

# 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 IX.

1919

LONDON:  
FREDK P. BRININGER,  
14, HEREFORD ROAD, WANSTEAD, E.11.

DEAR FELLOW-BELIEVERS,

First of all we take this opportunity of thanking God our Father for all the mercies that have contributed to the production of another year's testimony.

Secondly, we want all our readers to understand our position in connection with the state of the times. On every hand, man is uniting. There is a tremendous activity everywhere to bring about a unity of the flesh. The scriptural position seems to us to be, more than ever, independent testimony. We feel that no good purpose is served in becoming involved, either directly or indirectly, in controversy we do not propose to combat teaching which may run counter to that of this witness, neither do we propose to continue *Reviews under Books for Bereans*, as apart from the fact that the space at our disposal is much too limited, we feel constrained, for several reason, to confine ourselves to positive testimony in consonance with our title. This decision will explain why no references has been made to the several publications sent to us during the past few months.

To all who believe in the Scriptures of truth rightly divided, we commend this little witness, but above all we look up to Him Who alone has provided for and guided us through the years now past.

With every good wish in grace, through Christ,

Yours in that blessed hope,

CHARLES H. WELCH  
FREDK. P. BRININGER

*December, 1919.*

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## DEVOTIONAL ARTICLES.

### The Knowledge of God.

Col. i. 10. p. 13 – 15

When the Lord in His great intercession of John xvii. spoke of *aionian* life, He also spoke of its object:--

“And this is the *aionian* life, *that* they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent” (verse 3).

The word rendered *that* in this verse is in the original *hinā*, “in order that”, “with the object that”; and therefore allowing this meaning its force and significance, we discover that *aionian* life is the glorious opportunity provided by the God of all grace to get to know Himself and the One He sent – Jesus Christ our Lord.

This passage is not alone in the suggestion that during the present life we do not know GOD. In the prayers of the apostle, as recorded in the three epistles of the mystery, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians, there is progress observable in this knowledge. First in Eph. i. 17 the goal is stated:--

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him.”

Then the steps to that end begin to be enumerated, viz., (1) That you may know what is the hope of *His calling*. (2) That you may know what is the riches of the glory of *His inheritance* in the saints. (3) That you may know what is the exceeding greatness of *His power* to usward who believe.

Until we know these three manifestations or objects of God, *the knowledge of God Himself* cannot be ours. But these three items of knowledge, gloriously full as they are, are not sufficient qualifications to pass us into the higher school where we may learn to know GOD. Chapter iii. places all its emphasis upon knowing the love of Christ, “to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge”; this special aspect of knowledge has its own peculiar goal, “in order that you may be filled unto (R.V. – not with) all the fulness of God”. The fulness of God is the goal *unto* which the apostle’s prayers are directed; he does not pray that the believer may be filled *with all* the fulness of God; such is reserved for One and One only – the Lord Himself, for in Him dwelleth *all* the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and we are filled to the full in Him. The prayer of Phil. i. deals with another phase of spiritual growth, another factor in the progress of the saint to the desired goal:--

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more *in knowledge* and all discernment, that ye may try the things that differ (and so approve the things that are excellent), in order that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ: being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the praise and glory of God” (verses 9-11).

Col. i. 9, 10 gathers up these factors into one prayer, and leads on to the goal expressed in the opening words of Eph. i. 17. "For this cause we also, since the day we heard (heard what? Their faith, their love, their hope, their fruit—all that had been prayed for in Eph. i.; iii.; and Phil. i.), do not cease to pray for you" (What! is there something more? Had they not yet reached the goal? No!), "that ye may be filled with the full knowledge of His will, with all wisdom and spiritual understanding to walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing; in every work bringing forth good fruit, and increasing (or growing up) to the knowledge of God". Some texts read, "increasing unto the knowledge of God", and it is difficult to decide the question, but in either case the truth remains, that all the knowledge of His will to which we attain in this life, all the increasing worthiness of our walk, all the fruitfulness of all our good works is after all a growth, an increase, a preparation to the one great and glorious goal, THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. We know God now, mediately, but then face to face. Our highest good during this life is found in the recognition of this fact: during the pilgrimage, the discipline, and the probation of this life we make it our chief concern to know Christ. "That I may know Him" should be the desire of our hearts. To know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, to know the power of His resurrection, to know the Son of God, this is the knowledge for the time now present. This mediatorial knowledge leads on to the next and fullest, *to know God*. One has only to read the creeds of Christendom to see to what absurdities truly godly men may descend in their endeavour to explain the invisible God. For the present, Christ is All and in all; in the future, God will be All and in all. If ever the reader has thought about the occupation of the redeemed in glory, here is an answer that reaches out to boundless infinity—they will then begin to know God.

Let us accept the teaching of the Word instead of wasting precious time and opportunity on that which is beyond our scope; let us learn the appointed lessons now that we may the better learn *the* lesson then.

With what zest and earnestness shall we seek the knowledge of Christ and His love, the knowledge of the hope of His calling, and the glory of His inheritance if we realize the object with which those lessons have been set, viz., with a view to a future knowledge of GOD.

The knowledge of the Son of God leads on to the condition of perfection, and then, and not till then will the strong meat be allowed us.

To go beyond the appointed lesson of life is to be swayed by an unspiritual curiosity. True yearning to know God will bow before His appointments, and will realize that as in redemption and salvation, so with the knowledge of God, the Saviour can say, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me".

**Freedom.**

**“For he that is called in the Lord, being a slave,  
is the LORD’S FREEMAN: likewise also he that is called,  
being free, is CHRIST’S SLAVE.”**

**I Cor. vii. 22. pp. 29 - 32**

If ever we are to appreciate what freedom means in the full sense of the scriptural meaning of the term, we must learn the truth of the seeming paradox of I Cor. vii. 22.

One of the first lessons we have to learn, not only in relation to freedom, but in relation to practically all the doctrines of redemption, is that no blessing or gift is of value *for its own sake*. To seek liberty because to our natural temperament bondage is galling, is to seek, under the cloke of the term liberty, the satisfaction of the flesh. To fail to “use liberty rather” if the opportunity is given because it brings with it irksome or hazardous responsibilities, is likewise pandering to the flesh. By nature we judge by outward appearances. It is God who looketh upon the heart.

The very slave, if a believer, may rejoice in the fact that in spite of all the shackles made by man, he is *free*—the Lord’s freedman. In the same way the man who is master of his own time, who owes no man anything, if he is the Lord’s, should remember that he is the very *slave* of Christ. The heartburnings, the envyings, the frettings that seem so synonymous with bondage to the mind of the flesh; the boasting, the patronizing, the ease that so often accompany the conception of freedom to the man of the world, vanish when viewed “in Christ”.

This same spirit is observed in other connections. For example, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith through love working” (Gal. v. 6).

From our position we can readily appreciate the teaching that *circumcision* avails not anything, but we have not truly grasped the teaching of that statement if we do not as truly and as enthusiastically endorse the other phase, namely, that *uncircumcision* is equally of no avail. That this thought is very closely related to the spirit of I Cor. vii. 22 will be readily seen by reading back a little in I Cor. vii. to verses 18 and 19. The same argument that is used concerning the slave and the free, is used of the circumcision and the uncircumcision. The same neutralizing of disabilities and advantages which only obtain in the flesh and in the world are found again here.

“Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing; but keeping the commandments of God”. If we read this verse with Gal. v. 6 we shall know how to interpret the words, “but keeping the commandments of God”. Had we read on in Gal. v. to verse 13, we should have seen another close parallel. “For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve (as a slave) one another”.

This thought is echoed in I Pet. i. 16, “As free, and not using your *liberty* for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the *slaves* of God”. In both passages, liberty is but an opportunity for bondage—but the bondage of love. No finite creature can ever be allowed to exercise without restraint his own will. The liberty which the gospel brings is a *change of masters*.

The sixth chapter of Romans speaks of bondage and freedom.

“Our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed that we may no longer serve sin (as slaves). . . . Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. . . . Sin shall not have dominion over you. . . . Ye were the slaves of sin. . . . being freed from sin ye became enslaved to righteousness. . . . enslaved to God” (verses 6, 12, 14, 17, 18, 22).

Here the character of our liberty is clearly set forth. We were slaves. We have been set free in order that we may enter a new slavery. We have changed masters. Instead of sin and death, we have righteousness and God. The same thought is carried over into chapter vii. The wife is free upon the death of her husband, but the thought of being *married to another* is prominent. Rom. viii. 2 brings all the teaching to a focus. In Christ Jesus we are free, FREE, yet, notice well, we were set free by LAW. We are no longer under the law, but under grace (Rom. vi. 14). Nevertheless, being delivered from the law does not mean licence; we are still “under Christ’s law” (I Cor. ix. 21). This apostle of grace who said of himself, “not being myself under law” (verse 20), nevertheless, in the exercise of his liberty, said “I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage”. This holy paradox is vital to true service and to a true understanding of our position in the Lord. At one breath we say that we have been made free by Christ, and that we are bondslaves of the Lord.

Paul was a prisoner of the Roman power; he was a prisoner because of Jewish enmity, but his own description was, “a prisoner of the Lord”, and “a prisoner for you Gentiles”. He was Christ’s free-man when manacled to his Roman guard, he was Christ’s bond-slave when travelling into regions beyond. Are we not slaves if it is true of us:--

“Ye are not your own, ye are *bought* with a price”?  
“Ye are bought with a price, *therefore glorify God in your body*”  
“Ye are bought with a price, *become not the slaves of men*”  
(I Cor. vi. 19, 20; vii. 23).

We cannot serve God and Mammon; we cannot serve two masters; we cannot glorify the God who has bought us, and be the bond slaves of any other.

At the close of that epistle of liberty (Galatians), the apostle says, “Finally, let no one trouble me; for I bear in my body the *brand marks* of the Lord Jesus”. The “marks” are the *stigmata*, the brands whereby slaves and soldiers were marked to show to whom they belonged. He who gave place by subjection “no, not for an hour” when he defended the cause of our liberty in Christ (Gal. ii. 4, 5); he who drew such a decided line between the bondage of the child and the freedom of the son (iv. 1-11); he who used the allegory of the free woman (Sarah) and the bond woman (Agar), (iv. 22-31); he who raised that

rallying battle-cry, “Stand fast to the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free” (v. 1); this one was *the branded slave of Christ*.

There is a quietening influence in the contemplation of this relationship to the Lord. If we are His, if the freedom He has given us is ours to lay at His feet in loving service, if we no longer seek our own but His, if we cease from picking and choosing what “service” we shall render, if all service public or private, is rendered *unto Him*, we shall understand the sanctifying paradox of the new life. His service is perfect freedom, and truest liberty is expressed in the most devoted bond-service. The more free we are from the old bondage of sin, world and flesh, the more completely can we become the Lord’s bondmen.

Would we know the brand-marks of Paul the bondsman of the Lord? Did they consist only of the scars of the lictors’ rods, or the Jewish stripes? No. They are indicated for us the threefold crucifixion of Gal. ii. 20; v. 24; and vi. 14. Crucifixion to sin and to law; crucifixion to the flesh with its affections and desires; crucifixion to the world; these are the brand-marks of the slave of Christ. The liberty which knows not these marks is a delusion.

“For while speaking high-flown words of vanity, they allure with the lusts of the flesh by dissoluteness those who have just fled, those who walk in error, promising them liberty, while they themselves are slaves of corruption: for by whom a man is subdued, by him is he also brought into slavery” (II Pet. ii. 18, 19).

**Christ is All.**  
**#2. The Gospel.**  
**pp. 42 – 45**

We pass from the wider testimony of Scripture to the consideration of the gospel, and in doing so we shall find it to be gloriously true that there, CHRIST IS ALL. Writing to the Corinthians the apostle explains or makes known (*gnorizo*) the gospel which he preached to them. That gospel was “glad tidings”, and centred in Christ: it presented Christ under three aspects of His work, followed by a sixfold witness to His resurrection:--

- A | Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures;
- B | He was buried;
- A | He was raised again the third day, according to the Scriptures.

**The sixfold witness.**

- a | Seen of Cephas.
- b | Then of the twelve.
- c | Of more than 500 brethren at once.
- a | Seen of James.
- b | Then of all the Apostles.
- c | By Paul as of one born out of due time.

It will be observed that in explaining the gospel the apostle appears to consider the establishing of the facts concerning Christ as of fundamental importance. He does not refer to “us” except in the opening statement, whereas many of our attempts at defining the gospel revolve around the thought that it is God’s goodness concerning our salvation, our peace, our glory; far from this being so, we shall find our next reference that the gospel is God’s good news concerning Christ. In the opening verses of Romans the apostle give a clear definition of what he so often calls, “my gospel”; “Paul, a bond servant of Jesus Christ, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God. . . . concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord”. By omitting for the moment the parenthesis of verse 2, we see clearly that the gospel of God is CONCERNING HIS SON. Christ as the Son around whose Person the gospel revolves, is set forth under two aspects, according to the flesh, and according to the spirit.

1. Who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh.
2. Who was marked off Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness, by a resurrection out from the dead.

There is only one Christ, and He the Messiah of Israel. As subsequent revelations of the purpose of grace, were unfolded, new honours and titles were given to Christ, to mark new relationships. It is necessary to make this obvious remark because some, in their endeavour to discredit the teaching of the Mystery, discover a proof that the Church and the Kingdom are not to be distinguished, by the apostle’s reference to David in II Tim. ii. 8. What does the apostle really say, “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel” (R.V.). This version follows the order of the original which places resurrection first. The purport may be gathered better if graphically set out as follows:--

- A | Jesus Christ.—The Person.
- B | Risen from the dead.—Special fact.
- A | Of the seed of David.—The Pedigree.
- B | According to my gospel.—Special aspect.

Paul is telling Timothy to “remember” something. He may have referred back to his oft-repeated message spoken in Timothy’s hearing; in any case, the record of his teaching is found in the opening verses of Romans.

A comparison of the preaching of Paul and Peter in their opening addresses as recorded in Acts ii. and xiii. will further illustrate and enforce the apostle’s meaning. Peter and Paul quote the Psalms as foretelling the resurrection of Christ, and both speak of David by name. Peter declares that David, being a prophet, knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up

Christ to SIT ON HIS THRONE (Acts ii. 30). Peter's testimony speaks of Christ, raised in relation to David's throne, and is "according to the flesh"; Paul's quotations from the Psalms, and his remarks concerning David, are very similar to those of Peter (Acts xiii. 36), but where Peter goes on to speak of David's throne, Paul goes straight on to preach forgiveness and justification, a doctrine entirely absent from Peter's messages. Thus, when in Rom. i. Paul would speak of his apostleship and gospel, he uses a strong, and an unusual expression concerning himself. He says, "*separated* unto the gospel of God"; this is the word used in the parable of the net where it speaks of "severing" the wicked from the righteous (Matt. xiii. 49), and in Matt. xxv. 32, the "separating" as between sheep and goats. The same word is used in Acts xiii. 2 when the Holy Ghost said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul". There is a distinct contrast also intended, not only as between the ministry of the uncircumcision - Paul, and that of the circumcision - Peter (Gal. ii. 7), but between the condition of Saul the Pharisee, and Paul the Apostle; this is not evident to the English reader without a little help.

The word "separated" is from the verb *aphorizō*, and this is similar in meaning and in sound to the word *Pharisee*, which also meant a separated one. The one-time Pharisee is now, may we say, "phariseed" unto the gospel; this has reference to Paul himself. When speaking of the distinct presentation of the gospel which was his special ministry, he uses a cognate word. In speaking of Christ according to the flesh (which was Peter's presentation in Acts ii. 30), Christ was of the seed of David, but was "marked off" Son of God in power, according to the spirit of holiness, by resurrection out from the dead (Rom. i. 3, 4); the word we have translated "marked off" is *horizō*, which is merely *aphorizō* without the prefix *apo*. A sharp line of demarcation is drawn between Christ "according to the flesh", and Christ "according to the spirit". There came a time early in the ministry of Paul when he could say, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more".

Whether it be the gospel preached before unto Abraham, whether it be the gospel of the kingdom, or whether it be the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, Christ is its theme, its foundation, its dynamic, its goal, and its glory. He is the promised "seed" of Abraham's faith, He, the long looked-for Son of David, He, the glorious Head of the Church of the One Body. Christ is the gospel, and without Christ preaching is vain, and the good news a mockery to dying men.

Such, to come back to our primary thought, is the emphatic place accorded to Christ in the gospel. We may well pray that our every presentation of God's good news may be as full of the risen Christ as was the testimony of Paul, his separated servant.

**Christ is All.  
#3. The Prophecy.**

When the Lord Jesus opened the Scriptures to His disciples on that memorable walk to Emmaus, He said:--

“O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to have entered into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke xxiv. 25-27).

Prophecy is spoken of as a light that shineth in a dark place, but it is a light that has gone out when Christ is not the centre, for it is true not only in the limited sense of the quotation, but in the widest sense, “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”. See how decidedly Philip takes this view as recorded in Acts viii. 35. To the Eunuch, reading Isa. liii., “Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him *Jesus*”. This chapter in Isaiah is a good illustration of the subject. The last three verses of Isa. liii. must be included in the theme of chapter liii. The exalted servant is Christ, for the words, “for that which had not been told them shall they see”, are quoted in Rom. xv. 21 as of the gospel of Christ. That Christ is the “arm of the Lord” of liii. 1 is proved by John xii. 38, for the apostle says:--

“But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him: that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the Arm of the Lord been revealed?”

The next section which opens with the words, “Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows”, is quoted as of Christ in relation to His miracles of healing, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses” (Matt. viii. 17). Peter, speaking of Christ’s sufferings, quotes the words of Isa. liii. 5 and 6, in I Pet. ii. 24, 25, “By whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls”. In verse 22 of the same chapter Peter refers to the words, “He hath done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth”. The last reference is in verse 12, “He was numbered with the transgressors”, which Mark xv. 28, says was fulfilled when the Lord was crucified amidst the thieves.

On that walk to Emmaus, however, Christ did not apparently direct the disciples’ attention to a few outstanding prophecies, but began at Moses. It may be well for us to refresh our memories of these things, and while we cannot hope to touch “all the scriptures” which speak concerning Him, we may be able to trace the thread of prophecy, and confirm to our hearts the blessed truth that in prophecy as in all else Christ is all.

THE SEED OF THE WOMAN (Gen. iii. 15).—The very heart and soul of redemption is revealed in this primal prophecy. The history of redemption begins and ends with the history of the serpent. The serpent’s seed betrayed its innate enmity at the very gates of paradise, for “Cain was of that wicked one and slew his brother”. What is the title of the One who should overcome and destroy this awful power of evil? He is not named here

the Son of God, or even the Son of man. He is not hailed as King of kings and Lord of lords. His name, "The Mighty God", is not uttered. Out of weakness itself is to be born the victor over the serpent. "The Seed of the woman" shall bruise the serpent's head. Within the compass of these few words is found human corruption and guilt are passed down the male line. Here also lies enfolded the glorious teaching of I Cor. 45-47, the second man, the Lord from heaven, is here in view—He is the Seed of the woman. The prophecy of the virgin birth, Isa. vii. 14 and Matt. i. 23 is hereby necessitated.

THE SEED OF ABRAHAM.—"He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ" (Gal. iii. 16). Here is another embracive title. All that Isaac was as the well-beloved and only son, offered willingly upon the altar, is included in this prophetic name. In this Seed all families of Jew and Gentile alike were to be blessed. The great principle of faith is implied in the title, and much of the apostle's teaching in Romans and Galatians is alone possible by reason for the fact that Christ fills both prophecies concerning the woman's seed and the seed of Abraham.

THE SEED OF DAVID (Rom. i. 3).—This title covers all the promises of God which relate peculiarly to Israel and the kingdom. It is related to a set of prophecies that deal with Israel "according to the flesh". Here is the king after God's own heart. Here is the Prince of Peace. The rule and reign of David's greater Son exhausts his kingly prayer, and in contemplation of His benign reign the prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended, accomplished, consummated (Psa. lxxii. 20). Every sacrifice and offering ordained by the law or the Word of God was a prophecy of Christ.

Did Israel find protection under the shed blood of the passover? "Christ our passover hath been sacrificed for us" (I Cor. v. 7). Did God ordain various offerings for the various phases of ceremonial access, worship, and expiation, these were but prophecies of Christ. "Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a BODY hast Thou prepared Me. . . . Lo, I come" (Heb. x. 5-9). The time when the Messiah should come is given in various ways by various prophets (Gen. xlix. 10; Dan. ix. 24-27; Haggai ii. 6-9). The place of His birth is indicated by Micah v. 2. The nature and purpose of His death is foretold with marvellous precision in Psa. xxii. and Isa. liii. His glorious resurrection is foretold by David in Psa. xvi., His investiture with universal sovereignty is foretold by Daniel in vii. 13, 14, and by John in Rev. xi. 15. His second coming in its many phases constitutes the brightest star of both Old and New Testament eschatology.

We have done nothing more than pick out a few of the many themes that this subject holds out to us; Christ is ALL in prophecy. He is its beginning and its end. With His person and work Genesis records the first prophetic word, and His personal coming is the promise of the closing verses of inspiration, "Surely I come quickly".

May every reader be able, by grace, to reply, "Even so, Come, Lord Jesus".

**Christ is All.**

#### #4. Redemption. pp. 142 - 144

“Christ our passover hath been sacrificed for us” (I Cor. v. 7).

“Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John i. 29).

The first promise which God made to Abraham is contained in the words, “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation” (Gen. xii. 1, 2). It was not, however, until the seed of Abraham had spent many grievous days of toil in Egypt, that God appeared on their behalf, and fulfilled His promise. The first national act was the sacrifice of the passover, every member of the chosen race being redeemed by blood.

A vital change is indicated in Exod. xii. 2, “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year TO YOU”. Up till this point the first month of the year had been *Tisri*, which corresponds with our October, but a complete change was introduced, and the month *Abib* became the first month of the new year to Israel, “This day came ye out in the month Abib” (Exod. xiii. 4).

The children of Israel were commanded to take a lamb for an house. There is something suggestive in the way the word lamb is used. First it is A lamb (xii. 3), then THE lamb (verse 4), then YOUR lamb (verse 5). It is good to recognize Christ as A Saviour, it is better and more blessed to see in Him THE Saviour, best of all to realize once for all that He is YOUR Saviour. The record of Exod. xii., spoken as it was for the instruction of Israel on that memorable night, nevertheless seems to pass from the type to the Antitype in verse 6, “And the whole congregation of the children of Israel shall kill IT in the evening”. For every house of Israel a lamb had been taken; many lambs therefore that awful evening would have been slain by as many fathers—yet the Word reads, “the whole congregation. . . shall kill IT”. “Christ our passover hath been sacrificed for us”.

It has been pointed out by others before us, that while the blood of the passover was sprinkled *above* the upper door post, and on either *side* the two side posts, no blood was sprinkled upon the threshold; God saw to it that not even in type should any of the children of Israel “trample under foot” the blood that spoke of the sacrifice of His Son. To the children of Israel that sprinkled blood was a token, and the Lord said, “when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt”.

“When I see *the blood*”. Not when I see your genealogy as a true son of Abraham, not when I see your character, but when I see the *blood*. No dispensation, however diverse in character, calling, and destiny, alters one word of this basic truth. Redemption by blood lies at the bottom of Israel’s deliverance and nationality, redemption by blood is one of the “spiritual blessings” of the dispensation of the mystery (Eph. i. 7). Every presentation of the gospel whether from pulpit, platform, or village green must pass this scrutiny. The

blood is the token, and the Lord still looks for the blood in order that “He may be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus”.

To many, possibly, the yearly sacrifice of the passover said little; to one, however, we do know that it spoke of Christ. That one was David. Ps. li. is the prayer of a truly penitent man. He prays that his transgressions may be blotted out, and he himself thoroughly washed from his sin. “Purge me with hyssop”, he cries, “and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow”. Why did David ask to be purged with *hyssop*? Hyssop is a small bushy plant; in what way could it be used to purge and cleanse? The answer is found in the passover. “Ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two sideposts with the blood” (Exod. xii. 22). Here is David’s meaning; he cried for the protection and cleansing of the blood.

David follows the reference to the hyssop by another strange remark, “Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which Thou hast broken may rejoice”. Of the passover lamb it was written, “neither shall ye break a bone thereof”, and John xix. 33-36, speaking of the Roman custom and the soldiers’ attitude says, “These things were done that the scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.”

In verse 14 of Psalm li. David utters the dreadful character of his sin, “Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness”. If it was impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin or to touch the conscience, how could David expect deliverance, and how could he couple it with God’s righteousness? He might have said that his tongue would sing aloud of God’s mercy, or love, or pity, but no, he says *righteousness*. David saw beyond the passover lamb to the Lamb of God, Whom God was to set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission (margin, passing over) of the sins that are past, through the forbearance of God (Rom. iii. 25).

The lessons of the passover are many and full. This paper touches a few, but however many more may be seen and realized, still must it ever be true that in the sacrifice of the passover, as in all the scheme of redemption, CHRIST IS ALL.

**Christ is All.**  
**#5. For the Pilgrim.**

Not only does Christ fill the gospel with His glory and sufficiency, and fill the purpose of the ages with His power and wisdom, not only is He found filling the Psalm of the cross (xxii.) with His passion, and the Psalm of the crown (xxiv.) with His glory, but He also fills the Psalm of the crook (xxiii.) with His shepherding care.

When Israel came out of Egypt under the sprinkled blood of the passover lamb, they came out by virtue of Christ. They did not leave Christ behind them, however, when they commenced the journey through the wilderness. We are not left to the process of inference in this matter. Scripture in more than one case declares that Christ is to be seen in the wilderness journey. In I Cor. x. 1-4 we read:--

“Our fathers did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: AND THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST.”

The Israelites not only had spiritual drink, but they ate manna (angels' food) which was sent from heaven. Again, we are not called upon to reason, infer, or spiritualize; we have but to read the Word:--

“Our fathers did eat manna in the desert: as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. . . . I AM THAT BREAD OF LIFE” (John vi. 31-51).

In the approach to God in worship during the days of pilgrimage, the Israelite had a constant reminder of Christ in the tabernacle that God commanded to be made. The inner shrine, the holiest of all, contained the ark and the mercy-seat, the meeting-place appointed by God between Himself and Moses, and, through Moses, the people. That mercy-seat was be-sprinkled with blood, and that mercy-seat spoke of Christ, “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (*a mercy-seat*), through faith in His blood”. Another accompaniment of the wilderness journey was the gracious *presence*. “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest” (Exod. xxxiii. 14). The Lord Jesus is to the pilgrim the presence of God. In His face shines the light of the glory of God. He it is who goes before us, our pillar of cloud and our pillar of fire. By day and by night His words remain true, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”. The very *way* the pilgrim treads may be looked upon as Christ Himself. Who but He is “the Way, the Truth and the Life”? How blessed the lesson of the wilderness! Its privations, and its provisions all to lead us to fuller trust in the Lord Himself.

If the redemption that lies behind us is all of Christ, and if the glory that awaits us be filled with His presence, shall not the brief interval of pilgrimage here be made blessed and holy by reason of the same precious truth. Oh may every sojourner through life's wilderness learn the blessed secret that in all our needs, our ways, our joys, *Christ is all*.

## **Pruning.** **pp. 46 - 48**

These thoughts were written in October, after having spent a little time pruning fruit trees. A garden teaches many lessons, and the pruning of fruit trees is by no means the least helpful.

First of all, why do we prune? While to one unaccustomed to fruit culture the principles upon which the pruner works may not be at once clear, it would be obvious that every cut of the knife was not wanton waste, but purposeful and good. Translating our thoughts into the sphere of spiritual things, we also are persuaded that every branch or shoot that the heavenly husbandman removes, is taken away for our good and for His glory. As we stood for a moment considering whether such and such branches should come off or stay on, the blessed comfort came to us to think how much more may we not believe that every cut we receive from the pruning of the Lord is the result of wisest choice and tenderest concern.

Why then do we prune? First, to produce the maximum amount of fruit-bearing wood; secondly, to give such fruit-bearing wood as much light and air as possible, and thirdly, that the resulting fruit shall be so placed as to be most easily gathered; these three reasons for pruning need no alteration of wording to speak to the believer of his own life and experience. We are expected to produce fruit, and just as the pruner's knife cuts away much that may look pleasant to the eyes, so the Lord has to remove much that to the eye of the flesh seems attractive and necessary: the pruner knows, however, that unwise pruning instead of producing fruit-bearing wood, produces year by year branches of twiggy growth that *rob* the tree, and deprive it of air and sunshine. God looks at us, as we look at our trees. He sees that branch of mental activity, that development of worldly or social affairs, is a branch that will be unfruitful and will also spoil the remaining fruit, and so He prunes. The reader should think kindly of this when suffering the cutting off of some fancied good, some hoped-for success—the Lord is pruning, He desires fruit. Air and sunlight are necessary not only for ripening the fruit when it has developed, but for ripening the wood upon which the fruit shall form. Remember, fellow-believer, *fruit forms on ripened wood.*

There are other minor considerations which are true in both the natural and spiritual spheres.

1. *All trees are not alike.*—While with some varieties fruit sets all along the branches, in others, fruit is borne at the tips of the branches and is found practically all on the outside of the tree; to prune merely by rule of thumb would spell ruin. How thankful we should be if, hesitating and half afraid at times through inexperience, we remember in the spiritual sphere that the Lord has said, “*My Father is the husbandman.*” This physical fact (*viz.*, the differing fruit-bearing habits) should also deter us from hasty comparisons. We are apt to think that the experiences of one child of God should be modeled upon our own;

and if they are not we are apt to pass uncharitable judgment. Let us leave one another in the hands of the heavenly husbandman, and let us not “judge one another any more”.

**Pruning. (Conclusions)**  
**pp. 63, 64**

2. *Heal the wounds.*—When a fairly thick branch is to be taken out of a tree, the saw must be used. Living wood resents the saw, and if the stump be left unattended there is every possibility that the deadly canker may find an entrance. When the saw cut is made it must be smoothed over with a knife, and the edge bevelled to induce the formation of a cicatrix; how comforting is the thought that comes to one while thus carefully tending the wounded branch—*He who wounds is He who heals.*
3. *Seasons.*—Some trees will stand the pruner’s knife at any period of the year - others, particularly plums, must not be pruned until the quiet season, otherwise there is a danger of bleeding the tree, perhaps to death. Grateful indeed are we that the pruning of God’s trees is in His hands. There are too many of the mind of Peter who say, “And what shall this man do?”, to whom the Lord must still answer, “What is that to thee? Follow thou Me”.

And so lessons could be multiplied. When we cease from the language of ungodly science and speak of “Nature” as the “Works of God”, we shall find continual parallels and correspondencies between His Word and His Works; the Scriptural teaching concerning fruitfulness unto God is a very blessed, albeit solemn one. Many other factors must come into the practice of fruit culture other than pruning, but pruning there must be if good fruit is to be produced.

The reader may be interested to note that the golden “snuffers” used in the temple (I Kings vii. 50) are “pruners”, being a similar word to that translated “pruning hooks”.

In John's Gospel there are two closely related passages wherein the Lord Jesus Christ used the word "Always".

"Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard Me, and I knew that Thou hearest Me *always*" (John xi. 41, 42). The Lord was face to face with the utter hopelessness, yea corruption, of human nature. He stood at a tomb. Human love had done its all, but human love could not endure the thought of facing corruption. "Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days". Yet, standing before that symbol and servitor of death, the Lord Jesus was perfectly confident that those who stood with Him should there see the glory of God. He knew that the Father heard Him *always*.

There is another passage, a passage which precedes this one both in time of utterance, and in order of experience. "I do *always* those things that please Him" (John viii. 29). Here is revealed the reason of unanswered prayer; here also shines out the character of the perfect Saviour.

Let us keep before our hearts these two verses. *Always* heard, because *always* pleasing; and further, that we can be heard at any time, but *for His sake*.

### **Three Phases of Peace. pp. 127, 128**

Peace is an effect, and it must ever held in mind that "the work of righteousness shall be peace" (Isa. xxxii. 17). Consequently "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isa. lvii. 21). Rom. iii., which declares "There is none righteous, no not one", also declares "the way of peace have they not known".

PEACE WITH GOD.—A sick-visitor once asked a man whether he had made his peace with God. No, replied the man, "No, thank God, *it was made for me.*" Peace with God can only be possible as a result of righteousness. Man by nature cannot produce this righteousness, and therefore cannot make his peace with God. Rom. v. 1 gives the true position. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Note the "being" before the "having".

PEACE OF GOD.—All who have peace with God, who are fully acquitted before God, are not always enjoying the peace of God. This is more in line with the second half of Isa. xxxii. 17, "The effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever". Phil. iv. 5-7 shows us the path to this peace. Moderation or "yieldingness" to all; anxiety for nothing, for everything prayer and thanks, "and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall GARRISON your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus".

Col. iii. 15 says, “Let the peace of God **RULE AS UMPIRE** in your hearts”. Here we have a blessed guard and guide.

**THE GOD OF PEACE.**—One might think that to reach the standard of Phil. iv. 5-7 was high enough. Verse 9, however, pointing us to the example of that faithful follower of the Lord, says, “Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and hear, and seen in me, do: and the God of Peace shall be with you”. If the Giver is greater than His gifts, this is favour indeed.

# Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth.

## #19. The Basis of the New Order.

(Gen. viii. 21 - ix. 17).

(see The Fifteen Dispensations, Volume VI, page 136).

pp. 6 – 13

There are many of the Lord's gifts to us as His creatures that we accept as a matter of course, yet without which life would be impossible. Nothing is so free as air and sunlight, yet nothing so vital. The regular sequence of day and night, the recurrence of seed-time and harvest, the continued rotation of summer and winter we think of as though no interference with their regularity and order could be possible. The flood, which we were considering in our last paper, was the most violent interference with "nature" that had occurred since the fall of man, and it was after the waters of the flood had dried up, and Noah had offered his burnt offerings, that we read:--

"The Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done" (Gen. viii. 21).

There is a parallel with this in ix. 8-17 where God establishes His covenant with Noah and his seed and with every living creature that there should never be sent a flood again to destroy all flesh.

**Gen. viii. 21.** And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

**22.** While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

**ix. 1.** And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

**2.** And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

**3.** Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

**4.** But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

**5.** And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

**6.** Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

**7.** And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.

**8.** And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,

**9.** And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

**10.** And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

**11.** And I will establish my covenant with you, neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.

**12.** And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

**13.** I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

**14.** And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

**15.** And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

**16.** And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

**17.** And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.

Although we often speak of *Jehovah* as God in covenant with His people, and *God* as Creator, we observe that while JEHOVAH said in His heart that He would not smite any more as He had done, it is GOD who makes the covenant to that effect. For the dispensational meaning of Jehovah the reader is referred to the article on pp. 40-44 of Volume VIII.

Jehovah being the God of the age, His covenant is called the age covenant (A.V. everlasting covenant, ix. 16):--

“While the earth remaineth (or while all the days of the earth [continue]), seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.”

Day after day since this promise was made the Lord has looked down upon man whose heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, and has never again interfered with the universal ordinances here specified. Famine and other judgments there may have been in places, but never universally, like the flood. The Lord while on earth drew attention to the fact that the Father “maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust”. The apostle Paul declared that God, while suffering all nations in time past to walk in their own ways, yet “left not Himself without witness, doing good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts xiv. 15-17).

The Lord appeals to the unchanging continuance of the ordinance of day and night to indicate the like character of His covenant with Israel:--

“Thus saith the Lord which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinance of the moon and of the stars for a light by night. . . . If those ordinances depart from before Me. . . . then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me all the days” (Jer. xxxi. 35, 36).

The A.V. and the R.V. by using here the words, “for ever”, instead of “all the days”, commit the Lord to perpetuate Israel *as a nation* throughout eternity, and also the ordinances of the sun and moon. Neither of these propositions can be established by Scripture, and there are some passages which speak of the cessation of the ordinances of the sun, moon and stars, therefore the earnest student will be careful not to go beyond what is written. The apostle, as we have seen (Acts xiv. 15-17), speaks of these things as “a witness”. Rom. i. 19, 20 teaches us that the Gentiles by the “things that are made” might have known the “eternal power and deity of God”, and thereby have been deterred from idolatry. In the same manner these covenanted ordinances are God’s witnesses. The recurring seed-time and harvest are a standing warning to the whole race, apart from the written revelation. How often the present life with its opportunities is likened to a seed time, and how many are the warnings and the encouragements in view of the harvest at the end of the age! The day, too, when man may work, the night that cometh when man’s work is done; the daily miracle of sleeping and awaking is a foreshadowing of that sleep of death and that morning of resurrection which is so prominent in the N.T. Scriptures. All these themes the reader can pursue with profit; we can but draw attention

to the great age-time covenant, that throughout all dispensations has continued in unaltered order.

The first great dispensational fact that is made known in the new world that opened out to Noah and his descendants was that judgment is deferred. God will not again visit in the same way the sins of man as He did at the flood; the wicked *now* may prosper as a green bay tree, the righteous *now* may be plagued all the day long, “the end”, as seen in “the sanctuary of God”, reveals the fact of a future day of individual judgment. So it is that even though man continues in his sin, seed time and harvest, and day and night, do not cease.

In the next chapter (ix.) the Lord lays the foundation of human government. We must go back further into history than the days of Nebuchadnezzar for the divine institution of “the powers that be”. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man” (Gen. ix. 6). When Cain shed his brother’s blood God made a special protection for him against the hand of his fellow-man. Here, however, man is appointed judge and executioner. A change also in the food of man is made. To Adam God gave every herb bearing seed, and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; now, “every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even as the green herb have I given you every thing”. To this divine change in human diet the apostle Paul alludes in I Tim. iv. 4, 5, “For every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused, being received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer”. The false teaching of the apostasy, the doctrines of demons, included the forbidding of marriage, and the abstinence from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

To progress in what is called Spiritism, abstinence from flesh foods and from marriage is essential; the seducing spirits with their doctrines of demons seem to be characteristic of the “latter times”. The days of Noah are to be repeated, and the spirit activities that brought about the corruption of the earth that ended in the flood are to be expected again. If the abstinence from flesh food and from marriage makes intercourse with the spirit world easier, we can perceive the wise provision in the change of human food as given to Noah, and the reason why such an institution should be discontinued as a prelude to demon activities in the latter times.

After blessing Noah, and saying, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”, God speaks of man’s new relationship to the animal world; this is exactly in the same order in Gen. i. 28. There are one or two modifications, however, that indicate a change from Gen. i. 28; man is told not only to replenish the earth, but to subdue it, a type of Him who will yet subdue all things beneath His feet; further, he was to “have dominion”, another type of the Lord from heaven. This appears to be directly connected with the fact that man was created in the image of God. That the image remained after the fall and after the flood is abundantly testified by Gen. ix. 6, and James iii. 9. Instead of the word “dominion”, we have in the re-institutions of Noah, “the fear of you and the dread of you” shall be upon every beast, fowl and fish. This is something lower than dominion, and harmonizes with the general character of the age.

When Nebuchadnezzar was made “the head of gold”, he became more than king of Babylonian Empire, or the first of a new dynasty, a dispensational change took place, almost as great as is indicated in Gen. ix. When Daniel interpreted to Nebuchadnezzar the meaning of the great image he said:--

“Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory, and wheresoever the children of MEN dwell, the BEASTS of the field and the FOWLS of the heaven hath He given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all” (Dan. ii. 37, 38).

The words, “hath He given into thine hand”, are an echo of the words of Gen. ix. 2, “into your hand are they delivered”; there is also more than a coincidence in the fact that in Gen. i., ix., and Dan. ii. these things are associated with an image, in the one case “the image of God”, in the other a “great image whose brightness was excellent, and its form terrible” (Dan. ii. 31). One other consideration and we must close.

The question as to the extent of the flood is perennial, and we just briefly deal with it here. First of all, the extent of the flood must be considered not from a geographical point of view, but from the standpoint of its purpose. Gen. vi. 17 declares that the flood was intended to destroy all flesh, and that everything in the earth should die. This is again stated in Gen. vii. 4, “every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth” [*adamah*, ground]. This is recorded as an accomplished fact in vii. 21-23:--

“All flesh died. . . . and every man, all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, and all that was in the dry land died, and every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground. . . . they were destroyed from the earth, Noah only remained, and they that were with him in the ark.”

These statements are sufficient proof that the flood was universal in extent *so far as life was concerned*, and we might waive the question of its geographical extent did not the Scripture (Gen. vii. 19) use such an expression as

“ALL the high hills, that were under the WHOLE heaven were covered.”

Had the passage read, All the high hills that were on the earth or the ground, there may have been room for an argument as to the meaning of these terms, but surely no such limitation can be set to the whole heavens!

Dr. Kitto points out another witness:--

“If the deluge were local, what was the need of taking *birds* into the ark, and among them birds so widely diffused as the raven and the dove? A deluge which could overspread the region which *these* birds inhabit could hardly have been less than universal. . . . if the waters of the deluge rose fifteen cubits above all the mountains of the countries which the raven and the dove inhabit, the level must have been enough to give universality to the flood.”

We believe that the human race began anew in Noah and his sons, and with them commenced the order of things that was at the base of the national life, soon to be instituted; the beginning of the nations and their place in the divine economy we must consider in our next paper.

Space will not permit a lengthy examination of all the varying features of the new dispensation which commenced with Noah and his saved family and the lower animals. We feel that the evident relation between the dispensations connected with Adam, and that connected with Noah is important enough to receive the following tabulated list of parallels and contrasts, and we trust the interested reader will pursue the theme more fully than we are able to do in these pages; we write always for BEREANS:--

**List of parallels and contrasts between the dispensations headed by:**

<b>ADAM.</b>	<b>NOAH.</b>
A judgment in the background which left the earth without form and void (Gen. i. 2; Isa. xlv 18).	A flood in the background that left the earth a ruin (Gen. vii. 17-24).
(The parallel between these two passages is so close that commentators are divided as to which of them II Pet. iii. 5, 6 refers).	
The dry land appears on the third day, grass and trees grow (Gen. i. 9-13).	The dry land appears in Noah's 601 <sup>st</sup> year, and the plucked olive leaf indicated to Noah that this was so (Gen. viii. 11-13).
Living creatures are "brought forth" from the water and from the earth, and God blessed them saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth" (Gen. i. 20-25).	Living creatures are "brought forth" with Noah out of the ark that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply in the earth" (Gen. viii. 15-19).
Man made in the image of God to have "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. . . and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. i. 26-28).	"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered." "In the image of God made He man" (Gen. ix. 1, 2, 6).
Food.—"Every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat" (Gen. i. 29).	Food.—"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things", but not blood (Gen. ix. 3, 4).
The seventh day rest (Gen. ii. 1-3).	Every flood date (except Gen. viii. 5) is a sabbath. ( <i>Companion Bible</i> note) the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month which was a Sabbath (Gen. viii. 4).
Adam has three sons, Cain, Abel and Seth (Gen. iv. 1, 2, 25).	Noah has three sons, Shem, Ham and Japeth (Gen. v. 32).
One son, Cain, is cursed more than the earth, and becomes a fugitive and a vagabond (Gen. iv. 12).	One son, Ham, the father of Canaan, is cursed, even though God had promised not to curse the ground any more, and Canaan becomes a servant of servants (Gen. ix. 25; viii. 21).
God curses Cain for shedding his brother's blood, but does not sanction vengeance by human hands (Gen. iv. 10-15).	God will require the life blood from every beast and man, but now delegates the execution of judgment to man himself. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" (Gen. ix. 5, 6).

The Lord sets a “mark” ( <i>oth</i> ) to protect Cain (Gen. iv. 15).	The Lord sets a bow in the cloud for a “token” ( <i>oth</i> ) to ensure all flesh (Gen. ix. 13).
God planted a garden.	Noah planted a vineyard.
Nakedness and shame are linked together in connection with Adam.	Nakedness and shame are linked together in connection with Noah.
The fruit of the tree, and the fig. (Gen. ii. 8; iii. 6, 7, 10).	The wine of the vineyard (Gen. ix. 20-23).
The redemption of both man and his lost dominion is symbolized by the Cherubim (Gen. iii. 24).	The redemption of both man and his lost dominion is symbolized by the animals preserved alive in the ark (Gen. vii. 13-16; viii. 1, 17-19).
The serpent beguiled the woman and brought about the curse (Gen. iii. 1-24; II Cor. xi. 3).	The sons of God by their actions towards the daughters of men bring about the flood (Gen. vi. 1-4).
All the days of Adam were 930 years (Gen. v. 5).	All the days of Noah were 950 years (Gen. ix. 29).

Many other details could doubtless be collected, and many instructive lessons be learned from the changes introduced into the new dispensation. We trust that sufficient has been given above to stimulate the reader to individual effort.

## **#20. The Purpose of God (Gen. i. - ix.).** pp. 37 - 42

Our studies together of these early chapters of Genesis have led us up to the point when in the new world nations are to make their first appearance, and a new development is about to take place in the purpose of the ages. We write these pages for those who desire help in understanding the *fundamentals* of Dispensational Truth, and therefore propose to pause at this juncture to consider what light these early chapters throw upon the purpose of God.

There is need here for the utmost care, lest by confusing things that differ we are found saying things about the Lord that shall be to our shame.

*First there is the purpose of God according to election.* This purpose is illustrated for us in the ninth chapter of Romans; the apostle had expressed his sorrow for his kinsmen according to the flesh, but corrects any idea that there had been any miscarriage of the purpose of God by saying:--

“Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel, neither, because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. . . . the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

The Scripture passes from the promise concerning Isaac to that concerning Jacob, saying:--

“For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.”

It is evident that this is “election” pure and simple; it was planned before the children were born, and took no account of their works, either good or evil. In the operation of this purpose the Lord shows mercy or hardness entirely irrespective of the individual. Pharaoh, and the hardening of his heart, is instanced as a further illustration, and the figure of the potter and the clay makes the meaning of the apostle clear. References to a similar purpose are to be found in Eph. i. 1-14, where the election is said to have been made in Christ before the overthrow of the world, and the sonship and the inheritance are spoken of as being according to predestination, which predestination is in harmony with the purpose of Him who is energizing all things according to the counsel of His own will. Parallel with this is the reference in II Tim. i. 9:--

“Who saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before aionian times.”

This purpose and promise, related to that period spoken of as before *aionian* times, is, like the purpose which is related to the period before the overthrow of the world, connected with election, for Titus i. 1, 2 links the faith of God’s elect with the promise that was made before *aionian* times. Now, here comes the danger of a false comparison of things that differ. If we transfer the terms of this pre-aionian purpose to the purpose of the ages, or to the purpose of God in general, we shall be found teaching that which if taught wittingly would be quite erroneous.

Let us see what happens if we take the absolute principles of the purpose of election, and teach that such is the character of God in the widest application. If this be true then there is no such thing as sin, or human guilt; God is openly and unblushingly made responsible for sin, and sin is robbed of its ugliness and criminal character, and becomes but the handmaid of God. Satan is not really an enemy or an adversary, he is but one of the many strange tools that God is employing under this purpose. It is idle to speak of responsibility, of obedience or disobedience, of punishment and repentance; as well punish a stone, because left unsupported it falls to the ground, as punish a man for sinning. If God has willed and decreed from first to last the whole course of the ages with all that ever will be done therein, He has of necessity made a machine, the wheels and cogs of which move by *mechanical* power and not by *moral* forces. If any fault is to be found it must be found in the Maker, for He willed all that has been and shall be down to the last detail.

Possibly the reader will interpose with one of the many passages of Scripture where man is addressed as a moral agent, urged to obey, believe, love, etc., threatened with punishment or encouraged by reward. Deut. xxviii., e.g., is so much mockery in the ears of those whose every deed is fixed by predestination or electing purpose. It will be sufficient for our purpose to consider the following passages in the nine chapters of Genesis which we have now passed under review.

- |                    |                          |
|--------------------|--------------------------|
| (1). Gen. i.1, 2.  | Creation and Chaos.      |
| (2). Gen. ii. 17.  | Prohibition and Penalty. |
| (3). Gen. iv. 25.  | Seth and Substitution.   |
| (4). Gen. vi. 5-7. | The repentance of God.   |

(1). GEN. i. 1, 2.—We noticed, when dealing with this passage in Volume VI, page 169-173, that the condition of chaos and darkness there indicated was not the condition of creation “in the beginning”; it *became* so. The passage we referred to (Isa. xlv. 18), not only discloses that the earth was not created *tohu* (without form), but that “He formed it to be inhabited”. Here, therefore, at the threshold of our enquiry we have words that indicate that the purpose of the creation of Gen. i. 1 received a check; something had for the time being entered and spoiled the fair work of God. This passage, taken by itself, does not settle the question we are considering; we must wait until we have collected further evidence. We may remark here, however, that the “purpose of the ages” (Eph. iii. 11) occupies the whole period of this present time, the creation of the six days being the platform upon which the great drama of good and evil is enacted, the consummation being the restoration of the alienated creation back to God. When this takes place the present heaven and earth pass away, and a new heaven and a new earth appear. It seems that we must choose the view that either the purpose of God is of such a character as to roll on its way utterly unaltered by any action of any of His creatures, or we must believe that something did enter into His creation which temporarily turned that purpose aside, and that the conflict of the ages is no piece of theatricals, but a desperate battle, that sin is an ugly and awful things, and no creature of God, that the coming of the Son of God was a necessity, that His agony suffering, and death were real, that the triumph and victory was not the conquest of a make-believe enemy, and that the infinite power and wisdom of God are fully able to deal with all opposition, and to accomplish the fulfillment of all His purposes. The one who sees the very “weakness” of God as being stronger than man, and the “foolishness” of God as wiser than man, needs no inflexible mechanical purpose to necessitate certainty. We watch a game of chess, and after a while the certainty comes to us that one player is already beaten, and the other the victor, although each are bound by laws, and neither can predestinate the others movements, and the wisdom and the skill of the victor is enhanced as we realize the high qualities of his opponent. Sin, Satan, and death are real enemies; they are included in the things that offend, and are to be finally banished from the kingdom of God. True, He makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and restrains the rest (Psa. lxxvi. 10), true, He overrules sin, and takes the wise in their own craftiness. To accomplish His purposes of grace He spared not His own Son, and working by law and by faith, by conscience, and by revelation, by grace, by love, by warning, and by beseeching, with infinite variety and in manifold wisdom He deals with the ever varying moral agents that comprise the fabric of His purpose.

(2). GEN. ii. 17.—Coming to Adam, his temptation and fall, Scripture definitely declares, “This only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions:” (Eccles. vii. 29). When God said to Adam concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, “Thou shalt not eat of it”, *He meant it*, as the “God of truth and without iniquity”. He could not have meant, “Thou shalt not eat of it—but my purpose is that you shall, that your seeming responsibility and choice is only superficial and not real”. The penalty attached to the disobedience is only moral if Adam had free action in the matter; if we grant this, then it at once becomes evident that the purpose of God cannot be of the mechanical unaccommodating character that some would have us believe. An illustration of what we mean by accommodation is found in the birth of Seth.

(3). GEN. iv. 25.—Seth was so called, because “God hath appointed me”, said Eve, “another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew”. Cain was “of that wicked one”, and if the unalterable and inflexible purpose of God was that Seth should be the seed through whom the line of promise should run, then Cain had obeyed the will of God in thus murdering his brother, but if God met the attack of “the wicked one” by appointing “another seed instead of Abel”, His purpose would still go on, and the enemy’s attack fail. Besides, that view makes the whole transaction real, the other makes it an awful fiction.

(4). GEN. vi. 5-7.—Come again to another scene, the flood. If the deluge was a predestined part of the unalterable, inflexible purpose of God, so must have been the wickedness that necessitated it, and God, looking down upon the increasing violence, must have rejoiced to see how well His purpose was developing; but what saith the Holy Word?

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, and it REPENTED THE LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it GRIEVED HIM AT HIS HEART, and the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man and beast, and creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it REPENTETH ME THAT I HAVE MADE THEM” (Gen. iv. 5-7).

Here is solid, sober Scripture, call it by what name in the range of figurative language that you will, when all is said and done, stand once again and behold this record of Divine grief over the apostacy of His creatures, and the resolution to blot them out that followed. We need no greater proof than this, that the responsibility for human guilt rests upon man, and that he was under no necessity by reason of an iron purpose to do so wickedly. Noah himself, as we sought to show in the last two papers, is a kind of second Adam with whom a new start is made. We will not pursue this subject further, being content to have seen that there is a vast difference between that electing purpose that was made in Christ before sin entered, and that purpose and plan which spans the ages and ends in the defeat of the adversary, the destruction of the last enemy, and the homage of heaven and earth and underworld in the name of Jesus. We cannot quote a more apt passage in conclusion than that of Rom. iii. 5-8:--

“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man), God forbid; for then how shall God judge the world?

For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner, and not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), LET US DO EVIL, THAT GOOD MAY COME? WHOSE DAMNATION IS JUST.”

**#21. The Birthright of the Nations. (Gen. x.).**  
**The Third Dispensation** (see *Volume VI, page 136*).  
**pp. 69 – 75**

It is evident from the many parallels exhibited between the period immediately following the flood and the period of the creation of Adam, that a new dispensation commenced with Noah and his saved family. If we believe the teaching of Scripture (Gen. x.) we can have no alternative but to believe that all mankind is descended from Noah, through his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth:--

“These are the sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread” (Gen. ix. 19).

The apostle Paul, speaking to the Athenians said:--

“God. . . hath made of one *every* nation of men to dwell on the *whole* face of the earth” (Acts xvii. 26).

These words of Paul are either Scripture truth and therefore final, or private opinion and therefore fallible. Speaking as an apostle (*ex cathedra*, as it were) Paul was inspired and infallible, and the testimony given here on Mar’s Hill was a public witness of a duly accredited ambassador of Christ. He spoke truth, and his word here is but an echo of the statement of Gen. x.

The Athenians applied the term of *autochthones* to other peoples, believing that other peoples had sprung as a separate creation from the soil, as they believed they had. One can feel the point of the apostle’s words to these very Athenians, knowing the belief they entertained. The testimony to the unity of the human race seems to be the exclusive witness of the Scriptures, and what science is reluctantly but nevertheless definitely approaching, the humblest believer in the Word has known all along. As far back as 1655 *La Peyrère* published his theory of pre-adamite races, and at intervals since then there have been various suggestions put forward regarding the different origins of existing nations.

*Voltaire* said that no one who was not blind could doubt

“that the Whites, the Negroes, the Albinos, the Hottentots, the Chinese, and the Americans belong to entirely different races.”

One philosopher maintained that there were eleven different species of mankind, while another went so far as to say there could be no less than fifteen.

Let us look at some of the most striking differences exhibited by the various nations. Among them we might mention *colour*. *Quatrefages*, in his book, “the Human Species”, says:--

“The difference in colouring is easily explained. We now know beyond a doubt that the skin of the Negro is exactly the same in composition as that of the White. . . the mucous layer. . . is the seat of the colour. . . External influences have, moreover,

an influence on the organ, and modify the colour secretion. Simon has shown that freckles are nothing more than spots upon the skin of the White, presenting the characteristics of the skin of Negro. He also says that even the attempt to divide the races of mankind along the line of colour is founded upon *entirely erroneous ideas*. Among the 'Whites' there are entire populations whose skin is as black as that of the darkest of Negro."

"There are Arab and Jewish families of ancient settlement in Northern Africa, who have become as black as the other inhabitants" (*The Vestiges of Creation*).

Another insecure test is that of the *hair*. All Negroes have not the proverbial wool. Every possible gradation from crisp curly woolly hair to flowing hair is found among them.

Difference in *height* is sometimes taken as an argument. The Patagonian of 6ft.3.75in. is in great contrast with the Esquimaux of 3ft.3.37in., yet the links that bind these extremes are of such gentle gradation that it is impossible to draw the line and say, Here one race begins and another ends. It has been ascertained that the French have decreased in height in the islands of Mexico, whilst the British have increased in height in Kentucky.

The *brain capacity* was once thought to be a criterion, but even *Haeckel*, the evolutionist, and no friend of the Bible, says:--

"Within the limits of a single race, for example, among the peoples on the Mediterranean, the shape of the cranium can vary even to the most extreme forms."

The writer of *The Vestiges of Creation* quoted above says:--

"About 200 years ago, a number of people were driven by a barbarous policy from the counties of Antrim and Down in Ireland towards the sea-coast, where they have ever since been settled, but in unusually miserable circumstances even for Ireland; and the consequences is, that they exhibit peculiar features of the most repulsive kind, projecting jaws with large open mouths, depressed noses, high cheek bones, and bow legs, together with extremely diminutive stature."

We could multiply quotations (we are indebted to the writings of *Rev. John Urquhart* for those cited), but we refrain. Scripture simply and unreservedly states as a fact of inspired truth that all the nations of the earth sprang from "one". Moreover, it does not make the mistake of judging by outward appearance, but divides the whole of mankind into three families, declaring that this division is the result of the families originating from Noah's three sons. The study of language has led men to divide the human race into *three*, called the Aryan (which corresponds with the Japhethic), the Semitic, and the Turanian (which answers to the Hamitic). The Aryan family stretches from India to England, and includes such a variety of languages as Sanscrit, Persian, Celtic, Greek, Latin, Italian, Russian, Danish, German, English, etc. *Colonel Vans Kennedy* shows a list of 900 words common to the Sanscrit and other languages of the same family. In the Sanscrit and Persian we find such words as pader, mader, sunn, dokhter, brader, deuta, eyeumen, nasa, none of which need translation for the English reader.

The Semitic family includes Hebrew, Assyrio-Babylonian, Arabic, Syriac, and Ethiopian. The third, the Turanian, or Hamitic group, comprises all the languages of Asia and Europe not included in the Aryan or Semitic groups. In the *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology, 1889 and 1890*, is shown the close connection between the Accadian, an undoubted Hamitic tongue, the most ancient language of Babylonia, and the Chinese, which Mr. J. C. Ball calls "the new Accadian".

The science of philology has led to the conclusion that there is a threefold division of the human race corresponding with the threefold division of Gen. x.

One more testimony from archæology and we pass to other things. Gen. x. places the new beginning of the race in Western Asia. Is there any evidence that these three families have left their mark here? *Professor Rawlinson* says:--

"In Western Asia the several ethnic branches of the human family were more closely intermingled, and more evenly balanced than in any other portion of the ancient world. Semitic, Indo-European, and Tartar or Turanian races, not only divided among them this portion of the earth's surface, but lay confused and interspersed upon it in a most remarkable entanglement. It is symptomatic of this curious inter-mixture, that the Persian monarchs, when they wished to publish a communication to their Asiatic subjects in such a way that it should be generally intelligible, had to put it out not only in *three* different languages, but in three languages belonging to the *three principal divisions* of human speech.

The region retains the same peculiarity to the present day. It is still inhabited by representatives of the *three* great divisions of the human race, and when the Government publishes its edicts, it has still to employ Indo-European (Persian), Semitic (Arabic), and Turanian (Turkish) speech."

We must now leave this testimony to the truth of the Scriptures to consider in brief "the generations of the sons of Noah". Shem is named first because of the fact that he was the father of the line of promise, although Japheth was the first-born (I Chron. i. 5).

THE SONS OF JAPHETH.—The name of Japheth means "enlargement", and the fulfillment of the promise, "God shall enlarge Japheth" is seen to this day in the fact that the "white man" is still the colonizer and pioneer. The sons of Japheth are seven in number, who have seven sons, and "by these were the coast-lands of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations". Brief notes are all that can be given upon these sons and their descendants.

GOMER.--Ezek. xxxviii. 6 places Gomer in "the north quarter". In the Assyrian inscriptions Gomer is called Gimirra, and by the Greek writers Kimmerii. The name is preserved in the word "Crimea". By the Romans Gomer was called Cimbri. This in turn is the name Cymry, the name of the Welsh or the Celtic race. They have left traces of their journey across Europe from the Crimea to Cumberland.

MAGOG.--Ezek. xxxviii. 2-6 associates Gomer with Magog, and nothing very definite can be said of this man's descendants.

MADAI.—The title of the multifarious tribes to the east of Kurdistan; the Medes.

JAVAN.—Both Sargon (the father of Sennacherib) and Darius use this name for Ionia and Greece.

TUBAL spread over the south-eastern portion of Cappadocia.

MESHECH, Muski, Muska and Moschaios of the Assyrian tablets were known to be in the eastern part of the Asia Minor. An opinion, not yet confirmed, is that Meshech is the ancestor of the Muscovites.

TIRAS.—*The Companion Bible* gives this man as the ancestor of the Thracians.

Of the sons of Gomer and Javan little can be said.

*Prof. Sayce* sees in Ashkenaz, the Assyrian Asguza, a district which lay between the kingdom of Ekbatana and the Minni. The Jews, however, have always applied the name to Germany.

*Max Muller* says:--

“There was a time when the ancestors of the Celts, the Germans, the Slavs, the Greeks, the Italians, the Persians and the Hindoos were living together beneath the same roof, and separate from the Semitic and Turanian races.”

The philologist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century but repeats the witness of Gen. x.

THE SONS OF HAM are four in number.

CUSH.—The Cushites first lived in South Mesopotamia, and afterwards in Africa; the Ethiopians. *Bunsen* once wrote, “An Asiatic Cushite exists only in the imagination of interpreters, and is the child of their despair”. *Strabo*, the ancient Greek geographer, describes the Ethiopians as “a two-fold people, lying extended in a long tract from the rising to the setting sun”. Herodotus speaks of “Oriental Ethiopians”. The Egyptian Monuments, “From the time of the twelfth dynasty onwards, a new race makes its appearance on the Egyptian horizon, viz., the Kashi in Nubia” (see also Jer. xlvi. 9, A. V. margin).

MIZRAIM.—The Egyptians. Isa. xxxvii. 25 records Sennacherib’s boast that he had, “dried up all the rivers of Matsor”, that is, the mouths of the Nile. Again, in Isa. xix. 6, the “brooks of defence” should read, “The Nile-arms of Matsor”. While Matsor was the name of lower Egypt, upper Egypt was called, Pathros (see Isa. xi. 11), the Egyptian Peto-res or “southern land”. A son of Mizraim is Pathrusim (Gen. x. 14).

PHUT.—Probably Somali-land, the Punt or Put of the Egyptian Monuments.

CANAAN.—The Tel-el-Amarna tablets show that the land of promise was known by the name of Canaan in the time of Moses. The Hittites were descended from Canaan

(Gen. x. 15, "Heth"), their language, as yet undeciphered, shows now affinity to the Semitic or the Aryan, and has been adjudged as Turanian or Hamitic. The Philistines were descended from Casluhim, while the Phœnicians were called Kept by the Egyptians, and the part of Egypt in which they lived was called Kept-ur (see Caphtorim, Gen. x. 14). Amos ix. 7 presents a problem as compared with Gen. x. 14 which we are unable to solve. There are thirty-one names given in the line of Ham.

THE SONS OF SHEM.—Shem is called the father of "all the children of Eber", for Peleg's descendants, who carry us down to Abraham, are not named in this chapter, but are reserved until the special section which gives the generations of Shem (Gen. xi. 10).

ELAM.—Josephus thought Elamites were Persians, but the Assyrian inscriptions identify the Elam with Susiana, the ancient inhabitants of which were Semites.

ASSHUR.—The Assyrians, whose language is closer to Hebrew than French or Italian is to Latin.

ARPHAXAD.—*Prof. Sayce* concludes that this refers to Chaldæa, as the word may be pronounced Arpa-Chesed, or "border of Chaldæa".

ARAM.—Mesopotamia and Syria. The language of this people, called Aramaic, was the language of Dan. ii. 4-7, the language of the common people of Palestine in the time of Christ. Mark v. 41 is an example. Very little is known of the other names figuring in this list.

Uz was the name of the country of the Sabeans and Chaldeans (Job i. 15, 17).

EBER.—The word indicates "one who passed over" (see Joshua xxiv. 2, 3, 14, 15), and from this word we get the name *Hebrew*. Eber has two sons, Peleg and Joktan. Attention is drawn to the fact that in Peleg's days the earth was divided, but nothing more is said of him until chapter xi., where he is seen in the direct line from Shem to Abraham.

Joktan is considered to be the father of the Saracens. He was the 13<sup>th</sup> from Shem, the numerics of his name being 13\*13, and he had 13 sons.

"These are the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood."

These nations, seventy in all, were divided by God into the various parts of the earth. He set the bounds of their habitation (Acts xvii. 26), and divided the earth and its peoples, and separated the sons of Adam, "according to the number of the children of Israel (Deut. xxxii. 8). So the great purpose of the Bible is steadily pursued, the list of Noah's descendants being as vital to the theme as is the genealogy of Matt. i.

None of these nations is "lost". They may be untraceable to man, but God knows where they are, and what they are now called. Their names recur in the prophecies that refer to the future day of the Lord, and when the Lord deals both in judgment and in

blessing with the nations of the earth, these seventy nations we believe will be found to encompass them all.

**#22. Babel (Gen. x. 8-12, xi. 1-9).  
pp. 101 - 108**

In the midst of the list of names given in Gen. x. we are arrested by one or two digressions. One son of Cush became so great that his name and prowess became a proverb, "Wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord". The other digressions in this chapter are the references to the Canaanites (18, 19); the statement that Shem was the father of all the children of Eber (21); the division of the earth in the days of Peleg (25); and the dwelling of the sons of Joktan (29, 30). We propose to consider the place that Nimrod occupies in the outworking of the purpose of God.

The name Nimrod is from the Hebrew *marad*, to rebel. The Merodach of the Bible (Jer. 1. 2) is the name Nimrod. The Accadian Merodach was called Amaruduk or Amarudu, and became in Assyrian-Babylonian, Marduk. The suffix *uk* is dropped in the Hebrew, and the prefix *ni*, assimilating the name "to a certain extent to the initial forms of the Hebrew verbs", was added giving us the Hebrew name Ni-marad or Nimrod. We would not say that *all* error is counterfeit truth, simply because our limited knowledge would not justify the assertion, but we do say that much error, much *vital* error, is counterfeit truth, this is seen in the lies of Satan spoken in Eden and incarnate in Nimrod.

Merodach (i.e. Nimrod deified) is creator and saviour in the whole unholy parody. He it is who undertakes to do battle with Tiamat, and to him it was spoken, "Fear not, and make merry, *for thou shalt bruise the head of Tiamat*". Here is one of the primal declarations concerning the Seed diverted from its true object. Merodach, as a result of his decision to become the avenger and the redeemer, is exalted above all gods. "Among the high gods *thou art highest*; thy command is the command of Anu, O Merodach, our avenger, we give thee sovereignty over the entire universe. Thy weapon will ever be irresistible". "May Merodach, the mighty overseer of the heavenly spirits, exalt thy head".

What is true concerning the usurpation of the glory and offices of Christ in this satanic scheme, is true also of all that is associated with His gospel. A complete *religion* dealing with life, death, and judgment, salvation by works, penances and rites, a Christless creed, and the very mystery of iniquity. With Nimrod, Babylon and all that Babylon stands for are associated together. "Babylon is taken: Bel is confounded: Merodach is broken in pieces" (Jer. 1. 2).

Nimrod, the rebel, is the first one that Scripture records as founding a kingdom. "The beginning of his kingdom was Babel". Up to this time an earthly king was unknown;

how suggestive if the character and purpose of human kingdoms it is, that the first king was a rebel and the first kingdom began at Babylon! The line of Divine purpose was to flow and develop through Shem, that is evident by a comparison of the generations given in Gen. x. and xi. Nimrod was therefore the next great satanic attack upon that purpose, and from its first mention in Genesis until its final mention in Revelation Babel or Babylon has been the seat of all the rebellion and opposition to the Divine purpose.

Before we proceed to the more detailed account of the origin of the name Babel, as given in chapter xi., we will endeavour to show how the great rebel has been foisted upon mankind in the endeavour of Satan to usurp the glory and the kingdom of the Son of God. Bunsen states that the religious system of Egypt was derived from “the primitive empire of Babel”. Birch, dealing with the Babylonian cylinders, is quoted by Layard as saying, “The zodiacal signs. . . . show unequivocally that the Greeks derived their notions and arrangements of the zodiac (and consequently their mythology, that was intertwined with it), from the Chaldees”. Ouvaroff in his work on the Eleusinian mysteries states that these mysteries were transplanted from Egypt, which in turn received them from the East, “the centre of science and civilization”. Not only did Egypt and Greece derive their religion from Babylon, but so also did the Phœnicians, so Macrobius says in his Saturnalia; and wherever man is found and religion is professed, beneath the superficial differences of names and ritual lies the one great primitive lie originated at Babylon and linked with Nimrod.

Egypt, under the titles Isis and Osiris; India under the titles Isi and Iswara; Asia as Cybele and Deoius; Pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter-puer (the boy Jupiter); Greece as Ceres, the great Mother with the babe at her breast; China as Shing Moo with her child in her arms; and Papal Rome as the Madonna and child, all these and many more are the result of the original idolatry set up at Babylon to turn the minds of men away from the first promise of the true Seed of the woman to Satan’s counterfeit. The Babylonians worshipped Semiramis under the name of the great *Goddess Mother*, and it was from her son that she derived all the glory and claim to deity. By a strange process the husband of Semiramis came to be worshipped as the seed (her son), and that son and husband was NIMROD himself. Babylon, both in Old and New Testaments, stands forward as the great symbol of Anti-God, even as Nimrod usurps all the titles and prerogatives of Christ. (For fuller details as to these titles, the reader is referred to that master-work, *The Two Babylons* by Hislop).

Let us now trace the story of Babylon, to see its place in the order of things. Babylon does not come into the page of Scripture (after the two references of Gen. x. and xi.) until the time of Israel’s deposition draws near. God’s king, David, and God’s city, Jerusalem, had been chosen, but until David’s greater Son should reign the purpose of God must flow in other channels. Universal sovereignty goes back by Divine appointment to Babylon, to be retained in Gentile succession until Babylon and Babylonianism should be destroyed. Read Daniel for this. Isa. xiii. contains “the burden of Babylon”, “And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah”. In chapter xiv. 4, the king of Babylon is addressed, and what is said is prophetic of the future antichrist

who said, "I will be like the Most High". Again, in "the burden of the desert of the sea", come the words, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" (xxi. 9). In Isa. xlvii. 1-15 we have another prophecy of Babylon's doom. Babylon is addressed as a woman that had been called, "the lady of kingdoms", and which had usurped the Divine prerogative of saying, "I AM, and none else beside Me".

Jeremiah speaks the word of the Lord against Babylon, and occupies chapters l. and li. with threatenings of wrath to come. The vengeance that falls upon Babylon is "the vengeance of His temple". "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand that made all the earth drunken: the nations have drunk her wine; therefore the nations are mad". Babylon is addressed as a "destroying mountain" in li. 25, and is threatened with judgment. "I will make thee a burnt mountain". "As Babylon hath caused the slain of Israel to fall, so also at Babylon shall fall the slain of all the earth". Many similar passages of great importance come in these two chapters of Jeremiah which we cannot stay to quote. Jeremiah concludes with a solemn charge to Seraiah, who was going to Babylon to take the book wherein all these judgments were written, to read them there, to bind a stone to it, and to cast it into the Euphrates, and say, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her: and they shall be weary".

Just as in Isaiah we have history intertwined with prophecy, a literal Sennacherib foreshadowing the future Antichrist in his blasphemy and his doom, so Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Babylon had reference partly to the overthrow of Babylon of the Medes (Jer. li. 11), and partly to the future overthrow of the Babylon yet to be revived again in these last days. The book of the Revelation devotes considerable space to the fall of Babylon. Six times Babylon is mentioned, and five times out of the six she is spoken of as being "great". Let us notice what is said in this last prophecy of the Word. "And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all *nations* drunk with the wine of her fornication" (Rev. xiv. 8). This utterance has on the one side the *aiōnian* gospel, with its call to "*worship* Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters". On the other there is the threat of awful judgment upon any one who *worships* the beast and his image, and who receives his mark in his forehead, or in his hand.

The next reference is in chapter xvi. 19, "And great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath". A most mighty earthquakes shakes the earth at the pouring out of the seventh vial, the great city is divided into three parts, the cities of the nations fall, every island flees away, and mountains are not found. The judgment of Babylon is in a setting of world-wide judgment. Then follows in chapter xvii. a description of this great city, and its judgment. It is likened to a woman sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast having seven heads and full of the names of blasphemy. The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth". The woman was drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the

martyrs of Jesus. Her destruction is brought about by the ten horns which the beast carried, who are ten kings who reign for the brief hour of the Beast's dominion.

Chapter xviii. follows with a further description of the character and fall of Babylon. again an angel cries, "Babylon the great is fallen, and is become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every hateful and unclean bird". As chapter xvii. tells of the kings of the earth, so xviii. links all nations and kings in the participation in Babylon's impure vintage. Jeremiah's command to Seraiah is taken up and amplified:--

"A mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and cast it into the sea saying, Thus with violence shall the great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee, and no craftsman of whatever craft he shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee; for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Let us note these closing words; they may be a figure of speech, they may, however, be very awfully true. All the blood! not only of prophets, saints and martyrs, but every murder and every execution, every war and every assassination, all traceable back to the system of iniquity and the father of lies, who, to thwart the purpose of the Most High, made his seat at Babylon. Not only is the influence and the judgment of Babylon world-wide in its effect (the very heavens resound with Hallelujahs at her downfall), heaven itself can hold the glorious Son of God no longer. He rides forth to conquer and to rule, and the reign of peace and righteousness follows swiftly on the destruction of that city which symbolized the dread authority of the prince of darkness.

We must now return to the book of Genesis, to learn somewhat more of the beginnings of Babel. Although the division of the earth among the sons of Noah comes before the record of the building of the tower of Babel, the scattering that took place at the confusion of tongues was the cause of the division recorded in chapter x. There in chapter x. 5, 20 and 31, the descendants of Japheth, Ham, and Shem are divided according to their *tongues*. This therefore must have come after the record of chapter xi., for there we read, "The whole earth was of one language and one speech" ("one lip, and one in words"). The idea that the tower of Babel was built "to reach unto heaven" is not scriptural. The words are more correctly rendered, "Whose top with the heavens", and far more likely denote a tower like the ancient temples of Denderah and Esneh which have the signs of the zodiac represented on them. What possible object there could have been to build such a tower with the Zodiac thereon we must reserve for the series entitled, *Sidelights on the Scriptures*, as the subject is too vast altogether for this article. Suffice it to say that it meditated a direct attack upon the primeval witness given by God to man, and pictured for his memory in the heavens. The builders also desired to make a name. This too was an intrusion into the purpose of God. That which could not be obtained by such means was promised by God to Abraham, "I will make of thee a great nation, and make thy name great". Seeing that the imagination of man's heart is evil, the greater the

number, and the easier the means of communication, the greater the possibilities of evil. The Lord does not destroy these men; no judgments fall. He simply confounds their language. They were scattered abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Nimrod did not build Babel (the beginning of his kingdom was Babel), he went back it would appear to that deserted city, finished it, and sought to overthrow the purpose of God by becoming the first earthly king. From this, apparently, small beginning has spread all the harlot abominations of the earth, and as we saw by reading the Revelation, no millennium is possible until that city and its system is judged before heaven and earth. Babylon is Satan's metropolis, even as Jerusalem is God's. Babylon and Shinar are about to revive before our very eyes.

As we see these things, we know the hour of our glory and hope is near. Readers, lift up your heads.

### **#23. The Generations of Shem and Terah. (Gen. xi. 10-32). pp. 134 - 136**

The generations of Shem lead us on to another phase in the unfolding of the Divine plan. The way in which this new section is placed in juxtaposition with man's attempt at Babylon is suggestive. In the order of occurrence Gen. x. follows Gen. xi. 1-9. This is easily seen when we note that in the period covered by Gen. xi. 1-9, "The whole earth was of *one* lip and one in words", whereas in Gen. x. 5, 20, and 31 the division of the earth among the sons of Japheth, Ham, and Shem is among other classifications, "after their tongues". We are not told when the tower of Babel was built, but we do know that it was immediately after its erection that "the Lord scattered the builders abroad upon the face of the whole earth". In Gen. x. 25 a statement is made that in the days of Peleg "the earth was *divided*". This word "divided" is not the same as that used in Gen. x. 25 and 32, but it is nevertheless used with the same meaning. The Hebrew word is *palag*, which comes in such passages as II Chron. xxxv. 5, "the *division* of the families of the Levites"; Ezra vi. 18, "they set the priests in their *divisions*"; Dan. ii. 41, "the kingdom shall be *divided*". We may take it that in the days this great division took place, and he was so named in relation to the event. In Deut. xxxii. 8 there appears another reference, as it seems, to this time:--

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel."

Here the word "divided" is *nahal*, and directs attention more to the "inheritance" than to the manner of its division. Peleg's generation is not given in Gen. x., while that of Joktan his brother is set out fully; the reason is clear. Joktan is numbered among the nations, Peleg comes in the line of promise which involves the calling of the one nation out of which was to come the Messiah. Peleg was born, according to the genealogy of

Gen. xi., 101 years after the flood, and 121 years after Peleg, was born Terah the father of Abraham.

Terah's generation comes central in the book of Genesis. On the one side we have the generations of the heavens and earth, Adam, Noah, the sons of Noah, and Shem. On the other side we have the generations of Ishmael, Isaac, Esau, the sons of Esau, and Jacob. Terah is the link between the "nations" and the "nation". Strangely, Abram has no separate generation, but has his line traced under the generations of Terah. While the genealogy from Terah to Abram is exceedingly brief, the section covered by these generations is very full, extending to Gen. xxv. 11. Terah has three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Abram marries his half sister Sarai; Nahor marries his niece Milcah, the daughter of his brother Haran, and becomes the grandfather of Rebekah. Lot was brother to Milcah.

Gen. xi. 28 tells us that Ur of the Chaldees was the land of Haran's nativity, while verse 31 shows that Abram dwelt there also. The Hebrew name of this city is *Ur-Kasdim*. Hommel has shown that the name, like many others, has changed with time. From the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards *Kasdim* was *Kaldu*, which gives the Greek word *Chaldaioi*, Chaldeans, before that, as early as the second millennium B.C., in fact to the very time of Abraham, and the dynasty of Khammurabi. This city, Ur of the Chaldees, was at the time of Abraham a centre of learning, science, art, and wealth, even to the point of luxury. All this has been discovered from the monuments and remains of the great city.

It is of great importance that we remember that it was *not* Abram's ordinary mode of life to dwell in a tent. He was *not* by upbringing and choice a nomad; he was a citizen of no mean city. The fact therefore that Abram chose to leave this city behind, and become a stranger and a pilgrim, is an evidence of faith, and becomes an example of enduring hardships for Christ's sake. With all the light and learning of Ur of the Chaldees there was darkness and ignorance of the true God.

"Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; *and they served other gods*" (Josh. xxiv. 2).

So again when Laban and Jacob made their covenant, Laban swore by

"the God of Abraham, and the god of Nahor, the god of their fathers. And Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac" (Gen. xxxi. 53).

Idolatry had reached a high pitch by the time Abram was born. An elaborate ritual and priesthood, with altar, sacrifice, and temple. With gods many and lords many, with awful magical rites and powers, and a definite league with evil spirits had enveloped the earth with a pall. Into this mire and corruption descended the God of grace, and led Abram forth to make of him the father of the faithful and the friend of God. Abram therefore stand out in the page of history as a kind of firstfruits, a pledge of the blessing yet to be realized.

The nations of the earth had been given up by God as a retribution for turning away from Himself, and for instituting idolatry. He might have left them to perish with their

own devices. That He did not, but called out Abram to walk with Himself, and become the father of a great and privileged nation, is an eloquent testimony to the great purpose of love that shines out with ever increasing splendour as the Scripture story develops. Let the reader remember as he finishes the eleventh chapter of Genesis, that so far as the periods covered are concerned, he is *half way through the O.T.* It is an illuminating fact which shows how truly the Bible is the record not merely of human history, but of Divine purpose.

## **#24. The Foundation Covenant (Gen. xii. 1-4). pp. 166 - 171**

TERAH is the watershed of the Old Testament, even as his generation is the central one of the eleven in Genesis. His most famous son, Abraham, not only left his city and his home, but we nowhere read, “these are the generations of Abraham”, the whole of his wonderful life being ranged under the “generations of Terah”. Abraham beyond all things else sets forth the principle of faith. He is the first one of whom the Old Testament records that he *believed in the Lord*. The twelfth chapter of Genesis opens with the words:--

“Now the Lord *had said* unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and *from thy kindred*, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.”

Stephen in his speech before the Council said:--

“The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was yet in Mesopotamia, *before he dwelt in Haran*, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country” (Acts vii. 2, 3).

The Lord not only called Abraham out from Ur of the Chaldees, but from his kindred, yet the first movement after the word were spoken to Abraham is that of Terah.

“And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son’s son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram’s wife; 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 Terah died in Haran” (Gen. xi. 31, 32).

The call of God to Abraham involved separation of a very drastic character, and we shall see that the Lord did not lay upon him the whole burden at once; he was to leave country and kindred, but not at first his father’s house; he obeyed the call so far as leaving his country was concerned, and Heb. xi. records the step of faith with divine approval. Scripture does not say, “and Abraham took Terah”; it is put the other way, “and Terah took Abram his son”. Terah’s name means a “traveler”, or a “wanderer”, and as a type he may well represent that class who “go out”, not by faith, but by reason of temperament; the call that quickened Abram with a living faith acted upon the fleshly mind of Terah, and he too felt attracted by the journey.

A glance at the map shows that Terah and his family journeyed about 600 miles with Abram to get to Haran, but the map also reveals another thing, the route never took them across the river Euphrates. Even though 600 miles separated them from Ur of the Chaldees they were not separated from all that Chaldea meant to God. Haran was famous not only as a frontier town of the Babylonian Empire, but for the worship of the self-same god that made Ur of the Chaldees famous too. Terah was not a Hebrew, he never passed over. It will be remembered that Pharaoh was willing to let Israel go and worship the Lord “*in the land*”, but neither Terah nor Pharaoh had the “Hebrew” spirit. Before the record is given of Abram’s departure from Haran, there is recorded the great promise made by the God of glory, introducing into the page of Scripture the purpose of election, so far as nations are concerned. The Scripture are very exact, and we are never likely to believe them too implicitly; if we compare Gen. xii. 1 with Acts vii. 2-4, we shall find that Stephen makes an omission of one term. He tells us that the God of glory called Abraham from his country and kindred, but he does not say, “and from thy father’s house”. Abraham’s action, therefore, in allowing his father and relatives to accompany him as far as Haran was quite within the command he had received. Upon the death of his father the added words, “and from thy father’s house”, make up the full statement, and “so Abram departed, AS the Lord had spoken unto him”. Nature’s ties were no longer to hold him, a second separation must now be made. How kindly the Lord leads on! Still further and deeper trials of faith await Abram, but he is not tried above that which he is able.

The Lord in Gen. xii. 1-3 makes the first of a series of eight covenants with Abraham. In this first covenant we have a promise, every item of it, as we shall see, being personal to Abraham.

“Get *thee* out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew *thee*.

And I will make of *thee* a great nation,  
 And I will bless *thee*,  
 And make *thy* name great,  
 And *thou* shalt be a blessing,  
 And I will bless them that bless *thee*,  
 And curse him that curseth *thee*,  
 And in *thee* shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.”

This great covenant is divided into related groups of promise, as follows:--

- A | Get thee OUT, the Lord had said.
- B | Country, KINDRED, and HOUSE. A *land* shown to Abraham.
- C | a | The promise of the GREAT nation.
  - b | The promise to BLESS Abraham.
  - a | The promise of the GREAT name.
  - b | The promise that Abraham shall be a BLESSING.  
 (Conditional clause added).
- B | All FAMILIES of the *earth* blessed in Abraham.
- A | So Abram DEPARTED, as the Lord had spoken.

Here we have the germ of the whole of God's covenants with Abraham, viz., Israel and the Nations. Like Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which stands on the threshold of the times of the Gentiles, this covenant spans and embraces the whole period and scope of the Abrahamic covenant, all other covenants and promises, including even Paul's witness to justification by faith in *Romans* and *Galatians*, being but expansions and details of this one grand covenant. It behoves us therefore to give careful attention to this marvellous record; it is bounded on either side (members A A) by command and obedience, "Get thee out", "So Abram departed". Obedience to the word of God, "the Lord had said", "as the Lord had spoken". Heb. xi. 8 links Abraham's obedience with faith, "By FAITH Abraham, when he was called to go out unto a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, OBEYED"; this supplies the scriptural interpretation to the words of Paul in *Romans*, "By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for *obedience of faith* among all nations" (i. 5), ". . . . made known to all nations for *obedience of faith*" (xvi. 26). To this the apostle refers in xv. 18, "for the obedience of the nations". Acts vi. 7 shows that those of Israel who believed were "obedient to the faith". (We shall have to consider the relation of faith with Abraham and his covenants when we read Gen. xv.).

We pass on to notice members B B. Abraham's obedience meant loss, yet Abraham's obedience made him the father of many nations, and all families in the earth were to be blessed in him. How can we speak of losing when we have such a God! We lose trifles, bubbles, we gain realities for ever. The land promised to Abram was not to be a portion of earth cut off from all else, for though sacred and called by preeminence, *The Holy Land*, it was chosen, and the people and events that fill out its history have as their designed end the blessing of the nations, "all families of the earth". So in Gal. iii. 13, 14, "Christ hath redeemed us (Israel, verse 10) from the *curse* of the Law, . . . . that the *blessing* of Abraham might come on the Gentiles".

The central member C is taken up with the links that were designed to bring about this desired end, first, the formation of a great nation. A question that is of importance here is that which touches the greatness of this elect nation, viz., Wherein was their greatness? In several places the greatness of this nation is mentioned:--

"Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation" (Gen. xviii. 18).  
 "I am the God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of thee a great nation" (Gen. xlvi. 3). "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty and prosperous" (Deut. xxvi. 5).

The inhabitants of Canaan, however, are said to be *great*, "for the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong" (Josh. xxiii. 9). Seven nations are enumerated in Deut. vii. 1 that were cast out of the land, "greater and mightier" than Israel. The question of Israel's greatness therefore does not consist of mere numerical greatness, indeed the same passage continues, "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" (verse 7). Israel's greatness as a nation consisted in the unique position which they occupied as an instrument of blessing in the hand of the Lord:--

“For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for; and what nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day” (Deut. iv. 7, 8).

Israel’s greatness is here shewn to be the nearness of the Lord, and gift of His revealed will in the law. To be entrusted with the oracles of God was the chief of their claims to pre-eminence (Rom. iii. 1, 2). Not only was Abraham to be the father of a great nation, but he himself receives the promise, “I will make thy name great”. The greatness of the “name” is connected with the greatness of “inheritance” as Heb. i. 4, 5 shows. Abraham became “heir of the world”, father of the great nation and of many nations; Abraham was called “the friend of God”. The record of Gen. xii. seems to have been purposely placed in contrast with Gen. xi. There we have the whole earth of one speech, and inhabited by one family, they dwelt in the plain of Shinar or Mesopotamia; Abraham is called to leave that very land, and to separate himself from home and kindred. “Let us make a name”, said the builders of the tower of Babel; “I will make thy name great”, said God to Abraham. Judgment falls upon the people in Gen. xi., and they are scattered abroad to form “the families of the earth” who are to be blessed in Abraham, God, while leaving the nations to walk in their own ways, had not forgotten them or given them up for ever. His concentration upon Israel was for the Gentiles ultimate blessing.

No promise in this wonderful covenant is conditional to Abraham. Israel must be a great nation, Abraham must be a blessing, all the families of the earth must be blessed in him. God has said so, the only conditional element in the whole passage is that of verse 3:--

“I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that maketh light of thee.”

They that pray for the peace of Jerusalem shall prosper. National histories bear record to the truth of these words.

Where is Babylon? where is Assyria? gone, yet Persia that helped Israel in the rebuilding of the temple remains to this day. It may be that the national prosperity of Britain is related to its attitude toward the people of Israel. The Jew, outcast and despised as he is, is a sacred object by reason of the covenant with the fathers:--

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father’s sakes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. . . . for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all” (Rom. xi. 28-32).

These opening verses in Gen. xii. are of prime importance, for they are the foundation of the gospel of the apostle Paul, the teaching of such epistles as Romans and Galatians, and the ministry of the reconciliation.

## The Epistle to the Hebrews.

### #5. Heir of all things. The Ages.

pp. 24 – 29

The apostle no sooner speaks of the Son, than the original theme (the importance of His message) is for the time being held over, while the transcendent glories of His Person are brought before the mind.

The holding over of the theme, however, is in order to consider the Son as the highest example of those who are here to go on unto perfection, and to enter into the inheritance. Had we no knowledge of the theme of the epistle it is highly improbable that we should have correctly foreseen what the first title of the Son would be.

HEIR OF ALL THINGS.—Three times we read in Hebrews the word *heir*. (1) Christ, heir of all things (i. 2); (2) the overcoming Hebrews who were going on unto perfection, who like Abraham endured temptation and perfected the faith (vi. 17); and (3) Noah, who exhibited that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, having been warned of things not seen, endured to the end and became “heir of the righteousness according to faith” (xi. 7). For the exposition of this expression and its bearing upon the theme of the epistle we must wait until the verses are under review, but sufficient is on the surface for us to see the oneness of the theme covered by these three references. The same may be said of the one occurrence of the word “co-heirs”, or as the A.V. puts it, “heirs together”, in xi. 9. The pilgrim character is prominent, pilgrims because strangers, looking forward to their home and rest in the City whose builder and maker is God.

Passing from the heirs to the inheritance, we find it called an *aionian* inheritance (ix. 15), and in xi. 8 it is the land promised to Abraham that is spoken of. The verb, “to inherit”, is found written concerning the Son in i. 4, where we read, “having become by so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they”. The superiority of this inheritance above the angels is sustained in the next occurrence (i. 14), where, speaking of the angels, Scripture says, “Are they not all ministering spirits sent out for service on account of those who are about to inherit salvation”. We shall find that this salvation which is to be inherited is something very different from the salvation from sin and death which is the theme of the gospel; we can only touch the subject here in passing. The verb occurs again in vi. 11, 12, where the believers are urged to show the same diligence in the full assurance of the hope to the end, in order that they become not slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patience are inheriting the promises. The last reference is in xii. 17, where Esau is spoken of as a type of those who mind earthly things, who lose both inheritance and birthright through failure to estimate the true value of spiritual things, and who sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

We have read of the *land*, the heavenly *city*, and the *promises* as being inherited; the “so great salvation” also and the “righteousness of faith” are equally related to an inheritance: all, however, are within the one great allotment of the Son—for He has been appointed heir of ALL THINGS.

The epistle tells us that to this glorious inheritance the Son was *appointed*. As “God over all blessed for ever” He cannot be appointed to an inheritance, for all things are His. As Most High God He is the “Possessor of heaven and earth”, but in the person of the Son He, by redemption and endurance, redeemed the alienated creation and is appointed heir. This very chapter speaks of the Son as *God* (8), and tells us that the earth’s foundation was laid by Him, and that the heavens are the work of His hands (10), yet it seeks to prove that He has inherited a more excellent name than they. God must necessarily be above all His works, but here, as the *Son*, we see the Lord in the flesh enduring suffering, obeying, serving, and finally dying that He might overcome. As “God over all” He could not be “appointed”, but when He became flesh and blood (ii. 14), such appointment was possible, and becomes the crowning attestation to the full accomplishment of His purpose of love. The second chapter of Philippians has a parallel with this line of teaching which it will be worthwhile to notice:--

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Heb. i.        | Christ addressed as “God”, and creation ascribed to Him.  |
| Phil. ii.      | Christ “originally in the form of God”, thought it not a thing to be seized upon “to be equal with God.”  |
| Heb. ii.       | Christ made for a little “lower than the angels” and “partaker of flesh and blood.”   |
| Phil. ii.      | Christ took the “form of a servant” and was “made in the likeness of men.”  |
| Heb. i., ii.   | This descent was for the purpose of “purging” sin, and by death to destroy him that had the power of death; as a result, He has been appointed “heir of all things”, has inherited “a more excellent name”, and receives the “worship of angels” and a “throne.”  |
| Phil. ii.      | This making Himself of no reputation, ending in the death of the cross, has resulted in His being “highly exalted”, receiving “the Name which is above every name”, and the homage of every knee, in heaven, earth or underground.  |
| Heb. iii., iv. | “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful. . . . for we are made partakers of Christ if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast to the end. . . . let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” |
| Phil. ii.      | “Wherefore my beloved. . . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings.”  |

The earnest student is exhorted to read these parallels again and again, adding to their detail from the Word as far as possible, that he may see in their light the first great title of the Son, the “HEIR OF ALL THINGS.”

The appointment of the Son to be “heir of all things” has not been fully realized as yet; from the standpoint of this epistle “we see not yet all things put under Him”, a kingdom awaits His sceptre, and He is yet to be brought into the habitable world and acclaimed as the Son of God and the heir of all.

However complicated to our view the course of the ages may be, one thing comes prominently forward here—the ages are of His appointment, and must work out His purpose, “By whom also He made the Ages”.

There are some versions which read, “on account of whom”, or “for whom”, “instead of”, “by whom”. In chapter ii. 10 the two Greek expressions, “for whom” and “by whom” occur together, *di’ on ta panta*, for whom are all things, and, *di’ ou ta panta*, by whom are all things. The word spoken “by” angels (ii. 2), those who came out of Egypt “by” Moses (iii. 16), the better hope “by” which we draw near (vii. 19) are all examples of the same expression. The preposition *dia* followed by the genitive case denotes a cause; it may be the *efficient ministerial* or *instrumental* cause, but not the *final* cause. Heb. i. 2 teaches that the Son, the heir of all things, was the One by whom God made the ages; here again we must pause to allow the Scripture to be our teacher. A superficial acquaintance with *Hebrews* would most likely have considered the High Priesthood as the title to have been given first, but it is not so—it is the fact that the Son has been appointed heir of all things. Of all the things that He has done we feel sure that the making of the ages would be among the last, and not the first, to be thought of, and yet so it stands. First, His Person—the Son, secondly, His dignity—the heir, thirdly, His work—the ages. In these two verses we have as the one great cause, GOD. God spake by the prophets, God spake by His Son, God appointed Him heir of all things. God made the ages by Him. Two instruments are mentioned, the one, “the prophets”, the other, “the Son”; these instruments are contrasted both here and later. Prophets and angels are created beings, and their use produces no difficulty. The agency of the Son is not so simple a matter to grasp. Angels worship Him, creation is unreservedly ascribed to Him (10), immutability in contrast with created things is His. The omission of the article before the word “Son” prepared us for something different from a mere matter of degree. When Christ spoke it was not merely that a greater prophet than all before Him was speaking; God in a sense hitherto impossible was speaking. God, who is invisible, whose being must be beyond the powers of human thought or language to express, has made Himself known as Jehovah, as the Almighty God, as He now makes Himself known as the Son. The Son was not merely God’s mouthpiece, He was God manifest in the flesh; by Him, Scripture reveals, the ages were made.

THE AGES.—The Hebrew and Greek words that are variously rendered age, world, ever, have been considered at length in earlier issues of *The Berean Expositor* (see Volume I, page 89, and Volume IV & V, page 113). In Volume VIII, pages 40-44, we sought to show that Jehovah is the God of the Ages. We do not feel that the English word “world” is a good translation, and it is likely to turn the mind to the creation of the “world”, thereby meaning the heavens and the earth and all therein. That is not the purpose or the teaching of the verse before us. The making of the ages is very different from the creation of the world, and involves a very different line of teaching; it is the very first article of that faith which is the theme of Heb. xi. 1. That faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, understands that the ages were fitted together by the word of God (xi. 3). Thus the fact that the ages were made and were adjusted, is truth related to the special teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews.

Scripture speaks of “age-times” (II Tim. i. 9; Titus i. 2; Rom. xvi. 25), and of what was done “before” and “since” those times began; we also read of what God ordained “before the ages” (I Cor. ii. 7). The ages have their characteristics, their beginning, and their consummation; they pass one by one before the eye of faith as revealed in the Word with their burden of sin and death, and their burden of grace and glory.

Three distinct creations of “heaven and earth” (II Pet. iii. 5, 7, 13) carry us from before the ages on to the time when the ages cease, spanning, with the creation of six days, the present evil age; these provide, as it were, the platform for the working out of the purpose of redemption. The ages develop the unveiling of that purpose and witness the growing accomplishment of all its parts. Christ is the centre of the purpose, and by Him God made the ages; within the compass of the ages sin is dealt with and passes away, rebellion and conflict give place to harmony and love. Christ as king reigns supreme, heaven and earth, reconciled and united in Him, the heir of all things, brings the glorious consummation of the ages to pass.

May we rejoice in that marvellous wisdom which has placed the whole conduct of the ages and their purpose in the hands of Him who for our sakes died and rose again.

## **#6. The Brightness of the Glory (Heb. i. 3). pp. 57 - 63**

There is in these opening verses a simple alternation in the theme that divides the subject into two portions, (1) What God is, (2) What God does. Some may be disposed to object and say, No, it is rather (1) What *Christ* is, and (2) What *Christ* does, for the subject, as suggested in the sub-title of this very article is not the glories of God, but the glories of the Son. We attempted to point out that the Scripture makes a decided difference between the idea of God speaking in or by the prophets, using them as instruments merely, and the idea of God speaking to men in Son. The Son, however glorious, must not be looked upon merely as an instrument in the hand of God, but as God Himself, setting aside all the previous instrumentality of prophets and angels, coming among men as man, and that the Son is as much a title of the Most High God as is *Jehovah*, *El-Shaddai*, and other names; therefore we repeat, the subject is (1) What God is, and (2) What God does.

- A | The new revelation.—The Son.
- B | His glories.—Heir of all things. Maker of the ages.
- A | The brightness of His glory, express image of His substance.
- B | His glories.—Upholding all things. Purging sins. Sat down.
- A | More excellent name.—Thou art My Son.

This is not to be taken as a literary structure, it is only intended to show the relation which our present study has to the context. What Scripture intends us to understand in the statement that God now speaks “in Son”, or as it may be expressed “as a Son”, is

more fully opened up in the words of verse 3. The verse starts with His *being*, “Who being”, not with His doing; we are to read what the Son *is*, and then what He *does*.

We first of all quote from the A.V., “Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person”; the R.V. gives it as, “Who being the effulgence of His glory, and the very image of His substance”. Rotherham’s version reads, “Who being an eradiated brightness of His glory, and an exact representation of His very being”. J. N. Darby rendered it, “Who being [the] effulgence of His glory, and [the] expression of His substance.” The A.V. alone of the versions quoted above uses the word person. The revelation contained in these few words is so vast, so deep, so high, so full, that the whole of the Scripture must be placed under review to present the subject accurately, and nothing but the spirit of revelation would be sufficient to fully interpret those Scriptures that speak of Him. All that we can hope to accomplish is to point the way, leaving the reader with the Word and with God to make the vision plain.

Let us first attend to the words of inspiration, “Who being (*hos õn*). Were the very words of Scripture not dealt out with marvellous exactness and perfect fitness, we might feel that such words as “who being” could well be passed over. A comparison with other Scriptures will, however, lead to an important aspect of truth, and well repay the time spent. In Phil. ii. 6 we read, “Who being in the form of God”, and without instruction to the contrary the reader would not realize that there was any difference between the two passages. The words used in Phil. ii. 6, however, are not *hos õn*, but *hos huparchõn*; this word is made up of *hupõ*, “under”, and *archõ*, “to begin”; “to begin under” does not convey much to English ears, but if expressed as “subsist” the difference between that and the ordinary “to be” can be felt. It is not easy, and perhaps not necessary, to find some one expression that will fully fit each of the occurrences of *huparchõ*, but a few examples of its varied meanings may, however, help us in the forming of a judgment.

- Luke xi. 13.- “Being evil.” (That is by very nature, something at the base of things).
- Acts iii. 2.- Translated in A.V. “lame”, was not accident, being the original condition of the man from birth.
- Gal. ii. 14.- “If thou being originally and at base a Jew.”
- Acts iii. 6.- “Silver and gold are not things usually connected with me.”

The derivations of this word are translated “goods” and “possessions”. The Lord originally, and as His rightful position, was in the form of God. This is His position and sphere as the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, the Word who was in the beginning. The Son, however, in His position in time, when He who originally was in the form of God took upon Him the form of a servant, is different. It is of the Son that Heb. i. is speaking, the Word made flesh, and it is of Him as the Son that these glories are spoken, and not of Him as the Word, or any pre-natal manifestation.

*Apaugasma*.—Here we have a word found nowhere else in the N.T., a word reserved with jealous exclusiveness for the Son of God. The word is a compound, derived from *apo*, away from, and *augazõ*, to shine. The same exclusiveness is observed in the use of *augazõ*, to shine, for that word occurs nowhere else but II Cor. iv. 4, “By whom the god of this age hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of God should shine (or dawn) upon them”. This light and glory is further

spoken of in verse 6, “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”. There is a designed contrast here with the “face of Moses” and its “fading glory”, a contrast which also places the new covenant over against the old. The connection between II Cor. iii. 14 and the theme of Hebrews is clear; Moses, the servant, is eclipsed by Christ, the Son, which it is a part of the apostle’s intention to prove (see Heb. iii.). We must not fall into the error of thinking that the apostle indulges here in the metaphysics of the “fathers”, and commence an investigation along these lines; we shall surely fail if we attempt to explain spiritual things with anything else than spiritual words, and the unhappy conclusion of writers of all times who have argued concerning the sun and its beams, the light and its manifestation, etc., are sufficient warning to us to keep to Scripture typology. The apostle was writing to Hebrews who knew the Holy Scriptures, who had received types and shadows of this glorious One long before He came; the typology of the tabernacle is referred to somewhat fully in Heb. ix. and there we read of the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, and the overshadowing cherubim of glory. The ark was the divinely-appointed symbol of the presence of God with His people, and was itself called, “the glory”. The wife of Phinehas, with her dying breath named her son *Ichabod*, saying, “the glory is departed from Israel, because the ark of God was taken” (I Sam. iv. 21, 22). That this is an inspired title and not the idea merely of the wife of Phinehas may be seen by the Psalmist’s comment upon the same incident:--

“He delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the enemy’s hand”  
(Psalm lxxviii. 61).

The ark of God, upon which stood the propitiatory and the cherubim, was the divinely-appointed meeting-place between God and man, “There will I meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims” (Ex. xxv. 22). Many times God is addressed in the O.T. as, “He that dwelleth between the cherubims”; this is referred to in the chapter which calls the ark the “glory” (I Sam. iv. 4). Again in II Sam. vi. 2, David goes to bring back the ark of God, “whose name is called by the name of the Lord of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubims”. That the title did not by any means indicate a “localizing” of God may be clearly seen in the prayer of Hezekiah, who said:--

“O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the cherubims, Thou art the God, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; Thou hast made heaven and earth”  
(II Kings xix. 15).

The glory of the Lord is said to be “above the heavens” (Psa. viii. 1), and yet Hezekiah’s prayer teaches us that that infinite and incomprehensible glory could also be spoken of as being manifested above the mercy-seat between the cherubims. At the giving of the Law the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and was like a devouring fire (Ex. xxiv. 16, 17); that was one aspect of the glory. Moses later said to the Lord, “Show me Thy glory”, and the Lord said, “I will make all My goodness pass before thee. . . . while My glory passeth by I will put thee in a cleft in the rock”; the face of the Lord could not be seen by mortal man in the face of Jesus Christ. When the tabernacle was completed, “then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle”. When Solomon finished building the temple, and brought the ark into it, the priests could not stand to minister “for the glory of the Lord

had filled the house of the Lord”. When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up in the temple, he heard the seraphims cry, The fulness of the whole earth is His glory (Isa. vi. 3, R.V. margin); the apostle John tells us that Isaiah in the vision saw the glory of the Son, and spoke of *Him* (John xii. 37-41). Ezekiel, describing the wonderful vision of the glory of the Lord, says, “And upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man upon it. . . . this was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord” (Ezek. i. 26-28). The reader can add to this brief selection many other passages which show the majesty and the glory of the presence of the Lord. What we desire, however, to emphasize here is, that when we have read and learned all that there is to be known concerning the glory, we still have to remember that it is written of the Son that He was *the brightness* of that glory; thus it is that “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God” is found only in the face of Jesus Christ.

As we meditate upon this wondrous theme, what light breaks forth from such a passage as Eph. i. 17, “The God of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, the Father of *the glory*”, where glory answers to the Lord Jesus Christ, as surely as Father answers to God.

Dr. Owen calls attention to the *Targum*, which renders Psa. xlv. 24, “Wherefore hidest thou Thy face?”, by, “Why takest Thou away the majesty (*shekinah*) of Thy glory”. Rashi’s comment upon the vision of Isa. vi. 1, is that it was the shekinah: the word shekinah comes from *shaken*, meaning to dwell, particularly as in a tabernacle, “Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them” (Exod. xxv. 8). The connection between the Hebrew *shaken*, and the Greek *skenoō* is visible to the English reader, especially when the vowels are eliminated, leaving n each case s...k...n. It is the word used in John i. 14, “the Word was made flesh, and *tabernacled* among us”; the apostle continues, “and we beheld *His glory*, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”.

*The Companion Bible* (Appendix 179) suggests that the birth of Christ took place on September 29<sup>th</sup>, which was the first day of the Feast of *Tabernacles*. Thus we come back and read the words again, “Who being the brightness of His glory”, realizing perhaps with more reality than words can express the marvellous manifestation of grace and love given us in the person of the only begotten Son, the true shekinah glory, the very dwelling-place of glory in the midst of His people.

It is important to remember the lesson we learned earlier concerning the fact that these glories peculiarly concern the Son, and are not to be confused with the glory which He had before the world was. None but the Son, the Word made flesh, could be the great antitype of the ancient glory of Israel’s ark and mercy-seat. “Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a **BODY** hast Thou prepared Me”. It is to the Son, as such, that pertains the throne and the sceptre (Heb. i. 8); it was as the Son “in the days of His flesh” that the Lord learned obedience by the things which He suffered (Heb. v. 7, 8); it was the Son of God who was crucified afresh (Heb. vi. 6), and whose blood was trodden under foot. The coming of the Son of God, and His partaking of flesh and blood, is a deep lesson not to be lightly displaced by

the equal truth that the Lord existed in other glorious forms before His birth at Bethlehem.

**#7. The Son, the express Image of His Substance. (Heb. i. 3).  
pp. 85 - 91**

We have already drawn attention to the peculiar importance of noting the words of verse 2, “spoken to us *in Son*”. Not as through a new instrumentality as of a new prophet, but as of a new theophany God spoke “in Son”. As the Son, God was manifest in the flesh. “The brightness of His glory” shows Him as the great antitype of the presence, the shekinah of the holiest of all. We now approach the consideration of a related title, but one that is confessedly more difficult of interpretation.

THE EXPRESS IMAGE OF HIS SUBSTANCE.—The A.V. reads “person”, but we adopt the R.V. for reasons to be submitted presently. Our first consideration must be the words used in the original.

*Express Image*.—This in the original is the word *charakter* which all will recognize in the Anglicized “character”. It is derived from *charatto*, “to engrave”. The word occurs but once in the Scriptures, but in secular writings we find it used to mean letters, or as we call them still, “characters” engraved or impressed upon waxen tablets; and stamping or coining money, literally putting the impress upon it. A word closely allied to this, viz., *charagma*, is used several times in the Scriptures. We find it in Acts xvii. 29, “We ought not to suppose a gold or a silver or a stone *sculpture* of man’s art and device, to be like the Deity.” Here we translate the word “sculpture”; the remaining occurrences of the same word are found in the Revelation, where it is used of the “mark” of the beast.

Let us look again at Acts xvii. The spirit of Paul had been stirred while waiting at Athens when he saw that the city was full of “idols”. The idols he refers to as sculptures were intended to represent the Deity. We might well ask how it could be that nations so advanced in culture and learning as the Egyptians and the Greeks, should be found upon the same level as the ignorant savage; and while we could argue from this universal craving for images in heathen worship the universal evidence of man’s fall (Rom. i. 21-23), we should be no nearer the reason why a corrupt nature should of necessity express itself in image worship. The real reason is that it is by no means error to approach God by means of an image but profound truth, the error being that the idols of the heathen usurped the prerogative of the Son, for HE IS THE IMAGE OF GOD. God is invisible, He is One whom no man hath seen or can see, and Christ as the Firstborn of all creation is the image of the invisible God.

Another title used in another aspect of this great subject is that of Phil. ii. 6. There, as regards equality with God, He is spoken of as originally being “in the form of God”, which glorious “form” expressing equality, was exchanged for “the form of a servant”,

when “equality” changed to “obedience”. Heb. i. 3 therefore is but one further facet of this glorious jewel, there He is “the express image of His substance”.

God as conceived of as “invisible” needs Christ as His “Image” both in creation and grace (Col. i. 14-16). God, as expressed by Christ as His “equal”, necessitated “the form of God”. God, as regards His “substance”, required the “express image” of the Son. Each phase has its own manifestation and context. Christ is also spoken of as the “image” in II Cor. iv. 4-6, and in this passage the reference is not to the essence, being, or person of God like it is in Col. i. 15, but the revelation of His gospel, “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ”. We find, further, in Heb. x. 1 that the law had a “shadow” of good things to come, but not the “very image”. A reading of the chapter will demonstrate clearly that the blood of bulls and goats, and the sacrifices and offerings of the law, are the “shadows”, while Christ, the body prepared for Him, the once-offered sacrifice, and the remission of sins that touched the conscience, constitute “the very image”.

It will be seen therefore that Christ is the “image” not only of God Himself, but also of God’s intentions and purposes of grace, faintly set forth in the law until the fulness of time should come. We therefore take the word *charakter* to set forth a relationship to the “substance” parallel to that which the image holds to the unsearchable and hidden purposes of God.

We must now turn our attention to the second word, *Substance*.—This in the original is the word *hypostasis*. The English word is an exact equivalent of the Greek, but is derived from the Latin. *Hupo* and *sub* both mean under; *histanai* and *stare* have similar meanings, both being capable of the meaning “to stand”. The first meaning of the English word “substance” is *not* something physically solid as, for example, a brick, and the statement that faith is anything but a “substance” is only true if this lower meaning of the word is intended. A dictionary gives the undermentioned meanings to the word substance in the following order:--

“Being; something that exists, something real, not imaginary; something solid, not empty; that which underlies all outward manifestation; substratum; that which constitutes anything what it is; nature; real or existing essence; the most important element in any existence; the characteristics of anything; anything that has a material form; body; matter; estate; property. We call a noun a substantive because it designates something that exists, or some object of thought, either material or immaterial.

We have gone to this length of definition because if we merely say that *hypostasis* means substance, we use a word of varied meanings. What we mean by substance in this article is “that which underlies all outward manifestation”. The hidden unknown characteristics of God are the *hypostasis* of which the Son, God manifest in the flesh, is the express image.

It is well to remember that the Greek of the N.T. is a language used by men who thought Hebrew, or at least had been trained in the Jewish school. The LXX therefore becomes of great service to us, showing us the Hebrew equivalent for these Greek words. In Psa. cxxxix. 15 (A.V. numbers) we read:--

“My *substance* was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lower parts of the earth.”

Verse 13 speaks of the period of birth, but this verse speaks of something far more mysterious. This secret thing wrought in the lower parts of the earth the LXX calls “my *hypostasis*”, and this *hypostasis* is to birth (13) what the substance of Heb. i. 3 is to express image.

While the verse which follows does not contain the same word in the LXX, it is nevertheless an expansion of the meaning of *hypostasis*.

“Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect, and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them” (compare Heb. x., ‘In the volume of the book’, etc.).

In the earlier verses of the Psalm there is found this same thought of something hidden and unseen except by God, see verses 2 and 4. Another passage where the word occurs in the LXX is Psa. xxxix. 5, “Behold thou hast made my days as an handbreath, and mine age (*hypostasis*) as nothing”. Here the word “age” is in Hebrew *cheled*, something that creeps imperceptibly, and so not manifest. “Time slips our notice and unheeded flies”. The Syriac version used *cheled* to translate, “to creep in”, in II Tim. iii. 6.

Psa. lxi. 2 gives an example of the simpler concept of “standing”. Our own word “understanding” is a faculty of the mind, a meaning we can very well imagine a would-be expositor ridiculing who simply used the dissecting knife and limited himself to the etymology “stand”, “under”.

In the N.T. we find *hypostasis* used in the sense of “confidence”, a most natural development of the idea of underlying reality, II Cor. ix. 4, xi. 17, Heb. iii. 14. Heb. xi. 1 reads, “now faith is the *substance* of things hoped for”, something real, though not seen. The unseen faith of the worthies that occupy Heb. xi. was manifested in their lives. Their *hypostasis* had its express image in their lives and conduct. One thing was common to them all. They lived, suffered, and died for something “unseen”, or “seen afar off”; they endured as seeing Him Who is invisible.

If faith is the substance of things hoped for, we can use either term with good sense. Instead of the words, “By faith Abel, . . . Noah, . . . Abraham”, we can say, “By the substance (the deep hidden reality) of things hoped for, Abel, Noah, Abraham did this or that.

Christ is the *charakter* of God’s *hypostasis*. No law or set of laws, no fasts, feast, or sacrifices, no series of typical man could ever be the express image; Christ alone is that. It is this thought that permeates the epistle to the Hebrews. It is because of this that the title occurs *here*. It is essential to its true understanding that we remember that it would not have been employed if the theme of the epistle had not demanded it. Because Christ and Christ alone is the express image, He is above angels (Heb. i.), above Moses and Joshua (iii., iv.), above the high priesthood of the order of Aaron (v.-viii.), above all

typical sacrifices and offerings (ix., x.), and above all examples and patterns (xii. 1, 2). None but Christ in every phase of His *charakter* can express the glorious *hypostasis* of the invisible God.

A passage somewhat parallel to Heb. i. is found in John's Gospel chapter i. The title there is, "The Word" (*logos*). It is the function of the word to express the hidden thought, and creation is associated with this title (1-3). In verse 14 the subject changes to redemptive purposes, and the Word becomes flesh. He then has another glory, "the glory of the only begotten of the Father". His title, "The Word", is used no longer, and in verse 18 the parallel with verse 1 is found, "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath given Him an exegesis". The parallels may be seen the better if set out thus:--

<i>Title.</i>	<i>The Word.</i>	<i>The only begotten Son.</i>
Position.	With God.	In the bosom of the Father.
Purpose.	Implied in title.	He hath declared Him.

Of the only-begotten Son the Scripture says that He was "full of grace and truth. . . . For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ". Moses did not originate the law, it was given through him. Christ, however, is not a servant, but a Son (Heb. iii. 1-6), and the very same word that declares the creation of all things to be through Him is used to teach us that in the new creation, as in the old, He is the Creator.

*Panta di' autou egeneto*—"All things through Him became."  
*He charis kai he aletheia dia Iseou Christou egeneto*—"The grace and the truth through Jesus Christ became."

"Grace and truth" indicates, "True, real antitypical grace", something better and fuller than the veiled symbols of the law. He who brings in real grace is the One who declares the unseen God. The parallel with Heb. i. is worthy of careful study. What the *Word* is to God in creation, the *Son* is to God in grace, and the exegesis given by the Son as unfolded in John's Gospel (see for example John xiv. 7-11) is a part of the deeper doctrine contained in the words of Heb. i. 3, "The *charakter* of His *hypostasis*". Just as John i. speaks of Christ both as the Son and as God, so does Heb. i. Similarly, as John i. speaks of all things, and true grace coming into being through the Son, so Heb. i. tells us that the ages were made through Him, and that the heavens are the works of His hands. One great difference is to be observed if we would appreciate to the full the teaching of Heb. i. 3. Christ in John i. is the Word made flesh, and as such is the only begotten Son. In Heb. i., however, it is Christ in resurrection that is spoken of in the words, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee". This is the One who fills with His glory the message of this epistle. As we ponder the fulness of the title, we may perhaps appreciate the better the reason why the article is omitted before the word "Son" in verse 2. God spoke through the prophets as His instruments; in these last days He has spoken "in Son", His fullest and greatest theophany.

NOTE.—As an appendix we draw attention to a word which differs from *hypostasis*, by the insertion of *kata*. It is the name of a figure of speech, *Hypocarastasis*, or implication. It is made up of the words *hupo*, under, *kata*, down, *stasis*, a stationing, hence means, a putting down underneath. (See *Figures of Speech*, Dr. E. W. Bullinger). “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees” is such a figure. It is not stated that the doctrine of the Pharisees was like leaven, it is implied. The figure suggests something hidden, something under the surface, and is very parallel in meaning to the word *hypostasis*. This note may not mean much to some readers, but those who have a knowledge of figures of speech may find the thought suggestive.

## **#8. The Word of His Power (Heb. i. 3). pp. 123 - 127**

God has spoken to us “in Son”. We reiterate this unique expression that the marvellous truth contained therein may enable us to realize the glory of the One we call Saviour and Lord. He is the appointed heir of all things, by Him the ages were made, He is the effulgence of the glory of God; He, the express image of His substance.

The glories of the Son are not yet exhausted, for the passage proceeds, “and upholding all things by the word of His power”. While the Greek word *phero* occurs some sixty times in the N.T., it is only translated “uphold” once. It is rendered “bring” over thirty times, but the primary meaning of the word (“to bear”) seems to be the one intended in the passage before us. Outside the epistle to the Hebrews the word occurs but twice in Paul’s epistles:--

“Endured with much longsuffering” (Rom. ix. 22).  
“Bring the cloak which I left at Troas” (II Tim. iv. 13).

The word is used five times in Hebrews:--

“Upholding all things” (i. 3).  
“Let us go on unto perfection” (vi. 1).  
“There must. . . . be (brought in, margin) the death of the testator” (ix. 16).  
“They could not endure that which was commanded” (xii. 20).  
“Bearing His reproach” (xiii. 13).

It will be seen that the word is one which has many usages. The primary idea of bearing as a burden, supporting and sustaining, seems to be the meaning in Heb. i. Moses, when speaking of the responsibility he felt, in Num. xi. 11, 12 says, “Thou layest the burden of all this people upon me”, and that God had said, “carry them in thy bosom”. In Hebrews we see “all things” (not merely the burden of one people) upheld by the word of Christ.

When considering the words, “the express image of His substance”, we note a parallel in Col. i. 15. We must turn to that passage again.

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature, for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”

We note that there are several parallels here with Heb. i. The image of the invisible God, and the express image of His substance; the creation of all things, and the making of the ages; the statement that by Him all things consist, and that by His word all things are upheld; in both passages He is spoken of as the *prototokos*, the firstborn. In Colossians the titles are introductory to revealing Christ as the Head of the body, the church, and the firstborn from the dead. In Hebrews the titles are introductory to His office as Mediator of the new covenant, and the firstborn in the habitable world whereof the apostle speaks in this epistle. The creation in its universal sense is intended in Col. i., the ages and their burden occupy the thought in Heb. i. The former is held together by the hand that created them, the latter is upheld and carried by the word of His power. Something must be accomplished during the course of the ages, and the word of His power is pledged to bring it to pass. Concerning the Son it is written in Hebrews that He is the upholder of *all things*, appointed heir of *all things*, that *all things* are to be placed in subjection under His feet. It is a comforting as well as a majestic thought to realize that the burden of “all things” pertaining to the purpose of God is resting upon the Son of God. With matchless wisdom, with infinite grace, with mighty power, and with Divine foreknowledge, the whole of God’s marvellous plan is brought to its goal by that One who died and rose again.

What is the means whereby the Son beareth or upholdeth all things? His hands made the heavens, His feet shall have all things placed beneath them, His body bore our sins, His Word, however, it is that upholds all things.

*Rhema* (the word)) differs from *logos* in that it indicates a spoken word or command, e.g., “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”. We find *rhema* in Hebrews as follows:--

“The word of His power” (i. 3).

“Tasted the good word of God” (vi. 5).

“The ages were formed by the word of God” (xi. 3).

“The voice of words” (xii. 19).

The word that framed the ages is the word that upholds all things, the word that called them into being will surely prevail over all opposition and bring all to perfection. It is “the word of His power”. He was crucified in weakness, but He liveth by the power of God (II Cor. xiii. 4). He was marked off the Son of God with power, by the resurrection (Rom. i. 4). As the risen One He said, “all power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth” (Matt xxviii. 18). This word “power” is rendered by “miracle” in Heb. ii. 4, and is linked with *rhema* in vi. 5, “the powers of the coming age”. The high-priesthood of Christ differs from that of Aaron in that it is “according to the power of an endless life” (vii. 16); and in xi. 11, 34 it is again occurs. It is the power of the risen Christ that makes His word effective, He will destroy him that has the power of death, that is the

devil. As the risen One He holds the keys of hades and death. He is the Son of God with power.

Let us turn for a moment to the records of His life on earth, for there we shall find, even in His humiliation, that His word was with power. When He said to two fishers, "Follow Me", there was no hesitation, "they straightway left their nets and followed Him" (Matt. iv. 19, 20); when the Lord had finished the "Sermon on the Mount" we are told, "the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught as one having authority, and not as the Scribes" (vii. 28, 29). A leper came and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean, and Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed" (vii. 1-3). This miracle is followed by one that even more clearly testifies to the power of His spoken word. A centurion who sought the Lord on behalf of his sick servant said, "*Speak a word only*, and my servant shall be healed. . . . and his servant was healed in the self-same hour" (viii. 5-13). Shortly after this the Lord and His disciples are found in a ship, and upon a great tempest arising the disciples call upon the Lord to save them; He rebuked the waves and a great calm follows, "but the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" (viii. 24-27). The miracle of the healing of the man sick of the palsy is a definite demonstration of the power of the Lord's word. He had said, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee". The Lord, answering the thought of those who heard these words, said, "for whether is easier, to say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (ix. 1-8). So the record continues, His word was then with power.

If this is the character of His word while in the form of the servant, what shall be the character of His word as the risen Son of God with power? So Heb. xii. 25, 26 admonishes:--

"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh, for if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven."

The O.T. furnished illustration of the Lord's Word of power, "And God said, Light be, and light was" (Gen. i. 3); "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth"; "For He spake and it was done, He commandeth and it stood fast" (Psa. xxxiii. 6, 9). Shall we not say that Psa. xxix., the Psalm of the "Voice", looks forward to that happy day when the Son of God shall have brought or carried all things on to the reign of peace?

"Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty,  
Give unto the Lord glory and strength.  
Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name;  
Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.  
The *voice* of the Lord is upon the waters;  
The God of glory thundereth:  
The Lord is upon many waters.

The *voice* of the Lord is powerful;  
 The *voice* of the Lord is full of majesty.  
 The *voice* of the Lord breaketh the cedars:  
 Yea the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon.  
 He maketh them also to skip like a calf:  
 Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn;  
 The *voice* of the Lord divideth the flames of fire;  
 The *voice* of the Lord shaketh the wilderness:  
 The Lord shaketh the wilderness of Kadesh;  
 The *voice* of the Lord maketh the hinds to calve;  
 And discovereth the forests;  
 And in His temple doth every one speak of His glory;  
 The Lord sitteth upon the flood;  
 Yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.  
 The Lord will give strength unto His people;  
 The Lord will bless His people with peace.”

### #9. “The Purifying of Sins” (Heb. i. 3). pp. 150 - 154

Since the mention of the Son we have been taken you with the glories of His person and the wonders of His office. We now come prepared with this revelation of His majesty to the record of His work. His wondrous attributes are many and varied, but the word to which all are focused is one—the purification of sins.

The A.V. would lead the reader to emphasize the words, *by Himself*, but the R.V. and all the best texts omit them, together with the word “our”, and we accept the reading, “when He had made a purification for sins”. The word *katharizō* is used for the cleansing of a leper (Matt. viii. 3), and the ceremonial cleansing of the outside of the cup (Matt. xxiii.). It is used in the epistle to the Hebrews, as indeed are the other forms of the word, and it will enlighten us as to the meaning if we consider all the references in that epistle:--

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the aionian spirit offered Himself without spot to God, *purge (katharizō)* your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (ix. 14).

“And almost all things are by the law *purged (katharizō)* with blood” (ix. 22).

“It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be *purified (katharizō)* with these” (ix. 23).

“Our bodies washed with *pure (katharos)* water” (x. 22).

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the *purifying (katharotēs)* of the flesh” (ix. 13).

As we examine these passages we shall observe that they do not speak primarily of the forgiveness of sins, or the justification of the sinner; they do not speak of redemption, but of one only of its effect, viz., purification. The type which will indicate fairly clearly the object of the work of Christ in Heb. i. 3 is that of the “ashes of the heifer”. The

nineteenth chapter of Numbers gives a detailed statement of this institution. Let us briefly analyze the record:--

1. The red heifer had to be without spot or blemish, and one upon which had never come a yoke.
2. It was slain "without the camp" (see Heb. xiii. 12).
3. The whole heifer, together with cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet, was burned to ashes; these ashes were used for the purpose of purification.
4. Uncleanness was contracted by touching a dead body, or by being in a tent wherein a man died, or by touching a bone, or a grave.
5. Purification was effected by mixing the ashes with living water and by sprinkling with a bunch of hyssop on the third and seventh days.
6. An unclean person that refused to be purified was cut off from the congregation; he had defiled the sanctuary.

It will be noticed that the whole question is one of defilement and its resulting exclusion from the service of the Lord. Some of the causes of uncleanness were quite outside the volition of the person involved, the touching of one slain in the field, or the death occurring in one's own home were shadows of the defiling contact of the world. Had the water of purifying not been at hand, many would perforce have been absent from the Lord's house. The great antitype of the ashes of the heifer is "the blood of Christ"; this "purges the conscience from DEAD works". The reference to the defilement of Numb. xix. is obvious, the dead man, the bone, and the grave are here exchanged for "dead works"; the privilege of access to the tabernacle being exchanged for "service to the living God". The running water was a type of the "aionian Spirit".

The next passage refers to the fact that almost all things by the law are purified with blood, and that the tabernacle, the book, and the people were thus purified.

"For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the sanctuary, and almost all things are by the law purged with blood. . . ." (Heb. ix. 19-22).

Here we have the other type of purifying, not the ashes of an heifer this time, but the blood of calves and goats. The effect, however, is the same, the result is purifying, and also a solemn dedication, the covenant, the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry all had to be CLEAN. The parallelism of Heb. x. 22 will perhaps now be more obvious, as also the way in which the type merges into the antitype, "hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" is the new covenant equivalent of "bodies washed with *pure* water" of Numb. xix.; as also the words, "let us draw near", which is impossible without purifying. It will be evident that we must include "the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24), and indeed all the references to blood in Hebrews.

Speaking without the book, and from a superficial acquaintance with its theme, one would feel certain that in the epistle to the Hebrews a full statement concerning redemption by the blood of Christ would be found. Redemption is not conspicuous in the first reference (Heb. i. 3) to the work of Christ, the whole imagery and teaching has to do

with a people *already saved*, who *have* access to God, who *are* pressing on to Canaan, and who *need* the continual ministrations of the priest and offerings for their sanctification. But let us see for ourselves; here are the references to *blood*:--

“The children are partakers of flesh and blood” (ii. 14).

“Into the second went the high priest alone once in every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people” (ix. 7).

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *aionian* redemption” (ix. 12).

“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh” (ix. 13).

“How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the *aionian* Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God” (ix. 14).

“Wherefore neither the first testament was dedicated without blood” (ix. 18).

“He took the blood. . . . and sprinkled both the book, and all the people” (ix. 19).

“Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you” (ix. 20).

“Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry” (ix. 21).

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood” (ix. 22).

“And without shedding of blood is no remission” (ix. 22).

“Nor yet that He should offer Himself often as the high priest entereth into the holy place with the blood of others” (ix. 25).

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (x. 4).

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus” (x. 19).

“Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye shall he be counted worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing” (x. 29).

“Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest He that destroyed the firstborn should touch them” (xi. 28).

“Ye have not resisted unto blood” (xii. 4).

“To Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant and of the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than Abel” (xii. 24).

“The bodies of those beasts whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest, are burned without the camp” (xiii. 11).

“Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate” (xiii. 12).

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the *aionian* covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will” (xiii. 20, 21).

Those that refer to redemption are ix. 12, 22, x. 4, and xi. 28; of these ix. 12 speaks of redemption as having been obtained already, and is not the result of the offering there, as verses 13, 14 prove; ix. 22, speaking of remission, may at first seem to be direct statement, yet it is in the midst of a context dealing with the covenant and tabernacle, and rather indicates that the remission which is a part of the new covenant (Heb. x. 16-18) cannot be enjoyed without this blood of sprinkling that links the people and the book together; xi. 28 refers to the passover, the true type of redemption, which offering is outside the scope of the epistle, for Hebrews has no place for redemption from Egypt, its setting being the wilderness and its centre the tabernacle. Salvation in the

evangelical and gospel sense is not the theme of Hebrews; it deals with a saved people, and their sanctification.

The teaching of the epistle as to sanctification is directly bearing on the “purifying of sins”, which Heb. i. 3 brings so prominently forward. It figures again in ii. 11 and x. 10, 14, “we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . for by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified”. The context speaks of the new covenant, of access into the holiest, and of despising the blood of the covenant whereunto one is sanctified: it is not the salvation of the sinner, but the perfecting of those who are sanctified that is here; so we come back to Heb. i. 3. Of all the phases of the sacrificial work of Christ this one is selected, selected by reason of the fact that it is vitally connected with the purpose of the epistle. The greatness of the One who thus provided the purifying, the Son of God, makes wilful defilement a terrible thing, it does despite to the spirit of grace.

Heb. x. 12 tells us that after the Lord had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, He sat down; this is the testimony also of Heb. i. 3, “When He had made a purifying of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”. This has reference to His high priesthood, “we have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (viii. 1), and to Himself as the pattern, “looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God” (xii. 2). Both the high priest and the pattern are for *believers*, so also this one phase of the work of Calvary, “the purifying of sins”.

#### **#10. The inherited Name, better than angels (Heb. i. 4). pp. 181 - 186**

The first “better” thing of the epistle is the exaltation of Christ (“having become *by so much* better than angels, *by how much* having inherited a more excellent name than they”). This is a sentence of un-English sound, and yet it brings out the comparison that is intended. The becoming better than the angels is not by virtue of the Lord’s deity. Looked at from the divine standpoint, He Who is addressed as God (verse 8) must of necessity be better than angels; looked at from the human standpoint, He was made for a little while lower than the angels, and in that capacity as Son He has been highly exalted. *The measure of His excellence above angels is His inherited name: by how much He has inherited, by so much He is greater.*

The question then has to do with the inherited name. But first, we might pause to ask: Why should such an argument be necessary, and in what way does it contribute to the theme of the epistle?

Writing as he was to Hebrews, the apostle had in mind their veneration of angels. Stephen alludes to the place that angels hold in Israel, in Acts vii. 53: “Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it”. The epistle to the Galatians says of the law, “it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” (Gal. iii. 19). Some of the Jews went so far as to contend that Malachi, the last of the prophets, was an angel, his name meaning “My messenger”, or “My angel”. It is part of the purpose of this epistle to place the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son, far above every other name and dignity. To have commenced with Moses as the law-giver would not have gone back far enough; Moses the mediator received the law by the disposition of angels. It must therefore be shown that Christ is much better than they, to establish His complete superiority. The exaltation of the Lord to the right hand of the Majesty on high marks the time when the Son was given the name that is above every name. It was at the resurrection that He was declared “son of God with power”; it was as the risen One that He claimed “all power” in heaven and in earth; the superiority of the Son above angels is one of degree, “by so much”, and is to be understood in the light of His inherited name. The Lord Jesus by His birth at Bethlehem became “the Son of God”, for said the angel to Mary, “the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke i. 35). When the Word became flesh, then was seen the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. All through the spotless years of His life up to that dread crisis of the cross, the Father’s testimony remained true and unchanged, “This is My beloved Son”. He vindicated His claim to the name He bore, and the name becomes His by inheritance.

On page 183 of Volume VIII the structure of Heb. i. and ii. is given, and one member covering i. 2-14, “The Son, His glories, God and Lord, better than angels”, must now be extended.

### **B | i. 2-14.**

- B | a | 2-4. The Son, Heir, made ages, upholds all things.
- b | 5, 6. To which of the angels. . . . Thou art My Son?
- c | 7. The Angels, Spirits, Ministers.
- a | 8-12. The Son, O God, Throne, Lord, Creation.
- b | 13. To which of the angels. . . . Sit on My right hand?
- c | 14. The Angels, Ministering Spirits.

The argument that occupies the remainder of the chapter is an establishment of the glorious doctrine of the supremacy of the Son. The method which the apostle adopts to prove his point is to bring forward a series of quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures, all of them being taken from the Psalms. Seven Psalms are quoted, and the references give evidence of a design in the order of their quotation.

## The Seven Psalms.

- A | ii. 7. The King on Zion. The decree.
- B | lxxxix. 26, 27, and II Sam. vii. 14. The King.
- C | xcvi. 7. Worship Him all ye gods.
  - D | civ. 4. His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire.
- C | xlv. 6, 7. Thy throne, O God is for ever and ever.
- B | cii. 25. The Creator.
- A | cx. 1. Priest on Zion. The oath.

Let us consider the passages which the apostle brings forward. The apostle's quotation and the manner of its introduction, "unto which of the angels did He at any time say?" show that the title, "the Son", is unique.

As it was in the days of the Lord on earth, so evidently it was at the time of writing this epistle the Scriptures were accepted as inspired truth, and however much their testimony may have been avoided or contravened, no voice seems to have been raised to throw doubt upon the infallible authority of the Word. There is also implied by the nature of the argument the completeness of the testimony of Scripture. It is sufficient to say that Scripture nowhere uses the expression, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee", to prove, by the omission, that such words could never be said of angels at all. That Psalm ii. is prophetic of Christ, and of *Christ in resurrection*, we do not feel it to be necessary to prove; the testimony of men speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and specially set apart to the authoritative position of apostles, is so great that no other evidence is becoming; such testimony is that of Acts xiii. 33.

The Psalm looks forward to the day when Christ as King shall be established on Zion, and shall rule to the uttermost part of the earth. The day of His begetting unto this glorious position was the day when, after He had suffered for sin, had died, and been buried, God raised Him from the dead, the firstfruits of coming glory. This double begetting finds an echo in Col. i. 15-18, where Christ is seen in the first place as the firstborn from the dead, the parallel with Heb. i. being very marked by the words that follow, "that in all things He might have the pre-eminence". The apostle brings another Scripture to bear upon this theme, and this time quotes from the words by Nathan to David, and which are referred to in Psalm lxxxix. Solomon here, as in Psalm lxxii., is a type of Christ. It is worthy of notice that in both cases Christ the Son is viewed as God's anointed King. While this fact is not brought into prominence by the apostle here, it is important, inasmuch as Christ, being King, could not be a priest after the order of Aaron; hence the Melchisedec priesthood is emphasized in this epistle. It may be objected, that both angels and men are called "sons of God". This is true, and the apostle in no wise denies it, but no angel has ever had a personal address made to him in this way, and no angel ever *inherited* the name. Angels are sons of God by creation, men become sons of God through faith; Christ, in resurrection, was declared Son of God by inheritance.

The third quotation is sometimes taken a little differently from the A.V. rendering; some would read it, "and when He again bringeth", in the sense of a second time. This

we do not feel is necessary. The thought that the apostle insists upon is the superiority of Christ above angels, and the question whether this verse refers to His birth or His second coming does not materially alter the sense.

Passing from this threefold testimony, the apostle proceeds to a definite statement concerning the angels themselves. The *Targum* rendering of the verse quoted here, Psa. civ. 4, is:--

“Who maketh His messengers, or angels, swift as spirits, and His ministers strong, or powerful, as a flaming fire.”

The point that it is necessary to notice here is, not so much the nature of angels, but their capacity. They are messengers and servants; this is the distinction that is sharply drawn between them and the Son; “but unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age”. The strange phrase, “the age of the age”, will be given closer attention when we are considering the definite teaching of the ages as taught in this epistle; at present we are considering the one great fact, that the Son is superior to the angels; they are ministers; He is addressed as God, and is seated upon a throne; His anointing above His fellows is an added testimony to His superior position. Without any effort to explain the strange wording of the quotation, the apostle leaves it to speak of itself. God addresses the Son as God, and it is in this light that the epistle introduces Him in verse 2. Not only does the Son sit as King and bear the name of God, but He is also addressed as Lord, and creation is ascribed to Him. Creation “in the beginning” is the work of His hands”; there are some who treat the passages of Scripture that speak of the Creatorship of Christ as though they meant nothing more than that Creation was made with a view to Him, or for Him, but the words are very plain here. In the beginning He laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of His hands. “The works of Thy hands” can have only one meaning, that the Son is the actual Creator. The quotation does not finish here; the heavens and the earth “shall perish”, but, in glorious contrast, we read of the Son, “but Thou remainest”. When the appointed work is accomplished for which the heavens and the earth were called into being, they will be laid aside as a vesture, but of Christ it is written, “but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail”. Here we strike a note which shall find its echo when the wondrous teaching of the epistle shall have been given. In the last chapters in structural correspondence come the words, “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, to-day, and unto the ages”. We now arrive at the concluding quotation:--

“But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit upon My right hand, until I make Thy enemies Thy footstool.”

To ask the question is to answer it. To no angel however mighty did God ever address such an invitation. To One only has such a place been given, to that One Who is the brightness of His glory, to that One Who made a cleansing for sins, and Who was as a consequence raised to the right hand of the majesty on high. Familiarity with the scriptural fact of the place of Christ at the right hand of God has possibly dulled our appreciation of its greatness. The same Psalm that is quoted here is referred to again in chapter x. 12, 13, and again, in viii. 1, the apostle summarizes his teaching concerning the Melchisedec priesthood by saying, “We have such an high priest, who is set on the

right hand of the Majesty in the heavens". The final reference to this high glory brings into prominence the original thought of Heb. i.

He has attained to this pre-eminence by way of inheritance:--

"Who for the joy set before Him, endured a cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God" (xii. 2).

Peter's testimony is much the same:--

"Jesus Christ, Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (I Pet. iii. 22).

Space will not allow of further references, but we trust the reader will be sufficiently interested in this unique honour ascribed to his Lord to make a list of references where such a position is claimed by, or ascribed to, the Lord of glory. We defer consideration of Heb. i. 14 in order to give one expression in the verse the attention that it needs. We have not felt that it was necessary to enter into a careful examination of the Psalms themselves, as the evident purpose of the apostle in quoting them is the initial theme that Christ, as the Son, is by inheritance lifted far above angels. Incidentally, the unique title, "the only begotten Son", is set forth, as also the deity, "O God", the kingship, "thy throne", the creatorship, and the priesthood, but none of these things are a real part of the argument here, and we therefore wait until in the course of inspired argument these weighty themes are developed.

May we who are blessed under the terms of a dispensation differing from that of "Hebrews" keep prominently before us the blessed truth, and "set our affections on things above, *where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*".

## Lessons for Little Ones.

### #2. The Creation of Man. pp. 45, 46

Our first set of lessons were concerning God as the Creator, and creation itself was reviewed so that by seeing His works we may learn “what may be known of God” (Rom. i. 19, 20).

The child should now be taught its place and relation both regarding the creation and the Creator, and so we take the subject of man.

First.—Read Genesis i. 24-31.—On the sixth day were made (1) animals, (2) man. Man is linked with the lower animals, yet the pause, the consultation, and the making of man in the image of God set him apart from all creation as one having special dealings with God.

Question the child, point by point, to discern the differences in these two great sections of the sixth day:--

“Let the earth bring forth” – animals.

“Let us make man” – man.

The image and likeness (see ix. 6; I Cor. xi. 7; James iii. 9).

Title of Christ (Col. i. 15; II Cor. iv. 4; Heb. i. 3).

Parallel in the new creation (Eph. iv. 24; Col. iii. 10), the *new* man; note the renewal is in knowledge. Do not limit the image to the physical. The *dominion* given is a part of it, so also the *mind* which differs from all else in creation. Compare i. 27 with v. 1, 2; this proves that the creation of Gen. i. is the same as that of ii. 7-25.

Secondly.—Read Gen. ii. 7.—Man formed of the dust, the soil.

The word “man” here is adam=the ground. He became a living soul by breathing into his nostrils. Note the use of the word translated *soul* “creature” (Gen. i. 21, 24; ii. 19; ix. 10, 12). “Remember” (Eccles. xii. 1). The sin of idolatry and its senselessness (Rom. i. 25).

Learn Psalm viii.

Read to the child such passages as Isa. xl.; Psa. xc. Do not hurry with these lessons; be careful of details. See that false notions are not strengthened or implanted. Search the Scriptures, and compare passage with passage. Your child will value the Bible just so much as it sees that you do. Teach as much as possible by questioning.

Let us give an example. After having read Gen. i. 24-31 say, Can you tell me what were made on the sixth day?

Did God say the same words when He made animals and man?

What connection is there between man and God by his creation? (Image).

What connection and contrasts between man and animals? (1. The same order of creation, yet has, 2. Dominion, 3. Different food).

### **#3. Man.—His Fall. pp. 95, 96**

We have looked into the Scriptures and learned something about God, the Creator, and man, the greatest of His creatures, and have read just two chapters in the first book of the Bible. When we read the third chapter we come to a sad story, for there we read that man sinned and fell.

One word summarizes the sin of Adam, *disobedience*. Gen. ii. 17 gives the command, Gen. iii. 1-5 the temptation, and Gen. iii. 6 the disobedience. Notice, disobedience is connected with “hearkening” to a voice other than that of God (iii. 17, also 1-5). It may be that of our dearest friend (Eve), or our deadliest foe (serpent), it is all the same if it opposes the Word of God. Abraham was “blessed” because he obeyed God’s voice (Gen. xxii. 18), but Jacob suffered severely because he obeyed his mother’s voice to do wrong (xxvii. 8). Blessing is promised to obedience in Deut. xi. 27, but a curse to disobedience in xi. 28. See what Samuel told Saul (I Sam. xv. 22, and notice whose voice Saul obeyed [verse 24]). Adam’s disobedience “made many sinners” (Rom. v. 19); it opened the door for sin to enter the world, “and death by sin”. Gen. ii. 17 clearly tells us that “the wages of sin is death”. The statement of Gen. iii. 19 shows us that “death entered by sin”, and Rom. v. 14 tells us “death reigned from Adam to Moses”, “that through the offence of one many have died” (verse 15). “The sting of death is sin” (I Cor. xv. 56).

Not only have all the children of Adam inherited a fallen nature and passes under condemnation, but every one of them has sinned (Rom. iii. 23). “All have gone astray” (Isa. liii. 6), “their own way” being the way of sin just as “hearkening” to any other voice leads to disobedience.

Rom. iii. 10-12 speaks of “none” and “all”; notice what is said. Verses 13-18 speak of the throat, the tongue, the lips, the mouth, the feet, the ways, the eyes. The words in verse 18 seem to be the cause of all the rest. The heart of man is the fountain of evil

(Matt. xv. 19), it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked (Jer. xvii. 9), and its imaginations are only evil continually (Gen. vi. 5).

Do not hurry to present the plan of salvation. Let the Scripture witness of the utter failure and sinfulness of man be really seen. A passage to memorize might be Psalm xiv. Gen. iii. should be carefully read, and such incidents as Saul's disobedience (I Sam. xv.) read and explained. Also, by way of illustration of the universality of sin, notice that even Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Job, Peter, Paul, all have recorded against them sins of one sort or another. These will provide concrete examples of that which might otherwise be difficult doctrine.

Some may feel that such a subject is hardly suitable for "little ones". We have found that children understand and follow the teaching of Scripture on these subjects far more readily than many may believe, and we earnestly ask all who have the responsibility of teaching children to try by careful questioning and instruction to lay a good foundation for the days to come.

#### **#4. What is Sin? pp. 140, 141**

We have learned that God is the great Creator, that man is His creature, that man has fallen. We have therefore brought our little charges face to face with the dreadful fact of sin.

*What is Sin?*.—Turn to I John v. 17, "All unrighteousness is SIN". Help the little mind to understand the word "unrighteousness". By illustrating by several words like un-known, un-clean, un-tidy, the little one will supply the meaning "not". Righteousness can be simplified by emphasizing the first syllable "right". We have now a scriptural definition in language that is within the child's grasp. "Everything that is NOT RIGHT is sin".

When addressing the adult believer in Ephesians, the apostle beseeches, but when enjoining obedience upon the child, he does not say, "because of the grace of God", but simply, "because it is *right*". Even in this epistle of grace the law is quoted when the child is instructed, even though it be "the first commandment with promise" (Eph. vi. 1, 2).

Turn again to I John iii. 4, "SIN is the transgression of the law". By wisely applied quotations where the words "transgression" and "law" occur, their meanings will be elicited. Never tell the child the meaning of a word where you can lead it to discover it for itself. Your child should realize from its earliest days that God's Word was written in another tongue. If this is the case you will be able to tell it that the word that God

Himself used for “transgression of the law” is “lawlessness”. Sin therefore is going our own way instead of God’s way.

Turn yet again to Rom. xiv. 23, “Whatsoever is not of faith is SIN”. Faith therefore is very parallel to law in this respect. Faith cannot be “lawless”, faith is always “right”. In this passage it stand for the conscience enlightened by the truth and gospel. What the law was to the O.T. believer, faith is to the N.T. believer.

Psalm li. could be memorized, and such a passage as Rom. iii. read over together several times. If the child is able, a useful lesson (which should not be attempted at one sitting) would be the construction of a concordance of the word *sin* from one of the epistles. This should not be suggested to a child that has not had some year or two of ordinary schooling.

SIN IS	/	Not right.
	{	Lawlessness.
	\	Not of faith.

### **#5. Salvation.—The First, and the Last Adam. pp. 175, 176**

Salvation is many sided, and we must not unduly hurry in our endeavour to bring this wonderful testimony of God before our little charges. We observed, when dealing with the fall of man, that one word, *disobedience*, summed up the sin that brought in the curse. We shall find that *obedience* has brought in the blessing.

A clear statement as to this is found in Rom. v. 19, “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous”.

There are some who exclaim, “What, take little children to Rom. v.?” We say, Yes, and ask anyone who has the opportunity to test the clearness of the scripture upon the mind unclouded by “theology” and its problems. The parables, so often assumed to be the proper lesson material for the child, are far more difficult to comprehension than the doctrine of Rom. v. Let us notice what Rom. v. 12-21 teaches. We shall find that two persons are brought together, Adam and Christ. Adam is “the figure of Him that was to come”. Every evil effect of Adam’s action is answered by a corresponding effect of Christ’s action.

We can set out parallel columns and by dint of careful questioning and reading discover something like the following:--

ADAM.	CHRIST.
<p>Through the offence of one, many are dead.</p> <p>The judgment was by one to condemnation.</p> <p>By the offence of one death reigned by one.</p> <p>By one offence judgment came upon all men unto condemnation.</p> <p>For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners.</p> <p>Where sin abounded.</p> <p>That as sin hath reigned unto death.</p>	<p>The grace of God, and the gift of grace hath abounded to many.</p> <p>The free gift is of many offences unto justification.</p> <p>They that receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One.</p> <p>By one righteousness the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.</p> <p>So by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.</p> <p>Grace did much more abound.</p> <p>Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.</p>

Some of the long words may need explanation, but the logic of the passage is not beyond the child mind.

(Concluded from page 176).  
**p. 191 (end).**

Moreover, even if it should be difficult to teach, here we are at the fountain-head of sin and salvation. Read the two columns down separately, and see the legacy of sin, condemnation, and death for all *in Adam*, and then the gift in grace, the over-abounding grace that is stored for those *in Christ*.

These parallels will emphasize the urgent necessity of rebirth. The child will realize that salvation is more than an opinion; it is vital. To be saved, the sinner must pass from the line of Adam to the line of Christ. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive". Death is Adam's legacy, life is Christ's. Fix it in the child's mind if you will, by some such scheme as

A s in Adam all  
 D ie, even so in Christ shall  
 A ll be  
 M ade alive.

Show from I Cor. xv. 45 Christ as the last "Adam".

## Studies in the Epistles of the Mystery.

### #30. “The Church. . . the Fulness” (Eph. i. 23).

(Further thoughts upon a wondrous theme).

pp. 17 – 20

At the creation of man, the purpose of his being seems to be foreshadowed in the words, “Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness”; his domain was, for the time, the earth and its lower orders of life. The invisible God was imaged in this creation by Adam, the lower orders saw no higher manifestation of God on earth than man, made in the image of God. In a sense and degree infinitely beyond man’s attainments the image of the invisible God is Christ, as Col. i. 15 records, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature”. Another passage in Colossians reveals to us yet another of the glories of the Lord, “for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. ii. 9).

The word “bodily” is *somatikōs* in the original, and explains how the Godhead dwelt in Christ; the same word in another form occurs in Luke iii. 22, “and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape”. It would appear that the body of the Lord was necessary to the full manifestation of the fulness of the Godhead to the members of His church and to the heavenly powers. This fulness resident bodily in Him is echoed back to God in His Church, for Col. ii. 10 continuing says, “and ye are complete in Him”. Now the word “fulness” is *plerōma*, and “ye are complete” is *peplerōmenoi*, which might be rendered “filled full”. *J. N. Darby’s* note here is:--

“The fulness or completeness of the Godhead is in Christ, as towards us; and we as towards God, are complete in Him.”

In a previous paper on Ephesians we dwelt a little on the blessed fact that the Church is called “His body”; the verse, however, does not finish with this title, but adds one even more glorious, “the Church which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all”. By comparing the teaching of Col. ii. 9 with Eph. i. 23 it seems that just as Christ is the fulness of God, and that in relation to the body, so the Church is the fulness of Christ, and that by reason of the special dispensational character indicated by the words, “the Church which is His body”. Of this body Christ is the Head, and the relation between the head and the body in this connection is brought forward in such passages as

“I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. . . . Man. . . . is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man” (I Cor. xi. 3 and 7).

Here we have a regular sequence, what God is to Christ, Christ is to man, and man is to woman: in each case the lesser is the glory of the greater, the woman is the glory of the man, the man is the glory of God: this is the order of things by virtue of creation:--

“For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man, neither was the man created for the woman: but the woman for the man” (I Cor. xi. 8, 9).

The argument is transferred from the old creation to the new, and there the Church which is His body is renewed in knowledge

“after the image of Him that created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free, but Christ is ALL and IN ALL” (Col. iii. 10, 11).

It would seem that the unity that is shadowed forth in the body is an essential feature of the Church. In that Church where there is neither Greek nor Jew, Christ can be ALL and IN ALL, and that Church which is His body, which “He created of the both”, i.e., Gentile and Jew (Eph. ii. 15), that Church is the fulness of Him that filleth ALL in ALL. When the glorious consummation of God’s purpose is reached and the words of I Cor. xv. 28 are fulfilled, then “God will be ALL IN ALL”; till that moment comes that wondrous fulness is vested in Christ. He is the One now who fills all in all. That these words are limited to the believer, and must not be interpreted universally, Col. iii. 11 would seem to indicate; perfect unity is necessary to manifest the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

A church which is His bride, or His kingdom, or His people, cannot so fully reflect this glory as the church which is His body, and thus it is that the most glorious calling is reserved for the church of the dispensation of the mystery.

The word *plerōma* occurs four times in Ephesians, and each occurrence if studied will help us in our understanding of the subject.

First, the special dispensation which is connected with the Church of the One Body is spoken of as, “the dispensation of the fulness of the seasons” (i. 10), the characteristics of that dispensation are the headship of Christ, and the uniting together under that headship of things in heaven and earth; this is found to be equally the case in Eph. i. 23. Instead of speaking of the fulness of the seasons, the context speaks of “this age and the age to come”; instead of speaking of things in heaven and earth, the heavenly things are named – principalities and powers, etc., and the earthly is represented by the Church which is His body. Colossians, in its first reference to the fulness, takes us back first of all to the creation of things visible and invisible in heaven and earth, and links the pre-eminence of Christ as Creator with His headship as Saviour, which in turn leads on to the words, “for it was well pleasing that in Him should all fulness dwell” (Col. i. 16-19).

The third reference in Ephesians is found in chapter iii., where, as a conclusion to the prayer commenced in verse 14 the apostle says, “that ye might be filled unto all the fulness of God”; this is intimately related to the words, “that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith”. All the fulness dwells in Him, and can only be approximated by us as He, by faith, dwells in our hearts. The A.V. reads, “filled with all the fulness of God”. One, and One only, is mighty enough to be filled *with* all the fulness; members of His body may be filled *unto* all the fulness of God, the utmost limit of their capacity is the measure of their comprehension of Christ Himself. As in other phases of divine manifestation it is written, “NO man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son,

who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him”, so with regard to the filling and the fulness. The words of Eph. iv. 13 speaks of the progress of faith toward the high goal:--

“Till we all come unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of the Christ.”

The Church which is His body is to be perfect man, even as it has already been created “one new man”, its measure is a lofty one, it cannot aspire of itself to the fulness of God, it must needs have a Mediator; Christ is its measure, and His image its goal and glory. This glorious position of the Church in Christ would be like unto Lucifer’s daring blasphemy were it conceived out of Christ.

Whether the Church will be His *body* in the future life we do not know. We incline to the thought that the *body* aspect is now, in time, while as a future glory is reserved for the Church the “fulness”. In Eph. i. 23 the fulness is not spoken of as the fulness of God, but the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Chapter iv. 9, 10 speaks of the Lord’s descent into the lower parts of the earth, and His ascent far above all heavens, that He might fill all things; this the Church at present cannot reflect, except by faith. When, however, it is actually raised and seated far above all principality in the super-heavenlies, then will be seen, in a degree now impossible of comprehension, the high glory and wondrous grace that constituted the outcasts of the Gentiles the very fulness of Him that filleth all in all.

As a practical outcome, those who realize and appropriate this truth will surely above all others find Christ their all in all now, His grace will be their sufficiency, His strength their stay, His glory their goal. May it increasingly be so.

**A state of grace, not of nature (Eph. ii. 1).  
pp. 49 - 53**

The structure of the epistle as a whole places chapter ii. in correspondence with iv. 7 - vi. 9. This may be seen in Volume II & III, page 93. Chapter ii. gives us the doctrine of which iv. 7 - vi. 9 specify the outworkings; let us note the theme of the chapter.

- |   |  |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| A |  | 1-3. Once. Walk and conversation. The world and the flesh. |  |   |
|   |  | B  |  | 4. But God. Rich in mercy. Great in love. |
|   |  | C  |  | 5-10. Made alive together. \              |
|   |  |  |  | Raised together. }                        |
|   |  |  |  | Made to sit together. /                   |
|   |  |  |  | In relation to sins.                      |
| A |  | 11, 12. Once. Gentiles in flesh. Without God in the world. |  |   |
| B |  | 13-18. But now. Made nigh. Made one.                       |  |   |
| C |  | 19-22. Citizens together. \                                |  | In relation to                            |
|   |  | Fitly framed together. }                                   |  | dispensational privileges.                |
|   |  | Builded together. /  |  |   |

In the first section (1-10) we have such words as “dead”, “trespasses”, “sins”, “disobedience”, “wrath”, “quicken”, “by grace saved”, “faith”, “walk” according to this age, and “walk” according to a new creation, all of which have to do with salvation from sin. In the second section (11-22) we have such words as “uncircumcision”, “aliens”, “far off”, “middle wall broken down”, “ordinances”, “one new man”, “fellow citizen”, and “holy temple”, and here the words “sin” and “death” do not occur. Instead of trespasses we have dispensational distance, instead of the flesh with its lusts and its wills, we have the flesh in its circumcision, its uncircumcision, and its enmity; in the one we have a creation in Christ Jesus unto good works; in the other a creation of the “twain” into one new man; in the one the quickened believer is raised to sit together with Christ in the heavenlies; in the other he is builded together as an habitation of God. We will not multiply these differences further, but will now turn our attention to the opening of the chapter which comes under the heading “once”.

- A | a | “Once” walked.
  - b | The pattern.—The age of this world.  
The power.—the energizing spirit.
  - c | Sons of disobedience.
- A | a / “Once” conversation.
  - b | The motive.—Lusts of flesh.  
The performance.—Wills of flesh.
  - c | Children of wrath.

The previous section which closed chapter i. had dealt with the glorious position of the risen Christ, His headship and His church. That church had been spoken of as His body. The apostle now proceeds to show that the same glorious power that quickened, raised, and seated the Saviour in the heavenlies, is that which has been exercised towards all that believe. The first item wherein Christ the head and the church His members agree, is that both were once dead. In the case of Christ Himself, we know that though He *had* no sin, and *did* no sin, yet He died *for* sins and died *to* sin. The A.V. would lead us to make a contrast here, and to understand that whereas Christ the sinless One died for the sins of others, we ourselves were already dead in sins of our own committing, and thus were set in the greatest contrast. We, however, ask the reader’s most careful attention while we seek to show what we believe is the real teaching of this passage.

First of all let us notice that although the deepest doctrine has been sounded in chapter i., but one reference has been made to sins in the whole of that passage. In chapter i. 7 we read, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins”. The word “sins” is *paraptōma*, and is rightly translated “trespasses” in ii. 1. Chapter ii. 1 and 5 contain the only other occurrences in Ephesians of either the word *paraptōma* (trespasses), or *hamartia* (sins). When we realize that “trespass” or “offence” occurs some 9 times, and “sin” and “sins” over 40 times, in Romans, it will be evident that there is a considerable difference in the theme of these two epistles. Now, according to the A.V., Eph. ii. 1 is written to tell us that we were dead in trespasses and sins. This interpretation we very seriously call in question, and submit our reasons for believing that

Eph. ii. 1 speaks of our state *in grace*, and not our state *by nature*; the actual wording of the verse is as follows:--

*Kai humas ontas nekrons tois paraptōmasi kai tais hamartiais,*

and the literal rendering is, “and you being dead (ones) to the trespasses and to the sins”. It will be noticed that there is no word “in” in either the Greek or the literal rendering, this being a rendering of the dative case, in which the words “trespasses and sins” are written. Let us refer to other passages which are somewhat parallel.

Rom. vi. 2. “We that are dead *to sin*” (*te hamartia*)\*  
Rom. vi. 10. “He died *unto sin*” (*te hamarita*)\*  
Rom. vi. 11. “Dead indeed *unto sin*” (*te hamartia*)\*  
Rom. vii. 4. “Dead *to the law*” (*tō nomō*)\*  
Gal. ii. 19. “Dead *to law*” (*tō nomō*)\*  
I Pet. ii. 24. “Dead *to sins*” (*taiis hamartiais*)\*\*  
[\* - Dative singular.      \*\* - Dative plural.]

The last passage, I Pet. ii. 24, is identical with one part of Eph. ii. 1. Now the question that demands an immediate answer is, Can we substitute the words, “in sins”, or “in law”, where the above-quoted passage reads, “to sins”, or “to law”? Let us try. “How shall we, that are dead in sin, live any longer therein”? If this be the correct translation the answer must be, Those who are dead *in sin* can do nothing else. We dare not pen the words in the place of the rendering of Rom. vi. 10, for the thought is blasphemous that Christ should ever have died in sin. And shall we say that believers are to reckon themselves dead in sin, but alive unto God? The very utterance refutes itself. There is no need for us to go further, the true rendering of Eph. ii. 1 must be, “And you being dead ones to trespasses and to sins”, indicating the same blessed state of union with Christ as is indicated in connection with sin (not sin as here) in Rom. vi., and in connection with sins, in I Pet. ii. There is one passage which we have not yet referred to which is very parallel with Eph. ii. 1, viz., Col. ii. 13, “And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh” (the word “in” is omitted by the best texts, and by the Numeric New Testament). To make verse 13 refer to our state by nature, breaks the inspired line of teaching; in verse 11 the statement is made, “ye are circumcised”, which is interpreted as the “putting off of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ”, so that we can say, Here is union with Christ as to circumcision. Verse 12 continues by saying that we were “buried with Him in the baptism”, and are “risen with Him through the faith of the inworking of that God who raised Him from the dead”. Here again is union, this time in burial and resurrection; note also the close parallel of one passage with Eph. i. 19, 20, “His power to usward who believe according to the inworking of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead”.

Keeping to our new translation, Col. ii. 13 makes no sudden digression, but continues the line of teaching, “and you being dead ones to trespasses, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made alive together with Him”. We must not leave Eph. ii. 5 unconsidered, lest some should think it taught something contrary to our suggested translation. *Ta kai ontas hemas nekrous tois paraptomasi*, “and we being dead ones to trespasses”. To be made alive together with Christ follows being dead to trespasses and

sins here and in Col. ii. 13. This is precisely the same order that is found in Rom. vi., vii., and Gal. ii. Rom. vi., like Col. ii., speaks of our burial, baptism, and resurrection. It tells us that we who died to sin, now live to God; so Gal. ii. 19, “for I through law am dead to law, that I might live unto God”. Thus it appears that Eph. ii. 1 is not teaching us that we were all “dead in trespasses and sins”, but that through the mercy of God we are dead ones to trespasses and sins.

One further item before we close this paper. It will be noticed that in verse 1 we read “you”, while in verse 5 we read “we”. The apostle is linking Jewish and Gentile believers together here, just as he does in the next section by the words, “the both”, and “twain”. You died to sins; we also died to sins, and by grace He has made us alive together with Christ.

Let us not give away blessed truth; what though evangelical doctrine be deprived of the testimony of these verses to the depravity and corruption of sinners, it will be far better than missing the mind of the Spirit in such an important passage.

### **#32. Dead Ones to Sins (Eph. ii. 1). pp. 81 - 85**

In the preceding paper of this series we sought to show that Eph. ii. 1 did not teach the doctrine of human depravity, but the believer’s relation to trespasses and sins, “And you being dead ones to trespasses and to sins”. Let us now consider the relation of this passage with that of Rom. vi., and then with its context.

Rom. vi. while somewhat parallel deals with the root – sin; Eph. ii. deals with the fruit – sins. Rom. vi. opens with the question, “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” There is no parleying, debating, or moralizing in the apostle’s answer. To him it is a matter of life and death. “Let it not be. How shall we, who died to sin, live any longer in it?” The apostle calls the mind of his readers to their baptism wherein union with Christ involved also union with His death, “baptized into Jesus Christ, baptized into His death”.

Baptism buried the believer also with the Lord into that death, that “like as Christ was raised out of dead ones by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life”. Not merely a new life, but a new kind of life, in fact, *resurrection life*. The old man was crucified with Christ so that the body of sin might be rendered inoperative. This body of sin is a most awful thing, for by it we are *enslaved to sin*. So it is written that the old man was crucified, and the body of sin rendered powerless **THAT WE MAY NO LONGER BE ENSLAVED TO SIN**. It is sin’s dominion and sin’s service that are here in view. The reign of sin and death ends when the reign of grace begins, “For sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law but under grace” (verse 14).

It is this present deliverance from sin's dominion that is in view all the time. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body". This must necessarily be limited to the present life. When this mortality puts on immortality, such an injunction, praise God, will be unnecessary. It is equally so with regard to verse 8, "Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him". This is often read as though it referred to the future resurrection life of the believer. It does, but only because the future resurrection is involved in the present anticipation. Notice how the argument proceeds:--

"Knowing that Christ being raised out of dead ones dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God."

Here the resurrection of the Lord is plainly taught. Now how will the apostle continue? Will he say, you also who have believed in Him shall in that day be raised, too, to likewise live unto God? No, he does not. What he does say involves the believer's present life in this mortal body, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord". This is the "living with Him" of verse 8, blessed anticipation of living with Him in the glad day that is coming. The whole of the chapter deals with the great deliverance of the believer from the dominion and thralldom of sin. The chapter proceeds to contrast the service of sin with the service of God, and chapter vii. shows in what awful bondage sin and law holds a man until delivered by the Lord. Nothing but "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" can make us "free from the law of sin and death".

To such a blessed state of liberty the Ephesian saints had arrived. They knew that in the death of Christ they had died to sin, and it was because they were already believers that the apostle prayed for them, that among other things they might know what was the exceeding greatness of His power *to usward who believe*, according to the inworking of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from dead ones. Note, the prayer is *not* that we should know the power or process of the resurrection of Christ personal, it is that we may know what is the exceeding greatness of His power to USWARD, and that that power is according to, or in harmony with, the power put forth to raise Christ from the dead and exalt Him to the right hand of God in the heavenlies far above all. That such is the case Eph. ii. abundantly proves. If i. 20 tells us that Christ was raised from the dead, ii. 6 teaches us that we were "raised together"; so also, if Christ was made to sit at the right hand of God in the heavenlies, the believers have been made to "sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus".

Not only had these believers died to sin, they were dead ones to *sins*. Not only did they realize that the truth in Jesus taught that they had put off the old man, but that they had put off the old man *with his deeds*, and that they had put off concerning *the former conversation* the old man, and were renewed in the spirit of their minds. Not only were they dead to *sin*, but to *sins*; not only the old man put off, but all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, together with all malice. Nothing but the exceeding greatness of His power to usward could accomplish such a wonderful change.

Peter in his first epistle speaks of “being dead to sins” and the context illuminates the expression. He tells us that Christ’s sufferings leave us a “copy” (*hupogrammos*, the copy set for a pupil, the lines traced out for workmen to work by) with the object that we may

“follow His steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth (works and words, compare Eph. iv. 28, 29, ‘hands’, ‘mouth’); who being reviled, reviled not again: suffering, He threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously; who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live to righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed” (I Pet. ii. 21-24).

Christ’s sufferings as a “copy”, following “His steps”, meekly submitting instead of giving place to the “old man and his deeds”, these are to do with having died to *sins*.

Let us not hold back from the doctrine of this important verse (Eph. ii. 1). We know and rejoice, as the context teaches, that it is all of grace, that it is not of works, yet, we do not misunderstand grace and teach licence for liberty, and with the context would emphasize that while our salvation is not *out of works*, it is *unto* good works. Let not a spurious “holiness” deprive us of the true. All our holiness is found “in Christ”, and we cannot walk worthy of our calling if we do not realize that we who died to *sin* should also be dead ones to *sins*. Let us again emphasize that the “truth” is not that we have put off the old man, but that we have put off the old man *with his practices* (Col. iii. 9). The “truth” is not that the old man is crucified, and that is sufficient; no, the old man is crucified, and the body of sin powerless, *that we may be no longer enslaved to sin*. “Know ye not”, said the apostle of grace to those justified by faith, “that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” (Rom. vi. 16). If such words do not harmonize with our doctrine, let us give up that doctrine, but let us hold fast the faithful Word. We feel constrained to emphasize that those believers to whom the marvels of grace and glory were revealed (as in Eph. i.), those spiritual blessings, those heavenly places, that predestination, that these believers were not led to believe that free grace meant irresponsibility, but rather that free grace gave them for the first time freedom to serve and obey from the heart the mind and will of God which had been hitherto impossible. The apostle says they were dead to trespasses and to sins. Let us consider these two words.

TRESPASSES (*paraptōma*).—The original word is from *parapiptō*, *to fall off* or *away* (e.g., Heb. vi. 6), and means a fall, an offence. *Dr. Bullinger* in his lexicon explains it as:--

“A falling when one should have stood upright, a misfall, mishap; hence a falling from right, or duty, the particular and special act of sin from ignorance, inadvertence, or negligence; sin rashly committed by one unwilling to do an injury.”

Gal. vi. 1 gives this element of surprise or of being caught unawares, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; watching thyself, lest thou also be tempted”. It is the word which is used in

Rom. v. 15, 16, 18, and 20 of Adam's act of disobedience, which opened the door for the entrance of sin and death.

SINS (*hamartia*).—The original word is from *hamartanō*, “To miss” as a mark, or as a way, a deviation, a failure. The tragedy of sin lies not only in its corruption and its criminality, but in the fact that it writes “failure” across the life of man. The bow has been drawn, the arrow has been shot, the mark has been missed; all have sinned and *come short*. Both to sins of rashness, ignorance, and temptation, as well as to sins of failure and deviation, the believer has died.

Do we intend by this that there are no longer two natures in the child of God? By no means. Do we intend by this that we have no sin, and that we shall not sin? By no means; but, knowing the blessed fact that Christ died to sin and for sins, we “reckon ourselves dead indeed to sin” and also to “trespasses and sins”, and set our minds on things above, seeking the grace that He alone can give to enable us to begin to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called.

### **#33. “The Age of this World” (Eph. ii. 2, 3). pp. 113 - 118**

The believer in Christ has died to trespasses and sins. This supposes that once the believer lived in them, which the apostle proceeds to teach, showing in so doing the character of those sins to which the believer is now dead. First let us notice to whom the apostle addresses himself. *You* in verses 1 and 2, *we* and *us* in verses 3 and 7. It is noticed by all readers that the words of verse 1 are repeated in verse 5, where the subject is resumed, but it may be necessary to point out the change of pronoun whereby both Gentiles and Jews, one in sinfulness, may realize their oneness in grace. “And you being dead ones to trespasses and to sins”, “we also being dead ones to trespasses”. This linking together is observable in the verses now before us, “in which YOU once walked. . . . among whom also WE all once had our conversation. . . .”, the sinful life is called a *walk*, and this chapter places before us two walks and two only, the one “according to the age of this world”, the other, the good works of the new creation (verse 10). Death and resurrection stand between these two, and to walk according to the age of this world is to walk contrary to our calling which has to do with the age to come.

It will be of service to us if we give a little time to the study of this word “walk”. Starting with Romans, we have first of all the new life presented as a walk:--

“Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom. vi. 4).

Here is not reformation, but *newness*, the newness of life from the dead. Three other references follow in Romans in which the negative appears, and by what they deny, the reader may see the character of the walk of the flesh.

Rom. viii. 4, "That the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit."

Here we have another division, "flesh" and "spirit".

Rom. xiii. 13, 14, "As in (the) day, we should walk becomingly, not in riotings and drinkings; not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the lusts of the flesh."

Again the division is sharp and clear; on the one hand Christ, on the other the six-fold lusts of the flesh, and the exhortation to walk becomingly.

Rom. xiv. 15, "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, no longer according to love thou walkest."

Here are three practical outworkings of the newness of life set forth in chapter vi.; they all need a separate study, but cannot receive more than a passing glance in this review. I Cor. iii. 3, "Are ye not carnal, and walk according to man?"; this must be read together with the reference to *man's day* of chapter iv. 3 (*margin*). II Cor. v. 7, "We walk by means of faith and not by means of sight". Col. ii. 6, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, walk ye in Him". Col. iii. 7, "In which ye also once walked, when ye lived in them". Oh what a depth of doctrine and practice these two verses contain; see how the reception of Christ, and the character in which we receive Him, must influence our walk; see also the way in which the walk is linked with the life, *Ye walked. . . . when ye lived* is true both in the sphere of the flesh and of the spirit, so also runs the argument of Gal. v. 25, "If we *live* in the spirit, let us also *walk* in the spirit"; the word "walk" occurs seven times in the epistle to the Ephesians, we give the references: ii. 2, 10; iv. 1, 17; v. 2, 8, 13.

Let us come closer to the passage under review, and learn from the parallels in Ephesians and Colossians.

"Wherein once ye walked according to the age of this world, according to the prince of the authority of the air, of that spirit now energising in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2).

"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness" (Eph. iv. 17-19).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is idolatry; for which things' sake the wrath of God cometh" (Col. iii. 5, 6).

Such is the natural condition of those who were by grace blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ. The sinful walk of Eph. ii. 2 is said to be according to (1) the age of this world, and (2) the prince of the authority of the air.

THE AGE OF THIS WORLD.—The way in which *aiōn* is used in this verse prevents us from translating *aiōnian*, “age-abiding”, or “age-lasting”, because something more than a time idea is intended here. Character also must be understood; while “age” therefore includes the idea of time, it also includes the characteristics of that time; the expression, “age of this world”, looks at the age dominated by “the world”. The A.V. suggests character by the translation “course”. What is the world? *Kosmos*.—In secular writings this word always denotes order, regularity, ornament. In I Pet. iii. 3 it is translated “adorning”. *Wahl* translates James iii. 6 “ornament (i.e., the glosser over) of iniquity”. In its primary usage it indicates the created heaven and earth, and all therein. The Lord Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of *this world*” (John xviii. 36), although His kingdom will one day include the earth and the land of Israel. “This world” denotes the order obtaining *now*, and this world is stained with sin, and at enmity against God. This world has a prince, “the *prince* of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me”, “Now shall the *prince* of this world be cast out”, “the *prince* of this world is judged”. It is evident from these passages that the world as at present constituted is anti Christ, and therefore to walk according to it is a mark of the unbeliever.

- A | Ye are from beneath;
- B | I am from above;
- A | Ye are of this world;
- B | I am not of this world (John viii. 23).

The seventeenth chapter of John has much to say concerning the world; the Lord declared both of His disciples and Himself that they were “not of this world”. God has made “foolish the wisdom of this world”, and “the spirit of the world” is placed in opposition to “the spirit which is of God”. “The fashion of this world passeth away” (I Cor. i. 20; iii. 19; ii. 12; vii. 31).

The epistle to the Galatians has two very strong references to the world; the first (iv. 3) speaks of it as a sphere of bondage, “even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world”, which elements are again referred to in verse 9 as “weak and beggarly”. Gal. vi. 14 says, “but let it not be that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I unto the world”. No words could more clearly declare the utter antipathy that exists between the gospel of grace (as preached and practised by the apostle) and the world, than these two references. The elements of the world, together with the traditions of men, are “a vain deceitful philosophy”, and “not according to Christ”. To these elements the believer has died, for the apostle says, “Wherefore, if ye died with Christ from the elements of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances” (Col. ii. 8, 20). It will be seen from this earth passage that it is still possible to be living in this world; the entangling web of the world alas holds us all, we are often unaware of it until some revealing ray of light shines from the Word of truth. True religion includes the keeping of oneself “unspotted from the world” (James i. 27), which clearly indicates its moral character and defiled state before God. Further, James asks, “Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”. It is in this epistle that Abraham, the man of faith, the

man who left the world, is called the friend of God (ii. 23). Peter speaks both of the “corruptions” and “pollutions” of the world, the last word being the “*miasma*” plague spreading filth, showing the awful condition of the world before God (II Pet. i. 4; ii. 20).

The first epistles of John uses the word twenty-four times in its five chapters, while the prison epistles use it only seven times in all. We cannot stay to consider all these references but just mention one or two. I John ii. 15 commands us to “love not the world”, declaring that “if any one love the world, the love of the Father is not in him”, moreover verse 16 supplies us with an insight into the “things that are in the world”—the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. Verse 17 echoes I Cor. vii. 31, the world knows neither the believer, nor his Lord (iii. 1). It hates him, even as Cain hated Abel (iii. 12, 13). The words of iii. 17 should be read with ii. 16, for the words translated “life” and “goods” are the same. Every one who has been begotten of God, and who believes that Jesus is the Son of God, overcomes the world. The last reference is in v. 19, “the whole world lieth in wickedness”; this may possibly mean “in the wicked one”. Such is the Scriptural statement. What fellowship hath light with darkness, death with life, Christ with Belial? The great complexity—the world, stands on one side, Christ stand on the other. God loved the world and sent His Son into it to save sinners from their sins, but He came not to repair or renovate the world that must pass away. It has been weighed in the balances and found wanting; its politics are fore-doomed, its culture is unsanctified and Christless; its civilization goes in the way of Cain.

Just Lot, vexing his righteous soul, is a picture of the believer who has not learned the Scriptural character of the world, Abraham, outside the city, the picture of the man of God. Once the believer formed a part of that great system, the world; nothing but death and burial with Christ can make it possible for such to become “dead to the world”; the believer severed from the world, its advantages and its snares, finds his all in Christ. To some this may sound a hard saying, but the Scripture teaching seems clear. To walk “according to the age of this world” is the exact opposite to having died to sin. To walk according to man is the denial of spirituality, so self-evident is this that the apostle asks those who died with Christ from the elements of the world, “why, AS THOUGH LIVING in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?” This also is his thought in Eph. ii. There, the believer is viewed as dead to sin, quickened, risen, and seated with Christ, the other side of that grave lies the “times past”, and with it the walk according to the “age of this world”.

**#34. “The World, the Flesh, and the Devil” (Eph. ii. 2, 3).  
pp. 145 - 150**

The Scripture not only teaches us that our life before salvation may be described as a walk “according to the age of this world”, it also shows the power that is at work in the sons of disobedience; the world is looked upon as a kingdom, over which there rules a *prince*, his title as given in this passage is, “the prince of the authority of the air”. The word translated “prince” is *archōn*, and indicates one who is first in authority, and so a prince. It is used of the rulers of the synagogue (Luke viii. 41), and of the rulers of the Jews (Luke xxiv. 20; John iii. 1). The title is used by Stephen with reference to Moses (Acts vii. 27, the A.V. of Exod. ii. 14 reading, “a prince and a judge”). Satan is spoken of as the prince of the demons (Matt. ix. 34; xii. 24, see verses 26-27), whilst verse 28 places the Spirit of God against the prince of the demons. Three times do we read in John’s Gospel of “the prince of this world”, viz., “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out”; “the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in Me”; “the prince of this world is judged” (John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11). The last reference where this word occurs is suggestive and cheering, “Jesus Christ. . . . the prince of the kings of the earth”.

A cognate of *archōn* comes in Eph. i. 21 where it is rendered “principality”, while the word “power” of the same verse is the word *authority*, rendered “power” in A.V. of Eph. ii. 2. The prince here spoken of is “the prince of the authority of the air”. This is a strange title, and it seems to show that Satan, at present, has his seat of government in the air, and because of this the air does not escape the final judgments and raptured saints are to “meet the Lord in the air”. To us, who are still flesh and blood, the air seems to be unsuited as a permanent abode, yet when we remember that we are dealing with spirit powers, we remember also that our objections are no longer valid. The conflict of the believer is described in Eph. vi.; it is not directed against “flesh and blood”, but “principalities, authorities, world-holders of this darkness, spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies”, shows that rule and dominion over this world and its darkness is exercised by those who are not flesh and blood, but who are mighty powers in the heavenlies; the prince of these powers is also the prince of this world, and the god of this age.

Eph. ii. is not alone in speaking of the state of unconversion as that of the dominion of Satan. The apostle, receiving an epitome of his ministry, in Acts xxvi. 18 speaks of the turning “from the authority of Satan unto God”. Again in Col. i. 13 the apostle speaks of being delivered “from the authority of darkness”, and in ii. 15 he speaks of Christ having “spoiled principalities and authorities” by the cross. Something of the meaning of the title, “prince of the authority of the air”, may be gathered from Rev. xi. 6, where the witnesses are said to have authority to shut heaven, and to turn the waters to blood; or again in Rev. xiii. 2, where it is written that the dragon gave to the beast “his power, and his throne, and his great authority”. Whatever the dread authority be that is spoken of in Eph. ii. 2, it is wielded by a *spirit*, who is a mighty energizing power in the sons of disobedience.

Two spirits powers are brought into strong contrast in this contest, the one, the spirit of the evil power that energizes the unsaved in their disobedience to God, the other, the Spirit of Him Who raised up Jesus from the dead. In Eph. i. 19, 20 we read of:--

“the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe according to the *energizing* of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.”

While Scripture does not minimize the greatness of the energizing power of Satan, it does draw attention to the “exceeding greatness” of the energizing power of God. This evil energy is spoken of in II Thess. ii. 7, 9, “the mystery of iniquity already energizeth”, and “whose coming is according to an energizing of Satan”; this dreadful working is met by God in verse 11, “and for this cause God shall send them an energizing of deceit”. Whether we can fathom this awful depth or not, we can realize the reality of Satan’s power, and understand in some measure the unseen worldwide influence that is manifesting itself on every hand in the case of nations, and of the world, in fact in all the things of man. “The son of disobedience” are put in direct contrast with those who are “children of light”, showing thereby that disobedience is connected with darkness.

*Apeitheia* is rendered “unbelief” in Rom. xi. 30, 32, and Heb. iv. 6, 11. *Peithō* is often rendered “persuade”, and the sons of disobedience are chargeable with an unwillingness to be persuaded as to the truth. While the world is divided into two main divisions, saved and unsaved, both of these divisions are sub-divided; not only are the saved blessed under various dispensations, but they are also made up of ready and unready ones. The unsaved are all unbelievers, but some have never wilfully rejected the word, having never heard the gospel (Rom. x. 14, 15), while others are said to have pleasure in them that commit the awful works of darkness (Rom. i. 32). There are those who are said to be “ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth”, the reason being that they “resist the truth”, and are men of corrupt minds, “reprobate concerning the faith” (II Tim. iii. 7, 8). The “strong delusion that they should believe a lie”, is sent to those who “received not *the love* of the truth” (II Thess. ii. 10, 11). The miracles of the false prophet deceived them that *had received* the mark of the beast” (Rev. xix. 20). It is a part of the work of Satan to turn men away from the truth, for “the god of this age hath blinded the minds of the unbelieving, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. iv. 4); such were the Gentiles, walking in the vanity of their minds, having the understanding darkened.

If the Ephesians to whom the apostle wrote (addressing them as “ye” in ii. 2), were by nature “sons of disobedience”, the Jews from whom the apostle had been taken (spoken of as “we” in verse 3), were as truly “children of wrath even as others”, “among whom we all had our conversation in time past”. It is not strictly necessary that the *we* of verse 3 should be limited to the Jews, for the apostle may have intended an all-embracing term, “we all”, Jews and Gentiles, but seeing that the distinction is observed in verses 11 and 12, it may be intended here also. It is a levelling statement; outwardly Israel was not numbered among the nations; they were the circumcision, others had no hope, no Messiah, no God, yet were they (the favoured people) children of wrath even as the

others, they too, in spite of electing grace, and wonderful laws, were in heart so like the heathen that the apostle sees no distinction and says, “among whom”, not separated and distinct, but “among whom we all had our manner of life”. Of the Gentiles dispensationally it was written that they were “Gentiles in the flesh” and “without God in the world” (11 and 12), yet of all, whatever their dispensational privilege or disadvantage, it can be said that they all lived “in the desires of the flesh”.

Gal. v. 16, “Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the desire of the flesh”, will make clear that to be so characterized is an evidence that the spirit which thus leads and energizes is not of God. The desire of the flesh is *the* easiest of all entries for the spirit that energized the sons of disobedience. Look back over history, where will you stop? Must we not go back to the dawn of creation, and there in Eden’s garden see the tempter making our first parents sons of disobedience by the “desire of the flesh” (Gen. iii. 6). These desires are “deceitful”; the truth in Jesus teaches “that ye have put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful desires” (Eph. iv. 22). Peter warns believers (calling them by the name of “strangers and pilgrims” to “abstain from fleshly desires which war against the soul” (I Pet. ii. 11), and again in iv. 2 he says, “that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the desires of men, but to the will of God”. Again, in II Pet. i. 4 he speaks of having “escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (or desire), and says of certain evil-doers that they “walk after the flesh in polluting desires” (ii. 10). The “scoffers” who say, “Where is the promise of His coming?”, have this characteristic that “they walk after their own desires”. The epistle to the Romans reveals the reason why the desire of the flesh is so faithful an ally of Satan. Sin reigns in the mortal body of the unbeliever, “let no sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body, *that ye should obey it in the lust (or desires) thereof*” (Rom. vi. 12). “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the lusts (or desires) of the flesh” (Rom. xiii. 14). “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the passions and desires” (Gal. v. 24). We have used the word “desires” rather than “lusts”, because in present day usage, “lust” has become lowered in meaning, and is usually associated with immoral and base passions; it is misleading to think that such is the scriptural limitation. The desires of the flesh may be above all suspicion of vice or immorality, they may include many of the legitimate things of life, they may include high ambitions and great schemes, the point is they are the desires of the FLESH, and the mind of the flesh is enmity against God. The great moving power of all men is desire. The man without desire or ambition accomplishes little; the desires of the flesh, however, soon lead to “doing the will of the flesh and of the mind”. This is in exact contrast with the statement concerning the servants of Christ “doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph. vi. 6).

The whole difference between saved and unsaved may be expressed in this difference between their relation to the will of God: in the one case the dominant power is the “will of the flesh”, while in the other it is “that good and perfect and acceptable will of God”. Just as there is a filthiness of spirit as well as of flesh (II Cor. vii. 1), so there is the will of the mind, just as evil as that of the flesh; the mind (*dianoia*) of the unsaved is darkened (Eph. iv. 18), and enmity and alienation by wicked works is associated with it in Col. i. 21. Speaking of other phases of God’s purpose, the new covenant deals with this

alienation of mind, for it includes the promise, “I will put My laws into their mind” (Heb. viii. 10). When we realize the compelling force of desire and will, and then further have revealed that behind all the activities of this world there is the spirit that energizeth the sons of disobedience, we may well exclaim, “By grace are ye saved”! Nothing but the power that raises the dead could suffice to deliver us from this authority of darkness. That authority still constitutes our enemy, but thanks be to God we are more than conquerors in Him who is raised far above all.

**#35. Rich Mercy and Riches of Grace (Eph. ii. 4-7).  
pp. 177 - 180**

Our study of verses 2 and 3 left us with a sense of the utter impossibility for the flesh, energized as it is by a wicked spirit, and environed in a world that is the enemy of God, of doing anything to bring about its own deliverance. The first words of verse 4 are the only words under circumstances that could be uttered, if the whole race were not to perish. “But God”: great as the opposition may be, impossible as the task may appear, God is always the One and true turning point, with God all things are possible; Abraham and Sarah, as good as dead, shall have a seed as multitudinous as the stars of heaven and the sand on the sea shore, for He is the God of resurrection: did He stop short of that, all the promises and threatenings of law, all the rigours of Egypt or the blessings of a land flowing with milk and honey, would still leave the human heart untouched and unrepentant.

Rom. v. 8 is another instance of the introduction of the words, “but God”; so also are I Cor. i.27, ii. 10, iii. 6, where in each case the inability and failure of the flesh are exchanged for power and wisdom by the God of resurrection. Before the passage in Eph. ii. proceeds to tell us the wondrous works of God, it stays for a moment to tell us what He is—“but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us”. He is rich in mercy. *Dr. Bullinger* in his Greek Concordance and Lexicon explains *eleos* to mean, “a feeling of sympathy with misery, active compassion, the desire of relieving the miserable”. Mercy differs from grace, in that it considers misery with pity, whereas grace considers the guilt and unworthiness of the object of its care. This is noticeable in the epistle to the Romans; the great word of Rom. i.-viii. is *grace*, and *mercy* does not occur until the dispensational and practical sections are reached in chapters ix.-xvi.

God is rich in this blessed quality. The riches of His goodness, the riches of His glory, the riches both of His wisdom and knowledge, the riches, yea the exceeding riches of His grace (Rom. i.4; ix. 23; xi. 3; Eph. i. 7, 18; ii. 7; iii. 16; Phil. iv. 19) are all lavished upon the undeserving children of wrath, accomplishing every step of their way from the initial repentance, brought about by the inheritance of the saints, and all summed up in the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. iii. 8).

One may have riches, and yet not use them, or use them only upon self. What is the motive cause that places the riches of God at the disposal of mercy? “Because of His great love wherewith He loved us”. The word “great” here draws attention to the abundance of the love rather than the quality of greatness; it was because God so loved that He saved us sinners of the Gentiles. This is what He is, rich in mercy as the God of love. What will such a God do? Verse 5 takes up the theme of verse 1, “Ye being dead to trespasses and sins. . . . we also being dead to trespasses, He made us alive together with Christ”. The apostle has more to say than this, but before he goes further he is constrained to ejaculate, “by grace are ye saved”.

It is well to pause at this N.T. *Selah*. Over and over again we have heard brethren speak of these blessings, death with Him has been remembered, being raised and seated with Him has been gratefully acknowledged, but being made alive together with Him has often been forgotten. It may be true that to be raised necessitates life, nevertheless God, who is rich in mercy, calls our attention to the blessed fact of life in Christ. The apostle who was dead to the law, and crucified with Christ, knew this life: “the life I NOW live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God”, “Christ liveth in me”, “I live, yet not I, but Christ”, “always bearing *about in the body* the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be manifest in our body, for we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest *in our mortal flesh*”. The life *now* lived in the *mortal* flesh does not refer to that blessed time of resurrection glory. Once we were under the dominion of death by reason of indwelling sin; now we have passes from death unto life by reason of the indwelling Spirit (Rom. vii. 20, viii. 11, “He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also make alive your *mortal* bodies because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you”). To this same truth Eph. i. 19, 20 refers, when it speaks of the mighty power which was wrought in Christ when He was raised from the dead as being directed “to usward who believe”.

We have not died with Christ and been buried with Him merely to await in sleep for resurrection, we have been “made alive”, we have been raised to walk in newness of life. The spirit that once energized us as sons of disobedience has left us, but we have not been left lifeless, for the body without the spirit is dead, the Spirit of Him who raised up Christ now energizes us to live, to will, and to do; “the living, the living, shall praise Thee”; and unless we realize that life is ours even now, in Christ, how can we “live unto God”? Before therefore the consummation is reached, the apostle exclaims, “by grace are ye saved”. Let us not forget the grace that enables us now to live unto God. In the contemplation of the future glory in the ages to come, life now is a pledge of life then (“and raised us up together, and seated us together in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus”).

The mystery of Christ is indeed the basis of the mystery of the church. He was raised and seated in the heavenlies, so are the members of His body. Before a word of exhortation is given, before even a reference to walking worthy is mentioned, the believer is spoken as being “seated”. He starts from a finished work. The nature of his new walk and conflict cannot alter this fact, the highest place in glory is his by grace, the question of prize and crown does not enter the subject here. Quickened, raised, seated, “in order that in the ages to come His might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness

towards us in Christ Jesus". What does this verse teach? Does it mean that in those future ages the church of the one body will be recognized as an exhibition of the exceeding grace of God, by reason of His great mercy that quickened, raised and seated us in the heavenlies? Or can it be possible that these blessings are after all only preliminaries? If the words, "rich in mercy", are sufficient to speak of the blessings that lead to the seat in the heavenlies, what subsequent blessings are they that shall call forth the words, "exceeding riches of grace"? The wording of Eph. ii. 7 seems to show that the blessing that culminates in the seat in the heavenlies is but a beginning, not an end. In the coming ages the exceeding riches of His grace will be exhibited in kindness toward us. It seems too good to be true, and that very fact may be a good reason why it should be true, for we are now in the atmosphere of mercy, love, grace and kindness. If rich mercy places us at the right hand of God, what may not the exceeding riches of His grace accomplish? Do not these thoughts throw us back once more to chapter i. 18, where we are exhorted to pray that we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints? If the ages to come hold out such blessed prospects, we also remember that it is written concerning our exalted Head, that He has been raised far above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come. No added blessing but what will enthrone Christ; no added kindness but what will be ministered to us "in Christ Jesus."

## Passages from Proverbs.

### #1. The Threefold Preface (Prov. i. 2-7). pp. 155 - 158

While the fountain doctrine of justification by faith, and the all-sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ for redemption and sanctification are prominent in the mind and message of those who believe the truth, there appears to be a failure many times to remember that for the walk that shall be “unto all pleasing”, “wisdom and understanding” are necessary (Col. i. 9). Christ has not only been made unto us “righteousness, sanctification, and redemption”, but also “wisdom”. When the apostle James spoke of the divers temptations which should come to those who endured in the course for the crown of life, he speaks of the need of wisdom:--

“Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God” (James i. 4, 5).

One might have thought that strength to endure, fortitude, stedfastness, or some kindred virtue would have been uppermost, but no, it is wisdom that is felt to be the great need for the tried believer. It is one of the spheres of the believer’s walk, e.g., “Walk in wisdom” (Col. iv. 5). Without wisdom practical righteousness is impossible, for even though we err unwittingly, that error cannot be right and hence cannot be righteous.

The book of Proverbs contains inspired rules for the conduct of life; our English title suggests the terse, compact form of speech, *proverbium*, indicating for, or instead of, much verbiage; the Hebrew word *mishlai* is probably derived from *mashal*, “to rule”, though some think it is from a word meaning “to resemble”. In the first case we look to the proverb for guidance, in the second we are taught in parable form. Regarding the book of Proverbs as a whole, and particularly in connection with the suggestion that some of the proverbs were written FOR Solomon, and some BY him, we commend *The Companion Bible* to the reader. While it is necessary to arrive at some conclusion concerning this suggestion, this series does not necessitate a laboured discussion of the subject. We commend the whole book to our readers, but we do not intend to give an exposition of the whole, but just take a verse or two here and there, hence our title, *Passages from Proverbs*.

It has been observed that the opening verses of the book seem to be most ragged; in the words of the Rev. John Miller:--

“We find in these opening verses where we might expect the diction to be most poised and perfect, a rather mixed collection of prefaces and preliminary purposes. This introductory incoherency reaches to the seventh verse inclusive, and if anyone doubts what we aver, let him try to read that collection of texts, and give the syntax, and the logic, and the motive for such a loose-jointed catalogue; the meaning comes when we take the infinitives of the second, fourth, and sixth verses, and see how they answered, by the assertions of the third, fifth and seventh; there are three assertions or proverbs therefore.”

The obscurity it is here stated is in the translation, and not in the inspired original. The first proverb occupies verses 2 and 3, the infinitives being translated “to know”, “to perceive”, and “to receive”; the complete proverb therefore is obtained by just adding the little word *is* to verse three, thus:--

“To know wisdom, and instruction;  
To perceive the words of understanding;  
To receive the instruction of wisdom,  
IS justice and judgment and equity.”

We will return to a closer consideration later. The second proverb is contained in verses 4 and 5:--

“To give subtilty to the simple;  
To the young man knowledge and discretion;  
A wise man will hear, and will increase learning;  
And a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.”

The third proverb occupies verses 6 and 7:--

“To understand a proverb and the interpretation;  
The works of the wise, and their dark sayings;  
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;  
But fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Let us now consider the first proverb, “To know wisdom and discipline”. The word rendered “instruction” is translated elsewhere “chastening” (Prov. iii. 11; xiii. 24; Job v. 17), “chastisement” (Isa. liii. 5), “correction” (Prov. vii. 22; xxiii. 13), “discipline” (Job xxxvi. 10).

Here we have wisdom and its practical application toward us in discipline; next comes the perception of wisdom. The word “to perceive” and the word “understanding” are cognate. Literally the words read, “to make discern speeches of discernment”, and by thus contemplating the actual wording we find on the threshold of the book a parallel to Phil. i. 10, and II Tim. ii. 15, the idea of discerning the point of a speech that possesses discrimination being prominent. “To receive the instruction of wisdom”; instruction we have translated “discipline” in verse 2. Wisdom here is not the same as in verse 2, it is rather something clear or prudent; thus we have four steps toward the goal of this proverb:--

1. To KNOW wisdom, to recognize it when we see it.
2. To KNOW it when it touches us as discipline.
3. To DISCERN things that differ in the speeches of the wise.
4. To RECEIVE the discipline that prudence demands.

All this is righteousness, and judgment, and equity. The whole good path (ii. 9) demands something even more than is laid down in the four steps detailed above. The recognition of the fact first, however, then the understanding of it is the right order. Ponder well this opening proverb. We who are justified freely by grace, who desire to

walk in harmony with our calling, we shall value these words of guidance; we cannot be *practically* righteous if unwise, undisciplined and undiscerning.

The second proverb contemplates growth, advancement, and ability to help others. The “simple” are literally the “open ones”, and are frequently mentioned in the book: they are classed with sinners and fools (i. 22); their turning away from the call of wisdom is fatal to themselves (i. 32); the simple believe everything, they pass on and are punished (xiv. 15; xxii. 3); all these passages if considered in their contexts reveal the fact that these simple ones are perishing for lack of instruction. “Discretion” preserves, it is life to the soul, it guards the life (ii. 11; iii. 21; v. 2). Verse 4 having spoken of those who *need* instruction, verse 5 proceeds to tell who is fitted to *give* it, “A wise man will hear, and increase learning”. The word “learning” means “to take”, and indicates that the wise man continues to take instruction; the best teachers are ever learning, ever increasing their capacity to receive, “and a man of understanding”, one who has become “discerning”, “shall attain unto wise counsels”. The word rendered “wise counsels” is derived from a word meaning “a cord”, “a rope”, or a “tackling”. The “Shipmaster” in Jonah i. 6 is literally “the chief of the rope”. Wise counsels, therefore, indicate guidance and leading in the sense of navigating a vessel at sea; here then is the qualification for the teacher.

We now consider the third proverb, which deals with the grand secret of understanding the deep things of God. The A.V. by rendering, “to understand a proverb *and the interpretation*”, does not take us very far, for how else can a proverb be understood than by its interpretation? *The Companion Bible* renders “interpretation” by “satire, or the point of what is said”. Hab. ii. 6 translates it “taunting”. The meaning of “a proverb and its point” seems to be given in the next phrase, “the words of the wise (the proverb), and their dark sayings” (the point). What is the “beginning”, the *sine qua non*, for such knowledge? THE FEAR OF THE LORD. Not so much the brain, as the heart is here put first, this “fear of the Lord” is the “wisdom and discipline” that “fools despise”.

The three proverbs open this book of wise sayings that are full and deep; their arrangement is simple, being an alternation:--

- A | To know, to perceive, to receive for one’s self.
- B | Is righteousness, etc.
- A | To give to others, as does a teacher.
- B | Necessitates hearing, discerning, and capacity to guide.
- A | To understand a proverb and its point.
- B | The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

We commend these opening words of *Proverbs* to all our readers, and hope that the need for wisdom in these perilous times may be realized, and that we may be guided along our pilgrim journey by these inspired “words of the wise”.

## #2. The Fear of the Lord. pp. 186 - 191

In our first paper we considered the important conclusion of the preface, which was, “the fear of the Lord” was the “beginning of knowledge”. So important is the lesson that finds its centre in the “fear of the Lord”, that the phrase occurs fourteen times in the book. As may be expected, a progressive line of teaching is found connected with these occurrences, and we propose giving that teaching a consideration in this article. First, let us note the fourteen references and their arrangement.

### The fear of the Lord.

- A1 | i. 7. The beginning of knowledge.
  - | i. 29. Knowledge hated.
  - | ii. 5. Knowledge found.
- B1 | viii. 13. Hate evil.
- A1 | ix. 10. The beginning of wisdom.
  - | x. 27. Great days.
  - | xiv. 26. Strong confidence.
- A2 | xiv. 27. A fountain of life.
  - | xv. 16. Contentment with little.
  - | xv. 33. Discipline of wisdom.
- B2 | xvi. 6. Depart from evil.
- A2 | xix. 23. Tendeth to life.
  - | xxii. 4. Riches, honour and life
  - | xxiii. 17. All the day long.

These proverbs are spiritual, and are to be understood by those who fear the Lord. The very beginning of knowledge is given as the fear of the Lord; a wisdom and a discipline that fools despise; this elementary truth is enlarged upon in verse 29, and in ii. 5, before the next great item of teaching is given (see structure). Wisdom has cried, warning of the awful effects of loving simplicity and hating knowledge (i. 20-28), then comes the conclusion:--

“Forasmuch as they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof, therefore shall they eat the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own desires, for the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.”

“They did not choose”. What issues hang upon a right choice! The Psalmist said, “I have chosen the way of truth” (Psa. cxix. 30); may this choice be ours. Those who turn away from wisdom are slain by their own choice, “they lay wait for their own blood, they lurk privily for their own lives” (i. 18).

Chapter ii. opens with a sharp contrast: here, the fear of the Lord is not merely given as the beginning of knowledge, but the one who has this is instructed how he may “discern” the fear of the Lord, and “find” the knowledge of God. Look how specific the instructions are, seek it like men seek for wealth, and you must find it—find, simply

receive—here we *commence* where the first proverb left off. Secondly, hide the commandments. The word indicates that one has discovered a treasure and “lays it up”. Thirdly, incline the ear: the word means “to prick up the ear” as does an animal; it is rendered “attend” (Prov. iv. 1, 20; v. 1; vii. 24), “hearken” (I Sam. xv. 22), “mark” (Jer. xxiii. 18). Fourthly, then shalt thou bend thy heart toward discernment. Here we reach the end of the first stage, receive, hide, hearken, and the heart bends toward discernment. The A.V. commences verse 3, “yea, if”; the Hebrew *ki-im* is better rendered “for if”, or “but if”, and marks a new departure.

First, cry after discernment and understanding; the heart now begins to pray; this word is used for prayer over and over again. Secondly, seek it as money, and search for it as for hid treasure; here earnestness is evident, the bending of the heart has led on to a definite desire. Thirdly, then shalt thou discern the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. Where, it may be asked, shall we search, or where shall we dig? Verse 6 supplies the answer: His inspired Word is His treasury. All that we have seen is comprehended in “the beginning of knowledge”, which is necessary to understand the point of these Proverbs and the words of the wise.

We now come to a practical issue: “the fear of the Lord is to hate evil” (viii. 13). No lesser word is compatible with the truth. Evil cannot be considered neutral, much less friendly, by those who fear the Lord. Fools hate knowledge (i. 29), and instruction (v. 12). The wise hate evil.

By noticing the structure of references above, it will be seen that the member B1 | viii. 13, “Hate evil”, is balanced by the member B2 | xvi. 6, “Depart from evil”. This has already been written in Prov. iii. 1, and xiii. 19 declares that it is an “abomination” to fools to depart from evil. (“A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident”, xiv. 16). The departing from evil is the very highway along which the upright walk (xvi. 17). Hate is as active as love: if love impels, hate repels. The order of this instruction is noteworthy. Departure does not come first; hatred first; the heart and the motive, then departure, the feet and the motion. It is an elementary law, as much a law as anything so named by science, that they who fear the Lord will hate evil and depart from it. No sophistry can alter this, and the wise will keep it before them as their infallible guide. Some may say, “Let us do evil that good may come”. Of such the apostle says their “damnation is just”. They eat the fruit of their own ways. This makes us suspicious of any line of teaching that looks upon evil with any other eye than that of hatred. God may use evil, even as the very chapter under notice (xvi.) declares, but we are not God, and our attitude is not to be regulated by our ideas, but His commands.

We now proceed, and discover that not only is the fear of the Lord the beginning of knowledge, but that it is also the beginning of wisdom (ix. 10). It is useless to reprove a scorner (8), for he lacks the essential to wisdom. A wise man being reproved will love (8), he will increase in wisdom (9), the reason being that he has been initiated, he fears the Lord; the next verse says, “for by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased” (11). This is the next item in the list of references, for x. 27

says, “the fear of the Lord prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened”. There is deeper truth here, and in ix. 10, than merely the prolonging of life, which, however, is attached to the observing of the commandment. Chapter ix. 10 may be translated, “for by me thy days shall become great, and they shall make thee greater through years of life”; and x. 17, “the fear of the Lord makes greater days, but the years of the wicked shall be made little”. This too is the testimony of Prov. iii. 1:--

“My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and years of life, and peace, SHALL MAKE THEE GREATER.”

Again in iv. 10 the A.V. says, “Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings, and the years of thy life shall be many”; the true rendering which takes account of the gender of the verb is, “Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings, AND THEY SHALL GROW GREATER TO THEE through years of life”. This is an aspect of truth that it is a blessing to realize.

The other passage that supplements ix. 10 is xiv. 26: “in the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and His children shall have a place of refuge”. The heart, not the intellect, is ever in view. They who “fear” the Lord need fear none else, in Him they have both confidence and refuge.

The Proverbs now leave the subject of knowledge and wisdom to treat of life. “The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death”. We can understand the first statement of this verse, but how can a *fountain* be of use in *departing*, and in departing from a *snare*? The word rendered “fountain” is derived from a verb, to dig, and, compounded with M, means literally “a dug out place”. This became almost exclusively used for a fountain, but we are not bound to adopt this secondary meaning. The primary meaning seems demanded by the idea of departing from the snares of death. The snares of death are varied, and one that entraps many is concern for the good things of this life. The fear of the Lord enables us to depart from this, for “better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure and trouble therewith” (xiv. 16). This is a discipline, as the apostle says in Phil. iv., “I have learned”, “I am instructed”, yet it is the “discipline of wisdom”, and is in line with other Scriptures which teach that suffering precedes glory, and “before honour is humility” (Prov. xv. 3). This brings us to the passage already considered, “the fear of the Lord is to depart from evil”. In the section that deals with knowledge and wisdom *hatred* of evil is spoken of; in the section that deals with life, *departing* from it is the teaching. Out of the heart are the issues of life.

We now consider xix. 23, “the fear of the Lord tendeth to life”. The plural “lives” may have future life in view, and this seems to receive confirmation from the next line, “and he that hath it shall abide satisfied”. Contentment here below with a “little” and “satisfied” in the life to come are connected with the fear of the Lord, as fruit is with root, for the next reference may be translated, “the end of humiliation, the fear of the Lord, is riches and honour, and life” (xxii. 4). It is therefore for our highest good that we hold to the fear of the Lord. They who fear not the Lord may prosper in this life, but we understand, like Asaph, “the end”.

The last reference most aptly leaves us with the thought,

“Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long,  
for surely there is a hereafter, and thine expectation shall not be cut off” (xxiii. 17, 18).

The fear of the Lord covers the whole journey, from the “beginning” of knowledge unto the “hereafter” that shall be enjoyed in His Presence.

May we learn these lessons for our present and future welfare.

## Studies in the Book of the Revelation.

### #25. The Universal Praise of the Lamb (Rev. v. 11-14). pp. 1 – 4

When the four living ones and the four and twenty elders had sung their new song, representing the innermost circle around the throne of heaven, its theme is taken up by the next order of created beings, the angels; here the number is so vast as to pass beyond definite enumeration, “their number was ten thousand of ten thousands, and thousands of thousands”. These “holy myriads” seem to be referred to in Jude 14, and Matt. xxvi. 53. Dan. vii. 10, to which we have referred before, speaks of those who surrounded the heavenly throne in similar language. “Thousand thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him.” These angels are spoken of as being ministering spirits, and in connection with Israel they had many opportunities of realizing the problem of redemption. From the tremendous host of angels sound forth the words, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive

Power, and  
Riches, and  
Wisdom, and  
Strength, and  
Honour, and  
Glory, and  
Blessing.”

Here is a seven-fold ascription, detailing in heavenly joy the perfections of the Lamb that was slain. The first is POWER.—He is worthy to receive power. The question is raised, Does this mean that He is worthy of having all these virtues and gifts bestowed upon Him? or is it that He is worthy of being praised as possessing them? That the Lord did possess power before His birth in Bethlehem we know, for Heb. i. 3 speaks of Him as “upholding all things by the word of His power”. The Lord Himself, when He died on Calvary’s cross, “was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God” (II Cor. xiii. 4). That risen life marked Him off as “the Son of God with power” (Rom. i. 4), and His resurrection was the source from which His believing children draw their power (Phil. iii. 10).

In the three gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, the words of the Lord are recorded concerning His coming in the clouds with power and great glory. His High Priesthood is in the power of an endless life (Heb. vii. 16). The host of heaven say that the Lamb is worthy to receive power. We take this here in a literal sense. The Lord had been exalted to the highest place of glory, graced with the name that is above every name, that at that name every knee should bow; here in Rev. v. the myriads of adoring ministering spirits acclaim His worthiness to receive this seven-fold blessing. Power had been given to others, but how unworthy had they proved themselves to be of the trust. We read of the

powers of the heavens which are to be shaken, the power of the enemy which was used for the hurt of human kind. There shall yet be manifested “power and signs and lying wonders” in the earth, when the dragon gives to the beast “his power, and his throne, and his great authority” (II Thess. ii. 9; Rev. xiii. 2). This last reference supplies the parallel with our subject; just as God will give to the Lamb “power”, and He is acclaimed as worthy to receive it, so the dragon at the last feels that in the beast he has one who is worthy to receive this power is “as it had been slain”, so of the beast it is written in Rev. xiii. 3, 4:--

“And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded (same word ‘slain’) unto death, and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast, and they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”

The parallel between these two passages is very marked and needs further comment. The power given to the Lamb has special reference to His kingdom, and in xi. 17 we catch an echo of the new song, when the Lord God almighty took to Himself His great power and reigned.

The same age-time lesson which we learn from seeing a Lamb, as it had been slain, in the place where we might have expected a Lion, is here. In all heaven and earth none is so worthy to receive *power* as the Lamb, and that Lamb the One who was dumb before His accusers and was crucified through weakness.

**RICHEs.**—What we have said of power may also be said of riches; the Lord was rich, yet for our sakes became poor; He is worthy therefore to receive riches. When we try to think of the “riches in glory”, or the unsearchable riches of Christ”, we cannot find words to express even our puny conceptions, but we glory in the fact that He who sits upon heaven’s throne and rules this poor cursed earth in righteousness and peace, is worthy to receive the coveted power and riches which no one yet has possessed without failing somewhere in his stewardship. The gold that the Lord counseled Laodicea to buy, was “gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich”; such is the character of all the riches that He will receive.

So we may consider all the rest. The *wisdom* that is first pure, then peaceable, is His; the *strength* that is His will never be used but in the cause of righteousness. *Honour* and *glory* constituted His crown “for the suffering of death” (Heb. ii. 9), and His priesthood’s consecration on the mount of transfiguration (II Pet. i. 17). Glory and honour also pertained to Him as the Son of man beneath whose feet shall be subjected all things.

Finally comes **BLESSING**.—As we listen to this acclamation, our minds are impelled backward into the history of the past. We think of those who have received from God glory and honour, riches and wisdom, power and blessing. Among those that stand out in this connection are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar—yet, wide as the difference between these individuals may be, and worthy as some are of our imitation, all were creatures, and all were fallen, none were “*worthy* to receive” the blessings that had been bestowed. How different it is with the Lamb of God! God blessed Adam, but how

soon Adam involved himself and his seed in the curse! He was not worthy. God blessed Noah and his sons, but how soon the father's curse falls! God gave wisdom to Solomon, yet consider his end! All, all are unworthy, heaven's song is true, "Worthy is the Lamb".

This song begun in heaven is taken up by all creation. From the heavenly side, power comes first, leading on to blessing; from the standpoint of universal creation, blessing comes first and might last. This fourfold ascription taken up by the wider circle of all created things in the four divisions of the universe (heaven, earth, under the earth, and sea), is addressed to "Him that sitteth upon the throne", as well as "unto the Lamb".

The universal praise that ascend to the throne, commencing with the four living ones, and the twenty-four elders, extending to the myriads of heaven's angels, then taken up in turn by every creature in every sphere of creation, is gathered up again from whence it came by the solemn *Amen* of the four living ones, and the worship of the four and twenty elders.

All is now ready, the Lamb has been acclaimed, He alone was worthy to open the book, and to lose the seals, the solemn hour has struck, and with the noise of thunder the Lamb opened one of the seals, and the "day of vengeance" began.

Before passing on to the scenes of judgment, let us pause awhile to catch the joy and delight that seem to echo through the words of praise, "for He is worthy, Amen and amen".

## **#26. The Beginning of Sorrows (Rev. vi.).** **pp. 33 - 36**

The Lamb has taken the seven-sealed book from the hand of Him who sits upon the throne, ten thousand times ten thousand have acclaimed His worthiness and ascribed to Him power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. The apostle now watches the opening of the seals, and describes what he sees as a result. It will be seen that the first six seals are opened consecutively and without pause, but a whole chapter intervenes between the opening of the sixth and seventh seals; we shall therefore give our attention to the six seals as contained in chapter vi.

It is at once evident upon reading this chapter through, that these six seals are divided between (1) judgments, and (2) martyrdom:--

- A | vi. 1-8. The four horses.—Judgments under false Christ.
- B | 9-11. Martyrs.—Cry for vengeance.
- A | 12-17. Signs in heaven.—Wrath of Lamb.

What are we to understand by these symbols? What volumes have been written in the attempt to interpret them! We do not intend wasting out limited space in refuting the interpretations of the “historic school” (the various writers do that so completely themselves), but we would most humbly and sincerely seek to follow the inspired rule, and “explain spiritual things by spiritual words”. Keeping within the covers of the book for all the material necessary for the interpretation. What help can we get regarding these four horses? Every one acquainted with the *Minor Prophets* (and such only can hope to begin to understand the imagery of the *Apocalypse*) will immediately turn to the prophecy of Zechariah. In chapter i. of his prophecy Zechariah says:--

“I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled and white. Then said I, O my lord, what are these? . . . . These are they whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth, and they answered the angel of the Lord that stood among the myrtle trees, and said, We have walked to and fro through the earth, and behold, all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest” (verses 8-11).

Before reading on further, we will turn to the corresponding vision described in chapter vi.:--

“And I turned and lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses; and in the second chariot black horses; and in the third chariot white horses; and in the fourth chariot grisled and bay horses; then I answered and said unto the angel that talked with me, What are these, my Lord? And the angel answered and said unto me, These are the four spirits of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth” (verses 1-5).

Coming back to chapter i. we find that the narrative continues with a prayer for mercy upon Jerusalem, and the cities of Judah upon which the Lord had indignation for threescore and ten years: the Lord answered, using good and comfortable words. God reveals His jealousy for Zion, and His sore displeasure with the nations who had gone beyond the little displeasure of the Lord, and had “helped forward the affliction”; the vision finishes with the promise that the Lord shall yet comfort Zion and shall yet choose Jerusalem. The vision of chapter vi. is preceded by the prophecy concerning the building of a house for the ephah in the land of Shinar (Babylon), and is followed by the prophecy concerning Christ who shall build the temple of the Lord.

We can now return to Rev. vi. and understand that the four horses and their riders are also “the four spirits of the heavens”. By comparing chapter vi. and vii. and onwards we find the following:--

- A | vi. 1-8. Four horses; commissioned to let loose God’s four sore judgments on the earth.
- B | vi. 9-11. The martyrs; the cry for vengeance;  
their fellow-servants to be killed; white robes to be given them.
- C | vi. 12-17. Signs in heaven; the great day of wrath.
- A | vii. 1-3. Four angels; commissioned to hurt the earth, the sea, and the trees.
- B | vii. 4-17. The 144,000 sealed; the great multitude out of the great tribulation;  
white robes.
- C | viii. - xix. The seven trumpets and vials; the wrath of Almighty God.

It appears from this survey that the judgments represented by the four horsemen will really be the ministry of angels, and that the fellow-servants of the martyrs are the 144,000 sealed ones and the great multitude.

The wrath of the Lamb, the great day of wrath, the wonderful signs in the heavens, and the effect upon the kings, captains, and mighty men, epitomized under the sixth seal, are given at greater length and fuller detail in the chapters that follow, concluding with the personal coming of Christ, the wrath of Almighty God, and the kings, captains, and mighty men who suffer under this judgment, as shown in chapter xix.

We will now once more leave the book of the Revelation to obtain further light from the prophecy of Christ Himself recorded in Matt. xxiv. There is an indirect link with Zechariah's prophecy in the prophecy of Olivet, by the reference to the *house* being left desolate, and its stones being overthrown. The disciples asked the Lord saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of Thy coming (*parousia*) and of the end (*sunteleia*) of the age?" This threefold question receives a threefold answer, but the answers do not follow the order of the questions, but the reverse; the first answer deals with the end (*sunteleia*) of the age (verses 4-22); the second answer deals with the sign of the coming (*parousia*) (verses 23-31); the third answer is the parable of the Fig Tree, which, by saying, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors", answers the first question, "When shall these things be?" (verses 32, 33).

Let us now take note of the Lord's answers in fuller detail. There shall be false Christs (5). Ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars. . . . the end (*telos*) not yet (6). Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places (7). All these are the beginning of sorrows (8).

The disciples had asked as to what should be the sign of the *sunteleia*, consummation, gathering point of the age? Here is the answer; the end (*telos*) is preceded by the *sunteleia*, which is described as the "beginning of sorrows", and the characteristics of that period are given. Following this period comes martyrdom and tribulation:--

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven" (29, 30).

We turned, it will be remembered, to this prophecy for further light upon Rev. vi. By placing the records in parallel columns we shall easily see that Matt. xxiv. and Rev. vi. cover the same ground:--

<b>Matt. xxiv.</b>	<b>Prophecies and Seals.</b>	<b>Rev. vi.</b>
Verses 4, 5. 6, 7. 7. 7.	False Christs. Wars. Famines. Pestilences.	Verses 1, 2. 3, 4. 5, 6. 7, 8.
“All these are the beginning of sorrows”.		
9-28. 29, 30.	Martyrs. Signs in heaven. The Lord’s coming.	9-11. 12-17.

We have now cleared the way for investigating the meaning of these signs; we have both the testimony of Matt. xxiv. and of Zechariah to prevent us from giving a second thought to the multitude of “fulfillments” that have been culled from the history of Rome onwards, and find in the reference to Dan. ix. in Matt. xxiv. a point of time around which these events are grouped. We must take up the more detailed exposition of this important chapter in our next article.

As members of the One Body we have a hope entirely unconnected with “signs”, yet the argument is irresistible, that if the signs of the consummation of the age are appearing upon the horizon (be they as yet no larger than a man’s hand), then our hope is so much nearer its realization. May we all live. . . . looking for that blessed hope.

### **#27. The Four Horsemen. (Rev. vi. 1-8). pp. 65 - 68**

Following the latest Greek texts, the first verse reads:--

“And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living ones saying, as with a voice of thunder, Go!”

The words “and see” are omitted and the verb *erchomai* being translatable by either “come” or “go” the context alone can decide. If the living ones said “Come”, the response would be, “he came forth”; as it is, the wording is “he went forth”, showing that the verb in this case is the command “Go!”.

In our last article we considered the teaching of the Old Testament prophecies, particularly Zechariah, in connection with these horsemen; we will now deal with the actual visions themselves.

In Matt. xxiv. we read not of one false Christ, but many, not one war or one famine or one pestilence, but many. We shall, therefore, have to be careful when viewing these seals that we do not read anything of our own into them. There will be one false Christ, and one false prophet when the end is in sight, but the “beginning” of sorrows is ushered in by the many false Christs—which are here symbolized under the figure of the white horse.

“A *White Horse*.”—Here is the parody of Rev. xix. 11-16. There we read:--

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. . . . and the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.”

The rider in Rev. vi. has a bow, and is thereby linked with another vision of the revelation of Christ, viz., Psa. xlv. 4, 5. “In Thy majesty ride prosperously. . . . Thine arrows are sharp in the hearts of the King’s enemies.” While the bow is of frequent mention in the O.T. it is only mentioned once in the N.T. A passage from Hosea seems to point the meaning of the symbol:--

“I will have mercy on the house of Judah and will save them by the Lord their God, and I will not save them by bow, nor by the sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen” (Hos. i. 7).

This statement rules out the four horsemen of Rev. vi. These are not the divine instruments of Israel’s restoration. What was true of the first inheritance will be true of the last.

“They got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but Thy right hand and Thine arm and the light of Thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them. . . . I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me” (Psalm xlv. 3-6).

The false Messiahs will be no saviours, they will go forth conquering in order that he might conquer. The object is here stated, “in order that” (*hina*) he might conquer. Like the beast of Rev. xiii. and like all his pre-shadowings down the age; these grasp at world dominion, and seek it by right of conquest. The crown that is given to the rider is a triumphal crown (*stephanos*), indicating victory or conquest.

The next horseman that rides forth is seated upon a *red* horse. The red horse symbolizes war. To the rider are given two things, the one a symbol of the other. It was given to him to take peace from the earth in order that they should kill each other; and there was given to him a great sword. The sword is the first of God’s great sore judgments.

“The sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast” (Ezek. xiv. 21).

When the true Christ was born the angels said, “on earth peace” (Luke ii. 14), but the world despised Him, hated Him and crucified Him. The false Christ ushers in war, and takes peace away from the earth. No war ever fought will “end war”; that is one of the awful mockeries of the times we live in. Nothing but the coming of the Prince of Peace will be sufficient guarantee that the nations shall “learn war” no more. The peace is taken from the earth with a purpose, “in order that they should kill each other”. Nation rises against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and wear themselves down in their blind hatred and impotence. All these things, as current events demonstrate, make the

universal kingdom of the Beast a necessity, and a welcome proposition to the war-worn nations, for their cry will be, “Who is able to make war with him?” One of the features of the Antichrist is a false peace; the many false christs that precede him are accompanied with wars and rumours of wars.

Following in natural sequence we have the *black* horse. Desire for conquest, then war, then famine; how true this order has always been. The rider of this horse holds neither a bow nor a great sword, he holds a balance in his hand. Black denotes famine in scripture symbolism.

“Their visage is blacker than coal. . . . they that be slain by the sword are better than they that be slain with hunger; for these pine away, stricken through for want of the fruits of the field.”

“We get our bread with the peril of our lives, because of the sword of the wilderness. Our skins were black like an oven because of the terrible famine” (Lam. iv. 8, 9; v. 9, 10).

The balance indicates the need of scrupulous care because of famine. When Ezekiel foreshadowed the siege of Jerusalem he had to eat his meat “by weight”, and his water he had to drink “by measure” (Ezek. iv. 9-11; see also verse 16 and xii. 16-19). This is an expression in direct contrast with “eat and be full” of Deut. vi. 11, etc. The extent and nature of the famine is indicated by the words, “one chœnix of wheat for a denarius, and three chœnixes of barley for a denarius.” A denarius was a day’s wage (Matt. xx. 2, 9), and a chœnix was nearly a quart. Numerous citations from Greek writers show that this measure was the daily ration of a slave. An attic medimnus of grain cost five or six denari. A chœnix was the 48<sup>th</sup> part of a medimnus and cost one-eighth of a denarius. Here therefore is a statement of famine prices. The daily food advanced to 800 percent. The command also to injure not the oil and the wine indicates that extreme care must be taken with these by reason of the great shortage of the staff of life.

The fourth horse is described as *pale*. The word *chlōros* means a colour like that of a young shoot of vegetation, i.e., a palish green; evidently a hue inclining to the *cadaverous* is here meant (*Moses Stuart, in loco.*). The name of the rider is given, *ho thanatos*, “death”, and in immediate association comes *hades*. Christ by virtue of His redemption claims the keys of death and hades. When the dead are raised to stand before the great white throne, we read, “death and hades gave up the dead which were in them”, and finally, “death and hades were cast into the lake of fire” (xx. 13, 14). Both death and hades are spoken of as having a dominion. These forces and authorities of darkness are given a dreadful liberty of action in the closing days of the age.

“And there was given to him authority over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the wild beasts of the earth.”

To kill by “death” is a figure, a figure indicating pestilence and plague, death in its most awful form. The Septuagint renders the Hebrew word for pestilence by *thanatos* (“death”) more than 30 times and so enables us to see the meaning of the word here.

We have in these four horsemen and their followers a series of symbols, setting forth the sign of the *sunteleia* of the age, the “beginning of sorrows”. War, famine, pestilence,

wild beasts, with death and hades exercising their dread authority. What a blessing to know Him who has the keys of death and hades, and to look across this darkening nightfall of a ruined world to the day when death and hades shall be cast into the great destructor together with all things that offend. These are the beginning of sorrows, but they do not last for ever. Greater judgments have yet to follow them, nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a new heaven and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

## **#28. The Cry for Vengeance (Rev. vi. 9-11). pp. 97 - 101**

The first four seals are connected together by the reference to the four living creatures. The fifth seal is not connected with them, and must be considered as a separate subject. While viewing this seal as something separate, we must remember that the words of verse 11 link this with the awful times of the first four seals.

“And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the Word of God, and because of the testimony which they held.”

An altar is literally “a place of sacrifice”. It occurs in viii. 3 and 5; ix. 1; xi. 18; and xvi. 7. The first and last occurrences have much in common. We read that the third angel poured out his vial, and the angel of the waters said:--

“Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art and wast, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.”

While this last reference is parallel with the first, the idea of judgment is connected with several of the remaining passages. The dispensation of grace, with its spirit of longsuffering and meekness, has led the enemies of truth to a fatal misinterpretation. The God who said, “Avenge not *yourselves*”, said also, “vengeance in *Mine*, I will repay”. To the wicked God said, “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself. . . . now consider. . . . lest I tear you in pieces” (Psa. l. 21, 22). The long deferred “day of vengeance” (see Luke iv. 19, 20) is linked with the comforting of Zion (Isa. lxi. 2, 3). So also in Isa. lxiii. 4, “For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redeemed is come”. “The day of the Lord’s vengeance” is linked with “the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” (Isa. xxxiv. 8).

The opening of the fifth seal is marked with a cry for vengeance. The apostle says that he saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain. It is surely a sign of weakness when such a passage is used to support the traditional teaching concerning the soul, and we do not remember ever reading that anyone who has used this passage to support the teaching of the soul’s conscious existence after death has ever brought

together the seven occurrences of the word “soul” in the Revelation. We do not believe that in such a book as the Revelation we shall find teaching concerning the nature of the soul, and as *Moses Stuart* remarks, “It would be as apposite to undertake a demonstration that the trees and brambles can talk, from the fable of Jotham, as it would to undertake the proof of the material nature of the soul from the representation before us”. The seven occurrences of *psuche* are

- “The *souls* of those who had been slain” (vi. 9).
- “The creatures, which were in the sea, and had *life* died” (viii. 9).
- “And they loved not their *lives* unto the death” (xii. 11).
- “And every living *soul* died in the sea” (xvi. 3).
- “And bodies and *souls* of men” (xviii. 13).
- “The fruits that thy *soul* lusted after” (xviii. 14).
- “The *souls* of them that were beheaded for the witness of *Jesus*” (xx. 4).

The way in which the word is brought in vi. 9 and xx. 4, together with xii. 11, should cause us to hesitate to generalize the passages, and in effect to render the word unnecessary. We believe a richer lesson lies awaiting us than can be discovered by considering this word merely as a figure of speech. There is a most definite doctrine of Scripture concerning the *soul* that has not received sufficient notice. We do not refer to the teaching of the Word as to the nature of the soul, but the teaching concerning the losing and saving of the soul:--

“If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For, whosoever shall save his *soul* shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his *soul* for My sake shall find it” (Matt. xvi. 24-26).

In Heb. x. 39 we read, “But we are not of those shrinking back unto destruction; but of faith unto obtaining (as to a purchased possession, Eph i. 14) of soul”. This is directly connected with, “taking joyfully the spoiling of your good, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance”, and is illustrated by the examples of Heb. xi. (see 8, 9, 10, 24-26), and in Heb. xii. 2 by the greatest example of all. The giving up in this life is rewarded by the joy in the next life. The losing of the soul here ensures the finding of it there. I Pet. i. 9 links the salvation of the soul with the theme of suffering followed by glory, “of which salvation”, “the sufferings for Christ and the glories that should follow”, and “the grace that is to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ”.

It is because the apostle had to teach this truth, that he tells us that he saw not the dead bodies, but the souls of the martyrs under the altar. Here, these suffering saints “lost their souls” for Christ’s sake. In xx. 4 John again saw “the souls” of these martyrs glorified—they had “found them”, as the Lord had promised. This is a lesson worth the learning, and lies very near the heart of the *Apocalypse*, tracing as the book does the “overcomer” through suffering to glory. These martyrs were slain on account of the Word of God, and on account of the testimony which they held. Four times do we find the “testimony” and the “Word” together in the Revelation, viz.:--

John's testimony to the Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ (i. 2).  
 John in tribulation and patience for the kingdom of Jesus, in the isle of Patmos for the  
 Word of God, and the testimony of Jesus (i. 9).  
 John sees the soul under the altar of those slain for the Word of God, and for the  
 testimony which they held (vi. 9).  
 John sees on thrones those who were beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the  
 Word of God (xx. 4).

It will be seen that to hold this testimony in the days of the Revelation will mean suffering and death. This is further emphasized in xii. 17, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus", and here the dragon himself is seen to be the great persecutor. God views the death of these witnesses as sacrifices—their souls are seen under the altar, they have "loved not their lives unto the death". Their cry ascends to God, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and take vengeance for our blood from them that dwell upon the earth". The church of God cannot cry to God for vengeance, such is not in harmony with its calling. When the day of grace closes, and the day of vengeance sets in, then the cry will be right and proper, and the "Imprecatory Psalms" and the many prophecies of vengeance will be fulfilled. Those upon whom vengeance is called are "them that dwell on the earth". Reference is made to these earth dwellers in very awful and solemn settings. We give the passages in order that this special title may receive the attention that seems its due.

### **The earth dwellers.**

- iii. 10. Speaks of the hour of temptation about to come on such.
- vi. 10. Vengeance for blood shed is called down on them.
- viii. 13. An angel flies in mid-heaven saying Woe, woe, woe to them.
- xi. 10. They rejoice over the death of the two witnesses.
- xi. 10. Who had tormented them.
- xiii. 8. They shall worship the beast. Their names not written in the lamb's book of life.
- xiii. 12. They are made to worship the beast by the false prophet.
- xiii. 14. They are deceived by his numerous signs.
- xiii. 14. They are told to make an image to the beast.
- xiv. 6. An angel flies in mid-heaven with the *aionian* gospel to them.
- xvii. 2. They were made drunk with the woman's wine, which is likened to the blood of the martyrs (verse 6).
- xvii. 8. They shall wonder at the beast. Their names not written in the book of life.

The only gleam in the gloomy list is xiv. 6, and then we have no warrant for believing that the "earth dwellers" obey this primeval gospel, although we believe many of those who are differentiated from them (see xiv. 6, "and unto every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people") will fear God in the hour of His judgment.

In answer to the cry of the martyred witnesses we read:--

"And there was given to each one a white robe, and it was said to them that they should rest yet for a time until both their fellow-servants and their brethren that were about to be killed as they also had been, should fill up *the appointed number*."

The following passages will make clear the reason why these martyred saints were given white robes:--

“Nevertheless, thou hast a few names in Sardis which defiled not their garments, and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. *He that overcometh shall thus be arrayed in white garments*” (iii. 4, 5).

“A great multitude. . . . arrayed with white robes, and palm branches in their hands” (vii. 9).

“These are they who come out of the Great Tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white through the blood of the Lamb” (vii. 14).

To each of the unavenged martyrs is given a symbol of the overcomer. “They are worthy”, “They overcame because of the blood of the Lamb” (xii. 11). They are bidden to rest yet for a time. Their fellow-sufferers who were to be killed as they had been were also said to “rest from their labours, for their works follow with them” (xiv. 13). God, who allows His witnesses to be put to death for their testimony, knows them each one. Knows the number that must suffer, looks upon their faithfulness as an acceptable sacrifice. The guilty world little dreams that the blood they shed cries for vengeance. It does, and when iniquity reaches its height again in a rebuilt Babylon, judgment falls. Blessed are they who in that day hold the testimony of the Lord, blessed are they who are kept out of that hour, blessed are they whose hope shall anticipate the fall of vengeance, blessed are they who in every dispensation “hold fast the faithful word.”

## **#29. The Sixth Seal (Rev. vi. 12-17). pp. 129 - 133**

“And I saw when He opened the sixth seal, and there was a great shaking, and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the whole moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, as the fig tree casteth her untimely figs when shaken by a mighty wind, and the heaven was separated (from its place) as a scroll rolling itself up; and every island and mountain were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the chief captains, and the rich men, and the mighty men, and every bondman and free man, hid themselves into the caves and into the mountains. And they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. Because the great day of His wrath is come, and who is able to stand” (vi. 12-17).

THE GREAT SHAKING.—Although the word *seismos* may be rendered “earthquake” with truth in many passages, the primitive idea (“a shaking”) will fit the context better in this case. Seven times do we find the earthquake or *seismos* mentioned in the Revelation itself, and as we desire to provide every facility for arriving at a true conclusion, we will set them out first.

The “shaking” upon the opening of the sixth seal (vi. 12).

The result of the angel’s scattering of fire on the earth, before the seven trumpets were sounded (viii. 5).

The reviving of the two witnesses is followed by an earthquake, when the tenth of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain 7000 men (xi. 13).  
The result of the temple being opened in heaven (xi. 19).  
The result of the pouring out of the seventh bowl. This earthquake is the greatest ever known (xvi. 18).

It will be seen that this “shaking” is connected with the presence of the Lord either on the throne, in the temple, or manifesting Himself in the raising up of the two witnesses, and in every case judgment is imminent. There is evident allusion in Rev. vi. 12, 13 to the times spoken of by Joel ii. 10, 11:--

“The earth shall quake before them, the heavens shall tremble: the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. . . . for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible, and who can abide it?”

A further reference to similar phenomena is found in Joel ii. 30, 31, which Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost, and declared that the outpouring of the spirit which had then taken place was the fulfilling of Joel ii. 28, 29. The complete prophecy of Joel has not yet been fulfilled, but a seven-fold beginning was made, leaving the wonders in heaven and earth to take place in the day of the Lord.

It will be remembered that the mighty earthquake that ushers in great Babylon’s judgment in Rev. xvi. is preceded by the gathering of the whole world to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. The armies are gathered into the place called *Har-mageddon*. In Joel iii. 9-16 there is a proclamation of “Holy War” (see margin verse 9), and the Gentiles are gathered for judgment. There again we read:--

“The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake.”

In the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah we have *The burden of Babylon*. The reader should read from the commencement of the chapter, noting parallels with Joel iii. In verses 9-11, and 19 we read:--

“Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger. . . . for the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for their evil. . . . therefore will I shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger. . . . and Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”

When considering the cry for vengeance under the fifth seal, we quoted Isa. xxxiv. 8, which links the day of the Lord’s vengeance with the year of the recompense for the controversy of Zion. That same chapter is an O.T. prophecy of the effect of the opening of the sixth seal.

“The indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and His fury upon all their armies. . . . all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down as the leaf falleth off from the vine,

and as a falling fig from the fig tree. . . . for it is the day of the Lord's vengeance. . . . Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you" (Isa. xxxiv. 1-8; xxxv. 4).

A terrible shaking awaits the nations of the earth. Even in the present day, as we see thrones and crowns on the brink of collapse, what word so expresses the state of the nations and kingdoms as the words of Haggai, "I will shake all nations"?

"For thus saith the Lord of Hosts: Yet first, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Hag. ii. 6, 7).

Here is the blessing of Israel. The closely-related "vengeance" on the nations is found in Hag. ii. 21, 22, "I will shake the heavens and the earth: And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations". In the epistle to the Hebrews we see that the shaking of the earth looks back to Sinai, while the shaking of the heavens "once for all" looks forward to a far more violent and far-reaching visitation the inspired comment being, "*Yet once for all* denotes the removal of the things that may be shaken, as of things that have been made, so that the things which cannot be shaken may remain" (Heb. xii. 25-29).

Coming now, with all these prophecies, to Matt. xxiv. the key prophecy, we shall be able to locate the sixth seal in the Divine plan.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven" (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30).

No mention is made in this passage of the shaking of the nations, but this is supplied by Luke.

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. . . . for these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. . . . until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken; and then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (Luke xxi. 20-27).

It will be observed that in Matt. xxiv. 29 we have a distinct point of time indicated. The tribulation is immediately following the shaking and the signs in heaven. Therefore we can with certainty say that the great tribulation takes place either at the breaking of the fifth seal, or before the opening of the sixth. If this be so, then, still following the order of Matt. xxiv. 15, the *Abomination of desolation* must find its place somewhere between the fourth and the sixth seals, and consequently Rev. xiii. must be assigned a place here. It appears, therefore, that although there are seven seals upon the scroll, six of them exhaust the period of its prophecy. The sixth seal takes us to a period of time when kings, great men, and bond and free shall flee to hide from the wrath of the Lamb. The

period which is reached by the sixth seal is called “The great day of His wrath”. We are led on by a different series of events to the same end when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, for again the period is given, “Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged” (xi. 18).

The record of the seven angels who have the seven vials gives us fuller details of this period of “wrath” (vi. 17; xi. 18), for they have the seven golden vials full of the wrath of God. At the opening of the seventh seal upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and upon the pouring out of the seventh vial, we have voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake or shaking (viii. 5; xi. 19; xvi. 18). These three series of seals, trumpets, and vials are each connected with the temple (viii. 3-5; xi. 19; xvi. 1, 17).

We have devoted time to this particular section because of the need there is to seek an answer to the question, “Do the seven trumpets, and the remaining prophecies of the Revelation, take place after the sixth seal in order of time, or do they go back and give fuller details of the period covered by the six seals?” The fact that the abomination of desolation and the great tribulation come before the opening of the sixth seal, necessarily brings some of the later chapters into the period covered by chapter vi., and considering also the manner in which each series of seals, trumpets, and vials ends, we cannot help but feel that the teaching is the true one which sees in the six seals the large outline of events, and in the subsequent trumpets and vials the fuller details of the same period.

Just by way of suggestion we pass on the following items, trusting the reader may be stirred up to make his own list and comparisons.

In the rendering of Rev. vi. 12-17, with which this article opens, it will be observed that there comes the expression, “the *whole* moon became as blood”. If we consider this as meaning what is known as the full moon, we shall miss the important connexion with the events of the fourth trumpet. When the fourth angel sounded, the *third* part of the sun was smitten and the *third* part of the moon. Just as God in His dealings with Pharaoh held back the threatened judgment upon the firstborn until the very last, so here we can see that the sounding of the fourth trumpet, though mentioned after the opening of the sixth seal, is really before it in point of time.

Again, at the conclusion of this fourth trumpet an eagle flies through mid heaven with cries of *Woe*. Under the fourth seal men repent not, neither give God glory. This seems connected with the record of xiv. 6, which speaks of an angel flying through mid heaven with the *aionian* gospel, calling upon the earth dwellers to give glory to God.

But we must conclude. May the revelation of these realities stir us up to diligent prayerful service, and steadfast faith during the days in which we are called upon to witness.

**#30. The Sealing of the 144,000 (Rev. vii. 1-8).  
pp. 161 – 166**

Before the inspired record deals with the opening of the seventh seal, two episodes are introduced, one, the sealing of the 144,000, the other, the great multitude before the throne.

There is nothing in the wording of the passage to tell us definitely just where to place these visions in relation to the seals. The words with which chapter vii. commences are (according to the best texts and R.V.) *after this*, not “after these things”; there is therefore no necessity to take the sealing as occurring after the sixth seal in point of time. In verses 1 and 2 reference is made to four angels who had received commandment to injure the earth, the sea, and the trees by the instrumentality of the four winds of the earth:--

“And I saw another angel ascending from the sunrising, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea: saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of God in their foreheads.”

We do not read anything that exactly answers to this hurting of the earth, sea and trees in any of the happenings following upon the opening the six seals. In the sixth seal there is a most awful convulsion or shaking, but this seems to be the result of something other than the wind. In chapter ix. the fifth angel sounds and locusts come out upon the earth:--

“And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads” (ix. 4).

Here, by implication, we see the 144, 000, for they are contrasted with the unsealed ones.

**Rev. vii. 1-8.**

1. And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.
2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,
3. Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.
4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.
5. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.
6. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.
7. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.
8. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

Let us now turn to the prophet Ezekiel to see whether we can obtain any light from his prophecy. The first twelve chapters of Ezekiel are taken up with the desolateness of Jerusalem and Israel, even as the concluding thirteen are taken up with the restoration. Chapter i. is full of teaching concerning *four living creatures* (the very same name as the four *beasts*, or living ones, of Revelation). Ezekiel receives his commission to go to the rebellious house of Israel, and in chapter iv. he prophesies, by means of a symbol, the siege of Jerusalem; there we find a parallel with the third seal:--

“I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem: and they shall eat bread by weight and with care, and they shall drink water by measure and with astonishment” (Ezek. iv. 16).

In chapter v. Ezekiel is bidden to take a sharp sword, “as a barber’s razor shalt thou take it”, and with it used in this fashion he is told to cut off some of his hair and beard. The hair was divided into three parts, one third to be burned in the city, one third to be smitten with the sword, and the remaining third scattered to the wind, and the Lord said, “I will draw out a sword after them”. A few in number were to be taken and bound in the prophet’s skirts. These signs are interpreted in verse 12:--

“A third part of thee shall die with pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee (see the first four seals of Rev. vi.), and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them” (this emphasis upon the *third part* is also found in Rev. viii.).

No mention is made in this passage of those typified by the small portion of hair bound in the prophet’s skirt; in chapters vi. and vii., however, a hint is given by the reference to a “remnant” that “escape” (vi. 8, vii. 16). Chapters viii. - xi. are taken up with the sins of Israel with reference to the temple, and a series of “abominations” are shown to the prophet. In chapter ix. 4-6 the Lord commanded:--

“Go through the midst of Jerusalem, and *set a mark upon the foreheads* of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof, and to the others He said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite; let not your eye spare, neither have pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children, and women; *but come not near any man upon whom is the mark*: and begin at My Sanctuary.”

Without pursuing this section further, it will be seen that we have a close parallel to the sealing of the 144,000 in the book of Revelation. We cannot but feel that they too will be marked off as ones that sigh and that cry because of THE abomination that maketh desolate. The sealing of these saints of God is in direct contrast with the branding of the beast (xiii. 16-18, xiv. 9-11, xvi. 2, xix. 20). God’s own are “sealed”, the devil’s own are “marked” or “branded”. John tells us that he “heard the number of the sealed”, and the 144,000 (12,000 for each tribe) must be taken literally. Again in ix. 16 a far more “figurative” sounding number is given, viz., “two hundred thousand thousand”! yet the apostle solemnly declares, “I heard the number of them”. When the number is beyond computation the apostle has said so, e.g., “whose number is AS the sand of the sea” (xx. 8), or even more to the point, in the very next vision to the 144,000 he sees a multitude “that no man could number”. *Moses Stuart* says, “That the number in this case is *symbolical*, and not to be literally taken, seems scarcely necessary to remark”; the same

writer, however, when speaking of the order of the names of the twelve tribes, makes the observation, "There are no two cases in the whole Bible where the *order* and *number* are the same". The following table may be useful as a guide to the underlying reasons for this variation of what at first would seem to be a fixed subject:-- (*see next page*)

We have not attempted to set out all the lists that occur in the Scriptures as the above (*next page*) will be sufficient for our purpose. The first, the order of birth, needs no comment. Where the order differs from this one, however, an explanation seems necessary. The omission of Levi from four of the lists (Nos. 4-7) is explained in Josh. xviii. 7, "The Levites have no part among you, for the priesthood of the Lord is their inheritance". These four lists deal with the earthly inheritance. Levi finds a place in No. 8 which deals with the heavenly inheritance. Ephraim is omitted in No. 8, but Joseph is named, while in Nos. 4-7 Joseph is omitted, Numb. xiii. 11 explaining the omission of Joseph's names, "Of the tribe Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh". This also would stand good in an opposite sense in No. 8, and Joseph would there stand for Ephraim, Manasseh being mentioned by name, the omission of Simeon from the blessing of Moses is unexplained in the narrative, and so far as we know is unexplained by any interpretation of Scripture.

Why is Dan omitted from No. 8? The sealing was that *all* the tribes of the children of Israel (Rev. vii. 4). Dan is by no means excluded from blessing, as may be seen in No. 7, for the very first to be assigned its portion is this tribe. Dan was the first tribe to set up idolatry after the entry into the land, but it must not be forgotten that before Dan's image was made Aaron and all the tribes had been involved in the matter of the golden calf. Again, while Dan may have been the first to lapse into idolatry, what tribe is there that is clear from that sin?

The promises of the Revelation are addressed to persons, and are related to personal actions; they take no account of either the good or the bad record of the person's ancestry. It is essentially "to HIM that overcometh". It may seem strange that not one individual of the tribe of Dan should have been found worthy to receive the seal of the living God, but it is possible that in the light of the fulfilment of this passage abundant reason will be found. If, as some believe, Antichrist is to be of the tribe of Dan, that would possibly have some influence on the tribe as a whole, but this has to be proved, and we prefer to wait. We do not expect to see the fulfilment of this passage, believing that the blessed hope of the calling wherewith we have been called will have been realized before the day of the Lord sets in: the church of the one body has no promise that any of its members will be sealed in their foreheads, but the same principle obtains in this dispensation as in that of the Revelation, as the teaching of Phil. iii. bears witness.

<b>1. Birth.</b> (Gen.xxix., xxx.).	<b>2. Jacob's Blessing.</b> (Gen. xlix.).	<b>3. Moses' Blessing.</b> (Deut. xxxiii.).	<b>4. The Numbering.</b> (Num. i.).	<b>5. The Spies.</b> (Num. xiii.).	<b>6. Division of Canaan.</b> (Josh. xiii. - xix.).	<b>7. The Inheritance.</b> (Ezek. xlvi.).	<b>8. 144,000 Sealed.</b> (Rev. vii.).
Reuben Simeon Levi Judah Dan Naphtali Gad Asher Issachar Zebulon Joseph Benjamin	Reuben Simeon Levi Judah Zebulon Issachar Dan Gad Asher Naphtali Joseph Benjamin	Reuben Judah Levi Benjamin Joseph Zebulon Issachar Gad Dan Naphtali Asher (Simeon omitted).	Reuben Simeon Judah Issachar Zebulon Ephraim Manasseh Benjamin Dan Asher Gad Naphtali (Levi and Joseph omitted).	Reuben Simeon Judah Issachar Ephraim Benjamin Zebulon Manasseh Dan Asher Naphtali Gad (Levi and Joseph omitted).	Reuben Gad Manasseh Judah Ephraim Benjamin Simeon Zebulon Issachar Asher Naphtali Dan (Levi and Joseph omitted).	Dan Asher Naphtali Manasseh Ephraim Reuben Judah Benjamin Simeon Issachar Zebulon Gad (Levi and Joseph omitted).	Judah Reuben Gad Asher Naphtali Manasseh Simeon Levi Issachar Zebulon Joseph Benjamin (Dan and Ephraim omitted).

## Sidelights on the Scriptures.

### #23. The Nineveh Gallery.--Sennacherib. pp. 5, 6

“The Bas-reliefs which line the walls of this room were excavated by Sir Henry Layard from the mound of Kouyonjik, Nineveh, between the years 1845-1854; a large number of them were fractured by the action of fire when Nineveh was destroyed by the allied forces of the Babylonians and Medes about B.C. 609. As far as possible the fragments have been laid in their proper places; no attempt at restoration has been made” (*British Museum Guide*).

We draw attention to the following:--

No. 2, ASSYRIAN GALLERY.—This is considered to be a Phœnician ship; note the ram, the double bank of rowers, and the shield fastened to the upper deck to protect the soldiers and crew. Several fish are depicted, also a crab. The detail that is introduced into these carvings is not merely ornamental. We quote from Canon Rawlinson’s *The First Great Monarchies*:--

“It was under Sennacherib that the practice obtained of completing each scene by a background, such as actually existed. . . . the species of trees’ is distinguished in Sennacherib’s bas-reliefs; gardens, fields, forests, seeds, are carefully represented. Wild animals are introduced, as stags, boars and antelopes; birds fly from tree to tree, or stand over their nests feeding the young who stretch up to them; fish disport themselves in the waters.”

Nos. 4-8.—A battle in a marsh, and the registration of prisoners and spoil.

Nos. 20-26.—This is part of a series, representing the assault of the city of. . . . Alammu (? Jerusalem).

Nos. 41-42.—These slabs depict the various attendants bringing in food for the banquet; one figure is of particular interest as it shows a man carrying in each hand a rod upon which locusts are fixed, like beads on a thread; these are the locusts that formed the fare of John the Baptist while in the wilderness. Many think of the locust *bean* when they read about John, but it was the insect that was eaten.

Nos. 51-56.—These illustrate some of the architectural activities of Sennacherib. In No. 52 the king is shown standing in a chariot on the top of a mound, superintending the work. A colossal bull, such as we have seen in the Assyrian transept, is being dragged up the slope by force of gangs of men, each man has a small rope over his shoulder which is attached to the large one; other gangs of captives toil up the slope with earth and stone. In No. 55 the artist has placed among the reeds a sow with nine little pigs; men are shown carrying picks, saw, spades, etc., and a drag carts laden with ropes and beams.

We quote Canon Rawlinson again:--

“In the construction of these great works he made use chiefly of forced labour with which his triumphant expeditions into foreign countries had so abundantly supplied him, Chaldeans, Aramæans Cilicians, and probably also Egyptians, Ethiopians, Elamites and Jews were employed by thousands. . . . they wrought in gangs, each gang having a costume peculiar to it, which probably marked its nation. . . . the forced labourers often worked in fetters, which were sometimes supported by a bar fastened to the wrist, while sometimes they consisted merely of shackles round the ankles.”

There is much in common between the Pharaohs of Egypt and the Kings of Assyria. Their cruelty, their culture, their art, architecture, learning and literature, their religion and their pride, are symbols of the ever present character of the flesh and the world.

There are other interests in this Gallery which require too careful a study for us to take them up now, but we hope to do so in our next paper.

## **#24. The Nineveh Gallery.--The Creation Tablets. pp. 76 - 80**

Along the middle of this gallery are nine table cases containing some most valuable tablets from the Royal Library at Nineveh. The library though existing in the days of Sargon (B.C. 722-705) reached its highest glory under Ashur-bani-pal (B.C. 668-626). These tablets, of which there are many thousands, are copies of older works deposited in the library in the temple of Nebo, the god of learning.

THE CREATION TABLETS.—In table case A will be found a series of tablets which give the Assyrian account of the Creation and the Flood. Nos. 1-19 form parts of the series known as the *Creation Tablets*. There were *seven* tablets, even as there were *seven* days occupied in the creation. The tablets are classified both by number, and also by the first words of the first tablet of the series. The first words of the first tablet are *e - nu - ma e - lish*, “When in the height”, and so the fourth tablet is inscribed, “Tablet IV. *e - nu - ma e - lish*”. This system is quite in agreement with the Hebrew method. The book of Genesis being called *Beroshith*, “In the beginning.”

The following is a synopsis of the contents of these tablets, which has been given by *W. St. Chad Boscawen, F.R.H.S.*

Tablet I.—The pre-creative state and the first day (Gen. i. 1-5).

TABLETS II., III., IV.—The creation of light and the war between light and darkness. The victory of the former and the separation of heaven and earth, the banishment of the dragon of chaos to the depths of the under world. The earth planted. This group corresponds in general to the work of the second and third days (Gen. i. 6-13).

TABLET V.—Creation and ordering of the heavenly bodies. Corresponds nearest of all to the fourth day (Gen. i. 14-19).

TABLET VI.—Lost.

TABLET VII.—Creation of cattle and creeping things, and probably man also. Corresponds to the sixth day (Gen. i. 24-31).

We now give a translation of the opening lines of the first tablet:--

“At that time the heavens above named,  
Nor did the earth below record one:  
Yea, the deep was their first creator,  
The chaos of the sea was the mother of them all.  
Their waters were embosomed in one place, and  
The flowering reed was ungathered, the marsh-plant was ungrown.”

The reference to the chaotic deep as the mother of them all seems a mutilated story of the time recorded in Gen. i. 2. These tablets do not go back to the primal creation of Gen. i. 1. Confusion and conflict is the beginning of their story. There is more than superficial resemblance, for the cuneiform word *Tiamat* corresponds with the Hebrew *Tehom*, “the deep” (Gen. i. 2).

We will not weary the reader with the rest of the translation; this teaches that the chaos and emptiness was broken by the creation of “gods”. The last legible lines of the tablet however are suggestive, “Far extended were the days, until the host of heaven and earth were made”. Some translations read, “Far extended were the days until the gods ansar and Ki-sar were made”. An-sar means, “heaven host”, and Kis-sar, “earth host” with which should be read Gen. ii. 1, “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them”.

Tablets II., III., and IV. are taken up with the doings of Marduk (Merodach), who eventually slays Tiamat (The Deep):--

“He split her like a flat fish into two halves, He took one half of her and made it the covering of the sky; He stretched out the skin, and caused a watch to be kept, enjoining that her waters should not issue forth.”

Beneath the strangeness of these words one can hear the remains of a great truth. The present heaven was a special creation, as Gen. i. 6-8 teaches. The keeping back of the waters of the great deep is an echo of the words of Job xxxviii. 4-11.

The third tablet contains a passage which speaks of sin being found among the “gods”. As we believe that the fall of Satan and his angels has much to do with the condition indicated in Gen. i. 2, the following lines are suggestive:--

“The great gods, all of them determiners of fate,  
They entered, and deathlike the God Sar *filled* (?)  
In sin one with the other the compact joins.

The command was established in the garden of God  
 The Asman (fruit) they ate, they broke in two,  
 Its stalk the (?) destroyed.  
 The sweet juice which injures the body.  
 Great is their sin. Themselves they exalted.  
 To Merodach their Redeemer He appointed their fate.”

The “garden of God” is spoken of in Ezekiel xxviii. where the prophet speaks of one  
 “full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God. . . .  
 thine heart was lifted up. . . .”.

The fifth tablet presents several striking agreements with the Scripture record of  
 creation:--

“He made pleasant the positions of the great gods  
 The constellations He arranged them, the double stars he fixed  
 He ordained the year, he appointed the Zodiac signs over it.  
 The twelve months of constellations by threes he fixed  
 From the day when the year commenced to its close.  
 He established the position of the crossing stars and for the seasons their bounds.  
 Not to make fault or error of any kind

\* \* \* \* \*

The Illuminator he caused to shine to rule the night,  
 He appointed him to establish the night until the coming forth of the day  
 (Saying) Each month without fail by thy disk keep watch.  
 At the beginning of the month or the rising of the night  
 Horns shine forth to announce the night.  
 On the seventh day to a disk it fills up.  
 Open thou and cause the rays of thy face to shine  
 At that time the Sun on the horizon of heaven at thy coming.”

\* \* \* \* \*

In this account the stars come first, which accords with the scriptural description of the  
 people, “Astrologers”, etc. The sun, moon and stars were created “for signs and for  
 seasons, and for days and years”, and this is evidently believed in this tablet. The path of  
 the sun through the heavens was carefully mapped out. There were twelve stations,  
 subdivided into four groups, divided from each other by fixed points. The words  
 “crossing stars” in the tablet are the rendering of the cuneiform *Nibiri*. *Nibiru* really  
 means a “ferry boat”, and Merodach is called *Ilu Nibiru*, “the god of the ferryboat”. The  
*Nibiri* means the constellations which mark the points where the sun passes from one  
 division of the year to the other. The “Zodiac signs” of the third line are in the cuneiform  
*Mizrata umazzir*. With this compare Job xxxviii. 32, “Canst thou bring forth *Mazzaroth*  
 in his seasons?” (margin, “the twelve signs”). “The rising of the night” is in cuneiform  
*Lillate*, in Hebrew *Lillith*, “the twilight”.

The sixth tablet is very much mutilated, but sufficient is decipherable to show that it  
 refers to the work of the sixth day (Gen. i. 24, 25):--

“When the gods in their assembly had created (great beasts)  
They made perfect the mighty monsters,  
They caused the living creatures to come forth;  
The cattle of the field, the wild beast of the field, and the creeping things of the field.  
. . . . . for the living creatures.”

The god Ea, is mentioned in the mutilated lines that follow, and as this god is usually the one to whom the creation of man is assigned, it seems very probable that the Babylonian account of the creation of man was written on this same tablet. A fragment of a hymn has the following:--

“Mayest thou be great, for a noble companion art thou. Let thy manhood be increased. With the dominion of all the gods I have caused thy hand to be filled.”

These words seem an echo of Gen. i. 26. An ancient magical text of Accadian origin (a people from whom the Babylonians learned much) has a line, *Assat ina udli nis uttam*, “the woman from the flank of man was called”, which is parallel with Gen. ii. 21, 22.

It is probable that the last tablet made reference to the Sabbath. The Sabbath was called *Udu Khulgul*, an “unlawful day”, and *Salum*, “rest or completion”. A gloss in a lexicographical tablet explains the word *Sabbatum* by *Yum nukh libbi*, “The day of rest for the heart”. Those who are acquainted with the Hebrew language will see how closely related the Assyrian and the Hebrew are. In another list *Sabattu* is explained as a synonym of *gamaru*, “to complete, to finish”. So in Gen. ii. 1-3 we read, “Thus the heavens and the earth were *finished*. . . . on the seventh day God *ended* (same word *finished*). . . . and He rested on the seventh day. . . .”.

We have not quoted or even indicated the grotesque and “turbid mass of idolatrous fancies” which occupies the bulk of these tablets, neither do we suggest that a comparison with the inspired record is possible. Referring to the truth revealed in Rom. i. 18-24, we quote the words of the *Rev. John Urquhart*:--

“The Chaldean Genesis is itself a testimony that revelation is a fact. The story is built upon outlines which perfect knowledge of creation’s mysteries could alone have furnished. And the Genesis of the Bible is also itself the proof that He Who gave the first revelation gave us the second revelation, that men may know Him Who is behind all things and in all things--the living God, our Maker, and our Father.”

This we shall have illustrated again when we consider the tablets dealing with the Flood.

**#25. The Nineveh Gallery.--The Tablets of the Flood.**  
**pp. 137 - 140**

TABLE CASE A (Nos. 24-64).—Here are fragments of twelve tablets which give the wanderings and adventures of a mythical hero Gilgamesh. He is called “A mighty one on earth”, and has the title among others of “The warrior perfect in strength”. Archæologists see in Gilgamesh, Nimrod, “the mighty rebel”. His many titles are all applied to the sun god, and the twelve tablets of the exploits of Gilgamesh are arranged upon an astronomical principle, each book corresponding with one of the signs of the zodiac. The eleventh tablet corresponds to the sign Aquarius, and to “the month of the curse of rain”, and here we find the story of the Deluge.

Gilgamesh sets out to find Tsit-napishtim, in order to learn from him the secret of immortality. Tsit-napishtim relates to Gilgamesh “the story of his preservation”, and 173 lines are occupied with the account of the Deluge and the preservation of Tsit-napishtim. We will not quote the whole of the poem, but will give sufficient extracts to show how closely the Chaldean epic follows the Scripture narrative.

“To make a deluge the great gods brought their hearts.  
Destroy the house and build a ship.  
For I will destroy the seed and the life.  
Cause them to go up into the ship all seed that hath life.  
The ship which thou shalt make. . . . cubits its length in measure.  
. . . . cubits the contents of its breadth and height.  
. . . . above the deep roof it over.  
The building of the ship which thou commandest.  
If it be made by me,  
Then will laugh at me the children of the people, and the old men.  
Ea opened his mouth and spake to me, his servant.  
If they laugh at thee, thou shalt say unto them,  
Every one who has turned from me  
Shall be punished, for the protection of the gods is over me.  
I will judge my judgment upon all above and below.  
Close not the ship  
Until the season, when I shall send the word (saying),  
Enter the ship and close the door.  
In the interior of it thy grain, thy furniture, thy goods,  
Thy wealth, thy man servants and maid servants, and thy young men.  
The cattle of the field and the animals of the field as many as I would preserve.  
I will send thee, (then) make firm thy door.  
The reverent and holy one opened his mouth and spoke to Ea, his Lord.  
No one has made such a ship  
. . . . on the ground. . . .  
(The form of) the ship let me see.  
On the fifth day two sides were raised,  
In its enclosure (hull) fourteen ribs,  
Also fourteen they numbered above.  
I placed its roof and enclosed it.  
Sixthly I made it firm, seventhly I divided its passages.  
Eighthly its interior I examined.  
Openings to the waters I stopped.

I searched for cracks, and the wanting parts I fixed.  
Three sari of bitumen I poured over the outside.  
Three sari of bitumen I poured over the interior.

\* \* \* \* \*

The season the sun god had fixed and (of which) he spake saying:  
I will cause it to rain from heaven heavily.  
Enter into the midst of the ship and close thy door.  
Of that day when I reached the twilight,  
The day which I had watched for with fear.  
Then rose the water of dawn at daylight  
Like a black cloud on the horizon of heaven.  
The thunder god in the midst of it thundered.  
Nebo and the wind god march in front.  
The throne bearers (storm clouds) go o'er the mountains and plains.  
The pestilence god brings with him affliction.  
The war god goes in front and casts down,  
The angels of earth carry destruction.  
In their glory they swept through the land.  
The deluge of the rain god reaches to heaven.  
The darkened earth to waste is turned.  
To battle against men they brought the deluge.  
Brother saw not brother, men knew not one another.

\* \* \* \* \*

And though I the mother have begotten my people,  
Yet like the spawn of fishes they fill the sea.

\* \* \* \* \*

Six days and nights.  
The wind, the deluge, and the storm go on sweeping away  
The seventh day when it approached the rain subsided,  
And the great deluge,  
Which had assailed like a host,  
Was appeased.  
The sea began to dry, and the wind and flood ended.  
I watched the sea making a tossing,  
And the whole of mankind had turned to clay.  
Like reeds the corpses floated.  
I opened the window, and the light struck on my face.  
I was sad at heart, I sat down, I wept.  
To the country of Nizir floated the ship.  
The mountain of Nizir stopped the ship, and to pass over it was not able.  
On the seventh day in the course of it  
I sent forth the dove; it left. The dove went and returned;  
A resting place it saw not, it returned back.  
I sent forth a swallow, it left and turned, and  
A resting place it could not see, and it returned back.  
I sent forth a raven, and it left.  
The raven went and the corpses which were on the water it saw.  
It did eat – it floated and was carried away – it returned not.  
I sent the animals forth to the four winds (of heaven).  
I sacrificed a sacrifice.

I built the altar on the peak of the mountain.  
 Adgur (libation) jars by sevens I placed.  
 Below them I spread reeds, pine wood, and spices.  
 The gods smelt the savour. The gods smelled the sweet savour.  
 The gods like flies over the master of the sacrifice gathered.  
 The great goddess lifted up the mighty bow which Anu had created as his glory.

\* \* \* \* \*

Let the doer of sin bear his sin, and let the transgressor bear his transgression.  
 Instead of making a deluge, may lions increase,  
 and men be decreased (also jackals, famine, pestilence).

\* \* \* \* \*

He turned himself to us, and established himself to us in a covenant.”

A few notes may be of service. The words *Zir napisti bulaah*, “preserve the seed of life”, remind us of the words of Gen. vii. 3, “to keep seed alive”. The reference to substituting the depredation of the lion, jackal, famine, and pestilence for the flood is a faint echo of the promise of Gen. viii. 21, 22. Further, the lion and jackal were emblems of the god of death, and the sword, famine, and pestilence are brought together in several parts of Scripture (see Jer. xiv. 12; xxvii. 13; II Sam. xxiv. 15; Rev. vi.). Some of the figures used to describe the deluge in this tablet remind one of the majestic Psalm of Habakkuk. See, for example, Hab. iii. 5, “Before Him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at His feet”. The darkness that is spoken of in the line, “the darkened earth to waste is turned”, is a word which suggests the “darkness that might be felt” of the Egyptian plague, while the combination of waste and darkness reminds one of Gen. i. 2.

The Scriptures tell us that the ark rested “upon the mountains of Ararat”, not as often quoted, “upon Mount Ararat”. The Chaldean tablet speaks of the ship resting upon “the mountain of Nizir”. Ararat is written *Uradhu* in the inscriptions, and there denotes Armenia, and more particularly the district about Lake Van. An inscription of Assur-nazzir-pal places Nizir in the tableland of Pamir, a little south of Rowandiz. The word “Armenia” of Isa. xxxvii. 38 is in the Hebrew *Ararat*. The introduction of the rainbow into the account is noteworthy. There is also a hymn wherein occur the words, *kistu abubi*, “the bow of the deluge”, Hebrew, *kesheth*, which differs only in pronunciation from the Assyrian. As in the article dealing with the creation, so here, we quote the words of Rev. John Urquhart:--

“Notwithstanding these numerous and striking agreements, the Babylonian legend is neither progenitor nor rival of the Scripture. It is defile and defaced; and it contains distortions of the truth grave enough to make us sensible of how much we owe to this despised Genesis. . . . The truth was there; but it was inextricably mingled with error which spread darkness not only over the earth’s past, but also over heaven. . . . For the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth to have been declared by Moses, he had to pass the Egyptian priests and the Chaldean documents, and to speak with God.”

**#26. The Nineveh Gallery.**  
**Grammatical Tables and Syllabaries, etc.**  
**pp. 171 - 175**

It must be remembered that the Assyrians were not the original inhabitants of the country, and that the warlike Assyrians were indebted to the vanquished Accadians for the basis of their written language. The Accadian or Sumerian used a picture writing, which became conventionalized and simplified in course of time. The Assyrians took the signs from the Sumerians, disregarded their original *meaning*, and retained only their *sound* value. In the ancient Sumerian language the sign that represented "heaven" was pronounced *an*. This sign and sound was taken over by the Assyrians without its meaning. The sign simply stood for the sound *an* in whatever Assyrian word such syllable might come.

In Table Case B are portions of various Syllabaries, Nos. 9-11 being of the first class, viz., those which give (1) the Sumerian value, (2) the sign, and (3) its Assyrian name. Nos. 12-15 are of the second class, viz., those which give (1) the Sumerian value, (2) the sign, and (3) its Assyrian meaning. Nos. 16 and 17 are of third class, viz., those which give (1) the Sumerian value, (2) the sign, and (3) its Assyrian name, and (4) its Assyrian meaning. Nos. 22 and 23 give a list of Assyrian words of synonymous meanings. Nos. 24-26 give Assyrian words and phrases used in legal documents. Nos. 27 gives grammatical examples in Sumerian, with Assyrian translations, the phrases being those found in incantations. There are forty-one lists in this case dealing with a great variety of philological subjects. In Table Case C we have a collection of explanatory lists of words, names of gods, of utensils, of stars, rivers, countries, cities, temples, birds, animals, etc. As one begins to realize all that these grammatical tables and syllabaries mean, one can appreciate the following comment of Prof. Sayce:--

"The Assyrian Scribes themselves have provided us with the most abundant materials for interpreting the inscriptions."

"Every great Babylonian city had at least one library, scribes were kept constantly at work there copying and re-editing old texts, and sometimes writing new ones."

Table Case D contains a number of tablets dealing with Chronology, rich in material for Assyriologists, but not of a nature of interest the ordinary reader. One of the lists tells us that in the month Sivan an eclipse of the sun took place, and recent astronomical calculations prove that an eclipse of the sun, visible at Nineveh, took place on 15<sup>th</sup> June, 763, B.C. This gives a fixed point for assigning correct dates over a long period. No. 41 is an inscription of Tiglath-Pileser III, mentioning "Ahaz, king of Judah" as among tributary kings.

Table Case E contains a large number of Assyrian letters relating to public and private affairs, selections of astronomical reports, contract tablets, and commercial documents.

In Nos. 108 and 109, we see not only the clay tablet, but the clay envelope which was formed round it, making it impossible to open without destroying a part of the envelope. In Table Case F are exhibited tablets with incantations and directions for the performance of religious and magical rites and ceremonies. In Table Case G are prayers, hymns, litanies and incantations. No. 5 is an alliterative hymn in Assyrian in the form of an Acrostic. The initial and final syllables of the lines read downwards from the same sentence.

Exhibited in Table Case H is a series of Omen tablets. Omens derived from water, the flight of a bird, the births of deformed children, the weather, dreams, dogs, etc. The present day superstition concerning mirrors, salt, tea-leaves, crossed knives, ladders, etc., are somewhat parallel and less excusable.

Table Case I contains tablets inscribed with mythological legends, texts having magical powers, catalogues, and labels. No. 53 is a contract tablet written 694 B.C.; the nail marks of the witnesses here take the place of seal impressions. The present day fingerprint system of identification is a parallel. No. 66 shows the effect of the intense heat to which it was subjected at the burning of Ashur-bani-pal's Library at Nineveh.

A few words on the subject covered by these tablets may be of service. For the following we are indebted to the writings of Prof. Sayce:--

**SACRED BOOKS and RITUAL.**—Along with the growth of the official religion went the growth and completion of the Chaldean Bible and Prayer-book. The festivals of the gods were numerous; the ceremonies to be performed by the priests were more numerous still. The ceremonies were usually accompanied by the recitation of one or more hymns; these hymns were written in Sumerian, which had now become the sacred language of Chaldea just as Latin is the sacred language of the Roman Church. An error in pronunciation was supposed to invalidate the ceremony.

**THE PRIESTS.**—The High-priest was often the monarch. Subordinate to him were other high priests and under them again the priests of Ishtar, and the "elders". By the side of them stood the "prophets" under a chief.

**THE TEMPLES.**—The temples were provided with towers which served for the observation of the stars. In the shrine was a "mercy-seat" whereon the god "seated himself" on certain occasions. At Balairât near Nineveh the mercy-seat had the form of a coffer or ark in which two written tablets of stone were placed.

**ASTRO-THEOLOGY.**—The stars were worshipped; Ishtar herself was originally the evening star, and most of the deities were identified with the planets and chief fixed stars.

**SACRIFICES and OFFERINGS.**—Sacrifices were offered to the stars, as to the other divinities. Besides the sacrifice, offerings were also made of meal, dates, oil, and wine. The sacrifices and offerings were provided partly by endowments, partly by voluntary

gifts (sometimes called *Kurbanni*, the Hebrew *Korban*), partly by obligatory contributions, the most important being “tithes”.

LITERATURE.—*Astronomy*.—The great work on astronomy and astrology in seventy-two chapters or books was originally compiled for the library of Sargon of Accad. It contained chapters on the eclipses or conjunction of the sun and moon, of the planets, the fixed stars and the comets and the path of the sun through the signs of the zodiac.

*Mathematics*.—Treatises giving tables of cube and square roots give an example of the extent of the knowledge of the subject. The notation of the Assyrians was sexagesimal, and 60 still figures in such as the divisions of time, 60 seconds, 60 minutes, 24 hours. 360 degrees to the circle, etc.

*Medicine, Law and History* also held a considerable place in the literature of Assyria.

CONTRACT TABLETS.—From these contract tablets we may gather much as to the social life of the people.

*Marriage*.—We find polygamy was very rare and the wife enjoyed a considerable amount of independence, being able to trade with her own money and conduct law suits in her own name. Wives, however, could be purchased.

*Slavery*.—This was ancient institution, but the slave was protected by law. The Sumerian law ordered a son who denied his father to be shorn and sold as a slave.

*Taxes*.—Nineveh paid into the Treasury in the time of Sennacherib 30 talents a year, Carchemish was assessed at 100 talents. There was an *octroi* duty upon goods entering a town.

*The Bureaucracy*.—The library of Nineveh gives long lists of Assyrian officials. Among them the Rab-shakeh, “chief of the princes” or Vizier (see Isa. xxxvii. 8), the Rab-saris, “chief of the nobles”, and the Rab-mag, “chief physician”.

In one important respect, the basis upon which society rested in Babylonia and in Assyria was different. The Government of Babylonia was theocratic, that of Assyria was military. While Assyria with its bureaucratic centralization was an anticipation of imperial Rome, Babylonia with its theocratic constitution was an anticipation of papal Rome. The king was the adopted son of Bel, and his right to rule was based on the fact that Bel, the true lord and master of the state, had delegated to him his power.

## **The Hope and the Prize.**

### **#18. Joint Imitators (Phil. iii. 17).**

**pp. 21 - 24**

The apostle had spoken of the truth pertaining to the prize, and of the instruction of those who desired to be perfect, as being revealed to such by God. He links with this high and holy revelation the responsibility of each one to walk in line with his attainments. He now proceeds to call their attention to the pattern that had been given them, saying, "Brethren, become joint imitators of me". In the opening up of the secret which was made known to Paul, we find the Gentiles made joint heirs, a joint body, and joint partakers of the promise (Eph. iii. 6). This joint participation in inheritance, body and promise was not of their own choosing or volition, it was entirely of grace. Those who were thus blessed were blessed without regard to their own personal characters or desires; the joint imitators of the apostle were such by virtue of that grace-given desire to press toward the prize.

On several occasions the apostle speaks of himself as a pattern for us to follow, and unless we appreciate the condescension of our God in this matter, we shall miss much blessing.

When we are exhorted to follow the example of Christ, we may feel tempted by reason of our own conscious corruption and failure to feel that the attempt must ever prove fruitless, because He, the Son of God, was so peerless and so perfect. God has met our need in this matter; He has taken a man who so hated the name of the Lord that he went the length of threatening and slaughter, and so dealt with him that he became God's own interpretation of what He means when He tells us to follow or imitate Christ. He says, in effect, here is no peerless and perfect Saviour, but a saved sinner, a man of like infirmity with yourselves; look at the way he followed his Lord, and take his example as my illustration of what I mean when I call upon you to walk in the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Before passing on to consider the passage which will enable us to appreciate the apostle as the pattern for the Church, we would draw attention to the fact that here in Philippians we find the word "joint imitators", and not simply "imitators" as in all the other passages; this is peculiarly characteristic of the epistles of the mystery. This prize is to be won by members of one body, and however individual the progress and responsibility may be, there was to be a unity pervading the endeavour. This can be gathered by noticing the repeated emphasis on "minding the same thing", being of "one mind", being of "equal soul" that is found in the epistle. The "joint imitators" are called upon in i. 27 to be "joint strivers" for the faith of the gospel; the contexts of these two words have some things in common. Both are closely connected with the teaching concerning "citizenship", translated in each case by the word "conversation", both have to do with something that goes beyond salvation and speaks of suffering for Christ. The joint imitator is, moreover, very closely related to two other expressions in the third

chapter. In verse 10 the apostle concludes the desires that constituted the qualifications for attaining the prize by using the words, “conformable to His death”, which word is prefixed with the same particle that we have rendered by the word “joint”. In verse 21 the glorious answer to the conformity to death of verse 10 is given in the words, “fashioned like unto the body of His glory”, the words being the verbal and substantive forms of the same word.

The “joint imitators” of verse 17, doctrinally, as well as literally, link these two references. Paul’s own individual conformity to the death of Christ, which led on to his conformity to the glory of Christ, becomes the example for our imitation, that we being already fellow heirs, fellow members, and fellow partakers, may by becoming fellow imitators share with him the added glory of attaining unto the prize of the high calling. If we have entertained hopes and fears regarding our place in the contest, the matter may become simplified by a prayerful examination of the pattern we have to follow.

The first epistle given by inspiration that Paul wrote contains in the sixth verse the reference to imitation, “and you became imitators of us”. Such statement requires a high standard of spiritual attainment for any teacher to make without qualification, yet the apostle’s statement is even fuller than this, for he adds, “and of the Lord”, linking, by the authority of God, his own example with that of his peerless Lord.

The imitation here noted is explained as their having “received the word in much affliction with joy of the holy Spirit”, so that they in turn became “types to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia”. In I Cor. iv. 16 the apostle concludes a passage (which uses such loathsome similes as “the filth of the world”, and “the offscouring of all things”, and tabulates such privations as hunger and thirst, nakedness and homelessness), with the words, “Wherefore, I beseech you, become ye imitators of me”! Here again the imitation of the apostle led to suffering and rejection. In I Cor. xi. 1 he concludes another line of argument, this time not laying the emphasis upon suffering, but upon the placing of the well being of others ever before our own considerations:--

“Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God: *even as I* please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved; become imitators of me, *even as I* am of Christ.”

How much the apostle realized that his life was to be an example for the saints to imitate is seen in such a passage as II Thess. iii. 7-9:--

“For ye yourselves know how it behoves you to imitate us: for we were not disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man’s bread for naught, but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you; not because we have not authority, but in order that we might give ourselves a type for you to imitate us.”

This type which the Lord exhorts us to imitate sets before the believer suffering, hardship, self denial, care for others, toil and labour; the power of the example is found in the words, “even as I also am of Christ”. He so followed his Lord that his example becomes a type or pattern for us to imitate. From another standpoint, that of distinct doctrine, we might consider other passages where Paul and his life and teaching are

spoken of as types, but such passages are not strictly connected with the thought of Phil. iii. We have not yet, however, considered the particular phase of the apostle's example that he gives in Phil. iii.; that particular phase is given in verse 20, but is preceded by a warning concerning those whose walk is quite contrary; these two types, the one to follow and the other to avoid, together with their ends, we must leave for another paper.

### **#19. The enemies of the cross (Phil. iii. 18, 19). pp. 53 - 57**

Before passing on to the grand conclusion of the chapter, which gives a glimpse of what the "out resurrection" will mean, the apostle pauses to give one final word of earnest warning. Early in the chapter he had sounded the same note, "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision, for we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh"; these "dogs", "evil workers", and "concision" are in utter opposition to the true circumcision. Sadly enough, not only without but within the church were those who were not the true circumcision:--

"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping (parallel to the writing the same things which to the apostle was not grievous, as this was, but was safe), that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things."

When the apostle speaks in the same breath of his own example, and that of those whose walk must not be imitated, it seems impossible to believe that he is speaking of the unsaved. Surely the example of the unsaved would be no snare to the Philippians in their running for the prize! No, these are believers, who though redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and therefore saved and justified, had not gone on to realize the deeper teaching of His cross, who had not learned the circumcision of their flesh, whose God was, alas, their belly, whose mind was set on earthly things. Of such the apostle says, "their end is destruction". Concerning His sheep the Saviour had said, "they shall never perish", and this we believe is foundation truth also concerning every member of His church. The destruction here cannot refer to the believer himself, but is to be understood by its context, as being similar to the teaching of I Cor. iii. 15-17. "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. . . . if any may defile (margin and R.V. "destroy") the temple of God, him shall God destroy". The words, "he himself shall be saved", and "him shall God destroy", are so contradictory that the latter clause demands an explanation that shall bring it into line with what is clearly taught in verse 15. The word here rendered "destroy" signifies to spoil, mar, deprave, and this meaning agrees with the teaching as to suffering loss; further, there is something worth considering in the suggestion that the word rendered "him" should read "it", indicating thereby the building which, not being "God's building", is destroyed.

In the series of articles on “*Things that differ*” the special doctrine of the “Cross of Christ” (Volume VII, pp. 89, 117, 148, 180) was considered, and we learned that the cross had a bearing upon discipleship, denial of self, and crucifixion of the flesh; so that it becomes possible for a believer, by indulging the flesh, and by failing to walk spiritually, to constitute himself an enemy of the cross of Christ; the end of such must be loss. The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the same thing; the failure of the redeemed Israelites, Moses included, to enter the promised land involved them in loss, and those who drew back, drew back to “destruction” or loss (same word as Phil. iii. 19), forfeiting as they did “the recompense of the reward”. To those who look with longing eyes at the far off prize, such meanings will be of the utmost value, and the clearer the character of this walk is seen, the easier will it be to avoid the error.

After telling us what such are, viz., “enemies of the cross of Christ”, and what their “end” must be, the apostle throws a threefold light upon the secret of their failure. Their God is their belly, their glory is in their shame, and the things on earth occupy their mind. Can a believer be said to have a “god”? At first thought we may answer, No, yet a moment’s reflection may bring to your mind the warning against “covetousness which is idolatry”. When in Rom. vi. 13 the apostle says, “neither yield your members. . . . unto sin; but yield yourselves unto God”, it is not difficult to see that sin, being placed in opposition to God and claiming that service which is due to God, really becomes “a god” if yielded to by the believer. What is the god that claims the service of these enemies of the cross—“their belly”. Scripture speaks plainly, and the issues are too solemn for us to gloss over these words of warning. Have we not at times been rebuked by some well-meaning but unenlightened believer, when such would dissuade from some step in the Lord’s service by some such words as, “*but you must live*”! If faithfulness appears to jeopardize one’s means of gaining a living, this is often reckoned as too foolish to be thought of, yet how many times do we not need to learn the ancient lesson, that “man *does not* live by bread alone”; anxious thought for “what we shall eat, or what we shall drink” is not the mark of the true disciple. The first temptation recorded in Scripture was founded upon something that looked “good for food”, and the first recorded temptation of the Saviour in the wilderness was addressed to the claims of hunger, and in this temptation and triumph we may see the completest contrast with those whose example is the subject of the Apostle’s warning. Israel’s murmurings in the wilderness revolved round the question of food, and as we acquaint ourselves with the teaching of the Word, and note the tendencies in ourselves and others, it will be seen how easy a thing it is to lapse into this subtle form of idolatry. In Rom. xvi. 17, 18 the apostle calls upon the saints to “mark” (same word Phil. iii. 17) them which cause divisions, for such “serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly”. In I Cor. vi. 12, 13 the apostle, repudiating the idea covered by the saying, “all things are lawful unto me”, says, “meats for the belly, and belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them”, as much as to say, We take higher ground than this for the regulation of our conduct. Many times failure to rise to the high call of Scripture may be attributed to a “bread and butter reason”; many a believer has been betrayed into unfaithfulness because the contrary action involved what Scripture so searchingly calls, “the belly”. What a degradation for one who has confessed the “one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all”!

Those whose God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ find their glory in His presence, and in His smile, they look forward to the day when they, together with Christ their life, shall be manifested in glory; those whose God is their belly find their glory in their shame. Of the Lord it is written that He endured the cross, and despised the shame. The apostle in Phil. i. 20, speaking of his deliverance from prison, says:--

“According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.”

Paul’s conception of shame seems to be a denial of Christ, the pleasing of self before the Lord; it is fairly certain that those whose God is their belly would not be likely to magnify God in their body. In what way such could find their glory in their shame may be difficult to detail, the fact is sufficient for the purpose of a warning. It is the special feature of the truth of the prison epistles that those who are blessed under the dispensation of the mystery are blessed “in the super-heavenlies”, to such the apostle writes:--

“If ye then were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth” (Col. iii. 1, 2).

The concluding description of those whose example was to be avoided is that they “mind earthly things”. The earthly things (*epigeios*) are contrasted with heavenly things in John iii. 12, and also in Phil. ii. 10. The same is also true of I Cor. xv. 40, where the heavenly body is contrasted with the earthly body; or of II Cor. v. 1, where the earthly house is contrasted with the house not made with hands, age-abiding in the heavens. The contrast is most severe in James iii. 15, where contrasted with the wisdom that descends from above is the wisdom that is “earthly, sensual (*or natural*, that which pertains to the soul, and so to the first man Adam, see I Cor. xv. 45), demoniacal”. It is evident that one cannot have the mind that was in Christ Jesus, and mind earthly things at the same time. While the usage of the word “earthly” would seem to favour the thought that the evil things of earth are prominent, it is not exclusively so. What may be called legitimate earthly things may prove a snare should they absorb the mind of believers. It is right to be diligent in business, it is right to provide for one’s own, it is right to labour with one’s hands, yet business, family cares, and the necessities of daily life must not be allowed to take first place however great the pressure upon us may be. We all are more likely to become like Martha, cumbered with much serving, than Mary, choosing that good part of sitting at the Master’s feet and learning of Him. If the Philippians with their light and advancement needed the words of warning that have occupied our attention, how much more do we need them? Let us keep before us the practical as well as the doctrinal truth, that there is, to us, one God, and that our glory and our minds are not connected with earthly things, but where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.

“I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disapproved” (I Cor. ix. 27).

## #20. The Citizenship and the Transformation (Phil. iii. 20, 21). pp. 91 - 95

After the solemn warning that occupies verses 18 and 19, and which are parenthetical, it is a joy to resume the theme of the apostle commenced by him in verse 17. He had spoken of himself as a pattern for the believer to imitate, and verses 20, 21 may be read on from verse 17 without a break, “. . . . as ye have us for an example; for our conversation is in heaven, etc.” The word rendered “conversation” is *politeuma*, and is better translated by the word “citizenship”. We have the word *polite*, a citizen (Acts xxi. 39); *politeia*, citizenship, rendered “freedom” (Acts xxii. 28); *politeuo*, to live according to one’s citizenship, rendered “lived” (Acts xxiii. 1); “conversation” (Phil. i. 27). The inhabitants of Philippi would be in a position readily to understand the apostle’s meaning when he used this word “citizenship”. Philippi, according to Acts xvi. 12, was “the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony”.

Philippi had been made a Roman colony with free municipal government by Augustus. Its citizens though living in Philippi *were citizens of Rome*. They were exempt from taxes that other less fortunate cities paid. How forcible therefore the meaning of the apostle would be. Just as they lived and acted as citizens of Rome though far away from that city, so too they were to act as citizens of heaven, though for the time on earth.

In Phil. i. 27 the exhortation is, “Only let your conversation (*politeuo*) be worthy of the gospel of Christ”, where the idea of citizenship is latent in the word used. In Phil. iii. the connection is more evident, for the walk of the believer is directly linked with his heavenly citizenship. This citizenship, its freedom, its privileges, and its foundation, is explained in Eph. ii. 11-22.

“No therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but joint-citizens of the saints, and of the household of God” (verse 19).

It is because these believers were “joint-citizens” that the apostle exhorted them to become “joint-imitators” of his walk, for he ever remembered that his citizenship was in heaven. We must not pass over the little word “is” in the sentence, “our citizenship is in heaven”, for it is not simply a part of the verb “to be”, but the rendering of another verb altogether, namely, *huparchō*. This word gives us *huparxis*, “substance” or “goods” (Acts ii. 45 and Heb. x. 34, and *huparchonta*, goods or possessions, Matt. xix. 22; xxiv. 47, etc.) and the primary idea is not expressed by the verb “to be” simply, but by the added thought “to possess”. It is something that subsists, that really is, that demands this word in preference to *eimi*, “to be”. The word occurs twice in Philippians. The first occurrence is in ii. 6, “Being in the form of God”. The R.V. margin has, *Gr. being originally*; Rotherham and J. N. Darby render it “subsisting”; Weymouth puts it, “from the beginning He had”.

The heavenly citizenship then of Phil. iii. is a blessed possession subsisting in fact and reality in heaven. Just as the Philippians were real citizens of Rome, though Rome was separated by many miles, so these Philippians were citizens of heaven. The contest for the prize might involve the loss of some if not all of their possessions (*ta huparchonta*), even as it had involved the “gains” of Paul, and the “goods” of the “Hebrews”, yet the one great possession remained, their citizenship in heaven.

From this position and possession in the heavens “we are waiting with longing expectation a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ”. The word *apekdechomai*, “to wait, or expect”, occurs seven times in the N.T., and all in the writings of Paul. “The earnest expectation of creation *waiteth* for the revelation of the Son of God”; “and not only they, but ourselves also, *wait* for the adoption, the redemption of our body”; “If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience *wait* for it” (Rom. viii. 19-25). The Corinthians were “*waiting* for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. i. 7); the Galatians, through the spirit, *waited* for the hope of righteousness by faith (Gal. v. 5), and the Hebrews were told that “unto them that *look* for Him, shall He (Christ) appear the second time apart from sin unto salvation” (Heb. ix. 28).

We have continually called attention to the parallel that exists between Hebrews and Philippians, and this passage is a case in point. The salvation waited for, like the redemption of Rom. viii., and the hope of Gal. v., is “apart from sin”. The “so great salvation” of Hebrews was something that might be lost, and has reference to the promises that some were in danger of losing through drawing back. The Saviour that the Philippians looked for had already dealt with their sin, and so completely had that been settled that the word sin is absent from the epistle. The prize is now in view, and they were earnestly awaiting the Saviour to bestow it upon them. So, immediately the Saviour is mentioned, His sought-for work is described, “Who shall change (not forgive or justify), our vile body”.

In this passage we have the words *metaschematizō*, translated “change”, and *summorphos*, translated “fashioned like”. In Phil. ii. 6-8 we read that the Lord Jesus originally subsisted in the “form” (*morphe*) of God, but that He emptied Himself (R.V.), taking the form (*morphe*) of a servant, becoming in the likeness of men; and being found in “fashion” (*schema*) as a man, He “humbled” (*tapeinoō*) Himself. This passage will throw light upon the meaning of the words “change”, “fashioned like”, and “vile” of Phil. iii. 21. The exchange of the “form” of God for the “form” of the servant was accomplished by a change of outward appearance; the Lord became in “fashion” as a man.

The believer whose conformity to the death of Christ has qualified him for the prize, must in order that appropriate expression be given to this conformity, and the prize be fittingly bestowed, be given an outward appearance that shall agree with this wondrous exaltation; and so he waits for a Saviour who shall “change”, “transform”, or “transfigure” the body of his humiliation (*tapeiōnsis*) that it may be conformed to the body of His glory. The rendering of the A.V. “vile body” is misleading. The word indicates “low estate” (Luke i. 48), “humiliation” (Acts viii. 33), “made low” (Jas. i. 10).

The antithesis to this word is “exalted” (see Luke i. 52; Isa. lii. 13; and James i. 9). The humbling of Christ, as set out in Phil. ii. will explain the humiliation of the believer in Phil. iii. Of the Lord it is written, “He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, EVEN THE DEATH OF THE CROSS”. The believer’s humiliation is conformity to His death, and that death the death of the cross. Those whose god is their belly know nothing of this body of humiliation. Instead of being conformed to the death of the cross, they are the enemies of the cross; instead of their minds being set upon the citizenship in heaven, their minds are fixed on earthly things. Instead of their humiliation being the passport to the likeness of the glory of the exalted Christ, they glory in that which is their shame.

The out-resurrection and the prize of the high-calling we saw were connected with the fellowship of His sufferings, and conformity to His death. The power that alone could enable one to run this race is called “the power of His resurrection”. The transformation of the body to the likeness of the body of His glory is connected with previous humiliation, and the power that accomplishes it is the energy whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself.

We have on more than one occasion endeavoured to make it clear that there is no uncertainty attaching to our hope. Readers must distinguish between the “hope” and the “prize” and not dim the glory of the one, by their felt unfitness for the other. Sufficient we feel has now been brought forward in these articles to give all true *Bereans* enough to test for themselves, and we earnestly pray that walk and witness of all may be so worthy that at the end we may be able to say, “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown”. Let us each remember the example of the apostle, let us lay aside every hindering weight, let us beware of the flesh, let us forget the things behind, let us remember the mark, let us “so run that we may obtain”. We hope to conclude this series with a few words dealing with one or two difficulties.

## **#21. A few difficulties and an encouragement.**

**pp. 118 - 122**

The subject which we have considered in the previous twenty articles has not been without its difficulties; we have been encouraged from time to time to realize that readers were stirred to question the exposition of the subject, and in this concluding article we propose dealing with just a few outstanding difficulties. We shall not be able to answer each correspondent individually, but as many of the difficulties are of a similar nature, we believe that the following answers will embrace the majority.

Many have a difficulty regarding this subject by reason for failure to distinguish clearly *Prize* from the *Hope*. In an early article of this series we endeavoured to draw the distinction between “the Hope”, and “the Prize”, and said, “There can be no greater

contrast than that of Ephesians and Philippians in their point of view. Ephesians teaches *boldness with confidence*, because there the question has entirely to do with being accepted in the Beloved; Philippians speaks of *fear and trembling*, because it has reference to the service, the running, and the contest of the believer subsequent to his perfect acceptance in Christ". The "Hope" does not figure in the epistle to the Philippians; the very word is used only by the apostle there with reference to himself. Phil. i. 20, his hope of deliverance and faithful testimony; ii. 19, 23, his hope of sending Timothy to the Philippians. To have misgivings therefore about the "hope", when reading Phil. iii. about the "Prize" is an evidence of failure to discern the things that differ. The hope of the believer is that of being with the Lord in glory and of sharing in the resurrection. This is a part of redemption; unto this every member of the One Body is sealed and pledged by the Holy Spirit "until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory". No conditions are attached to the hope, no fears are expressed regarding its attainment, and no efforts are called for to qualify for it.

A passage from Colossians may help us to see that this is so. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath MADE US SUFFICIENT to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light" (Col. i. 12). Here is not the "fear and trembling" attaching to the Philippian prize, but the "boldness and confidence" of the Ephesian hope. What must be the state and condition of those who are to be the partakers there "in the light", what holiness, what righteousness, what spotlessness, what worthiness? God alone knows the standard He has set, but "one thing I know", Christ is my sufficiency, in Him I am "*sufficient*" for the heavenly places "in the light". By no act or endeavour can we make ourselves sufficient, but the grace that "made us alive together with Christ" will "make us sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus".

The prize forms no integral part of the unity of the Spirit, but the "one hope" does (Eph. iv. 4). A crown that may be won, may be lost, and the glory of reigning with Christ is directly connected with "enduring", whereas living with Him is simply the outcome of "having died with Him", a participation which is the joyous reckoning of every believer (II Tim. ii. 11-13). When the hope of the one body is spoken of in Col. iii. we do not read, "when Christ the righteous judge shall appear", but "when Christ who is our *life* shall appear, then shall we appear with Him in glory", and here is exactly the same argument that we found in II Tim. ii. 11, "ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God". The apostle who wrote these inspired words, who so fully taught the perfect acceptance of the believer in the Lord, did not entertain any doubt regarding the hope when he penned the, "if by any means" of the prize. To be exercised in mind as to any question of worthiness regarding the Hope, and to assume certainty with regard to the Prize and the Crown, are alike to be shunned.

Another series of difficulties arises in connection with the question of the scriptural meaning of death. Many of our readers have come to the conclusion that the Scripture teaches that the dead are dead, and not alive in another world, that the scriptural figure of sleep disposes of the traditional idea of spirit activity after death, that the Scriptures' united witness is that the only hope before Jew, Gentile, or Church of God is by the one way--resurrection. Tradition uses the expression "sudden death—sudden glory",

tradition speaks of the departed loved one as being now in the conscious enjoyment of the presence of the Lord. What tradition has done is this, it has denied the scriptural doctrine which teaches that the dead are dead, that the dead sleep until the resurrection, and it has taken that which is held out as a peculiar and extraordinary privilege, a prize in fact to be attained with great difficulty and self denial, as the common experience of every saved own who has fallen asleep in Christ. An axiom of the world says, "The exception proves the rule." The aspirations and the doubts of the apostle in Phil. i. and iii. bring before us an exception; there was a way whereby the resurrection may be brought nearer, the believer might attain unto the out-resurrection out from among the dead, he might "depart and be with Christ", which is far better than living or dying.

Another question that is asked in different ways is, "Who can hope to attain to this height?" And "Did Paul himself reach it?" Knowing something of the awful failure of the flesh, the entanglements of the world, the ease with which we may do wrong, the general uncircumcision of our natures, we do not wonder that many say, "All that I can hope for is that which comes by pure grace, anything that lies beyond that I cannot reach unto". The humility of mind that speaks thus is precious in the sight of God, *and may be the first step* towards the seemingly unattainable. Even Paul, the pattern, depreciated himself; he wrote, "not as though I had already attained, either were already perfected", and it might not do either for him or for us to know how far we were along the road, lest by thinking we stand we bring about a fall. One thing we may be certain about, if we know our shortcomings and besetting environment, *the Lord does too*. He has not told us that we have to reach the standard He has set for another. The outward conformity of one whose natural temperament never leads him into danger or difficulty may be far greater than another who has inherited some trying passion, yet in the eyes of the Lord, who looks upon the heart and tries the reins, who can tell which one is nearer the "conformity to His death" or which one is experiencing "the body of humiliation"?

A principle upon which the Lord works with regard to the awarding of reward seems to be contained in the following words, "and unto one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; *to every man according to his several ability.*" The three servants varied in *ability* and *responsibility*; he who had five, gained five, and he who had two, gained two, and both stood exactly upon a level in the eyes of the Lord, for indeed one hundred per cent gain was true of both; identical words of approval and reward awaited them. Had the servant whose ability was represented by one talent gained but one talent, he would have stood as high as the one who gained five. In the days when "gifts" were common among the churches, the difference in the gift was made sovereignly by the Spirit, "dividing to every man severally as He will", and no one was responsible for the use of a gift with which he had not been entrusted, but all were exhorted that "having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy *according to the proportion of faith.*" Paul must use Paul's gift up to his measure, or fail of his reward, but neither the writer nor the reader will be asked to reach Paul's standard; he may have been entrusted with the full five talents, Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Teacher, and Disciple; you may be but entrusted with one—the Disciple, "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in that which is much". As to conformity to the death of Christ, fellowship with His sufferings, the

greatest conformity, the deepest fellowship must leave their depths unfathomed. Let us not err by measuring ourselves with ourselves, let us not grieve the Lord by desponding; an honest endeavour by His grace, though it fail, will be more pleasing to Him than to hide our one talent in a napkin; prove once again that grace is still sufficient.

Did Paul himself attain the out-resurrection? Scripture does not say. He desired “to depart and be with Christ”, and in II Tim. iv. he says, “the time of my departure is at hand”; he does not say that his death is near, but retains the same word that he used in Philippians. In II Timothy there are none of the misgivings of Philippians, the apostle stands now on the verge of the grave, life and service are now behind, what is the God-given review? “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness”. Paul does not say that the prize of the high calling was his, he does not say that for him sudden death would mean sudden glory; we can only feel that the apostle who so ardently desired as to say that he had but “one thing” before him, would hardly say at the close, “I have finished my course”, if he did not feel the Divine assurance that his desire was to be granted. We cannot but believe that the silence of the Scripture is salutary; we believe that the Lord would not lay before His children the impossible. We realize the difficulties a little, we need to be kept constantly humble all through our course, and may well leave the end to Him.

We trust that none will feel disposed to surrender because of the trials of the wilderness, but will rather, like Caleb and Joshua, seek to wholly follow the Lord.