

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 XII.

1922

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

DEAR FELLOW-MEMBERS,

Every fresh volume of *The Berean Expositor* seems to be another “Ebenezer”, for we can most truly say concerning its publication, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us”.

The limits of our witness are marked for us by a rightly-divided Word of truth, and the ministry of the apostle Paul to the Church of the Mystery is its stand-point and testimony. We do not expect such a course of teaching to be popular, but we do call upon all whose eyes God has enlightened as to the Mystery of His will, to join with us in upholding this testimony in the fast closing years of the dispensation of the grace of God.

Yours for the Truth, by grace,

CHARLES H. WELCH
FREDK. P. BRININGER

December, 1922.

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The Fear of Forming a Sect. **pp. 45 - 47**

Some of the Lord's people who feel the need of fellowship with other fellow-members have expressed hesitation to put their desires into operation, fearing that by so doing they would be forming "another sect". It is well to retain a tender conscience over all our actions, but at the same time we must not allow an unscriptural fancy to prevent us fulfilling what may be a scriptural desire.

WHAT IS A SECT? We read in Acts v. 17 of the sect of the Sadducees, and in xv. 5 of the sect of the Pharisees. In Acts xxiv. 5 we find the term the sect of the Nazarenes. Here we have the same word used of two sects who were manifestly not of God and also of the true Church of God. The Apostle takes up the word used by Tertullus in xxiv. 5, in his defence saying:--

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way they call heresy (same word as *sect*), so worship I the God of my fathers" (Acts xxiv. 14).

Hairesis = sect is derived from *haireomai* = to chose (Phil. i. 22; II Thess ii. 13; Heb. xi. 25). The scriptural idea of a sect is "self choice", and is a work of the flesh (Gal. v. 20; I Cor. xi. 19 *heresies*). A company of believers seeking to manifest their union with one another and with the risen Lord cannot be guilty of forming "another sect" by so doing. Should unscriptural practices, leaders, or ideas be allowed, these departures would merit the undesired title, and it is these "self choosings" we must shun.

One of the most important facts to remember in connection with any attempt to form a meeting to-day is the condition that corporate Christianity had reached in the days of the Apostle Paul. The second epistle to Timothy reveals a church in ruins, the foundation alone remaining and exposed to view. Consequently the discipline that was possible while the church was standing can no longer be put into operation. Instead of Timothy being instructed to exercise his disciplinary powers upon *others*, he is urged to exercise them upon *himself*. The foundation itself bears the seal:--

"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (ii. 19).

The personal note is sounded in such statements as:--

"If a man therefore purge *himself* from these" (not purge others) (ii. 21).

"From such *turn away*" (not turn others away) (iii. 5).

Timothy is told to "shun" profane and vain babblings, to "flee" youthful lusts, to "follow" righteousness, faith, love, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Foolish and unlearned questions he is to avoid, knowing that they but gender strifes (II Tim. ii.). These passages seem to indicate in a general way the mind of the Lord as to the meeting together of His people.

In the early days we read many times of “the church in the house” (Rom. xvi. 5; Col. iv. 15) of one or another. We believe that the apostasy which everywhere manifesting itself will compel the faithful once again to meet in this primitive way. When this does take place, the *domestic* qualifications of the bishop and deacon of I Tim. iii. will be better appreciated. It will be obviously impossible to meet in the house of a brother whose lack of control makes his children’s behaviour a scandal. Neither could the meeting be held in a home where there was lack of unity between husband and wife. With regard to the question of teachers, we believe that when the Lord’s people met together, it would not be long before one or two would manifest that they were “faithful men, able to teach others also”, and would be recognized as such.

We are fellow members of the One Body, and our privilege it is by the working together of every part to make increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love. Let us avoid by all means a mere multiplication of “Meetings”. Let us shun any approach to a “sect”, but let us as fellow-members of one body seek by all the means sanctioned and sanctified by the Word, to build one another up in the faith.

“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name” (Mal. iii. 16).

“No More Canaanite.”
(Zech. xiv. 21).
pp. 172 - 174

The closing words of the Prophets are full of interest and instruction, bringing to a focus the goal and purpose of the age. The last verse of Zechariah is no exception. After describing the holiness of the people of Israel in the day of their restoration, the prophet adds:--

“And in that day there shall no more be the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts” (Zech. xiv. 21).

In the Revelation the sin and sorrow of Gen. iii., and the overthrowing deluge of Gen. i. 2 are seen to pass away:--

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth and there was *no more sea*” (Rev. xxi. 1 -- Gen. i. 2).

“There shall be *no more death, sorrow, crying, pain.*” “There shall be *no more curse*” (xxi. 4; xxii. 3 -- Gen. iii.).

Zechariah however speaks of certain nations that shall “no more” be in the house of the Lord. Are we to look upon these Canaanites as being in the same category with the “deep” of Gen. i. 2, and the curse, sin, death and sorrow of Gen. iii.? The only way to obtain an answer to this question is to “search and see” what the Scriptures teach.

The Canaanites take their name from Canaan, the son of Ham. As a result of his father’s action, Canaan is cursed by Noah. “Cursed be Canaan” (Gen. ix. 25). It is important to notice those who are cursed in Scripture, and their relation one to the other:--

The Serpent.—“Thou are cursed above all cattle” (Gen. iii. 14).

The Ground.—“Cursed is the ground for thy sake” (Gen. iii. 17).

Cain.—“Thou art cursed from the earth” (Gen. iv. 11).

Canaan.—“Cursed be Canaan” (Gen. ix. 25).

Contrary to common belief neither Adam nor Eve were cursed in Gen. iii. Sorrow and toil until death, with the hope of the promised seed and the pledge of the cherubim are the results of Adam’s sin, but the curse falls upon the Serpent and upon the ground.

The first man to be cursed is Cain, and though the first son of Adam and Eve, was “*of that wicked one*” (I John iii. 12). The second man to be cursed is Canaan, and through him the Canaanites. And the Canaanites likewise appear to be closely connected with the wicked one. The land of Canaan was inhabited in earlier days by races of giants called Anakim, Avim, Emims, Horim, Rephaim, Suzim and Zamzammim, but these earlier races were supplanted by the Canaanites. The first mention of the land of Canaan is found in Gen. xi. 31:--

“Terah took Abram to go into the land of Canaan.”

After Terah died, Abram entered the land of Canaan, but “The Canaanite was then in the land”. It would appear that the elect nation Israel were destined to fill the place occupied by the Canaanites, which either in actuality or in type, the Canaanites had forfeited. The parallel is extended into the dispensation of the mystery. Some Principalities and Powers, with Satan at their head, have forfeited their place in the heavens, and an elect company called the Church which is His Body, at present pilgrims and strangers, and wrestlers with these heavenly powers, shall one day enter into their inheritance in the heavenly places.

Abraham, the first man to receive the promise of Canaan, was most particular that his son Isaac should not marry any woman of the Canaanites:--

“I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites” (Gen. xxiv. 3).

When the spies entered the land of Canaan they were terrified by the children of Anak in whose sight the Israelites felt like grasshoppers (Numb. xiii. 33), and the Canaanite dwelt in both the valley (xiv. 25), and in the hill (xiv. 45). Upon entering the land of Canaan Israel was instructed to smite them, and utterly destroy them, to make no covenant with them, nor shew them mercy, neither allow their sons nor their daughters to make marriages with them, the great reason being that the Canaanites would turn the hearts of Israel away after idols, the other reason being that Israel was a holy people unto the Lord (Deut. vii. 1-6). A distinction in treatment is to be made between the cities of those who live far away from Israel’s inheritance and the cities of the Canaanites. An element of mercy and discrimination is enjoined in the one case (Deut. xx. 10-15):--

“But of the cities of these people, which the Lord Thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save nothing alive that breatheth” (Deut. xx. 16-18).

Both the books of Joshua and Judges reveal the fact that Israel did not fulfil the commands of the Lord respecting the Canaanites, and the subsequent history of Israel and their kings, ending as it did in the Babylonish captivity and the establishment of gentile dominion, is a black commentary upon their disobedience. The Canaanite stands for all that is unholy and unclean, and therefore when Zechariah looks forward to that day when even the bells on the horses and the utensils of the kitchen shall be “Holiness unto the Lord”, then he cries as expressing a long-deferred factor in Israel’s blessing:--

“In that day there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts” (Zech. xiv. 21).

Further thoughts arising out of this must be deferred until another opportunity.

The Lord's Anointed. **pp. 175, 176**

As one reads the concluding chapter of I Samuel, with the tragic story of Saul's death, and then continues on into II Samuel and reads David's lament, one is impressed with the great contrast that is found in these two references to the one subject.

The Amalekite apparently reckoned that his story of the death of Saul would give him favour in the eyes of his successor David, and reckoning according to the flesh he was doubtless justified. David, however, viewed the event and story in quite a different light. Instead of rewarding the messenger and exhibiting pleasure or satisfaction at the news he brought, David said unto him:--

“Whence art thou? And he answered, I am the son of a stranger, an Amalekite. And David said unto him, How wast thou not afraid to stretch forth thy hand to destroy the Lord's anointed? And David called one of the young men, and said, Go near, and fall upon him. And he smote him that he died. And David said unto him, Thy blood be upon thy head; for thy mouth hath testified against thee, saying, I have slayed the Lord's Anointed” (II Sam. i. 13-16).

Then David lamented Saul in words that he afterward taught the children of Israel. He opens his lamentation with the words:--

“Thy heart, Israel, is slain upon the high places; How are the mighty fallen!” (verse 19).

Further on he says:--

“Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives” (verse 23).

When one reviews the long persecution which David suffered at the hands of Saul, the words “lovely and pleasant” sound strangely in our ears. Both words (“love” and “pleasant”) are used of Jonathan:--

“I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very *pleasant* hast thou been unto me; thou *love* to me was wonderful, passing the love of women” (verse 26).

This we can understand, but how could David use them of Saul? The secret of David's regard for Saul lies in the words “*The Lord's Anointed*”. In the days of his persecution, though tempted by his advisers and his extreme need, he refrained from killing Saul when he had the power so to do. On one occasion he cut off the skirt of Saul's robe, yet so tender a conscience did David keep, we read that:--

“David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord” (I Sam. xxiv. 6).

Again, after Saul had basely broken his promise to David, and was once more in his power, David again refrained, saying:--

“Who can stretch forth his hand against *the Lord’s anointed*, and be guiltless?” (I Sam. xxvi. 9).

When David was king and he composed a Psalm of thanksgiving upon the occasion of the coming of the Ark of God, the Lord’s anointed is once more mentioned. This time, however, it is not a king that is intended, but the children of Israel:--

“When they were but few He suffered no man to do them wrong: Yea, He reprov’d kings for their sakes, saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm” (Psalm cv. 12-15).

When Balaam looked upon Israel, the Lord’s anointed, he said of God:--

“He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel” (Numb. xxiii. 21).

This is parallel with David’s attitude. Saul had many things in his life that were neither “lovely” nor “pleasant”, and died at length at the hand of the Lord for the sin of witchcraft. Yet for all this he was the Lord’s anointed. Israel is continually spoken of as rebellious and stiffnecked, their works and thoughts are “iniquity”, the conception of “perverseness” (mischief) being attributed to them (Isa. lix. 4-7), yet the words of Balaam are true.

Do we realize as we should the efficacy of the name of Christ, THE Anointed One? While we must never condone sin in the believer, and ever seek grace to walk worthy of our calling, let us in our estimate of other believers, and of ourselves, never under-estimate the fact that with all our confessed failings, we are IN Christ and blessed WITH Christ, accepted IN the Beloved.

Answers to Correspondents. pp. 63, 64

No. 26.—R.J.C. writes. “I am seeking light on the question of the hope of the mystery Church. I see clearly the ‘Thessalonian’ hope was entirely contingent upon Israel’s repentance. I would ask:--

1. Is this held in abeyance till Israel is taken up again in God’s purpose, or has it completely passed. All the Thessalonian saints died and of course await resurrection. To what? The *Air*, the *New Jerusalem* or the *super-heavenlies*?
2. I am searching (but cannot find it revealed) for the meeting place of the Head and the Body, which I presume must take place somewhere before the manifestation of Christ and we with Him (Col. iii. 4).
3. The Apocalypse Scriptures I take it deal with the unveiling of *Christ’s* glory, to us and others.”

(1). Hope is the realization of one’s calling. It is “the hope of your calling”. Whatever therefore constitutes the calling of any believer now by faith, will be fulfilled to him when hope is realized. Consequently those Thessalonian saints who fell asleep believing the words and teaching of I Thess. iv., will be found among those who being “the dead in Christ shall rise first”, and share with the living saints the joy of meeting the descending Lord in the air. This will not take place until Israel once more are taken up by God and the two epistles to the Thessalonians will be “dispensational truth” once more (*see* II Thess. ii. for its association with the Day of the Lord, Antichrist and the Book of the Revelation).

The mention of the New Jerusalem as an alternative shows that it is not realized that entry of that city is more of the nature of a “prize” than of hope (*see* Heb. xi. 16; xxii. 22, 23; Rev. xxii. 5, 14).

The “super-heavenlies” do not come within the hope revealed to the Thessalonians. They waited for God’s Son FROM HEAVEN.

(2). This search is likely to be a long one, for so far as our knowledge of the epistles is concerned we do not remember any indication being made as to where the meeting place will be. Our attention is rather focused upon being *manifested* with Him in glory.

(3). By the “Apocalypse Scriptures” we suppose is meant those epistles and the Revelation itself which use the word “Apocalypse” of the Lord’s second Coming? Seeing that this word is never used in connection with the hope of the One Body, it is wise for us to keep the two aspects of the Lord’s Coming distinct. If “the unveiling of Jesus Christ” is set forth in Rev. xix. 11-21 then it is not *to us*, however much we may, in spirit, rejoice in the prospect. The key to understanding our hope is in Eph. i. 17, 18:--

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (the eyes of your heart having been enlightened); that ye may know what is the hope of His calling.”

As we get to know the present glory of Christ in His position “far above all”, we add to our understanding of the hope that will place us there with Him. Further, seeing that this “one hope” of our “calling” is a part of the seven-fold unity of the Spirit, it would appear that as our practical appreciation of the truth becomes manifest, so our understanding of the One hope will develop.

May the Lord bless you in your labours for Him and His truth.

pp. 91 - 94

No. 27.—W.H.G.T. writes:--“I notice on page 58 of the Berean Expositor for April, 1917 (*Volume VII*), that you distinguish between faith *in* Christ, and the faith *of* Christ. I wish you would some time or other elaborate this and justify it from Scripture, because the matter is a very vital one. The word “faith” is followed several times by the genitive case, and in several passages I have hitherto found it impossible to take the words as meaning Christ’s own faith. Thus, in Rom. iii. 22, I do not see how it is possible to render the words other than by “faith in Jesus Christ”. There are other passages equally impressive, and one of them is, as you know, Mark xi. 22, where the context seems to demand the thought of “faith in God”. I have sometimes felt tempted to render “faith” as “faithfulness” in these passages, because, as we know, the two renderings of the Greek word are possible, and when we look at the distinct references to faith in Rom. iii. 22 it certainly yields a vital truth to translate “the righteousness of God which is by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ unto all those who believe”, but of course it seems impossible to render the same word in two different ways in one text”

We are thankful for this reminder to “search and see”, to “prove all things and to hold fast that which is good”, and as we desire the truth and have no reputation at stake except that of those who seek the truth of God, we set out upon a further and fuller examination of the theme mentioned in our correspondent’s letter.

We have continually found help and light upon vexed questions by following a simple self-made motto “When in doubt, consult the Septuagint”. The usage of *pistis* in the N.T. is somewhat difficult to define. But seeing that the apostle Paul has practically founded

the whole of his teaching concerning justification by faith (in its threefold aspect, Rom. i., Gal. iii. and Heb. x.) upon one verse in the prophet Hebraekuk, we feel compelled to cross the bridge provided by the LXX in order to discover the underlying meaning of “faith” in the Hebrew of the O.T.

Pistis.

This word occurs about thirty times in the LXX; let us look at its usage. We will not only give the English rendering, but the Hebrew word also, so that we may be more fully qualified to arrive at a Scriptural conception of the word.

“Children in whom is no *faith*” (Heb. *eh-moon**) (Deut. xxxii. 20).

“The just shall live by his *faith*” (Heb. *emoo-nah*) (Hab. ii. 4).

These are the only places where the A.V. renders the word “faith”. As one of the passages (Hab. ii. 4) is practically the one awaiting proof, we must search further before we can feel that we are on sure ground.

“His righteousness and his *faithfulness*” (Heb. *emoo-nah*) (I Sam. xxvi. 23).

“Did ordain in their *set office*” (margin *trust*, so in four other places (I Chron. ix. 22).

“The men did the work *faithfully*” (II Chron. xxxiv. 12).

“All His works (are done) in *truth*” (Psa. xxxiii. 4).

“He that speaketh *truth*” (false witness, in *antithesis*) (Prov. xii. 17).

“They that deal *truly*” (Prov. xii. 22).

“Seeketh *truth*” (*Sym* reads *alētheian*) (Jer. v. 1).

“Great is Thy *faithfulness*” (Lam. iii. 23).

“Betroth thee unto Me, in *faithfulness*” (Hos. ii. 20).

“We make a *sure covenant*” (Heb. *amah-nah*) (Neh. ix. 38).

“They dealt *faithfully*” (Heb. *emeth*) (II Kings xii. 15).

“Let not mercy and *truth* forsake Thee” (Prov. iii. 3).

“As a liar, and as waters that *fail*” (margin “not *sure*”) (Heb. *ah-man*) (Jer. xv. 18).

“The heart of the righteous studieth *to answer*” (Heb. *gah-nah*) (Prov. xv. 28).

[* - All transliterations given as in the Englishman’s Heb. and Chal. Concordance.]

We have given above a sample of the usage of the word *pistis*, with all the Hebrew words which it translates in the LXX. The meaning of the Hebrew words, except *gah-nah*, is summed up in the words *Truth*, or *Faithfulness*. The Hebrew word here quoted give us the familiar *Amen*, which is translated in the Gospels “Verily”. It will serve no useful purpose to set out the way in which *pistis* can translate *gah-nah* “to answer”, as a proof demands a wider digression than space or time permit. We feel that sufficient has been cited to show the meaning of the word.

In the LXX of Hab. ii. 4, instead of reading “The just shall live by his faith”, it reads *ho de dikaios ek pisteōs mou zēsetai*, “the just shall live by MY faith”. This word “my” does not occur in all the MSS but its presence is suggestive. Those who thus translated the passage evidently understood it to mean *God’s faithfulness*, not merely the prophet’s faith in God. The three quotations of Hab. ii. 4 in the N.T. omit the words “his” of the Hebrew and “my” of the LXX, and so do not decide the reading either way. The Apostle uses the verse in two distinct ways, (1) Doctrinal, in Romans and Galatians where the righteousness spoken of is in contrast to *law* and *doing*, and (2) in Hebrews, where the

same verse is brought forward to enforce the truth of “living” by faith after being justified. This broad use of the passage therefore still leaves the primary meaning and wording untouched.

Let us now turn to the N.T. Rom. iii. 22 is one of the verses under consideration, but before we turn to that verse, we shall find earlier in the chapter an undoubted use of *pistis* after the manner of the O.T.

“For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the FAITH OF GOD of none effect. Let it not be so; yea, let God be TRUE, but every man a liar if the TRUTH OF GOD hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory” (Rom. iii. 3-7).

Here we have the expression, *tēn pistin thou Theou*. This cannot mean our faith in God, it means here His faithfulness (the “truth” of verses 4 and 7). In Rom. iv. 16 we have another expression that may help us:--

“To the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham” (*tō ek pisteōs Abram*).

It is perfectly clear that this cannot mean our faith in Abraham, but refers to Abraham’s own faith. This expression finds a parallel in Rom. iii. 26:--

“The justifier of him which believeth in Jesus” (*Ton ek pisteōs Iēsou*).

When we compare this passage with the one cited above from iv. 16 we shall agree that something is wrong with the A.V. rendering. Gal. iii. 22 uses the expression in an exactly similar context to that of Rom. iv. 16:--

“In order that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ (*ek pisteōs Iēsou Christou*) might be given them that believe.”

If we translate this as meaning that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ is given to them that believe, we feel conscious that something is amiss, one word, either “faith” or “believe”, is an unnecessary repetition. The promise is not *ek nomou* = out of law (21), but *ek pisteōs Iēsou Christou* = the faith of Jesus Christ. This parallelism indicates the two possible *sources* or *origins* of the inheritance. They arise either (1) out of the law, or (2) out of the promise made 430 years before the law to Abraham. The context decides that it is not out of law, but out of the promise made to Abraham (16-18). The promise to Abraham looked forward to one seed, Christ. Christ came in relation to that covenant previously made by God (17), and His faithfulness in every phase of His work and office is the great ground of justification. So in Rom. iii. 22 we have two great presentations to faith.

1. The Righteousness OF GOD.
2. Through the Faithfulness OF JESUS CHRIST, to all who believe.

There is no difficulty in translating *pistis* as “faithfulness”, and *pisteuō* as “believe”, for this is in line with the LXX and the Hebrew renderings of the two words. We quote here from *Glynne*, on Galatians, on this use of the genitive:--

“When a writer would describe a person as the author or owner of a thing, the proper and obvious course is to write the name in the genitive case; if he desires to present him as the object of reference, a variety of forms suggest themselves (which are freely employed by New Testament writers, such as *eis*, *epi pros*, and sometimes *en*, with their respective cases), by which his purpose can be effected without exposing himself to the charge of ambiguity, or the risk of misapprehension. Should he, however, passing over all these forms, select the genitive which is the natural expression of source or proprietorship, it is to be presumed that it was his intentions so to do, and the genitive is to be understood subjectively.”

Mark xi. 22 we believe can be best explained by the figure of speech known as *Antimeria*, a figure involving exchange, and in this phase called “the Sacred Superlative”.

“Great wrestlings” are literally “Wrestlings of *God*” (Gen. xxx. 8).

“Cedars of *God*” (Psa. lxxx. 10).

“A city great to *God*” (Jonah iii. 3).

Moses was “fair to *God*” (Acts vii. 20).

Mark xi. 22, and the parallels in Matthew and Luke, demand the meaning “great faith”, and this verse need not interfere with the usage of the other expressions which we have noted above.

Readers of *The Berean Expositor* may often find statements that are not matured and reasoned out, scattered through the articles. We make an observation of a *fact*; sometimes we are able to pursue it at once, sometimes it lies dormant, and sometimes it stimulates others. In the passage cited from Volume VII, page 58, we made a statement as to *fact* and desired that the peculiar expression “The faith of Jesus Christ” should be allowed to stand, even though we may not have been clear as to its full meaning. Since then others have corresponded and the results are given in this brief investigation. The subject is by no means exhausted. Some reader may be inclined to tabulate all the various ways in which faith is used, and so bring out fuller light upon a vital theme. To the correspondent (W.H.G.T.) we offer our thanks for suggesting the fuller investigation.

pp. 95, 96

No. 28. E.B. writes:--“We have had what is called a Mission of Revival. One of the addresses to Christians was on the subject of being filled with the Holy Ghost. It was stated that all believers were not Spirit filled because they had not faith. Acts xiii. 9 and Eph. v. 18 were quoted among several other passages. Are the two things the same, “Being filled with the Holy Ghost” and “Being filled with the Spirit”, and are they for this present time?”

We will pass without comment the question of Missions of Revival (every servant of the Lord is responsible to his Master) and will confine ourselves to the question concerning “being filled with the Spirit”.

The words “Holy Ghost” and “Holy Spirit” are translations of the same Greek words and you can dismiss any idea of difference. We do not use the word “Ghost” to-day as it was used when the A.V. was translated, and every place where “Holy Ghost” occurs you may read “Holy Spirit”. There is a difference, however, to be observed as between “The Holy Spirit”, the Person, and “Holy Spirit”, His gifts, which gifts may be further differentiated as either (1) supernatural gifts, or (2) the new nature, which is also “holy spirit”. Dr. Bullinger’s Work *The Giver and His Gifts* goes very thoroughly into the question, showing that in many passages where the Person is understood, the gifts are intended. The words *pneuma hagion* = holy spirit. This usage (without articles) occurs 52 times in the N.T. and is always wrongly rendered “The Holy Spirit” (with the definite article, and capital letters), consequently there is no stronger rendering available when there are two articles present in the Greek (*to pneuma to hagion*), which means, “The Spirit the Holy (Spirit)”. In Acts ii. 4 we read:--

“They were all filled with *pneuma hagion*, and began to speak with other tongues, as THE SPIRIT gave.”

Here the *Giver* and His *gifts* are strictly distinguished. (Appendix 101 of *The Companion Bible*).

Pneuma hagion (the gifts) is an expression absent from Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians.

Another important feature is that the verb “to fill” is sometimes Active and sometimes Passive. In the Active followed by the Genitive case it indicates *what the person is filled with*, viz., with supernatural gifts, for example. In the Passive followed by the Dative case, *the one who fills* is indicated. Now in Acts xiii. 9 we have the Passive followed by the Genitive which indicates what the *vessel was filled with*. “Then Saul, being filled with *pneumatos hagiou*”, the gifts of the Spirit.

In Eph. v. 18 we have the Passive followed by the Dative indicating *who was the filler*, not with what the vessel was filled, “Be filled by Spirit”.

Under no circumstances omit a reference to Colossians when studying Ephesians. Observe how we add to our understanding by reading the parallel passages together.

Eph. v. 18, 19.	Col. iii. 16.
“Be filled by (the) Spirit, speaking to yourselves, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”	“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. In all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

Here we learn with what the Spirit now fills us—"The word of Christ". During the Acts the Spirit filled men with supernatural gifts, now He fills men with the word of Christ. This takes the place of the "gifts" and enables them to speak with wisdom and profit. The "gifts" of the Acts period were visible. They could be possessed in abundance by a carnal and divided Church, like that at Corinth. These gifts were for a sign while Israel as a people remained. They have no place in the Dispensation of the Mystery and the Church of the One Body.

A Criticism of Dispensational Truth Examined.

#1. The Critic and Inspiration.

pp. 1 - 4

“The servant of the Lord must not strive”, yet upon occasion he must be prepared to withstand “Peter to the face”. Such is our position at the moment. A servant of God whose earlier writings have contributed to our understanding of the Word of God has for some considerable time maintained an active and aggressive campaign against what we commonly understand as *Dispensational Truth*. He has not refrained from speaking of the teaching as unscriptural, inconsistent, absurd, erroneous, and as a mutilation of Scripture, and as several have raised questions concerning these particular articles and books, we feel constrained to examine them in these pages.

We wish it to be clearly understood that there is nothing of a personal character in these notes, and although for some reasons we might have preferred to have spoken openly of the writer, yet to avoid even the appearance of personalities we refrain. We shall therefore refer to the book under review by the letters “G.P.K.”; those who know the book will recognize the title. When the necessity arises of referring to the author we shall use the letter “M.” and trust that by so doing we shall direct the attention not to the man himself, towards whom we can entertain no feelings other than Christian, but to the doctrine, which we feel is contrary to truth.

The first item with which we shall deal is not the writer’s views of Kingdom or Mystery, but the *effect* of those views upon his own appreciation of the inspiration of Scripture. In 1909 “M.” wrote an excellent booklet and in the introduction said:--

“It is manifestly of the very highest importance to insist unceasingly upon the *sufficiency, finality and completeness* of the revelation given by God in His Word” (*Our italics*).

By the “Word” the writer means the whole Bible as we possess it to-day, for he uses “The Word” and “The Bible” interchangeably. Our object in quoting this passage is to shew the change that has come over “M.’s” view of the completely and equally inspired Scripture, since he took in hand the task of proving that the Kingdom of the Heavens and the Church of the One Body are all one and the same.

In 1919 “M.” wrote another book entitled “G.P.K.”, and there express his more mature thoughts concerning “All Scripture” which is given by inspiration of God. In the following quotation, taken from pages 112, 113, we preserve unaltered the author’s own italics, so that he himself shall place his own emphasis upon his own words.

“We receive GOD’S communications through Paul and through other earthen vessels as being truly ‘the commandments of the Lord’, and to be revered and obeyed as such. Yet we must carefully note the difference which the Scripture makes between Divine communications given through the *pens* of fallible men, who received an occasional and *strictly limited* inspiration for that particular purpose—men who, but for the

comparatively brief moments when the HOLY SPIRIT controlled their tongues and pens, were just as liable to err as we are (*see* Gal. ii. 11 for example)—and those particular words which were actually formed by the lips and living breath of the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself. For *He* ever and *always* spoke ‘the words of God’. For God gave not the SPIRIT ‘by measure’ unto Him (John iii. 34). Whereas, to every servant of CHRIST, grace for ministry is given ‘according to the *measure* of the gift of Christ’ (Eph. iv. 7), ‘the gift of CHRIST’ being, of course, ‘the gift of the HOLY SPIRIT’.”

Now what does “M.” intend his readers to understand by these words? He draws attention to the “difference” which he says that “Scripture makes” between the words of Christ and all other instruments of revelation. We shall see upon further examination that “M.” does not teach that Paul’s *subject matter* differed from Christ’s personal ministry, for he strenuously endeavours to prove that John Baptist, Christ Himself, Peter and Paul all taught *the same* doctrine and preached *the same* gospel. He is however inconsistent because he immediately follows the quotation given above with a reference to Heb. ii. 1, where the question is not one of *inspiration* but *subject matter*, namely, “the so great salvation”.

To return to the quotation. At the close “M.” draws attention to the difference which Scripture makes as to the qualifications for *ministry*, which we readily admit. An apostle differed in his “measure” from a prophet or a teacher, and *all* were exceedingly different from Him they call Master and Lord. “M.” cannot be referring to either *differences* of subject matter or of *ministerial qualifications* and there is only one conclusion left for us. He sees differences in INSPIRATION. Look at the words:--

“Pens of FALLIBLE men.”

“Occasional and STRICTLY LIMITED inspiration for that particular purpose.”

“Those particular words which were *actually formed* by the *lips and living breath* of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.”

What is the intention behind these words? Is it not to leave in the mind of the reader the idea that the words of Paul or Peter as given in the Epistles are less inspired than those of Christ given in the Gospels?

It has been our constant witness that “ALL SCRIPTURE is God-breathed”, and it matters not whether the instrument of inspiration be David the shepherd boy, Amos the gatherer of sycamore fruit, Peter the Galilean fisherman, or Paul the Pharisee. Let us leave the confusion which is evidently the mental condition of our would-be critic and hear what the Scriptures themselves say on this important matter. And first of all where shall we find the “particular words which were actually formed by the lips and living breath of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself”? They were spoken in the streets, synagogues and temple of Galilee, Samaria, Judea and Jerusalem. Like the spoken words of any ordinary man they have left no mark except in the minds and memories of those who heard them. All who heard those wondrous words are dead, and all that we possess of the ACTUAL words formed by the lips and living breath of Christ has come to us through the writings of a converted publican named Matthew, or such a one as Mark, Luke or John. As a matter of fact there are no words of Christ in existence save as recorded by “the pens of fallible men”. Now we believe Paul was no more fallible than was Matthew, and if we once agree that in the matter of writing the Gospels or the Epistles the

respective writers were INSPIRED, then “the differences” which “M.” speaks of are the result of his own confusion, for all alike are equally and fully inspired.

In the business world there are shades and degrees of falsehood. We have heard of “white lies” and “business lies”, but they are all “lies” nevertheless; and so with the Scriptures. The slightest departure from perfect and complete inspiration means that such departure or “measure”, call it what you will, is fallible and liable to error, which idea we absolutely repudiate.

The emphasis placed by “M.” and others like him on the words of Christ is misleading. Humanly speaking the first Gospel is in the words of *Matthew* and the first epistle in the words of *Paul*. But are they not all the words of Christ, O.T. Scriptures included? Did not “the Spirit of Christ” speak the words of inspired prophecy (I Pet. i. 11)? Was not Paul’s prison ministry “the testimony of our Lord”? (II Tim. i. 8). If we admit any difference in inspiration (which we do not) we should say that *the later revelation of Christ* given to Paul from heaven was of greater weight than the earlier ministry of Christ on earth (Heb. xii. 25).

The charge often made against those who believe *Dispensational Truth* is that they rob God’s children of most of their Bible. But we believe it is demonstrated that the case is the reverse of this. We rightly divide a Word of TRUTH, and make no invidious comparisons between the inspiration of Matthew or Paul. Those who share the opinions of our brother wrongly divide the Word and are obliged to speak of some parts as being more inspired than others. In essence “M.” robs us of all infallible Scripture except the four Gospels.

Enough of this phase of the subject. “M.” in seeking to save his readers from the imaginary ditch of a rightly divided word has landed himself and his readers in a very bog of confusion. We shall examine his criticism of our teaching further in subsequent papers. Meanwhile we believe we have demonstrated that his own views render him upon his own confession unfit to be a teacher of the Word.

#2. David’s House and Kingdom.

pp. 17 - 20

In order to understand the purport of the Gospel according to Matthew one must understand the intention of the Holy Spirit when He names Christ in the opening verse “The Son of David”.

We were under the impression that the genealogy given in Matthew (which differs from that given in Luke) was intentionally placed where it is, in order that the crown rights to the throne of David may be clearly set forth as belonging to the Lord Jesus: further, that the opening words of the wise men, “Where is He that is born KING OF

THE JEWS?" were intentionally recorded by Matthew as being entirely in line with his purpose in writing. The writer of G.P.K. however, while agreeing that the title Son of David in Matt. i. 1 is indicative of the theme of the Gospel, denies that Christ came as King or came to occupy an earthly throne. According to this writer David is not to be connected with the idea of a King and Kingdom, but with a house, which house is the Church of Matt. xvi. and of Eph. ii. 22. The promise made by God to David in I Chron. xvii. is, according to this writer, fulfilled in the "Church". The following quotation from G.P.K. is given with the author's own italics:--

"And it shall come to pass, *when thy days be expired* that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will *raise up thy seed after thee*, which shall be of thy sons; and I will *establish* His kingdom. He shall build Me an house, and I will establish His throne *forever*. I will be HIS FATHER and He shall be MY SON—see the express application of these words to CHRIST in Heb. i. 5—and I will not take My mercy away from Him as I took it from him that was before thee. But I will settle Him *in Mine house* and in My Kingdom *forever*; and His throne shall be established *for evermore*."

"These words settle in the clearest way (and other Scriptures furnish a great mass of concurring testimony) certain matters touching which various eminent expositors in our day have contrived to produce extraordinary uncertainty and confusion. Our immediate purpose has to do with the fact, first, that the principal thing foretold of David's SON was the building of the HOUSE OF GOD; *second*, that in the order of events as clearly predicted, the SON OF DAVID was *first* to build GOD an house, and then GOD was to establish His—the SON'S—throne."

"M." finds the Key to a right understanding of the character of Matthew's Gospel in the words which higher up the page he lifts out of their context and prints thus:--

"He shall build Me an house, and I will establish His throne forever."

Nothing can be clearer if the reader will only allow "M." to guide his study of the Word. As he says, the order of the events is clearly predicted, and so that there shall be no doubt about it, he will number them for us, so saving us all trouble and responsibility. "M.'s" order is:--

1. The House.
2. The Throne.

and the idea developed from this order is the main feature of the book. We however prefer God's order *unedited* and find it as follows:--

1. I will establish HIS KINGDOM.
2. He shall build an HOUSE.
3. I will establish HIS THRONE.

In case any should refer to the closing words, "I will settle Him in Mine house and in My kingdom forever and His throne shall be established for evermore" as giving a different order, we must point out that the subject matter differs. In the first quotation the subject is the BUILDING of the house by the SON. In the second it is the SETTLING of the Son in the house by the FATHER, which of course must be subsequent to the building of the house. We cannot help feeling that "M." has been unfortunate in the

selection of his first great proof, that Christ as Son of David came not to reign as King but first of all to found the Church.

After this “clear proof”, on page 28 and 29 the writer pursues his theme until he reaches page 181, and then he exhibits one of the weirdest pieces of self-deception one can well imagine. The footnote of thanks, printed at the end of the chapter (page 182), makes one wonder whether this is the clutch of the drowning man at a straw. He says:--

“For this valuable suggestion as to the significance of the omission from Matthew of part of Zechariah’s prophecy I am indebted to a brother, a servant of the Lord, who once held the postponement theory, but was convinced of its unscripturalness by the writer’s booklet on the *Kingdom of Heaven*.”

Let us see what the “significance of the omission” is. “M.” is still on the subject as to Christ coming as King. He contends that Christ came first as SAVIOUR, and will not come as KING until He comes the second time with power. Matthew therefore, we can imagine will *omit* any reference to kingship, but will insert any reference in Zechariah’s prophecy to salvation. We will quote from G.P.K.:--

“It is a noticeable and significant fact that *but part* of Zechariah’s prophecy is quoted by the evangelists as having its fulfillment at the Lord’s entry into Jerusalem immediately before His betrayal and crucifixion. The whole verse reads, ‘Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee. He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.’”

When we do turn to Matt. xxi. 5 this is what we read:--

“Tell ye the daughter of Sion, BEHOLD THY KING COMETH unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.”

What is therefore the “noticeable and significant FACT”? It is that Christ presented Himself as KING at this entry into Jerusalem. Kingship is *inserted* and Salvation is *omitted*, yet the logic peculiar to “M.” and the brother who was convinced by the writer’s booklet leads them to deny that Christ had any thought of kingship during His earthly ministry, but was all the time and without break intent upon building the Church. We wonder what “M.” would say should any one deduce from the “noticeable and significant fact” of the omission of “salvation”, that Christ had no intention of becoming the Saviour at all?

There is no need to examine publicly all the details of the edifice when we see how unsound the foundations are. We can only deplore the mental state of those who may be so misled by such “significant facts” and alterations in God’s own written “order”.

We must take up the positive teaching of Scripture concerning the questions raised as to Matthew’s Gospel, David’s Throne, and the House, when we have considered the teaching of “M.” on one or two other related themes.

#3. The Mystery. pp. 33 - 36

“G.P.K.” is a book of 240 pages, and out of this number the writer devotes *one and a quarter pages* to the wondrous teaching of Ephesians and Colossians on the subject of the mystery, which we here quote in full:--

“PAUL AND THE ‘MYSTERY’.

It is astonishing to find how prevalent has become the idea that the Church was a ‘mystery’ first revealed to the Apostle Paul, and of which the other Apostles were ignorant, until Paul made it known. We meet this idea again and again in current writings, and when we ask what basis there is for it, we are referred to Eph. iii. 1-13; and Col. i. 23-29. But we are unable to find a trace of that idea in those Scriptures.

In the first place the ‘mystery’ (whatever it be) whereof Paul is there speaking, was one that, according to his own testimony, had been revealed *not* to him exclusively, nor to him primarily, nor to him in any special way. It was ‘the mystery of CHRIST which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is *now*’—*in this age*—‘revealed unto *His holy Apostles and prophets by the Spirit*.’ Paul thus claimed no exclusiveness nor preeminence in the knowledge of this mystery. The SPIRIT OF GOD revealed it to GOD’S ‘holy apostles and prophets’, Paul being simply one of a number to whom the revelation had been given.

The mystery itself was that Gentiles were to receive ‘the unsearchable riches of CHRIST’ on precisely the same terms as the Jews—the ancient ‘middle wall of partition’ that GOD had placed between Jews and Gentiles having been removed by the death of CHRIST (Eph. ii. 13-16). As stated in Eph. iii. 6, the mystery consists in this, ‘that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the *same* body and partakers (lit. *joint* partakers) of His (GOD’S) promise in CHRIST by the Gospel’.

Peter had acted upon this ‘mystery’ in preaching CHRIST to the Gentiles at Cornelius’ house before Paul began his ministry; which fact is enough in itself to dispose of the idea that Paul was the first to receive knowledge of it.

The passage in Colossians is precisely to the same effect. ‘The hope of the Gospel’ was ‘preached to every creature (or in all creation) under heaven’, and not to Jews only. Of that Gospel Paul ‘was made *a* minister’—simply one of many. He also had become ‘*a* minister’ of the Church; and this was, to quote his words, ‘according to the dispensation of GOD which is given to me *for you* (Gentiles) to fulfil the word of GOD, even the *mystery* which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is *made manifest to His saints*, to *whom* GOD would make known what is the riches of the glory of *this mystery among the Gentiles which is Christ among you* (Gentiles) the hope of glory’.

This, we think, requires no explanation, the meaning being quite evident to those who give proper attention to the language.”

Let us examine “M.’s” statement as to the mystery.

Speaking of the prevalent belief that Paul had some exclusive revelation he says that upon examining Eph. iii. 1-13 and Col. i. 23-29, he is “*unable to find a trace* of that idea in those Scriptures”. Not even a TRACE! We had better look at the passages again.

The first reason why “M.” failed in his search is basic. He does not rightly divided the Word of truth. He does not clearly distinguish between the revelation of the mystery of Christ which was shared by other apostles and prophets, and that revelations which Paul declares was revealed to himself that he should enlighten all. He fails to rightly divide between the ministry of Paul and Peter, for he says:--

“Peter had acted upon this ‘mystery’ in preaching Christ to the Gentiles at Cornelius’ house *before Paul began* (our italics) his ministry, which FACT is enough of itself to dispose of the idea that Paul was the first to receive knowledge of it.”

“M.” is rather fond of FACTS. He continually refers to some statement of his own as “this fact”, but we feel that most of these are open to doubt. The one before us is a case in point. The casual reader, who does not test what is written by the Word, would conceived that the idea of Paul’s exclusive claim to the revelation of the “mystery” was exploded by “this fact” from Acts x. In Acts ix. we have the following FACTS recorded by inspiration:--

“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God” (verse 20).

“He spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed with the Grecians; but they went about to slay him” (verse 29).

Gal. i. 17 supplies the ellipsis of Acts ix. 22, stating that Paul went away into Arabia. The scriptural FACT is that Peter had not gone further in his testimony than to the Samaritans, and upon his own confession would not have done so had he not received the vision from heaven. This vision did not take place until AFTER Paul’s conversion and commission. Another FACT is found in Acts xxvi. 16-18. There, Paul reveals *for the first time* what the Lord said unto him on the road to Damascus:--

“I have appeared unto thee for this purpose delivering thee from the people, and from the GENTILES, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.”

“M.’s” facts are fictions, anything being a good enough weapon with which to beat the “postponement theory”. But he can do nothing against the truth, and we cannot think many real students will be impressed with the facts about the “mystery (whatever it be)” that are of this character. We will accept his own explanation, and believe that he is indeed “UNABLE to find a trace”, etc., and agree that the failure so to do is found in his own inability as a student and not in the inspired record.

The closing paragraph quoted on page 34 contains this wholesome suggestion:--

“The meaning being quite evident to those who give proper attention to the language.”

We do not know the extent of “M.’s” acquaintance with the original tongue of the N.T., but scattered through his books are references to the Greek and quotations from “*Bagster’s Interlinear.*”

If “M.” had been more concerned to find the truth than to beat his fellow servants and had paid that “proper attention to the language” which is its due, he would not have made such a public exhibition of his “inability to find a trace” of the unique character of Paul’s ministry.

“M.” quotes Eph. iii. 4, 5 in the second paragraph and Col. i. 26 in the last paragraph but one of the excerpt given beforehand:--

“The mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is *now*—in this age—revealed unto *His holy Apostles and prophets by the Spirit*” (Eph. iii. 4, 5).

“Even the *mystery* which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is manifest to His saints” (Col. i. 26).

Now had “M.” followed his own advice, he would have seen in the original this FACT. The word translated “ages” in Eph. iii. 5 should be rendered “generations” and is exactly the same word as that which is so translated in Col. i. 26, where we read of both “ages” and “generations”. The “meaning” is now “quite evident”. Having given “proper attention to the language” we shall be able to find much more than a trace of the idea of Paul’s exclusive ministry. Eph. iii. 5 speaks of something which had been revealed “now” in a fuller measure than it had been in “other generations”, which brings to light one FACT that the “other generations” did have the subject “made known” to them in a degree. Col. i. 26 however adds another FACT, and that HIDDEN instead of being made known to the generations. Inasmuch as there can be no contradiction conceived in the statements of Eph. iii. 5 and Col. i. 26 they must of necessity be speaking of two distinct things, and the argument of “M.” is found worthless and without foundation. We feel sure that if he will only give the language of these wonderful passages proper attention he will have to revoke a good deal of his recent publications. The pity of it is, he will not be able to undo the harm that his methods of study and his untenable “Facts” have done.

We cannot do more than touch upon the positive side of the question in these papers; this we must reserve until later.

#4. Elijah. pp. 49 - 52

“M.” has a deal to say against the “postponement theory” which we will consider in its order. One of the obstacles lying in his path is the statement made in Scriptures concerning John the Baptist and Elijah. We quote from “G.P.K.” page 51:--

“We have now to inquire as to the *time* of the fulfillment of Malachi’s prediction of the coming of Elijah the prophet. For it is held and taught by not a few prominent expositors that Elijah himself (meaning Elijah the Tishbite) will come during the great tribulation and will then fulfil Malachi’s prophecy by turning many Israelites to the Lord. In fact this assumption is one of the main props of the post-Kingdom theory. Hence it challenges scrutiny. The idea that John did not fulfil the Elijah-ministry foretold by Malachi rests upon a very curious interpretation of Matt. xi. 14. We quote verses 12-15 inclusive:--

‘And from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive (it), this is Elias, which was for to come. He that hath ears to hear, let *him* hear’.”

“M.” adds:--

“We believe that the real meaning is simple and obvious.” “The name ‘Elijah’ was in our opinion used in this prophecy (of Malachi) in order that we might have a key to the unlocking of important truth.” “The view we take is, we are confident, sustained fully, first by the results accomplished by John’s ministry in making ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

The connection of the writer is that there is nothing *conditional* in the Lord’s words. He believes that John the Baptist was Elijah, and that no future Elijah is to be expected. Hence he speaks of the “Elijah-ministry” of Malachi’s prophecy—which of course Malachi does not, for he says definitely “Elijah the prophet”. We will take the writer’s own canon as our guide.

First, the results accomplished.—The writer limits his statement to the preparation of a people for the Lord, but this will not do. On page 55 he again quotes Scripture, “And Jesus answered and said, Elias truly shall first come and restore all things”. He follows the full quotation of Matt. xvii. 9-13 with the remark:--

“These words are too plain to admit of any misunderstanding on the part of those whose minds are not occupied by preconceptions. The language is simple and unambiguous.”

We ask “M.” one simple and unambiguous question, Did John the Baptist RESTORE ALL THINGS? The answer is No, he did not. In Acts iii. 21 Peter uses the same word, when speaking of the second coming of Christ:--

“Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the RESTITUTION of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since (the) age.”

Elijah's ministry of restoration was future when John the Baptist was dead. "M." says:--

"It is noticeable that the Lord connects John's ministry with the prophecy of Malachi."

The Scripture, speaking of that coming for which the 'messenger' prepared, says, "But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth?" (Mal. iii. 2)—words that do not describe the Advent of Christ as unfolded in Matthew's Gospel, but which look onward to the second coming. Malachi continues:--

"I will come near to you in judgment" (Mal. iii. 5).

"Behold, I send unto you Elijah the prophet (which is John the Baptist, according to "M." unconditionally), BEFORE THE COMING OF THE GREAT AND DREADFUL DAY OF THE LORD" (Mal. iv. 5).

Joel says:--

"The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, BEFORE THE GREAT AND THE TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD COME" (Joel ii. 31).

This is the second test. "M." opens the chapter with an enquiry as to *time*. That terrible day is still future. John the Baptist's preparatory ministry is divided from the event by nearly 2,000 years. This can by no argument be made to fit with the meaning of the word translated "before". A similar objection is found in the reference to the sun and moon—these signs are still awaiting fulfillment. The so-called "postponement theory" instead of receiving a refutation is very much strengthened by these passages.

When the Lord said, "Elias is come already", the disciples "understood that He spake of John the Baptist" (Matt. xvii. 13); and seeing that He had previously prefaced His words concerning John with a condition—"If"—they were able to understand His meaning. When John was questioned, "Art thou Elias?" he answered, "I am not". Shall we quote our brother and say,

"These words are too plain to admit of any misunderstanding on the part of those whose minds are not occupied by preconceptions. The language is simple and unambiguous"?

No, that will not do here, "M." is in possession of a secret that was hidden even from John the Baptist himself. John the Baptist *did not know that he was Elijah* which was for to come! We quote:--

"In perfect keeping with this was it for him to take the question of the Jews as referring to Elijah the Tishbite, as doubtless it did in fact. Therefore John could consistently and truthfully answer 'No'."

We fear that our own understanding of the meaning of *Yea, Yea* and *Nay, Nay* will not allow us to follow the subtle reasoning here manifest. We do however most certainly believe that John the Baptist would have scorned such casuistry. As well say that when he said that he was Not the Christ he was mistaken.

Now for the anti-climax. After having denied the conditional nature of the Lord's statement, after having had recourse to such an idea as that Malachi, who said "Elijah THE Prophet", meant no such person: after having confused the *time* of fulfillment, and taken prophecies which deal with the great and dreadful day of the Lord as applying to the ministry of John Baptist: after having spoken of "this assumption" as being one of the main props of the "post-Kingdom" theory—"M." finishes his argument by saying:--

"The view we have here presented does not, of course, exclude the possibility that there may be yet another 'Elijah' who will accomplish a further and final fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy. Hence any who wish to do so are free to look for such a further and final fulfillment. All we have to say about that is that we see nothing in Scripture to support such expectation."

Is this what the writer means by "simple and unambiguous" language? On page 63 of "G.P.K." the writer speaks once more of Elijah. He there quotes I Kings xviii. 36. In this Scripture Elijah is definitely called "Elijah the Prophet", identifying him with the Elijah of Malachi. He quotes Elijah's prayer:--

"Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned *their heart back again*" (verse 37),

and says:--

"It was then a far off look to the time when the nation Israel shall gaze upon Him Whom they pierced, and shall turn indeed, never to apostatize again. But that day is drawing near."

If ever a man was compelled by the force of Scripture to acknowledge truth in spite of his own misunderstandings our brother is so compelled here. The ministry of John the Baptist, which is so linked with that of Elijah, had to do with the *turning back to God* the apostate NATION ISRAEL, *and that day is drawing near!* "M." believes the "postponement theory". He believes John Baptist's ministry was to the *Nation* Israel, and not to or concerning the Church, and that the long postponed completion of that germinant fulfillment, when John went before the Lord "in the *spirit* and *power* of Elias", is drawing nigh.

We rejoice in the confirmation of the truth to ourselves by those who set out thus to oppose it, and trust that its reconsideration may prove a blessing to our critic himself.

#5. The Postponement Theory. **pp. 65 - 68**

The idea of a “dispensational change” or “dispensational break” is opposed very strongly by “M.” Instead of a “break” he teaches that there has been no change whatever in the testimony from the time of John the Baptist to the writing of the Epistle to the Ephesians. The teaching of a dispensational change at Acts xxviii., or earlier, the writer calls for convenience the “postponement theory”. Our brother then makes the following sweeping statement:--

“This principle of interpreting a passage according to its plain and simple meaning is of the utmost importance in the inquiry we are now making, for the reason that the advocates of the postponement theory do not even pretend to offer proof from Scripture in support of it.”

We do not even *pretend!* The author of G.P.K. will be grieved to discover when dealing with the testimony of others that his antipathy to their doctrines has led him to cross the border line of truth. The advocates of the postponement theory do not EVEN PRETEND to offer proof from Scripture. Yet within the space of two pages the same writer says:--

“Finally, we have sought to examine patiently EVERY SCRIPTURE, and EVERY DEDUCTION from Scripture, that has been brought to our attention as tending in any way to support the postponement theory.”

If those who advocate this theory do not even pretend to give Scripture proof, how can anyone examine patiently, that which no one even pretends to produce? Does “M.” mean us to understand that he only pretended to seek to examine patiently these Scriptures with their deductions? If he does not, then upon his own confession, the advocates of the postponement theory have evidently a goodly array of Scripture and deductions from Scripture. This question of Scriptural proof we must take up seriously when we deal with these subjects positively. In this paper we are seeking to understand our critic. Of course there is an exception to every rule. The “PLAIN and SIMPLE meaning” has not been followed for instance in the case of Malachi’s prophecy of Elijah, or of John Baptist’s plain straightforward answer “I am not”. In order to prove John Baptist to be Elijah, the words “Elijah the Tishbite” are introduced instead of Elijah the prophet. You must speak of an “Elijah ministry” instead of Elijah in person. “M.” even teaches that either John did not know that he was Elijah, or that he could say “I am not” with a double meaning. Further, the postponement theory is novel, therefore untrue:

“The results of his investigations fully confirm our statement as to the entire novelty of the postponement theory.”

Some think the John-Baptist-Elijah-theory to be novel—yet once again this is the favoured exception. The doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ was considered novel when it was brought to light by the early Brethren. Justification by faith was novel to the majority in the days of Luther.

In attacking the “postponement theory” you may say that it does not *pretend* to claim the support of the Scriptures; then you can face about, and say that you have patiently examined every Scripture and deduction, and that “it has been a matter of surprise that such arguments as HAVE BEEN ADVANCED (forgetting the statement about ‘pretending’), and have been repeated OVER and OVER (forgetting the other statement about no Scripture proofs) should ever have been put forth at all”.

Another statement equally emphatic, but speedily revoked, is the following:--

“From first to last there is no sign of any break in the purpose of God so clearly indicated in Matt. i. 1.”

This is not sound argument. Matt. i. 1 simply says:--

“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham.”

and others beside our brother may think that they can discern God’s purpose therein, which differs very much from that of the author of G.P.K.

Following on from this statement, and within four pages of it, our attention is called to the “enlightening comments” in a letter written by one for whom the “postponement theory” has been shattered. The “enlightening comments” deal with the quotation of Zech. ix. 9 in Matt. xxi. 5, where the words concerning the King are given, but the words concerning salvation are omitted. These are the words:--

“The Holy Spirit purposely *leaves out* these words from the record in Matt. xxi. 5; for Christ came the *first* time as the Meek One; and He is coming the *second* time as the Just One. *Between the first and second comings of Christ there is the age of grace, ‘the acceptable year of the Lord’.*”

This is “enlightening” and true. Surely here is a confession that Scripture teaches a “break”, a “dispensational change”, and that the novel “postponement theory” is proved by its opponent to be as old as Zechariah! Let us read on. “M.” seems to lose some of his certainty as he proceeds:--

“The opposition of the Kings of the earth and its rulers against Him is foretold in Psalm ii.; and this, according to Acts iv. 26, 27, WAS FULFILLED.”

Adherence to the “no break” theory would necessitate that “M.” stopped here, but cannot. In spite of all his strong words to the contrary, he is obliged to adopt the despised “postponement theory”, for he says, “was fulfilled, *partially at least*”. If it was only fulfilled “partially”, the complete fulfillment is yet future, which is all the postponement theory demands. Even “M.” cannot misinterpret Ps. ii. of the church, it is too evidently future and earthly. We shall see this more clearly still when we return to the subject.

One more reference, and we can leave the question. On page 48 the writer is dealing with the subject of Malachi’s prophecy of Elijah. He says:--

“The words ‘before the day of the Lord’ are not to be taken to mean ‘immediately before’ the coming of that day.”

It will be observed that our brother does not even PRETEND to give Scriptural proof for this statement, and we therefore cannot seek to examine patiently his proofs, for there are none. What we will do however is to tell his readers that the *very same Hebrew word* is used by the same prophet in the words, “He shall prepare the way *before Me*”, in Mal. iii. 1, and trust that they will judge for themselves as to the character of the criticism which complains of those who do not even pretend to bring forward Scripture in proof. Continuing our quotation:--

“And furthermore it is in accordance with Old Testament prophecy to *disregard the length of time of this dispensation*, and to speak of events belonging to the second coming of Christ AS IF THEY FOLLOWED CLOSELY upon the events of His first coming.”

Could a clearer demonstration be given of the Scriptural fact of the “gap”, “break”, or “postponement” theory? Is Scripture so elastic? The word “before” which literally means “in the face of” means according to our brother “a very long way off”, and then after having stretched this word, he compresses the whole of the present dispensation within the compass of a comma. We urge our critic to study II Tim. ii. 15 in view of “that day”. It seems manifest to us that “M.” is beating the air. Those who have never grasped the truth of the Mystery or of a rightly divided Word, and whose time and capacity are too limited to enable them to do their own study of the Word, may be led away by “M.’s” arguments, but no true BEREAN can be satisfied by such methods, and so far from shaking their faith in the wondrous truth of the Mystery the very attacks only revealed its foundation principles to be impregnable.

#6. The “Offering” of the Kingdom. **pp. 84, 85**

We do not feel our readers will disagree with us in thinking that no good purpose will be served by occupying much more space with this examination. We will just touch upon one or two further fallacies and conclude.

A proper man of straw which “M.” erects and overthrows is the idea that Christ, or John the Baptist, *offered* the kingdom to Israel, and he states that if this had been his ministry instead of baptizing unto repentance, John should have opened up negotiations with the leaders of the nation. “To offer an earthly kingdom to the nation of Israel is a very different thing from turning ‘*many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God*’,” states “M.”, and we agree. It is a very different thing indeed, and had Israel “repented”, the times of restitution and restoration would have commenced, the king being present and the kingdom heralded as “at hand”. Christ was the King, not the “leaders of the nation”. They were offered nothing, but were bidden to repent in order that the Spiritual Kingdom of Prophecy might be set up. This fallacy of the “offer” is associated with another. “M.” writes:--

“The words we have quoted from I Chron. xvii. 11-14 sweep away completely the idea that the Son of God and Son of David came to announce an earthly kingdom, or to seek acceptance of Himself as Israel’s King. No such UNWORTHY THOUGHT as that can be read out of any part of the Word of God To dispel that UNWORTHY and UNWARRANTED idea is one of our objects in writing these pages.”

Surely students of prophecy will not need details to convince them that “M.’s” conception of the earthly kingdom is as UNWORTHY as it is UNWARRANTED. “M.” further writes:--

“No trace, we repeat, *not the slightest trace*, of such an offer is found in any of the recorded utterances of the Apostles.”

Let the reader compare Acts i. 6 with Acts iii. 19-21 in the original, and then say whether “M.” is warranted in making such a statement. “M.” makes much of the *Sermon on the Mount*. Does he fail to see that “theirs is the kingdom of heaven” must be read with “they shall inherit THE EARTH”? “M.” further writes:--

“Moreover, had the Lord stated to Nicodemus that he was offering or announcing the promised earthly kingdom to Israel, and that He would immediately establish it if acceptable to the people and their rulers, Nicodemus would have had *no difficulty at all in understanding what was meant*.”

Nicodemus and our brother however are both in the same error. Both looked upon the earthly kingdom as being not spiritual, whereas when the kingdom does come, “all Israel shall be *saved*”; “*ungodliness* shall be turned away from Jacob”; the very pots in the houses of Israel in that day shall be “*Holiness* unto the Lord”; and a “nation shall be born in a day”; “they shall all be *righteous*”. What as “unworthy and unwarranted” conception “M.” has of that kingdom for which David so yearned in Psa. lxxii., and concerning which he could say, “The prayers of David the Son of Jesse are consummated!”

With regard to the question as to the relationship of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God “M.” makes the following statements:--

“The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God which the Lord was announcing, and for which He was preparing His disciples, ARE ONE AND THE SAME” (page 136).

On page 149 is a most involved argument which when analyzed results in the following:--

1. “The children of the kingdom” (Mat.. viii. 12) does not refer to the kingdom of heaven.
2. That this same kingdom is intended by Peter when he spoke to *unconverted Jews* in Jerusalem (Acts iii. 24) and with this agrees the Lord’s words to the Pharisees, when He said
3. “The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a *nation* bringing forth the fruits thereof” (Matt. xxi. 43).
4. “It is particularly to be noted in this connection that the Lord does not say in Matt. viii. 12 that the Israelites are the ‘children of the kingdom *of heaven*’.”

Page 136 gives among “facts” which “clearly appear”, that the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God *are one and the same*. Page 149 by reason of confusing the teaching of Eph. ii. with Matthew’s Gospel puts forward as a “fact” and “plain” that the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are *vitaly different*, the one including *unconverted* Jews and referring to a nation, the other, the kingdom which is the Church, and the Body, and the Mystery, and the fulfillment of the promise of Abraham.

We leave these evidences of confused thought, feeling that they are sufficiently self contradictory of themselves. The author of G.P.K. is a warning to us all, showing the confusion of mind and the misunderstanding of Scripture that arises out of failure to put into constant practice the command of II Tim. ii. 15, *Rightly to divide the Word of truth*.

Dispensational Difficulties.

#6. The New Creation.

An enquiry as to how the Apostle Paul could use the term both before and after Acts xxviii.

pp. 11 - 13

The Church of the One Body is a new man, *created* so. In II Cor. v. the apostle says, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature". The difficulty before the minds of some is somewhat as follows:--If the Church of the One Body be the subject of a mystery not made known until after Acts xxviii. how is it that the apostle speaks of a believer being a new creature in an epistle written before Acts xxviii., seeing that the new creation is a distinctive term of the Mystery?

Let us notice the references to a new creation in the prison epistles.

"Created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. ii. 10).

"To create of the two in Himself one new man" (Eph. ii. 15).

"Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24).

"And have put on the new man, which 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).

Next let us observe the references in the earlier epistles:--

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold new things have come into being, and all things are of God who hath reconciled us to Himself" (II Cor. v. 17).

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. vi. 15).

The doctrine of the earlier epistles of Paul are the foundation upon which the Mystery is built. During the early ministry doctrine and dispensation differed considerably. The doctrinal position of Jew and Gentile as set forth in Romans is summed up in the words "*no* difference", whereas the dispensational position is "*some* difference", and, "the Jew first". The middle wall still stood.

The introduction of the ministry of the reconciliation, while it did not completely remove the dispensational distinctions, was plainly a step in that direction.

During the early epistles the dispensational position of the Gentiles was that of *wild olive branches grafted into the true olive*, whereas the dispensational position of the Gentiles in the prison epistles is that of *fellow-members of the One Body*. What is true only doctrinally in Paul's early ministry is true equally of doctrine and dispensation in Paul's prison ministry. Every saved and justified believer during Paul's early ministry

was himself a new creature, but did not at that time come under a dispensation that eradicated all the distinctions between himself and Israel. In the dispensation of the Mystery dispensation echoes doctrine, the anomaly has vanished, the new creation has extended to “the both”, and has united Jew and Gentile in one new man, so making peace.

The position may be set out thus:--

New Creation. <i>Doctrine.</i>	Jew first. Wild Olive. <i>Dispensation.</i>	New Creation. <i>Dispensation.</i>
II Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. Eph. ii. 10. Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10, 11.	Rom. i. 16. Rom. iii. 1, 2. Rom. ix. 3-5. Rom. xi. 17-26.	Eph. ii. 15. Eph. iii. 6.

The step forward is indicated in Eph. ii. 15. There the new man that is created is not that which is connected with the salvation and justification of a sinner by grace. This new man is created in Christ “of the twain”, that is of Jewish and Gentile believers. This brings dispensational position level with the doctrinal position; in both the flesh is eliminated, both are connected with reconciliation. In II Cor. v. the new creature is the doctrinal outcome of the first sphere of reconciliation. In Eph. ii. 15, 16 the new man created in Himself is the outcome of the further reconciliation there brought in.

The difference between the two periods may be seen if set out thus:--

	Before Acts xxviii.
<i>Doctrine.</i> —“In Christ”;	<i>Dispensation.</i> —“With faithful Abraham.”
	After Acts xxviii.
<i>Doctrine.</i> —“In Christ”;	<i>Dispensation.</i> —“With Christ.”

#7. The dispensational position of I Thess. iv. 13-18. pp. 61 - 63

Each chapter in this epistle speaks of the Lord’s coming. It is of such importance, that it is indicated as the one thing for which the redeemed wait while serving God; “they wait for His Son out of the heavens” (I Thess. i. 10). Chapters ii., iii., iv., and v. give this Coming one name—The *Parousia*. The word “coming” is not a good rendering, rather is it His *arrival*—His “Personal Presence”—that the word indicates.

The apostle tells the Thessalonians practically what he told the Corinthians:--

“We shall not all sleep” (I Cor. xv. 51).

“For this we say unto you in a word of the Lord, that we, the living who are left to the Coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who fell asleep” (I Thess. iv. 15).

“In a word of the Lord” does not necessarily indicate the special revelation of a mystery or secret; Paul refers to such a statement as John xi. 25, 26:--

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.”

There is a “mystery” revealed in I Cor. xv. concerning this same truth, but that does not refer to the fact of some being found alive on the earth at the Lord’s Coming, but to their “change”, even though not passing through death and resurrection.

“For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven with a shout, with an archangel’s voice, and with a trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (I Thess. iv. 16).

The *shout* is the shout of soldiers rushing to the charge, the archangel being Michael. This resurrection is intimately connected with Daniel’s people:--

“And at that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And MANY THAT SLEEP in the dust of the earth shall awake” (Dan. xii. 1, 2).

The *voice* of the archangel connects I Thess. iv. with the great tribulation of the Revelation. It connects it also with the hope of Israel. In Rev. xii. Michael stand up and engages in war with the dragon. In Rev. xiii. the beast and the false prophet arise.

The two epistles to the Thessalonians were written about the same time and to the same people. The second epistle in the second chapter deals with the same period as is dealt with in Rev. xiii. This is a further link with the Apocalypse. Again, this coming of the Lord is also “with a trumpet of God”. In Rev. x. & xi. we have the sounding of the seventh trumpet which announces the taking of the sovereignty of this world by Christ. I Cor. xv. 52 says this resurrection and change shall be at the *last* trump, and the seventh trumpet of Rev. xi. is the last in Scripture.

The hope of I Thess. iv. 17 is to “meet the Lord in the air”, which is not the same as “going to heaven”. Those who met the Bridegroom turned and came with him (Matt. xxv.). Those who met Paul on the road to Rome turned and went back to Rome with him. Those who meet the Lord in the air will not alter the Lord’s course. He will descend to the earth according to His promise.

Scripture is most consistent in the usage of words. The word *Parousia* is used by the Lord in Matt. xxiv., by Paul in I Cor. xv. 23 and I & II Thess., by James, by Peter and by John. It is NEVER USED OF THE LORD’S COMING in the *Prison Epistles*. It is consistent with the dispensation that covers Matthew’s testimony, the Acts, and the ministry of Peter, James and John. It cannot be used of the blessed hope of the Church of the One Body. When I Thessalonians was written it was a Scriptural expectancy that

within that generation the Lord would come. Paul could rightly join himself with the believers and say:--

“We which are alive and are left to the coming of the Lord” (I Thess. iv. 15).

“Your whole person, spirit, and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Thess. v. 23).

Of this coming Peter spoke in Acts iii. 19-21:--

“Repent ye therefore, and be converted When the times of refreshing shall come from the Presence of the Lord, and He shall send Jesus Christ Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the age.”

Right on till Acts xxviii. the hope is “the hope of Israel” (xxviii. 20). This therefore includes the hope of Galatians, I & II Thessalonians, I & II Corinthians and Romans. But Israel repented not. They were not “converted” (xxviii. 27). The times of refreshing did not come. The Lord did not return. The dispensation with its hopes and its doctrine, its church and its sphere, passed away, and its place has been taken by the dispensation of the mystery. Not until the Church of the One Body is complete can the hope of Israel be resumed. It shall come. He is faithful; but a better hope awaits the Church of the Mystery.

#8. The dispensational place of the Gentiles during the Acts. pp. 71 - 73

Our only means of knowing the purpose of God is the teaching of the Word of God. We cannot argue the point as to whether there *may* have been some Gentiles gathered with the disciples on the day of Pentecost, all we know is that there *are* none in the Scripture record. None but Jews, or Israel, either believing or unbelieving, figure in Acts i., ii., iii., iv., v., vi. & vii. We earnestly invite our readers to write to us if they disagree on this, not to debate, but to supply us with chapter and verse. Chapter viii. records the widening of the witness:--

“Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ” (viii. 5).

Here the third sphere of testimony is reached, “Jerusalem and in all Judæa and in Samaria” (i. 8). Toward the close of the chapter an Ethiopian is introduced, to whom Philip preaches “Jesus” (viii. 35). Philip passes through Azotus (in Judæa) and preaches in all the cities until he comes to Cæsarea, some 30 miles north-west of Samaria. Chapter ix. finds the preaching of Christ extended as far as Damascus, some 140 miles north of Jerusalem. This section is concluded by the words of ix. 31:--

“Then had the churches rest throughout Judæa and Galilee and Samaria.”

The conversion of Cornelius is next recorded. Here Peter makes the statement that he is still “a man that is a JEW”, and that he had been bound until that moment to observe the law which forbade such to keep company or come unto one of “another nation”. Till then all Gentiles, even though they might be “devout”, and even though they “feared God with all their house”, “gave alms” and “prayed to God always” (x. 2), were reckoned as “common or unclean” (x. 28). It needed a thrice repeated vision to convince Peter otherwise, AND YET WE ARE TAUGHT that the church BEGAN AT PENTECOST! This attitude exhibited by Peter was not something personal to himself, it was shared by “the Apostles and brethren in Judæa” who contended with Peter for going in to men uncircumcised and for eating with them (xi. 2). How *could* a Gentile have “continued stedfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and have all things common and eat meat with gladness”? There would have been an uproar instead of fellowship had a Gentile been included.

After the rehearsal of the case of Cornelius by Peter, who concludes by saying “What was I, that I could withstand God?” we find:--

“When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life” (xi. 18).

This admission is immediately followed by the statement that they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word TO NONE BUT JEWS ONLY.

Acts xiii. commences the second and larger half of the Acts. Barnabas and Saul are separated by the Holy Spirit unto a special service. This is somewhat parallel with the baptism of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. As a result a Jew is blinded and Sergius Paulus, a Gentile, is saved. This foreshadows the new turn of events.

The Synagogue witness at Antioch shows the Gentileward trend by the concluding words (xiii. 40-48):--

“Lo, we turn to the Gentiles I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles.”

It is, we trust, abundantly evident that Paul was the Apostle to the Gentiles and it was his commission and ministry that gathered the Gentiles to Christ, and founded churches in the heathen cities of Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, Ephesus, etc. It will be from his epistles therefore that we shall learn the place of the Gentile during the Acts.

Galatians teaches that both Gentile as well as Jewish believers were “All the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus”, they were “All one in Christ Jesus”, and argues “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. iii. 36-29). They were by virtue of being “in Christ Jesus” a new creation (Gal. vi. 15).

The first epistle to the Thessalonians shews that the Gentiles converted from the heathendom were “waiting for His (God’s) Son from heaven” (i. 10; iv. 14-18). They had been “called unto His Kingdom and glory” (ii. 12), they had not been appointed to

wrath, “but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ” (v. 9). The second epistle to the Thessalonians reveals that the Gentiles who believed during the Acts period formed part of a company that will be on earth during the last days, during the rise and dominion of the man of sin, and the time of tribulation (i. 5-12; ii. 1-12).

The first Epistle to the Corinthians shews us that the Gentile believer at that time came behind in no gift “waiting for the revelation (*apocalypse*) of our Lord Jesus Christ”, which is parallel with I & II Thessalonians. These spiritual gifts, which so mark the times of the Acts, were for a purpose:--

“In the law it is written, With men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people: and yet for all that will they not hear Me, saith the Lord. Wherefore tongues are for a sign” (I Cor. xiv. 21, 22).

With this passage should be read Rom. x. 19, xi. 11-14, where the place of the Gentile and the object of his inclusion before the Millennium is explained:--

“But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will PROVOKE you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.”

“Salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to PROVOKE them to jealousy If by any means I may PROVOKE to jealousy them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.”

Here is light upon the inclusion of the Gentile. *It had the provocation of blinded Israel in view.* Like the Apostle to the Gentiles, they were “born out of due time”.

The figure whereby the Apostle enforces and illustrates this position of the Gentile is next given. The Gentile is likened to a “wild olive” graft (contrary to nature) into the true olive tree. This is not a case of ordinary grafting, for it is usual to graft the choice variety on to the wild stock. At this present moment, and for the identical reason, slips of one variety of dessert pear are being grafted into another, not that the graft shall bear fruit, but that it may “provoke” the flagging tree into more fruitfulness. The Gentile was included during the Acts for *Israel’s sake* to stir up, if it were possible, that people fast falling into a deadly slumber. It was of no avail. The day at length came when Israel were “dismissed” and the secret purpose of God for the Gentiles in the interim made known.

If we allow a place to the testimony of I Cor. xiv. and Rom. x., xi. in our views of Gentile blessing, we shall see how utterly impossible it is to try to make the teaching of Ephesians fit in with the earlier teaching of the pre-prison epistles.

#9. The Gospel for To-day.

pp. 103 - 105

Most believers who have been led to see the truth of the "Mystery" immediately feel that some different presentation of the gospel becomes necessary. The "Whosoever will" evangel does not seem to harmonize with the peculiar teaching of the prison epistles. The gospel of the Kingdom (as given in Matthew) or the fuller and future gospel of "Whosoever is willing", when the Spirit AND the Bride shall witness together after the Day of the Lord (Rev. xxii. 17), do not express the good news of God for the present time. Let us observe one or two outstanding features of the present dispensation.

1. GENTILE.—The secret purpose of God for the present interval could not be made known nor introduced until the people of Israel had been set aside. The present emphasis is not (a) Salvation is of the Jews, (b) The Jew first and also the Gentile, but (c) The Gentile WITHOUT the Jew at all. This statement by no means excludes the Jew as an individual from believing in Christ as Saviour and Lord now.

2. GRACE.—When the apostle was about to become a prisoner and looked forward to finishing his course and the ministry he had received, he speaks of it as being "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24). This exactly fits the present period, for it is called in Eph. iii. 2 "the dispensation of the grace of God".

Plainly, each dispensation must have its own gospel or set of good news. The gospel of the kingdom runs with the dispensation of the kingdom. The gospel of the grace of God goes with the dispensation of the grace of God. The great basis of the gospel to-day is found in Romans. The limitations of this present article forbid any attempt at opening up this marvelous epistle, but we call attention to the following. The epistle opens with the gospel of God which had been promised before by the prophets in the Holy Scriptures. It closes with a reference to a gospel which was intimately associated with the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which had been silenced in the age times, but was now made manifest through prophetic writings.

The gospel of God occupies Rom. i. 1 - v. 11. It deals with the Jew and the Gentile in their separate needs, shewing that whether under the law of conscience and creation, or under the superadded law of Sinai, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The gospel that is connected with the mystery which had been silenced is related to something deeper than anything revealed in Rom. i. 1 - v. 11. There the personal sins and doings are under review; here in Rom. v. 12-21 the failure and fall of the creature apart from his deeds is brought to light. The gospel of God goes back to ABRAHAM, the mystery of Rom. xvi. goes back to ADAM. In no other place except I Cor. xv. is it revealed that Adam's one act of disobedience is the great cause of sin, death and condemnation. This opens the way for the preaching of Jesus Christ according to this mystery, and shows that:--

"As through the disobedience of the one the many were constituted sinners, so also through the obedience of One, the many shall be constituted righteous" (Rom. v. 19).

As we said above, an exposition here is impossible. It is essential to distinguish between the “many” and the “all”, this we must reserve until later. Rom. vi., vii., & viii. follow and preach Christ in this connection in relation to the dominion of SIN, LAW and DEATH. It is this inner section of Rom. v. 12 - viii. 39 which is the basis of the gospel for to-day, and “Who is sufficient for these things?”

How many “Evangelists” would give a series of gospel addresses on these pages? The Prodigal Son, John iii. 16, and similar scriptures written for other times are deemed all-sufficient.

The world to-day is thinking in terms of “*Humanity*”, but the gospel for to-day reveals the utter failure of all mankind, and the new Headship of Christ. This gospel is the gospel of the new creation. All men by nature are “in Adam”; Christ is revealed as the “last Adam” and the “second Man”. The gospel reveals the way whereby man may be taken out of the natural sphere of sin and death into the sphere of life and righteousness. The “no condemnation” of Rom. viii. 1 looks back to v. 16-18.

There is one element which is very prominent in Romans and Galatians which does not need so prominent a place now, and that is the various things said regarding “the law”. “For we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are UNDER THE LAW” (Rom. ii. 19). “The Gentiles have NOT the law” (Rom. ii. 14). Of course, where any may be found to have a tendency of legalism, then these passages will be needful.

When the gospel has been believed, and becomes “the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation” (Eph. i. 13), it is followed by the “mystery of the gospel” (Eph. vi. 19) which structurally balances the “mystery of Christ” (Eph. iii. 3), as also in the remoter context of Col. iv. 3. In the inner teaching of Romans (v. 12 - viii. 39) the believer is spoken of as dying with Christ, and being buried with Christ, and being raised again with Christ. This is the gospel which leads up to THE Mystery of Ephesians, for there the top stone is added, “seated together with Christ” (Eph. ii. 6). Further, the threefold equality of Eph. iii. 6, 7 is a part of the gospel, as also the peace which accompanies the “one new man” (ii. 14-17). The gospel for to-day is essentially a preparation for the mystery and its peace—“Your feet shod with the preparation of the *gospel of peace*” (vi. 15).

We believe that God blesses the faithful preaching of His Word whether it have as its goal Christ as King, Bridegroom, Last Adam, or Head, but those who rejoice in the “revelation of the mystery”, who know the final revelation of the “mystery of Christ” and are members of “the Church which is His body”, such will preach that gospel which, while it saves from sin and its consequences, leads to Christ as Head over all things to the Church, and to the heavenly places far above all.

(Concluded from page 105).
pp. 139, 140

We have recently read an article which seeks to prove that the gospel of the Kingdom as given in Matthew, and the gospel of the grace of God as revealed in Paul's epistles, are one and the same.

One argument put forward is so manifestly a piece of bad logic that we feel it has only to be stated to be disproved. The argument is this. The word *gospel* means God's good news; therefore, seeing that both the gospel of the Kingdom and the gospel of the grace of God are God's good news, they must be the same, and the difference in their titles must not be taken to indicate that they differ in reality.

For the sake of clearness let us use an illustration from the Vegetable Kingdom. The *potato*, the *tomato*, and the *nightshade* are all of the same genus *Solanum*. If the writer mentioned above should put his method of reasoning into practice, he would probably do so at the cost of his life. He would find that it is perilous logic to say that because a potato, tomato and nightshade are of the genus *Solanum*, they are all one and the same. The word *gospel* is the name of a genus. It is God's good news; but, just as in the example given, there are vital differences within that genus. The potato is a *Solanum*, and we eat the tuber that is formed in the earth. The tomato is a *Solanum*, but we eat the ripe fruit that grows in the sunlight. The nightshade is a *Solanum*, and unless its product be administered with care and knowledge, it is deadly poison.

The gospel of the Kingdom is like the gospel of the grace of God in this particular, that it is God's good news. It differs however from the latter, inasmuch as it announces a Kingdom, and that a Kingdom which shall be set up "*under* the whole heaven". They who enter or inherit that Kingdom shall at the same moment "*inherit* the earth". The gospel preached by Paul on the other hand had other phases of God's revealed purposes of grace as its theme. One presentation of it is entirely heavenly. Now while the earthly and the heavenly purposes may both be announced under the covering word "*gospel*", it is no more true that the gospel of the Kingdom is the gospel of the grace of God than that the tuber of the earth (the potato) is one and the same with the fruit of the air and sunshine (the tomato).

With regard to the strong statement made by Paul as to the preaching of "*another*" gospel in Gal. i. 9, we would remind those who use that passage as an argument against us, that they themselves must be careful to preach no other message than that preached by Paul himself if they would avoid the Apostle's anathema.

**#10. The references to “gifts” in the Prison Epistles.
pp. 124 - 126**

Speaking broadly “gifts” are prominent in the epistles of the Acts period, but practically absent from the prison epistles. While such gifts as “tongues”, “miracles” and “healings” are never mentioned in the post-Acts epistles, some references are to be found to “gifts”, and as these references cause some readers a difficulty from the dispensational point of view we propose a consideration of them here. *Charisma*, the word that is so characteristic of I Cor. xii., is used only of Timothy himself, and that upon two occasions. We shall consider these passages in their place. *Charisma* occurs nowhere else in Paul’s epistles after Acts xxviii.

The first reference to “gifts” in the prison epistles is that of Eph. iv. 8:--

“Having ascended, He has led captivity captive, and has given gifts to men.”

Here, associated with the ascended Lord, are “gifts”. What are these gifts? Are they the “signs” of I Cor. xiv. 22 in fulfillment of the passage in Isaiah? Are they the gifts as detailed in I Cor. xii. 28? Let us see.

The passage in Ephesians continues and speaks of the Lord in His relation to the Church of the One body as the One who “ascended far above all heavens, that He might fill all things”. This is exactly parallel with Eph. i. 21, 23, “Far above all who filleth all in all”, where the Lord’s relation to the Church as Head is prominent. The gifts which are given in this capacity and sphere are next detailed:--

“And He has given some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers, for the readjustment of the saints, with a view to (the) work of ministry, with a view to the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. iv. 11,12).

These are the gifts and their purpose.

In I Cor. xii., where the gifts are set out in detail, there is an inspired order maintained; first, secondly, thirdly. This order must be so placed for a purpose. To discount it is to despise the inspired Word; to add to it is to take unwarranted liberty. Before Acts this is the God-given order:--

<i>First,</i>	Apostles.
<i>Secondarily,</i>	Prophets.
<i>Thirdly,</i>	Teachers.
<i>After that,</i>	Miracles.
<i>Then,</i>	Gifts of healings; Helps; Governments, Diversities of tongues (I Cor. xii. 28).

This order is repeated in the verse that follows. The order in Eph. iv. is:--

1. Apostles.
2. Prophets.
3. Evangelists.
4. Pastors and Teachers.

The third one here is the Evangelist whilst the Teacher is fourth. No other gifts follow, as they do in I Cor. xii. 28; we are evidently dealing with a different order, e.g.:-

“APOSTLES.”—These were given after He had “ascended up on high”. Which of the apostles were thus given? In Matt. x. 2-4 we read:--

“Now the names of the twelve apostles are these. Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Lebbæus, Simon and Judas Iscariot.”

Before the Lord *ascended* He was seen “of the twelve” (I Cor. xv. 5). This therefore includes Matthias, for Judas never saw the risen Lord, and Matthias was a “witness of His resurrection”, and was “numbered with the eleven” (Acts i. 15-26).

The twelve Apostles are complete without Paul.

In I Thess. ii. 6 Paul associates with himself Timothy and Silas saying, “We might have been burdensome as the apostles of Christ”. These men are also outside the list of Matt. x. Paul and the apostles of his Order were the gifts of the ascended Lord, the apostles of the Circumcision were appointed by Christ on earth.

“PROPHET” are referred to in Ephesians alone of the prison epistles, and always in the same relation as in iv. 11. First we read that the “One body” is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (ii. 20). Next that the revelation of the Mystery of Christ, now given to his holy apostles and prophets, is greater and fuller than that given in other generations (iii. 5), and lastly, that this order was a part of the gift of the ascended Lord to His Church (iv. 11).

“EVANGELIST.”—This is the gift which is not found in I Cor. xii. Philip is called an evangelist in Acts xxi. 8, and when Paul was giving Timothy his parting charge, he says:--

“Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry, for I am already being poured out” (II Tim. iv. 5, 6).

The office was evidently very different from that which is so named to-day. The Evangelist was the successor to the Apostle. Timothy, who had the charge of the Church, the appointing of the elders and deacons and general administration, was called upon to make full proof of his ministry at the passing of the Apostle by doing the work of an *Evangelist*.

The foundation ministry was that of Apostle and Prophet. These, together with Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher bridged the gulf, re-adjusted the saints as to the new dispensation that had been introduced, and led on to the unity of the faith.

From our brief examination of this first passage we find that the “gifts” of Eph. iv. are totally different from those which were prominent during the Acts. We must continue our examination in another paper.

**#10. The unique character of the
Dispensation of the Mystery.
pp. 155 - 158**

1. "Is the Mystery of Eph. iii. 3 something revealed for the first time through the Apostle Paul, after the setting aside of Israel, in Acts xxviii., or was it known before?"
2. "Is the Mystery of Eph. iii. 3 peculiar in its teaching, or is it merely a development of the Gospels and the Acts?"
3. "Is the Mystery of Eph. iii. 3 the logical outcome of the Gospel of Matthew, the Epistle to the Romans and the ministry of Peter and Paul as set forth in the Acts, or was it revealed for the first time when logic failed and a crisis had been reached?"

The word "mystery" is not confined to the prison epistles. The word occurs in the N.T. 27 times. Three of these occurrences are found in the Gospels, and four in the Revelation. The remaining 20 are exclusively used by Paul. Neither Peter, James, John nor Jude have anything to say about a mystery of any kind. Paul, and those with him, were "stewards of the mysteries of God". Ten of the references made by Paul to the mysteries occur in Ephesians and Colossians. The other ten are found in Romans, I Corinthians, II Thessalonians and I Timothy. Let us now seek a scriptural answer to the three questions given above:--

1. (a) Is the Mystery of Eph. iii. 3 something revealed for the first time, (b) through the Apostle Paul, (c) after the setting aside of Israel, in Acts xxviii., or (d) was it known before?

Opinions are valueless. All we desire is the pronouncement of the Word of God on the matter. Let us turn to Eph. iii. In verse 3 the apostle says:--

"By revelation He made known unto me the mystery as I wrote before briefly."

The superior knowledge of the "mystery of Christ" which the apostle had received was his credentials for being believed in the more exclusive realm of the mystery itself. Our first question deals with the time of the revelation of the Mystery. Let the apostle himself tell us:--

"Unto me that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to enlighten all as to what is the dispensation (R.V.) of the Mystery, which hath been hidden since the ages by God" (Eph. iii. 8, 9).

The Lord once said, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead", and we feel the same applies here. As we have dealt with this subject in the April number, we refer the reader to the article there for fuller detail.

We there showed that the Mystery was revealed for the first time to Paul alone in Ephesians, and therefore the rest of the question set out above requires no further answer. The distinction between “the Mystery” and “the mystery of Christ” was also discussed in that number.

2. “Is the Mystery of Eph. iii. 3 peculiar in its teaching, or is it merely a development of the Gospels and the Acts?”

Let us notice what is revealed in Ephesians regarding the characteristics of this mystery.

1. PLACE.—*Heavenly places* (i. 3), further defined as at the right hand of God and far above all principalities (i. 20, 21), and indicated as the glorious sphere of blessing for the church of the one body who are made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (ii. 6).

2. TIME.—*Before the foundation of the world* (i. 4).—Waiving the question of the interpretation of this passage, we note that no other company of believers are spoken of as connected with this period. The expression occurs elsewhere only of Christ Himself. All others are blessed in connection with a purpose dating “since the foundation of the world”. Parallel with this unique expression are the words of II Tim. i. 9 and Titus i. 2, the literal rendering of which is “before age times”. Other mysteries are dated “since the age times” (Rom. xvi. 25).

3. TITLE.—The company of believers who are thus blessed are called “The church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 22, 23).

4. UNITY.—All distinctions, privileges, and disabilities, which in here to either Jew or Gentile in the flesh, are destroyed, and in this new company we find not a reformation or a development, but a “new man” and a “new creation”. The middle wall of partition being broken down, the only unity now recognized is the unity of the Spirit.

5. STATUS.—In this new sphere the Gentile is a *fellow-heir*, a *fellow-member*, a *fellow-partaker*, a *fellow-citizen* (ii. 19, iii. 6). Such a condition had not been hitherto experienced. In Romans, even, the Jew is first, the Gentile is but a wild olive, grafted into the Abrahamic stock. In Ephesians it is impossible to distinguish either the Jew or the Gentile. They are created one new man.

Question 3 (above) is practically answered already. If the mystery was never revealed until the people of Israel had been set aside, if no one except the apostle Paul originally received it, if its place of blessing, time of election, title, unity and status are all peculiar to itself, it is evident that it did not logically arise out of the teaching of the early ministry of Peter and Paul. It rather is given complete and entire by God, when all His hitherto revealed purposes had apparently ended in disaster.

The *omission* of Old Testament quotations, the *absence* of the names of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, the Fathers, Israel (in a positive sense, *see refs.*); the *setting aside* of

ordinances, decrees, observances, feasts, fast, and days; the *entire absence* of supernatural gifts, the emphasis upon *one* baptism, the non-reference to the Lord's supper, these must all be weighed in the balances of the sanctuary.

Our space is limited, and a fuller discussion of the subject must be reserved for a series upon the Mysteries of Scripture. Meanwhile we feel that sufficient evidence of the unique character of the Dispensation of the Mystery has been here brought forward.

Studies in Ecclesiastes.

#12. The Seven Good Things.

1. The Good Name (vii. 1).

pp. 20 - 22

The reference to Adam in vi. 10 brings us to the structural centre of the book, and the doctrinal basis of its teaching. Chapter ii. opens with a series of answers to the question, "What is that good?" The question is stated in vi. 12 thus:--

"For who knoweth WHAT IS GOOD for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow?"

The question is not simply, "What is good?" (that might be answered easily), it is what is good for a man "IN THIS LIFE?" and the problem is emphasized by the added words, "the numbered days of his vain life as to which he spendeth as a shadow". Over against vi. 11, 12 we may write:--

A		vi. 11, 12.	The Question stated, What is good?		
A		vii. 1-18.	The Question answered,		
			1. Good name.	\	
			2. Day of death.	\	
			3. Mourning.	\	
			4. Sorrow.	}	"Better."
			5. Rebuke.	/	
			6. End.	/	
			7. Patience.	/	

Let us patiently and humbly seek to understand this sevenfold answer to the question, "Who knoweth what is good?"

A GOOD NAME IS BETTER THAN PRECIOUS OINTMENT (vii. 1).—Let us note the literary peculiarities of this opening verse. The Hebrew sentence commences and ends with the word *tobh*, "good", for the word "precious" is the same as the word "good". Another literary figure is employed called *paronomasia*, where words of like sound are used to call the reader's attention to their deeper similarity. The Hebrew word for "name" is *shem*; the Hebrew word for "ointment" is *shemen*. The complete sentence reads, *Tobh shem mish-shemen tobh*.

We must now have a clear image in our mind as to what the "precious ointment" signifies, otherwise we shall miss the point. With us ointment generally indicates some healing and mollifying substance. In the East it has a deeper and wider range of meaning. First let us notice the occurrences of the word in Ecclesiastes:--

- vii. 1. "A good name is better than precious **ointment**."
- ix. 8. "Let thy head lack no **ointment**."
- x. 1. "Dead flies cause the **ointment** of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour."

In the Song of Solomon we have a parallel usage to that of Eccles. vii. 1:--

“Sweet is the odour of thy good ointments; thy name is as ointment poured forth” (i. 3).

Another reference to ointments occurs in Song of Solomon iv. 10:--

“How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine!
and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!”

The anointing oil which was used in the service of the tabernacle was composed of pure myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and olive oil. The tabernacle and its vessels were anointed with it, as also was Aaron, the high priest. The kings later were inducted into their high office as “the Lord’s anointed”. Another who was anointed with this holy ointment was the leper in the day of his cleansing. Esther ii. 12 tells us that before the women entered into the royal presence they were purified, six months with oil of myrrh and six months with sweet odours.

The “precious” ointment seems to have specific reference to that which was exclusively sacred to the Lord. The expression occurs in II Kings xx. 13, repeated in Isa. xxxix. 2 and in Psa. cxxxiii. 2. In these instances it refers to the holy anointing oil which was forbidden to the people. To this, apparently, Eccles. vii. 1 refers. Better even than the holiest external symbol of acceptance of high priesthood, of kingship, or of cleansing—better than even this is a “good name”—a good *shem* than a good *shemen*.

The word “name” does not occur more than three times in Ecclesiastes, and it is very evident that vii. 1 is in direct contrast with vi. 10, “That which hath been the *name* thereof is called already, and it is known that it is Adam”.

The very first “good thing” for any man in this vain life, whose days are numbered, whose character is a shadow, whose end is the “one event”, the very first thing consists in a *change of name*. The mystery of the gospel as revealed in Rom. v. 12 onwards was not clearly seen by Koheleth, but the spirit who inspired the book not only knew that Adam was the concluding note of the downward progress of chapters i.-vi., but that the “good name” which would hereafter be placed over against Adam must be the very beginning of the quest for “that good thing”.

Koheleth has guarded his conception of a good name. He cannot mean that which passes current among men, for he has deliberately set it in contrast with the holiest external symbol known in his day. Those who have been most entitled to the “good name” have often been covered with calumny and false charges. The apostle Paul, who most surely of all the followers of Christ had that “good name”, could write of himself that he was made “the filth of the world and the off-scouring of all things”. Not he that commends himself, or he that is commended by others, but whom the Lord commendeth, is the possessor of this good name.

Those who have this good name carry with them everywhere a sweet savour of Christ. Their daily work and conversation is an offering of a sweet smelling savour acceptable and well pleasing unto God (Phil. iv. 8). What though they never “make a name” in this

Babel of a world! what though their names be cast out as evil, and blotted out of the world's conventions! nevertheless, they have started with the first great good thing in this world of shams and unrealities. Every virtue, every fruit of the spirit, every following after Christ is a contribution to this good name which is better than precious ointment.

May we take the consolation of the Scriptures fully to ourselves in these degenerate times, and rejoice in the blessed fact that we are named with the name of Christ.

**#13. Death, Mourning and Sorrow, and their relation
to what is good for man in this life (vii. 1-6).
pp. 52 - 55**

The first "good thing" we have learned, is a *good name*. The name covers all its outgoings. By nature all have the name of Adam, and the very first "good thing" is to exchange that name for the better name of a child of God. Koheleth may not have personally understood the full evangelical meaning of his own statement, the statement being increasingly true as one ascends the scale of fuller knowledge and personal faith in Christ.

It is, however, necessary that we appreciate the radical change indicated by the possession of the "good name", otherwise the remaining "good things" will not be understood. The second good thing which Ecclesiastes records is apt to sound "a hard saying", and only those who have tasted the sweets of the new name can heartily endorse his testimony.

"The day of death (is better) than the day of one's birth."—To the unsaved reader these words will be sufficient to confirm their opinion that Koheleth was a pessimist. To the enlightened believer the same words will reveal him as a spirit-taught optimist. From the viewpoint of Ecclesiastes what is this present life? It is summed up in the words "Vanity and vexation of spirit" to all those who have not reached the "conclusion of the whole matter" (xii. 13, 14). This present life is expressed in the synonymous clause "all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow" (vi. 12). At the end of that life there is the "one event", and the "one place".

"As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand" (v. 15).

The flesh profiteth nothing. This life can only be blessed and purposeful when it is viewed as a place of discipline and training, fitting one for true service and life that is life indeed in resurrection. The day of our birth ushers us into a sphere dominated by the law of sin and death. We are at birth "sown in corruption", dishonour, weakness, merely a natural (soul-ical) body. Resurrection changes all this. We are raised in incorruption, glory, power and with a spiritual body. The first state is connected with Adam (I Cor. xv. 45, Eccles. vi. 10, *Heb.*), the second with Christ.

If these facts are appreciated in any degree, we shall also appreciate the words of Ecclesiastes “the day of one’s death is better than the day of one’s life”. At death the pilgrimage ceases, the lessons are over, the discipline done. For the believer sin’s *punishment, power and presence* will have for ever passed away. The death which has fallen upon him shall never fall again. The present life with all its blessings and pleasures and opportunities is a life spent in corruption, and in the sphere of a curse. Such a condition cannot be immortal. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither can corruption inherit incorruption. This being so, even though the mind and heart shrink from the valley of the shadow of death, one can see that it is a necessity (“change” will be the equivalent for the living saints) if we would enter into the full blessedness of redemption.

Ecclesiastes is under no false idea that death is a “friend” or a “bright angel”. That is left to the unbeliever in his endeavour to hide the terror of the last enemy. The believer taught by the Scripture is under no illusions as to death. Job could even dare to speak of “worms destroying his body” when he knew that his *Redeemer* lived. Paul can speak of death and the grave without softening either awful word, because resurrection robbed them of their sting and their victory. Ecclesiastes teaches that the only ones in this life who can “enjoy” any good in it, in the true sense, are those who have faced its transient character, realized the fact that this is not their rest but their school, and who, knowing that life in its fullness cannot be entered until we awake satisfied with Christ’s likeness, set their mind on things above where Christ is. As a result of believing that the day of death is better than the day of birth, Koheleth continues:--

“It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to heart” (vii. 2).

The man of the world argues in an exactly opposite direction. Seeing that death is the end of all men, he says, “Let us eat, drink and be merry, *for to-morrow we die*”. Again it is the hope of resurrection that makes the difference. Both can say “to-morrow we die”, but the one as a result says “feast”, the other “fast”. It is a *natural* thing to say, “If this brief life is to end in death, why not make the most of it? Why not get all the good one can out of it, in other words, put sadness and sorrow out of sight; eat, drink and be merry”. That is natural. Taught by the Spirit of truth however, we reason that if this present life is to end in death and the full blessings of redemption cannot be entered by flesh and blood; moreover, if there are spheres of service to be entered in the life to come that shall bear some analogy to our faithfulness here, and if an eternal weight of glory lies over against a light affliction which is but for a moment, if moreover, love to our Redeemer compels us to stand on His side, go without the camp and suffer His reproach—then we cannot help becoming pilgrims and strangers, declaring by our very abstention that we seek a country that lies beyond the grave, that our pleasures are associated with our Saviour, and that while sin and death and the curse are everywhere apparent, we cannot find it in our heart to eat, drink and be merry, but rather find greater and deeper joy in those circumstances which superficially are the saddest and darkest hours of life.

“The living will lay it to heart” (vii. 2); further, “Sorrow is better than laughter” (vii. 3) for the same reason, “for by the sadness of the countenance (external) the heart (internal) is made better” (vii. 3). The world thinks only of the *face*, the believer thinks more of the *heart*. True wisdom recognizes the essential difference.

“The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning (and will be thereby made ‘better’); but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth” (vii. 4).

Association with mourners may not prove so enjoyable to the flesh as the hilarity of feasting and mirth, but

“It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools. For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This also is vanity” (vii. 5, 6).

The choice of worldliness is fleeting. The brief hour of mirth is oft followed by days of bitterness. The poor untaught world sees nothing beyond this present age, and the majority of Christians seem to have conspired to perpetuate its blindness. Present Christendom with its worldliness, its pleasures, its fleshly inducements, its forsaking of the narrow path, its philosophy, its politics, all proclaim the negation of resurrection. The Church is fast approaching the form of godliness which involves the denial of the power of the resurrection, and with it in song and sermon sounds the hoary tradition that puts resurrection aside, bridges the gulf between the flesh and the spirit, and seeks to improve that which is corrupt, carnal and mortal. Eccles. vii. is sober truth.

Let us hear the rebuke of the wise, and seeing the end of all men let us lay it to heart.

**#14. The maddening effect of “oppression” and “crookedness”,
but for the knowledge of God’s purpose (vii. 7-13).
pp. 81 - 83**

The result of entering into the spirit of Eccles. vii. 1-6 must be a chastened and humbled mind, and a frame and a temper not easily provoked. Instead of frantically seeking to bolster up the doomed fabric of Adam’s world the believer realizes that God has reserved the honour of complete restoration to His Son. Instead of becoming a member of this Society and of that he realized that all improvements of the flesh are destined to end on this side of the grave. To this aspect the writer now turns.

“Surely oppression maketh the wise man mad; and a gift destroyeth the heart Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools” (vii. 7-9).

To those who do not possess the wisdom which comes from above the call of the oppressed sometimes becomes irresistible. Many times the tyranny of oppression, the selfish cruelty of those who have rule and authority, have stirred the old nature, and but for grace this would have manifested itself in association with fleshly and worldly

methods, which in reality vainly seek to do that which Christ alone can do. The new man however looks beyond the present.

“If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter (margin, will, or purpose): for He that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they” (v. 8).

Let our indignation be modified by the fact that if *we* see, so also does *He* that is higher than the highest. Moreover the “matter” is of “purpose”. It is not a question of indifference on the part of God; He knows, He regards, but the place of judgment is **THERE**, not here (xi. 9; xii. 14; *see* especially iii. 16, 17). Chapter v. introduces us to the sanctuary of God, and like Asaph we understand the end and cease to fret ourselves because of evil-doers and of those wicked who prosper.

In our quotation of Chapter vii., which appears above, we gave verses 7 & 9, omitting verse 8. There is a helpful alternation which should be observed here:--

- A | 7. Oppression makes wise man mad.
B | 8. Pause.—Better the end than the beginning,
and a patient spirit as a consequence.
A | 9. Be not hasty; anger belongs to fools.
B | 10. Pause.—Do not enquire petulantly concerning the former days.

The great corrective, when we view the inequalities of this life, is to remember that there is a purpose which runs through the ages, that this world is out of joint by reason of sin, and that to attempt to put crooked things straight apart from *Redemption* is the worst vexation of all. Pause and reflect; the end is the great thing; God is over-ruling oppressions and inequalities and all shall subserve His end. Be “patient in spirit”; do not be “hasty in spirit to be angry”, for only fools are thus betrayed into impotent wrath. Moreover, do not be tempted to adopt the general idea embodied in the term “the good old days”; there have been no such good old days, for all days have been marked by the presence and power of sin and death with their accompanying miseries. The days past were no better than the present; all human nature runs in the same direction. The parent assures his erring child that he was “never so naughty when he was a little boy”. Old people always deplore the awful sinfulness of the rising generation, but this is not wisdom, it is feebleness of mind (Eccles. vii. 10). All generations have been wicked and will be until the Lord comes and the new life begins.

Keep an even temper. Eccles. vii. 7-10 says in effect, “Let your moderation be known unto all men: the Lord is near” (Phil. iv. 5). “Wisdom is good like an inheritance the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life, to them that have it” (Eccles. vii. 11, 12, *see* Volume X, pages 167 & 168 for fuller exposition). Instead of allowing the limited horizon of this life to decide our actions, to arouse our anger, to lead us in the vain attempt to improve the old nature, we remember “the Higher than the highest”, we reflect upon the purpose that is surely beneath all the happenings, we remember the “end” and the “life” to which true wisdom points. So concludes Koheleth:--

“Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which He hath made crooked?” (vii. 13).

Contrasted with the works of God are the works of man.

“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. That which is crooked cannot be made straight” (i. 14, 15).

When the Apostles came first to Thessalonica they were styled “These that have turned the world upside down” (Acts xvii. 6). It is the world that is in reality upside down. The very word rendered “crooked” is so translated in Psa. cxlvi. 9, “The way of the wicked He turneth upside down”. We do well therefore, before hastily espousing some cause of the world, to “consider the work of God”. If the deranged affairs be a part of His doing, shall we lead men to fight against Him? Then consider again, Have all the revolutions that have arisen on earth ever made crooked things STRAIGHT? At best they have made the crookedness less apparent, or cause the pressure to be felt in another direction, but God and His people are concerned with utter rectification, not mere palliatives, and that awaits the day of the Lord. The word “straight” occurs again in Eccles. xii. 9, “set in order”. In the Chaldee of Dan. iv. 36 (33), it is rendered “I was established”, with reference to a kingdom.

Such straightening out of the crookedness of Adam’s race can never be accomplished by man. We patiently await the day of Christ. We shall not sit inert, we shall not be idle, but rather shall be occupied with nobler and more fruitful service by a due recognition of the true dispensational character of many of the things around us.

#15. The practical problem of good and evil (vii. 14). pp. 115 - 118

Four times in chapter vii. does the Preacher bid us “consider”.

“*Consider* the work of God: for who can make that straight, which He hath made crooked?” (13).

“In the day of adversity *consider*” (14).

“*Consider*, this have I found” (27).

“*Consider*, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions” (29).

Let us look at verse 14.

“In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity *consider*: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.”

It is sometimes helpful to work back through a passage and it may help us here.

“*After him.*” —The baffling nature of God’s providential dealings is to prevent a man discovering that which comes after him. This is a theme many times repeated in this book. When Koheleth had expended his energies and wisdom on labours vast and wonderful he said:--

“What can the man do that cometh *after* the King?” (ii. 12).

His further investigation was not encouraging:--

“I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it to the man that shall come *after* me; and who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool?” (ii. 18, 19).

Having traversed the thoughts of chapters ii. & iii., Koheleth arrives at the conclusion:--

“Wherefore I perceive that there is nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works, for that is his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be *after* him?” (iii. 22).

The question forms the very closing words of the first half of Ecclesiastes, before he begins to enumerate the good things for this life:--

“For who knoweth what is good for man in this life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow: for who can tell a man what shall be *after* him under the sun?” (vi. 12).

Following the verse under consideration (vii. 14) we pass on to:--

“A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell?” (x. 14).

These six references focus the attention on the problem of what shall be “after?”

The reference in iii. 22 shews resignation and contentment, the enjoyment of one’s rightful portion, and leaving the “after” with God. This is seen from another angle in vii. 14. The experiences of prosperity and adversity which come upon man are intended to prevent discovery of that which shall come after: “To the end that man should find nothing after him” (vii. 14). There is a close parallel here with iii. 11:--

“He that made everything beautiful in His time; also He hath set the *olam* (the age) in their heart, so that no man can *find out* the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.”

So in vii. 23, 24:--

“I said, I will be wise, but it was far from me. That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can *find it out*?”

In vii. 26, 27, 28, 29 the word “find” comes again and again, leading to the discovery that man has departed from his original uprightness, and sought out many inventions.

The conclusion of this matter is reached in viii. 17, ix. 1:--

“Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea, further; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it. For all this I considered in my heart even to declare this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, ARE IN THE HAND OF GOD: no man knoweth either love or hatred, all lies before them (in the future).”

The baffling experiences which have this effect have been “set the one over against the other” by God.

The word “set” is usually rendered “made”. It comes in iii. 11 and vii. 29:--

“He hath *made* all things beautiful in His time the work that God *maketh*”
(iii. 11).
“God hath *made* man upright” (vii. 29).

The two experiences, prosperity and adversity, are made to balance one another, they do not always follow one another as cause and effect, but as xi. 11 says, “times and chance” enter in and prevent calculation. No one can foresee what shall be “after”. God alone holds all things in His hands and works all things in line with His purposes.

We are to rejoice in the day of prosperity. Blessings of health and friends, of happy labour and happy homes come from the Lord:--

“Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour, this is the gift of God. though He give not much (cf. verse 12) yet he remembereth the days of his life: because God causeth a response in the joy of his heart” (v. 19, 20).

Those who misunderstand Ecclesiastes think that its teaching makes for gloominess, brooding, austerity, cynicism. This is quite untrue. Only he who has faced the fact of death in the light of resurrection, only he who has ceased from vain speculation and has reached the haven of peace in the will of God, only he who has gratefully acknowledged the limitations set around this life and its possibilities can really enjoy the blessings as they come without being haunted by the shadow of the “one event”, or being troubled by the oblivion of the “one place”.

The word rendered “prosperity” is *tohv** which is the word “good”. We are not surprised therefore to find that the word “adversity” is *ra(n)g* = “evil”. This knowledge of “good and evil”, with its concomitant sorrow and death, commenced in the Garden of Eden and shall go on until that day when God Himself shall wipe away all tears from off all faces. The whole of the age is associated with the acquiring of this knowledge, and its application. When experiencing the “good”, rejoice. When experiencing the “evil”, consider. Let the visitation not pass without profit. Let the chastisement yield its fruit. Let the lesson be learned. Let patience have her perfect work. The day of prosperity is not the time when we consider the purpose of the ages with so much profit as in the day of adversity. Then, says Koheleth, consider the purposes of God and learn the humbling lesson. A word almost identical with “adversity” is “sadness” (vii. 3), and the lesson is

the same. Chapter xi. 9, 10 bases its teaching upon the same truth as does vii. 14. Youth will, and should rejoice, but let rejoicing be of that sort that remembers the fact of judgment. Instead of the problem of “good and “evil” being something for the philosopher only, it enters into the warp and woof of life, and Ecclesiastes rightly followed will cast many a ray of light upon the ways of God with man, “all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow” (vi. 12).

[NOTE: * - For the sake of consistency we use throughout these articles the English, equivalent as given in Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance.]

#16. The Policy of Laodicea (vii. 15-22). pp. 147 - 149

“All things have I seen in the days of my vanity. There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness” (vii. 15).

This is a recurring observation in this book (*see* ii. 14; viii. 14; ix. 1-4). Its effect upon the mind and heart has been faithfully chronicled in Psalm lxxii., where Asaph envied the wicked who prosper, and considered that he had cleansed his heart in vain. It would seem that in Eccles. vii. 16, 17 we have some such sentiments expressed as those of Asaph before he went into the Sanctuary of God. It seems repugnant to the general teaching of Scripture to understand that God would have us not to be righteous over much, or wise over much, or wicked over much. It is far more likely that Koheleth is expressing the general compromising policy of the world. The very words “over much” of vii. 16 are used of Solomon in I Kings iv. 29, 30, where we read:--

“And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much and Solomon’s wisdom *excelled* the wisdom of all the children of the East.”

Are we to understand that God gave Solomon *much* wisdom and then inspired him to discredit it? The word rendered “*over* wise” in verse 16 comes in Eccles. ii. 15, “Why was I then *more* wise”, and in xii. 9 (margin), “Because the preacher was *more* wise”.

It appears that when the just man perished in his righteousness the comment of worldly wisdom was, Keep the happy medium. Don’t be *over* righteous or *over* wise. Why should you destroy yourself? Why not make the best of both worlds? Do not be too strait-laced. On the other hand don’t be *over* wicked. This is not good policy either. Why should you die before the time? This we understand to be the wisdom of the world, but that it is not given for us to follow. On the contrary Koheleth appears to counteract this teaching in verse 18:--

“It is good that thou should’st take hold of this, yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: *for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.*”

Did Joseph in the house of Potiphar listen to the policy “Be not righteous *over much*”? or did he not rather in the prison and on the throne realize the truth of “He that feareth God shall come forth of them all”? Did Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego listen to this policy, “Be not righteous *over much*”? Did they not “come forth of them all”? This “coming forth” is used of birth (v. 15); of coming out of prison (iv. 14); of coming out of the ark (Gen. viii. 19). Let not the believer heed the temporizing policies of the day. He will only too soon meet the kindly-spirited brother who will advise compromise under the guise of long-suffering, gentleness, judging not, etc. Let him beware of such; long-suffering and gentleness let us have by all means, but let us abhor the wisdom of the age which urges us to be neither righteous over much nor wicked over much, but just nicely and comfortably Laodicean through and through. Koheleth says, “Much study is a weariness to the flesh” (xii. 12). True, but does he mean then that we should not study? Again, “In much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow” (i. 18). Shall we infer then that “Ignorance is bliss”? If sorrow be the price of true wisdom we must pay it. If weariness be the result of much study we must be prepared for it.

“Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city” (vii. 19).

Verse 20 commences with “for” and is usually read as an explanation. It is difficult to see how the fact that “there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not” can be a reason why “wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty men which are in the city”. Verse 19 concludes the statement of verses 11-18, and verse 20 opens a new section. It may be objected that the verse commences with “for”. The word can also be rendered “because” and thus read gives better sense:--

“Because there is not a just man Also take no heed unto all the words that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant revile thee. For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou likewise hast reviled others” (vii. 20-22).

We shall be wise to take no heed to either the policy of worldly wisdom (16, 17), or to the censure and criticism of others, however just they may be. Our one aim and desire should be to fear God, and in the confidence that we shall come forth of them all, we are to hold on our way. “It is good that thou shouldst take hold of this” (vii. 18), said the Preacher. Let us hold fast the truth in the day when it is being deserted; the Lord is faithful, and one day, how soon we know not, *they that be wise shall shine*.

**#17. The “reason” of evil discovered (vii. 24-29).
pp. 180 - 183**

The concluding portion of Eccles. vii. contains an exceedingly difficult statement. Believing it to be a part of that Scripture which is not only inspired but profitable we must seek its meaning, looking continually to the Author Himself to lead us into all truth.

A step toward truer understanding will be the recognition of the theme of the writer. “I applied my heart to seek out the *reason*” (vii. 25). Now this word “reason” occurs again in verse 27: “counting one by one to find out the account”. We evidently have here the thread, and if we find this same word yet again at the conclusion we shall be justified in assuming that we have established one item. In verse 29 we have the feminine form of the word, “They have sought out many *inventions*”. In the space of five verses we have “reason”, “account”, and “inventions”. We must find some common idea that will enable us to understand Solomon’s investigation more clearly. The feminine form of verse 29 occurs in II Chron. xxvi. 15, “He made in Jerusalem *engines* invented by cunning men”. The word translated “cunning” is also from the same root; the French version reads “*des machines de l’invention d’un ingenieur*”. Many times the root word is rendered “devise”, “curious”, and “cunning”.

If we now come back to Eccles. vii.25 we may be able to perceive more clearly the object of Koheleth’s search. We shall observe that the words “*of things*” are in italics and we can ignore them if need be.

“I applied mine heart to know, and to search and to seek out wisdom and *the cunning device*, and to know the wickedness of folly even of foolishness and madness.”

The Preacher was seeking the hidden spring of wickedness, seeking to know what was the ensnaring bait that led men on to sin and death. Out of the bitter experience of his heart Solomon now speaks. He confesses that he had not discovered “what his souls seeketh” (28), but the example which he gives, together with the conclusion at which he arrives in verse 29, will be sufficient for those who seek guidance in this world of darkness.

The better to appreciate Solomon’s warning here, we must turn aside for a moment to the book of Proverbs. The reader is referred to the *Companions Bible* for a full account of the composition of the book of Proverbs. Suffice it for your purpose to say that some Proverbs were written BY Solomon, but some were written FOR Solomon. Those written FOR Solomon occupy i. 7 -ix. 18; xix. 20 -xxiv. 34; xxvii. 1 - xxix. 27 and xxx. 1 - xxxi. 31. These were compiled for the future guidance of David’s son and successor. Among the items of solemn warning is the danger morally, religiously and dynastically of the “alien woman”. In the Proverbs written BY Solomon this one feature *is never mentioned*. The Proverbs FOR Solomon conclude with a marvelous pen portrait of the wife he should seek. Here was evidently Solomon’s weak point. Had he hearkened to the Word of God he would have saved his name from the ill savour that must ever attach to it.

In I Kings xi. 1-8 we read the dismal failure of Israel's wisest king:--

“But King Solomon loved many strange women beside the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians and Hittites; of the nations concerning which the Lord had said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods.”

Nehemiah, when reproving the people for marrying wives of Ashdod, Ammon and Moab, could find no more tragic example than that of Solomon:--

“Did not Solomon King of Israel sin by these things? Yet among many nations was there no King like him, who was beloved by his God, and God made him King over all Israel; nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin” (Neh. xiii. 26).

It is evident, by both the account in I Kings xi. and Neh. xiii., that Solomon's sin was not so much that of immorality as of failure to keep intact the covenant separation of his race and throne. In other words to the believer of all ages it represents the temptation of the flesh to overstep the bounds of separation drawn by redemption. It is suggestive in view of Eccles. vii. 28 that I Kings xi. 3 tells us that Solomon had a harem of exactly 1,000:--

“And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart.”

Ignoring the warnings of the Proverbs written for his guidance he added wife to wife in vain endeavour, but among the whole thousand found not one. The one depicted in Prov. xxxi. he had turned from, and the result was disaster. Just a little earlier in Eccles. vii. Solomon had said, “There is not a just man in all the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not”. His words therefore in verse 28 must not be interpreted as meaning that one man in a thousand was just and sinless. We meet the expression in Job ix. 3, “He cannot answer him, one of a thousand”; and in Job xxxiii. 23, “If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, *one among a thousand*, to shew unto man his uprightness: Then he is gracious unto him”. Here the one among a thousand is an “interpreter”, one who seems somewhat like the “days-man” of Job ix. 33, who was “in God's stead”, yet “formed out of the clay” (Job xxxiii. 6), and so could mediate between them. We seek to avoid spiritualizing, yet, if Koheleth makes a cryptic reference back to Adam in Eccles. vi. 10, it is not unreasonable to suppose that he makes here a cryptic reference onward to Christ. Whether he personally thus understood his own words we cannot say, the application of Solomon's failure and discovery is for ourselves.

One deeply important finding of the Preacher is written with no uncertainty, and this we would set forth with all possible emphasis:--

“Lo, this only I have found, that GOD HATH MADE MAN UPRIGHT, but they have sought out many inventions” (vii. 29).

One thing emerged clearly before Solomon's mind. God was not chargeable with the fall of man. In his own case this was clear. God warned him again and again. His fall

was entirely due to disobedience to the Will and Word of God. From his own personal case he views man as a whole. He weigh over “one by one to find out the cunning device” which has ensnared them. It is always the same:--

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man, but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed do not err, my beloved brethren” (James i. 13-16).

Ecclesiastes is a book in which the problem of good and evil is investigated from many standpoints. It is a cause for thankfulness that this clear statement is found here. Man, when he left the hand of his Maker, was upright. The devices for his own undoing proceeded from himself. Mankind has sought out “many inventions”. The apostle Paul has given a more doctrinal setting to the theme in Rom. vi. & vii., and speaks of the dominion of sin in the members of the body, which dominion can be traced back to Adam by consulting Rom. v. Paul, James and Koheleth are at one in this, that God is not the Author of sin or of moral evil. God made man upright. To each of us the experience of Solomon should be a warning. We may not all be vulnerable at the same point. Solomon seemed proof against the snare of riches and power. Many who may have been proof against the alien woman would have lost their heads with half his riches or power. The world is ever seeking access by means of our members and our carnal nature. We have the clear word of God as to the character of our calling and the dangers of fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. While we may not fully solve Solomon’s own peculiar enigma, let us see to it that we learn our own lesson, and profit by his example.

One concluding thought. It has been said that the writing of the book of Jonah argues for his (Jonah’s) repentance. The writing of the fifty-first Psalm proves David’s deep contrition. Shall we not also believe that Solomon’s eyes were opened at the last, and that these few verses indicate his justification of God and of the simple truth of His Word?

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth.

#37. Joseph—The Dominion Promised and Postponed.

pp. 5 - 7

Passing over the chapter that is devoted to the generations of Esau we open at Gen. xxxvii. and read:--

“And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph”

Jacob’s generations are not written as from Padan-aram and the house of Laban, but from Canaan, the land of pilgrimage. Jacob uses this word “stranger” in xlvii. 9, when he speaks of the years of his “pilgrimage”. The pilgrim character of the family of faith is a very “fundamental of dispensational truth”. All the exhortations to leave the world and its ways, which so characterize the writings of the New Testament, emphasize this truth.

The second item of importance in this statement of the generations of Jacob is the fact that it is practically the life story of Joseph. We do *not* read, “These are the generations of Jacob. Reuben,” but “Joseph”. The other sons are referred to as “his brethren”. Joseph is pre-eminently the great type of Christ in Genesis, and this again leads us to another great fundamental of all truth; whether doctrinal or dispensational Christ is all. The first great type of Christ in Genesis is Adam, “who was a figure of Him that was to come”. The last is Joseph, equally a figure of the same blessed one. Adam’s story is one of awful failure involving all his seed in ruin. Joseph’s story is one of suffering as a path of glory with the object that he may “preserve life”.

It may be interesting to note the complete little picture that Genesis presents in the seven great types of Christ that it contains:--

- A | ADAM.—Sin forfeits life.
- B | ABEL.—The accepted offering.
- C | SETH.—Substitution.
- D | NOAH.—Atonement (“pitch”).
- C | ISAAC.—Substitution.
- B | JUDAH.—Suretyship.
- A | JOSEPH.—Sufferings lead to preservation of life.

The record on Gen. xxxvii. does not say, “Now Jacob loved Joseph”, but “*Israel* loved Joseph”. Israel, the prince with God, loved Joseph more than all his children. Joseph’s position in the family is indicated by the “coat of many colours”, which his father made for him. The marginal alternative of the A.V., “pieces”, is to be rejected. The same word is used in Judges v. 30 where it refers to “divers colours of needlework”. The embroidered garments of Aaron—the blue, the purple and the scarlet, were symbols of the priestly office. Joseph was the heir and the priest of the family. When Rebekah prepared Jacob to deceive Isaac and to seek the birthright, she took “raiment of desires”.

Throughout Scripture clothing has a symbolic value. The result of Joseph's pre-eminence is prophetic of Christ. "His brethren hated him."

Joseph's career cannot be dissociated from dreams, and they run in pairs:--

1 st pair.		Joseph's dreams of pre-eminence.
		Lead to prison and suffering.
2 nd pair.		The prisoners' dreams being interpreted.
		Lead to deliverance from prison.
3 rd pair.		Pharaoh's dreams being interpreted.
		Lead to glory and honour.

The words of his brethren at the recital of his first dream anticipate the words of the enemies of Christ:--

"Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams and for his words" (Gen. xxxvii. 8).

The statement made concerning Jacob—"his father observed the saying" (Gen. xxxvii. 11)—upon the narration of the second dream remind one of the words concerning Mary that she "kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart" (Luke ii. 19).

It is very strongly emphasized in the sequel that the envy and hatred that sought to prevent Joseph's dreams from becoming accomplished facts were over-ruled by God to bring about their fulfillment:--

"So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and a lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt" (Gen. xlv. 8).

So Peter could say:--

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23).

Joseph's dreams spoke of rulership over his brethren. The rejection of Joseph by his brethren temporarily suspended this prophecy from fulfillment, and during the interval he became ruler and saviour among the Gentiles, reaching the destined rulership at a subsequent period. The "postponement theory" cannot be proved from a type, but the fitness is nevertheless confirmatory. Christ was heralded as a King. His rejection as such was foreknown; and when at length He is acknowledged King, it will be found that He is Saviour as well.

It is also surely not an accident that it is one named Judah (Judas in Greek) who suggested selling Joseph for twenty pieces of silver, while Judas sold Christ for thirty pieces of silver. It was the father who sent his beloved son Joseph to his brethren, the latter saying, "Come now, therefore, and let us slay him". It was the Father Who sent His

well beloved Son to His brethren in the flesh: these received Him not, but rather said, “This is the heir; come, let us kill Him”.

We learn from the last verse of Gen. xxxvii. that Joseph was sold to Potiphar; and then, before we are told anything further, a part of the life of Judah is interjected, the theme of Joseph at Potiphar’s house being resumed in chapter xxxix. Judah falls into temptation, and the signet, bracelets and staff which he left behind are a witness against him. Joseph stands firm under a similar temptation; and the garment which he left behind, though used against him falsely, was a witness really of his integrity. Joseph stands where Judah falls: how this is repeated in the temptation of Christ is recorded in Matt. iv. Those three temptations in the wilderness have their parallels in the wilderness wandering of Israel, the three quotations used by Christ being from the book of Deuteronomy.

The pathway to glory for Joseph was *via* prison and shame. It was so with his blessed Antitype too, Who declared that He must needs have suffered these things and to have entered into His glory. When Joseph was in the house of Potiphar, we read, “The Lord was with Joseph” (Gen. xxxix. 2). This is repeated when Joseph was cast into prison (verse 21). This must have been the great sustaining fact upon which Joseph leaned during his severe trial. It was the consciousness, too, of the Father’s nearness that was the great joy of Christ during His earthly ministry. We have reached the lowest depth of Joseph’s trials. The rejection and the loss are to be followed by acclamation and honour. This we must leave until we can devote more space to it.

We conclude this section with the quaint rendering of an early English version:--

“The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a luckie fellow” (Gen. xxxix. 2).

#38. Joseph—The Dominion Realized. (Gen. xl. - l). pp. 36 - 39

Joseph sets before us in his remarkable career a clear type of that feature which is so prophetic of Christ—“the sufferings and the glory that should follow”.

We left Joseph in our last study together in the lowest depths; we shall not leave him in this paper until we see him seated at the right hand of Majesty. The dreams of Joseph led to his exile; the dreams of Pharaoh led to his exaltation.

“And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art. Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled; only in the throne will I be greater than thou” (Gen. xli. 39, 40).

Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-paaneah. The A.V. gives a possible meaning in the margin by considering it a Coptic word, but more recent discovery in Ancient

Egyptian brings to light the true meaning of the name and its prophetic import. *Zaph-en-to* was a title of the last of the Shepherd Kings of Egypt and means “The nourisher of the world”. *Zap* means “abundance”.

“Its well ascertained meaning is ‘food’, especially ‘corn’ or ‘grain’ in general”
(Canon COOK).

Nt (*nath*) is the preposition “of”, common on the early monuments. *Pa* is the definite article “the”. *Anch* signifies “life”. Thus one name of Memphis is *ta-anch*, the land of life, or, the land of the living. The name therefore means “Food of the life”, and is a far-off echo of that wondrous claim which the Greater than Joseph was to make when He said “*I am the Bread of Life*”.

Is there not also an echo of Pharaoh’s words in the lips of Mary? Pharaoh said, when the people had no bread, “Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do” (Gen. xli. 55). Mary said to the servants, when they had no wine, “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it” (John ii. 5).

Chapter xlii. resumes the broken thread of the story of Jacob and his sons. One event however has happened that it is important to remember. Joseph blesses the Gentiles during his rejection by his brethren. Joseph is united to a Gentile by marriage while exiled from his father’s house. The names of his two children speak of forgetting his toil and his father’s house, and of being fruitful in the land of his affliction. The famine at length appears and among those who are forced to sue at Joseph’s feet are his ten brethren. The story is a long one and we will not spoil it by attempting to summarize, we know how it all ends. The outstanding typical features number among them the following:--

1. THE REPENTANCE OF ISRAEL.—When Joseph’s brethren came before him and are charged with being spies, they aver that they are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and behold say they:--

“The youngest is this day with our father, and one is not” (Gen. xlii. 13).

The mention of the fate of Joseph and the harshness of their treatment at the hands of the ruler of Egypt causes their conscience to awaken and they said:--

“We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us”
(Gen. xlii. 21).

Reuben uses even more forceful words: “Behold, also his blood is required” (Gen. xlii. 22). The type is clear. Israel must repent before they can be blessed.

2. THE REVELATION TO ISRAEL.—“Then Joseph could not refrain himself I am Joseph” (Gen. xlv. 1-4). When Israel’s blindness is removed and for the first time they recognize the Lord Jesus as their Messiah, “They shall look upon Me whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for Him” (Zech. xii. 10) is the word of prophecy.

First there is the revelation of the *Person*, “I am Joseph”. Then follows the revelation of the *Purpose*, “God did send me before you to preserve life to save your lives by a great deliverance” (Gen. xlv. 4-7).

3. THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL.—Joseph could not be content until “all Israel” were safely beneath his care. Benjamin had been brought before him by the strategy of love, and now nothing must hinder the journey of his father Jacob.

One more feature of fundamental importance is marked for us in Heb. xi. If we were to select the one act in Joseph’s life which should eclipse all others as an act of faith, we hardly feel that the one selected by the inspired writer of Heb. xi. would be our choice. There in Heb. xi. 22 we read:--

“By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.”

“Concerning his bones!” What is there in these words to deserve such prominence? Joseph linked the deliverance of Israel with *resurrection*.

4. THE RESURRECTION OF ISRAEL.—Joseph stresses the fact that the land of promise was that which God swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob (Gen. 1. 24), and Christ shows that the title “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” proves the doctrine of Resurrection (Matt. xxii. 23-33). Ezek. xxxvii. connects resurrection with restoration.

We are conscious that much more precious truth lies near the surface of this remarkable history. We have indicated a few fundamentals of dispensational importance. One more feature must bring this paper to a close. The dreams of Joseph, though their realization was postponed, were eventually realized, but the postponement shut the door upon Israel for a time and opened it to the Gentiles. So the rejection of Christ by His brethren, their refusal to “have this man reign over them”, deferred the time of their restoration. When Israel is at length restored the Gentiles will have been blessed for a period of two thousand years, or as the type has it, “For these TWO years hath the famine been in the land” (Gen. xlv. 6).

The Lord who was despised and rejected shall yet be honoured and exalted, and in this glorious fact is all our hope and desire.

#39. Final Notes on Genesis. pp. 68 - 70

While the story of Joseph carries us through to the close of the book of Genesis, there are one or two items of dispensational importance that may be profitably gathered together before leaving this book of the beginning.

Judah, who made such a sorry figure in the parenthesis of chapter xxxviii., becomes a noble type of Israel's Redeemer in chapters xliii. and xliv. There the great feature is Suretyship:--

"I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever" (xliii. 9).

"Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren. For how shall I go up to my father and the lad be not with me?" (xliv. 33, 34).

The language of these verses is so clear, so beautiful that any words of ours would seem to spoil their teaching. All that we will do will be to indicate the usage and meaning of the word translated Surety.

SURETY (Hebrew *Arab*).—The root idea of the word appears to be "To mix", as in Psa. cvi. 35, "mingle"; Prov. xiv. 10, "intermediate". In the Chaldee section of Daniel the equivalent occurs in Dan. ii. 41, "Iron *mixed* with miry clay".

In weaving, the *ereb* is the "woof", that which is woven into or mixed in the texture (Lev. xiii. 48). The word is translated many times "evening", the time when darkness begins to "mix" with the light. Now all this bears upon the truth of Surety-ship. The Surety so "mixes" with the one for whom he acts as to take his place and be treated in his stead. Judah clearly perceived this when he said:--

"Let thy servant abide INSTEAD of the lad A BONDMAN, and let the lad GO UP with his brethren" (Gen. xliv. 33).

Benjamin was the one who really should have been bound and Judah the one who should have gone up to his father, but Judah as the Surety was so intermingled with the case of his brother that he could be treated "instead of" Benjamin with perfect justice.

The attitude of Reuben with regard to Joseph must not be passed over without a word. Reuben, being the first-born, might well have been jealous of Joseph but we find him doing his best to save Joseph from the hands of his brethren. It was during Reuben's absence that Joseph was sold, and his grief is expressed upon his return in the words:--

"The child is not, and I, whither shall I go? (xxxvii. 30).

The student of the Scripture must have noticed the important place given to the firstborn. Christ Himself bears the title, and so do the elect. A careful weighing of the statements of Scripture would make one feel that believers to-day constitute a kind of

firstborn, saved early and during this present time that they in their turn may deliver those who have not been so favoured, when the time comes for the knowledge of the Lord to cover the earth as the waters cover the seas.

Before Jacob died he gathered his sons together, to tell them what should befall them “in the last days” (xlix.). The prophecy, though it finds partial fulfillment in Israel’s past, looks to the period of the second coming of the Lord and the time of Jacob’s trouble and restoration. By far the largest space is devoted to the future of Judah and Joseph. In both come prophecies of Christ. Verse 10 speaks of “Shiloh” and the “Sceptre” in connection with the royal tribe of Judah, and in Joseph’s line Christ again figures as the “Shepherd” and “Stone” of Israel of whom Joseph was such a type.

A brief outline may help to set out the chief points.

<i>Reuben</i> (Firstborn).	Not excel. Birthright forfeited (I Chron. v. 1).
<i>Simeon and Levi.</i>	Divide; Scatter. (Josh. xix. 1; Lev. xxv. 32-34; Exod. xxxii. 26; Deut. x. 8, 9).
JUDAH.	The Lion. <i>The Sceptre.</i> <i>Shiloh</i> (Christ).
<i>Zebulun.</i>	Haven of Ships.
<i>Isaachar.</i>	Strong Ass.
DAN.	Judge. <i>The Serpent</i> (Antichrist). <i>The Salvation</i> (Christ) awaited.
<i>Gad.</i>	Overcome.
<i>Asher.</i>	Bread.
<i>Naphtali.</i>	Let loose.
JOSEPH.	The Fruitful Bough. <i>The Shepherd.</i> <i>The Stone</i> (Christ).
<i>Benjamin.</i>	Wolf.

When Jacob had finished this prophecy, he spoke of his approaching death and commanded that he should be buried together with Abraham and Isaac. Joseph lived to nourish and care for his brethren, and when he was about to die, he too gave command that his bones be carried up to the land of promise, saying “God will surely visit you”. The book, which commences with the creation of heaven and earth, concludes with the history of one obscure man and his twelve sons, and stresses the fulfillment of God’s promise concerning the “land” and the close connection that resurrection would hold to that fulfillment. The Scriptures focus upon a small space and a limited number, not because the wider circle is forgotten, but because in the smaller sphere we may the better see the purpose of the ages which indeed transcends the promised land and embraces the heavens and the earth, and goes beyond the pale of the chosen people to embrace every nation, tongue, people and language, and behind the promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to that promise made before the age times.

**#40. Israel's Bondage and its Bearing
upon Dispensational Truth (Exodus i.).
pp. 106 - 109**

The Hebrew title for Genesis is *B'reshith*, "In (the) beginning". It speaks of Creation. The Hebrew title of Exodus is *Ve alleh Shemoth*, "Now these are the names". It speaks of Redemption. Genesis speaks of the Nations, Exodus of the Nation. The theme of Genesis is traced through Adam and the fall of Joseph and the restoration. Joseph's last words were that God would surely visit Israel and lead them back to their own land. That visitation is chronicled in the book of Exodus.

The book is divided into two sections by the giving of the law at Mount Sinai, and may be visualized thus:--

Exodus.

Bondage.	\	Passover.
Redemption.	/	
<i>The Giving of the Law.</i>		
Freedom.	\	Tabernacle.
Worship.	/	

Worship can only be offered by a free people, yet let us note well a free people received the law! The apostle Paul who fought so for freedom in the epistle to the Galatians gladly commences Romans by calling himself the "bond slave" of Christ. The one great purpose of God is displayed under varying forms again and again:--

First we have a perfect creation (Gen. i. 1).	\	
Then a fall, darkness and chaos (Gen. i. 2).	}	Cosmic.
Then a renewal (Gen. i., ii.).	/	

If we leave the cosmic platform and limit ourselves to the human plane, the purpose is again displayed in Gen. iii.:--

First a perfect creation. Man.	\	
Then a fall, death and expulsion.	}	Racial.
But a restoration promised and typified.	/	

Leaving the wider circle of the human race we notice the story of the nations:--

First the nations divided by God (Gen. x.).	\	
Then their rebellions (Gen. xi.).	}	National.
Then their only hope of restoration (Gen. xii.).	/	

This is as far as Genesis takes us. exodus now expands the theme, but confines itself to the fortunes of the one nation Israel. The same order is observed.

First the fruitful and mighty people (Exod. i. 1-7).
Then the bondage.
Followed by the deliverance and exodus.

How did it come about that Israel became such abject slaves? There is a threefold answer to the question, viz., (1) The Purpose of God:--

“Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them: and they shall afflict them” (Gen. xv. 13).

(2) The Fulness of Iniquity. Their entrance into the land of Canaan was delayed in mercy to the wicked inhabitants:--

“In the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Gen. xv. 16).

and (3) The Punishment of Sin. The bondage of Israel was connected with their own failure. They became idolatrous and like the Egyptians themselves (Lev. xvii. 7; Josh. xxiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 5-9).

Possibly some readers will not be fully alive to the fact that God visited Israel with judgment in Egypt before He delivered them, and therefore we will quote the passage from Ezek. xx. referred to above:--

“In the day that I lifted up Mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt Then said I unto them, Cast ye away every man the abominations of his eyes, and defile not yourselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the Lord your God. But they rebelled against Me in the midst of the land of Egypt.”

Israel sets forth in miniature the dealings of God with mankind. First there is the great purpose of the ages, that necessarily accounts for much that is mysterious and strange in God’s providential dealings. It would have seemed more reasonable, seeing that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were already settled in the land of promise, that the promises upon which their faith rested should be put into immediate operation. As it was, these men were pilgrims and strangers in the very land of promise, and the only portion that actually belonged to Abraham was a piece he *paid for* in which to bury Sarah.

Secondly, the relation which Scripture shows existed between the exile of Israel and the iniquity of the Amorites reveals another phase of God’s dispensational dealings. The same truth is uttered in the epistle to the Romans:--

“Blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*, and so all Israel be saved” (Rom. xi. 25, 26).

Adam’s fall, Job’s sufferings, the Church’s period of suffering and persecution, all speak of the same long waiting for the heading up of Sin, as set forth finally at Babylon (Rev. xiii., xvii., xviii., etc.).

Thirdly, Israel became idolators in Egypt. Their bondage followed upon their departure from God. So with the larger issue. Man’s present condition of bondage is a part of the Divine Plan. It must continue his condition until iniquity has filled its measure. It continues also because man is personally sinful and amenable to wrath. The

heirs of promise therefore possessed no merit whereby they could lay claim to the land. The movement which ended in their deliverance was entirely the work of God:--

“Speak not thou in thy heart saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess this land Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess their land but that He may perform the Word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob” (Deut. ix. 4-6).

There is yet one further reason for the long sojourn in Egypt before the occupation of the land, which bears upon the purpose of every individual life, and that is *experience*. They were destined to be a Kingdom. The law was to come forth from their holy city unto all the earth. They were to be the custodians of the written revelation of God, and the guardians of His holy Law. Moses himself was most thoroughly trained under Pharaoh for his future great work, being learned in all the arts of the Egyptians. Israel, too, during their stay would become possessed of a wide knowledge and ability, which, humanly speaking, could never have come to them had they remained in Canaan in the same station and manner of life as that of the twelve sons of Jacob.

Every child of God is gathering experience. He may never perform in the life to come the occupation wherewith he earns his bread in this life, but he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful in that which is much. A faithful and honest fulfillment of life's little duties here may be fitting one for higher service there. In Building there are the great fundamental principles of righteousness expressed in the line and the plummet, the square and the foundation. In Agriculture there is the ploughing and the sowing before the reaping. All spheres of life contribute their quota, and like Israel in Egypt we are being prepared for higher things.

The Author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm* may be quoted here with advantage. After having spoken of the misconception of heaven as a place of inertness and quiescent bliss, he says:--

“But if there be a real and necessary, not merely a shadowy, agency in heaven as well as on earth; and if human nature is destined to act its part in such an economy, then its constitution, and the severe training it undergoes, are at once explained; and then also the removal of individuals in the very prime of their fitness for useful labour ceases to be impenetrably mysterious. This excellent mechanism of matter and mind, which, beyond any other of His works, declares the wisdom of the Creator, and which under His guidance is now passing the season of its first preparation, shall stand up anew from the dust of dissolution, and then, with freshened powers, and with a store of hard-earned and practical wisdom for its guidance, shall essay new labours in the service of God, Who by such instruments chooses to accomplish His designs of beneficence. That so prodigious a waste of the highest qualities should take place, as is implied in the notions which many Christians entertain of the future state, is indeed hard to imagine. The mind of man, formed as it is to be more tenacious of its active habits than even of its moral dispositions, is, in the present state, trained, often at an immense cost of suffering, to the exercise of skill, of fore-thought, of courage, of patience; and ought it not to be inferred, unless positive evidence contradicts the supposition, that this system of education bears some relation of fitness to the state for which it is an initiation? Shall not the very same qualities which here are so sedulously fashioned and finished, be actually needed and used in that future world of perfection? Surely the idea is inadmissible, that an instrument wrought up at so much expense to a polished fitness for service, is destined to

be suspended for ever on the palace-walls of heaven, as a glittering bauble, no more to make proof of its temper?" (Quoted by Fairbairn on *Typology*).

Let us not repine therefore at the trials of the way, but believe that when the harvest comes we shall reap in this connection, exactly as we have sown.

**#41. Moses and Christ; rejected at first,
but afterwards received (Exod. ii. - iv.).
pp. 132 - 135**

We saw, in our last paper, the great dispensational fact that Israel's bondage was a necessary part of the Divine purpose, both with regard to themselves and with regard to the nations.

"Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards: YET affliction cometh not forth of the dust, NEITHER doth trouble spring out of the ground" (Job v. 6, 7).

Affliction and trouble are within the providence of God; they come from above. Egypt was no fit abiding-place for the chosen people; affliction and distress came upon them, to make them the more ready to respond to the command to leave the house of bondage and go forth to the land of promise.

"Arise and depart hence, for this is not your rest, *because it is polluted*" (Micah ii. 10).

Before the cry of oppressed Israel ascended up to heaven, the deliverer was prepared who should be the manifest answer to their prayer. The seventh from Adam was Enoch (Jude 14). He walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Scripture draws attention to the fact that Enoch was the seventh from Adam, and it is evident that we are to consider this as of typical importance. Moses was the seventh from Abraham. (1) Abraham, (2) Isaac, (3) Jacob, (4) Levi, (5) Kohath, (6) Amram, (7) Moses. This fact seems to indicate that Moses also will be an outstanding figure in the development of the purpose of God. The same numerical character may be seen in the case of Abraham. Abraham was the seventh from Eber, who gave his name to the Hebrews—"Abram the Hebrew" (Gen. xiv. 13).

The faith of the parents of Moses finds a place in the list of overcomers in Heb. xi. This led to the adoption of Moses by Pharaoh's daughter, and is a remarkable example of the marvellous way in which the Lord makes "the wrath of man to praise Him". "When Moses was grown" (Exod. ii. 11), or, as Acts vii. 23, 24 tells us:--

"When he was full forty years old, *it came into his heart* to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian."

Stephen, when he uttered these words, was "full of the Holy Ghost", and his face as it had been "the face of an angel". This must guide us when we read in Exod. ii. 12:--

“And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.”

Exodus gives us the outward appearance, Acts vii. looks upon the heart, and moreover reveals the dispensational teaching as we shall see. Instead of thinking that Moses cast furtive glances “this way and that way” before dealing a treacherous blow, we must see it in the light of Isa. lix. 16:--

“And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation”

So also Isa. lxiii. 5. Stephen reveals the purpose that prompted Moses to take vengeance upon the oppressor:--

“He supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not” (Acts vii. 25).

Vengeance as well as redemption belong to the Kinsman-Redeemer of Whom Moses was a conspicuous type.

These words prevent us from agreeing with the words of Dr. Fairbairn concerning this act of Moses when he says:--

“It was the hasty and irregular impulse of the flesh, not the enlightened and heavenly guidance of the Spirit, which prompted him to take the course he did.”

Upon interposing between two of his brethren who were striving together next day, he was rebuffed by their jealous words, “Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?” This is typical of the rejection of Christ upon His first advent. It is not the failure of Moses, but that of his people, that we are to see here. His sojourn in the land of Midian and his marriage there must be viewed in the same light as Joseph’s sojourn in Egypt and his marriage there, the outcome of both being the deliverance and blessing of his brethren who had hated and rejected him. That this is so we may learn from Acts vii. Joseph and Moses are brought together by Stephen to enforce this great lesson upon the leaders of Israel:--

“And at THE SECOND TIME Joseph was made known unto his brethren” (13).

“This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? THE SAME did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush” (35).

It is clear that we have here in Exodus a foreshadowing of Israel’s great rejection. The Lord Jesus came, the time was fulfilled, but His people refused Him saying, “We will not have this man to reign over us”.

During their rejection by their brethren both Moses and Joseph marry Gentile brides. This looks to the dispensation of the Acts during which the Church is spoken of as being prepared as a bride, and on to the period of the second coming as given in Rev. xix. The *second time* is the key thought. The reason why Israel failed to respond to Moses and to

Christ is the same, “They understood not”. Their eyes were blinded, their ears were stopped, their hearts were hardened. At length however Israel cry unto the Lord, “and their cry came up unto God by reason of the bondage” (Exod. ii. 23). Their cry brings back the deliverer they refused. The Lord spake to Moses out of the burning bush and said:--

“I have surely seen the affliction of My people I will send thee unto Pharaoh”
(Exod. iii. 7-10).

Moses was sent in the name of Him Who was the great I AM, and was assured of his success by the twofold sign of the serpent and leprosy. He Who came to be the Saviour must have power over Satan (the serpent) and over Sin (leprosy), so Matt. iv. records the temptation, and Matt. viii. the first defined miracle. It was Moses’ high destiny to have foreshadowed Christ in more ways than one. He was to have been both “Apostle and High-Priest”, but by reason of human infirmity this honour was shared with his brother Aaron.

A greater than Pharaoh is soon to mount the throne, and a greater tribulation than that of Israel in Egypt will follow. The apocalyptic judgments will be appalling greater than the plagues of Egypt. Men will once more harden their hearts instead of repenting. Israel will cry again to the Lord, and “the day of vengeance” will be in His heart. He Whom they rejected shall come back to them and “so all Israel shall be saved”. They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced”, saith the Lord. And when Israel do at length see Who it is that is their deliverer they will say, as we can never so fully say:--

“Surely He hath borne OUR griefs, and carried OUR sorrows, YET we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted!” (Isa. liii. 4).

Moses was inspired to speak of his own typical character:--

“A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you” (Acts iii. 19-26).

The truth of the postponement of the purpose of God relative to Israel is much more than a theory. Israel through all these centuries have experienced the terrible reality of its effect upon them. The hour of their deliverance draws near, “the second time”.

**#42. “Let My people go” (Exod. v. 1).
The Principle of Separation.
pp. 164 - 167**

The demand that Moses made when he entered into the presence of Pharaoh, and Pharaoh’s refusal and attempts at compromise, form a type of the age-abiding feud between the “Church and the World”:-

“Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto Me in the wilderness” (Exod. v. 1).

No feast to the Lord could be held in Egypt, the type of the world. The wilderness was the place chosen by the Lord for worship. Pilgrims and strangers may worship acceptably; slaves to the world and the flesh cannot worship in spirit. In Exod. v. 3 two terms are added that are typically suggestive. God is called “The God of the Hebrews”, suggesting the separate character of His people. The journey that the Israelites must take in order to worship God was to be a “three days’ journey”. From the Creation week onwards the third day sets forth resurrection. True worship is not of the world (*Egypt*), it is offered by a free people (*Let My people go*), and a separate people (*Hebrews*), and is upon resurrection ground (*three days*). One sacrifice only was offered in Egypt, the Passover; all else was reserved for the Tabernacle in the wilderness.

Pharaoh’s answers, “Who is the Lord?”; “I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go”; “Get you to your burdens”, are, in their turn, typical of the world’s attitude towards spiritual service. The “burdens of Egypt” are far more important than the service of the Lord, and even among the Lord’s people Martha finds more imitators than Mary, so much of Egypt do we all carry with us.

The Judgments of God begin after Pharaoh’s refusal, and in chapter viii. Pharaoh calls for Moses and Aaron and suggests the first compromise, “Go ye, sacrifice to your God IN THE LAND” (25). God had said “in the wilderness” and a “three days’ journey”. Pharaoh’s says, in effect, “You can worship *your* God, I do not ask you to bow down to any of mine, you can offer your sacrifice, but there is no necessity for making yourselves so peculiar, sacrifice to your God *in the land*.”

The first great snare set by the god of this age is that of mixing the world with the church. Moses repudiated the compromise, the first reason being that the very center and basis of their worship was an *abomination* to the Egyptians.

The world is quite willing to speak of “Jesus”, and especially so if they can refer to him as the “Galilean” or the “Carpenter”, but the center of the faith, the cross, “Christ crucified”, is an “offence”. The cross reveals the hopeless and helpless condition of the flesh, and this is an “abomination to the Egyptians”.

The second reason for repudiating the suggestion is just as strong as the first, but one that we are apt to forget. The suggestion ran counter to God’s express statement, and that

is enough to condemn it. When He says “wilderness” and “three days’ journey”, to *debate* the question of “in the land” is sin. Upon this resolute stand being taken by Moses Pharaoh appears willing to lengthen the chain, but it is still *a chain*:--

“I will let you go, that ye may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness” (Exod. viii. 28).

So far, that is good. Pharaoh, moreover, does not speak irreverently of God; he uses the full title of the Lord. The snare, however, is still set. “Only”—Ah yes! the world will give a good length of chain. “Only ye shall not go VERY FAR AWAY”. The contested point is the clear-cut division between the Church and the World. While many would hesitate to offer the abomination of the Egyptians IN THE LAND, they are ensnared at the HALF-WAY HOUSE. Let the Church have its separate gatherings, its ecclesiastical laws, its ordained priests, its ritual, its “form of godliness”, but let it deny “the power thereof” by leaving out the “three days’ journey”. Once more the demand is made, and once again the chain is lengthened:--

“Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go? And Moses said, We will go with our young and with our old, with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds; for we must hold a feast unto the Lord” (Exod. x. 8, 9).

True scriptural unity has ever been the target of Satan. If the attractions of the world from without do not avail, distractions from within may prove more effectual.

“And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, AND YOUR LITTLE ONES: look to it; for evil is before you. Not so, go now YE THAT ARE MEN, and serve the Lord” (Exod. x. 10, 11).

The distraction of divided heart, the serving of two masters, the miserable failure of the attempt to make the best of both worlds, are suggested here. After further judgments, a yet further concession is made:--

“Go ye, serve the Lord: only” (Exod. x. 34).

The presence of that “only” is deadly. Shakespeare puts it—“but me no but’s”, and it were well that we met all attempts to evade the full truth as peremptorily.

“Only *let your flocks and herds be stayed*, let your little ones go with you” (Exod. x. 34).

That is, bind the saint of God down to earth by the shackles of worldly possessions. The love of riches, the cares and riches of this age, the things that so easily entangle us. Moses replied:--

“Thou must give us also sacrifices and burnt offerings that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God, our cattle also shall go with us; there shall not an hoof be left behind; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord, until we come thither” (Exod. x. 25, 26).

Demas was caught in this snare, so also were Ananias and Sapphira. The parable of the Sower speaks of the thorns as representing the cares, riches and pleasures of this life. The evil is two-fold. While our possessions remain in Egypt, our hearts are likely to turn

back there too. On the other hand we must be prepared to offer whatever the Lord shall demand. We may be prepared to offer money, but hold back time. We may be pleased to pray, but not to labour. That is a spirited expression that it would do us good to repeat occasionally—*not an hoof*. Separateness must ever be offensive to the world, and will never be understood or tolerated.

Moses demanded that Israel should serve God:--

In the wilderness.
A three days' journey.
All should go.
Not an hoof left behind.

Pharaoh suggested that they could serve their God just as well and with far less inconvenience if they either remained:--

In the land.
Not very far off.
Only men went.
Flocks and herds left behind.

These four items teach us that true worship is connected with a pilgrim walk, is on resurrection ground, that it comprehends all saints, and embraces all we have and are. These four items fill out the word "Saint"; anything less "comes short of the glory of God".

The Epistle to the Hebrews.

#23. The Profession (iii. 1-6). pp. 25 - 28

We have already seen that the master key of the Epistle is the theme of “perfection”, that the great leader, perfecter and finisher is Christ, Who as Son is higher than angels; as Apostle is higher than Moses; as High Priest is greater than Aaron; and as Sacrifice better than all the offerings of the law.

The doctrine of perfection is set forth in type also, and in chapters iii. & iv. the type is the rest that was promised to Israel, the failure of most to attain to it, and the triumph of those who like Caleb and Joshua overcame by faith.

Ignoring other parts of the Structure of the Epistle, we find that chapters iii. & iv. are set in correspondence with v. & vi. and note their related themes:--

	*	*	*	*	*
B		iii. 1.	The Priesthood of Christ.		
C		iii. 7 - iv. 13.	Failure to enter into rest.		
		*	*	*	*
B		v.1 - x. 18(?)	The Priesthood of Christ.		
C		vi.	Failure to go on unto perfection.		

The atmosphere of the passage before us is that of temptation:--

“For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.”

“When your fathers tempted Me.”

“In all points tempted like as we are.”

“For every one that uses milk is untempted (‘unskilful’ A.V.) in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect.”

The two-fold title, “The Apostle and High Priest”, is clearly echoed in the twelfth chapter in the words, “The Author and Finisher (Perfecter)”; while the words “our profession” find illumination in the same way from the word “faith”, of which Christ is both Author and Perfecter.

The “profession” occurs at the beginning and end of this section, as do also the references to the High Priest and to temptation. They are linked together. In xi. 23 it occurs again, closely associated with the expression of iv. 14 and x. 19, *Echontes oun*, “Having therefore”, and with the High priesthood of Christ. “Let us hold fast the profession of our faith (‘hope’, literally) without wavering.” Here again we catch the thought of chapters iii. & iv. “Without wavering” (*aklinēs*), “turned to flight” (*klinōs*) (Heb. xi. 34). This word comes in Psa. cxix. 51, “The proud have had me greatly in derision; yet have I not *declined* from Thy law”, which expresses the possibilities that beset the Hebrews.

This “profession” is also the “confession” of Heb. xi. 13. They “confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth”. This confession is veiled somewhat in the A.V. rendering of Heb. xiii. 15, where it is translated “giving thanks”. The context, like that of Heb. x. and of iii., iv. speaks of a position of exposure, temptation and loss. Those who hold the confession “bear His reproach”, and the fruit of their lips is “confessing to His name” (xiii. 15 margin). The whole section may be visualized as follows:--

A	ii. 17 - iii. 1.	Jesus. High Priest. Tempted. Succour. The Profession.
B	a iii. 2-6.	Christ the Son. Moses the Servant. Whose house are we If _____
	b iii. 7-14.	Forty years. Moses. We are made partakers If _____
	c iii. 15 – iv. 8.	Forty years. Moses. David. Joshua. Some never entered If _____
A	iv. 12 - 16.	Jesus. High Priest. Tempted. Grace to help. The Profession.

Two great leaders are instanced in these chapters—Moses and Joshua. The words of iv. 8 in the A.V. are misleading. They should read, “If *Joshua* had given them rest”. The land of Canaan was the type, not the reality. It is also important to notice that in iii. 1 and in iv. 14 the simple name “Jesus” stands; not “Christ Jesus”, as the A.V. reads.

The points of superiority that are brought together in iii. 2-6 are emphasized either by comparison or by contrast. Both Moses and Christ were “faithful”. This has already been said in ii. 17. Faithfulness is especially associated with endurance (“Be thou faithful! unto death” Rev. ii. 10). Christ is spoken of as the “Faithful Witness” (Rev. i. 5); and identical language is rendered “faithful martyr” in Rev. ii. 13. Moses failed to reach the promised land, but unfaithfulness to his charge could not be laid against him. Christ is superior to Moses, however, in this; Moses was placed over the house of God, but Christ built the house Himself. Moses’ faithfulness also was as a Servant, but Christ’s faithfulness was as a Son over His own house.

It is important that we realize something of the great place which Moses held in the estimation of the Hebrews. In Numb. xii. 7 the Lord Himself differentiates between Moses and the prophets: “My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house”. No other prophet would arise like unto Moses until Christ came (Deut. xviii. 18). Moses’ faithfulness was “for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after”. The slavish adherence to Moses when the Greater than Moses had come was in reality denying the very testimony of Moses’ life and ministry.

It is clear from Heb. iii. 6 and 14 that membership of the house, and the partaking of Christ, are conditional. “Whose house are we IF we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.”

If we understand that the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks, not of salvation, but of the things which accompany salvation, we shall have no need to defend the truth known as the final perseverance of the saints. This Epistle addresses those who are already saved ones and holy brethren. These, and these only, are exhorted to continue steadfast.

Christ has a house made up of those who overcome. This company is known as “the church of the firstborn” (Heb. xii. 23). They do not merely hold fast the hope (that is common to all believers in some degree), they go further. They triumph over troubles. They rise above persecution. They take joyfully the spoiling of possessions. They hold fast the *confidence* and the *boasting* of the hope firm unto the end.

These words indicate the overcomer. They are entirely in line with the theme of “perfecting”. This we shall see more clearly when we have passed the remainder of the section in review.

#24. “Whose House are we IF” (iii. 2-6). pp. 58 - 60

When the apostle wished to lead the Hebrew believers to appreciate the excellency of Christ, he first drew attention to the difference that must be realized between God speaking by the prophets and God speaking “in Son” (*see* for this expression Volume VIII, page 183). He then proceeds to speak of the excellent name of Christ as compared with angels, and again the emphasis is, “Thou art My Son”. In chapter iii. the apostle approaches the tenderest spot in the Hebrew mind, the place and honour of Moses. In the Jewish hymns for the Sabbath come the words:--

“Thou calledst him Thy faithful servant, and didst put a glorious crown on his head when he stood before Thee in Mount Sinai, etc.”

The Scriptures themselves emphasize the isolated dignity of Moses:--

“I will raise up a Prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put My words in His mouth whosoever will not hearken unto My words which He shall speak in My name, I will require it of him” (Deut. xviii. 18, 19).

Deut. xxxiv. 10 adds:--

“There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.”

When the apostle spoke of the angels he did not hesitate to shew their inferiority to Christ, but when he speaks of Moses, he is careful to bring forward the highest commendation which Scripture affords. Christ was faithful, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. The reference is to Numb. xii. 6-8 where the Lord severely reproves the attitude of Aaron and Miriam, saying:--

“If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all Mine house. With him I will speak mouth to mouth, even apparently and not in dark speeches and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.”

There can be no question that in all the range of Old Testament history no name could mean so much to a Hebrew as that of Moses. The apostle had to shew them one who was greater than Moses, inasmuch as the New Covenant of spirit and life was greater than the Old Covenant with its ministration of death.

In the first case he would bid them consider the essential difference between Moses and Christ. Moses was a part of the house over which he ruled, but Christ was the actual builder of the house Himself. This of necessity spoke of the greater honour of Christ, but in verse 4 the apostle brings forward the argument which formed the climax of his testimony in Heb. i.:--

“For every house is builded by some one; but He that built all things is God.”

There can be no purpose served by this statement unless the apostle intends the Hebrews to understand that Christ was God. Verse 3 demands this meaning, and the fitness of verse 4 is only preserved if we believe it to refer to the Person of Christ. In Heb. i., after having spoken of the high dignity of the Son, he leads on to the same point:--

“Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth” (i. 8-10).

Whether the “all things” of iii. 4 be taken to refer to the Creation at large, or in a more restricted sense to all the dispensations, including the Mosaic and the Gospel, Christ is the Builder.

The apostle now proceeds to another feature. Moses was faithful as a SERVANT in all his house, but Christ as a SON over His own house. Not only is there the contrast between Servant and Son, but between Moses IN, and Christ OVER, the house. Further, the added words “Over His own house” confirm the interpretation of verse 4 of Christ.

The reason for this carefully debated point is revealed in verse 6. This house over which Christ as the Son presides, is infinitely more glory than did Moses in the house of which he formed a part, this house is a special people who are now to be named and described. “Whose house are WE”, the “we” being the holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling of iii. 1, and the many sons who are being brought to glory (cf. ii. 10).

Their peculiar characteristic is now added, and enforced by historical example.

“Whose house are we IF we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (iii. 6).

This finds its echo in verse 14:--

“For we are made partakers of Christ, IF we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.”

These two passages are followed by almost identical words, which is a more forcible reason why we should compare them together. Following verse 6 we read:--

“Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, AS IN THE PROVOCATION forty years I was grieved I sware They shall not enter into My rest. Take heed brethren, LEST” (iii. 7-12).

Following verse 14, we read,

“While it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, AS IN THE PROVOCATION with whom was He grieved forty years? to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest Let us therefore fear, LEST” (iii. 15, iv. 1).

The whole context of chapters iii. & iv. makes it impossible that the “house” of iii. 6 can mean the church. In the case of the church there can be no “if”, and the figure of Israel falling in the wilderness can by no system of interpretation set forth that church whose standing is in pure grace. So also the parallel expression “partakers of Christ”; this too refers to something which is in addition to redemption. The word “partakers” is the same as that which is rendered “fellows” in Heb. i. 9. The idea in these passages is that of association with Christ in “the joy that was set before Him”, the “oil of gladness” being that of exultation or extreme joy. Heb. iii. 1 places no “if” against the statement that those addressed were “associates of the heavenly calling”, that being unconditional. The association with Christ, however, is different. Rom. viii. 17 contains a parallel with these two conceptions.

“And if children, then heirs, heirs of God” (parallel with Heb. iii. 1).

“And joint-heirs with Christ; if so be we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together” (parallel with Heb. iii. 14).

We shall find that all the teaching of this epistle focuses upon the few verses with which chapter xii. opens. The exhortation is “so run that ye may obtain”.

#25. The Provocation (iii.) pp. 88 - 91

Chapters iii. & iv. are bounded by the word “confession”:-

“Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession” (iii. 1 R.V.).
“Let us hold fast our confession” (iv. 14 R.V.).

It is evident that the Hebrew believers were exhorted to consider Christ as an example in the matter of this “confession”. A somewhat parallel double occurrence is I Tim. vi. 12-14 where Timothy’s “good confession” is associated with that of Christ before Pontius Pilate. The word contains an element of danger and opposition, and the exhortation is to hold it unto *the end*. The one great feature which is singled out by the apostle in the case of Christ Himself is that He “was FAITHFUL” (Heb. ii. 17, iii. 2). Within the bounds set by iii. 1 and iv. 14 therefore will come some further teaching, example, exhortation, encouragement and warning, such as will, by the grace of God, help the tried believer to hold on his way.

The one feature of Christ which the Hebrew believers were called upon to consider was His *faithfulness*; the one great warning which follows is that against *unbelief*:-

“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of UNBELIEF, in departing from the living God” (iii. 12).
“So we see that they could not enter in because of UNBELIEF” (iii. 19).
“The word preached did not profit them, because they were not united by FAITH with them that heard.”

The great example is “the provocation”. This word comes from *pikraino*—“to be bitter”, and illuminates Heb. xii. 15, 16, where another type for the believers’ warning (Esau) is closely linked with a “root of bitterness”. The great “text” of the apostle in these two chapters is taken from Psa. xcv., which he introduces with the solemn words, “As the Holy Ghost saith”.

It is evident that we must know something of this “provocation” on the part of Israel if we would profit by the Scripture before us. In Num. xiv. we have the record. Caleb and Joshua had urged upon the people a confident faith in the Lord with respect to the entry into and possession of the land of promise.

“But all the congregation bade stone them with stones And the Lord said unto Moses, How long will this people PROVOKE Me?” (Num. xiv. 10, 11).

Their provoking was largely due to their unbelief, for the passage continues, “How long will it be ere they believe Me?” The Lord threatened to disinherit and smite the people, but upon the prayer of Moses He said, “I have pardoned according to thy word”. The people therefore were a *pardoned people*. But does this mean that they did go up and possess the land? No, for after pronouncing the gracious pardon the Lord added:-

“But as truly as I live surely they shall not see the land neither shall any of them that provoked Me see it” (Num. xiv. 21-23; *see also* Psa. xcix. 8, II Sam. xii. 10-12).

In Numb. xiv. 22 the Lord declares that already this people had tempted Him *ten times*. THE COMPANION BIBLE gives the “ten times” as follows:--

1. At Red Sea. (Exod. xiv. 11, 12).
2. At Marah. (Exod. xv. 23, 24).
3. Wilderness of Sin. (Exod. xvi. 2).
- 4, 5. Twice about Manna. (Exod. xvi. 20, 27).
6. At Rephidim. (Exod. xvii. 1-3).
7. At Horeb (golden calf). (Exod. xxxii.).
8. At Taberah. (Num. xi. 1).
9. At Kibroth Hataavah. (Num. xi. 4).
10. At Kadesh. (Num. xiv. 2).

Each occurrence should be carefully studied, as each brings to light some ground of provocation and forfeiture. One of the most frequent expressions in this series is that the children of Israel *murmured*. It will be remembered that in Philipians, the Epistle of the PRIZE, the exhortation is:--

“Do all things without *murmurings* and disputings, that ye may be the sons of God, without rebuke” (ii. 14).

In I Cor. x. also, this feature is brought forward:--

“Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer” (verse 10).

Murmuring may seem a small thing, but it is the seed of unbelief that departs from the living God. On one of the occasions, that of Num. xi. 4, it was the *mixed multitude* that led Israel astray—the type of those “whose God is their belly, who glory in their shame, who mind earthly things” (Phil. iii. 19). Israel murmured at the heavenly provision of Manna, saying, “Our soul loatheth this light bread” (Num. xxi. 5). Psa. lxxviii. reveals that unbelief was at the bottom of this rejection of heavenly food—“Because they *believed not* in God”; “Their heart was not right with Him” (verses 17, 18, 22, 25, 37). In the dealings of God with His people *after* salvation, the principle remains true that “Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap flesh spirit”; for in Num. xiv. 28, 29 we read:--

“AS ye have spoken in Mine ears, SO will I do to you. Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness which have murmured against Me.”

The very sending of the spies into the land of promise was an act of provocation to the Lord. “We will send men before us” (Deut. i. 22). He allowed them their own way in the matter, but the result was that “they brought up an evil report”. Exek. xx. 6 definitely tells us that the Lord Himself had espied the land for them, but they believed not His report.

It is comforting to know that while “Some, when they had heard, did provoke; howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses” (Heb. iii. 16), for Caleb and Joshua wholly followed the Lord and are blessed examples of those who by patience and continuance inherit the promises.

While the church of the One Body has a different calling from either the church in the wilderness or the church of God during the Acts period, the temptations and the snares are much the same, and we should give earnest heed to these things, so that we may in our turn “press according to a mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus”.

#26. “The Rest that Remaineth” (iv. 9). pp. 121 - 124

In chapters iii. & iv. the words *katapausis* and *katapauō* (“rest”) occur eleven times, and the one reference in iv. 9 where the word *sabbatismos* is used, makes twelve in all. It is evident therefore that this “rest” is an essential subject. In the first case the entry into the land of promise was typical of the rest that remaineth to the people of God, for it is used directly in connection with Israel in the wilderness. That it was not the actual “rest”, but a type only, may be seen from Heb. iv. 8:--

“For if Joshua had given them rest, then would He not afterwards have spoken of another day”,

which the Lord did in David’s time, as is seen in Psa. xcv. Not only is the rest here spoken of likened to the entry of the faithful overcomer into Canaan, it is also likened to the Sabbath day rest of the week of Creation:--

“For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all His works” (Heb. iv. 4).

The structure of Heb. iv. 1-13 will help us to see the chief features of the passage and guide us in our study.

Heb. iv. 1-13.

- A | 1, 2. | a | Let us therefore fear, lest.
 - b | Any come short.
 - c | Not united by faith.
 - d | The Word of hearing.
- B | 3, 4. Nature of this rest. After Works, e.g., Creation.
- C | 5, 6. It remaineth (*apoleipō*)—a rest.
 - D | 7. David.
 - D | 8. Joshua.
- C | 9. There remaineth (*apoleipō*)—a rest.
- B | 10. Nature of this rest. After Works. e.g., Creation.
- A | 11-13. | a | Let us therefore labour, lest.
 - b | Any fall.
 - c | Example of unbelief.
 - d | The Word of God.

The A.V. of iv. 2 reads “not being mixed by faith”, and gives in the margin “*because they were not united by faith to*”. The R.V. reads “But the word of hearing did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that heard”. This reading turns our attention to the great division that came about after the return of the spies.

Israel did not join with Caleb and Joshua in their triumphant faith, but with the unbelievers and the complainers.

With regard to the nature of this rest both verses 3, 4 and 10 look back to Gen. i. & ii., where we are told that God rested upon the seventh day after the completion of the six days’ creation. The believer is said to have rested “from his works as God did from His”, when he enters into this “rest that remaineth”. Verse 9 departs from the usual word for rest to give us its full and perfect meaning:--

“There remaineth a *Sabbatismos* (a Sabbath rest) for the people of God.”

There is one further feature that demands attention, and that is the statement made in iv. 3:--

“Although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

“The foundation (*katabolē*) of the world” is an expression that has been carefully examined in *The Berean Expositor*, and the interpretation “The overthrow of the world” has been adopted instead of that of the A.V.

This “overthrow” we find indicated in Gen. i. 2:--

“And the earth *became* without form and void”,

the six days’ work which followed being the preparation of the earth as a platform for the outworking of the plan of the ages. The question that comes to us as a result of this is:--

“In what way does this reflect upon the believers to whom the Apostle addressed his words, for their rest is likened to the seventh day rest of God” (*see* Heb. iv. 3, 4, 10).

A little wider study, we think, will help us to appreciate the apostle’s meaning. In iv. 1 he writes:--

“Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.”

Now we are already acquainted with the fact that the grand exhortation of Hebrews is to “go on unto perfection”, *perfection* being the doctrinal equivalent of *the rest that remaineth*. So therefore in Heb. vi. 1 we read:--

“Therefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us go on unto perfection.”

This “perfection” we see to be the parallel with the “rest” of chapter iv. by observing the second half of chapter vi.:--

“Things that *accompany* salvation” (9).

“The full assurance of hope unto the end” (11).

“Followers of those who through faith and patience *inherit* the promises” (12).

“And so after he had patiently endured, he *obtained* the promise” (15).

In iv. 3 we read of works that were done since the overthrow of the world, and in ix. 25, 26 we read that Christ did not offer himself often as the High Priest who entered the Most Holy Place yearly with the blood of another, for in that case He must have suffered since the overthrow of the world.

The work of the six days’ creation is brought into line with the work of redemption, as indeed it was a part. The rest that remaineth unto the people of God is a rest which follows completed work. The epistle will go on to develop the twofold character of this rest. It will first of all shew it to be the result of the great finished work of Christ Whose one offering caused the oft-repeated sacrifice of the law to “rest” (*pauō* = cease) from being offered (Heb. x. 2). And secondly it will shew it to be the result by grace of that faith which obtained promises and was the substance of things hoped for. Sabbath *succeeding* work is not gospel, *it is reward*.

“Let us *labour* therefore”, while we at the same time rest in the finished work of Christ.

#27. Sword and Sympathy (iv. 12-16). pp. 152 - 155

It is tolerably certain that in the book of the Revelation the Lord Jesus Christ enters into His office as the great King-Priest, “after the order of Melchisedec” (*see* Psa. cx.). This brings the Apocalypse and the epistle to the Hebrews into line. The fact too that both books treat of the overcomer and the New Jerusalem will add to this sense of similarity. In our last paper we were considering the “rest that remaineth unto the people of God”, and in Revelation that rest is materialized. There too we have the words:--

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them” (Rev. xiv. 13).

The concluding verses of Heb. iv. contain a two-fold presentation of Christ: (1) as He appears to the seven churches (Rev. ii., iii.); and (2) as the merciful High Priest, Who can sympathize with His people’s weaknesses.

“For the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him to Whom we might give an account” (Heb. iv. 12, 13).

In Rev. ii. 12-16 Christ says:--

“These things saith He which hath the sharp sword with two edges Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”

The words spoken to each of the seven churches are searching indeed. Their works are known, the One Who speaks is a Judge of the thoughts and intents of the heart. His purpose too is to lead them on to “perfection”, or as the Revelation words it to “overcome”. So in Heb. iv. the searching statements of verses 12 and 13 are addressed to those who are being urged to endure to the end.

Some commentators say that the reference in Heb. iv. 12 is exclusively to the written Word, while others maintain that it can only refer to the living Word. It is evident that somewhere before verse 12 the personal element is introduced. The simplest view seems to be that which is expressed in the figure of Rev. i. 16, “And out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword”, and Rev. xix. 13, “His name is called The Word of God”. The apostle, in Heb. iv. 12, 13, speaks of Christ together with the Word using it for His people’s good. There is possibly a reference also to that specific passage of the Word which underlies the apostle’s argument, viz., Psa. xcv., which he referred to as the words of the Holy Ghost. That Psalm is still “living and energetic”. The Lord can still use it to reveal the vital difference between “soul and spirit”. This is a distinction that is not kept clear in the minds of many of the Lord’s people.

Much that enters into Church life, witness and worship, if viewed in the pure light of the Word, would prove to be of the soul rather than the spirit. While body, soul and spirit compose the complete man, the highest service and the only acceptable worship is that of the spirit. Philippians, the epistle of the *Prize*, shews that discernment is necessary:--

“And this I pray that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all *discernment*; that ye may *try the things that differ*; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ” (i. 9, 10).

II Timothy, the epistle of the *Crown*, also urges discernment:--

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

Hebrews, the epistle of the *Perfecting*, also reveals the need for discernment. Soul and spirit must be kept distinct.

The last words of verse 13 read in the A.V. “with Whom we have to do”. In Heb. xiii. 17 the word rendered “do” (*logos*) in iv. 13 is translated “account”, and this is its meaning in Heb. iv.: “To Whom we must give an account”. The atmosphere is that of the Judgment Seat of Christ, and verses 12 & 13 leave the mind impressed with the “terror of the Lord”. This is but one side of truth however. There is another, which equally impresses us with infinite sympathy, tender care, wondrous grace, and bids us to come “boldly”. That other phase is expressed in Heb. iv. 14-16:--

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, Who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.”

Here is the first exhortation. With this chapter iii. opened:--

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, Who was faithful.”

We have turned aside to consider the unfaithful of Israel and their forfeiture, turn again and see in Him the great Captain and Perfecter of faith, Who, for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. An added reason for continuance is given in iv. 15, 16:--

“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched (sympathize) with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, APART FROM SIN.”

God never tempts a man to sin. Temptation is an essential feature in the record of the race and the crown, but that temptation which is of the nature of trials and tests. Temptation which springs from our own sinful selves is another matter. James clearly distinguishes between the two sorts of temptations in the first chapter of his epistle:--

“Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into divers temptations blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life” (verses 2 and 12).

That is the temptation of Hebrews and of Revelation. The other kind of temptation to which Heb. iv. takes exception is next reviewed by James:--

“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed” (i. 13, 14).

Just as iv. 14 looked back to iii. 1, 2, we find iv. 15 looking back to ii. 18:--

“For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted.”

An example of the temptation that is intended in ii.-iv. is found in Heb. xi. 17:--

“By faith, Abraham, when he was tempted, offered up Isaac.”

Whatever the temptation may be through which we may be called to pass, it is a comfort to know that He who sits at the right hand above was made partaker of flesh and blood, was tempted like as we are, apart from sin, and is “able to sympathize with our weaknesses”.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (iv. 16).

#28. The High Priest of our Profession (v. 1-6).
pp. 187 - 189

The way in which the High Priesthood of Christ comes before and immediately after the great type of Israel in the wilderness indicates that it is vitally associated with the attaining to the perfectness which is the great theme of the epistle, and of which the entry into the land of Canaan was a type. The link is more closely revealed by the words of iii. 1 “The Apostle and High Priest of our PROFESSION”, for we have seen that this “profession” or “confession” is also related to the great theme of Heb. iv. 14.

In chapter iii. 1 Christ is presented as (1) Apostle, (2) High Priest. The first title is compared and contrasted with Moses. In some points the comparison holds good, “He was faithful AS also Moses was”. In other points Christ rises superior to Moses. Moses was a servant, Christ a son. The same method is adopted with respect to the second title. This is compared and contrasted with Aaron in chapter v. 1-5. Christ fulfilled the qualifications which were essentially vital to the priesthood as set forth in the call of Aaron. He was “taken from among men”. Chapter ii. 14 has already emphasized this:--

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.”

There are many solemn and weighty reasons why Christ should have been made flesh. This is one of them. He was “ordained for men”, and could never have been High Priest on their behalf if He had not been made like unto His brethren. Every priest had to do with the offering of sacrifices, “that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices”. In this, too, the Saviour was fully manifested as true High Priest:--

“For every High Priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is necessary that this man have somewhat also to offer” (viii. 3).

and chapters ix. & x. go on to show how infinitely great was the offering He made. Another phase of the high priest’s mission, and one which some views of the great atonement are apt to slight or set aside, is that he is one:--

“Who is able to have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself is compassed with infirmity, And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins” (v. 2, 3).

In these words we have a comparison and a contrast. As in the case of Moses the type breaks down. Christ was “touched with the feeling of our infirmities”, yet the words *immediately* added, because of the words to be written in v. 2, 3, SIN EXCEPTED. In vii. 26, 27 the contrast is maintained:--

“For such an High Priest became us, who is holy, blameless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens: Who needeth not daily, as those High Priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself.”

There are many contrasts brought out in this epistle between the priesthood of Aaron and that of Christ. This is the first and fundamental one. He was without sin. He was holy. He was without blemish.

Then further, there is no usurpation of office by Christ. Aaron was called of God, so also was Christ. Neither the "honour" nor the "glory" did He take to Himself. Chapter ii. 9 shows us Christ crowned with glory and honour, because of the suffering of death. Here the two words (v. 4, 5) are connected with priesthood. Peter uses them of the Transfiguration, (II Pet. i. 16-18), and Psa. viii. 5 uses them of Adam and Christ in dominion over all things. A similar connection is seen by the quotation from Psa. ii. 7, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee". Heb. i. & ii. use the statement to show the Lord's superiority over angels, particularly in connection with a "throne" and the "world to come". Chapter v. uses it with reference to the priesthood, thereby fulfilling the prophetic utterance of Zech. vi. 13, "He shall be a priest upon His Throne". This introduces the peculiar character of Christ's dual office, a King-Priest. Of this Order Aaron was not the type, for kingship and priesthood were kept apart with the utmost severity, as Uzziah learned to his life-long regret. This is none other than a priesthood after the Order of Melchisedec.

The introduction of this name demands prayerful attention. It is closely related with the great theme of the epistle and its various aspects demand at least an article to itself. This we must attempt in our next paper.

The Eight Signs of John's Gospel.

#7. The Raising of Lazarus (xi.).

pp. 8 - 11

We reach, in this seventh sign, the lowest depths of Israel's night. In the parallel sign—the second (iv. 46-54)—the ruler's son was “at the point of death”, and the cry was, “Come down ere my child die”. In this sign death has come, “Lazarus is dead”, and the cry is, “Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died”. While the second sign shows the national life almost flickering out, the seventh shows life extinct.

In the sign of the healing of the blind man the Lord said that the man was not born blind because of his own sin or that of his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. In the seventh sign a somewhat similar expression occurs:--

“This sickness is not with a view to death merely (free rendering of *pros*), but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby” (xi. 4).

In all the eight signs there is some element of test; something that necessitates faith apart from sight or evidences:--

1. THE MARRIAGE AT CANA.—Woman! what have I to do with thee? (ii. 4).
2. THE RULER'S SON.—Except ye see signs and wonders (iv. 48).
3. THE IMPOTENT MAN.—Wilt thou be made whole? (v. 6).
4. THE FEEDING OF THE 5,000.—Whence shall we buy bread? (vi. 5).
5. THE WALKING ON THE SEA.—Jesus had not yet come (vi. 17).
6. THE MAN BORN BLIND.—The works of God manifested (ix. 3).
7. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.—Not death, but the glory of God (xi. 4).
8. THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.—Have ye any meat? (xxi. 5).

It is not always possible to understand the reasons for the many dispensational dealings of God, but one thing we know, that whatever the outward appearance may seem He abides faithful; He is still the God of love.

This is prominently brought forward in this seventh sign. We know from other sources of the love that existed between the Lord and the family at Bethany. In this chapter before us we are told, “Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus”; but instead of continuing “Therefore as soon as He heard of Lazarus' sickness, He hastened to his bedside and healed him”, we read the following strange sequence, “When He had heard *therefore* that he was sick, He abode two days still in the same place where He was”. All through those days one prayer was uppermost in the sisters' mind and heart. “If only the Lord would come.” Separately each sister utters her heart's burden when she did meet the Lord. “Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died” (xi. 21, 32). Those “two days” may have a variety of individual interpretations, but most know something of their anxiety and despair. Dispensationally too Israel will say:--

“After two days He will revive us, and the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight” (Hos. vi. 2).

There is an ever widening circle of influence exhibited in the development of the sign. Starting from the centre of all we have the glory of God, and the extreme circumference reaches to “the people that stand by”. This may be better seen as follows:--

1. The glory of God (xi. 4).
2. The glorifying of the Son of God (xi. 4).
3. The faith of the disciples (xi. 5).
4. The faith of Martha (xi. 25-27, 40).
5. The people that stood by (xi. 42).
6. Many of the Jews (xi. 45).

When Martha met the Lord she said:--

“Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died, but I know that even now, whatsoever Thou wilt ask of God, God will give it Thee” (John xi. 21, 22).

Vaguely Martha seemed to feel that even now in some strange way she need not abandon hope. When the Lord put her unshaped thoughts before her in the simple words, “Thy brother shall rise again”, Martha’s faith recoiled, as it were, for she said, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection *at the last day*”. This was not, however, the secret hope that had prompted her first words. The Lord recalls her mind from the “last day” to Himself and the present. Knowing something of the feeling of human helplessness in the presence of death, we can in some small degree appreciate the majesty and the triumph of the Lord’s reply to Martha:--

“I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever is alive and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?” (John xi. 25, 26).

The Gospel of John contains a wondrous series of statements made by Christ characterized by the expression “I AM”. In Himself the Lord Jesus is the great “I AM”.

“Before Abraham was, *I am*” (viii. 58).
“*I am*; be not afraid” (vi. 20).

To the woman of Samaria the Lord revealed himself:--

“*I* that speak unto you *am*” (iv. 26).

To the Jews the Lord said:--

“If ye believe not that *I am*, ye shall die in your sins” (viii. 24).
“When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that *I am*” (viii. 28).

At the time of the betrayal the Lord again refers to this great title (xiii. 19); and in the garden of Gethsemane the mere utterance of the words caused those who were about to take Him to fall backwards (xviii. 6).

To His people this great title takes more concrete form. There are seven avenues of blessing through which the believer draws upon the Saviour as the great I AM.

1. I AM the Bread of Life (vi. 35).
2. I AM the Light of the World (viii. 12).
3. I AM the Door of the Sheep (x. 7).
4. I AM the Good Shepherd (x. 11).
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (xi. 25).
6. I AM the True and Living Way (xiv. 6).
7. I AM the True Vine (xv. 1).

The Lord's title as revealed to Martha is twofold and refers to the two classes of believers that must come under the beneficent effects of His mighty power.

To the dead believer, He is the Resurrection.
To the believer who is alive at His coming, He is the Life.

No words could indicate more clearly the Lord's consciousness of triumph than these; yet what condescension! What lowly sympathy is exhibited in that smallest of verses, "Jesus wept" (verse 35)! Though He is indeed a great High Priest, yet He is not untouched with the feeling of our infirmities. When Martha interposed with the fact that Lazarus had been dead four days, the Lord said, "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?"

Christ was raised by the "glory of the Father" (Rom. vi. 4). It is a great pity that some, not seeing the close relationship between the "glory" and the "resurrection", render the words of Eph. i. 17, "the glorious Father". We must retain the rendering "The Father of glory", seeing how closely it is connected with the exceeding greatness of the power which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. The Lord had already said:--

"The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth" (John v. 28).

And here before the grave of Lazarus He gave a foretaste of that blessed day:--

"Lazarus, come forth! and the dead man came forth" (xi. 43, 44).

The last sign given by the Lord before His sufferings is the sign of Israel's restoration. Rom. xi. 15 says:--

"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones also looks forward to that same blessed day. Indeed there is no blessing that can be enjoyed in its fullness apart from resurrection. The blessings of our pilgrimage are foretastes of coming glory. The life that is life indeed is future.

While we may not range ourselves with those whose hope is defined in John v. 29, may we nevertheless ever remember that our “blessed hope” can never be realized apart from Him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

**#8. The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.
The One Sign following Resurrection (xxi. 1-14).
pp. 39 - 41**

In the first sign the Lord manifested (*phanaroō*) His glory, in the last He manifested Himself, “shewed” (xxi. 14) being *phaneroō*. In the first sign we read “They have no wine” (ii. 3), in the last that “they caught nothing”, and had nothing (xxi. 3, 5).

There is a dispensational reason for this correspondence of subject. What the Lord came to do at His first advent, He will fully accomplish at His second. Resurrection is the master key of the Bible. Quite apart from human guilt, it was the purpose of God to establish a Kingdom with His Son as King, and when the intruding element of sin has been removed that purpose will be brought to a consummation. That is the teaching of the first and the eighth signs. The fresh start follows the Lord’s own resurrection, and in the numerical sequence of the signs it follows the seventh which sees the raising of Lazarus.

Two confessors of the faith are in immediate contextual connection with the first and last signs—Nathaniel and Thomas. Nathaniel was told by Philip that they had found the Messiah, but Nathaniel objected that no good thing could come out of Nazareth. Philip’s argument was “Come and see” (i. 46). Thomas was told by the disciples that they had seen the Lord, but Thomas objected that he would not believe their statement apart from actually seeing the wound prints themselves (xx. 25). When Nathaniel was convinced, his confession went farther than that of any of the others at that time. “Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the King of Israel” (i. 49). So Thomas, when he did see the Lord, went beyond the confession of Peter himself, saying, “My Lord and my God” (John xx. 28).

Nathaniel was an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile, but he was not a representative of the nation. Alas, a truer picture of the apostate nation is found in the blinded Jew of Acts xiii., to whom Paul addressed the words “O full of all *subtilty*” (same word as “guile”). There were but few Nathaniels. Thomas represents the redeemed and awakened nation, who shall indeed “look upon Him whom they pierced”, and shall confess “Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him”, and this confession, like that of Thomas, comes after resurrection, for the verse before says, “He will swallow up death in victory” (Isa. xxv. 8, 9).

Closely associated with the eight signs is an unfolding of the titles of Christ. At the beginning just before the first sign, His disciples spoke of Him as Jesus of Nazareth, the

son of Joseph, the Messiah. Nathaniel's confession, as it were, adjusts the focus, and He is seen as the Son of God and the King of Israel. From His own lips now comes the title the Son of Man.

The sign of walking on the sea reveals Him as the "I AM" (vi. 20), while the feeding of the 5,000 leads on to the title "The bread of life" (vi. 35). In the sign of the man born blind (ix.) Christ is revealed as the Sent One, and immediately following the confession of the man born blind comes the title "The Good Shepherd" (x. 11). At the raising of Lazarus is revealed that blessed and majestic title "The Resurrection and the Life" (xi. 25). Thomas' confession, "My Lord and my God" (xx. 28), and that of the disciples "It was the Lord" (xxi. 12) round off the wondrous list. The signs were wrought with the object that they might believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God; and that believing they might have life through His Name (xx. 31). Each sign contributes something to our knowledge and understanding of the Christ.

One item in the final sign has always presented a difficulty, and that is the number of fish brought to land, viz., 153. The number is too definite to pass by. It must have a meaning. From earliest days men have displayed a varied ingenuity in explaining the meaning of this number. Dr. Bullinger, in *NUMBER IN SCRIPTURE*, draws attention to the fact that the gematria of the Hebrew words *Beni Ha-Elohim* "Sons of God" is exactly 153. It is also suggestive that the gematria of the word "fishes" *ichthues* and "the net" *to diktuon* are both 1,224 or 8*153. If we may be allowed to see any teaching in these facts, the final sign emphasizes the certainty that all who have been given to Christ by the Father shall come to Him, the presence of the 8 in the words "fishes" and "the net" occurring in the 8th sign emphasizing resurrection. Appendix 176 of the Companion Bible, speaking of the first and last signs, says:--

"When Messiah gives joy to the nation, it will be filled up to the brim (ii. 7 cf. Isa. ix. 2-7. John xxi. 11); and when He fills the Land with restored Israel in resurrection, it will be to the last one (Ezek. xxxvii. 12-14). For in the eighth sign Messiah was the Caller, signifying that He will be the Gatherer" (Jer. xxxi. 10).

Lt.-Col. F. ROBERTS has present another interpretation which amplifies the foregoing. He has drawn up a list of those that Scripture records as having received direct blessing from Christ, and this list totals 153 individual cases. We will not attempt to repeat the list, but it may be consulted by any interested in *NUMBER IN SCRIPTURE*. Peter and the other disciples were to be fishers of men. The Risen Christ stood by them. Their net should not break, and they should lose none. In their own strength they would toil all night and catch nothing, but upon His word they should let down their net and catch a net full.

Should any reader be in possession of further light upon this subject we shall deem it a favour to hear from them.

Lessons for Little Ones.

#15. A Matter of Method. “Apt to Teach” (II Tim. ii. 2). pp. 30, 31

In teaching children it should be our endeavour to draw from them correct answers to questions rather than put the answers ready made before them. The reason is this: if you define for a child, say, “sin” as “unrighteousness”, the child will accept the statement, but probably will have no clear idea as to what “unrighteousness” means. If you draw out from the child the words “naughty”, “not doing what we are told”, “doing wrong”, etc., you will define “unrighteousness” in intelligible terms, and unrighteousness will become simply that which is “not right”.

Some time ago we stood before a gathering of children, and our subject was the words, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God”. It may be of service to go over the method then adopted.

Teacher—If I stand here with this blackboard for the next twenty minutes and SAY nothing and WRITE nothing, will you understand what I want to tell you?

Scholar—No.

Teacher—What then must I do if you are to hear and understand the WORDS I have in MIND?

Scholar—You must TELL us.

Teacher—So far so good. God intends that we shall know His Will. His Will is expressed in His Word, and in order that this Word may be heard and understood, He must tell us. We proceed.

Teacher—What ways have we of “telling” anything?

Scholar—Speaking. Writing, Acting*.

Teacher—Yes, these are the three principal means we use. God has *spoken* His mind—That is His Word. God has caused that Word to be *written*—That is the Scripture. God has sent His Son, Whose name also is the Word and by His life, death and resurrection, as well as by His sayings, He has *revealed* God himself. Let us now see how this helps us with our texts, *All Scripture*.

Teacher—What other words do you know which sound like Scripture?

Scholar—Scribe Scribble Script.

Teacher—What do all these indicate?

Scholar—Scripture is something WRITTEN.

Teacher—Boys and girls may like to know the actual word God used for Scripture. It is *graphé*. Do you know any words which include this in their composition?

Scholar—Phono-graph = Sound-writing.

Photo-graph = Light-writing.

Tele-graph = Distance-writing.

Teacher—Inspiration. What other words do you know which have any relation to the word Inspire?

Scholar—Respire Perspire Transpire.

Teacher—Yes, all have something to do with BREATHING. Perhaps you would like to know the actual word used in II Tim. iii. 16. It is *Theopneustia*. The part of the word I want you to look at is connected with *Pneuma*, which is the word *Spirit*. Do you know any words having the word *Pneuma* in them?

Scholar—(Silence.)†

Teacher—Surely some boy or girl has a bicycle—

Scholar—(The light having dawned by this suggestion) Pneumatic!

Teacher—Yes, and is a pneumatic tyre solid?

Scholar—No. It has to be inflated with AIR.

Teacher—So then we come back to the meaning of inspiration. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, means all the WRITTEN Word is God-BREATHED.

We will not pursue this method further, as we trust the idea has been conveyed. The foundation of truth cannot be too truly laid, and nothing is more disastrous than early misconceptions. Sympathy with the child's mind and view point is all important, and the most advanced students and teachers will find the teaching of the child to be their greatest test.

While the words of II Tim. ii. 2 "apt to teach" may not strictly apply here, the fact that they are to be found there shows that something more than faithfulness is necessary to qualify for satisfactory teaching. The word "Scripture" may be merely a pious shibboleth—once to realize it means "that which is written" is important knowledge.

The Superintendent summarized this address in the language of the school child. "Scripture is Dictation, not Composition". That sentence, intelligible to any school boy, expresses much more than "The plenary and verbal inspiration of Scripture".

[NOTE: * - This third item was not brought forward on this particular occasion as we were confining ourselves to the Inspiration of Scripture.

† - We have purposely included this lack of response in order to show how the answer may still be called forth from the child. Only as a last resource should the answer be given by the teacher, and when this is done, let the teacher recognize that he has failed in that one particular, and so be led to seek grace to help.]

The Gospel according to Matthew.

#1. Matthew Twofold in Scope. pp. 74, 75

We have during the past years devoted some considerable space to the parables and the miracles of the Gospel according to Matthew, and a consciousness of the great claim which the epistles of Paul have upon our time, thought and testimony, turned our attention from a fuller consideration of the teaching of the Gospel as a whole. The statements of the critic of dispensational truth, which have been touched upon in these pages, together with some evident misconception held by those who “for the time ought” to be clearer, lead us to realize that it will not be going over a well-worn subject if we embark upon an exposition of the Gospel according to Matthew in these pages.

The book opens with a statement which indicates with no uncertainty the theme of the Gospel.

“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham”
(Matt. i. 1).

The word “generation”, Greek *genesis*, means genealogy or pedigree, and indicates the first 17 verses of the Gospel. Now it is a common saying among many that the gospel of Matthew is the gospel of the *kingdom*. This is true, but not true in the sense that some intend the words. We refer to that view of things that suggests that Matt. i. 1 reads, “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David” and stops there. This is but stating half the truth. He was the Son of David, His genealogy establishes His right to the throne, He therefore was truly King, and this gospel sets forth this aspect so prominently that it merits the designation, *The Gospel of the King and Kingdom*. The other half of the truth that is needed to make perfect balance and to avoid disproportion is contained in the words ‘the Son of Abraham’. This is a title that is wider than Israel and the Kingdom, and therefore we must be careful not to teach error either by unconscious suppression or by undue emphasis.

Christ’s ministry as presented by Matthew is twofold. First He is set forth as the Son of David, and then as the Son of Abraham. Solomon the son of David is the great type of the kingly element, Isaac the son of Abraham the great type of the Abrahamic feature. Now this twofold title of Christ not only divides the first verse, but dominates the literary structure of the whole Gospel; and unless we see this we shall be liable to read into that which pertains to Christ as Son of Abraham those things which belong to Him only as Son of David. This twofold character can be clearly seen from the following:--

The Gospel of Matthew.

- A | Birth (*genesis*, i. 1-18).
- B | Baptism in water.
- C | Threefold temptation in wilderness. “Kingdoms of the World.”
- D | SON OF DAVID (Solomon).
 - a | iii. 17. Voice from heaven, “Beloved Son.”
 - b | xvi. 16. Confessed by Peter (Israelite).
- iv. 17. “From that time began Jesus to preach”—Kingdom.**
 - D | SON OF ABRAHAM (Isaac).
 - a | xvii. 5. Voice from heaven, “Beloved Son.”
 - b | xxvii. 54. Confessed by Centurion (Gentile).
- xvi. 21. “From that time began Jesus to show”—Death and Resurrection.**
 - C | Threefold agony in the garden. “The cup.”
 - B | Baptism in death.
 - A | Resurrection (“This day have I begotten thee”, *gennaō*).

It will be observed that the two sections D & D are in most respects parallel. Both open with the *voice* from heaven. It is evident that the Transfiguration commences something fresh, by the way in which it echoes the Baptism of John at the beginning. Both sections ends with the confession. The Davidic sections ends with the confession of Peter, an Israelite; the Abrahamic section ends with the confession of the Centurion, a Gentile. Not only so; each section has a definite time mentioned connected with these two distinct phases.

iv. 17. “*From that time* Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the KINGDOM of the heavens is at hand.”

xvi. 21. “*From that time* Jesus began (absolutely identical with iv. 17) to shew unto His disciples how He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.”

These time divisions are not merely human or arbitrary, they are *inspired*. The apparent recommencement in xvii., on the Mount of Transfiguration, the balancing of the Israelite and Gentile confession that Christ was the Son of God, are entirely in line with these inspired divisions, and further, they exactly coincide with the statement in Matt. i. 1 that Jesus Christ was (1) The Son of David, (2) The Son of Abraham. This twofold character of the Gospel therefore must be kept in mind if our understanding is to be clear. It is a case of “rightly dividing” that meets us here—as everywhere.

#2. The Son of David. pp. 97 - 100

Let us now gather together the passages in Matthew where Christ is spoken of as the Son of David. There are nine passages in all. The first is i. 1, with which the Gospel opens. The next is found in ix. 27; two blind men follow the Lord crying, "Thou son of David, have mercy on us". In chapter xx. 30 and 31 another pair of blind men cry out, "Have mercy upon us, O Lord, Thou Son of David", the one addition to the title being that of "Lord". The significant fact concerning this is that NO *miracle other than these two is recorded by Matthew as being performed by Christ as the Son of David*. Israel were blind, they did not recognize their long-promised King. Is that suggested by this strange fact?

The reader may possibly think that the miracle of chapter xv. has been forgotten. There a Gentile woman approached the Lord with the title of Son of David and with the plea for mercy upon her lips, but in this instance she was met with silence. In her hearing the Lord said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of *the house of Israel*". David was the shepherd king, taken by God from minding the sheep to shepherd His people, and Christ as the Son of David was the Shepherd King of Israel too. When the Canaanite left the title Son of David for the wider title "Lord" (xv. 27), then the Lord granted her request, recognizing at the same time the greatness of her faith. It is true therefore to say that the only miracles which Christ performed as the Son of David were those to do with blindness and with Israel. This is the first miracle possibly that He will perform when He comes at length to take the Kingdom and reign. He will open their blind eyes that they may look upon Him Whom they pierced. The fact that in each case there were two blind men is suggestive, for the prophets make mention many times of the coming together again of the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Another feature that is associated with this title is that the Pharisees began to realize that unless they definitely discounted the notion, the people would receive Christ as King.

As the outcome of a miracle in which a man possessed of a demon, blind and dumb, was healed, we read, "And all the multitude (*ochloi*) were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?" (xii. 23). What was the immediate result? "When the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of the demons" (xii. 24). Christ replied, "If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the Kingdom of God is come unto you" (xii. 28).

This approach to public recognition, and the immediate attempt of the leaders of the people to discredit Christ, it will be noted is recorded in Matt. xii., where the rejection of Christ is clearly indicated. In that chapter He speaks of Himself as "greater than the temple" (6), "greater than Jonah" (41), and "greater than Solomon" (42), but in each case and capacity He was rejected. Then comes the chapter of PARABLES and *mystery* because Isa. vi. 10 was being fulfilled in Israel. Here comes the rejection of the Son of David, and for the first time we read of the "Mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens",

which speak of bad ground, birds of the air, tares sown by an enemy, corrupting leaven, a treasure found and hidden again, and a harvest “at the end of the age”.

In chapter xxi. the Lord makes His public entry into Jerusalem. He will bring before the people yet once again the fact that in Himself the prophecies of the King and Kingdom found their fulfillment. He rides into Jerusalem, fulfilling the words of Zechariah, “Behold, THY KING COMETH” (xxi. 5). The multitudes (*ochloi*) cried:--

“Hosannah to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosannah in the highest” (xxi. 9).

Luke xix. 38 renders the cry:--

“Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; peace in heaven and glory in the highest.”

Mark xi. 9, 10 reads:--

“Hosannah, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, Blessed is the Kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosannah in the highest.”

A crowd never says exactly the same words throughout a period of acclamation and each Gospel gives a faithful report of the varied utterances, while all assert the one great fact, that here, in the person of the Son of David, was the promised King and Kingdom. Once more the leaders of the people are displeased:--

“When the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosannah to the Son of David; they were sore displeased” (Matt. xxi. 15).

Once again it is evident that the public recognition of Christ as the Son of David threatened their own position and authority.

The last occurrence of the words “Son of David” coincides with the last question addressed to the Lord by His enemies:--

“While the Pharisees were gathered together (after having endeavoured in vain to entangle Him by their questions), Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He? They say unto Him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? If David then call Him Lord, how is He his Son? And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions” (xxii. 41-46).

Immediately following this passage comes the terrible denunciation of woe against the leaders of the people who sit in Moses’ seat and bind heavy burdens upon their backs, which is concluded by the lament over Jerusalem and the solemn allusion to the Hosannah of xxi. 9:--

“Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord” (xxiii. 39).

Israel, now blind, shall yet see Him. He shall yet “sit upon the throne of His glory” (xxv. 31). His title, Son of David, carries this pledge with it, and His title as David’s Lord ensures that this pledge will be fulfilled.

We drew attention to the picture of Israel’s blindness in the blind men who cried to the Saviour for mercy, and the reader, with xxii. 42 in mind, will appreciate the prophetic hint in the *added* title “Lord” in the confession of the second pair of blind men who cried for mercy to the Son of David.

The nine occurrences of the title “Son of David” form a group of seven items as follows:--

- A | i. 1. Jesus Christ, the Son of David (cf. i. 23).
- B | a | ix. 27. Two blind men. Israel.
 - b | xii. 23. The people’s confession. The leader’s opposition.
- C | xv. 22. Gentile misuse of the title.
- B | a | xx. 30, 31. Two blind men. Israel.
 - b | xxi. 9, 15. The people’s confession. The leaders’ opposition.
- A | xxii. 42-45. The Son of David is David’s Lord (cf. Rev. xxii. 16).

The two groups are dispensationally suggestive. The blind men are grouped with Israel. In each case the leaders of the people, blind leaders of the blind as they were, led Israel into the ditch of rejection.

#3. The Three Great Discourses. v.-vii., xiii., and xxiv. & xxv. pp. 130 - 132

There are three outstanding discourses in the Gospel according to Matthew which must be considered together:--

- The Teaching given on the Mountain (v.-vii.).
- The Parables given at the Sea side (xiii.).
- The Prophecy on the Mountain (xxiv., xxv.).

each discourse having the kingdom prominently in view.

In the *Sermon on the Mount* the opening beatitudes speak of the kingdom of heaven. The question of being least and great in that kingdom, and of entering into it is spoken of in the opening chapter. In chapter vi. the prayer given to the disciples as a pattern includes the prayer for the coming of the kingdom, and the kingdom of God is to be sought above all else. Chapter vii. reverts to the theme of entry into the kingdom.

Upon the rejection so manifest in Matt. xii. comes the series of parables which speak of the “mysteries of the kingdom of heaven”. These parables have been dealt with at some length in earlier volumes of *The Berean Expositor*.

The third discourse is the great prophecy given immediately consequent upon the words of Christ when He said:--

“Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt. xxiii. 39).

The prophecy refers to the “end”, when the Son of man shall come in great glory, when Daniel’s prophecy shall be fulfilled, when the days of Noah shall once more be upon the earth, and when the nations shall gathered before the Lord to hear His verdict concerning entry into the kingdom. Entry into the kingdom is a recurring theme in these great passages. We shall see this better when we give them a more detailed study.

In the *Sermon on the Mount* which comes in the first portion of Matthew, the part connected principally with the Son of David, the law of Moses is quoted and the temple at Jerusalem is referred to. The practice of making offerings at the altar, the danger of the Sanhedrin and Gehenna, the taking of oaths, the ceremonies in the synagogues, the fasting and the anointing of the head, the reference to Solomon in all his glory, the reference to *the Gentiles* as in contrast with those addressed; all link this discourse primarily with Israel.

In Matt. xxiv., xxv. those addressed shall be hated of *all nations*; the gospel of the kingdom is to be preached in all the world for a witness unto *all nations*. When the King comes and sits upon the throne of His glory, *all nations* shall be gathered before Him. The law of Moses is not applied to them. “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me”; this is the law that decides the question of entry or non-entry into the kingdom. This is parallel with the words of Rom. ii. 26, “Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?” This wider aspect of Matt. xxiv., xxv. and its reference to “all nations” are fittingly placed in that part of Matthew which is associated with Christ as the Son of Abraham.

The parables of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven speak of both Israel and the nations at the end of the age, under the figures of wheat, tares and fish.

We must now turn our attention more directly to the place and purpose of the Sermon on the Mount. This we hope to do in the next article of this series.

#4. The Sermon on the Mount.
What is its Place and Purpose?
pp. 162 - 164

What is the purpose of Matt. v.-vii.? A great variety of opinions exist as to the place of the Sermon on the Mount in the revelation of truth. To speak broadly, the varying views come under two heads:--

1. *The Sermon on the Mount is the great outline of Christian practice (Bloomfield), and applies to the church to-day.*
2. *The Sermon on the Mount does not apply to the church to-day, but constitutes the laws of the kingdom which is yet to be set up on the earth.*

Readers of *The Berean Expositor* will not require a detailed refutation of position #1, while the majority will already have arrived at conclusion #2. It is our duty however to reject both conclusions and to examine the theme independently. It will first be necessary to go into the reasons for rejecting position #2, especially as this has been taken up by many who have sought rightly to divide the Word of truth, and who are clear as to the distinction between kingdom and church.

Let us look at the Sermon on the Mount and consider the claim upon our faith for the conception that these verses constitute "the laws of the kingdom". The opening beatitudes speak of "mourning" and being "persecuted for righteousness' sake". A blessing is pronounced upon those who are "reviled", "persecuted", and "slandered" falsely for the sake of Christ. We believe that the Scriptures testify that, when the kingdom of prophecy is set up and Christ reigns as the Son of David:--

"In his days shall the righteous FLOURISH, and abundance of PEACE so long as the moon endureth" (Psa. lxxii. 7).

The "needy" and the "poor" are to be his special care and:--

"They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat; for as the days of a tree are the days of My people, and Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord" (Isa. lxxv. 22-25).

One cannot but realize that a different atmosphere pervades the references of the O.T. to the kingdom of the Messiah, than that of the Sermon on the Mount. The beatitudes of verses 1-12 are not the only references to the persecuted and outside position of those addressed here.

Under the conditions recognized by the Sermon on the Mount a man may be in danger of gehenna or of prison and the payment of the uttermost farthing. Divorce is still contemplated as a possibility, which we feel can find no warrant from O.T. prophecy of the future kingdom. Again, the injunction to resist not evil, and being sued for one's coat, or being compelled to go a mile, etc., bring before the mind a totally different

economy from that which fills the vision of the prophets of old. Enemies are still abroad, and those that curse and hate. In the great prayer taught by the Lord to His disciples, the kingdom is still future. They pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven”. Those addressed still “fasted”, and had the possibility of serving “two masters”. The kingdom of God is to be the first object of their seeking, and “evil” is still to be expected day by day. “Dogs” and “swine” may still turn and rend those who indiscriminately dispense holy things, and those addressed are still in the condition that can be spoken of like this, “If ye then, *being evil*, etc.” False prophets will still deceive, and some still build upon sand.

We cannot reconcile the general tenor of the teaching of these three Chapters with the conception of those with whom in the main we agree, viz., that the Sermon on the Mount gives us the laws of the kingdom. Rather do we see a persecuted, waiting people, suffering during the absence of their rightful king, sustained by the hope that, when He comes and the kingdom is set up, they will then receive their great reward which is in heaven, awaiting the day when they, the meek, shall inherit the earth.

We have dealt with the subject negatively in order to free ourselves from the tradition mentioned above. We can now approach the passage to search and see as true *Bereans* its purpose and place in the Gospel of the kingdom.

The Ministry of Consolation.

#1. “A Word in season” (Isa. 1. 4). pp. 28, 29

One of the most enviable gifts that we can possess when seeking to minister to those in distress or sorrow is the ability to speak a word “in season” to him that is weary. There are many weary hearts that cry out for comfort, yet how many are rebuffed and chilled simply because the word of comfort has not been spoken “in season”. The word in season cannot be learned by rote, neither can it be acquired by any artificial means. Words that reach the heart must come from the heart.

In Isa. 1. 4 we may learn the precious secret.

1. The Tongue.

“The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learner, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.”

The gift of tongues surely never included a more precious gift than this. It is most important for us to observe that the word rendered “learned” in the A.V. should be “learner”. Of all the people most unfit to speak to sorrowing ones is the “learned” one as such. Isaiah uses the word so rendered, four times. “Disciples” (viii. 16); “Taught of” (liv. 13); and “learned” (1. 4) (twice).

The learner, the one who has passed through the school of experience, is alone fitted to minister comfort to the weary. How is the tongue of the learner obtained?

2. The Ear.

“He waketh morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learner” (Isa. 1. 4).

Here is the blessed secret. The tongue is influenced by the ear. This is so in the physical world. There are many who are dumb solely because they are deaf. They do not know that they can make an articulate sound, therefore they never speak. It is the same in the spiritual world. Many a believer is dumb in testimony, in prayer, in proclamation, because he is deaf. To have the tongue of the learner we need the wakened ear. The wakened ear means more than merely “hearing”, for “to hearken” in the Scriptures includes *obedience*. So, in Isa. 1. 5, the opened ear is associated with meek subjection.

“The Lord God hath opened mine ear and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.”

3. The Face.

The tongue can only speak as the ear is opened, and the opened ear cannot be disassociated from suffering and reproach:--

“I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting” (Isa. 1. 6).

The words reveal the Saviour here. He was and is the One Who pre-eminently has the tongue of the learner. As the great High Priest He is able to succour the tempted and tried, because He has suffered, being tempted, Himself; He does give a “word in season” to the weary. In Matt. xi. we have those memorable words:--

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

The context is instructive. The cities wherein the Lord had done many mighty works repented not. Humanly speaking His ministry had been most discouraging. Yet:--

“AT THAT TIME Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight” (Matt. xi. 25).

Here is the glorious illustration of Isa. 1. He Who was so meek and lowly that He could look up under these circumstances and say, “Even so”, He was the One Who could say “Learn of Me”. He could speak a word “in season” for He was not rebellious. He had the tongue because He had the ear and the heart.

Shall we not learn this lesson, and in our pilgrimage be better fitted to pour in the oil and wine of comfort, speaking a word in season to the weary ones whom we meet, and learning not only *what* but *how* to speak the word that shall minister true consolation?

**#3. “Together, with them” (I Thess. iv. 17).
pp. 47, 48**

The view which the enlightened believer upon conversion receives of the carnal nature often produces in certain minds an unscriptural repudiation of homely and domestic affections. To such their Lord is “an austere man”, and holiness is synonymous with mortification. To such the possibility of a practical working combination of holiness and natural affection does not seem possible. The Apostle when foretelling the apostate times of the end could place side by side, “unholy, without natural affection” (II Tim. iii.) and could enjoin young widows to re-marry (I Tim. v. 14).

To that man of God there was nothing carnal in the full appreciation of God’s Fatherly care, and while being thoroughly conversant with the joys of independence in the midst of privation, he could nevertheless write of creature comforts, that God had given them “richly to enjoy”.

There are many, who, by the workings of this selfsame austerity, are deprived of the “comfort of the Scripture” with reference to “that blessed hope”. Waiving for the moment the dispensational position of I Thess. iv., and seeking from it the comfort for which it was primarily written, we would draw attention to one feature which has gripped our own hearts, and turned the tears of sorrow into those of joy. The austere view, touched upon above, tends to rule out the God-given natural affection that should find a sanctified place in the hope of the believer. True it is that our hope is to meet the Lord, be with Him and be like Him, whether the meeting take place on earth, in the air, or far above all.

Some there are who have become persuaded that the meeting once again of loved ones however is not to be uttered in the same breath. Yet, we feel sure that many whose lips with all sincerity give utterance to these self-effacing words, will often feel their hearts crying out for the assurance that the hope of meeting their Lord need not banish into the background the hope of meeting their loved ones too.

It is here where the consolation of the Scripture is fuller and kinder than the conceptions of man. The Divine order we find in I Thess. iv. 17 is “together with them to meet the Lord”. There will be no furtive glances, no aching hearts, when we enter into the presence of the Saviour. All we have loved and lost in the faith shall meet again, and TOGETHER WITH THEM (and not otherwise) shall we MEET THE LORD, and ever in unbroken unity be with Him.

“Wherefore comfort one another *with these words*” (verse 18).

#4. “Fret Not Thyself” (Psa. xxxvii.).
pp. 140, 141

The English word “fret” comes from the Anglo-Saxon *fretan* = to gnaw. The Hebrew word used here means to burn, to kindle (Gen. xlv. 18, Num. xi. 33). The LXX translates the Hebrew by *parazēloō*. This word is also used in the Greek translation of Deut. xxxii. 21, I Kings xiv. 22, and Psa. lxxviii. 58, and in the N.T. in Rom. x. 19, xi. 11 & 14. It is therefore very evident that the command “Fret not thyself” in Psa. xxxvii. must not be rendered by the English idea of to fret, to be peevish, to mourn, or to grieve.

One has only to look at the context of the command in Psa. xxxvii. to see that the word contains the thought of envy and jealousy. It is not the fretting because of the wickedness of men, but fretting because of their prosperity. It is not the overburdened mourner that is addressed, but the believer, tempted by the temporal successes of the ungodly, to leave the pilgrim pathway. In verse 7 this thought finds expression:--

“Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.”

This kind of fretting leads to evil. Verse 8 shows this by immediately following with:-

“Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not thyself in anyway TO DO EVIL.”

This fretting is the result of forgetting, and of shortness of vision. David assures us that those successful wicked men

“shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb” (verse 2).

Later, in verses 35 and 36, he enlarges upon this saying:--

“I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree. Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.”

Instead of envying the wicked and their successes, the Psalmist urges the more excellent way of trust in the Lord.

“Delight thyself also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the DESIRES OF THINE HEART. Roll thy way upon the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall BRING IT TO PASS Be silent to the Lord, and wait patiently for Him” (verses 4-7).

What words are here! How they breathe the very atmosphere of quiet confidence and simple trust! “Delight thyself”; how much better this than “*fretting* thyself”! “Roll thy way” instead of bearing the burden alone. “Be silent”; “wait patiently”; what holy calm!

Peace with God is unalterable. The *enjoyment* of that peace is another thing. Phil. iv. 5-7 is a far-off echo of Psa. xxxvii.:--

“Be anxious for nothing, in everything by prayer with thanksgiving AND THE PEACE OF GOD”

Fret no thyself.

#5. The Ram caught in a Thicket (Gen. xxii. 13). pp. 158, 159

Not a few of the readers of *The Berean Expositor* are passing through seasons of trial owing to the growing problems in the industrial and commercial world. For their encouragement we draw attention to a well-known passage, which in a time of difficulty came with new force.

Gen. xxii. must ever remain pre-eminently prophetic of the great act of Calvary, yet this does not prevent its light and blessing radiating into the lesser corners of our private lives. Scripture itself gives us the argument:--

“He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not WITH HIM also freely give us all things?” (Rom. viii. 32).

We are told that Abraham rejoiced to see the day of Christ (John viii. 56), and if, as we may reasonably suppose, he understood in some degree the prophetic import of the trial through which he passed, that would by no means lessen the personal and practical effects of the provision of the Lord in the “ram caught by his horns in a thicket”. Indeed, Abraham does not name the place “Jehovah-Jireh” until after he had seen the ram and had offered it instead of Isaac his son.

Some of our everyday trials and experiences, resulting, as they may do, from the chaotic state of finance and commerce, may nevertheless be permitted in order that the Lord may be able to say “Now I know that thou fearest God” (Gen. xxii. 12). In such hours and places of trial look out for the ram caught by his horns in a thicket. The ram was “behind” Abraham, and unobserved until the critical moment had come, but all the same it was seen at that moment, and gratefully accepted as a provision of love.

While we therefore in stedfast faith would “lift up our eyes, and see the place afar off” (Gen. xxii. 4), let us, by the same undoubting faith, lift up our eyes to see what providence the Lord may send to deliver us at the time of crisis. “In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen” (Gen. xxii. 14), not while we are “afar off”. We may have to stretch forth the hand and take the knife, before the ram caught by his horns is revealed to us.

It is rather suggestive that in the preceding chapter we have a parallel with the ram caught in the thicket. Hagar took her son also:--

“And wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And the water was spent in the bottle” (Gen. xxi. 14, 15).

Hagar felt that the end had come. She cast the child under one of the shrubs and went about a bowshot away, for she said, “Let me not see the death of the child” (verse 16).

Then came the voice from heaven; not recognizing faith as in the case of Abraham, but remembering the promise made to Abraham, viz.:-

”Fear not, for God hath heard the voice of the lad WHERE HE IS” (Gen. xxi. 17).

The lad was Ishmael; *Where he is* was under a shrub dying of thirst. “I will make him a great nation” (verse 18) was the promise.

“And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water” (Gen. xxi. 19).

It does not say that God made a well; He simply opened the woman’s eyes.

Are there rams caught by the horns in every thicket? Are there wells of water in every desert? It appears so. Maybe instead of praying for deliverances we should seek the ever opened eye.

#6. “The End.” **pp. 170, 171**

Psalm lxxiii. reveals the fact that it is necessary to look from the right standpoint, especially when the providential and dispensational dealings of God are concerned. Asaph saw the proud and the wicked, and observed that they often flourished, and were at ease, whereas the righteous were plagued all the day long, and chastened every morning. He said, “I was envious at the foolish”. Then something happens to clear his vision, something adjusts his focus. He shall see the same wicked, but no longer with envious eyes. He now can see the slippery place whereon their feet stand, he sees how quickly desolation falls upon their prosperity. Where once he envied the ill-gotten wealth, or unchastened ease of the proud, he now says:-

“There is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee” (verse 25).

Verse 17 contains the secret of the change in Asaph:-

“Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end.”

Not only may we there understand the end of the wicked, but *the end* in its fuller and vaster meaning. The word translated “end” is also rendered “the *latter* days” (Numb. xxiv. 14; Deut. iv. 20, etc.), and “*latter* end” (Deut. viii. 16, etc.). Psa. xxxvii. brings the “end” of the wicked and the righteous together for comparison:-

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off” (verses 37, 38).

It appears from these passages that the truer view does rest upon the present transitory phase with its varied and unequal experiences. A little more or less of pleasure, sorrow, ease, or distress, is more than counterbalanced by the end.

It is also of great help, not only to think of the vast purpose and end that God has in view, but also to consider the narrower circle of our own pilgrimage and to echo the prayer of Psa. xxxix. 4:--

“Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.”

The answer to this prayer immediately follows:--

“Behold, Thou hast made my days as an handbreath: and mine age as nothing before Thee: verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Psa. xxxix. 5).

When we were tracing the theme of Ecclesiastes we were led to the conclusion that life is a purposeless puzzle apart from resurrection (*The Berean Expositor*, Volume X, pp. 122-127). The dominion of sin and death involves all in the bondage of corruption, and were it not that there is “hope” in the “end” life would be unbearable. It is in this spirit that the apostle wrote I Cor. x. 13:--

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not allow you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will WITH the temptation MAKE THE END, that ye may be able to bear it.”

So in II Cor. iv. 17 he can call his afflictions “light” as he views the “exceeding weight” of glory; he can speak of them as “but for a moment” when he knows the weight of glory to be “age-lasting”.

“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen” (I Cor. xv. 19, 20).

James bids us not only to dwell upon the “patience of Job”, but also the “end of the Lord”. He tells us that temptations have a perfecting work, and with Heb. xii. directs us to the “afterwards”.

“Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord there is HOPE in thine END” (Jer. xxxi. 16, 17).

**#7. “Jesus wept” (John xi. 35).
p. 191**

It would not be possible for the Lord to avoid tears, and at the same time to enter into the experiences of those who are flesh and blood, for the pilgrim’s path leads through the valley of Baca (Heb. v. 7). There is blessed consolation however for the weeper in the words:--

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm xxx. 5).

This is our stay as with tears we press on; the tears are but for the night. A day is coming when “God shall wipe away all tears” (Rev. xxi. 4).

Service cannot be faithfully carried on without tears. “Serving the Lord with many tears” (Acts xx. 19 and 31), expressed the active devotion of the great apostle. “Much love” cannot be expressed without the price of tears (Luke vii. 36-50); but whether the strenuous devotion of a Paul, or the quieter devotion of the woman who was a sinner, it remains true that “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy” (Psalm cxxvi. 5). When therefore the tears will come, let us remember that they unite us with a holy fellowship. The Lord Himself, the sweet singer of Israel, Jeremiah the prophet, Paul the apostle, the woman who loved much, form a part of that goodly company, as do the great multitude whom no man could number, that pass through the tribulation and stand, overcomers, before the Lord (Rev. vii. 17).

Weeping is the portion of the believer while absent from the Lord (John xvi. 20), but in the presence of the Lord there is fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

“Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning” (Psalm xxx. 5).

Studies in the Epistles of the Mystery.

#48. The Dispensation given to Paul (Eph. iii. 2). pp. 23 - 25

We have seen that the imprisonment of Paul was very vitally connected with his ministry to the Gentiles after the setting aside of Israel. That ministry he called “the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward”.

Before going further into this chapter, let us see whether we can realize a little more just what the apostle meant by the word “dispensation”. The word is a translation of *oikonomia*, which occurs nine times in the New Testament. Every reference is found either in Paul’s writings, or in those of his companion, Luke. In Luke xvi. 2, 3, 4 the word is rendered “stewardship”. In I Cor. ix. 17; Eph. i. 10, iii. 2, 9 (R.V.); Col. i. 25 it is rendered “dispensation”, and in I Tim. i. 4 (A.V.) “edifying” occurs instead of “dispensation”, owing to a variant reading in MSS.

The cognate word *oikonomos* occurs ten times. Of these occurrences four are in Luke, five in Paul’s Epistles, and one in I Pet. iv. 10. It is mostly translated “steward”. Luke xii. 42; xvi. 1, 3, 8 render it thus. So do I Cor. iv. 1, 2; Gal. iv. 2 (R.V.); Tit. i. 7; I Pet. iv. 10. Rom. xvi. 23 uses it of “Erastus, the *chamberlain* of the city”. The steward is variously connected with charge over household goods and affairs, the municipal oversight of a city, Paul’s stewardship of the mysteries of God, the charge of young children, the responsibility of a bishop, and the stewardship of the manifold grace of God.

The Septuagint uses the word *oikonomia* in Isa. xxii. 19, 21 to speak of the “station” and “government” of Shebna who was the “treasurer; and it frequently uses *oikonomos* in the expression, “that was *over* the household”, as in Isa. xxxvii. 2. Heb. iii. 1-6 in the light of these references evidently has stewardship or a dispensation in view.

Coming back therefore to Eph. iii. 2 with these facts in mind we read again the words, “Since ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward”. The dispensation was given to Paul as a steward of the mystery of God (I Cor. iv. 1). The household over which he was placed is clearly defined in Eph. ii. 19. His treasurership was to do with greater treasures than ever Shebna dreamed—they were “the unsearchable riches of Christ”; “the riches of the glory of this mystery.”

The dispensation which was given to Paul is called “the dispensation of the *grace* of God”. The dispensation given to Moses was that of *law*. What mysteries have been made out of the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” which were given to Peter! Read in the light of Isa. xxii. 15-25 it is seen to be the symbol of stewardship. The trusted servant who is “over the household”, like Joseph in the house of Potiphar, had the keys. He shut and no one opened, he opened and no one shut (Isa. xxii. 22). Peter therefore had the dispensation of the kingdom of the heavens committed to him. Paul and Apollos were

stewards of the mysteries of God. When Paul became the prisoner of Christ, after the crisis of Acts xxviii., he was given the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles.

The character of this dispensation is twofold:--

1. It is pure grace.
2. It is for Gentiles.

Grace threads its way throughout this epistle as woven in the very texture of the theme. We quote from an earlier article. Speaking of the structure of the occurrences of “Grace” in Ephesians (Volume VI, page 19) we read:--

“How truly does the divine arrangement of this word emphasize its place and importance. No salvation is complete without it, and the parting benediction is enriched by it. It runs through the whole fabric of redemption, covering the ages past and to come with its unction. It gives its name to the special dispensation committed to the Apostle Paul, marking it off as pre-eminently one of grace. It vitalizes the outcome of redemption, namely service, being as much a necessity for the inspired and gifted Apostle while preaching the Word, as for the individual believer in his everyday conversation.”

God had already shown grace to Israel and to the Gentiles, but never before so fully, and so richly, and never before in such a fashion.

The title of the dispensation given in Eph. iii. 2 is not complete without verse 9. Reading *oikonomia* (as in the R.V.) instead of *koinōnia*, we have the full rounding out of the title—“And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery”. The grace of God which flows to the Gentiles under the stewardship of Paul has not to do with the promises made to Abraham or to David, but with a dispensation hidden by God from the ages.

One further item is gathered from Col. i. 24-26. There we find the dispensation committed to Paul is associated on the one hand with the “church which is His body” (24), and on the other hand with that mystery which had been hidden from the ages and generations (26).

The dispensation given to Paul therefore may be said to be:--

As to Subject, Gospel, Attitude and Basis	The Grace of God.
As to Form, Limits, Manifestations	The Church of the One Body.
As to Nationality	The Gentiles.
As to Distinctive Character	The Mystery never before made known.

We must turn our attention in the next article to the claim which the apostle makes to the “revelation of the mystery”, and to the parenthesis of verses 4 & 5, wherein we must try the things that differ and so approve of those which are more excellent.

#49. The Mysteries of Eph. iii. 1-13.
pp. 55 - 58

The great theme of the first half of chapter iii. is "The Mystery". This subject, like several other equally weighty themes in Paul's epistles, is introduced by way of a parenthesis. Chapter iii. opens with the words, "For this cause" and verse 14 resumes the statement. The chapter may be sub-divided simply as follows:--

- A | iii. 1. For this cause.
- B | 2-13. The ministry of the mystery.
- A | 14-. For this cause.
- B | -14-21. Prayer for believers.

Our subject for the present is confined to the first half of the Chapter, viz., B | 2-13. Again we must set out before the eye the literary arrangement of the passage so that we may perceive the subject upon which the attention should be focused.

B | 2-13.

- A | 1. Prisoner for you.
- B | 2. Dispensation of the grace of God.
- C | 3. Revelation of mystery.
- D | 4-7. Ministry of mystery.
- C | 8. Unsearchable riches.
- B | 9. Dispensation of mystery.
- A | 13. Affliction for you.

The apostle, instead of seeking the commiseration of the saints with his imprisonment, shows them the ground he and they have for glorying in such affliction, seeing that in that condition and state he had been entrusted with the dispensation of the mystery, unveiling a purpose which hitherto had never been made known (A | 1 and A | 13). The dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles is further explained as the dispensation of the mystery which had hitherto been hidden by God, the one expression magnifying the wondrous grace that has been manifested to the far-off Gentiles, the other indicating the peculiar character of that grace inasmuch as it was the outworking of a secret purpose of the ages which God had never before made known (B | 2 and B | 9).

But, some reader may interpose, How can you speak of the mystery as being kept an absolute secret until revealed to the apostle Paul, when verse 5 declares that it had been made known in measure at least to other generations, and had been revealed not to Paul only but to other apostles and prophets too? The question is an important one, nevertheless it is an evidence of failure to rightly divided the Word of truth here. Let us examine the passage for ourselves.

Verse 4 speaks of the Mystery of *Christ*. This mystery evidently was not something entirely new at the time, for the apostle definitely makes a comparison between the knowledge possessed by former generations and that of his own time. "As" indicates this

comparison. However much we may stress the greater knowledge of the apostles and prophets, such comparison necessitates that the sons of men in other generations did have a knowledge of the same truth. If however we read on in the chapter we shall find that the apostle appears to change his tone. Instead of sharing the revelation with other apostles and prophets, he emphasizes his own peculiar stewardship. Instead of instituting a comparison with former generations, he stands alone and incomparable:--

“To me, the less than least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the Gentiles, and to enlighten all as to the dispensation of the mystery which hath been hidden from the ages in God” (Eph. iii. 8,9).

The epistle to the Colossians should always be considered when any difficulty is found in Ephesians. It always amplifies, illustrates or illuminates. The distinctive character of Paul’s ministry of the mystery is the subject of Col. i. 23-27. There the apostle speaks of himself as a minister:--

“according to the dispensation of God which is given to me to you, to complete the Word of God, even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and generation, but is now made manifest to His saints.”

Let us take this passage back with us to Eph. iii. First of all we should know that Eph. iii. 5 is incorrectly translated in the A.V. Instead of reading “in other ages”, it should read “in other *generations*”. The A.V. has so translated the word in Col. i. 26. We are now able to make a more positive statement. The mystery spoken of in Eph. iii. 5 WAS made known in some measure in other *generations*. The mystery of Col. i. 26 was NOT made known either in other generations or ages. This fact helps us to see more clearly than ever that there are two subjects, both mysteries, with which the apostle deals in Eph. iii. 2-7. The one, revealed in fuller measure to apostles and prophets than it had been in the past, is the Mystery of a CHRIST. The other, never made known in any generation or age, and revealed only to the apostle Paul, to whom the trust was committed to enlighten *all* as to its teaching, is called simply the MYSTERY, and pertains to the members of the Body of Christ. The mystery of Christ speaks of the *Head*. The mystery exclusively revealed to Paul speaks of the *members*.

We can now the better appreciate the opening up of the central members of the structure C | 3, C | 8, and D | 4-7:--

- C | 3. The mystery made known TO PAUL.—“unto me.”
- D | 4-7. | a | 4. The Mystery of CHRIST.
 - b | 5. Apostles and Prophets (*plural*).
 - a | 6. The Threefold Fellowship.—“The Mystery” (verse 3).
 - b | 7. Paul (*singular*).
- C | 8. Unsearchable riches made known BY PAUL.—“unto me.”

It will be seen by the above arrangement that verse 8 reads on from verse 3, verses 4-7 being in parenthesis:--

“How that by revelation He made known UNTO ME the mystery, UNTO ME, the less than the least of all saints is this grace given” (verses 3 and 8).

Immediately before verse 3 is the reference to the dispensation of the grace of God, and immediately following verse 8 is the reference to the dispensation of the mystery.

The parenthesis, verses 4-7, may now be studied in its right relationship with the context, and this we propose to do in our next paper.

#50. The Two Mysteries of Eph. iii. 4-7. pp. 86 - 88

The “mysteries” are practically peculiar to the N.T. Out of eight different words rendered “secret” in the O.T. the LXX translated but one of them by the Greek word *musterion*, and that is confined to the Chaldee section of the book of Daniel (chapters ii. and iv.). The Chaldee portion of Daniel pertains *to the Gentiles and the transfer* of the sovereignty from Israel to Nebuchadnezzar. This is an important and suggestive fact.

The word mystery was not used by Christ when on earth until his rejection by Israel became evident. The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revelations of that phase of God’s purpose that came into operation consequent upon Israel’s rejection of the Lord. It is vitally associated, by the Lord Himself, with Isa. vi. 10. When Israel of the dispersion had followed in the same steps as Israel in the land, Isa. vi. 10 was again quoted, and again was closely associated with mystery. The epistle to the Ephesians, of which the mystery is the theme, follows the setting aside of Israel in Acts xxviii.

Eph. iii. speaks not only of the mystery as it relates to the new dispensational dealings of God with the Gentiles, but also with the mystery of Christ. Now this mystery must not be read as meaning simply the fulfillment of prophecy. While many in Israel saw the teaching of their Scriptures as to the coming of the Messiah in glory and dominion, few saw the mystery of the Messiah which related to His Coming in lowliness, rejection and suffering. Christ said, speaking of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, “Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see these things but have not seen them” (Matt. xiii. 17), and into the mystery of Christ “angels desired to look” (I Pet. i. 12). Mystery necessitates revelation. It is something that cannot be inferred or arrived at by study.

We pointed out in our last paper that verses 4-7 are a parenthesis and that verse 3 reads on to verse 8. We have therefore the means to a clearer view of the theme before the apostle by leaving the parenthesis out for a time and observing his teaching concerning the wondrous dispensation which he had received. Some features we have already considered, so we will merely tabulate them in order to have a full statement.

The Mystery; its Special Characteristics.

1. A special minister.		Paul, as prisoner (1). Me (2, 3, 8). I (8).
2. A special ministry.		For you Gentiles (1). To youward (2).
		Among the Gentiles (8).
3. A special communication.		Made known by revelation (3).
4. A special theme.		Unsearchable (8). Mystery (3, 9). Hid (9).
5. A special period.		The dispensation of the grace of God (2).
		The dispensation of the mystery (9). Now (10).
6. A special witness.		Unto principalities (10). Manifold wisdom (10).
7. A special purpose.		According to the purpose of the Ages (11).

Such is the theme of verses 1-11 omitting the parenthesis. Coming to verses 4-7 we learn more concerning this mystery by way of contrast. The mystery of verses 1-3 and 8-11 is contrasted with the mystery of Christ. Let us again seek an analysis.

The Mystery of Christ.

1. Not exclusive to this dispensation. It was made known in other generations (5).
2. Not exclusive to the Apostle Paul. It was revealed unto prophets and apostles (5).

The Mystery.

1. It was exclusive to the Apostle Paul. Verses 1, 2, 3, 8 & 9, already considered, and verse 7, "Whereof I was made a minister", the words defining the gospel intended in verse 6.
2. It was peculiar in its composition. It gives a threefold equality to the Gentile believer never before known or enjoyed (6).

Verse 6 in the A.V. reads on from verse 5, being connected by the word "that". The R.V. makes the connection closer by adding in italic type the words "*to wit*". Any literal translation however is obliged to render *einai* as a statement of fact, and there is no word nor construction which necessitates "that" or "to wit". Instead of connection, contrast is intended. Instead of the threefold fellowship of the Gentiles being the mystery revealed to the apostles and prophets and before them the sons of men in other generations, it is entirely associated "with that gospel" whereof Paul was made a minister, who in that capacity received the commission *to enlighten all* as to the dispensation of the mystery, which instead of being revealed in other ages, or at the time to many prophets and apostles, had never been revealed at all, but had been hid from the ages and revealed only to the one chosen Apostle, Paul, when the time for its publication had arrived. Instead therefore of linking verse 6 with 5, we should link verse 6 with 7 & 8.

We do not arrive at the truth if we stop at the word gospel in verse 6. Scripture speaks of a series of sets of good news or "gospels" and to ascertain the truth we must know that the gospel under consideration was that which the Apostle Paul preached according to the gift of grace of God which had given him the dispensation of this secret to administer. The parenthesis of verses 4-7 stands therefore thus:--

THE MYSTERY	/	Made known in other ages.
OF CHRIST	\	Revealed now to apostles and prophets, including Paul.
	/	The threefold fellowship of the Gentiles.
THE MYSTERY	{	Revealed in the special gospel of Paul.
	\	Given to him to the exclusion of others.

Isaiah, when he penned the 53rd chapter of his prophecy, entered in some degree into the “mystery of Christ” and shared with Paul, Peter and others that blessed truth. David too, when he wrote Ps. xxii., perceived the sacred secret of Christ’s rejection.

But neither Isaiah, David, nor Peter had any knowledge of the terms of the mystery as revealed in Eph. iii. 6. That was hidden by God. It constituted a part of the purpose of the ages, but was a part, pertaining to the heavenly section, which had never been made known.

A fuller examination of iii. 6 must be reserved for our next paper.

#51. Sphere and Character of Blessing (Eph. iii. 5, 6). pp. 118 - 121

It is difficult to decide between the A.V. rendering of Eph. iii. 5, which joins the words *en pneumatī* (by the spirit) to the apostles and prophets, thereby declaring the source of their inspiration, and the alternative rendering which makes the words “in spirit” commence the statement as to the threefold fellowship of the Gentiles.

Matt. xxii. 43 supplies an instance where *en pneumatī* is used of inspiration, “How then doth David *in spirit* call him Lord?” Rom. viii. 9 supplies an instance where the words are used not of inspiring apostles and prophets, but as indicating a sphere of blessing. “You are not in flesh, but *in spirit*.” The general trend of the context and the recognition of the canon that the apostle’s style allows of no superfluous words causes every sentence to be pregnant with meaning. No item can be eliminated without injury to the sense and teaching. The question of inspiration is not in view. Whatever had been made known of the subject under discussion, either to Paul or to the other apostles, had been “revealed” which carries with it the thought of inspiration.

On the other hand a change of sphere is a feature which the apostle emphasizes in this epistle. Its blessings are “in the heavenlies” and “in Christ”. Its practical outworkings are “in the Lord”, and the special feature with which Eph. iii. 6 is in direct contrast is given in Eph. ii. 11, *en sarki* “in flesh”. In verse 12 another sphere is mentioned “in the world”.

In the world	is contrasted with	in the heavenlies.
In flesh	is set over against	in spirit.

With the addition of the word “one” the change is found indicated in ii. 18, “Access to the Father in One Spirit”, and again in ii. 22, an habitation of God *in Spirit*”. In chapter iii. the apostle pursues the theme of the change of dispensation. The inspiration of Scripture or of apostles is extraneous to the subject. Consequently, as we are free to choose, we feel that iii. 6 must commence with the words “In spirit”. This is the essential condition of blessing in this dispensation. The blessings themselves are “all spiritual” and can only be received by those who are “in spirit”.

In the next place we pause to note the class who are spoken of as being thus blessed *in spirit*. It is usual for the words to be added, at least mentally, to make the verse read, “That the Gentiles *together with the Jews* should be fellow-heirs, etc.”, but this idea is unwarranted. If for the moment we concede that the Jew is in view, the teaching then must be accepted as a veritable revelation of an hitherto hidden mystery, for where, since the call of Abraham to the writing of the epistle to the Romans (where the apostle says “the Jew first”, etc.), has the Gentile ever received the threefold *equality* revealed here.

Millennial blessings, which fulfils the promises to Israel, necessarily give the blessed Gentile a secondary place; they who were once aliens to the commonwealth of Israel, but who are finally blessed under the covenant of promise, are nevertheless “tail” and not “head”, and their *national* distinctions remain. Here, in the dispensation of the Mystery, the sphere is “*in spirit*” and the equality is concerning the Gentiles. The only place that a Jew can have here is to lose his nationality and enter this unity as a sinner saved by grace, even as the Gentile did.

The threefold equality of this new sphere must now be noted:--

Sunkleronoma, Sussōma, Summetocha.

In each case the word commences with *su* which means “with”. The best word in English to fit the three statements is the word “joint”. We can say “joint-heirs”, a “joint-body”, and “joint-partakers”.

In Heb. xi. 9 we read of Isaac and Jacob who sojourned with Abraham as “heirs with him of the same promise”.

God does not call Himself merely the God of Abraham, or the God of Abraham and Isaac. His full title in this connection is “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”. They were co-heirs. In I Pet. iii. 7 the husband, though recognizing his wife as a “weaker vessel”, is nevertheless enjoined to remember that they were both “heirs together of the grace of life”. The equality among all believers in the dispensation of the Mystery is expressed in similar terms. Co-heirs. This inheritance is the subject of Eph. i. 11 & 18, and of Col. i. 12. It is a predestined allotment, it is “in the light”.

The joint-body (*sussōma*) is as unique as is the word used to express it. The word occurs nowhere else in the N.T. or in the LXX. Words arise in response to needs, and never before in all the varied ways of God with man had there been the necessity for such

a term. Kingdom, Firstborn, Church, Bride, Wife, Flock, these and other terms had been necessitated by the unfolding of the purpose of the ages, but not until the revelation of the Mystery was there necessity to use such an expression as “joint-body”. The equality in the body is opened up in Eph. iv. 16. There is but One Head and the rest of the body are members one of another.

The third item is “joint-partakers”, but such an expression does not convey the truth until the statement is completed:--

“Joint-partakers of the promise in Christ, through the gospel of which I became minister.”

The better readings omit the words “of Him”, and give the title “Christ Jesus”.

“*The promise in Christ Jesus.*”—Paul, when writing to Timothy his last “prison epistle”, calls himself:--

“An apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life, which is in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. i. 1).

Writing to Titus between the two imprisonments he speaks of the :--

“hope of *aionian* life which God, that cannot lie, promised before age times, but hath in due times (or, its own particular seasons) manifested His word through a proclamation with which I (*egō*) was entrusted” (Titus i. 2, 3).

The Gentiles, here called and blessed, may indeed have been “strangers from the covenants of promise” while “in flesh”, but “in spirit” they are “joint-partakers” of a promise which goes back before the age times, and before the overthrow of the world.

Such is the sphere and character of the unity created by the Lord during this time of Israel’s blindness.

We rejoice at the testimony of “All Scripture” to the joys and blessings which are stored up for Israel, the nations, the groaning creation, and the church of God. nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for higher things than Abraham hoped or the Prophets dreamed.

“There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory” (I Cor. xv. 41).

**#52. Two aspects of the Apostle's ministry (Eph. iii. 7, 8).
pp. 149 - 152**

We have considered the great threefold statement concerning Gentile blessing. We now pass on to observe the added statements of the passage. In verses 7 and 8 appear two descriptions of one office, the one viewed from the standpoint of Divine appointment, the other from the standpoint of human fitness. From the standpoint of Divine appointment the wording is direct, unapologetic, full of the consciousness of spiritual importance. On the human side there is intense humility, but in both there is *grace*. The apostle speaking of his ministry says that it was:--

“According to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power.”

The wording here is noteworthy. “Effectual working” is in the original *energeia* = “inworking” or “energy”. Power is the word *dunamis*. In Eph. i. 18-20, speaking of the resurrection of Christ at the conclusion of the first prayer, the apostle says:--

“That ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of His power (*dunamis*) to usward who believe, according to the working (*energeia*) of the strength of His might, which He wrought (*energeō*) in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead.”

We say “speaking of the resurrection of Christ”, but the passage is more strictly concerning the power which is to “usward who believe”. The mighty power which raised Christ from the dead is “to usward who believe”. Such a statement when compared with the poverty of our present experiences of the grace of God may sound strange, but it is a Scripture *for us* and *about us*. Again in chapter iii. 20, 21, at the conclusion of the second prayer of the epistle, the apostle says:--

“Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power (*dunamis*) that worketh (*energeō*) in us. Unto Him be glory.”

Here again the fulfillment of this prayer is associated with the same marvelous power and energy. In chapter iv. 16 this energy is seen pulsating through every member of the One body as its very life blood:--

“From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working (*energeia*) in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

In direct contrast with these passages comes the statement in Eph. ii. 2:--

“According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh (*energeō*) in the children of disobedience.”

This dread energizing is manifested in the “lust of the flesh, fulfilling the wills of the flesh and of the mind” (verse 3) and those thus energized have no idea that in thus following their own bent they are being so led and empowered. This is probably so with regard to the believer. In the ordinary way this energy of God which flows to us through

the risen Christ may not make any great show of power, but just as the children of disobedience are unconsciously energized by the evil spirit to fulfil the will of the flesh, so the believer is unconsciously energized to do the will of God. The hymn expresses the thought perhaps as well as any words we could say:--

“And every virtue we possess,
And every victory won.
And every thought of holiness,
Are His alone.”

The whole spiritual life and service of the believer is the outworking of the risen life of Christ. In the case of the apostle the ministry of the one body was carried out by the same glorious power. The smallest and most insignificant member of the body likewise cannot minister to his fellow-member apart from this same power. If we keep to the figure of the body, we can say of this energy, “the blood is the life”. Without this “power of His resurrection” the body would be dead, and all activity would cease.

The reader may be stimulated to review the teaching of the Scriptures with regard to this word *energeia* by the complete list of occurrences which are as follows: Eph. i. 19, iii. 7, iv. 16; Phil. iii. 21; Col. i. 29, ii. 12; II Thess. ii. 9-11.

This apostle, in no degree behind the chiefest apostles, this apostle, who “glorified” his office, could nevertheless write in the very next verse, “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given”. Fearless proclamation, unflinching courage, immovable convictions, are not necessarily separated from lowliness of mind. Moses, the master mind of Israel, was the meekest man on earth. Paul, who would not yield in subjection for an hour at Jerusalem (Gal. ii. 5), could nevertheless call himself the chief of sinners and one utterly unworthy of the sacred trust given to him. Let us notice the humble mind of this great apostle, and seek to emulate it also:--

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints” (Eph. iii. 8).

“I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am” (I Cor. xv. 9, 10).

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, Who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief sinners, of whom I am chief” (I Tim. i. 12-15).

The conscience of the apostle was still tender when he wrote to Timothy. Years of faithful service, of unparalleled suffering, of heroic conflicts, of glorious testimony, never hid from the great apostle’s eyes, his own personal unworthiness. It was the grace of God that made him what he was. It was His mercy that placed him in the ministry.

It is one of the trials of Christian service to feel constrained to be emphatic with regard to truth, uncompromising with regard to stewardship, and ever conscious of a sacred trust, and yet to be ever reminded of those things that one did “ignorantly in unbelief”, and of the many personal fallings and shortcomings so palpable to the senses of those who do not believe one’s testimony. It is however a cause for great thankfulness that in

the example of the apostle we find encouragement to continue in the narrow and difficult path, even though we have continually to confess our own unworthiness and failure. The gospel of grace, in the dispensation of grace, is carried on by grace, and grace speaks of favour to the unworthy.

The same Paul who in real humility wrote to the Corinthians that he was the “least of the apostles” was equally inspired to write to the same church that he was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles (II Cor. xi. 5), repeating the claim, with the added touch of conscious personal demerit:--

“In nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles, *though I be nothing*” (II Cor. xii. 11).

May grace be given to every reader so happily to combine true zeal with the grace of true humility.

#53. The Gospel of Unsearchable Riches (Eph. iii. 8). pp. 184 - 187

The two presentations of the apostle’s conception of his calling, the one the minister gifted by grace and energized by power, the other gifted by grace because so personally unworthy, is followed by two aspects of his special ministry:--

1. “That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (iii. 8)
2. “And to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery” (iii. 9).

He had already spoken of two mysteries; the one, the mystery of Christ, the other, the mystery of the dispensation; and had claimed a great knowledge of the former (verse 4), and an exclusive revelation of the latter (verses 3, 9). The mystery of Christ finds its utterance in the unsearchable riches of Christ; the mystery itself is explained by the words of verse 9. Let us examine these parallel statements. Firstly, the unsearchable riches of Christ. Three items should be observed here. Following the order of the original:--

- (1). Among the Gentiles.
- (2). To preach as a gospel.
- (3). The unsearchable riches of Christ.

The sphere of the apostle’s witness is defined as among the Gentiles. We are still dealing with his special ministry. The nature of the announcement must be noted. It is not a *kērugma*, or the proclamation of a herald, but it is an *evangel*, a preaching as of a gospel. The special for the Church of the One Body is here indicated. There are two “preachings” mentioned in Ephesians, viz., (1) “He came and preached peace” (ii. 17 - this had to do with the constitution of the New man, all faction being destroyed, and reconciliation being perfected); and (2) “That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (iii. 8). The two together make up the good news

concerning the rejected yet glorified Head, and the members of His body. There are four references to a gospel in Ephesians:--

“The **gospel** of your salvation” (i. 13).

“The **gospel** whereof Paul was made a minister” (iii. 6, 7).

“The preparation of the **gospel** of peace” (vi. 15, which echoes ii. 17).

“The mystery of the **gospel**” (vi. 19, which echoes the gospel of the unsearchable riches of iii. 8).

The subject of this gospel as we have already seen is the unsearchable riches of Christ. The word translated “unsearchable” occurs elsewhere in the N.T. only once. In Rom. xi. 33 it is rendered “past finding out”. The LXX uses the word three times in Job:--

“Which doeth great things and *unsearchable*” (v. 9*)

“Who doeth mighty works, *past finding out*,
And wondrous things, in number infinite.

Behold! He passeth, but I see Him not;

He sweepeth by, but is invisible” (ix. 10, 11*).

“He breaks the strong in ways we *cannot trace*;

And others, in their stead, He setteth up” (xxxiv. 24*).

[* - Metrical Version, see *The Companion Bible*.]

The important part of *anexichniastos* is *ichnos* = “a step” (see Rom. iv. 12; II Cor. xii. 18, and I Pet. ii. 21). The idea of the word is expressed by “untraceable”, no footmark being found. The main features of Messianic prophecy are plainly marked upon the page of Scripture. The “mystery of Christ”, the “mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven”, were not so plainly understood. The special phase of the mystery of Christ which is related to the Church of the One Body was untrackable—no trace being found. The apostle Paul preached Christ in a manner impossible to others before him. Who, before the preaching of Paul, knew that the rejected Christ had been raised far above all principality and power, and had been made Head over all things to the Church which is His body, during the very time when He had been rejected as Head over all things in the wider sphere of God’s purposes? Christ is essential to the Church, and it is not possible to speak of the constitution of the Church until the position of Christ is first realized. Is He severed for the time from Israel and earthly things? then I can understand the status of the Church of the One Body, and its political seat in heaven. Is He nevertheless raised to the very right hand of God in the super-heavenlies? then I can appreciate the revelation of that blessed sphere as being that of the Church’s blessing. The order of verse 8 and 9 is inspired and logical. First the unsearchable riches of Christ, then the dispensation of the mystery. Let us not pass over the fact that we are dealing with “riches”.

The tragedy of Israel’s fall became “the riches of the Gentiles” (Rom. xi. 12), and the rejection of their Messiah did not rob Him, it but revealed His boundless reserves of wealth. Old Testament prophecy, type and ritual is full of the riches of Christ, riches of the majesty of His kingship, riches of the fullness of His one offering, riches of the plenitude of His doctrine, but these by no means exhausted the statement of His wealth. He had riches in glory, that had never been made known, and they are revealed in the

mystery of Christ, for the first time in this epistle. Here are riches of grace (i. 7); riches of glory (i. 18, iii. 16); and exceeding riches of grace (ii. 7).

The mystery of Christ, the unsearchable riches of Christ, constitute the riches of the glory of the mystery. Without these unsearchable riches the dispensation of the mystery would be a dispensation of beggary. Every member of the One Body would be a Syrophenician suing for crumbs from Israel's table. The apostle makes this clear in Col. i. 27:--

“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.”

What is it? Shall we enumerate the spiritual blessings? Shall we dilate upon heavenly places? Shall we exult in the threefold equality? We cannot. These are valueless and empty without the risen and ascended Christ. The riches of the glory of the mystery among the Gentiles is “*Christ among you the hope of the glory*”. In Rom. i. 1-4 the gospel of God is defined as:--

“Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.”

The Christ of Eph. iii. is the same blessed person. He is still so far as the flesh is concerned “the seed of David”, but the revelation of His present position is much more wonderful than that given in Rom. i.:--

“Dost thou remember Jesus Christ, the One having been raised from the dead, of the seed of David, *according to my gospel*, wherein I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds” (II Tim. ii. 8, 9).

Without a knowledge of the mystery of Christ we cannot preach the gospel that harmonies with the truth of the One Body.

We must reserve the consideration of the message of Eph. iii. 9 for another paper. Meanwhile may we rejoice in the riches here revealed to our faith, and find our hearts knit together and comforted as we meditate upon all that they mean to us and to our blessed Lord.

Paul and his Traducers.

#1. “Christ or Paul?” pp. 79, 80

The opposition and misrepresentation which marked the course of the Apostle Paul’s ministry has never died down and to-day among Christian people many hard, biased and untrue things are said against this servant of Christ.

Our sub-title “Christ or Paul?” is the quintessence of prejudice and ignorance, we only use it in order to show its untruth. The words “Christ OR Paul?” imply that Paul set himself up in opposition to Christ and that his doctrine is a substitute for the doctrine of Christ. Let the apostle speak for himself, and upon the testimony of his own words let both the apostle and his traducers be judged:--

“Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name” (I Cor. i. 13-15).

“But we preach Christ crucified” (I Cor. i. 23).

“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed?” (I Cor. iii. 5).

“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (I Cor. iii. 6, 7).

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God” (I Cor. iv. 1).

“Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Cor. xi. 1).

“The Head of every man is Christ” (I Cor. xi. 3).

“We preach NOT OURSELVES, but Christ Jesus the Lord” (II Cor. iv. 5).

“We have this treasure in earthen vessels” (II Cor. iv. 7).

“Now then we are *ambassadors* for Christ” (II Cor. v. 20).

“Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (II Cor. xii. 9).

“Since ye seek a proof of CHRIST speaking in me” (II Cor. xiii. 3).

We have limited ourselves for the time being to a few passages in I & II Corinthians. If we quoted nothing further, these statements of the apostle in his letters to one church only would be sufficient to set aside as biased and untruthful the insinuation contained in the words “Christ or Paul?” In the epistles Christ speaks *through* Paul, the latter being His ambassador, His minister.

We hope to return to this subject again.

#2. “The Slave of Christ.” pp. 126 - 128

What is Paul’s own statement as to his relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ? “Paul, a bond servant (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ”. So opens the epistle to the Romans. After speaking of the Risen Christ, Paul says:--

“By Whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name” (Rom. i. 5).

Then towards the close of this wonderful epistle the apostle says:--

“I written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given me of God, that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles” (Rom. xv. 15, 16).

In Galatians we have this utterance:--

“From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks (*stigmata*, the brand marks upon slaves) of the Lord Jesus” (Gal. vi. 17).

In Ephesians, Paul says:--

“Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. iii. 8).

Philippians presents a deeper and more loyal love and service to Christ than has ever been shown by mortal man:--

”With all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life, or by death. For to me to live—CHRIST” (Phil. i. 20, 21).

Writing to Timothy years after the day of his conversion, Paul says:--

“I thank Christ Jesus our Lord Who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry: who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious” (I Tim. i. 12, 13).

And again:--

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the *testimony of our Lord*, nor of me His prisoner” (II Tim. i. 8).

Paul rarely refers to the Saviour as “Jesus”; to him “Jesus is LORD” (I Cor. xii. 3). “To us there is but ONE LORD Jesus Christ” (I Cor. viii. 6). The glory of the sevenfold unity of the Spirit is the central figure, viz., “One Lord” (Eph. iv. 5) and looking forward to the day that is coming this slave of the Lord could glory in the thought that then “every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 10, 11). In the same introduction to the Romans where the

apostle styles himself the bond-slave, he gives the full title of his Master, as “Jesus Christ His Son, our Lord” (Rom. i. 3).

We have observed that many of those who are antagonistic to the teaching of Christ through Paul rarely speak of the Saviour by His risen title of “Lord”, but usually and familiarly speak of Him as “Jesus”. His bond-slaves, “bought with a price”, will only too gladly confess Him continually as Lord.

Truth and lies have no neutral ground between them. Whether the unjust statements concerning Paul proceed from ignorance or malice, from untaught zeal or from hatred to truth, such statements are lies and those utter them are liars, the Scriptures quoted above being witness.

#3. “The name of Jesus Lord.” **pp. 143, 144**

As mentioned briefly in our last article, many who speak slightly of the Apostle Paul, and who make a great show of love and loyalty to Christ speak of Him continually as “Jesus”. The man whom they traduce ever owned Him as “Lord”. The very first utterance of the converted Pharisee was “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” (Acts ix. 6). These words epitomized his ministry. To Paul “Jesus was Lord”, and Paul his bond slave. What a contrast to the unholy familiarity of those who continually use the name “Jesus” is Paul’s declaration in Rom. i. 3 that the gospel of God is concerning “His Son Jesus Christ our Lord”!

Paul, as soon as he was converted and had entered Damascus:--

“Straightway preached Jesus in the synagogues, that He is the *Son of God*
proving that this is very *Christ* he spake boldly in the name of the *Lord Jesus*”
(Acts ix. 20-27).

Throughout his testimony he spoke of Christ in terms that acknowledged His glory and Headship. Where the many, to-day, who are not worthy to unloose the latchet of Paul’s shoes, so familiarly address the Risen Son of God as “Jesus”, Paul bows before Him and owns Him “Lord”. To Paul He is “The great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus ii. 13).

In the short epistle of II Thessalonians Paul makes reference to Christ twenty-four times. Eleven times he uses the title “The Lord Jesus Christ”, nine times “The Lord”, twice “Christ”, once “Lord Jesus”, and once “the Lord of Peace”. Surely the man who within the brief compass of 47 verses uses these full titles so frequently (one to every two verses) manifests the attitude of heart and mind that was his toward the Saviour. We know not whether other epistles would reveal more or less than II Thessalonians—we simply picked upon this as being brief.

In Phil. ii. and Eph. iv., where Paul does use the name “Jesus”, the exceptions prove the rule. In the one passage “every knee is to bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is LORD”, in the other, Christ is seen as the Head of the New Creation. The few occasions where Paul departs from the usual acknowledgment of the Lordship of the Christ are all justified by their contexts.

Again we feel that Paul has a lesson to teach those who prefer “the teachings of Jesus” to the “opinions of Paul”.

#4. “Paul’s Opinions.” pp. 171, 172

Those who speak against the apostle Paul and place the “teaching of Jesus” in contrast with the epistles, speak of the teaching of those epistles as “Paul’s opinions”. Let us therefore have Paul’s own testimony concerning the doctrine he proclaimed, for which he lived, and for which he eventually died:--

“I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the REVELATION of Jesus Christ it pleased God to REVEAL His Son in me immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood” (Gal. i.).

In proof the apostle brings forward his known manner of life to show how impossible it was for the doctrine he preached to have originated in his own mind, further, he declares that no man taught him, and in proof he shows that three years of preaching went by before he even saw Peter, and fourteen years before he went up to the Council at Jerusalem. In I Thessalonians he reminds them of the way in which the gospel came to him:--

“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance” (i. 5).

“When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as word of men, but as it is in truth, the WORD OF GOD, which effectually worketh also in you that believe” (ii. 13).

“For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain, etc.” (iv. 15).

Apart from the personal inspiration of the apostle, his epistles are replete with references to the Old Testament Scriptures. During the Acts period he could say of his ministry:--

“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come” (Acts xxvi. 22).

Not only could Paul declare that his message was “according to the Scriptures”, but Peter, who confessed that there were many things in Paul’s writings “hard to be understood”, which the unlearned wrested unto their own destruction, Peter, who so clearly expresses his understanding of the inspiration of Scripture (II Pet. i. 19-21), Peter includes Paul’s epistles among the Scriptures (II Pet. iii. 16). Paul wrote by the same authority as did Moses, Matthew, Peter and John.

#5. Christ Risen. pp. 189, 190

There are some who say with Mary, “They have taken away my Lord”, when they refer to the supposed results of following the teaching of the epistles of Paul.

Unconsciously by so quoting Mary’s statement they reveal the true state of affairs. Shorn of sentiment Mary’s utterance amounts to a confession of unbelief in the resurrection of Christ. Those who oppose the teaching of Paul’s epistles *know Christ after the flesh*, but seem to have no practical place for *Christ risen*. When once the fact has been grasped that the same Person, Christ Himself, speaks whether in the Sermon on the Mount, Peter’s epistles, the Apocalypse, Romans or Ephesians, all such invidious distinctions must cease, and Matthew, Peter, John and Paul are channels only, ambassadors, servants, mouthpieces, but not originators.

Paul’s conversion was by the personal revelation of the risen Christ (Acts ix.). His gospel was

“Concerning His Son declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. i. 3, 4).

So vital was the truth of the resurrection to the apostle’s ministry, that he declared that forgiveness of sins, future hope, and present faith were vain, if Christ were not risen. The life which the apostle lived in the flesh he lived by faith of the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20), and heart belief that God had raised Christ from the dead meant salvation (Rom. x. 9).

Apart from resurrection Christ could not have entered into His office as the last Adam (I Cor. xv.).

“To this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and living” (Rom. xiv. 9).

Paul’s teaching starts with the death and resurrection of Christ, whereas Matthew’s ends with it. In the prison epistles the emphasis is not only upon the *risen* Christ, but also upon the *ascended* Lord, for resurrection does not necessarily remove from earth to heaven. To those who turn a deaf ear to the words of the risen Christ by reason of antipathy towards the instrument He has chosen, we would quote Heb. xii. 25:--

“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.”

Redemption.

#1. The Kinsman-Redeemer. pp. 109 -112

It may appear in the eyes of some readers that a series of articles upon "Redemption" can be intended only for those who are in need of the first principles of the truth, and that those to whom *The Berean Expositor* chiefly addresses its testimony may pass these articles by without much loss. We believe, however, that some of the most advanced readers of this magazine entertain views that have come down the age as truth, but which will not stand the test of impartial scriptural investigation, and if this should be so, it necessarily follows that our understanding of the whole purpose of the ages must suffer, and our views on many related themes be distorted.

It is possible that some doctrines which have been held very tenaciously may be seriously called in question, and that other and perhaps neglected aspects will have to take a more prominent place. We therefore trust that all our readers will realize the fundamental importance of the subject and will, as a result, be the more desirous that the teaching of the Scriptures shall be accepted in full. It is not possible to consider the teaching of Scripture with regard to *Redemption*, without also taking into account the teaching of the same Word as to the *Redeemer*. Redemption is not an abstract thing, it is the work of a Personal Redeemer. That Redeemer is set forth in clear, unmistakable characters, and when we have grasped the essential conditions that had to be fulfilled before one could become a Redeemer, we shall at the same time grasp more fully the scope of Redemption itself.

In the A.V. O.T. there is but one word translated *Redeemer*, that word being *Goel*. The book which most vividly portrays the Scriptural features of the Redeemer is the book of Ruth. A certain man left Bethlehem-Judah, by reason of famine, and went into Moab, taking with him his wife Naomi and two sons, Mahlon and Chilion. There Elimelech dies, and the two sons marry. They also die, and Naomi, hearing that the Lord had visited His people with bread, arises to return to Bethlehem. The two daughters-in-law go with her, but one, Orpah, turns back, Ruth alone accompanying Naomi back to Bethlehem, arriving at the beginning of barley harvest, and therefore at the time of the Passover.

A kinsman of Naomi's husband, a man of wealth, named Boaz, owned fields of corn, and into this man's field Ruth goes to glean. Boaz deals very kindly with her on account of her faithful conduct toward Naomi. When Ruth returned with the result of her day's gleaning and told Naomi of the attitude of Boaz, Naomi praised the Lord, and said, "The man is near of kin unto us, *one of our next kinsmen*" (Ruth ii. 20). The A.V. margin reads "One that hath right to redeem". Acting upon Naomi's instructions Ruth lies at the feet of Boaz on the threshing floor, and at midnight upon being discovered Ruth answers, "I am Ruth thine handmaid, spread therefore thy wing over thine handmaid, *for thou art a*

near kinsman” (iii. 9). Again the A.V. margin reads, “One that hath right to redeem”. Boaz now reveals a fact that made a pause in the accomplishment of Naomi’s purpose.

“It is true that I am thy near *kinsman*: howbeit there is a *kinsman* nearer than i. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if *he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman*, well; *let him do the kinsman’s part*: but if he will not *do the part of a kinsman to thee*, then will I *do the part of a kinsman to thee*, as the Lord liveth” (Ruth iii. 12, 13).

It is evident from what has been already quoted that pity, love, power, or any other attribute associated in our minds with Redemption cannot be put into operation until *kinship* is established.

The fourth chapter of Ruth shows us Boaz obtaining the right of redemption, and putting it into operation:--

“Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there; and, behold, *the kinsman* of whom Boaz spake came by” (Ruth iv. 1).

Boaz puts before this kinsman the case of Naomi, saying:--

“If *thou wilt redeem it*, *redeem it*: but if *thou wilt not redeem it*, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to *redeem it* beside thee: and I am after thee. And he said I will *redeem it*” (Ruth iv. 4).

When, however, Boaz gave this kinsman to understand that the redemption of the inheritance of Naomi involved the raising up of the name of the dead husband of Ruth, the kinsman withdrew. The law says:--

“If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold some of his possessions, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold” (Lev. xxv. 25).

“If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: *her husband’s next kinsman* (margin) shall take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband’s next kinsman unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed *in the name of his brother which is dead*, that his name be not put out of Israel. And if the man like not to take his next kinsman’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband’s brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband’s next kinsman Then shall his brother’s wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother’s house, and his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed” (Deut. xxv. 5-10).

Boaz said before the elders:--

“Ye are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech’s, and all that was Chilion’s and Mahlon’s, of the hand of Naomi, Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: Ye are witnesses this day” (Ruth iv. 9, 10).

Here we have emphasized the great outstanding fact that the Redeemer must be Kinsman. We must devote further space to the consideration of the following points:--

- (1). Christ as the Kinsman-Redeemer.
- (2). The typical meaning of the Kinsman nearer than Boaz.
- (3). The declared purpose of this redemption, and its bearing upon the doctrine of Redemption at large.

#2. Immanuel, God with us. pp. 113 - 115

Every occurrence of the word "Redeemer" in the A.V. Old Testament is a translation of *goel* and means, as is Ruth, the Kinsman-Redeemer. The many passages in Isaiah where the word occurs reveal most plainly that the Redeemer is Jehovah. He is called "The Holy One of Israel", "Creator", "King of Israel", "Lord of Hosts", "The Lord Thy God", "Him Whom man despiseth and the nation abhorreth", "The Mighty One of Jacob", "The God of the whole earth shall He be called", "The Redeemer shall come to Zion", "Thou Lord art our Father, our Redeemer from everlasting" (*olam*).

If we quote no further, we have given sufficient to cause the careful reader to think. If Jehovah, the Creator, is at the same time Kinsman to the sons of Adam, then the remaining testimony of Isaiah is absolutely necessary to make the revelation rational. *God must become flesh and blood*. Isaiah names this mighty Redeemer, Immanuel, God with us. Not only so, he reveals in plain terms that Jehovah was to be born of a virgin, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel". The fulfillment of this remarkable statement is found in Matt. i. 20-23. John, in the opening verses of his Gospel, also reveals this mighty truth. "The Word was God", "The Word became flesh the only begotten of the Father." In Gal. iv. 4, 5 the apostle passes from the question of the heir and the inheritance, to Christ as the Kinsman-Redeemer of that inheritance:--

"When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, *to redeem*"

Heb. ii. 14, 15 speaks of this kinship in strong terms:--

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

The office of the Kinsman-Redeemer is twofold, and that twofold character is plainly indicated in Heb. ii. "Flesh and blood destroy deliver."

The very same word (*goel*) which we have looked at in the rendering Kinsman-Redeemer is also translated, *The Revenger*, in the title "the revenger of blood" (Numb. xxxv. 19, etc.). "The day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My

redeemed is come” (Isa. lxii. 4) shews the intimate association of the two thoughts. Christ as the Kinsman-Redeemer came to destroy and to deliver. This is not only set forth in Heb. ii., but in I John iii. 5-8:--

“And ye know that He was manifested *to take away* our sins; and in Him is no sin For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, *that He might* destroy the works of the devil.”

The Lord Jesus Christ bears the title “Firstborn of every creature” (Col. i. 15). This tells us that He stands intimately related to the whole creation, and renders the deliverance of the groaning a possibility, for the right of redemption is His. The same Lord is also “The Seed of the Woman”, “The Last Adam”, “The Second Man” and “The Son of Man”. This renders possible the wondrous redemptive words of I Cor. xv. 22:--

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Christ moreover is the Seed of Abraham, and this brings the blessings of Abraham to both Jew and Gentile (Gal. iii.). He is moreover the Son of David, and can alone redeem the forfeited Kingdom. Possibly the reader will by this time perceive the fallacy which lies in the argument of those who speak of Christ as *either Redeemer or King*. Matt. i. brings into close association “Son of David”, “Son of Abraham”, “Jesus, Who saves His people from their sins” and “Immanuel, God with us”.

We feel that the *place* of redemption in the purpose of the ages has been very much misunderstood, but its consideration we must leave until other phases of the subject have been seen. Sufficient for our purpose has been brought together. Christ is the true Kinsman-Redeemer, and the birth of Christ at Bethlehem was absolutely essential to His rendering work.

#3. The Nearest of Kin who failed. pp. 129, 130

When studying the book of Ruth we are at first somewhat disappointed to find that Boaz, the mighty and merciful deliverer of the afflicted, was not the nearest of kin:--

“It is true that I am thy kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I” (Ruth iii. 12).

If Boaz be typical of Christ, of whom is the nearer kinsman typical? In Psa. xlix. 7, 8 we read:--

“No man can by any means redeem (Heb. *padah*) his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him (for the redemption of their soul is so costly that it ceaseth for ever).”

The word “ceaseth” is sometimes translated “forbear”, “leave off”, the idea being that the redemption of man is so infinitely beyond his own powers that it must be left alone; if no redeemer is to be found except man himself, redemption is impossible.

The nearest of kin, nearer than Boaz himself, is mankind. Man however can never be his own saviour. He stands exposed before all as a failure. Every son of Adam bears the reproach of Deut. xxv. 10:--

“His name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed.”

In Isa. lix. 20 we read:--

“And the Redeemer (*Goel*) shall come to Zion.”

This Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the context suggests the kinsman nearer than He, who failed:--

“And He saw there was *no man*, and wondered that there was *no intercessor*: therefore His arm brought salvation” (Isa. lix. 16).

The word translated intercessor, occurs in Isa. liii. 6 and 12. “The Lord hath *made to meet* on Him the iniquity of us all”, and “*made intercession* for the transgressors”. Man’s failure is further set forth in such passages as Rom. viii. 3 together with the triumph of Christ, the true Redeemer:--

“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son IN THE LIKENESS of sinful flesh (did).”

The utter inability of man by nature to accomplish his own redemption is too fully set forth in Scripture, and is too really fundamental to need further proof. The whole plan of redemption presupposes man’s hopeless state, and indicates most clearly the antitype of the man who failed to redeem his brother’s forfeited inheritance.

#4. Resurrection Life. pp. 145 - 147

The declared purpose of the redemption by the kinsman-redeemer in the law, and in the book of Ruth, is “to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance”. The firstborn which the wife of the dead man bears as a result of the kinsman taking her to wife “shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out in Israel” (Deut. xxv. 6).

Types fail, and wherever resurrection is typified a certain amount of accommodation is necessitated. When the death and resurrection of Christ was set forth by the killing of a bird and the setting free of a bird, two birds were necessary, but not to set forth two Persons; so with this great type of the redemption set forth in Ruth and the law. It was not possible for the dead man to be brought to life again in order that he may enjoy his inheritance. *That* is redemption in reality, but in the type *his name* is perpetuated as a

symbol of himself. The idea of new life as a result of redemption is suggested in the prayer of Psa. cxix. 154:--

“Plead my cause, and deliver me (as a kinsman-redeemer), *quicken* me according to Thy word.”

Psa. lxix., so full of Messianic prophecy, suggests a similar thought:--

“Draw nigh unto my soul and redeem it” (verse 18).

Heb. v. tells us that Christ prayed unto Him that was able to save Him out of death and that He was heard. This could not possibly mean that the Saviour sought to *escape* death, but it means, as Psa. xvi. so fully declares, that His soul was not left in Sheol, in other words, redemption here indicates *new life in resurrection*. Psa. ciii. 4 includes among the “benefits” meet for thanksgiving, “Who redeemeth thy life from destruction”. Hosea however most powerfully sets forth this glorious goal of redemption:--

“I will *ransom* them from the power of the grace, I will *redeem* them from death” (Hosea xiii. 14).

We had occasion to quote Psa. xlix. when explaining the nearer kinsman than Boaz. This Psalm also strongly emphasizes that resurrection is the one grand effect of the Hebrew conception of redemption:--

“None of them can by any means redeem his brother that he should still live for ever and not see corruption” (Psa. xlix. 7-9).

The testimony of Job xix. 25-27 is to the same effect:--

“I know that my Redeemer (ever) lives,
And at the latter day on earth shall stand;
And after (worms) this body have consumed,
Yet in my flesh I shall Eloah see:
Whom I, e'en I, shall see upon my side
Mine eyes shall see Him—stranger now no more:
(For this) my inmost soul with longing waits.”

(New Metrical Version.—See Companion Bible.)

Redemption enables us to look death in the face and call it by its ugly name. It enables us to speak of corruption and the grave, and to recognize that death is an “enemy”. Philosophy and Religion glory over death. They speak of death as a bright angel, as the great adventure, a transition, as the gate to life—anything but its true character. The believer who realizes redemption is delivered from the *bondage of the fear of death*. We quote the passage from Heb. ii. again:--

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same: that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil: and *deliver* them who *through fear of death* were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

The great goal of redemption as applied to the wide circle of creation is expressed in terms that run parallel with the hope of Job:--

“The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of CORRUPTION into the glorious liberty of the children of God the *redemption of our body*” (Rom. viii. 21-23).

Christ Himself expresses this glorious truth in Rev. i. 17, 18:--

“Fear not I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have *the keys of Hades and of death.*”

#5. Redemption and its Implications. **pp. 161, 162**

We have seen in the previous articles sufficient to warrant the following conclusions:-

1. REDEMPTION INVOLVES KINSHIP.—The Lord Jesus Christ, in order that He may redeem, must be partaker of flesh and blood as we are. He must be not only Son of David, Son of Abraham, Son of God, but He must be Son of MAN.

2. REDEMPTION IMPLIES THE RIGHT TO REDEEM.—Boaz possessed wealth, kindness, desire, but these availed nothing until he also established the “right to redeem” in the presence of the elders of the city.

3. REDEMPTION IMPLIES A FORFEITED INHERITANCE.—This item is so vital and so important that we pass on, devoting a separate article to its bearing upon the subject.

4. REDEMPTION ALSO IMPLIES BONDAGE.—This too demands a careful separate study.

5. REDEMPTION INVOLVES UNION WITH THE REDEEMER.—Boaz not only purchased the inheritance, but he married Ruth. This marriage was not a mere personal fancy, it was the essential feature of the contract that prevented the nearer kinsman from entering into his right to redeem.

The reader will call to mind many passages of Scripture which make union with Christ a vital part of the great plan of redemption. This we must see more fully together.

Questions such as “Does man suffer the penalty of sin?” “Did Christ bear the punishment of sin?” “To whom was the ransom paid?” can only be truthfully answered by those who have a scriptural (as opposed to a theological) conception of redemption. The subject is so personal, so vital, so fundamental, that freedom from error, and clearness of understanding, seem to be essential to a right understanding of the Purpose of the Ages.

#6. The Forfeited Inheritance. pp. 177 - 180

If we take the inspired type of Redemption as our guide, much that is dealt with under different heads of systematic theology will appear somewhat beside the mark.

Let us take as our guide in this article the underlying thought contained in the Hebrew *goel*, or kinsman-redeemer, namely that of the redemption of a forfeited inheritance. And further, let us adjust our focus upon that passage of Scripture which is the Charter of the Church of the One Body (Eph. i. 3-14). The general arrangement of the passage is known to most readers. In these few verses we have:--

The blessings of the Father (3-6).
The blessings of the Son (7-12).
The blessings of the Spirit (13, 14).

As we read through these verses we observe that each set has its own distinctive features. Verses 3-6 are taken up with the great purpose of the Father before the overthrow of the world, which chose certain sons of Adam in Christ and blessed them with every spiritual blessing in the super-heavenlies, the great purpose in this choice being that such should be holy and without blemish before Him. These happy and blessed children of men, moreover, have an inheritance (the adoption—a term which necessitates a separate article) in those heavenly places, love having predestined them for this high honour, and their choice by the Father “in Christ” is filled out in the closing term:--

“To the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He hath highly favoured us in the Beloved” (verse 6).

Now, contrary to what most teach, and contrary to what we ourselves have held, we submit that in these verses there *is no place for redemption*. This choice was definitely made BEFORE the overthrow (it makes no difference if any reader chooses to retain the word “foundation”). Sin is nowhere in sight. The choice “in Christ”, and the high favour “in the Beloved”, are in perfect harmony with the high glory which Christ had before the overthrow of the world (John xvii.) as the Firstborn of all creation. Sinless beings, chosen that they may be holy and without blemish and destined to occupy the very highest conceivable position in glory, such is the inheritance provisioned by the Father “before age times”.

When we come to the second set of verses (7-12) we are in a different atmosphere. Here we read of redemption, and that through the blood of Christ, Who therefore must have become partaker of flesh and blood and hence our Kinsman. Here we read of sins and their forgiveness as something essentially connected with this redemption. Not only do we read now of grace, but of riches of grace, for the truth is that those who were

marked off for the high inheritance of glory by the Father are found “sold under sin”. Adam, the first father, by his one act of disobedience involved all his descendants in the forfeiture of the inheritance, and brought them under the bondage of corruption, sin and death. Here then is the place for redemption.

To intrude redemption by blood into verses 3-6 is a gross blunder. Did the Father of grace and glory need the shedding of blood to move Him to choose and plan His purposes of love? This is not the case. The truth is that sin and death, entering in and temporarily cutting across His mighty purpose, could not thwart Him of His goal. His chosen shall yet sit in heavenly places, and if needs be God Himself will provide the ransom. The horrible idea so often uttered that a “kind Jesus” interposed between the sinner and “an angry God” cannot find support in the Word. The “angry God” Himself “so loved the world that HE GAVE His only begotten Son”. God provided the ransom, and certainly He did not pay it to Himself. Redemption becomes understandable and real when viewed in the light of the forfeited inheritance. Sins barred the way to glory, not only by reason of their utter opposition to the one great quality expressed in the words “holy and without blame”, but also in the related penalty of death which ended all possibility of inheritance. Sins therefore are included in the great act of redemption. They are “forgiven” (*aphesis* = “forgiveness” and *aphiemi* = “to forgive”). Matt. vi. 12 uses the word in its primitive sense of discharging a debt. In Matt. xix. 14 the rendering “suffer” in the sense of “allow”, “do not dismiss”, and Matt. iv. 11, “to leave”, further illuminate the word.

The debt of the sinner is cancelled by the redeeming blood, a fact wonderfully indicated by the apostle in the “nailing” of the “blotted out” handwriting to the cross (Col. ii. 14). Then the *secret* of God’s will is made known. This Kinsman-Redeemer is going to bring back the forfeited inheritance. Whether it be the destined place of the Church of the One body, the spotless glory of the Bride the Lamb’s wife, the wondrous ministry of the Kingdom of Priests, or the inclusion of the “ends of the earth” in the day when the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, the great secret of the Will of God is here made known. The forfeited inheritance is made secure “in Christ” the Redeemer. There is to be a period known as the fullness of the appointed times when God shall gather together under one head (*anakephalaiomai*) all things in Christ, the things in heaven and the things on earth, “in Him”. Now note the sequence:--

“In Whom also we have an inheritance, having been previously marked out according to the purpose of Him Who is operating all things agreeably to the counsel of His own Will” (Eph. i. 11).

In this re-union, this grand re-gathering, we shall find our forfeited inheritance. Predestination in this chapter is linked with two allied subjects, (1) “the adoption” according to the good pleasure of His will, (2) “the inheritance” according to the purpose of Him, etc. In the first place we have the purpose stated, in the second the purpose fulfilled. But, sin and death having intervened, the purpose is not carried through by the Father, but by the Mediator:--

“The man Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a Ransom for all, the testimony for its own appointed times” (I Tim. ii. 6).

The purpose “that we should be holy and without blame before Him” cannot be attained now, apart from redemption, and so we find this great purpose of the Father brought to pass by the Son (Eph. v. 25-27, “sanctify, cleanse, present it a church in glory holy and without blemish.”). So also Col. i. 22: by redemption those who had forfeited their inheritance “are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light”.

Space will not allow much upon the present witness of the Spirit (Eph. i. 13, 14). There we read of the “earnest”, the pledge, and that earnest is nothing less than the earnest of our INHERITANCE, which, being connected with such an expression as “unto the redemption of the *purchased possession*”, shews once more that redemption has in view, primarily, the purchase of the forfeited inheritance.

Studies in the Book of the Revelation.

#43. The Everlasting Gospel (xiv. 6, 7). pp. 13 - 16

“And I saw another angel flying in mid-heaven, having the aiōnion gospel to preach unto those sitting upon the earth, and upon every nation, and tribe, and language and people, saying with a loud voice, ‘Fear God, and give glory to Him, because the hour of His judgment is come, and worship Him that made the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and the fountain of waters.’”

Before considering the “everlasting gospel” we ask the reader’s attention to the people to whom that gospel is preached. “Them that dwell on the earth” appear to be one section, and “every nation, and tribe, and language and people”, appear to be the other. It will be noticed, however, in our rendering above that we have the words “those sitting upon the earth”. Our endeavour must always be first to realize what God says, and then to seek to understand the meaning of His words.

The expression “them that dwell upon the earth” is frequent in the Revelation, and the ordinary reader would most probably take it for granted that xiv. 6 was but another occurrence of the familiar phrase. This is not so however. The usual expression is found in xiii. 8, *hoi katoikountes epi tēs gēs*. *Katoikeō* means “to dwell”, and is a cognate of *oikos*, “a house”. The best texts do not read this word in xiv. 6, but *kathēmai*. This word is of frequent occurrence in the Apocalypse, and in many cases it has a special connection with the idea of authority.

In Rev. iv. 2, 3, 4, 9; v. 13; vii. 10, 15; xi. 16; xix. 4; xx. 11; xxi. 5 the references are to “sitting upon a *throne*”. In Rev. vi. 2, 4, 5, 8; ix. 17; xix. 11, 18, 19, 21 the references are to “sitting upon a *horse*”. Rev. xiv. 14, 15, 16, refers to “one sitting upon a *cloud*”. None of these passages convey the idea of merely resting but of sitting in authority, as King, as Elder, as Soldier. There are but five more occurrences of the word in Revelation, and they will identify the people to whom the *aiōnion* gospel is preached, and illuminate the true meaning of the clause that follows their mention:--

“The great whore that SITTETH upon many waters” (xvii. 1)

“A woman SITTING upon a scarlet coloured beast” (xvii. 3).

“The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman SITTETH, and they are seven kings” (xvii. 9).

“The waters where the whore SITTETH, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” (xvii. 15).

“I SIT a queen” (xviii. 7).

There is no passage in the Revelation where the verb “to sit” is used in any other way. Every occurrence has to do with rule. The one that “sitteth” on the many waters, and upon the beast, is Babylon. We can now view xiv. 6 in clearer light. “They that SIT upon the earth” are the leaders of the great Babylonian Apostasy.

The next consideration must be the relation which this great system has to those who are spoken of as “every nation”, &c. As the A.V. stands, the gospel is addressed.

1. To them that dwell upon the earth.
2. To every nation, &c.

But the word *epi* which occurs in the phrase “*upon* the earth” is repeated in the next sentence, “and *upon* every nation”. With xvii. 15 as our authority we can positively say that the meaning is that those same ones who are said to SIT upon the earth, are also said to SIT upon every nation, &c., for the very enumeration comes in xvii. 15. The beast of xiii. 7 received authority over (*epi*) every tribe, and people, and language and nation. This was the extent of Nebuchadnezzar’s dominion. His herald addressed the King’s command to “people, nations, and languages” (Dan. iii. 4, 7). The very strangeness of the expression, namely that of “languages” being “commanded” to fall down and worship Nebuchadnezzar’s golden image, is a connecting link with Rev. xiv.

Babylon and all that it means will SIT upon the very earth and its peoples. The scene on the plains of Dura will be re-enacted. The image of the beast takes the place of the golden image of Nebuchadnezzar, and death is the penalty, as before, for disobedience. The very throne of God is usurped. The creator Himself is denied. That throne is described in chapter iv., where we found our first occurrence of the word “sit”. There too heaven’s worship goes up to God as “Creator” (iv. 11). Soon evolution and kindred theories will have done their work. The whole of Science and Philosophy will have become enslaved by their teaching, and God Himself will be scientifically reduced to a cypher. Then the Man of Sin will mount the throne. Then the false prophet will demand universal worship of the beast and his image, and then will go forth the “everlasting gospel”.

We are sufficiently acquainted with the meaning and usage of *aiōn* and *aiōnios* to obviate the necessity of enlarging upon them here. The words mean, “an age, that which has to do with an age”, and this gospel announced from heaven by an angel is peculiarly fitted for the awful time of Babylon’s last grasp for Godless power. Unlike the gospel of the Kingdom, or the gospel of Grace, it does not call for repentance or for faith, but simply to “Fear God”. Do any of the oppressed nations, tribes, languages and peoples, hearken to this elemental message? Turn to chapter xv. There a company are seen who have overcome the beast, his image and his mark, and sing unto the Lord as to the *King of the Ages* saying:--

“Who shall not FEAR Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name? for Thou only art holy: for *all nations* shall come and worship before Thee, FOR THY JUDGMENTS are made manifest” (verse 4).

This is an echo of the evangel that saved them:--

“Fear God, and give glory to Him, FOR THE HOUR OF HIS JUDGMENT IS COME, and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters” (xiv. 7).

We are too prone to take our own times as a standard for judging other periods. *We* have no authority to preach as a gospel the fear and the worship of the Creator, but this will be the “good news” for the time of Babylonian supremacy. Further light upon this necessity will be found in Rom. i. 18-32. There it will be seen that the apostasy of the Gentile world in its beginnings foreshadows its final phase (Rev. xiii., xiv., xvii., xviii.). The Nations knew God, they were taught His relationship to creation, but they “glorified” Him not as God; they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an *image* made like corruptible man, birds, beasts, and reptiles. They changed the truth of God into THE LIE (see pages 161-163 of Volume IX for the close connection that this establishes between the 144,000 and this *aiōnion* gospel) and “worshipped” and served the creature more than the CREATOR. Babel, at the beginning (Gen. xi.), in the middle (Dan. iii.), and at the end (Rev. xiii.) remains the same. Deliverance however comes to the oppressed peoples, when the image is broken, and the Son of man comes. Then will be given to Him “dominion, and glory, and a Kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him”.

Turning back once more to Rev. xiv., let us note what immediately follows the announcing of this gospel, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen”, shewing by its sequence the true nature of “those that SIT upon the earth”.

**#44. “They have no rest.” “They may rest.” (xiv. 9-13).
pp. 41 - 45**

The first angelic message in the days of the Beast and the False Prophet will be that of the *aiōnion* gospel. The second which immediately follows will herald the fall of Babylon. As this is dealt with in detail in chapters xvii. and xviii. we pass on to note the message of the third angel:--

“And another, a third angel, followed them, saying with a loud voice, If anyone worshippeth the Beast and his image, and receiveth his mark on his forehead or on his hand, even he shall drink of the wine of God’s fury, which is prepared undiluted in the cup of His wrath; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth for the ages of the ages, and they have no respite day or night who are worshipping the Beast and his image, and if anyone receiveth the mark of his name” (xiv. 9-11).

Here is the solemn, the awful witness of the third angel. In Psa. lxxv. 8 we read:--

“For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and He poureth out the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink thereof.”

There is in many prophecies of this period an indication that the punishments Israel are made to suffer under the permission of God will be ultimately turned upon the great oppressor. For instance, in Psa. lxxiii. 10 it is “His people” to whom “the waters of a full cup are wrung out”. So in Isa. li. 17:--

“Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of His fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.”

Look at verses 9-16. There is the wounding of the dragon, the fear of a man that shall die and the fury of the oppressor. Here too is an illusion to the terms of the *aionian* gospel:--

“And forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth” (Isa. li. 13).

Then in Isa. li. 21-23 comes the great transfer:--

“Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink of it again: but I will put it into the hands of them that afflict thee: which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over.”

Again in Jer. li. 7 we read:--

“Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand; that made all the earth drunken. The nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad.”

Then comes the parallel with Rev. xiv. 8:--

“Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed it is the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of His temple” (Jer. li. 8-11).

The language of Rev. xiv. 10, 11 is based upon a passage in Isa. xxxiv. The whole chapter should be read and its bearing upon the Revelation noted. We draw attention to one verse in particular. The land of Idumea is to become:--

“burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day: the smoke thereof shall go up for ever, from generation to generation it shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever” (verse 10).

We would not seek to diminish the awfulness of the punishment which falls upon those who worship the Beast, but we do ask that this terrible penalty shall not be unscripturally applied to unsaved sinners of all times and places. It is the peculiar punishment of a special class. “Day and night” apply to time, not to eternity. A strict adherence to the tense of the verb makes us translate in Rev. xiv. 11:--

“They have no rest day or night *who are worshipping* the Beast.”

as though their moment is already in operation while they live upon the earth. Further, chapters xvii. and xviii. expand and expound these verses. There we read:--

“How much she hath glorified herself and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her” (xviii. 7).

“She shall be utterly burned with fire the Kings of the earth shall bewail her when they see the smoke of her burning” (xviii. 8, 9).

“With violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all and again they said, Hallelujah, and her smoke rose up for ever and ever” (xviii. 21 - xix. 3).

During the Millennial Kingdom Babylon will remain a burnt mountain, a monument of wrath to all the nations of the earth. During the same period the smoke of the torment of those who received the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image will be an awful object lesson to those in the heavens. Both symbols shall pass away with the “former things” when the ages of the ages finish their course, and when He that sits upon the throne shall say, “Behold, all things are new” (xxi. 5).

There is another portion of the angel’s message which must receive attention, namely the words of xiv. 12, 13:--

“Here is the patience of the saints—those who keep the commandment of God, and the faith of Jesus. And I hear a voice from heaven, saying, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, for their works follow with them.”

In Rev. xiii. 10 we have an explanation of what constitutes “The patience and the faith of the saints”—captivity and sword under the cruel oppression of the Beast. This is expanded in xiv. 12, which coming in immediate sequence to the reference to those who worship the image of the Beast suggests the character of their trial. A voice speaks from heaven, saying, “Write”. On four different occasions the apostle is commanded in the Apocalypse to write.

- A | i. 11, 19; ii., iii. Write to the seven churches.
- B | xiv. 13. Write, Blessed are the dead.
- B | xix. 9. Write, Blessed are they which are called
to the marriage supper of the Lamb.
- A | xxi. 5. Write, Behold, I make all things new.

There is a real connection between xiv. 13 and xix. 9. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord *from henceforth*.” The death here spoken of is evidently martyrdom. Under the fierce persecution of the Beast the believer is called upon to think of death as “blessed” rather than by yielding to pressure to purchase an extension of life by worshipping the image. Such overcomers are specially mentioned in Rev. xv. 1-4 and xx. 4, and are clearly referred to in xiv. 1 (cf. xiii. 16). See also second half of Heb. xi. 35. These enter into “rest” and their works following them bear testimony to their victory over the Beast and the False Prophet.

The same word is used of both classes. The one have “no rest day and night”, the other “rest from their troubles”. The martyrs under the fifth seal likewise are told to “rest” a little season until their fellow servants should also be killed (vi. 11). There is an evident reference here to xiv. 13.

The passage which we have here before us brings very vividly to light the two classes into which the actors in the Revelation are to be divided. It is not so much saved and unsaved, but

The worship of the Beast	or	the worship of God.
The receiving of his mark	or	the mark of the Father.
The earth dwellers	or	the pilgrims.
Those who bow to the Beast	or	the overcomers.
Those who save their lives by idolatry	or	those who love not their live unto the death.

The one class constitute the great supper of God (xix. 17), and the other is called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb (xix. 9). The one class are devoted to a special and signal punishment, the other to a special and signal reward. The one class are ranged under the Dragon and the other under the Lamb.

The exhortation to patience will be needed in those days of trial and fierce temptation. John could write sympathetically of this, for he describes himself as “Your brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus” (i. 9). The churches of Ephesus and Thyatira are commended for their patience, and the church of Philadelphia will receive a wonderful deliverance because it keeps the Word of the Lord’s patience.

The only other reference to patience are those of Rev. xiii. 10 and xiv. 12 (“Here is patience”), both of which refer directly and exclusively to the period of the Beast and the False Prophet. The references in other scriptures, particularly those in the epistle of James, are also very applicable to this period of tested faith.

Our lot is cast in a different day. Our trial may be of a different character, but to us, as to all saints, at all times the Word is true, “Ye have need of patience” (Heb. x. 36). “Let patience have her perfect work” (Jas. i. 4).

#45. The Harvest and the Vintage (xiv. 14-20). pp. 76 - 78

Immediately following the cry of the third angel and the indication that wickedness had reached its height comes the twofold scene of judgment, represented under the figures of the Harvest and the Vintage.

It will enable us to see more clearly the bearing of these visions upon the theme of the book and their place in its outworking if we take a wider view than the limits of chapter xiv.

In Volume IV & V, page 46, the structure of the Revelation as a whole is given. The central member is composed of a series of seven pairs of visions. It will be seen that xiv. 6-20, “The six angels” is echoed in the structure by xvi. 1 - xviii. 24. “The seven vials”. This helps us to place the Harvest and the Vintage and to see that both will be fulfilled in the doom of Babylon and the Beast.

It is pardonable to hesitate in accepting the statement that the harvest here refers to judgment, seeing that in many passages the reaping of the harvest includes the righteous. One prophecy seems to speak directly of this same period. We refer to Joel iii. 12-14:--

“Let the nations be weakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. PUT YE IN THE SICKLE, FOR THE HARVEST IS RIPE; come, get you down; for the PRESS is full, the FATS overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of threshing: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of threshing.”

Here without doubt is a scene of judgment, and here the figures both of harvest and vintage are used. Further, there is a verbal connection which should be remembered. In Rev. xiv. 15 the word “thrust” is the Greek word *pempō* = to send. In Joel iii. 13 the LXX has *exapostellō*, which likewise means “send” (see Joel ii. 25). The sickle is sent, just as the other agencies of judgment and mercy, and just what will answer to the symbol we may not at present know. Another passage bearing upon the subject is Jer. li. 33:--

“The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing floor, it is time to thresh her; yet a little while, and the time of her harvest shall come.”

While judgment is manifestly the setting of these visions, the harvest at the end of the age is a reaping of both wheat and darnel. In this case the “tares” or darnel, the “children of the wicked one”, are the worshippers of the image. These are bound in bundles to be burned. The “wheat” are the children of the Kingdom, the blessed dead who die in the Lord at that time. With regard to the Vintage the language is plain. It represents unmitigated wrath. The clusters of the vine of the earth are cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. This is but an echo of the figure of verse 10, “the wine of the wrath of God”, Isa. lxiii. 1-6 speaks of this terrible vintage:--

“Who is This That cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This That is glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness, Mighty to save I have trodden the winepress alone I will tread them in Mine anger, and trample them in My fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment. For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come.”

When we were dealing with the earlier portion of Rev. xiv. we found Isa. xxxiv. applicable. That chapter contains much that fits in with the Vintage of Rev. xiv. There we read of a “sacrifice in Bozrah”. The same awful emphasis upon “blood”. “The land shall be soaked (drunken) with blood”. And the same period is indicated as that of Isa. lxiii.:--

“For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” (Isa. xxxiv. 8).

Israel is represented as a vine. Sometimes they become worse than the “vine of Sodom” (Deut. xxxii. 32), or “the degenerate plant of a strange vine” (Jer. ii. 21), yet in the day of their restoration they shall “grow as the vine” (Hos. xiv. 7), and the vine that the Lord brought out of Egypt shall once again blossom and bud and fill the earth with

fruit (Psa. lxxx. 8-19). The vine of Sodom, the degenerate plant of a strange vine, to which Israel approximated in the apostasy, was the vine of the earth. Sodom and Babylon are included under this figure. The vine of the earth becomes ripe, iniquity reaches its height. The Man of Sin ascends the throne of Deity, and the sharp sickle is thrust in and the vintage gathered. This vine has not yielded that wine which rejoices the heart of God and man, but the intoxicating wine of Babylon that has sent the nations "mad drunk" (Jer. li. 7). Now the clusters are cast into the winepress of the wrath of God, and the awful result is expressed in the words:--

"And blood came forth out of the winepress even to the bridles of the horses, a thousand six hundred furlongs" (Rev. xiv. 20).

The sixth vial leads to Armageddon (xvi. 12-16). The actual treading of the winepress takes place at the riding forth from heaven of Christ as the Word of God, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. As a result of the battle which then ensues, the birds that fly in mid-heaven are called to partake of the great supper of God, when they shall eat the flesh of kings, officers and mighty men, horse and rider (xix. 11-21).

The distance, 1,600 furlongs, cannot be spiritualized; it stands as an actual measurement and indicates some feature of importance. The furlong is the Roman Stadium, which is about 202 English yards. 1,600 stadia, therefore, represent about 183 English miles. What tract of land can this point to? The southern extremity of Palestine was Kadesh-barnea (Numb. xxxiv.), the northern boundary, Mount Hermon (*see note in Companion Bible to Numb xxxiv. 7*). Kitto's Cyclopædia reads as follows:--

"The length, from Mount Hermon in the north, to which the territory of Manasseh beyond Jordan extended (Josh. xiii. 11), to Kadesh-barnea in the south, to which the territory of Judah reached was 180 miles."

The 1,600 furlongs give, practically, the extreme measurement north to south of the land of Israel. The whole of the land will be drenched with blood. Just how all will take place we do not know, and we are thankful that such details do not belong to our sphere. The cry goes up from beneath the altar:--

"How long dost Thou not avenge our blood?" (vi. 10).

When the day of vengeance sets in, the second vial of wrath turns the sea into blood (xvi. 3), the third vial turns the rivers and fountains into the same. The cry goes up at this:--

"They have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy" (Rev. xvi. 6).

The woman, Babylon, is discovered "drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (xvii. 6), and in Babylon was found "the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth" (xviii. 24).

The nations by their policy, their social developments, their science and their religions, are heading straight for this awful end. The wrath of God is terrible beyond

words. Blessed are they who have been redeemed from wrath and for whom there can be no condemnation.

**#46. The Song of Moses,
and the Song of the Lamb (xv. 1-4).
pp. 100 - 103**

Chapter xiv. occupied with a brief foreshadowing of the seven vials of wrath and the condition of the Lord's people during that dread period. It indicates that the climax sin is reached under the commands of the False Prophet, and that the fall of Babylon is closely connected with the blasphemy associated with the Beast. The torment of fire and brimstone and the smoke of that torment which ascends for the ages of the ages reveals the intensity of these seven last plagues, while the blessedness of the dead "from henceforth" shows the frequency of martyrdom during this time. The whole is summarized under the figures of the harvest and the vintage.

Before this series is given we are permitted a glimpse of the FIRST FRUITS (xiv. 1-5), and these sing a NEW SONG. In chapter xv., before the seven vials are poured out, we see the overcomers of the Beast, who also are a kind of FIRST FRUITS from the harvest of the earth. These, instead of singing a new song, sing the Song of Moses and of the Lamb. The key to the understanding of the seven vials of wrath is found in the "Song of Moses".

There is a division of opinion as to what is intended by the title "The Song of Moses". Some contend with a fair show of reason that the triumph over the host of Pharaoh in the Red Sea is echoed by the greater triumph over the Beast and his image. This looks to Exod. xv. as the Song of Moses. The Companion Bible and others however see a reference to Deut. xxxii., which is distinctly and repeatedly called the "Song" of Moses, and which rehearses the ways of God with His people, vindicating the justice of His judgments, and revealing the inner causes both of Israel's defection and the nation's apostasy.

In Deut. xxxi. 19 we read, "That this song may be a witness for Me against the children of Israel". In verse 21 and in verse 22 that "Moses wrote this song the same day". The burden of the song is given in verse 29, the evil which will befall them in the *latter days*. The song itself occupies the whole of Deut. xxxii. It traverses the dealings of God with His people right to the end: the idolatry of Israel, the worshipping of strange gods, the forgetting of God, their resemblance to the vine of Sodom. The song concludes with a call to the nations to rejoice with His people, the threat of vengeance for the blood of His servants, and the promise of mercy to His land and people.

In Exod. xxxiv. 10 the Lord makes a covenant that before all the people He would do marvels such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation. This is primarily a covenant with reference to Israel as a stiff-necked people, but seems to cover the judgments of the Apocalypse. It is noticeable how closely the miraculous judgments of the Revelation resemble the plagues sent by God upon Pharaoh and Egypt. These we shall have an opportunity of observing later.

In Rev. xv. 3 we read, "And they sing the Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb, saying" This indicates that the overcomers do not repeat Deut. xxxii., but give a summary of its principles in the words that follow. In their summary they emphasize at the commencement the greatness and the marvelous character of the works of God, and that His ways are just and true. They then ask the question, "Who should not fear, and glorify Thy name, O Lord?" and give a threefold reason.

- (1). Because of the Lord's holiness.
- (2). Because all nations shall come and worship.
- (3). Because of the manifestation of His righteous judgments.

In verse 3 of the A.V. reads, "Just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints", and gives in the margin "Or *nations*, or *ages*". The R.V., G., L., Tr., A. and WH. read "nations". The Numeric N.T. used the Greek text of Westcott and Hort, but has found it necessary to differ from them here. The two titles "King of Nations" and "King of the Ages" occur together in a most significant passage in Jeremiah. In the tenth chapter of Jeremiah the prophet warns Israel against idolatry. After proving the utter futility of idolatry, the prophet says in verses 6 and 7:--

"Forasmuch as there is none like unto Thee, O Lord; Thou art great, and Thy name is great in might. WHO WOULD NOT FEAR THEE, O KING OF NATIONS?"

Again the prophet interjects a word on the worthlessness of idolatry, and then in verse 10 says:--

"But the Lord is the true God, He is the living God, and KING OF THE AGES. At His wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide His indignation."

Then follows a verse which is written in Chaldee, the language of Babylon:--

"The gods have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish and from under these heavens."

Surely here is a reference to the state of things that necessitated the *aiōnian* gospel of Rev. xiv.

The words "Who would not fear Thee, O King of Nations?" are echoed in Rev. xx. 3, 4. The portion of Jeremiah addressed to Israel contains the title "King of Nations". The title that immediately precedes the Chaldee verse is "King of the Ages". Whichever reading we accept in Rev. xv. appears from Jer. x. that both titles are

related, both speak of the Lord's purpose through the ages with regard to Israel and the nations, and there, for the time being, our limited knowledge stays.

One further note must conclude this paper. The word rendered "holy" in Rev. xv. 4 is not the usual word so translated. It is *hosios*. Cremer, linking it with the Hebrew *chesed*, speaks of it as denoting God's holy love toward His people Israel. *Hosios* denotes a holiness established by a right or custom, but *chesed* "must not be taken as implying any praiseworthy virtue or merit, but simply an hereditary advantage" (Hupfeld). In Acts xiii. 34 the word occurs in the sentence "I will give you the sure mercies of David", and the A.V. margin calls attention to the use of *ta osia*, holy, or, just things, which the LXX frequently uses for the Hebrew *mercies*.

The occurrence of this word in Rev. xv. 4 and xvi. 5 is closely associated with the fulfillment of the sure mercies of David and the restoration of Israel. The Song of Moses and the Song of the Lamb bring before us the truth, the righteousness, the mercy of Him who is both King of Nations and King of Ages, Who in the midst of wrath remembers mercy and, while judging the nations for their idolatry, yet speaks of the day when all the nations shall worship before Him.

#47. The Vengeance of His Temple. The Seven Vials (xvi.). pp. 135 - 138

We now approach the great crisis of the book. Chapters xvi., xvii. and xviii. are taken up with the seven last plagues. These seven vials of wrath are, in the language of Jer. li. 11, "The vengeance of His temple".

This expression is found in the same context as the words "Babylon hath been a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that made all the earth drunken". Because these seven vials are peculiarly the "vengeance of His temple", we find in Rev. xv. 5, xvi. 1 that the seven angels who are commissioned to pour them out are connected with the very innermost shrine of the tabernacle. "The temple of the tabernacle of the testimony" is the basis of these judgments. They have to do with idolatry, with the usurpation of the place of God, with the blood of the saints.

The order of the seven vials is very similar to that observed of the seven seals and the seven trumpets. It will be remembered that the sixth seal takes us right on to the day of the wrath of the Lamb, and that the seventh seal is divided off from the rest by the half-hour's silence in heaven, and that the seventh seal covers the whole period of the seventh trumpets. So here; the first six vials run in sequence. The seventh is detached and is largely taken up with the judgments of Babylon. The order of the vials is as follows:--

	1 st .	On the Earth.		
	2 nd .	On the Sea.	\	Blood.
	3 rd .	On the Rivers.	/	
<i>I Heard.</i>		<i>The Angel of the Waters.</i>		<i>"Thou art just."</i>
		<i>One from the Altar.</i>		<i>"They are worthy."</i>
	4 th .	On the Sun.	\	Blasphemy.
	5 th .	On the Throne.	/	
	6 th .	On the Great River Euphrates.		
<i>I saw.</i>		<i>The Demons.</i>		<i>Armageddon.</i>
	7 th .	On the Air.	Voice from Temple.	It is done.
			Lightnings.	
			Thunders.	
			Voices.	
			Great Earthquake.	
			Great Babylon.	
			Great Hail.	

There is a great similarity between these vials of wrath and the plagues of Egypt.

Vials.	Judgments.	Plagues.	Judgments.
1 st .	Sores.	6 th .	Boils.
2 nd and 3 rd .	Water becomes Blood.	1 st .	Water becomes Blood.
5 th .	Darkness.	9 th .	Darkness.
6 th .	Demons like Frogs.	2 nd .	Frogs.
7 th .	Hail.	7 th .	Hail.

The exodus of Israel from Egypt is continually mentioned as a type of the greater day of their deliverance which is surely coming. In face of the literal character of the plagues of Egypt we cannot accept any spiritualizing in Rev. xvi.

THE 1ST VIAL.—When the Philistines took the Ark, they were smitten with “emerods”. Israel was threatened with “the botch of Egypt” (Deut. xxviii. 27). Miriam and Uzziah were smitten with leprosy. Elymas was smitten with blindness. When the first vial is poured out on the earth, “a bad and evil ulcer” broke out upon those who had the mark of the beast and who worshipped his image.

THE 2ND VIAL.—Just as Moses caused the waters of Egypt to turn into blood, so the second angel pours his vial into the sea and it becomes as the blood of the dead, bringing death to every creature in it. Words cannot convey to the mind the horror of this judgment.

THE 3RD VIAL.—This touches the rivers and springs, and all drinking water becomes blood. However much the senses revolt at the awful character of these judgments we must bear in mind the sins that have merited them. It is at this point that John says he heard the angel of the waters justifying the judgment of God.

“Righteous art Thou, Who art, and Who wast, The Holy and Merciful One (*hohosios*), because Thou didst judge these things; because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; worthy are they” (xvi. 5, 6).

After this John heard “the altar” saying, “Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments”. We are not told whether the angel of the altar, or the souls that waited beneath the altar, is intended in this intensely figurative expression. Most probably it indicates the concurrence of the martyrs, which is repeat in xix. 1, 2.

Many translators render the words *axioi eisi* “they deserve it”, and while this is certainly the meaning, yet we feel that the contrast with the words *axios ei* of Rev. v. 9, “Thou art worthy”, is important. Further *axios* is derived from a word meaning “the beam of a balance” and amplifies the thought in the words that precede the exclamation, namely, “Because they shed the blood of saints and prophets, Thou hast given them blood to drink”—the judgment corresponds with the crime; eye to eye, tooth for tooth, the beam of the balance indicating the equivalent judgment.

THE 4TH VIAL.—The effect of this vial is the intensification of the heat of the sun:--

“And men were scorched with the vehement heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, Who hath authority over these plagues: and they repented not to give Him glory”
(xvi. 9).

It is evident by the preceding words that these final judgments are so arranged (humanly speaking) to give the last opportunities to the worshippers of the beast to repent. Instead of repenting they blaspheme, both here, under the fifth, and under the seventh vial.

THE 5TH VIAL.—A direct attack is made upon the throne of the beast. The throne of Satan will be at Pergamos (ii. 13), and Satan will give the beast his throne and great authority. Whether the seat of Government will continue at Pergamos we cannot say. Rev. ii. 13 seems to indicate that at least during one part of the time it will be there.

The day of the Lord is connected with “darkness and gloominess, clouds and thick darkness” (Joel ii.). The sun will turn to darkness before the day of the Lord (Mark xiii. 24, 25). It is the beginning of the end.

THE 6TH VIAL.—The Euphrates is dried up with a purpose—“that the way of the Kings of the East might be prepared”. In Isa. xi. 15, 16 we read that “the river” is to be smitten in the seven streams, so that men may go over dry shod:--

“And there shall be an highway for the remnant of His People which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt.”

The passage through the Red Sea was real and the account of it literal, so will be the drying up of the river Euphrates. Both the remnant of Israel from Assyria, and the Kings of the East will pass over this way. Zech. x. 10, 11 has words much to the same effect as Isa. xi. 15, 16. The Kings of the East evidently lead their armies across the Euphrates, and the verses following shew that their objective is Armageddon.

Three unclean spirits, demon spirits working miracles, proceed from the mouth of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, with the express object of gathering the Kings of the habitable world to the battle of that great day of God, the Almighty. East and West (for the *oikoumenē* signifies the “civilized” world) meet together in joint opposition to the Lamb. At this critical period the Lord speaks to His own enjoining watchfulness. The “blessedness” of watchfulness here is to be compared and contrasted with the “blessedness” of a martyr’s death “from henceforth” in chapter xiv.

Armageddon, or more correctly Har-mageddon, means “The mount of Meggido”. Judges v. 19, II Kings xxiii. 29, II Chron. xxxv. 22-25, Zech. xii. 11 and Septuagint version of Isa. x. 28 give a foreshadowing of the Har-mageddon of the Apocalypse.

THE 7TH VIAL.—This introduces the judgment upon Babylon, and we must leave this over to our next paper.

#48. The Seventh Vial (xvi. 17-21). pp. 167 - 169

The seventh angel will pour his vial on the air. Why the air? We are not told that men were suffocated as a result—indeed, no result is actually mentioned. Yet the outpouring of this vial, reserved to the end, must be the climax. The fifth vial will be poured out upon the throne of the beast, the seventh will be directed against Satan himself. Unless we mistake the reference, Eph. ii. speaks of Satan as “The prince of the authority of the air”. The casting out of the dragon, called the Devil and Satan, from the heavens to the earth is followed by the words:--

“Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Anointed” (Rev. xii. 10-12).

The casting down of the Devil speaks woe to the inhabitants of the earth:--

“Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time” (Rev. xii. 12).

When therefore the seventh vial falls upon the air, a great voice is heard out of the temple from the throne saying “ACCOMPLISHED”. The word here ranks in sacred importance with the word “FINISHED” of John xix. 30. The state of the text renders Rev. xxi. a little uncertain, but many feel that the A.V. should be retained. If so, this is a blessed counterpart of Rev. xvi. 17. One of the features that follows this vial is an unprecedented earthquake:--

“Such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty and so great” (Rev. xii. 18).

Seeing that this earthquake must be akin to the mighty geological upheavals that have left their mark upon the crust of the earth, when mountains were formed and islands rose

or disappeared, the words of verse 20 need not be figuratively understood at all: "Every island fled away, and (certain) mountains disappeared". The shock divided Babylon into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed.

The mighty army that comes up against Israel, which Ezekiel addresses as Gog (xxxviii. 14-23), is met by a terrible earthquake:--

"So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground I will plead with him with pestilence and with blood great hailstones, fire and brimstone" (Ezek. xxxviii. 20-22).

The passage seems to refer to the seventh vial. Twice in Isa. ii. in connection with the day of the Lord we read of the time "when He shall shake terribly the earth". Hag. ii. 6, 7, 21 & 22 says:--

"Yet once, 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."

"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, and I will overthrow the chariots and those that ride in them; and the horses and the riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother."

This again speaks plainly of Har-mageddon. The first earthquake in the experience of man is described as a "creation", being something new. It was occasioned by the presumption of Korah, and Moses said:--

"If the Lord make a new thing (margin, create a creature), and the earth open her mouth and swallow them up then shall ye understand that these men have provoked the Lord" (Numb. xvi. 30).

The earthquake is associated with the judgment of God upon those who sinned in connection with holy things. Deut. xxxii. 21, 22 declares that the idolatry of Israel kindled a fire which shall consume the earth and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. Thus the volcano and the earthquake are both associated with "the vengeance of His Temple". The earthquake that Zechariah tells us shall split the Mount of Olives in the midst is likened to the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, the king, who followed Korah's sinful example, and was smitten (like the men under the first vial) with leprosy. Not only is the earth convulsed, but there falls from heaven hailstones of almost incredible weight. The Jewish talent has been computed as equal to 114 lbs. troy (Moses Stuart), avoirdupois (*Companion bible*), the Attic talent 57 lbs. troy. Whichever we take the talent to mean, the judgment is beyond thought. The construction of the sentence and the words used in verse 21 justify some such rendering as "terrific!"

Some readers have passed through the mental and physical agonies of the bombardment of modern war in the trenches, or the terrors of an air raid at home. What therefore must this unparalleled earthquake be, followed by a storm of hail, each stone weighing at least about a half hundred weight, falling from heaven! By far the most important feature of this section is that of verse 19, "And great Babylon came into

remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath". This feature occupies chapters xvii. and xviii., and to this we must address ourselves in following papers.