

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

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DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST,

It is three years since we wrote a Foreword to a completed Volume: three years of war, destruction and anxiety, yet three years of wonderful preservation, guidance and provision. A passage of Scripture that comes vividly to mind in this connection is that of Acts xxvi. 22:

“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing”

Although the “help” was “of God”, Paul acknowledged that it had been mediated through many willing hands and hearts. The word “help” in this passage is a military term and means an auxiliary or reserve ready to hand when needed.

Without this “help of God” *The Berean Expositor* would never have weathered the storm, and our thanks go out, under God, to the willing and ready “help” extended to us in our hour of need. Without this “help of God” the Chapel of the Opened Book would never have been found, nor would the removal from the country to stricken London have been attempted, or have been possible.

In 1941 we wrote:

“. . . . we have confidence that in so far as The Berean Expositor is in line with the will of the Lord, so we may expect that these precious promises will be once more fulfilled in our experience.”

This confidence has been honoured beyond our expectation. We asked for bare continuance, and He has led us through fire and water and has brought us out “into a wealthy place” (Psa. lxvi. 12).

We commend the witness to the prayers and the fellowship of all who value the Word and its “right division”, and who realize what a door of opportunity may be opening to us all with the coming year.

Yours for Christ and His Word,

CHARLES H. WELCH,
PHILIP DIVE,
FREDERICK P. BRININGER

November, 1944.

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Our Witness. pp. 97 - 99

“While valuing the fellowship of like-minded believers, THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR will continue untrammelled. It is the organ of no society, it is the property of no sect, it is the exponent of no creed. It is a searcher of Scripture.”

THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR was first published in February, 1909, and five years later, namely in 1914, also in June, 1927, the words quoted above were included in the Foreword to the reprints of Volume I. It is evident as we read these words, that whilst fellowship is valued, and perhaps greatly needed, for no consideration would that fellowship be purchased at the price of faithfulness. Neither THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR nor the Editor could be deflected from the set purpose which called the Witness into being. To-day in 1943, *The Berean Expository Witness* is still untrammelled, its principal exponent calls no man Master, no Council decides what shall be expounded and what shall not. To what “Society” does THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR belong to-day? Of what “Sect” is it the mouthpiece? What “Creed” finds it an exponent?

In 1921, after many set-backs resulting from the “Great War”, a modest notice appeared in the March number (Volume XI, page 48).

“Good-Friday, 25th March.—A meeting conducted by the Editor will (D.V.) be held at 7p.m. in the Small Class-room at ECCLESTON HALL, near Victoria Station, London. Those attending should knock at the far door in Eccleston Place.”

As an outcome of this meeting, the regular Witness in London was recommenced, although we no longer had to “knock at the far door” to gain admittance. Following the growth of the Witness and consequent opposition, it became necessary in 1922 (Volume XII, page 45) to publish a short article entitled: “The Fear of Forming a Sect”, to meet some unfounded rumours that were spoiling this opportunity to obey the Lord and His Word. This article opened as follows:

“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.”

* * * * *

“*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."

The meetings thus criticized continued, and their number grew, yet in 1924 we were as far as ever from forming a "Sect", for the Foreword written for Volume XIV will be found this reassertion of freedom:

"We are happy to say concerning *The Berean Expositor* exactly the same as we said ten years ago, viz., that it is:--

The organ of NO SOCIETY,
The property of NO SECT,
The exponent of NO CREED."

The fear express in 1921/1922 had not materialized even though the opportunities increased.

In 1927 a new note was struck, for the Foreword of that year says:

"Now that the long period of pioneering has in measure passed,"

and although this might have caused in some that recurring fear, no word reached us, and the change as it took place made no difference in the basic attitude of the Witness, the change being only of method and opportunity.

In the notice pages of that year we not only find meetings arranged in many parts of the country, but an indication of the Editor's visit to Canada to make known the truth entrusted. This involved organization both at home and abroad, funds had to be handled and accounted for, but still that "Sect" failed to materialize, neither did the Editor become "involved" or "fettered". Further, in the same year "Agents", who out of love for the truth stocked our literature and supplied local orders in Canada, U.S.A. and Australia, made their appearance on the notice pages, and still we remained "untrammelled". After Volume XIX, notices appeared on the cover of the issues, and ceased to be included in the bound volumes, but the witness spread, and visits were made to France and to Holland in the interest of the truth, and articles and pamphlets were translated into French and Spanish, but still no adverse change in the testimony.

For a period following the outbreak of War in 1939 itinerant witness was suspended, and only by the most valiant efforts of a few friends was THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR itself saved from eclipse. No "Sect" came to its rescue, no Society stirred a finger; it was saved through the grace of God and the fellowship of those who loved the truth.

At last it was borne in upon the minds of a few that the time had come to again pick up the threads, and prepare for the "peace" it is hoped will soon dawn. Just as in 1927 we struck a new note, so we strike one again in 1943. Just as, however, that new note in 1927 saw no change in our basis or our freedom, so this new note leaves us exactly in the same position. To quote from the Circular Letter dated March, 1943, in regard to the new work planned:

“ in short, the consolidation and extension of the work attempted during the last 30 years or so.”

The only difference contemplated is one of procedure. In the past the Editor has traveled miles, preaching and teaching in halls and meeting-places hired or owned by friends on the spot; he now proposes to conserve energy and—apart from occasional visits to other Centres—preach and teach the same truths in a hall in London to be provided by the fellowship of friends having the Witness at heart. By report it is evident that the Editor has a teaching ministry, and the greater proportion of those who attend these meetings are those who are teaching others or preachers of the Word themselves. We shall but “consolidate and extend” this teaching ministry if we can assemble faithful men who shall be able to teach others also and entrust to them those wonderful doctrines that we ourselves have received. For those who cannot attend personally, a Correspondence Course is in preparation, but whether the teaching be given orally at a hall of our own or through the post, there can be no possibility of “forming a Sect”.

In the present day a “Sect” is a company of Christians who are formed into a church, a society, or an assembly, the membership of which is conditional upon the acceptance of some doctrine or practice that must necessarily exclude some acknowledged believers from fellowship.

Every reader of THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR knows that never has he or she been invited to “join” anything; that there is nothing to join, no membership, no creed, no conditions. When any or all of these marks are discernible in our pages, plans or appeals, then it will be time to sound the alarm. Until these symptoms appear, and keeping in mind the history of the past 30 years, is it not a call for praise, that after so long a witness, instead of those most intimately concerned speaking of “retiring”, they are preparing to serve more strenuously than ever, prompted by the desire to “finish” their course, and to pass on the trust while time and strength permit?

Does this not appeal to you? If you cannot actively encourage such a work, we ask, for the truth’s sake, that you will not (maybe unwittingly) hinder it.

The Pearl of Parables.

#1. The Parable of the Father (Luke xv. 11-32). p. 205

The parable of the Prodigal Son has been called the pearl of parables. While it may be unwise to attempt comparisons between passages in Holy Writ, there is, nevertheless, in this parable, great appeal to the heart and much to move the feelings as one follows the progress of the prodigal both upon his disastrous outward journey, and during his return to love and restoration.

It is not by accident that this parable is recorded by Luke, for it is consonant with his practice of choosing always the evangelical aspect of his subject. Where Matthew's narrative is of the birth at Bethlehem of the "King", Luke delights to tell the good tidings of the birth of a "Saviour". Matthew of course pursues his definite purpose, for he proclaims the King and the kingdom, but Luke, the right-hand man of the apostle Paul, has a different object in view. It is he alone who traces the genealogy of Christ to God through Adam and, again, it is he alone who records the parable of "The Good Samaritan", a parable that could have no place in the Gospel of the Publican who went down to his house "justified" rather than the Pharisee; a blessed anticipation of the doctrine of Romans and of the confession of Phil. iii. 1-9.

Perhaps the affection in which this parable has ever been held is because it is *the* parable of the FATHER, a word that is used twelve times in the narrative. It was the mission of Christ to reveal the Father:

"No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i. 18).

He declared Him in His life, for the Son of God is the "express image of His Person". His declaration to the enquiring disciples was: "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father"; He declared Him in His gospel, in His discourses and in His parables, and here, in the parable of the Prodigal Son, we may learn something of the nature and character of Him to Whom we cry, "Abba, Father".

TRUST.

#1. A Sevenfold Aspect. pp. 221, 222

The body of truth that constitutes the ground of our calling is called “The Faith”, and the one condition for the obtaining of salvation, justification or life is “faith”, and in a world where all was perfect and ideal “faith” and “trust” would be but two sides of one state or attitude. In the everyday outworking of truth, however, honesty compels us to admit that a person may be a believer and be saved by grace, yet at the same time not always and completely trusting the Lord. As an illustration, Abraham “believed” in the Lord and his faith was counted for righteousness—yet in spite of this we find him in Gen. xx. 1-18 resorting to the same deceitful measures that he had previously employed regarding Sarah and the Egyptians (Gen. xii. 10-20). “Trust”, therefore, is not always commensurate with “faith”, although, as we have said, most certainly it should be.

In moments of great peril, or after long testing and trial, the believer sometimes echoes the words of David, “I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul” (I Sam. xxviii. 1), yet both David and the believer today would, at the same time and with the same breath, maintain the inspiration of God’s Word and His utter and eternal faithfulness. At the time of writing this series of short articles peril is on every hand, and it is with a view to strengthen faith, in its intimate and personal sense of committal or “trust”, that these words are written.

In the absence of specific scriptural definition of “trust”, there is no surer way of arriving at an understanding of the term than an examination of the different words translated by it and of the way in which these are used. There are seven words used in the O.T. Scriptures which have been translated “trust”, and observance of their peculiar meanings will form the basis of this first article of the series.

The Seven Words translated “Trust” in the O.T.

We should hardly think of going to the record of Israel’s unbelief and murmuring in Numb. xi. to discover the first meaning of “trust”, but in it mention is made of the “melons” which they ate in Egypt, and in the original the name of this fruit is “The Clinger”, by reason of its manner of growth, and it is this word that provides the most important of the seven that are translated “trust”: “They that know Thy name will put their trust in (or *cling to*) Thee” (Psa. ix. 10). About ninety of the occurrences of the word in the O.T. are translations of this word.

The second word is more obvious; it is “shelter” or “refuge”, as in the passage: “Thou hast been a *shelter* for me” (Psa. lxi. 3), or, “God is our *refuge* and strength”

(Psa. xlvi. 1). This provides the word translated “trust” in over thirty occurrences, as, for example, “He is a buckler to all them that *trust* in Him” (II Sam. xxii. 31). “Trust” therefore may “cling”, in conscious weakness, or “shelter”, in time of stress.

Of the three examples that follow each occurs but once and is translated “trust”, but they supply important aspects of meaning that are necessary to the complete conception of “trust”.

The idea of “staying” oneself upon someone underlies the word used by Elihu, when he said to Job: “Judgment is before Him: therefore trust thou in Him” (Job xxxv. 14).

In that dread experience recorded in Psa. xxii., the Psalm of the Cross, the word translated “trust” means “To roll on”, and is used in Gen. xxix. 3, where it speaks of rolling a stone from the mouth of a well. This is the word chosen as a taunt by the wicked when they said, “He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver him” (Psa. xxii. 8).

The next example is taken from the Aramaic, or Chaldee, language, and is found in Nebuchadnezzar’s frank utterance after the deliverance of the three from the furnace. The word used by that great king primarily means “To rely on”, and is found in Dan. iii. 28, where he is recorded as saying of God, “Who hath sent his angel and delivered His servants that trusted in Him”.

Two more words remain to complete the set.

The word “Amen” is known to every believer, and is the Hebrew word for “truth” and “faithfulness”. It occurs five times in the form of “trust”, but refers always to a misplaced trust or a trust withheld: “Behold He put no trust in His servants” (Job iv. 18).

And, lastly, the seventh word occurs in that moving utterance of Job when he said, “Though He slay me, yet will I *trust* in Him”, and introduces into the idea of trusting the thought of “waiting” and “hoping”.

Here then is a sevenfold presentation of the idea embodied in the words “To trust”. It means To cling, To find shelter, To stay upon, To roll upon, To rely on, To put faith in, and To wait with hope.

Without further exposition, here, in this sevenfold concept of “Trust”, is a message for the tired and tested believer in these days. Here is a trust that has as many aspects as there are days of the week. Here is a trust for all times and all occasions, and we therefore commend to the reader’s prayerful meditation this initial study.

A Tribute to Philip Dive.

p. 240

At a critical moment in the history of our Witness, our colleague Mr. Philip Dive undertook the somewhat onerous duties connected with the publications forming an integral part of our work, and since July, 1939—years marked by enemy action and governmental restrictions—he has maintained contact with our readers, not only in the execution of orders, but in a ministry of correspondence peculiarly his own.

He now passes on these duties to Mr. L. F. Green, B.Sc., A.R.I.C., whose kindly interest in 1942 enabled the recommencement of the London Witness in the buildings of the Centenary Memorial Sunday School, Kennington.

In the name of all readers we pay a tribute of great appreciation of Mr. Dive's devoted services, and extend a warm welcome to our new Honorary Publications Secretary, knowing that nothing would please him better than to be "snowed under" with your orders for 1945. *The Berean Expositor* is your Magazine; it lives only by fellowship, which both our retiring and incoming Secretaries manifest in so large a measure, and which should provoke us all to emulation.

We are thankful that our friend Mr. Dive is still assisting the work as a Trustee and member of Council of the Central Movement.

The Acts of the Apostles.

#48. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22). The section as a whole, and Paul's opening speech (xxii. 1 - 22). pp. 1 - 5

With this speech, made by Paul to the assembled throng in the Temple area, we commence the great section of the Acts which leads from Jerusalem to Rome; to the rejection of Israel and the suspension of their hope; to the prison ministry of the Apostle and to the revelation of the Mystery. While, therefore, the whole record of the Acts—being Scripture, and dealing as it does with the opening years of Christian testimony—must be of the greatest importance to all believers, this closing portion is of particular interest to all those who, by grace, realize the change of dispensation with which this imprisonment of Paul is associated.

Before we examine the Apostle's speech, we must obtain a view of the section as a whole (Acts xxii. - xxviii.). We discover that it preserves the record of several of Paul's speeches, not only to the Jews at Jerusalem, as in the opening section, but also to the Jews at Rome, in the closing section, and in between these two we have recorded the utterances before the two Roman Governors, Felix and Festus, and also the defence before King Agrippa.

The structure reveals the organic oneness of this great section. We observe two recurring items,

- (1) A pointed reference to hope (Acts xxiii. 6; xxiv. 15; xxvi. 6, 7; xxviii. 20).
- (2) A testimony to the Apostle's innocence (Acts xxiii. 29; xxv. 11, 25; xxvi. 31; xxviii. 18).

Moreover, in every case where the Apostle is permitted to plead he refers not only to his doctrine but to his manner of life. Before proceeding further we must set out the structure of this whole section in order that these items may be given their rightful place.

**Acts xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22.
From Jerusalem to Rome.**

A1	xxii. - xxiii. To Jews at Jerusalem.	\	
	a Manner of life. Law of fathers, Pharisee.	\	HOPE
	b Damascus - Conversion and Commission. Light. Saul! Saul!! Gentiles.	\	of
	c The Lord stood by me. Good cheer.	/	Resurrection.
	B1 FINDING OF LYSIAS.— <i>Nothing worthy of death or bonds.</i> /		
A2	xxiv. - xxv. 22. To Felix and Festus.	\	HOPE
	Manner of life. Sect. Heresy.	}	of
	B2 FINDING OF FESTUS.— <i>Nothing worthy of death.</i> / Resurrection.		
A3	xxv. 23 - xxviii. 15. To Agrippa.	\	
	a Manner of life. Straitest sect, Pharisee.	\	HOPE
	b Damascus - Conversion and twofold commission. Light. Saul! Saul!! Gentiles.	\	of
	c Angel stood by me. Fear not.	/	Twelve Tribes.
	B3 FINDING OF AGRIPPA.— <i>Nothing worthy of death or bonds.</i> /		
A4	xxviii. 16-22. To Jews at Rome.	\	HOPE
	Manner of life. Customs. Sect.	}	of
	B4 FINDING OF PAUL'S CONSCIENCE.— <i>No cause of death.</i> / Israel.		

We now return to the Apostle's testimony before the Jews, as recorded in Acts xxii. and xxiii.

We read in Acts xxi. 40 and in xxii. 2 that Paul spoke "in the Hebrew tongue". This word *Hebrais* occurs but three times in the New Testament (Acts xxi. 40; xxii. 2; and xxvi. 14). Twice it is used of Paul, and once it describes the language used by the Lord at the conversion of Paul.

The history of the Hebrew language may roughly be divided into two parts, the first covering the whole period of its use up to the Babylonian exile, and the second, the period commencing from the exile and continuing through to the present time. Since the Babylonian captivity, the "Hebrew" of the Old Testament had given place to a modified form. This "Hebrew" was

"The language spoken by the Jews in Palestine in the time of Christ. It might more accurately have been called *Syro Chaldee*, being a mixture of the Aramaean of Daniel and Ezra with the Ancient Hebrew" (Dr. A. Young).

When the Jews heard Paul address them in the Hebrew tongue, they kept the more silence. It was not only a concession to their extreme national and religious pride, but an intimation that the speaker was not a stranger to the sacred tongue. The Lord, when He spoke from heaven to the stricken persecutor, made the same concession.

The question has been raised as to whether Luke understood Hebrew. It cannot be settled from the record of this speech, for Paul could have given Luke a translation afterwards, or Luke could have been inspired by God to give it without intermediate assistance. On the other hand, the presence of a number of Hebraisms make it possible that Paul did not translate the speech for Luke, but that Luke gave his own translation, revealing himself by the presence of Hebrew forms of speech instead of ordinary Greek. Dean Alford's conclusion is:

“Now we do find, (1) that the speech is full of Hebraisms, (2) that while it contains several expressions occurring nowhere but in the writings of Luke, not one is found in it peculiar to Paul, or even strikingly in his manner. Our inference then is that Luke himself has rendered this speech from having heard it delivered; and, consequently, that he was acquainted with Hebrew.”

The matter is not of sufficient importance to pursue further. There is this to be said, however; all other writers of the Scriptures were Hebrews. Luke has been considered the exception, partly by reason of his Gentile name, and partly from tradition, but while there is insufficient evidence to settle the point there is every probability that “Luke the beloved physician” will not prove to be an exception to the rule.

The Apostle's purpose in this speech is expressed by himself in his opening words: “Men, brethren and fathers, hear ye my defence” (Acts xxii. 1). The Greek word translated “defence” has passed into our own language in the word “apology”. In the course of time the word has departed from its original meaning, and to-day an “apology” may be “A frank acknowledgment, by way of reparation, of offence given”, or “A defensive argument, often, specifically, the argumentative defence of Christianity”. The Apostle however conciliatory his manner in the choice of argument, or even of the language in which he addressed the enraged gathering near the Temple, was certainly not apologetic in the modern sense. Sturdy defence need not be rude, and firm conviction of the rightness of one's position is not made more evident by stubbornness or lack of courtesy. In his short speech, spontaneously uttered in circumstances of great pressure, the Apostle gives us a model both of courtesy and concession, coupled with unflinching faithfulness and courage.

Men who had but immediately beforehand charged him with abominable conduct, accompanying their false charge with a ruthless and savage attack which had led Paul into the extremely unpleasant, and possibly dangerous, position of being a prisoner in the hands of the Roman guard, were addressed by the Apostle as he opened his defence with the courteous and respectful words, “Men, brethren and fathers”. Further, to gain their confidence, he spoke of his early training at the feet of Gamaliel, and of his zeal, manifested alas in persecuting “this way” unto the death. Animated with the same motive, he turned from speaking in Greek to the Roman Captain (Acts xxi. 37) to the use of Hebrew when addressing the members of his own nation. They had accused him of polluting the sanctuary. He therefore not only tells them his place of birth and his training in Jerusalem, but adds that he was: “taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day”. He might have said, “and was blindly fanatical, as ye all are this day”, but he did not. Again, when

he introduces the name of Ananias, he omits what is recorded in Acts ix. as to Ananias being “a disciple”, and refers to him as “devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there” (Acts xxii. 12). Moreover, as further evidence of his correct attitude toward the Temple, and he told them of an occasion when, praying in the Temple, and being in a trance, the Lord appeared to him. But his appeal was in vain; it found no response, for it was made in the face of the most adamant of all human antagonism, viz., religious bias. As soon as the Apostle reached the point in his narrative where the Lord bade him: “Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles” (Acts xxii. 21), the pent up fury of the fanatical throng burst forth, for

“They gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said,
Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live”
(Acts xxii. 23).

Paul had led up to the critical statement of verse 21 with consummate skill and yearning sympathy. He knew, he implied, just how they felt against himself at that moment, for had not he himself been zealous persecutor? They called for his blood, as he, too, had consented to the death of Stephen and others. His choice of words in the reference to “the *perfect manner* of the law of the fathers” would be recognized as a claim on his part to have studied with patience and devotedness the intricacies of traditional lore, affirming that it was nothing less than a divine interposition that had changed the whole current of his life at the beginning, and again, in a later period, while praying in the Temple. He revealed that even there he had resisted the command to leave Jerusalem.

We bring the opening study of this section of the Acts to a close with a presentation of the structure of the speech and its effect, for, if this is perceived, it will be comparatively easy to follow the divine argument contained in the twenty-three verses concerned.

Acts xxii. 1 - 23.

- A | 1. Opening words: “Men, brethren and fathers.”
- B | 2. Effect when they heard “Hebrew”. Kept more silence.
- C | 3-5. Persecution. Prison. Death.
- D | 6-16. VISION on the way to Damascus. |
 - a | And it came to pass (*egeneto*).
 - b | Come nigh unto Damascus.
 - c | A *light* and a *voice*.
 - d | Thou shalt be his witness (*martur*).
- D | 17, 18. VISION in the Temple. |
 - a | And it came to pass (*egeneto*).
 - b | Come again to Jerusalem.
 - c | I *saw* Him *saying*.
 - d | They will not receive thy testimony (*marturia*).
- C | 19, 20. Persecution. Prison. Death.
- A | 21. Closing words: “Unto the Gentiles.”
- B | 22, 23. Effect when they heard “Gentiles”. Lifted up voices.

The parallelisms and contrasts of the speech are evident. The silence that was secured by Paul's use of the Hebrew language is in direct contrast with the uproar that followed the pronouncement of the hated word "Gentile". The double reference to Paul's early zeal and persecuting spirit is of importance in his endeavour to prove that he had not easily departed from the religion of his fathers, while the central position of the two visions, with their emphasis upon "Witness" and "Testimony", reveal the nature of Israel's blindness, and the nature of the Apostle's early ministry.

Like the Twelve, Paul was a witness of what he had "seen and heard". He was about to make known that he was also set apart as a witness of something more (Acts xxvi. 16), but this we will consider in its own place.

"Far hence unto the Gentiles" (Acts xxii. 21) is the first occurrence of *ethnos* in this section, and in the statement that "the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles" (Acts xxviii. 28) occurs the last reference of *ethnos* in the Acts.

Paul is still, in Acts xxii. in Jerusalem, but already, in spirit, he sees the fulfillment of the Temple vision in Rome.

**#49. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22).
Paul's defence before the Council (xxiii. 1 - 35).
pp. 33 - 36**

The Apostle's testimony from the castle stairs ended in tumult. At the hated word "Gentiles", "They lifted up their voices and said: Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live" (Acts xxii. 22, cf. xxi. 36). This same word *aire* ("away") had been uttered once before by the mob when they clamoured for another Prisoner—the Lord Himself (Luke xxiii. 18; John xix. 15). The Apostle is here following closely in the footsteps of his Master.

Paul's speech having been made in Hebrew, the chief captain is at a loss to know the meaning of this fresh outbreak, and so we read: "The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging: that he might know wherefore they cried so against him" (Acts xxii. 24). The Apostle had already been submitted on previous occasions to the cruel and degrading punishment of being beaten with Roman rods, and of being scourged in Jewish synagogues: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods" (II Cor. xi. 24, 25). And now it seemed that he would have to endure the *horrible flagellum*, or "whip", a form of torture which in Roman hands sometimes ended fatally.

In Acts xxii. 25 we read: "And while they were binding him down with the thongs." Some expositors, including Conybeare and Howson, and Lewin, consider that the

“thongs” refer to the “lash” of the whip, but others, among them Alford, Wordsworth and Farrar, interpret the word in the sense of “something that binds”. The word *himas* occurs elsewhere in Mark i. 7, Luke iii. 16 and John i. 27, where it refers to the “latchet” of a shoe. The prefix *pro* in the verb *proteino*, “to bind”, refers to “the position of the prisoner, which was bent forward and tied with a sort of gear made of leather to an inclined post” (Alford).

Three times already Paul, a Roman citizen, had suffered the illegality of being beaten, without revealing his station and claiming exemption. True martyrdom, however, is never separated in Scripture from the thought of “witness”. The same Greek word *martur* is translated both “martyr” and “witness”, as for example:

“Thou shalt be His *witness*” (Acts xxii. 15).

“The blood of Thy *martyr*” (Acts xxii. 20).

“The faithful *witness*” (Rev. i. 5).

“My faithful *martyr*” (Rev. ii. 13).

Suffering apart from service, suffering endured for its own sake, and without an object in view, is not martyrdom in the Scriptural sense. While the Apostle felt that there was still hope for Israel, he endured in silence, but he had now entered the closing phase of his ministry, and Israel’s days were numbered. To suffer the ignominy of examination by torture would now serve no useful end. It would benefit no one, and it would not uphold any vital truth. In the circumstances, it would have been a piece of unreasonable stoicism, and Paul therefore says to the centurion that stood by: “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?” (Acts xxii. 25). The Apostle’s undaunted courage had been fully manifested during the time that had elapsed since the Romans had intervened, and the centurion recognized that this was no mere evasion or a dishonest attempt to gain time. Moreover, he knew that to claim Roman citizenship falsely was often punishable by death (Suet. Claud. 25).

To bind a Roman, and to scourge him uncondemned, broke two laws, the *Lex Valeria* and the *Lex Porcia*, and there was also an edict of Augustus prohibiting the application of torture generally. Describing this same period under the heading “Festus succeeds Felix”, Josephus writes, in his “Wars of the Jews”:

“Florus ventured then to do what no one had done before, that is to have men of the equestrian order whipped, and nailed to the cross before his tribunal, who, although they were by birth Jews, yet were they of Roman dignity notwithstanding” (Jos. Wars. ii. 14, 9).

The fear that possessed the chief captain “because he had bound” Paul, does not refer to the fact he had taken Paul into custody, but rather to the illegal binding preparatory to scourging. What was called “*militaris custodia*”, by virtue of which a Roman citizen awaiting trial could be chained by his right hand to the left hand of his guard, was provided for by Roman law. The fact that Paul was consigned to a centurion afterwards indicates that he was put into this type of military custody.

The effect of Paul's words upon the centurion was immediate and pronounced. As a great Roman writer has said: "How often has this exclamation, *I am a Roman citizen* (*Civie Romanus Sum*), brought aid and safety among barbarians in the remotest parts of the earth" (*Civ. Verr.* v. 57).

The centurion at once hastens to the chief captain's quarters, saying: "Take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman." The captain himself then comes back to this astonishing Jewish prisoner—whom he had once suspected of being an Egyptian fanatic (Acts xxi. 38), and who spoke "Greek" and "Hebrew" with equal facility (Acts xxi. 37, 40)—and asks: "Tell me, art thou a Roman?" (Acts xxii. 27). Lysias himself had the praenomen "Claudius" (Acts xxiii. 26), indicating that he had obtained his freedom during the reign of Claudius, and, looking at the Apostle, and seeing nothing to indicate either wealth or position, he says: "*I know how much it cost me to get this citizenship*". Farrar's note here is as follows: "Verse 28, *Ego oida poso*, D. Though unsupported by evidence, the colloquialism sounds very genuine." Alford's note reads: "For *pollo, oida poso* D (remarkable and possibly original, *pollo* being a gloss; but if so, the genuine reading has been now overborne by the intruder)."

Dr. Cassius tells us that the *civitas* of Rome was, in the early part of the reign of Claudius, sold at a high rate, and it is to this that Lysias evidently refers. The Apostle's quiet rejoinder is given in verse 28: "But I was free born." We have no information concerning the Apostle's parents apart from the scanty references that occur in his own writings. The mere fact of being a citizen of Tarsus would not have conferred this privilege, for while Tarsus was an *urbs libra*, or "free city", it was not a *colonia*, or "colony". Besides, he had already revealed to the captain that he was a Tarsian (Acts xxi. 39). For some reason unknown to us, Paul's father or one of his more remote ancestors must have obtained the right of Roman citizenship.

The Apostle's claim is too great to be resisted, and he is immediately released. The soldiers who were to have tortured him, withdraw, and we read that "the chief captain also was afraid because he had bound him".

Still anxious to obtain information upon which he can frame an accusation, Lysias next arranges for the Apostle to appear before the Sanhedrin: "On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty whereof he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them" (Acts xxii. 30). Before considering the Apostle's defence before this council, let us first see how the section (Acts xxii. - xxiii.) is constructed.

Acts xxii. and xxiii. PAUL BEFORE THE JEWS.

- A1 | xxii. 1, 2. OPENING WORDS. He spake in Hebrew.
Men, brethren and fathers.
- B1 | xxii. 2-30. DEFENCE AND CONSEQUENCES. |
a | Silence.
b | Conciliatory address.
c | Tumult.
d | Paul taken to castle.
e | Paul a Roman.
f | Jewish council.
- A2 | xxiii. 1. OPENING WORDS.
Men and brethren.
- B2 | xxiii. 2-24. DEFENCE AND CONSEQUENCES. |
a | Smite on mouth.
b | Dividing address.
c | Dissension.
d | Paul taken to castle.
e | Paul and Rome.
f | Jewish conspiracy.
- A3 | xxiii. 25-30. OPENING WORDS. He wrote a letter.
The most excellent governor Felix.
- B3 | xxiii. 31-35. DEFENCE RESERVED.

Here we see the oneness of the Apostle's two-fold defence. The first section is given in an atmosphere of tense feeling, the second before the highest Jewish authority. Paul had already claimed Roman citizenship; he now claims equality with his Jewish hearers. On the stairs, before the excited mob, he had cried, "Men, brethren and fathers". Now, before the Sanhedrin, "earnestly beholding the council" with a steady glance that betrayed neither severity nor fear, he begins, "Men and brethren". The Sanhedrin was a judicial body of seventy-two, made up of twenty-four chief priests, twenty-four elders, and twenty-four scribes and doctors. The council originally met in an apartment of the inner Temple, but as it was impossible for a Gentile to enter the sacred enclosure, and as the Romans had granted the Sanhedrin the power of inflicting the death penalty in connection with any Gentile passing into this sacred enclosure and so were obliged to have a representative there, it now met in a room just outside the Temple precincts.

Ananias, the high priest, was one of the worst of his kind. The Talmud speaks of him as rapacious, gluttonous and greedy; defrauding the lower priests of their tithes, while sending his minions with bludgeons to collect his own tithes from the threshing floors.

"Few pitied him when he was dragged out of his hiding place in a sewer to perish miserably by the daggers of the Sicarii, whom, in the days of his posterity, he had not scrupled to sanction and employ" (Farrar, quoting Gratz and Josephus).

Several things, no doubt, combined to annoy this unprincipled man—Paul's omission of the title "fathers", claiming his right as a Sanhedrist and a Rabbi, his unflinching look,

and his emphasis upon a “good conscience before God”. The High Priest’s command that the Apostle should be smitten on the mouth was a violation of both decency and privilege, and would have been peculiarly offensive to a Jew. “He that strikes the cheek of an Israelite strikes, as it were, the cheek of the Shekinah, for it is said, He that strikes a man strikes the Holy One” (*Sanhedr*).

Once again the Apostle stands where his Lord had stood before him (Matt. xxvii. 30), but it cannot be said of Paul that, “as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth”. It is very difficult for anyone to-day to judge whether Paul was right or wrong when he replied, “God shall smite thee, thou withed wall”. His words may have been prophetic, for Ananias died, as we have seen, an ignominious death at the hands of assassins. However, whether this be so or not, the Apostle immediately apologizes, saying, “I wist not, brethren, that he was the High Priest”, and supplements his acknowledgment by quoting Scripture against himself: “For it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people” (Acts xxiii. 5). Did Paul’s words “I wist not” mean that, through defective vision, he had not recognized the High Priest? Or did they mean that, knowing the character of Ananias, and that he had attained his office through bribery, and had ruled as a tyrant, he refused to recognize such a man as a true holder of the office. Calvin and others have suggested that Paul spoke ironically, but none of these explanations seems to square with the Apostle’s retraction, and it would seem that Paul frankly acknowledged that he had committed an offence, even though the pressure under which it had been committed had been almost unbearable. Those who criticize the Apostle’s swift resentment should remember and follow his equally swift acknowledgment.

Just as earlier Paul had been seen that suffering at the hands of the Roman captain would accomplish no good end, so now he perceives that further conciliation in his attitude towards the Sanhedrin would be fruitless. He therefore throws into their midst the apple of discord, and so divides his judges into the two opposing factions of Pharisees and Sadducees. He eventually has to be saved from being “pulled in pieces” by the advent of the Roman guard. The Apostle was evidently not altogether happy about this expedient as we see from his acknowledgment before Felix:

“Let these same here say, if they have found any evil-doing in me, *while I stood before the council, except it be for this one voice*, that I cried, standing among them. Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day” (Acts xxiv. 20, 21).

When we consider the extreme danger in which the Apostle often stood, and the violence, confusion, and uncertainty in which he lived, the wonder is, not that he occasionally manifested that he was indeed a man of like passions with ourselves, but that he endured so nobly, and followed the Lord so closely. We love the earthen vessel, but, like Paul himself, we look for perfection in One only, our Saviour and Lord.

If Paul’s words spoken before Felix seem to point in one direction, the Lord’s words, as recorded in Acts xxiii. 11, seem to point in the other: “Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.” We

therefore leave the question of how far Paul was right or wrong in his attitude to the council, and would seek rather to “consider our own selves, lest we also be tempted”.

In verse 16, against the general background of tension and strife, a gentler note is introduced. “Paul’s sister’s son” discovers a conspiracy against the Apostle, and comes forward to warn the chief captain—a homely touch that the lonely captive would fully appreciate. This further plot apparently helped Lysias to make up his mind, and he summons two centurions, commanding them to make ready a bodyguard of horse soldiers, to conduct Paul safely to Felix. The letter that accompanied the prisoner was ingeniously worded so that any charges that might be preferred against the writer for his illegal handling of a Roman citizen would be obviated. These, and other points, we shall hope to consider in subsequent articles.

**#50. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22).
Paul before Felix and Festus (xxiv. and xxv.).
pp. 69 - 75**

According to Roman law, it was necessary that a prisoner who had been sent with an *elogium* should, wherever possible, be tried within three days. In this case, however, Felix had to communicate with Jerusalem, and command the presence of the High Priest and elders—which would occupy at least two days—and it is therefore not surprising that the case against Paul was not heard until “after five days” (Acts xxiv. 1). The priests and elders, not being eloquent in Latin, procured the services of an orator named Tertullus. Conybeare and Howson cite at length the Latin passage in Valerius Maximus from which it is inferred that all pleadings, even in Greek provinces, were conducted before Roman magistrates in Latin. Lewin, however, draws attention to the introduction of Greek, in spite of this law, even at Rome itself.

Roman law permitted the accuser and the accused to plead in person, and we find Paul using this right. Frequently, however, *advocati* (Gk. *rhetoires*, as in Acts xxiv. 1) were employed—generally young lawyers who served in this way in the provinces, in order to obtain experience.

In Acts xxiv. Tertullus follows the usual custom, and opens his address with a *captatio benevolentiae*:

“Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence: we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness” (Acts xxiv. 2, 3).

The use of the word “providence” here is an indication of the Latin persuasion of the speaker. A coin of Commodus is known, bearing the inscription *Provid. Aug.*, and *Providentia Cæsaris* is a common phrase on coins of the emperors. With regard to the implications of verses 2 and 3, it is certainly true that Felix had suppressed bandits in the

country, and had only recently rid the land of a false Messiah, an Egyptian. His real character, however, cannot be gathered from these opening compliments. Tacitus wrote of him:

“In the practice of all kinds of lust and cruelty he exercised the power of a king with the tempter of a slave” (Hist. v. 9).

“We may trace the *libidinem* in his persuading Drusilla to leave her husband and to live with him; the *saevitiam*, in his procuring the assassination of the high priest Jonathan, who had given him good but distasteful advice; the *servile ingenium* in that ‘he trembled’ under castigation, but was not corrected” (W. G. Humphry).

After the opening panegyric Tertullus passes on to the accusation. This he divides up under three heads:

- (1) The accused was a public pest, a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the Empire.
- (2) He was a ringleader of a sect of the Nazarenes.
- (3) He had attempted to profane the Temple.

This threefold accusation implied that Paul had offended against both Roman and Jewish law. The first offence amounted to *majestas*, or treason against the Emperor, while the third in itself was punishable by death.

The word for “a pestilent fellow” is *loimos*, “a plague”. What a name to give this bearer of life and light to a stricken and dying world! The word for “sedition” is *stasis*, which occurs in connection with the charge laid against Barabbas (Mark xv. 7), and is also used for the “uproar” in Ephesus (Acts xix. 40). Tertullus was careful not to refer to Paul as a leader of the “Christians”, for the title “Christ”, being equivalent of “the Messiah”, might have involved the Jews themselves.

Considerable differences of opinion exist among textual critics as to whether the second half of verse 7 and the first half of verse 8 should be included in the text or not. In the A.V. the passage reads:

“Whom we took, and would have judged according to our law, but the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him” (Acts xxiv. 6-8).

If we omit the suspected passage, then the words “of whom” refer to Paul. If, on the other hand, the A.V. be retained, they would refer to Lysias. Felix certainly adjourned the case, saying: “When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter” (verse 22), but whether or not this was an act of evasion it is impossible to say. Certainly Lysias never came, and Felix never heard the conclusion of the trial. In any case no doctrinal point is affected by the uncertainty in verses 7 and 8, and we therefore propose to follow the A.V.

Before, however, we consider Paul’s defence before Felix, we must get a general view of the whole of the section.

It will be seen that Paul's trial before the two Roman Governors falls into three sections, marked by the recurrence of "Time", "Charge", "Defence" and "Judgment". With regard to the fourth heading, it will be observed that in the first section it is not the judgment-seat of either the Roman Emperor or the Roman Governor that is in view, but rather the "judgment to come", at the prospect of which even Felix trembled. The judgment of God and the judgment of man are in striking contrast. Felix hoped for money from Paul, and to cover his own evil tracks upon his recall to Rome, he left him a prisoner, wishing "to show the Jews a pleasure". Festus also, for higher and purer motives, was willing to make concessions to the Jews, and have Paul tried at Jerusalem; a point that is repeated in the third account, as the structure shows (Acts xxv. 17-22).

Paul before Felix and Festus (Acts xxiv. 1 - xxv. 22).

- A1 | xxiv. 1. TIME.—After five days.
- B1 | xxiv. 1-9. CHARGE.—Tertullus informed against Paul (*emphanizo*).
- C1 | xxiv. 10-21. DEFENCE.—I cheerfully answer for myself.
- D1 | xxiv. 22-27. JUDGMENT.—*Felix*. |
 - a | Judgment to come.
 - b | Willing to show the Jews a pleasure.
- A2 | xxv. 1. TIME.—After three days.
- B2 | xxv. 2-7. CHARGE.—The High Priest informed against Paul (*emphanizo*).
- C2 | xxv. 8. DEFENCE.—He answered for himself.
- D2 | xxv. 9-12. JUDGMENT.—*Festus*. |
 - b | Willing to do the Jews a pleasure.
 - a | I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat.
- A3 | xxv. 13. TIME.—After certain days.
- B3 | xxv. 14, 15. CHARGE.—The chief priests informed against Paul (*emphanizo*).
- C3 | xxv. 16. DEFENCE.—License to answer for himself.
- D3 | xxv. 17-22. JUDGMENT.—*Festus*. |
 - a | I sat on the judgment seat.
 - b | Would Paul go to Jerusalem?

We come now to the trial before Felix, and Paul's defence. There is no flattering opening in this case, but the Apostle does make an initial statement that would probably help to secure a sympathetic hearing: "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself" (Acts xxiv. 10). From Josephus we learn that Felix had held this office for a period of six years, and was not recalled until A.D.60. He had also, according to Tacitus, held rule jointly with Cumanus prior to A.D.52. Whatever his character, Felix was bound to have been acquainted with the land and the people, and this all that Paul claims.

The first point made by the Apostle is given in verse 11: "Because it is in thy power to ascertain that only twelve days have passed since I went up to Jerusalem to worship." The twelve days are made up as follows:

1st Day.—Arrival in Jerusalem (xxi. 15-17).
2nd Day.—Interview with James, etc. (xxi. 18).
3rd Day.—Purification in the Temple (xxi. 26).
7th Day.—The seven days nearly completed. Paul arrested (xxi. 30).
8th Day.—Before the Sanhedrin (xxii. 30).
9th Day.—Conspiracy Revealed (xxiii. 12).
10th Day.—Arrival at Caesarea (xxiii. 33).
11th and 12th Day.—In custody (xxiii. 35).
13th Day.—Trial before Felix (xxiv. 1).

Felix knew the date of Pentecost, and could confirm that Paul had actually arrived for this feast. A complete account of all his movements for the whole time under review was obtainable. The further points in his defence were:

- (1) POSITIVE.—He came to *worship* in the Temple.
- (2) NEGATIVE.—No evidence was produced by Tertullus to show that he had been found disputing with any man, or raising up the people, either in the synagogue or in the city.

He had been charged with being the ringleader of a sect called the Nazarenes. This he willingly admitted, but it was no crime against Roman law to believe “all things which are written in the law and the prophets”. His accusers might call it “heresy”, but Paul claimed that it was the worship of the God of his fathers.

The phrase “the God of my fathers” was the usual term to denote the tutelary god of a particular nation, and as such a legal object of worship under Roman law. The terms “heresy” and “sect” are not used in an ecclesiastical sense in Paul’s defence. His very accusers belonged to two different sects—the Pharisees and the Sadducees—and Paul is simply claiming for this new sect of Nazarenes the toleration normally allowed by Roman law and enjoyed by his accusers.

In verse 15 the Apostle emphasizes the hope of resurrection which he held in common with the sect of the Pharisees, and in the following verse declares that he exercised himself to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and man. When the proper occasion presented itself, Paul was very ready to preach to Felix (*Acts xxiv. 25*), but this opportunity had not yet arrived. He concludes his defence by asking why the Jews from Asia, who were supposed to have seen him polluting the Temple, were not present at the trial to bear their witness against him. The only evil doing, the Apostle claims, that the council could bring against him was the split that his declaration concerning the resurrection had caused in their ranks.

The ring of truth that was so evident in the Apostle’s defence, his ready admission of “heresy”, the harmony of his statements with the letter written by Lysias, the failure to produce witnesses, and the manifest religious animosity of his accusers, convinced Felix that Paul was innocent. He had a “more accurate knowledge of that way” than his hearers had credited, and he defers the trial, saying: “When Lysias comes down I will decide finally between you (*diagnosomai*).” Paul is now given into the charge of a centurion, who is instructed to afford as much relaxation and liberty as the case allowed,

permitting his friends to visit him and minister to his needs. There was already a company of believers at Cæsarea, including Philip the Evangelist. Josephus, speaking of the custody of Agrippa when he was a prisoner, uses the word *aneseos*, “remission” or “relaxation”, in connection with the centurion who was friendly to him upon receiving news of the death of the Emperor Tiberius.

There are some who would criticize the Apostle for not preaching the gospel to these Roman officials, just as they would criticize his method of speaking to the philosophers at Athens. There are several facts, however, that should be carefully weighed before we attempt to criticize:

- (1) The council at Athens had in earlier days the power of life and death, and even if this power was later reduced, Paul’s liberty was in danger.
- (2) The Sanhedrin still retained the power of life and death.
- (3) The administration of provincial Roman justice was very much influenced by the character of the judges, and the pressure that could be brought to bear upon them by influential natives.
- (4) It is the duty of a man accused before the law to indicate his innocence before he asserts his rights, and this was the line of conduct that Paul pursued.
- (5) It is quite false to charge the Apostle with either reticence or cowardice. An examination of his apologies in Acts xvii., xxiii., xxiv. and xxv. will show how Christ and His gospel were either actually introduced, or would have been introduced but for the cutting short of his defence by his opponents.

Moreover, chapter xxiv. shows how faithfully the Apostle seized the opportunity which Felix presented, of preaching the gospel even while a prisoner.

“And after certain days when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ” (Acts xxiv. 24).

The word *paraginomai* (“came”) may indicate that Felix had been away and had now returned. His wife, Drusilla, was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I, whose end is described in Acts xii. 19-23, and the sister of Herod Agrippa II, mentioned in Acts xxv. and xxvi. Drusilla was originally married to Azizus, the king of Emesa, but this marriage was soon dissolved, as recorded by Josephus:

“While Felix was procurator of Judaea, he saw this Drusilla, and fell in love with her; for she did indeed exceed all other women in beauty. And he sent her a person whose name was Simon, one of his friends: a Jew he was, and by birth a Cypriot, and one who pretended to be a magician; and endeavoured to persuade her to forsake her present husband, and marry him: and promised, that if she would not refuse him, he would make her a happy woman. Accordingly she acted ill, and because she was desirous to avoid her sister Berenice’s envy, for she was very ill-treated by her on account of her beauty, was prevailed upon to transgress the laws of her forefathers, and to marry Felix; and when she had had a son by him, he named him Agrippa. But after what manner that young man, with his wife, perished at the conflagration of the mountain Vesuvius, in the days of Titus Cæsar, shall be related hereafter” (*Ant. of Jews*, xx. 7, 1).

Wordsworth comments here:

“St. Paul was tried on a charge of breaking the Law at the instance of the Jews, before a ruler who had set those laws at defiance, and who yet is flattered by them” (3-9).

From Drusilla Felix had probably heard of the Messianic hope of Israel, and of the new “heresy” that claimed that Jesus was the Christ. And so we read that Felix “sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ”. The expression here: *Tes eis Christon pisteos* (“The unto Christ faith”) is a striking one. According to the revised texts the name “Jesus” should also be added.

We have no means of knowing the length of time occupied by the Apostle, or the line of approach he adopted. He may have appealed to the O.T. Scriptures for the benefit of Drusilla, or he may have approached his subject along the lines of Acts xvii. The veil, however, is lifted for a moment in verse 25, and we read that “as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, Felix trembled” (Acts xxiv. 25).

The word *dialogismos* (“reasoning”) is used in an evil sense in the N.T. and is forbidden by the Apostle himself in several places (Rom. i. 21; xiv. 1; I Cor. iii. 20; Phil. ii. 14; I Tim. ii. 8). We must be careful, however, not to jump to false conclusions. “Reasonings”, *dialogismo*i (plural), are repudiated by the Apostle in five passages in his epistles, but “reasoning” (*dialegomai*) is actually used of him ten times in the Acts and is twice translated “preaching” (Acts xx. 7, 9). The last occurrence of *dialegomai* in the Acts is this reference in chapter xxiv., where Paul “reasons of righteousness, continence, and judgment to come”.

The man who listened to this “preaching” of the “faith unto Christ Jesus” was a Roman libertine, and the woman a profligate Jewish princess. Farrar says of Felix:

“He had been a slave, in the vilest of all positions, and the vilest of all epochs, in the vilest of all cities Ample and indisputable testimony, Jewish and pagan, sacred and secular, reveals to us what he had been.”

It was to this man that the Apostle spoke of a judgment-seat, where there is no respect of persons, and where the Judge Himself knows the thoughts and intents of the heart. In verse 25 we read that “Felix trembled”, but the “convenient season” never materialized, and the evil past held him in its grip. He “communed” with the Apostle on several occasions after this, but, finally, upon his recall to Rome, he violated the law in the endeavour to placate the Jews, and left Paul bound.

**#51. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22).
Paul before Festus and Agrippa (xxv. and xxvi.).
pp. 99 - 105**

We concluded our last article at the point where Felix, “willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound” (Acts xxiv. 27), and we must now take up the narrative again at the beginning of chapter xxv.

Festus, who appears in the last verse of chap. xxiv. and the first verse of chap. xxv., provides us with one of the few certain dates in the chronology of the Acts. As Festus died in A.D.61, and Felix was recalled in A.D.60, there can be no doubt as to the dating of this new chapter.

The narrative of Acts xxv. speaks of Festus in a more favourable light than was the case with Felix. Festus certainly attempted to administer “even-handed” justice, and Josephus says of him: “Festus succeeded Felix as procurator, and made it his business to correct those that made disturbances in the country” (D. J. ii. 14. 1).

Three days after his arrival at Cæsarea Festus went up to Jerusalem, and one of his first interviews would undoubtedly have been with the High Priest. By this time Ananias had been superseded by Ishmael, the son of Fabeï (*see Josephus Ant. xx. 8, 8*), but, although there had been a change in the person of the High Priest, it is evident that there had been no change in the attitude of the Jews themselves towards the prisoner at Cæsarea. The High Priest desires of Festus a “favour”, intending that, if the request were granted, Paul should be waylaid and killed before he could reach Jerusalem. However, Festus maintains the Romans standard of justice and replies:

“It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him” (Acts xxv. 16).

As Lewin comments: “The answer of Festus was such as became an imperial Prefect, and worthy of being written in letters of gold.”

Festus did, however, attempt one concession, and asked Paul whether he would be willing to go up to Jerusalem to be tried by the Sanhedrin, under his protection (Acts xxv. 9). However, the Apostle knew that he was to witness at Rome, and, cutting short any further bargainings with justice, he pronounces the irrevocable words “Cæsarem appello”.

“I stand before Cæsar’s tribunal, and there ought my trial to be. To the Jews I have done no wrong as thou knowest full well. If I am guilty, and have done anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if the things whereof these men accuse me are nought, no man can give me up to them. I APPEAL UNTO CÆSAR” (Acts xxv. 10, 11 Conybeare & Howson).

It could not have been very pleasant for a newly-arrived governor to have his first public trial end in this way, but against such an appeal there was no argument. Accordingly, Festus holds a brief consultation with his Assessors and, finding that Paul's appeal is valid, replies: "Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar shalt thou go." The wording here seems to convey the unspoken thought—"And you little realize what this appeal will mean."

While the case was taken, by the Apostle's appeal, out of the hands of Festus, he was still under obligation to remit to the supreme tribunal the *apostoli*, or report upon its previous progress. He was, moreover, in some perplexity, for the testimony of the Jews had been irregular, a mere accumulation of many and grievous complaints, which they could not prove. As he says in verse 27: "It seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him" (Acts xxv. 27). In these circumstances, the advent of King Agrippa seemed providential. On the death of his uncle, Agrippa had been made king of Chalcis. Claudius had also given him the tetrarchy of Batanæa, and to this Nero had added part of Galilee and Peræa. Bernice was Agrippa's sister, and had been the wife of his uncle, the king of Chalcis. Her relationship with her brother was the subject of suspicion (Juv. vi. 156), and she subsequently became the wife of Polemon, King of Cilicia, and the mistress of Titus. Drusilla, as we have already noted, was her younger sister.

The Herodians owed much to Roman patronage, and King Agrippa lost no time in paying a visit to the new Roman Governor. Seizing the opportunity that this visit presented, Festus remarks to his guest:

"There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix; about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him" (Acts xxv. 14, 15).

Festus then recapitulates the facts of the case, and Agrippa intervenes with the words: "I would also hear the man myself." We must remember that Paul was now outside the jurisdiction of Festus, and that Agrippa also had no authority in the matter. It was simply an excellent opportunity for getting the opinion of one who was intimately acquainted with the points at issue, so that Festus might be able to frame some reasonable account of the charges laid against the prisoner.

The reader may appreciate, at this point, a reminder of the general disposition of the subject-matter in this section of the book.

A1		xxii., xxiii.	To Jews at Jerusalem.
A2		xxiv. - xxv. 22.	To Felix and Festus.
A3		xxv. 23 - xxviii. 15.	To Agrippa.
A4		xxviii. 16-22.	To Jews at Rome.

This, of course, is only the barest skeleton. The full structure is set out on page 2 of current volume.

There were two periods in this part of the Apostle's career, during which he was a prisoner for two years. The first was at Cæsarea, where he was held a prisoner, with opportunity to see his friends, for two years (Acts xxiv. 27). After this he was again held in custody by Festus while he formulated a charge that could be sent with him, and then was sent on a journey to Rome, where once again he was a prisoner for another period of two years, receiving all that cared to visit him.

Paul's defence before Agrippa is the fullest of which we have any record. He was no longer on trial, and he availed himself of this splendid opportunity to give a complete testimony.

Paul Before Agrippa (Acts xxvi.).

- A | 1-3. Agrippa's acknowledge as an expert.
- B | 4-7. Paul's manner of life from his youth. A Pharisee.
- C | 8. Personal appeal to Agrippa. "Incredible" (*Apistos*).
- D | 9-15. Contrary to Jesus of Nazareth. Jerusalem. Damascus.
- E | 16-18. Paul's Commission. The two commissions. |
 - a | Stand (*Histemi*).
 - b | Witness.
 - c | Both. I have I will.
 - d | People and Gentiles.
 - e | Forgiveness. Inheritance.
- D | 19-21. Obedience to heavenly vision. Damascus. Jerusalem.
- E | 22, 23. Paul's Commission. The first commission re-stated. |
 - a | Continue (*Histemi*).
 - b | Witnessing.
 - c | *None other things*.
 - e | Suffer. Rise.
 - d | People and Gentiles.
- C | 24-28. Personal appeal of Festus, and of Paul to Agrippa (*Pisteuo*).
- B | 29. Reference to present manner of life. Except bonds.
- A | 31, 32. Agrippa gives his opinion.

We will not go over the ground already covered by the Apostle in his former defences, but deal rather with those items that he brings into prominence in this particular speech before Agrippa.

Paul could, of course, have refused to speak before Agrippa, or, on the other hand, he might have abused the opportunity by seeking to flatter him. In fact he did neither; his one object was to serve the Lord. The Apostle does not begin with any personal compliments with respect to Agrippa's character, but he does acknowledge that he was "an expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews"—a statement that was an undoubted fact.

Of Agrippa's father, Josephus writes:

“He also came to Jerusalem and offered all the sacrifices that belonged to him, and omitted nothing that the law required; on which account he ordered that many of the Nazarites should have their heads shorn. And for the golden chain which had been given him by Caius, of equal weight with that iron chain wherewith his royal hands had been bound, he hung it up within the limits of the temple, over the treasury that it might be a memorial” (Ant. xix., vi. 1).

The fact that Paul had been apprehended in the Temple, while associating himself with those who had taken the Nazarite vow, and the fact that he now wore the Roman chain, would no doubt make some appeal to Herod’s son.

The Apostle begins by going over the ground already covered by Acts ix. and xxii.—his early life, his persecuting zeal and the vision on the road to Damascus. At verse 16, however, he breaks new ground. Truth hitherto unrecorded is now revealed, and as this new revelation is of vital importance to all who rejoice in the dispensation of the Mystery, verse 16-18 must be given our closest attention. Let us note first that it is here for the first time that we are told what the Lord Himself said to the Apostle on the road to Damascus. It may, perhaps, be objected that this statement is not true, and that in Acts ix. we can read for ourselves what the Lord said. To make sure about this point, let us turn to Acts ix.:

Verses 1 and 2 record the journey to Damascus.

Verses 3 and 4 record the vision and the voice.

Verse 5 reveals that it is the Lord Who speaks.

Verse 6 tells Paul to go into the city and wait for instructions.

Verses 15 and 16 record what the Lord said *to Ananias about Paul*, but that is all.

It is clear therefore, that what the Lord actually said to Paul is not recorded in Acts ix., and it will be found that this is also true of Acts xxii. Chapter xxii. records *the words of Ananias* (verses 13-15), and we also learn that Paul was to be a witness of all that he had seen and heard, but it is to Acts xxvi. that we must turn to learn *for the first time* what the Lord actually said to Paul at his conversion and commission.

Two of the new features contained in this record are found in the words “Both”, “I will appear unto thee”, and “Now I send thee” in verses 16 and 17, and in the summary of doctrine contained in verse 18:

“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.”

The close association between these words and the doctrine of the epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians will be obvious.

In contrast with this new commission, recorded here for the first time, is the old commission to which the Apostle returns in verses 20-23. In these verses he preaches “repentance”, and proclaims “none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come”—which obviously could not refer to the mystery hid in God.

We have already seen from Acts xx. 24 that Paul had received some commission from the Lord that was intimately associated with “bonds”, and now, having appealed to Cæsar, the Apostle is at liberty to reveal the fact that from the beginning he had known that his commission was two-fold:

- (1) Witnessing to Israel and the Gentiles the things which he had seen and heard, while
- (2) Awaiting a future appearing of the Lord, when the terms of the new ministry associated with prison would be made known to him.

At last the fresh appearing had taken place, and the terms of the new commission given. Verse 18 anticipates, in a condensed form, the doctrine that is more fully expressed in Ephesians and Colossians (*see* Eph. i. 7, 13, 14, 18, and Col. i. 12, 13).

The word “both” necessitates a two-fold witness. Just as a believing and intelligent reading of John xvi. 12-14 compels us to seek for a subsequent revelation after the Spirit of Truth had come, so equally a believing and intelligent reading of Acts xxvi. 16-18 compels us to seek for that subsequent revelation of truth that was given after Paul had become the prisoner of the Lord for the Gentiles. This revelation is found in those epistles that bear the stamp of prison, namely: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and II Timothy. These epistles contain the revelation of the Mystery, and give dispensational grounds for the Gentiles’ right to the blessings summarized in Acts xxvi. 18.

In verse 24, Paul’s defence is interrupted by Festus crying with a loud voice: “Paul, thou art beside thyself: much learning hath made thee mad.” It is rather strange that, for entirely different reasons, Paul is twice interrupted upon reaching the word “Gentiles”. The fanatical Jews hear him up to this point, and then cry “Away with him”. Festus also hears him up to the same point, and concludes that a Jew who imagines that he can possibly have a mission and a message to the Gentiles must be mad. It is sad to think that there are many Christians who, by their opposition to the Apostle’s claim and their attitude towards those who would make these claim known, take practically the same position as that taken by Festus when he said of the Apostle, “Much learning doth make thee mad”. Paul, however, understands the attitude of Festus, and answers him courteously. He had listened with growing wonder to a tale of visions, revelations, persecutions, prophecies, the assertion that sins could be forgiven, and that the darkness not only of the Jew but also of the Gentile could be dispersed. It was no wonder that his Roman upbringing would not allow him to accept such statements at all readily.

Having replied to Festus, the Apostle turns again to Agrippa. King Agrippa had a knowledge of Moses and the prophets, and he also knew the facts of the past few years. As Paul says in verse 26, “This thing was not done in a corner”. And so, in verse 27, the Apostle asks: “King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.” How are we to understand Agrippa’s reply? On this point, Farrar writes:

“Not old in years, but accustomed from his boyhood to an atmosphere of cynicism and unbelief, he could only smile with the good-natured contempt of a man of the world at the enthusiastic earnestness which could even for a moment fancy that *he* would be converted to the heresy of the Nazarenes with their crucified Messiah ‘You are trying to persuade me offhand to be a Christian’, he said with a half-suppressed smile.”

Lewin, on the other hand, writes:

“Agrippa was deeply moved, and the confession fell unbidden from his lips ‘Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian’.”

Another interpretation is this:

“*En oligo*, as the expression is used by the apostle himself in another place (Eph. iii. 3) may mean, ‘in short’ ‘In short, you are persuading me, the most zealous of Moses’ followers, to be a Christian’. But this interpretation is not consistent with Paul’s reply, ‘I would to God that both *almost (en oligo)* and *altogether (en pollo)*”—(Lewin).

Conybeare and Howson give the following note:

“*En oligo* cannot mean ‘almost’, which would be *par oligon*. It might mean either ‘in a few words’ (Eph. iii. 3), or ‘in a small measure’ or ‘in a small time’ We might render the passage thus: ‘Thou thinkest to make me a Christian with a little persuasion’. We should observe that *peitheis*, ‘persuade’ is in the present tense, and that the title ‘Christian’ was one of contempt—see I Pet. iv. 16.”

The note in the *Companion Bible* is as follows: “To put it briefly, thou art persuading me to become a Christian.”

We feel reluctant to part with the thought enshrined in the words “almost persuaded”, but truth is greater than sentiment. Pilate before the Saviour asked “What is truth?”, but there is no reason to believe that he was really seeking the light. Felix, too, enquired of Paul concerning faith in Christ, and actually trembled as he heard, but there is no evidence that there was the slightest movement towards repentance. And so it seems, alas, to have been with Agrippa.

In spite of this, however, the Apostle replies with his whole soul:

“I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.”

Agrippa’s verdict was that nothing worthy of death or of bonds could be laid to Paul’s charge, and that if he had not appealed to Cæsar, he might have been given his freedom. How Festus framed his letter we do not know, but it is certain that there could have been no specific charge against the Apostle according to Roman law.

**#52. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22).
From Caesarea to Melita (xxvii.).
pp. 129 - 134**

The record of the voyage, shipwreck and arrival at Rome which occupies so much space in the closing section of the Acts is perhaps the most wonderful record of travel that has been preserved from ancient times. Since 1856, no writer on the subject can ignore the volume entitled: "On the Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul, with Dissertations" by James Smith. All writers of note, such as Conybeare and Howson, Lewin, Alford, and Farrar, who have had the xxviiith chapter of the Acts before them, have given unstinted praise to this writer. In addition, Conybeare and Howson had the help of Admiral Sir Charles Penrose, whose notes on the narrative make Luke's record, owing to the exactness of his nautical references and the breadth of his knowledge, little short of a miracle were the record but the figment of his imagination.

Independent research is commendable, and originality, where it is unaffected, is charming, but any attempt on our part to write on Acts xxvii. without reference to these technical treatises would be folly. Moreover, while it is impracticable to smother our pages with quotation marks, it would be a waste of good material to attempt avoidance of the use of the language of those who have made the subject their own. Like all writers since 1856 we are indebted to James Smith, and with this introduction and recognition let us open the book at Acts xxvii. and learn its lessons.

Paul was not the only prisoner who was to be delivered to Rome, and Julius, a centurion of the Augustin cohort, whose duty it was to see his charges safely to Rome in the shortest time, finding a trading vessel of Adramyttium about to sail by the coast of Asia, embarked with his men and prisoners and the eventful voyage commenced. Few Biblical maps show Adramyttium, but the reader would do well to acquaint himself with this as with every detail of this momentous voyage. This sea-port is on the coast of Mysia, opposite Mitylene, not far from Pergamos and Troas. It will be seen that such a port would well serve the centurion's purpose. Paul was courteously treated and, at the end of the first day's sail, permitted to land at Sidon "to go unto his friends and refresh himself". The wind that had enabled them to cover this 67 miles, now changed, and they "sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary". To a landsman, "sailing *under* Cyprus" suggests the south side of the island. The truer translation is "under the lee", and, in the case in point, this was the north side, for the record continues: "And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lysia." One glance at the map will confirm this rendering and fix the route.

Myra, is practically due north of Alexandria in Egypt, and with the prevailing wind, it was not strange that a grain ship from Alexandria should be found so far off the straight course to Rome. Seizing the opportunity thus presented, the centurion transferred his living freight, and the ship started on its journey to Rome.

“And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salome” (Acts xxvii. 7).

Let us be sure that we know the geography of this verse. Cnidus is the last point of land that would afford protection from the prevailing wind, and will be found on the extreme corner of Asia Minor, before the coast turns north. Seeing that the ship could neither enter Cnidus, nor hold on its way along the north shore of Crete, the course was changed, so that she passed round Salome, to the lee of the island. “Hardly passing it” shows that the winds were still contrary, and the navigator was therefore forced to begin to think of finding a harbour commodious enough to winter in. Fair Havens was reached, and for some time the ship waited for a change in the weather.

It was now nearly the end of September and the close of the sailing season. After “the fast”, which was the Day of Atonement, “sailing was dangerous”. The Greeks dated the opening of the sailing weather as “after *Dionysia*”. We must not misjudge these ancient navigators. They had neither chart nor compass, but steered by the stars, consequently in that part of the year, when for lengthy periods “neither sun nor stars might appear”, the seamen naturally hesitated to try the open sea. Discussions evidently took place as to whether they should winter where they were, or take the next favourable chance of sailing along the coast another thirty-four miles, and wintering in Phenice (xxvii. 12). Prisoner though he was, the Apostle was permitted a voice in these proceedings, and said:

“Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and the ship, but also for our lives” (xxvii. 10).

However, the centurion and the owner of the vessel were of the opposite opinion. Fair Havens had little to offer as a winter resort, whereas Phenice (the modern Lutro), but a few hours’ sail away, was the only real harbour in Crete, safe in all weathers, and much used by Alexandrian corn-ships.

At this point we pause to draw attention to the phrase, “If by any means they might attain to” (xxvii. 12). The language here is unambiguous, and the facts of the case prove that the element of doubt rightly adheres in these words. When, during the next year or more, the Apostle, who had passed through this terrible experience, came to write the Epistle to the Philippians, he uses the same expression saying, “If by any means I might attain unto the out-resurrection from among the dead” (Phil. iii. 11). To remove from these words the same element of uncertainty that must be allowed them in Acts xxvii., has the appearance of handling the word of God deceitfully. If in Phil. iii. 11 Paul meant only that resurrection which is the common hope of the church, uncertainty of attainment would have been foreign to the subject, but if he was speaking of a prize which will be awarded at “that day” by the Lord in His capacity of “the righteous Judge”, then the element of uncertainty is rightly an integral part of the passage, for a prize to be *won*, and that could not be *lost*, is a contradiction in terms. If the prize of Philippians be kept distinct from the common calling, or the blessed hope of the church, truth will be seen both in Ephesians and Philippians, but if we confound Hope and Prize, a greater shipwreck than was Paul’s experience awaits us.

But to resume.

“And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence they sailed close by Crete” (xxvii. 13).

From Fair Havens to Cape Matala was but four or five miles, so that with a gentle southerly wind the cape would be weathered, and the thirty-five miles from that point easily covered. It is possible that fair weather sails were set, and we know from verse 16 that a boat was in tow, so with hearts lightened and a good prospect before them the ship once more set sail.

How often in life does not that “south wind blow softly”, over-riding the severer counsels of grace and truth. Alas! the gentle breathing of the south wind in the sails and cordage was but a siren song, for scarcely had they passed the cape than a typhoon burst upon them. The word *tuphonikos* describes the circular whirling of the clouds caused by the meeting of the S. and the E.N.E. winds. Both Parry’s “Sailing Directory” and Smith’s “Voyage and Shipwreck”, say that this is exactly what might have been expected. The ancient name for this wind is “The Euroclydon”, and the modern name is “The Levanter”. This awful wind “seized” the ship in its grasp so that the helmsman could not “look at the wind”. The suddenness of the storm allowed no time to furl the mainsail, a circumstance which left them no alternative but to scud before the gale.

The island of Clauda lies twenty miles S.W. of Cape Matala, and the fact that the wind drove the vessel towards that island, made the sailors fear lest it should drive them into Syrtis, the quicksands which are off the African coast at this point. Though temporarily protected by the shelter of the island of Clauda, they had “much work to come by the boat”, which, however, was eventually hauled aboard, when more serious operations were demanded.

“They used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven” (xxvii. 17).

Note the use of “we” and “they”. Luke lent a hand in hauling in the boat, but the operation called “undergirding” was no work for a landsman to attempt.

The ships of the ancients possessed one large mast and one large sail, with the addition of a few topsails and a small auxiliary mast. It will readily be seen that with such a mast and sail bearing the full force of the wind, a tremendous strain would be thrown upon the ship. Virgil, who describes the loss of ships by various means, says, “all with fastenings loosened”. Consequently, a ship “thoroughly furnished” carried tackle called “Undergirders”, which consisted of strong ropes for passing around the hull of the ship to prevent the starting of its timbers. In more recent times this method was called “Fraping”, which Falconer’s Marine Dictionary thus describes:

“To frap a ship is to pass four or five turns of a large cable-laid rope round the hull or frame of a ship.”

For the moment the immediate dangers were averted. The boat had been saved, and the ship undergirt. But a great danger still threatened the ship.

What precisely is meant by the words “strake sail”? The literal translation is “they lowered the gear”, but this is indeterminate. To have scudded before the gale with bare poles would have driven the ship on to the quicksands: to have anchored was impossible, and the only other course open was that known as “lying to”. This was accomplished by bringing the prow of the vessel round as near to the wind as possible; that is, just enough of the huge mainsail would be left to steady the ship, and, having made all the preparation that circumstances permitted, the ship was left to drift broadside on, at the mercy of wind and wave. All night long the gale continued, and it became necessary to “lighten the ship”. Conybeare and Howson draw attention to the change of tense in verses 18 and 19. “They began to lighten the ship”, or “kept lightening”, whereas on the third day both sailors and passengers united in throwing out all the spare gear into the sea. The ship had now been reduced to a leaky and dismantled hulk,

“and when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away” (xxvii. 20).

Imagination falters as it tries to picture the physical and mental state of these 300 helpless souls. No fire could be lighted; no cooking done; no relief afforded from the soaking spray; no prospect existed but that of an awful death in a foundering vessel. In all this the Apostle and his companions took their share. It is certain that Paul, who in other circumstances had said “these hands have ministered unto my necessities”, would have lent a willing hand in all the work necessitated by the dreadful storm. It has been said that one of the hardest things to do is to refrain from saying “I told you so”, and Paul, before venturing once again to advise his fellow men, had fellowship in prayer with God. In the result, however, Paul, in order to gain the confidence of his hearers, does allude to his advice which had been rejected. Nevertheless he was able to assure them that, although the ship would become a wreck, no life would be lost. The whole ship’s company, therefore, owed their safety to the fact that this one Jewish prisoner, by the will of God, must reach Rome.

“Fear not, Paul”, (said the angel of God) “thou must stand before Cæsar: and, lo, God hath given thee all who sail with thee” (xxvii. 24).

Paul added that he believed God, and that they would be cast upon a certain island.

The rate at which a vessel, which is laid-to, drifts, varies according to the build of the ship and the intensity of the gale. In the circumstances of Acts xxvii., both James Smith and Admiral Penrose agree that “a mile and a half in the hour, or thirty-six miles in twenty-four hours, may be taken as a fair average”. After further technicalities the same authorities conclude that the angle of drift would be thirteen points with the direction of the wind. If the wind therefore was E.N.E., the course of the drift would be W. by N., “and such is nearly the bearing of the North Coast of Malta from the south side of Clauda”. There is no need to make a sinuous line to indicate the track of this doomed vessel; the course would not deviate far from a straight line. “Adria” (xxvii. 27) was the

name given to the part of the Mediterranean between Greece, Italy and Africa, and Josephus uses this same name “Adria” when he was shipwrecked and landed at Puteoli.

At the close of the fourteenth night, the sailors deemed that they drew near to land. Taking soundings they found “twenty fathoms”, and after an interval “fifteen fathoms” were reported.

“Then, fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day” (xxvii. 29).

It is usual for a vessel to anchor from the prow, but there would have been a danger of the ship swinging round and being smashed on the rocks. It is said that “Lord Nelson, reading this chapter just before the battle of Copenhagen, ordered our vessels to be anchored by the stern”. There was also the ulterior object in view, which was to run the ship ashore as soon as daylight enabled them to select a suitable spot. Modern Greek vessels may still be seen anchoring by the stern in the Golden Horn. There is a painting on the walls of Herculaneum which represents “a ship so strictly contemporaneous with that of St. Paul, that there is nothing impossible in the supposition that the artist had taken his subject from the very ship, on loosing from the pier at Puteoli”.

Thirteen days had elapsed since the ship started to drift. According to the computation given a little earlier, the ship must, therefore, have covered about 468 miles. Now the distance between Clauda and Malta is less than 480 miles, and there is every reason therefore to believe that the island now known as Malta is the one intended in Acts xxviii. 1, there called Melita.

An attempt of the shipmen to escape was frustrated by the prompt act of the soldiers in cutting the ropes holding the boat, Paul having said, “Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved”. Exhorting all to take food, adding, “not a hair shall fall from the head of any of you”, Paul thanked God in the presence of them all; and when he had “broken bread” he began to eat. It seems incredible that any writer, possessed of the ability to write a commentary on the whole of the Scriptures, should be so possessed of the value of the “sacraments” as to suggest “that this act may have been connected with a celebration of the Holy Eucharist”.

Even those who retain the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, must exclaim here, “Save me from my friends!”

“And when it was day, they knew not the land; but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into which they were minded, if it were possible, to thrust the ship. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the mainsail to the wind, and made for the shore. And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground” (xxvii. 40, 41).

The harbour of Valetta was seven miles away and the place where the ship struck was Ras el Koura, which is an iron-bound coast, but the mariners saw that at one extremity the cliffs sank down into a flat beach. To make a tack athwart the wind with a disabled ship was a manoeuvre by no means easy, but it was worth attempting. The anchors were

cut away, the ropes falling into the sea (not, as the A.V., “committed themselves unto the sea”), and the paddle rudders which had been lashed out of the way of the anchors were loosed, and they made for the shore. Again the influence of the Apostle was exerted and the lives of the prisoners spared, and at length the whole company, on spars and pieces of wreckage, escaped safely through (*diasothenai*) to land.

Before closing this article, we present the remainder of the evidence gathered by Conybeare and Howson for the belief that the island called “Melita” is the modern “Malta”.

- (1) The presence of breakers, yet without striking the land.
- (2) The direction and distance of the drifting vessel (already indicated).
- (3) The soundings, 20 fathoms, then 15 fathoms.
- (4) The presence, on a rocky coast, of a sandy beach.
- (5) The opening, “a place between two seas”.
- (6) The fact that the anchors held all night.

Every one of these items find substantiation in the features of the eastern boundary of what to-day is called St. Paul’s Bay, Malta. Even as to the character of the anchorage, the comment on St. Paul’s Bay in “The English Sailing Directions” is, “While the cables hold, there is no danger, as the anchors will never start.

Here for the moment we must leave our study. Should the reader desire to pursue further the geographical and nautical arguments that demonstrate the accuracy of Luke’s narrative, here but touched upon, he is referred to the authorities cited in the opening paragraph.

**#53. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22).
From Melita to Rome (xxviii. 1 - 22).
pp. 169 - 175**

Before leaving the twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts, we draw attention to the spiritual element that alternates with the narrative of the voyage. The journey from Caesarea to Rome occupies chapter xxvii. to xxviii. 16, and divides into two sections.

- A1 | xxvii. 1-44. CAESAREA TO MELITA.
A2 | xxviii. 1-22. MELITA TO ROME.

The sub-division of xxvii. 1 - 44 is as follows:

- A | 1. Centurion, Paul and Prisoners.
B | 2-5. The Coasting Ship. Sidon to Myra.
B | 6-41. The Grain Ship. Myra to Malta.
A | 42-44. Centurion, Paul and Prisoners.

xxvii. 6 - 41 extended.

- B | a1 | 6-8. Myra to Fair Havens.
- b1 | 9, 10. *Paul*. Warning. Damage to ship and life.
- a2 | 11-20. Fair Havens to Claua.
- b2 | 21-26. *Paul*. Exhortation. No loss of life, but of ship.
- a3 | 27-29. Claua to strange land.
- b3 | 30, 31. *Paul*. Warning. Abide ship. Saved.
- a4 | 32. The boat cut adrift.
- b4 | 33-38. *Paul*. Good cheer. Not an hair fall.
- a4 | 39-41. The ship broken up.

The above outline impresses the mind with the fact that, full as this narrative may be of nautical terms and geographical references, there is a spiritual theme running through it, the links of which are the four statements made by Paul. The prominent place which is given to the shipwreck seems to justify the view that it has a spiritual and typical object lesson. Between Paul, Jerusalem, and his past ministry, rolled the wide sea. The ship in which he traveled was broken to pieces, yet the outstanding testimony is that Paul was divinely assured that he must be brought before Caesar, and, apparently as a consequence, that all in the ship were to be given him.

Returning to the narrative at the opening of Acts xxviii., we find that upon reaching land the shipwrecked passengers found that it was the island of Melita or, as it is now called, Malta. The idea that the Adriatic island of Meleda is intended is founded upon a series of mistakes, first as to the true locality of "Adria", then as to the Roman usage of the word "barbarian", and lastly a misunderstanding as to the presence of "vipers" in the island. The contention has now been abandoned by most commentators. While the inhabitants of Malta were "barbarians" in the N.T. sense of the word, in the modern sense they were far from being "barbaric". That is to say, they were of Phoenician origin, with a mingling of Greek settlers, but because they could speak neither Latin nor Greek, they were called Barbarians. Luke gratefully records the "no little kindness" which these islanders showed the suffering, shipwrecked company, "for they kindled a fire, and received us, every one, because of the present rain and because of the cold".

As here instanced, there are no mock heroics in Luke's story of Paul's life and ministry. Paul is evidently included with the rest of the voyagers in feeling the numbing cold and the fatigue of their experiences. But if there be no mock heroics, the fact stands out in the narrative, that in times of emergency the man of faith is often the most practical. Perhaps Paul had learned the secret which is beautifully expressed in these lines of a modern hymn,

"A heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathise."

At any rate we read that it was Paul who gathered a bundle of sticks to help on the fire kindled by the hospitable islanders. Incidentally the word *phruganon*, "sticks", is defined by Theophrastus as "furze roots", which disposes of an objection which has been raised that "timber" would not have been available at St. Paul's Bay. This kindly activity

caused an incident which is of extreme importance in its bearing upon the dispensational position of the Acts of the Apostles. Awakened by the heat, a viper fastened on Paul's hand. We may well regard this as a malignant attack of the Evil One upon the servant of the Lord, but there is another angle from which it must be considered. That the bite of a viper was fatal was testified by the remarks and attitude of the inhabitants:

“They said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live they looked when he should have swollen or fallen down dead suddenly” (Acts xxviii. 4-6).

The word “vengeance” is *dike*, the equivalent of the Latin “justitia”, an abstract personification, like “nemesis”. The words “swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly”, give a clear indication of the normal consequences of an attack such as Paul had sustained, and in his escape we have therefore a miracle of the highest rank, and that wrought at the close of the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles. Observe also the effect of a miracle upon a people untaught by Scripture. At first they assumed that Paul must be a murderer, but, on observing his exemption from the normal consequences of his wound, they changed their mind and concluded that he must be a god. Similarly, when a miracle was wrought in the presence of other untaught heathen, we find them saying, “The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men” (Acts xxviii. 11).

From this we learn the important lesson that although miracles, when performed before a people enlightened by the Scriptures, constituted a confirmation of truth and evidence that was calculated to bring about repentance and faith (Matt. xi. 1-6, 20; Heb. ii. 3, 4), their performance in the presence of untaught people might but deepen their idolatry and superstition.

At the end of Mark's Gospel we read these words:--

“These signs shall follow them that believe; In My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands on the sick and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen” (Mark xvi. 17-20).

The fact that a viper, of all noxious creatures, should figure in these closing miracles of the Acts is of itself suggestive. Gen. iii. introduces the Serpent, with his enmity, and Rev. xx. sees his doom. When Moses received the call to leadership, he was given power over a serpent. Thus, also, at the close of the kingdom testimony, Paul picks up the creature which is the symbol of Satan and throws it into the fire, himself remaining unhurt. The “falling down suddenly” which the islanders expected is a symptom of snake bite confirmed by the ancient writer Lucian, and Shakespeare, with his embrative knowledge, says of Charmian, in Antony and Cleopatra, “Trembling she stood, and on the sudden dropped” (Ant. and Cleop. v. 2).

Those of our readers who hold that the last twelve verses of Mark xvi. do not form a part of inspired Scripture will probably feel that this passage should not be employed; but were we to respect every one's particular textual objection, it would be necessary to set aside a considerable number of important passages. The reader who has any doubt concerning Mark xvi. should consult Appendix 168 of the Companion Bible: the evidence of the Manuscript Versions and "The Fathers" there tabulated should be enough to convince any that the verses in question should be retained as found in the A.V. Mark ends on the note, "the Lord working with them, confirming the word with signs following". The Acts opens with a reference to "all that Jesus began both to do and to teach", and implies that the Acts is a continuation of this "doing" and "teaching", so that we are prepared to find the promise of Mark xvi. fulfilled throughout the record. If this be so, the dispensation that was ushered in at Pentecost remained unchanged. Healing, as well as immunity, was promised in Mark xvi., and both are found in Acts xxviii.

Luke's accuracy is again attested, by archaeological proof that has been forthcoming, that the title of Publius used, in the narrative, of "the chief man of the island" was one actually in use at the time. An ancient inscription found at Civita Vecchia uses the title *Protos Melitaion*, even as Luke uses *protos* for the title of Publius.

The Anglo Saxon reading of the Greek word *dysentery* in the words describing the illness of the father of Publius, viz., "a fever and of a bloody flux", robs the miracle of something of its power. The hand of Luke the Physician is evident in the narrative. Where other writers use *kausomai* and its derivatives, he had already used the medical term *therme* for "heat" in verse 3. He now observes that the dysentery from which the father of Publius suffered was "in an aggravated form", being accompanied by fever. The healing miracles of scripture are of an evident nature. Always, the person healed was conscious not merely of a strange undiagnosed pain, but was either blind, lame, deaf, or leprous; sometimes he was dead. To-day it is exceedingly difficult to get first-hand evidence of specific healing diagnosed disease, but, as the Apostle said of the testimony generally, in N.T. times "these things were not done in a corner". The miracle then was an undoubted one. Seeing it, others who had diseases, also came, and they, too, were healed. Thus three months went by before the Apostle left the island, a period giving full opportunity for the cures to be tested.

Coupled with the persistence of these prominent miracles is the fact that "the hope of Israel" was still entertained by the Apostle (Acts xxviii. 20). These two factors of kingdom witness steadily lead the reader to the conclusion that until this point in the narrative the dispensation had not changed, and the Mystery had not been revealed. This, however, comes before us in full strength in the last section of the Acts, namely at chapter xxviii. 23-31.

We must now resume the narrative of the Apostle's journey to Rome. The three months' sojourn in Malta end with the opening of the seas for safe navigation in February, a date confirmed by both Pliny and Vegetius. The centurion found another grain ship, which had wintered in the island, and on this he embarked with his company. This ship was named after the mythical twin sons of Zeus and Leda, and the twin-stars in

the constellation Gemini were regarded as the patron deities of sailors. We can readily believe that the name of this ship had been recorded because of the suggestion it conveys that the heathen world was about to be brought into subjection to the gospel by the ministry of the poor Jewish prisoner. The writings of Paul and Luke give evidence that they would not be above remarking upon the appositeness of such a feature. Perhaps having said so much we must say more.

The constellation Gemini, "The Twins", preserves the ancient Hebrew name *thaummim*, which means "united", a word which occurs in the original of Exod. xxvi. 24, "coupled together". The old Coptic name of the constellation *Pi-Mani* conveys the same idea, "United as in brotherhood". The Apostle, who was being borne by this vessel on his journey to Rome, carried in his message the most marvelous "coupling together" of those previously divided, that even the Scriptures contained, and, knowing this, we cannot imagine either Luke or Paul to have been so dull-witted as not to perceive the appositeness of the sign, without, of course, endorsing its Pagan associations.

The distance from Malta to Syracuse is less than one hundred miles. Upon arrival, the Apostle and his fellows were permitted to land, and they tarried there for three days: "And from thence we fetched a compass." The Greek word *perierchomai* occurs in Acts xix. 13, where it is translated "vagabond", and means "To come or go around". Here, Lewin remarks:--

"As the wind was westerly, and they were under the shelter of the high mountains range of Etna on their left, they were obliged to stand out to sea in order to fill their sails, and so came to Rhegium by a circuitous sweep, or as it has been translated, 'they fetched a compass'."

James Smith's view, that the word *perierchomai* means simply "beating", in the nautical sense, is probably more correct. At Rhegium, "The Twins" would have been forced upon the Apostle's notice once more, for Castor and Pollux were the patron divinities of the city. Here they tarried but a day. We learn from Josephus that the Emperor Caligula had projected a port here for the protection of Alexandrian corn ships, but had died without bringing it to completion. Mr. Smith computed that these vessels would travel at the rate of seven knots, and this well agrees with the distance covered according to Luke.

The south wind which sprang up after the one day's waiting was the most favourable for their purpose, and setting their course due north, the next day the vessel arrived at Puteoli, a distance of about 182 miles. Fifteen miles from Rhegium the vessel would pass between the famous Scylla and Charybdis, and, once more, we can imagine the Apostle and his companions gratefully remembering the snares and pitfalls through which, by grace, they had been safely guided. Puteoli stood in the bay of Naples, and was the great port of the Roman capital. In the Apostle's day Vesuvius was a lovely mountain, whose westward slopes were covered with vines (Mart. iv. 44), and no one could have suspected the near approach of the time when the admiral of the fleet would be lost in its fiery eruption, as though the judgment of another Sodom and Gomorrah were about to fall.

The advent of a grain ship made no uncommon stir among the populace of Puteoli. From a letter written by Seneca we learn that upon rounding into the bay all other ships were obliged to strike their top-sail, but the Alexandrian corn-ships were permitted to enter it with all sail set, and thus were instantly recognized. He speaks of the crowds that gathered to welcome these ships, and we can thus picture the scene that met the eye of the Apostle as he drew near to land.

Once again the Roman Centurion treated the Apostle courteously, and permitted him to spend a week with certain Christian brethren who met him there. This interval gave time for news of the Apostle's arrival to reach Rome before him, and so for a company of brethren to be in time to meet him on the Appian Way. From Puteoli to Rome was distance of about a hundred and forty-one miles. The Appian Way, along which the Centurion and his prisoners traveled to Rome, was described as *Appia--Regina viarum*, "The Queen of Roads", and was the most crowded approach to the metropolis. Should the reader desire fuller knowledge of this most ancient road, he should consult Gell's Topography of Rome and its vicinity, the quotation from it in Lewin's work on the Acts, or the description of the Apostle's journey in Conybeare and Howson. Space will not permit of this interesting aside here, and so, with the marvelous brevity of the scriptural narrative, we pass over all descriptive matter, and rejoice with the Apostle that:--

"When the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns; whom when Paul saw he thanked God and took courage" (Acts xxviii. 15).

How many pages have been, and could be written, to describe the city to which the Apostle drew near! Yet not one word is given by Luke. All he says is, "And when he came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard". Just that, and no more. Here was the answer to the Apostle's earnest wish, expressed in the words, "I must see Rome". Here was the fulfillment of the Lord's promise; a promise that had sustained him alike amid the fury of the fanatical Jews and the fury of the storm. He had entered Damascus blind, and he entered Rome bound, but in both blindness and bondage, the Lord was with him, and the word of the Lord was glorified.

The character of Burrus, who was an honest, bluff, soldier, was such that we might expect that the high opinion which the centurion held of the Apostle, together with the character of the charge against him, would allow him to treat his prisoner with humanity. This indulgence is indicated by the words: "But Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him." After the lapse of three days the Apostle called the chief of the Jews together, the outcome of the interview being that a day was appointed in which the peculiar tenets of the sect of which Paul was the reputed ringleader could be discussed.

As in our next article we shall want all available space to deal with the great dispensational landmark of Acts xxviii. 23-31, we will set out here the structure of the section that ends with verse 22 of chapter xxviii. although we have been unable to review its contents.

Melita to Rome (Acts xxviii. 1 - 22).

- A1 | 1-10. BARBARIANS AT MELITA. |
a | 1, 2. Arrival. No little kindness.
b | 3-6. Evidential miracle. The viper.
c | 7. Courteous reception by Publius.
b | 8, 9. Compassionate miracle. Dysentery, etc.
a | 10. Departure. Honours.
- A2 | 11-17. BRETHRENS ON THE ROUTE TO ROME. |
d | 11-13. After three months. Departure.
e | 14. Brethren found at Puteoli.
e | 15. Brethren met at Appii forum.
d | 16, 17. After three days. Arrival.
- A3 | 17-22. JEWS AT ROME. |
f | 17. Chief of Jews called. *Sunkaleo*.
g | 17. Laws and customs of people and fathers.
h | 18. Romans found no cause of death.
i | 19. Paul spoken against. (*Antilego*).
f | 20. Cause shown why Jews called. (*parakaleo*).
g | 20. Hope of Israel.
h | 21. Jews showed no harm.
i | 22. This sect spoken against. (*Antilego*).

#54. From Jerusalem to Rome (xxii. 1 - xxviii. 22). Paul's relation with Israel during the whole period of the Acts attested (xxviii. 17 - 22). pp. 208 - 212

It will be remembered that when writing the epistle to the Romans, the Apostle expressed his great longing to meet them (Rom. i. 10-12), telling them that when he did come he would come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ (Rom. xv. 29). It is of great importance therefore to notice, that when at last the opportunity is presented, those whom the Apostle first actually saw, by his own request, were the "chief of the Jews" (Acts xxviii. 17). The Apostle's primary object in so doing is on the surface. He knew by bitter experience what an influence the Jew, in his fanatical obstinacy and religious pride, had even over temperate and just Roman rulers, and the character of the Emperor before whose tribunal he was to appear to weight the scales of justice. The Apostle did not cover this very human purpose under a cloak of false piety, but manfully told these Jewish leaders his object:--

"Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans, who when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of

death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of" (Acts xxviii. 17-19).

Let us observe the following features:

Paul still addressed the chief of the Jews as "Men and brethren", a title which, as he explains in Rom. ix., belonged to Israel according to the flesh. The great change wherein "the twain" were created "one new man" had not yet been announced, and Israel as a nation still stood before God. From Acts xiii. 15 it is clear that this form of address was not necessarily a Christian one, for it was used by the ruler of the synagogue. When Paul used it for the first time in the Acts, he added, by way of explanation, "children of the stock of Abraham" (Acts xiii. 26); the added words, "and whosoever among you feareth God", is not an expansion, but addressed to a secondary company. So, in Acts xiii. 38, "Men and brethren" is the mode of address to those who in verse 41 were to be called "despisers" and, as verse 42 makes clear, were "Jews" as distinct from "Gentiles". We find Peter and James using the same form of address at the council at Jerusalem, where none but Hebrew Christians were present. We meet the expression no more until Paul addresses the Jews in Acts xxii. 1, xxiii. 1, and for the last time in xxviii. 17. To those who have learned to love and appreciate the hidden beauties of the Scriptures, it is no surprise to discover that this form of address occurs in the Acts just twelve times, twelve being most evidently the number of Israel.

The Apostles declared that he had committed nothing against "the people" or the customs of the fathers. Who, in Paul's estimate were "the people"? There is but one answer; Israel. In the same verse where we found the ruler of the synagogue using the title "Men and brethren" we find the first occurrence in the Pauline section of the Acts of the term "the people". When the appellation is first used by Paul he expands it, as he did the other title. He says, "The God of this people of Israel", and, with the exception of two references, namely Acts xv. 14 and xviii. 10, every one of the remaining occurrences, twelve in number, refers exclusively to Israel. In Acts xxviii. the references are pointed:

"Nothing against this people" (Acts xxviii. 17).
"Go unto this people" (Acts xxviii. 26).
"For the heart of this people" (Acts xxviii. 27).

What of "the customs"? *Ethos*, "customs", occurs in the Acts seven times. In Acts xvi. 21 and xxv. 16 it is the "custom" or "manner" of the Romans that is intended, but in the remaining passages it is used of the peculiar customs of Israel.

It is of great interest to realize that the first occurrence of *ethos* in the Acts is found in the charge which brought about the stoning of Stephen, to which Paul had consented.

That this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us" (Acts vi. 14).

The Apostle makes it clear in more passages than one, that those dreadful, persecuting, days of his earlier life never left his memory, and it would be with humbled

heart that he now defended himself against the very charge that had been laid against the man to whose death he had consented years before. That the *ethos* of the fathers was not to be confined to superficial customs is made clear from its use in Acts xv. 1, where “circumcision after the *manner* of Moses” is in view. Paul’s present imprisonment had been brought about because he had sought to rebut the charge made against him that he

“Taught the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs” (Acts xxi. 21).

and Paul acted as he did, so that all might know that, as the elders said to him, “those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing, but that thou thyself walkest orderly and keepest the law” (Acts xxi. 24). These most explicit statements reduce the issue to two heads. Either Paul did walk orderly and kept the law, or he did not. If he did, then the truth of the Mystery could not have been made known during the period of the Acts. If he did not, then his statements are false and we are of all men the most miserable.

“*The fathers.*” *To whom do these words refer?* Again, and for the third time, we return to the synagogue at Antioch and hear the Apostle speak.

“We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers God hath fulfilled” (Acts xiii. 32, 33).

His own written testimony in the epistle to the Romans is conclusive, “My brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh; who are Israelites whose are the fathers” (Rom. ix. 3, 5). In Acts xxviii., immediately before he said “this people”, the Apostle exclaims, “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers” (Acts xviii. 25). Further on in his statement to the chief of the Jews the Apostle used another expression, “My nation” (Acts xxviii. 19). The word translated “nation” is *ethnos*, and is frequently rendered “Gentiles”, when found in the plural, as it is in Acts xxviii. 28. Paul mostly used the word to designate the Gentiles, but when he said:

“I came to bring alms to my *nation*” (Acts xxiv. 17).
“My own *nation* at Jerusalem” (Acts xxvi. 4).

it is evident that he speaks of Israel, “the nation”, as distinct from the rest of the “nations”. At Acts xxviii. 19, *Israel* was still Paul’s *nation*.

Up to this point, however, what has been brought forward is negative in character: e.g., Paul had committed *nothing against* this people or its customs. But lest his testimony should be misconstrued he recapitulates, introducing a positive note.

“For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you, because that *for the hope of Israel* I am bound with this chain” (Acts xxviii. 20).

In his defence before Agrippa, who was expert in all “customs” of the Jews and who therefore would be able to appreciate the Apostle’s definite avowal, he said:

“And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come” (Acts xxvi. 6, 7).

This was none other than the promise which formed the burden of the Apostle’s question in Acts i.

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?” (Acts i. 6).

It was to this Peter referred when he said that the times of restitution of all things, which God by the mouth of all his holy prophets had spoken, would commence upon the repentance of Israel (Acts iii. 19-26). Moreover, the Apostle could have shown these Jews his own written statement in the letter he had sent to the church at Rome touching their hope, that it was the hope of Israel.

“There shall be a root of Jesse; and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in Him shall the Gentiles hope (*elpizo*), now the God of that hope (*elpis*) fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost” (Rom. xv. 12, 13).

Once we admit that these are the words of truth and soberness, we must also admit that the hope of the church up till the writing of the epistle to the Romans was the hope of the Kingdom, for what other meaning can attach to the words “reign over the Gentiles”? It is, moreover, the hope of Israel, for if not, why introduce the title “The root of Jesse”? and why say “reign over” the Gentiles? If any one should object to this translation of *archo*, let him turn to Mark x. 42. Moreover, this hope was associated with the power of the Holy Ghost.

It is therefore impossible to dissociate the hope of the early church from the hope of Israel, without impugning the veracity of the apostle Paul, or denying the inspiration of Rom. xv.

From the first chapter of the Acts one hope is before the church right on to the moment when Israel were set aside. But then, for the very sufficient reason that a new calling had been revealed, it became necessary to pray that the church might perceive “what is the hope of His calling”.

“*This sect*” (Acts xxviii. 22).

There are three sects mentioned in the Acts:

- (i.) The sect of the SADDUCEES (Acts v. 17).
- (ii.) The sect of the PHARISEES (Acts xv. 5).
- (iii.) The sect of the NAZARENES (Acts xxiv. 5).

The Apostle refers to this sect of the Nazarenes, saying:

“But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy (*airesis*, “sect”) so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets” (Acts xxiv. 14).

The Sadducees worshipped the God of their fathers after the way that men called “a sect”, but they did not believe all that was written in the law and the prophets, for they particularly denied the hope of resurrection. The Pharisees, too, worshipped the God of their fathers after the way that men called “a sect”, believing, at least professedly, all that was written, and definitely including the hope of resurrection in their creed, yet they overloaded the written word with an accumulation of tradition so great that it was made of none effect.

The Christian Church began, as a movement of the Spirit of God, *within the ranks of the Jews*: it grew up as a minority that still worshipped in synagogue: it was augmented by believing Gentiles, who were blessed under the New Covenant, and were accounted children of Abraham and heirs according to the promise (Gal. iii. 29), but the Church was never divorced from Israel, its hope, its promises or its covenants, until Israel itself became “lo-ammi” at Acts xxviii. 25.

It is because of the extreme importance of this chapter dispensationally, that it has figured so prominently in our ministry throughout the thirty years in which we have sought to fulfil the sacred trust committed to us.

To return to the momentous meeting at Rome, the chief of the Jews concluded the first interview by saying: “We desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest”, and accordingly a day was appointed.

What the Apostle “thought”, the way he presented his argument, the crisis that was reached in that “lodging” in Rome, must be the subject of our next paper.

EPHESIA.

#4. **Christos Iesus, “Christ Jesus”, The Exalted (Eph. i. 1).**

A Concordance to text of the R.V.

pp. 15, 16

“Paul” has been declared “an apostle”, but obviously no one can be an apostle, “a sent one”, without a “sender”, and so we come to the Lord Who sent him. The A.V. reads, “Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ”; the R.V. reads, “Paul an Apostle of Christ Jesus”. The order of words in a title is always important, but especially so when that title is the Lord’s. Let us therefore examine the R.V. and see what light it throws upon the point. The first occurrence of the title is found in the R.V. of Acts iii. 20, and Alford’s translation of it is suggestive: “Him Who was predestined your Messiah, namely, Jesus.” We meet the title in Acts xix. 4, but the R.V. there reads simply “Jesus”. In Acts xxiv. 24, however, where the A.V. reads “Christ”, the R.V. reads “Christ Jesus”. These are the only occurrences in the Acts and it will be seen that, whether we retain Acts xix. 4 or not, the only one to use the title is either Paul himself, or Felix in addressing Paul.

“Christ Jesus” is found in both versions in Rom. iii. 24; viii. 1, 2; xv. 5 and xvi. 3. There are six other occasions where the R.V. reads “Christ Jesus” instead of “Jesus Christ”, “Christ”, or “Jesus Christ our Lord”, namely, Romans vi. 3, 11; viii. 11, 34; xv. 16, 17.

In I Corinthians the title Christ Jesus occurs in i. 2, 30; iv. 15; xvi. 24; and, according to the R.V., in i. 4, in place of the title “Jesus Christ”. In II Corinthians the title occurs but once, and that only in the R.V. of i. 1. Galatians contains, according to the A.V., five references, but the R.V. omits vi. 15. The remainder are ii. 4; iii. 26, 28 and iv. 14. The R.V. adds ii. 16; iii. 14; v. 6, 24.

Ephesians, according to the A.V., has six occurrences: i. 1; ii. 6, 7, 10, 13; iii. 21. To these the R.V. adds i. 1 (the passage before us); ii. 20; iii. 1, 6. Philippians, according to the R.V., has eleven references: i. 1 (twice), 8, 26; ii. 5; iii. 3, 12, 14; iv. 7, 19, 21. Colossians has but three for the R.V. alters i. 28 to “Christ” and adds to i. 4; i. 1; iv. 12.

I Thessalonians has but two: ii. 14; v. 18. I Timothy has eight occurrences: i. 4, 15; ii. 5; iii. 13; vi. 13; to which the R.V. adds i. 1 (twice); iv. 6; v. 21. II Timothy has eleven occurrences: i. 2, 9, 13; ii. 1, 10; iii. 12, 15, to which the R.V. adds i. 1, 10; ii. 3; iv. 1. Titus has but one reference, R.V. i. 4. Philemon: In verse 6, where the A.V. reads “Christ Jesus” the R.V. reads “Christ”. Verses 1 and 9 are added by the R.V. and both versions read “Christ Jesus” in verse 23. Hebrews has but one reference in the A.V., that of iii. 1. This, however, is changed in R.V. to “Jesus”. There remains but two other references, namely I Pet. v. 10, 14, both of which are altered in the R.V. to read “Christ”.

From this analysis two facts emerge that are of importance to us all.

- (1) No other writer than Paul uses the title.
- (2) The title does not occur in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The title does not occur in II Thessalonians, but as this is a corrective of I Thess., where the title is found, and as both epistles can be considered a pair, this leaves Hebrews as the only one of Paul's epistles where, apparently, the title has no place. As to the distinctive meaning of this title, The Companion Bible (App. 98, xi. and xii.) says:

“Jesus Christ.—In the combination of these two names, the former is emphatic by its position, the second being subsidiary and explanatory. In the Gospels it means ‘Jesus the Messiah’. In the Epistles it means, Jesus Who humbled Himself but is now exalted and glorified as Christ. Care should be taken to note the various readings.

Christ Jesus.—This is the converse of ‘Jesus Christ’ (xi.) and denotes the now exalted One, Who once humbled Himself.”

In one or two cases the title “Christ Jesus” is found joined with another: “Our hope” (I Tim. i. 1); “The Man” (I Tim. ii. 5); “Our Saviour” (II Tim. i. 10; Titus i. 4). This leaves one reference by Peter, Acts iii. 20, and, if we include the words of Felix, we have seventy occurrences of the simple title “Christ Jesus” in the rest of the N.T., every reference being intimately associated with Paul as the Apostle of the Gentiles.

The distribution of the title according to the two great divisions of Paul's epistles, are the first seven (Rom., Gal., Heb., I & II Thess., and I & II Cor.), twenty-six occurrences. The second seven (Eph., Phil., Col., I & II Tim., Titus and Philemon), forty-three occurrences. There are seventy-two chapters in the first set of epistles with their twenty-six occurrences and there are twenty-eight chapters in the second set of epistles with their forty-three occurrences. This works out in the proportion of (33:153) thirty-three to one-hundred and fifty-three, revealing that the mystery, with Christ as the ascended and seated Lord, is essentially related to Him in His capacity as “Christ Jesus”. These facts would have been out of place in an exposition of the Epistle, but under the title “Ephesia” can be given a place.

We would acknowledge our indebtedness to Miss Ada Habershon's Concordance to the Names and Titles of the Lord of glory, which was published by James Nisbet in 1910.

(see: *Romans30*, pages 152 – 156).

#5. The Preposition DIA (Eph. i. 1).

With a note on the meaning of the terms “preposition” and “genitive case”.
pp. 29, 30

Paul was “an apostle of Christ Jesus”. This office was not of his own seeking or appointing; it was not received at the hands of men, but “*by the will of God*”. The word translated “by” here is *dia*, a preposition that governs the accusative and genitive cases. We propose in the present article to consider briefly the meaning of these terms, with particular reference to Eph. i. 1.

What is a preposition? A preposition is a part of speech, usually a particle, placed before a noun or its equivalent, and forming a qualifying or an adverbial phrase. Nearly all the prepositions convey either the idea of motion going on, or rest as a result of motion finished. Thus *ek* (“out”) may be likened to the motion of an arrow just leaving the bow; *dia* (“through”) to the flight of the arrow through the air; *eis* (“unto”) to the direction of the arrow towards its goal; and *en* (“in”) to the arrival of the arrow at the mark. Every preposition can be indicated in terms of either motion or rest.

What is a case? In grammar a “case” is a form, indicated by a terminal change in the word, which is used to express relationship. English has almost ceased to be an inflectional or declined language. We now have only one case of this kind in common use, namely the “apostrophe s”, which we use to indicate the possessive (as in the phrase “John’s book”). In Greek there are four cases:

- (1) THE NOMINATIVE.—This stands for the subject of the sentence.
- (2) THE GENITIVE.—This answers to the English possessive, but is wider in its scope, denoting origin. “Of” is a characteristic translation.
- (3) THE DATIVE.—The word is derived from the Latin “to give”, and its meaning can perhaps be understood from the usage in English “Give me the book”, which of course means “Give *to* me the book”. “To”, “at”, and “in” are characteristic translations.
- (4) THE ACCUSATIVE.—This is the object of the sentence.

These items will be more fully explained as instances are met with in the course of this series. We trust that sufficient has been said for the moment.

Dia is a preposition that governs the accusative and genitive cases. In Eph. i. 1 the preposition governs the genitive, and we will therefore devote our attention to this aspect only. From the special meaning “through”, it is an easy transition to the conception of an instrument *through* which anything is accomplished, as in John’s epistle: “I would not *with* ink and pen write” (II John 12). From material instruments the meaning passes to the non-material, and so is associated with “power”, “faith”, “will”, etc. There are fifteen occurrences of *dia* followed by the genitive in Ephesians, and its meaning will perhaps be made clearer if we use this opportunity to quote the passages concerned:

“By the will of God” (i. 1);
 “By Jesus Christ” (i. 5; iii. 9);
 “Through His blood” (i. 7);
 “Through faith” (ii. 8);
 “By the cross” (ii. 16);
 “Through Him” (ii. 18);
 “By the gospel” (iii. 6);
 “By the church” (iii. 10);
 “By the faith” (iii. 12);
 “By His Spirit” (iii. 16);
 “By faith” (iii. 17);
 “Through all” (iv. 6);
 “By that” (iv. 16);
 “With all prayer” (vi. 18).

The present series is not intended to take the place of exposition, but rather to provide an opportunity of noting and explaining much that otherwise has to be taken for granted. We shall therefore limit each article to the consideration of one particular point.

#6. Thelematos, “Will” (Eph. i. 1). pp. 36, 37

Paul, the Apostle of Christ Jesus, became so “through” the instrumentality of the “will of God”. In translation, to give smooth reading, the English demands the insertion of the article “the”, but in passing we note that in the original the article is omitted and read *dia thelematos Theou*. Until one meets us in the course of this series, we defer comment on the article, and devote our attention to the word translated “will”. In the nominative case this word is written *thelema*, but in the genitive it changes to *thelematos*. Its derivation is from the verb *thelo*, to will or to wish, and the ending *ma*, indicates that the verb has been changed to a “thing”. For example, *phileo* is the verb “I love”, “a kiss” is *philema* “a love things”.

Thelema, “will”, occurs seven times in Ephesians: “By the will of God” (i. 1); “The good pleasure of His will” (i. 5); “The mystery of His will” (i. 9); “The counsel of His Own will” (i. 11); “Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind” (ii. 3); “What the will of the Lord is” (v. 17); “doing the will of God from the heart” (vi. 6). It will be observed that one of these occurrences (ii. 3) deals with man, and is translated in the A.V. “desires”.

“*Thelema*”, says Cremer, is “an Hellenistic word foreign to profane Greek. It stands for the Hebrew words *chaphets* (Prov. xxi. 1); and *ratson* (Psa. xl. 8), and therefore does not denote *will as demand* but *as an expression of inclination or pleasure* toward that which is liked, that which pleases and creates joy. When it denotes God’s will, it signifies His *gracious disposition toward* something, Mal. i. 10; Jer. ix. 24; Isa. lxii. 4; Psa. xxx. 7; and it is also used to designate what God does of His own *good pleasure*, Psa. ciii. 7 so that it does not signify a command, but the expression of His good

pleasure. The N.T. usage differs in the LXX in this, that as a rule it stands for *the will of God* nowhere is it a name for the commands of God as such it designates what occurs, or what should be done by others, as the object of *God's good pleasure*, be it carrying out the divine purpose or the accomplishment of *what He would have*."

The Lord was graciously disposed toward Paul, in spite of the fact that he was before "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious" (I Tim. i. 13). It is "the good pleasure of His will" that the Apostle speaks of as the spring and origin of His choice, predestination and adoption of the members of the Church. Redemption itself is called "the mystery of His will", and God is spoken of as working all things "after the counsel of His will". These are the references in Ephesians that speak of the will of God in connection with the great plan of salvation, grace and glory. The last two references in Ephesians (v. 17 and vi. 6) have to do with Christian practice and living.

The first occurrence of *thelema* in the N.T. is in Matt. vi. 10, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven", and the last in Rev. iv. 11, "Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created".

We shall have opportunity presently to compare the two words *thelema* "will" and *boule* "counsel" (Eph. i. 11). All that we will do at the moment is to make an extract from Dr. Bullinger's Lexicon:--

Thelema.—"Used in cases where the wisdom and justice, etc., are not apparent, but where the will is arbitrary or absolute."

Boulomai.—"To have a wish, intention or purpose, formed after mature deliberation."

#7. Theos, "God", with a note on the irrelevance of etymology in this case. pp. 49, 50

Paul was an Apostle "by the will of God" (Eph. i. 1). We will examine the word *Theou*, translated "of God". The student will observe that in the original there is no separate *word* for "of", but that it is indicated by throwing the word *Theos*, "God", into the Genitive case, *Theou*. Words ending in *os*, such as *Theos*, *Logos*, etc., take *ou* in the singular to form the possessive or genitive case. When it is known that the Greeks pronounce *ou* as though it were written *ov*, the likeness to the English sign "of" will enable us to remember the genitive more easily.

Theos.—What a small word to represent so great a Subject! On the other hand, mere multiplication of syllables would bring the concept, God, no nearer. The first thing we must note and keep steadily before us is, that whatever the derivation of the word, it was not coined by the inspired writers of the Scriptures, but reclaimed from the heathen. The true and living GOD is known by exactly the same name as idols of wood and stone, or the gods of ancient mythology. The second is, that nowhere throughout the N.T. is there

the slightest attempt to build any doctrine upon the etymology of the word. On the contrary, in view of the fact that the word had for centuries been in common use to indicate “gods many”, it will be seen that any doctrine built upon the mere meaning of the word is almost sure to be false. Call Him by whatever name we will, the N.T. ever points to Christ, the Logos, as the One and Only Interpreter of the being and nature of God.

Two main lines of argument are put forward by those who seek the derivation of *Theos*:

- (1) That it comes from the Sanscrit root, DIU-S, which means fire, the sun, a ray of light, the sky, and heaven. From this root is traceable the name Jupiter (*Dies-Piter* or *Diu Piter*), i.e., Heaven-father. From DIV (Heaven) may be traced the English Divine (abbreviated from Dr. Bullinger’s Lexicon).
- (2) That it comes from the Greek verb *Tithemi*, “to place”, *Theos* being “The Placer”. This derivation must be treated with extreme reserve, otherwise we shall be found following in the footsteps of the heathen.

A Stoic writer, Phurnutus, who lived in the reign of Nero, wrote a “Philosophical Explanation of the Heathen Worship and Ceremonies”, in which he plainly refers them all to the different parts of *material nature*; as for instance, to the heavens, air, ether, sun, moon, stars, etc. This philosopher, in his chapter “*Peri Ouranon*”, concerning heaven, says, “It is possible that *theoi*, *the gods*, were so called from *thesis*, ‘position’ or ‘placing’; for the ancients took those for gods whom they found to move in a certain regular and constant manner, thinking them the causes of the changes of the air, and of the conservation of the universe; these then are the *gods (theoi)* which are the disposers (*theteres*), and formers of all things” (Parkhurst).

Thus it will be seen that the derivation of *Theos* leads us back into the darkness of idolatry, and, interesting as the history of the word may be, it will but tend to lead us to transgress the explicit command of God. The Orphic hymns prove that the demons of ancient worship were the intelligencies residing in created nature, especially the heavens, and the first and second commandments of the Law of Moses seem definitely to be attacked in such hymns as:--

“The demons, who in heaven reside, in air.
In water, or in earth or underneath
the earth”

Theos is employed by the LXX translation, to translate the Hebrew *Elohim*, “God”, but the plural, *Theoi*, is never used to translate the plural, *Elohim*, for this would but have ministered to the prevailing idolatry. The name *Theos* is used of the Father (John xiii. 3); of the Son (John i. 1); and of the Holy Ghost (Acts v. 3,4). It is used of heathen gods or idols (Acts xiv. 11), of magistrates (John x. 34, 35); and of Satan (II Cor. iv. 4). The word is translated “God” 1,326 times in the A.V., and “god” 12 times, besides “godly”, “exceedingly”, etc. In all this mass of material there is not a single passage which takes the word *Theos* and develops from its derivation a doctrine or a definition. To us, it

matters not whether *Theos* be derived from the Sanscrit or from the Greek *Tithemi*, for they are alike false, because they originate in and lead to darkness.

“God” is explained by such additional titles as “The Living God”, “The True God”, “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”, “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”, “The Most High God”, “The Incorruptible God”, and “The Almighty God”.

Quite irrespective of the meaning of the word *Theos*, the nature of God is given in a threefold revelation: “God is Spirit”, “God is Light”, “God is Love”. He is further denominated “The God of Glory”, “The God of Patience”, “The God of Hope”, “The God of Peace” and “The God of all Grace”. It is, moreover, insisted that God is “no respecter of persons”. For all that it still remains true, that

“No man hath seen God (*Theos*) at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John i. 18).

#8. The Greek article (Eph. i. 1). pp. 145, 146

The Apostle addresses this epistle to “the saints” (*tois hagiois*). The English translation demands the insertion of the article before the “will of God”, but in the original it appears for the first time in the phrase “to the saints”. The reader will note that both words (*tois* and *hagiois*) end with similar letter. The ending *ois* may indicate either the plural or the dative. However, we have already touched upon the meaning of the dative on page 29 (April, 1942) of this Volume, and we must now turn our attention to the definite article “the”.

We are met at the outset with a great variety of opinions among grammarians. There are some, like Bishop Middleton, who maintain that the article is always used in compliance with the strictest rules, while there are others who declare that the use of the article is guided by no rule at all. Originally the article was a demonstrative pronoun “that”, and we should remember that there is still a remnant of this meaning in most of its occurrences. The phrase “Bring the book”, for example, can never refer to the bringing of *any* book, but rather to some particular book (“*that* book”) which has been indicated by position, colour, subject, etc.

In English the definite article remains unchanged whatever the noun, but this is not so in the Greek. Many readers will be acquainted with the three forms of the French article *le, la, les* (Mas. Sing., Fem. Sing., and Plural). Similarly in Greek we have *ho, he, to* (Mas., Fem., and Neuter), the form of the article changing with the noun before which it stands. *Ho logos*, for example (Mas. Sing. Nom.) becomes *tou logou* when in the Genitive. The sign of the dative is *oi* (“iota subscript”), and this becomes *ois* in the plural, as in Eph. i. 1. The corresponding dative plural of the definite article, whether masculine or neuter, is *tois*.

At first the student usually feels that all this involves a great amount of unnecessary learning, but as the language becomes more familiar and the nice distinctions which these inflexions permit are appreciated, the suitability of the Greek tongue as a medium of revelation becomes apparent.

It is manifestly impossible for us in the present article to embark upon a systematic examination of the use of the Greek article—Bishop Middleton’s well-known treatise runs into nearly 500 pages—and we must therefore be content with the following points, which indicate in broad outline the way in which the article is used in the N.T.:--

- (1) DEFINITE: *The, that, this*. “*This saying*”, “*This persuasion*”, “*This letter*” (John vii. 40; Gal. v. 8; Col. iv. 16).
- (2) EMPHATIC: *He parthenos*, “THE virgin” (Matt. i. 23). *Ho huios, ho agepetos*, “My Son (even) THE beloved” (Matt. iii. 17).
- (3) EXPLANATIVE: “The adoption, *that is to say*, the redemption of our body” (Rom. viii. 23).
- (4) PREVIOUS MENTION: Thus “*the angel*” (Matt. i. 24) is the one mentioned earlier in the narrative.
- (5) ASSUMED EXISTENCE: Thus is Gal. i. 7, “There be some that trouble you”: *Hoi tarassontes*, “the troublers”.
- (6) ATTRIBUTE or QUALITY: *Hoi adikoi*, “the unjust”. This obviously refers to the whole class, “all who are unjust”.

We shall find various examples of the usage of the Greek article as we proceed with this series. What has been said here merely prepares the way, and indicates the wide ground covered.

#9. Hagios, “Saint” (Eph. i. 1). pp. 176, 177

“THE SAINTS.”—These were the addressees of this Epistle, and, in #8 of this series, we took the opportunity presented by the first occurrence of the article to make a few remarks upon it.

The Greek word translated “saint” is *hagios*, and no other word is so translated in the A.V. Different views are entertained as to the etymology of the word. One, which is suspect and considered fanciful, is that it is composed of *a*, negative and *ge*, “the earth”, but most lexicographers are of the opinion that it is allied to *hagos*, “purity”, from *hazo*, “to venerate”. The Greek however would most certainly never have conceived of a sanctity that was “not of the earth”—to learn *that* truth we are obliged to turn to the Scriptures. Where Pagan Greek words have been adopted by the Holy Spirit, they must be looked upon as “new creatures”, so far as their pedigree is concerned, and it is from their synonyms, associates and contexts that we must discover the meaning which inspiration attaches to them. We are on more definite ground when we know that the

LXX uses *hagios* to translate the Hebrew word *qadosh*, and we must allow the etymology and usage of the Hebrews word to colour the Greek *hagios*.

The word *hagios* occurs in Ephesians fifteen times, and is translated either “saint” or “holy”.

Hagios, translated “saint”.

- “To the *saints* which are at Ephesus” (Eph. i. 1).
- “I heard of your love unto all the *saints*” (i. 15).
- “The glory of His inheritance in the *saints*” (i. 18).
- “Fellow citizens with the *saints*” (ii. 19).
- “Who am less than the least of all *saints*” (iii. 8).
- “May be able to comprehend with all *saints*” (iii. 18).
- “For the perfecting of the *saints*” (iv. 12).
- “Let it not be named as becometh *saints*” (v. 3).
- “Watching with supplication for all *saints*” (vi. 18).

Hagios, translated “holy”.

- “That ye should be *holy* and without blame” (Eph. i. 4).
- “Ye were sealed with that *holy* Spirit of promise” (i. 13).
- “Groweth unto an *holy* temple in the Lord” (ii. 21).
- “As it is now revealed unto His *holy* apostles and prophets” (iii. 5).
- “Grieve not the *holy* Spirit of God” (iv. 30).
- “That it should be *holy* and without blemish” (v. 27).

It will be seen that “the saints” (i. 1) are such by their calling (i. 4), and that this calling is realized through the finished work of Christ on their behalf (v. 27), and while, in the first instance, their sainthood derives from what God has done rather than what they are in themselves, there is, subsequently, such a thing as a manner of life that “becometh” saints (v. 3), and that love for, and prayer on behalf of, the saints, for one another, is comely. Some of the passages referred to, for example Eph. i. 18, will come under review again, when a more searching examination can be made as to a possible new translation.

The only derivative of *hagios* found in Ephesians is *hagiazō*, “to sanctify” (Eph. v. 26). There the word is associated with “cleansing”, “washing” and “presenting” without spot or wrinkle, and illuminates the intention of the Spirit in the use of the word “saint” in addressing this epistle. The other derivatives are:--

- Hagiasmos*, “sanctification” (I Cor. i. 30);
- Hagion*, used in the plural, “sanctuary” (Heb. viii. 2);
- Hagiotēs*, “holiness”, abstract quality (Heb. xii. 10);
- Hagiosune*, “holiness”, the condition (II Cor. vii. 1);

EPHPHATHA, or “Be Opened”.

#4. The Unveiled Eye: “To See without Distortion.” pp. 17, 18

In view of the importance of the opened understanding, both for ourselves and for those to whom we minister, it is not surprising that the subject is brought before us under a further figure, that of the opened eye. The Psalmist prayed,

“Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law” (Psa. cxix. 18).

The word translated “open” is the Hebrew *galah* and means “to remove”. It is found in the expressions

“The glory is *departed* from Israel” (I Sam. iv. 22).

“The Lord had *told* Samuel” (margin, *revealed*) (I Sam. ix. 15).

“And *shew* it thee” (margin, *uncover* thine ear) (I Sam. xx. 12).

“The Lord *revealed* Himself to Samuel” (I Sam. iii. 21).

It is used three times of Balaam.

“Then the Lord *opened* the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way” (Numb. xxii. 31).

“Which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes *open*” (Numb. xxiv. 4 and 16).

By the use of the word “but” here the A.V. creates the wrong impression that Balaam had fallen into a trance and was therefore oblivious to sound and sight, while at the same time staring vacantly with his eyes. We note, however, that the R.V. substitutes “and” for “but” which considerably alters the meaning while Rotherham translates the passage: “Who the sight of the Almighty receiveth in vision, who falleth down but hath unveiled eyes.” That doubtless is its true purport. Balaam had “unveiled eyes” and saw the future blessedness of Israel, saying:

“I shall see Him, but not now; I shall behold Him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel” (Numb. xxiv. 17).

In verses 3 and 15 Balaam calls himself “the man whose eyes are open”, which the margin alters to “*who had his eyes shut, but now opened*”, as though he referred to the ecstatic vision given him. Bishop Newton, in his “Dissertations on the Prophecies”, however, seems to strike the right note when he says:

“It plainly alludes to Balaam’s *not seeing* the angel of the Lord at the same time as the ass saw him” (Vol. 1, p. 129).

We may therefore conclude that the prayer of the Psalmist in Psalm cxix. is for the removal of whatever may have become a veil, hiding from the eye of faith the wonders of God’s law. If it was important not to miss the transient glory of the law, how much more

important not to miss the transcendent glory of grace. Consequently, before the Apostle can proceed to speak of the high glories of the church seated together in Christ, at the right hand of God, he pauses to pray for them,

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation *for the acknowledgment* of Him, the eyes of your understanding (or heart) being enlightened, that ye may know, etc.” (Eph. i. 17, 18).

The Apostle does not pray here that the eyes of the saints “may be” enlightened, but assumes that they “have been” enlightened; so essential is this to all progress.

This series of articles takes its title from the words of the Lord when He opened the ears of a deaf mute. Mark viii., however, records the healing of a blind man, giving minute details of the performance of the act.

“He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town: and when He had spit on his eyes, and put His hands upon him, He asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. After that He put His hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly” (Mark viii. 23-25).

It is hardly possible to avoid comparing this account with the record of the healing of the deaf mute in Mark vii. 31-35. There we have a twofold operation before the man “spake plain”; first his ears were opened, and then “the string of his tongue was loosed”. So also in Mark viii. we have a twofold action. In the first the man was asked if he could see ought, to which he replied that he saw men as trees walking. In the second the Lord “made him look up and he was restored and saw every man clearly”. Instead of “He made him look up”, some texts read “The man looked steadily”, which is a suggestive alteration. “Clearly” is *telaugos*, meaning “distinctly”, as one sees a distant object with good sight. (The word *tele* enters into our words *telescope*, *television*, etc.).

Let us meditate upon these elements of truth, for they are contributions to the teaching of the Scripture as a whole. They teach that spiritual sight is a gift of grace, and that, whether in the case of the Ephesians or of the blind man, the eye first opened to see the initial light of salvation, may yet need further strengthening by further grace in order to see “clearly”. The man who can only see men as trees walking is to be congratulated in that he has sight, however defective, but it would be an incalculable loss for him to rest content with that vision, or if he were to be encouraged to believe that it was normal, still more that, with such a prime defect, he should set himself up as a leader of others.

The subject deserves an exposition of II Cor. iii. and iv., where the theme is the veil, which is made by the enemy out of undispensational use of the Scriptures, the law, that had been abolished, being used to blind the minds of those who believe not. This cannot be dealt with in a paragraph, but the reader would find the article in Vol. XXIII, p. 190, a useful supplement to the present one; also the chart illustrating II Cor. iii. and iv. that appears in Volume XXV, page 137.

We can, however, even with this briefest of considerations, realize the need to pray: “Unveil my eyes that they may behold wonderful things.” We need therefore:--

- (1) The Opened EAR.—“To Learn.”
- (2) The Opened BOOK.—“To Equip.”
- (3) The Opened UNDERSTANDING.—“To Perceive.”
- (4) The Opened EYE.—“To See, without distortion.”

#5. The Opened Mouth for Praise and Testimony. **pp. 50 - 52**

The opened ear, to learn, the opened eye, to see, the opened book, to equip, are not for personal edification merely, but lead to witness and service.

The prayer and penitence of David led him first of all to seek cleansing and restoration, but he also realized that his own shortcomings and sins were typical of the failure of others, with the result that the joy of salvation restored to himself quickened in his heart the desire to tell others. Thus he says:

“Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; And uphold me with Thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; And sinners shall be converted unto Thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness. O Lord, open Thou my lips: and my mouth shall show forth Thy praise” (Psa. li. 12-15).

The opened mouth of the redeemed or restored sinner sings not of its own righteousness, but a new song inspired by escape from the miry clay and being set upon a rock, “even praise unto our God” (Psa. xl. 3).

But, once again, although the heart pours out its praise and thanksgiving to God alone for His grace and love, the new song that He “puts” into our mouth, is a song not only of praise, but of testimony, as though the greatest praise we can offer to God for His great salvation is to find another voice to sing in concert. “Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord” (Psa. xl. 3). So in Col. iii. 16, the word of Christ that richly indwells the believer not only calls forth psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, sung with grace unto the Lord, but at the same time teaches and admonishes.

When Paul reminded Timothy that the Lord had not given us a spirit of “cowardice” and exhorted him not to be “ashamed” of the testimony of the Lord nor of Paul His prisoner (II Tim. i. 7, 8), he did not speak of that of which he himself was ignorant. He has left it on record that when he visited the Corinthians and went contrary to their wishes, because of his stewardship, it cost him something, for he confesses he was with them in “fear and trembling” (I Cor. ii. 1-3; iv. 1). So also when he had received the revelation of the mystery. He knew only too well that it was not without reason that the Lord had associated “bonds and afflictions” with that ministry (Acts xx. 23), and while

our hearts swell within us as we read his noble words, “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy” (Acts xx. 24), we are glad to know, as he himself confessed, that he was a man of like passions with ourselves (Acts xiv. 15) and that he was what he was only by the grace of God (I Cor. xv. 10). Consequently, when we find this great apostle writing to the Church that owed so much to his undaunted service, we are humbled yet encouraged at his words:

“Praying for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Eph. vi. 18-20).

We now come to another kind of “opening of the mouth” that is necessary, “Open my mouth wide, and I will fill it” (Psa. lxxxi. 10). The Psalm reminds Israel of the waters of Meribah (verse 7), and concludes with regretful exclamation “Oh that my people had hearkened unto me and walked in my ways!” Then would He have fed them with the finest of wheat and with honey out of the rock (verses 13-16). The intervening verses show that the food mentioned is a symbol of the Word of God. We cannot feed others unless we ourselves are fed. We can only deliver to others that which we have first of all received (I Cor. xv. 3).

As in Jer. i. 9, there are many references to the inspiration of the Prophets that do not apply to-day because, having complete revelation of God, we are not now in need of individual inspiration but can “fill our mouths” with the self-same words of inspired truth that opens the ear of the learner and enables him to speak a word that shall be in season (Isa. l. 4).

We need to remember moreover that “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt. xii. 34). There needs to be a treasure in the heart before good things can be spoken by the mouth, otherwise words will be without profit or power, like the tinkling cymbal rather than the clear clarion call. We must therefore continue this series in order to embrace the teaching of the Scripture as to the “Opened heart”.

Meanwhile, we summarize once more. For effectual service we need:

- (1) The Opened EAR,
- (2) The Opened BOOK,
- (3) The Opened UNDERSTANDING,
- (4) The Opened EYE, and
- (5) The Opened MOUTH.

#6. The Opened Heart, the Most Important of All. pp. 81, 82

We saw at the close of our last article (page 52) that the opened mouth was valueless apart from abundant treasure stored up in the opened heart. Let us now look more carefully into this matter.

The expression “opened heart” is used only once in the Scriptures, where it is found in the story of Lydia (Acts xvi. 14). In response to a vision the Apostle had left the shores of Asia Minor and for the first time had set foot in Europe. To present-day readers this is an epoch-making event, but there were then no evidences of it that would appeal to sense. Indeed, the Apostle’s reception at Philippi was as poor as could well be. There was no synagogue in the city, the Jewish population was small and their practice was to worship by the riverside where “prayer was wont to be made” (Acts xvi. 13). To this spot Paul and his companions resorted and spoke to the women there, and the Lord opened the heart of one of them, named Lydia, so that she attended to the things of which Paul spoke. An opened heart is necessary if the word of God be not only heard, but given attention. When Paul admonished Timothy “to give attendance to the reading”, he added, “give thyself wholly to them”, as though he would say, “This is a matter of heart more than anything else”.

Lydia’s “opened heart” soon led to an open house, for she said: “If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us” (Acts xvi. 15). A hardened heart does not attend to the word of God: “And he hardened Pharaoh’s heart, that he hearkened not” (Exod. vii. 13).

In Psalm cxix. the Psalmist refers many times to the necessity for “seeking” (2, 10), “observing” (34), “entreating” (58), “keeping” (69), and “crying” (145), with the whole heart, in connection with the Lord and His Word.

The word used of Lydia in Acts xvi. is not *anoigo*, “to open up”, but *dianoigo*, “to open up *thoroughly*”. This is the word used by the Lord in Mark vii. 34, when He said Ephphatha, “Be opened!” It is the words used of the disciples in Luke xxiv. 13 when “their eyes were opened” and they recognized the Lord. It is the word used in the same chapter for the opening of the Scriptures and of the understanding.

The heart thus opened is characteristic of the Bereans, who received the word with all readiness of mind (Acts xvii. 11). The heart thus opened is, in the language of Paul, “enlarged” (II Cor. vi. 11), for indeed he declared to the Corinthians in the third verse of the next chapter, “Ye are in our hearts to die and live with you”. The opened heart is one into which the love of God has poured like an overwhelming flood (Rom. v. 5), and will manifest, in tender-heartedness, something of that love to others (Eph. iv. 32).

In short, what has been brought before us in the preceding article, of this series is nullified and rendered fruitless apart from this, the last of all. An opened ear, if it send no echo into a heart touched by graces will never enable any to “learn” in the school of God. The opened book, precious heritage though it be, has no spiritual value unless received with an open heart. The open book can only “equip” those who receive the Word, not only in the letter, but in the spirit; not merely through the senses, but in the heart. The opened understanding is but a synonym for an opened heart, the Hebrew *leb*, usually translated “heart”, being translated “understanding” some twenty times in the O.T. We have already referred to the alternative reading of Eph. i. 18, where “heart” is read for “understanding”, and we refer to it again to say that the eye that is opened here, as everywhere, is the eye of the heart. We might have explored further avenues of thought and dealt with “open doors” for service, and other “openings” that find their place in the Word. These, however, do not fall within the scope of our title quite so truly as those we have examined.

And so, briefly, we bring this little study to a close, trusting that its perusal may have led to clearer appreciation of the ways of the Lord with His people.

Fruits of Fundamental Studies.

#24. The Scriptures an Entity: to be accepted or rejected as a whole. pp. 30 - 32

If a pound note be exchanged for twenty shillings, such exchange does not in any way detract from the full value of the pound. This is referred to the category of Quantity. There are however "entities" as well as "quantities" and "entity" differs from "quantity" in that it can only exist as a whole, subdivision being, in the nature of the case, impossible. For instance, while a father may divide his substance among his children without loss or detriment, he cannot thus divide and distribute himself. However much he may long to be with John while he is staying with James, the fact that he is an entity makes that longing impossible of fulfillment. Close and earnest acquaintance with the Scriptures convinces the believer that they are an entity: they must be taken as a whole, or not at all

In the course of our dealings with our fellows, we meet with many who, while rejecting the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God, make the assertion, that in this aspect or in that, they believe and accept them. One endorses the moral code of the Bible, while viewing both the record of the creation of man and his redemption with skepticism. Another revels in the poetic and literary excellence of the Bible, yet accounts the bulk of its subject-matter as so much myth and folk lore. A third would place "Jesus" upon the highest pedestal that a "man" can occupy, but denies His deity. Yet another has room only for what he calls "the eleventh commandment", that of love, while another accepts the teaching of the sermon on the mount, but rejects the teaching of Paul as to redemption and justification. Again, to another, prophecy, as such, is simply impossible, and to another the idea of a miracle is unscientific and absurd.

Let us test the assertion that the Scriptures are an entity, to be taken as a whole or rejected. First let us consider the difficulty confronting the person. That moral code revolves around the foci of truth and righteousness. Everything is tested by the plumb line of unbiased righteousness, and truth is the essential foundation of all its ethical teaching.

The beginnings of this code coincide with the history of the man Moses. The Scriptures give particulars of the birth of Moses, the four generations that intervene between Abraham and his birth; they record the fact that he was of the line of Levi, and tell how he was taken into the care of the Egyptian princess, together with numerous statements of such particular character as to leave no doubt in the mind of the reader that Moses did actually live in Egypt, that he did lead Israel out, as God appointed, that he did ascend Mount Sinai and there received that law, which for ever after was associated with his name. Not only so, but subsequent books of the Old Testament are equally committed to the same teaching. Joshua succeeds Moses, and the people feared Joshua "as they feared Moses all the days of his life" (Josh. iv. 14). Again, Joshua makes

specific reference to the book which Moses had written (Josh. xxiii. 6), and it is impossible to read the record of Joshua's division of the land of Canaan without being convinced that Scripture intends the reader to believe that Moses was an actual, historic, figure. Equally emphatic are the books of Judges, Samuel and Kings. We read that King Hoshea broke in pieces "the brazen serpent that Moses had made" (II Kings xviii. 4), a testimony to the belief in the historic reality of the man Moses. The revival under Ezra and Nehemiah, the references in the Psalms, the testimony of such prophets as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Micah and Malachi, complete the chain that commits the whole of the Old Testament to the teaching that Moses actually lived and did the things recorded of him.

The new Testament is no less emphatic on the subject. The integrity of the four Gospels are intimately connected with the real, historic, personality of Moses. "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me. But if ye believed not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?" (John v. 46, 47). This one statement of the Saviour refutes the validity of the claim to a right to believe a part of the Scriptures, while at the same time rejecting the Scriptural statements showing that Moses was an actual person, living and acting as the records say he lived and acted. We can add to these testimonies the further references to Moses by the *risen* Christ in Luke xxiv. 27, and the references by the Apostle Paul in his epistles, which latter but add confirmation to the explicit testimony of our Lord.

The very gospel of salvation is inextricably bound up with the historic reality of Moses, for John iii. 16 arises out of John iii. 14, which reads: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up." Not only does John iii. 16 hang upon the historic reality of Moses, but all the great types of redemption and atonement, which constitute the saving and sanctifying elements of the gospel, originate in the ceremonial law given by Moses to Israel.

Again, not only did Christ keep the Passover, but He himself fulfilled its glorious, typical, teaching, so that it could be written: "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." In the original the very "exodus" from Egypt provides a name for that "decease" which He accomplished at Jerusalem (Luke ix. 31), and the offerings enumerated in Leviticus are wonderful foreshadowings of that One Sacrifice for sins for ever, which becomes the propitiation by which our guilt is removed, our reconciliation is accomplished, access is enjoyed, and peace entered (Lev. i.-v.).

It is therefore practically impossible to say that one admits the high moral code of the Bible, yet rejects the historic statements concerning the men and women that live and act on that code. The moral code that demands inflexible, unswerving, truth, can hardly be furthered by fabrications of fact so colossal as they must be if Moses be not a real historical character. Similarly, for such a one, it would be impossible to believe "the simple gospel", for John iii. 16 stands or falls with the veracity of the Book of Numbers.

The same is true of another attitude adopted by some who explain away the prophetic element; yet if Christ could say of Moses, "He wrote of Me", or "All things must be

fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Me”, the question is reduced to the simple issue of, either accepting “prophecy” and “Christ”, or rejecting both together. For anyone to pondered the passages in the New Testament that use the formula: “that it might be fulfilled” is to make acceptance of Christ with denial of prophecy utterly incompatible. Moreover, not only did Moses prophesy, but he was himself a great prophetic type.

“For Moses truly said unto the fathers, 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. And it shall come to pass that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts iii. 22, 23).

There are moreover some who call themselves “Christian Evolutionists”. They have endorsed that pseudo-science of speculative theory called “Evolution”, yet desire to retain a hold upon the Christian faith. This attitude is pitiable, for the Scriptures from beginning to end make the most uncompromising assertion that the universe was “created” and that everything thus created was “after its kind”. Gen. i. and ii., instead of being an isolated passage that can be skipped, is a passage that holds sway throughout the inspired record. It is embedded in the ten commandments, it is interwoven in the prophecy of restoration (Isaiah), it is found, without modification or abatement, in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and the Revelation. The evolutionist who imagines that he can hold to his “science” and to the faith deceives no one but himself.

To the man to whom Adam is a myth, I Cor. xv., Rom. v. and Heb. ii. lose their triumph and their comfort. Moreover, the genealogy of the Saviour as given by Luke takes us back step by step through the Old Testament history until it concludes with the last links: “Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God” (Luke iii. 38), and it is impossible for anyone to put his finger upon a preceding link in the chain and say, “Here history ends, and myth begins”.

All this taken together not only proves that the Bible is an Entity, to be taken whole, or not at all, but it further proves that *Christ* and the Scriptures form an Entity, to be taken together as one great undivided testimony, or not to be taken at all.

Let us be clear on this vital matter for ourselves, and then clear in our testimony to others, “For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?” (I Cor. xiv. 8).

#25. A Quest for Ultimate Value. pp. 188 - 193

In the record of creation in Gen. i. there are seven occasions when the pronouncements is made that “it was good”.

The light (Gen. i. 4) and subsequently the dividing of the earth and sea (Gen. i. 10); the bringing forth of grass, herb and tree (Gen. i. 12); the rule and ministry of the sun, moon and stars (Gen. i. 18); the creation of all living creatures of the waters, and all the fowl of the air (Gen. i. 21); the creation of beast, cattle and creeping thing (Gen. i. 25).

Philosophy is concerned with three great quests: the quest as to the ultimate nature of reality, the quest as to the validity, nature and limitations of knowledge, and the quest for the ultimate nature and significance of value. This third philosophical quest is called Axiology, from the Greek word *axios*. Philosophy has arrived at the conclusion that in the realm of Ethics or Morals “The Good” is the ultimate value; that in the realm of Aesthetics “The Beautiful” is the ultimate value, and that in the realm of the Mind or Reason, “The True” is the ultimate value. Nevertheless, although these ideas have held sway since before the days of Plato, there has been in the minds of most thinkers a feeling that there should be something which would bind together these values and eliminate the disturbing relative elements the presence of which prevents many from accepting them as *ultimate* values.

While we do not wish to discuss philosophical terms in these pages, we must take this matter a little further in order to make clear our after-study. In the first place it is manifestly incorrect to speak of ultimate values. There can be but one all-comprehensive ultimate value, one that can contain “The Good”, “The Beautiful” and “The True”, while excluding everything of a conditional nature that comes in these several categories.

The value, “The Good”, is, after all, a relative form. In Gen. iii. the woman saw that the prohibited tree was “good” for food, yet at the same time it was an evil for the woman to partake it. She saw that it was “pleasant” to the eyes, which is comparable with the aesthetic value, “The Beautiful”, nevertheless, the word so translated appears in that dreadful place *Kibrothhattaavah*, “The graves of lust” (Numb. xi. 34), showing that “beauty” or that which is “pleasant” may be a relative term. Moreover, the forbidden tree was one “to be desired to make one wise”, which is comparable with the philosopher’s third value, “The True”. It appears therefore that “The Good”, “The Beautiful” and “The True” still leave room for something that is impartial. When we read that the weather is “good” for air-raids, what is intended? If it be “good” for the raiders, it will certainly be “bad” for those who are raided, from which it follows that the self-same thing will be “good” or “bad” relatively to circumstance.

Again, there can be no inflexible standard of Beauty. What would be the ideal in the eyes of an African chief, would fail to satisfy the aesthetic taste of a Greek in the days of Phidias. To one person a Symphony is a delight, to another a meaningless sound. Even

“Truth” can be relative. A person may say, with truth, that upon taking his seat in the Flying Scotsman at King’s Cross Station he did not “move” until he arrived at Edinburgh. This would be relatively true so far as this passenger’s relation to the actual compartment was concerned, but it could not be absolutely true; he could never have reached Edinburgh, had he not “moved” at all. Truth may be dispensational, true for one time, but not true for another, as for example the practice of Circumcision, or the observance of the Sabbath. While therefore Platonic philosophy may be grouped under the three headings “The Good”, “The Beautiful” and “The True”, the enlightened mind demands something deeper, something that will not change with circumstances.

When we turn to the second Epistle of Peter and read what is there said about the New Creation that is yet to come, we find the term for which we seek: “New heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. iii. 13). Here we have the one supreme, absolute, value which alone meets all requirement, “The Right”. If “Good” is to be good both for myself and my neighbour it must at the same time be “Right”. If upon approaching a town like Naples from the sea we are overwhelmed with its beauty but, upon walking its streets and living in its houses, we are oppressed with its sordidness and its shame, we are conscious that true Beauty must be “within” as well as “without”, or, in other words, that it must be “Right”. Now God has lifted the idea of “Right” to the level that we seek; something uninfluenced by persons and circumstances; something indeed as absolute as a plumb-line or a pair of balances.

We speak of “Fundamental Truth” and, until we are compelled to define our terms, we have little or no uncertainty in our minds as to what is intended, but if the question be pressed upon us, we discover that there is more than one claimant to the title. Undoubtedly, for the believer, the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work, is the One Foundation upon which he builds (I Cor. iii. 11), but it will be noted at once that the statement is qualified, it is “for the believer”. If we ask how in the first place one becomes a “believer” we shall at length arrive at the answer that places the veracity of the Scriptures at or nearer the foundation of all truth. But the Scriptures were not always in the world, for two thousand years intervened between Adam and Abraham, and, further, these Scriptures have not, even yet, penetrated into every corner of the earth. From the teaching of the Scriptures we discover that, apart from revelation, there has always been the evidence of “Creation” (Rom. i. 19-21) and “Conscience” (Rom. ii. 12-16), and this evidence is of sufficient strength to make those who come under the power of it “without excuse” (Rom. i. 20; ii. 1, 15). It therefore appears necessary that there must be some universal standard whereby the witness of Creation, Conscience, and Scripture shall be judged, and that standard seems to be set forth in the word “Right”. Every word, thought or deed is either “Right” or “Wrong”. The universe testifies to the fact that unless a thing be “Right” it is an intrusion; that it is a cause of misery and suffering. Because things are not “Right” the creation still groans under a curse.

Returning to the Scriptures (for we are already believers, and need not wait in the antechamber of Creation nor the portal of Conscience), we discover that “Right” and “Wrong” are indeed the essential categories under which all acts, from those of God Himself down to the humblest of His creatures, must be ranged. The handwriting on the

wall that brought consternation into the heart of the king of Babylon expresses the fundamental truth; “Thou art weighed *in the balances*, and found wanting” (Dan. v. 27). This brings us to the illuminating fact that the Scriptures have used the figure of the “balances” and the “plumb-line” to illustrate the impersonal and incorruptible character of “Right”. We may not all agree as to what we mean when we speak of the force of Gravity, but whether our views be those of Newton or those of Einstein, the acceptance of the evidence of a pair of scales or of the plumb-line remains unchallenged. The force that secures the right ration of our daily food, is the same as that which enables the builder to erect our dwellings correctly, and one of the special features of both actions is, that like the judgment of God, it is “without respect of persons”.

The close relationship between the “balance” and the “plumb-line” is found in the word used by Isaiah when he said: “Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet” (Isa. xxviii. 17). Here the “plummet” is *mishqeleth*, the feminine form of *mishqal*, “a weight” used in balances, as we read in Ezekiel, “Take thee balances *to weigh*”. The reader will doubtless have perceived that these words *mishqeleth* and *mishqal* are both related to *shekel*, which, though “money”, was “weighed”. “And Abraham weighed to Ephron the silver four hundred shekels of silver current money with the merchant” (Gen. xxiii. 16). The weighing of the money ensured that it was “right” in amount.

We find this symbolic use of the plumb-line in the seventh chapter of the prophecy of Amos:

“Behold the Lord stood upon a wall made by a plumbline, with a plumbline in His hand Behold I will set a plumbline in the midst of my people Israel: I will not again pass by them any more” (Amos vii. 7, 8).

Here the word translated “plumbline” is the Hebrew *anak*, a word that means something “leaden”, not only because of its weight but because it is uninfluenced by magnetic attraction and therefore a suitable figure of even-handed justice.

The prophet Zechariah also speaks of the use of a plummet saying: “They shall see the plummet in the hands of Zerubbabel” (Zech. iv. 10). Here the word “plummet” is the translation of two Hebrew words, namely, *eben bedil*, stone, tin, The use of the word “stone” brings in the idea of “weight”, for *eben* is the word used in Zech. v. 8 where he speaks of “the weight of lead”.

The intentional use of this great force everywhere around us as a symbol of inflexible right is not only seen in the use of the plumb-line, but in the use of the balances.

“Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure. Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have” (Lev. xix. 35, 36).

“Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small thou shalt have a perfect and just weight” (Deut. xxv. 13, 15).

“A false balance is abomination to the Lord; but a just weight is His delight” (Prov. xi. 1).

“A just weight and balance are the Lord’s; all the weights of the bag are His work” (Prov. xvi. 11).

“Divers weights and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord”
(Prov. xx. 10).

“Divers weights are an abomination unto the Lord and a false balance is not good”
(Prov. xx. 23).

When Job would express his desire for even-handed, unbiased, justice, he found the symbol of the balances ready to hand:--

“If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity” (Job xxxi. 5, 6).

Over against this desire of Job should be placed the humbling words of Prov. xvi.:--

“All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits”
(Prov. xvi. 2).

Hannah, the mother of Samuel, recognized this figure of justice:--

“Talk no more exceedingly proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed” (I Sam. ii. 3).

Even in English the word “ponder” retains the primitive idea of weighing, and is used in such words as “pound”, “imponderable” and “ponderous”. When therefore we read in Prov. xxi. 2 and xxiv. 12 that the Lord “pondereth” the hearts, we are not surprised to learn that the word “ponder” is the Hebrew *takan*, translated in Prov. xvi. 2, “weigh”.

Anticipating our findings, in order to press home the purpose of these studies, we say that the words written on the plaster of the palace wall in the days of Belshazzar, have been written by the same finger upon the hearts of all men. All, when weighed in the divine balance, tested by the divine plummet, will be found wanting. But this is not all, for, if it were, what incentive should we have to pursue our study? The revelation of our own utter need but leads us to the Saviour, Who, in His fullness, meets this and every other requirement of heaven’s high tribunal.

“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. v. 21).

Let us be thankful that there has been revealed this all-covering and final value. When we attain to that creation where “righteousness” dwelleth, the Good, the Beautiful, and the True will have been raised above their present relative and conditional characters, and find their synthesis in “The Right”. Let us be thankful, too, that the great plan of man’s salvation has been so conceived and so accomplished by God as “that He might be just *and* the justifier” of the believer. Salvation indeed does set forth the Goodness, the Beauty and the Truth of the divine nature, but over, above and including all is Righteousness. James speaks of a “crown of *life*”; Peter speaks of a “crown of *glory*”, but Paul entertained the hope of receiving at the hands of his Lord “a crown of *righteousness*”.

The whole conflict of the ages has been the conflict of “Right” against “Wrong”. Let us be thankful that “Might” is not “Right”. By all means let us acknowledge the omnipotence of God, but let us praise Him that “Right” not “Might” is the sceptre of His kingdom (Heb. i. 8). While therefore “The Good” and the pleasant can be found in the early chapters of Genesis, we perhaps the better realize the reason why “The Right” is deferred until we enter the realm of Redemption (Gen. vii.), or of Faith (Gen. xv. 6) and that it is found in its true place only in that New Creation where God shall be all in all.

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth. (Second Series).

ISAIAH.

#12. Woes and Glories (xxviii. - xxxv.).

“Without form and void” (xxxiii., xxxiv.).

pp. 18 - 22

We draw near to the closing pæan of Isa xxxv., but before the millennial glories of that chapter are reached, the shadow of the Assyrian invasion is once more cast across the prophecy and made to subserve the divine purpose.

In his commentary upon Isaiah the Rev. Alfred Jenour makes the useful suggestion that chapter xxxiii. is a song of triumph in which the Prophet is answered by a chorus of the people. While he does not appear to have perceived the underlying structure of the chapter, and we cannot therefore follow his suggested subdivisions, the principle seems to be true.

Woe is uttered against the Spoiler (Isa. xxxiii. 1), the chorus of praise replying,

“O Lord, be gracious unto us; we have waited for Thee; be Thou their arm (one MS reads ‘our’) every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble” (Isa. xxxiii. 2).

The Prophet resumes and speaks of the coming of the Assyrian under the familiar figure of a plague of caterpillars and locusts. This again is answered by the chorus of praise:

“The Lord is exalted; for He dwelleth on high: he hath filled Zion with judgment and righteousness” (Isa. xxxiii. 5).

Next is depicted the breaking of the treaty of Sennacherib and its effects upon the Land and once more there is a responsive chorus of praise:

“Now will I rise, saith the Lord as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire” (Isa. xxxiii. 10-12).

The Prophet now turns to his own people. Not only will God be a consuming fire to burn up the chaff and stubble that represented the Assyrians (Isa. xxxiii. 11, 12), but to His Own people, the “sinners of Zion”, this fact causes fear, for they cry, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?” (Isa. xxxiii. 14), and the reply insists upon practical righteousness, and that such as practice it need have no fear. Of such it is said, “He shall dwell on high his waters shall be sure” (Isa. xxxiii. 16).

The Prophet lifts up his eyes, and in contrast with the stricken king of Assyrian, or even the trustful king of Judah, he speaks of “the King in His beauty” as the glorious goal

of prophetic vision, “and the land of far stretching distances” in contrast with the cramping limitation of a siege.

Once more the Prophet turns back to the stricken foe:

“Thine heart shall reflect upon the terror (that threatened, and you shall ask in wonder) Where is he that counted? Where is the weigher of tribute? Where is he that counted the towers?” (Isa. xxxiii. 18).

Sennacherib and his host will have gone, and instead of looking upon a people of fierce countenance and ridiculous language, the people are exhorted to

“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken” (Isa. xxxiii. 20).

This prophecy takes us beyond the type, Sennacherib, and his destruction, to the anti-type, the antichristian Beast and his overthrow at the time of the end. It looks on to the day when Israel shall say,

“The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King (Israel’s triune Lord). He will save us” (Isa. xxxiii. 22).

Two millennial blessings conclude the chapter. The inhabitants of the Land in that day shall not say, “I am sick”, and the people that dwell in the Land “shall be forgiven their iniquity”, for the New Covenant will at length be put into effect. Other nations may depend upon their galleys and their ships, but the defence of Israel, as demonstrated by the overthrow of Sennacherib, is the Lord. Isa. xxxiv., which follows, takes us into “the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” (Isa. xxxiv. 8). The language is apocalyptic and looks to the great and dreadful day of the Lord. While Idumea is the place named, the great Edomite at the time of the end is intended, for this judgment is world-wide. Nations are called upon to hear, the peoples of the earth and all therein, and the world and all things that come forth of it.

The special objects of the Lord’s indignation and fury are the “nations and all their armies”. This looks to the great gathering against Jerusalem,

“When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh For these be the days of vengeance until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars” (Luke xxi. 20-25).

“And I saw the beast, and the Kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war” (Rev. xix. 19).

Zechariah speaks of the gathering of all nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the descent of the Lord with an accompanying earthquake (Zech. xiv. 1-5). The dreadful slaughter that ensues is suggested by the words of verse 16 where it speaks of “every *one* that is left of *all* the nations that came against Jerusalem”. This is literal Armageddon

(Rev. xvi. 16). The terrible conflict upon earth will be echoed by confusion in the heavens.

“And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from a vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree” (Isa. xxxiv. 4).

The unprecedented nature of such an event precludes repetition and it therefore follows that the parallel passages in Matt. xxiv., II Peter and Rev. vi. must refer to the same prophetic period.

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

“But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (II Pet. iii. 10).

“And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places for the great day of His wrath is come” (Rev. vi. 12-17).

Isa. xxxiv. is a revelation of the day of the Lord, a day of the sword of vengeance and of indignation.

The word “vengeance” (Heb. *naqam*) occurs six times in Isaiah. The occurrences are:

- A | xxxiv. 8. Idumea and Bozrah.
- B | xxxv. 4. Millennial. Weak, feeble and fearful comforted.
- C | xlvii. 3. Vengeance upon Babylon.
- C | lix. 17. Redemption to Zion.
- B | lxi. 2. Brokenhearted, captives and mourners comforted.
- A | lxiii. 4. Edom and Bozrah.

It is evident that this “day of vengeance” in prophecy is one. We find Jeremiah using the term with much the same emphasis and precision but introducing the expression “the vengeance of His Temple”. Associated with the word “vengeance” is the word “recompense”. “The year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” is the extension of Isa. xxxiv. 8. “Even God with a recompense” is the amplification of Isa. xxxv. 4. “The Lord God of recompense shall surely requite”, comments Jeremiah at the overthrow of Babylon (Jer. li. 56).

The whole prophecy of Isaiah could be threaded upon the name of Zion. Zion is seen in its desolation, sin and uncleanness (Isa. i. 8; iii. 16; iv. 4), but it is also seen glorified, reigned over by the Lord, and saved (Isa. iv. 5; xxiv. 23; lxii. 11). The language with which the Prophet was inspired to describe the day of judgment in

Isa. xxxiv. 11 is of extreme importance because of the illumination which it throws upon other extremely important passages:

“But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it; and He shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness” (Isa. xxxiv. 11).

The unclean birds that possess the land of Edom are an accepted symbol of judgment and desolation and do not call for extended comment. The line and the stone refer to measurement and weight:

“I will stretch over Jerusalem the *line* of Samaria and the *plummet* of the house of Ahab” (II Kings xxi. 13).

This passage not only uses these words as symbols of judgment, as in Isa. xxxiv. 11, but, by substituting “plummet” for “stone”, enables us to decide what is intended by the stone in Isa. xxxiv. In Zech. iv. 10 the word “plummet” is actually “a stone of tin”, as the margin shows.

As a symbol of perfectly unbiased judgment, a judgment that, by its very nature, must be free from all partiality, the plumbline is among the most suggestive.

“Amos, what seest thou? And I said, A plumbline. Then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumbline in the midst of My people Israel: I will not again pass them by any more. And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste” (Amos vii. 8, 9).

In Isa. xxviii. we have the same figure,

“Judgment also will I lay to the line and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place” (Isa. xxviii. 17).

II Kings xxi. 13, Amos vii. and Isa. xxviii. also use this symbol of the searching inquisition of Israel, but Isa. xxxiv. reveals that at the time of the end the same scrutiny is to be turned upon the Edomite. The chief importance however of this passage is not in the easily recognized symbols of line and stone, but in the words translated “confusion” and “emptiness”. In the original they are *tohu* and *bohu*, and occur together on the opening page of the O.T.:

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void (*tohu* and *bohu*) and darkness was upon the face of the deep” (Gen. i. 1, 2).

From these verses it is clear that the primal creation had passed under the judgment of “line and plummet” because of some failure (the pride and fall of Satan, as we believe), and had become involved in ruin. From Isa. xlv. 18 we learn that the Lord did not create the earth *tohu*, “in vain”, and we also find that the word *tohu* is placed in contrast with the word “inhabited”. In Isa. xxxiv. 10, 12 we read “none shall pass through it”, “none shall be there”, while in Jer. iv., where the words “without form and void” again appear, the context speaks of earthquake, darkness, no man, and desolation. Upon

re-examination of Isa. xxxiv. 11 another truth appears. We place Gen. i. 2, with its chaotic condition, at the junction between “the world that then was” and “the heavens and the earth which are now” and the later parallel, confusion and desolation, which includes the passing of the existing heavens, at the junction between the close of the present system, and the beginning of the new heavens and new earth of Rev. xxi. 1. In other words, the earth, with its firmament, which was “called heaven”, is bounded at either end by the words *tohu and bohu*. Moreover, the heaven that is to depart as a scroll, is not the heaven of heavens, the place of the throne of God, but is the limited “firmament”, “called heaven”, which was made on the second day of the reconstruction of Gen. i. 6.

It is somewhat unfortunate that we have such a word as firmament in Gen. i. It comes into our English Bible from the Latin. The Latin is an attempt to translate the *stereoma* of the LXX, which in its turn, is an attempt to translate the Hebrew *raqia*, which the margin of Gen. i. 6 gives as “expansion”. Now *raqia* by no means indicates something “firm” or “hard”, but rather something “spread out”, and while it can refer to “beaten gold” (Exod. xxxix. 3) it does not so much to the hardness of the metal as its extreme thinness. It is used of “spreading forth” the earth. Moreover, to confirm the idea that *raqia* in Gen. 6 means an expansion, the Hebrew word *natah*, “to stretch out” as a tent (Gen. xxxiii. 19), is used by Isaiah alone five times in connection with the heavens. The passages are as follows:

“That *stretcheth out* the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in” (Isa. xl. 22).

“He that created the heavens, and *stretched them out*” (Isa. xlii. 5).

“That *stretcheth forth* the heavens alone” (Isa. xlv. 24).

“I, even My hands, have *stretched out* the heavens” (Isa. xlv. 12).

“The Lord thy Maker, that hath *stretched forth* the heavens” (Isa. li. 3).

To these can be added Job ix. 8; Psalm civ. 2 and Zech. xii. 1.

It is this stretched out heaven, the “firmament” of Gen. i. 6, which is to be dissolved and rolled up at the time of the end. We repeat, it does not include those heavenly places “far above all heavens” where Christ sits, and where the Church of the One Body finds its sphere of blessing. Therefore while these things remain Scriptural facts, criticism of our emphasis upon the “super-heavens” must leave us unmoved.

Reference is made at the close of Isa. xxxiv. to “the line”, this time associating it with “the lot” and so with dividing, as an inheritance. A very simple outline of Isa. xxxiv. which takes note of this twofold use of the line is as follows:--

Isaiah xxxiv.

- A | 1-8. VENGEANCE. |
 - a | Indignation of the Lord.
 - b | Heavens dissolved.
 - c | Idumea.
- a* | Sword of the Lord.
- b* | In heaven—sword.
- c* | Idumea.
- A | 9-17. DESOLATION. |
 - d | Cormorant, bittern, owl and raven.
 - e | Line and stone.
 - d* | Dragons, wild beasts, owls and vultures.
 - e* | Line and lot.

Thus, by a series of steps, some sad and some glorious, we reach the close of this section with chapter xxxv., a chapter which is in itself an epitome of the glorious restoration which is the prophetic burden of the whole of Isaiah's prophecy.

ISAIAH.

#13. Woes and Glories (xxviii. - xxxv.).

“The ransomed of the Lord shall return” (xxxv.).

pp. 52 - 57

We now reach one of the most glorious chapters in the first part of Isaiah's prophecy, a chapter which brings the first section of the book to a glorious conclusion, and anticipates by word and phrase the restoration which is the chief theme of the remainder.

We have already indicated some of the references in Isa. xxxv., that find their echo in chapters xl. to lxvi. One very clear example is found in Isa. xxxv. 10, which is repeated in Isa. li. 11.

Isa. xxxv. opens with the words: “The wilderness and solitary place shall be glad for them.” We have already learned from Isa. xlv. 18 that the Lord did not create the earth *tohu* (“waste”), but formed it to be inhabited. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that the first passage in Isaiah in which the word “wilderness” occurs reads:

“Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness?” (Isa. xiv. 16, 17).

The Assyrian is addressed here, but as in Ezek. xxviii., a greater foe is in view. A little earlier in Isa. xiv. we read:

“How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! for thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God I will be like the Most High” (Isa. xiv. 12-14).

Here we have Gen. i. 2 on a smaller scale, for in Israel has been enacted in miniature the drama of the ages.

The “solitary place” is actually a place that is “dry” and so “barren” (as in Joel ii. 20). *Tsiyyah* is translated “dry land” in Isa. xli. 18, and “dry ground” in Isa. liii. 2. This wilderness and dry place shall we read, “be glad for them”. We find it exceedingly difficult to agree with the commentaries that see in the words “for them” a reference to the noisome creatures of Isa. xxxiv. 14-16. These are to “possess it for ever” and “from generation to generation shall they dwell therein” (Isa. xxxiv. 17)—which makes it impossible for the same district to “blossom as the rose”. The land of Idumea is to be so visited that its “streams shall be turned into pitch, and the dust into brimstone it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever” (Isa. xxxiv. 9, 10)—which makes it all the more difficult to reconcile with the description of Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 6 and 7.

The R.V. omits the words “for them” entirely, while the LXX reads: “Be glad, thou thirsty desert: let the wilderness exult, and flower as the lily.” Dr. Young’s literal version reads: “They joy from the wilderness and dry place”, while Govett renders it: “Thou thirsty wilderness rejoice! Thou desert be glad, and blossom as the lily!”

It will be obvious to the student that any attempt to read a special meaning into the language of the A.V. is uncalled for. Moreover, in addition to this negative argument, there is a positive one of much greater force. From the days of Moses, the words “to rejoice over” in connection with Israel have conveyed the hope of prophecy:

“As the Lord *rejoiced over* you to do you good” (Deut. xxviii. 63).

“The Lord will again *rejoice over* thee for good, as He *rejoiced over* thy fathers” (Deut. xxx. 9).

We also find the phrase in Isa. lxii. 5 and lxv. 19; and in Zeph. iii. 17. Isa. xxxv. 1 undoubtedly refers to the rejoicing of the land of Israel on account of the deliverance and restoration that had then come to pass.

The change from barrenness to blessing is expressed by the frequently used figure of “blossoming”. In Job xiv. 9 we read, with regard to a tree whose root had grown old: “Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.” This passage occurs in a context of resurrection, and its application to Isa. xxxv. is a pointed one. In chapter xxvii. 6 Isaiah had already prophesied concerning Israel: “He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.”

There are so many diverse opinions as to the precise flower indicated by the “rose” that it hardly seems worth while discussing it in any detail. The lily, the meadow saffron, and the narcissus have all been suggested as possibilities. The word occurs only once elsewhere, in the Song of Solomon, where the Shulamite, comparing herself with the

daughters of Sion, modestly confesses: “I am *the rose* of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys” (S. of S. ii. 1). To which the shepherd lover replies: “As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.” This context seems to favour the simple saffron or lily rather than the rose. In any case, we can rejoice in this wonderful blossoming even though we remain uncertain as to what flower is actually intended by the long Hebrew word *chabatstseleth*.

The allusion to Lebanon, Carmel and Sharon in verse 2 is a glance back to the terrible desolation left by the Assyrian invader:

“The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness: and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits” (Isa. xxxiii. 9).

There is a further connection between these two chapters (xxxiii. & xxxv.) in verse 8. The statement in chapter xxxiii. 8: “The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth”, is surely referred to in Isa. xxxv. 8, even though the words translated “wayfaring men” in the two passages are not exactly the same.

Before we go further with our examination of the chapter, let us obtain what help we can from its structure:

Isaiah xxxv.
The Glory of the Lord.

- A1 | 1, 2. JOY AND SINGING IN THE WILDERNESS. |
 a | Glory of Lebanon. \
- b | Excellency of Carmel. \ Physical and
 a | Glory of the Lord. / spiritual glory.
 b | Excellency of our God. /
- B1 | 3, 4. BE STRONG, FEAR NOT. |
 c | Weak hands—strengthened. \
- d | Feeble knees—confirmed. } Moral
 c | Fearful heart—strengthened. / restoration.
- C1 | 4. VENGEANCE. |
 e | Your God will come. \
- f | With vengeance. \ Salvation.
 f | With recompense. /
 e | He will come. /
- B1 | 5, 6. HEALING. |
 c | Then eyes of blind—opened. \
- d | And ears of deaf—unstopped. \ Physical
 c | Then lame man—leap. / restoration.
 d | And tongues of dumb—sing. /
- A2 | 6, 7. WATER IN THE WILDERNESS. |
 a | In wilderness—water.
 b | In desert—streams.
 a | Parched ground—pool.
 b | Thirsty land—springs.
 a1 | Habitation of dragons—reeds and rushes.
- B2 | 8. WAY. |
 c | A highway shall be there.
 d | A way.
 c | The way of holiness.
- C2 | 8, 9. NO LION. |
 e | Unclean—not pass over. \
- f | Wayfarer—not err. \ Protection.
 f | No lion—there. /
 e | No ravenous beast—go up thereon. /
- B2 | 9. WALK. |
 c | Redeemed shall walk. \ Spiritual
 d | Songs and everlasting joy. / restoration.
- A3 | 10. SONGS AND EVERLASTING JOY. |
 a | Come—to Zion. \
- b | Songs and everlasting joy. \ Spiritual
 b | Obtain joy and gladness. / deliverance.
 a | Flee—sorrow and sighing. /

In the first two verses of the chapter we find the “glory of Lebanon” and the “excellency of Carmel” balanced by the “glory of the Lord” and the “excellency of our God”. This teaches the important lesson that, at the restoration, the glory and excellency that will be manifested and enjoyed, will be but the reflection of the glory and excellency of the Lord Who has brought His purposes to their glorious goal.

Of all the O.T. books, apart from the Psalms, the prophecy of Isaiah is pre-eminently the book of “glory”. In the very day of Israel’s failure the Seraphim utter their comprehensive cry: “The fullness of all the earth is His glory” (Isa. vi. 3 lit.).

In chapter xi. 10, we read: “His rest shall be glorious (or glory)”, and in chap. lx. 1: “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”

A reference in this sixtieth chapter to “the glory of Lebanon” (verse 13) further illuminates the character of these glories that shall be revealed: they are devoted to the beautifying of the place of the Lord’s sanctuary—or, as verse 13 puts it: “I will make the place of My feet glorious.”

This whole section of Isaiah, that begins with the “glorious beauty” that had become as “a fading flower” (Isa. xxviii. 1), closes with the fulfillment in Isa. xxxv. of the promise of chapter xxviii.:

“In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of His people” (Isa. xxviii. 5).

The word translated “excellency” in Isa. xxxv. 2 is the Hebrew word *hadar*, and this word occurs seven times:

“The *glory* of His majesty” (Isa. ii. 10, 19, 21).

“Their *glory* and their multitude” (Isa. v. 14).

“The *excellency* of Carmel and Sharon” (Isa. xxxv. 2).

“The *excellency* of our God” (Isa. xxxv. 2).

“He hath no form nor *comeliness*” (Isa. liii. 2).

The first three of these occurrences refer to the day of the Lord and of judgment, while the central references deals with Israel’s loss of honour when the people went into captivity (Isa. v. 13, 14). The remaining occurrences are connected with the Lord’s glory and the day of restoration (Isa. xxxv.), and with that wonderful self-denial that led the Lord of glory to become as a root of a “dry ground”, having no form nor “comeliness”, the same word as “excellency”.

When the day of Israel’s glory dawns, it will be true of her, as of every one of the redeemed, that her beauty will be “perfect through My comeliness (excellency, Heb. *hadar*), which I had put upon thee” (Ezek. xvi. 14).

When we bear in mind Isa. xxxv. 5 and 6, we can readily understand why miracles of healing performed upon the blind, the deaf, the dumb and the lame, are called “the powers of the age to come” (Heb. vi. 5), and how “healing” can be synonymous with

“salvation”, as it is in the typical miracle of Acts iv. 12. Israel’s failure was largely associated with their eyes and their ears (Isa. vi. 10), and these at last shall be “opened” and “unstopped”.

“The parched ground” of Isa. xxxv. 7 is translated “glowing sand” by the R.V., with the word “mirage” in the margin. The cruel and delusive mirage is a fit symbol for the glory of the world that passes away, but its fatal attraction shall at length cease, and “the mirage shall become a pool”.

“The habitation of dragons” and the “court” (margin) of Isa. xxxv. 7 are obviously an allusion to the passage in Isa. xxxiv. 13 that speaks of a “habitation of dragons, and a court for owls”. The difference between the two passages is that in one case the thorns and nettles of the context speak of judgment, whereas the “reeds and rushes” of Isa. xxxv. 7 speak of luscious grass and plentiful water.

The first half of Isa. xxxv. is dominated by the figure of the restored wilderness, the second half by the figure of a highway. In this second half we have the words a “highway”, a “way”, “the way of holiness”, “pass over”, “wayfaring man”, “walk”, “return”, and eventually the glorious conclusion, when the ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion. The Hebrew word for “highway” is *maslul*. This masculine form of the word occurs only in Isa. xxxv. 8, every other occurrence being in the feminine (*mesillah*). We can advance no reason for this change in gender, except that it serves to throw the highway of Isa. xxxv. 8 into prominence. The word is derived from *salal*, “to cast up”. A “highway” is a raised, cast up, way, specially built in order that the traveler can return. It is also called “a way” (*derek*), or “trodden path”, so that we may understand that this way is to be used. It is a “common” way for all the redeemed, but it must also be remembered that it is “a way of holiness”, and none but the redeemed can tread this way that leads to Zion. No unclean person or thing shall pass over it.

Apart from Isa. xxxv. 8 there is no other occurrence of the word “unclean” in the first half of Isaiah except that of Isa. vi. 5. Just as the Seraphim anticipate the glory of the Lord, so they symbolize the removal of Israel’s uncleanness; in fact the glory of Isa. xxxv. is largely the fulfillment of the promises and the reversal of the evils found in chapter vi.

There is an element of ambiguity in the A.V. of Isa. xxxv. 8, which is intensified by the marginal alternative: “The unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those (*margin*—‘for he shall be with them’).” Dr. Young’s literal translation, which makes good sense, is as follows: “And He Himself is by them, Whoso is going in the way—even fools err not.” The presence of the Lord is certainly a feature of the day of glory, and Dr. Young’s rendering would seem to be preferable to those already quoted. Once the people of Israel went astray like sheep (Isa. liii. 6), but now all this has passed away in the glory of restoration, and “even fools err not”.

And so we come to the blessed conclusion of verses 9 and 10, a conclusion that anticipates Rev. xxi. 1-4, just as the New Jerusalem anticipates the New Creation (Isa. lxxv. 17-20):

“The redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. xxxv. 9 and 10).

ISAIAH.

#14. The relation of History, Archæology and Prophecy (xxxvi. - xxxix.). pp. 113 - 116

We have now reviewed the three great sections of the opening prophecy of Isaiah:

- (1) THE REMNANT SHALL RETURN (i. - xi.).
- (2) BURDENS AND BLESSINGS (xiii. - xxvii.).
- (3) WOES AND GLORIES (xxviii. - xxxv.).

In chapters xl.-lxvi. there await us three more, and between these two great groups of prophecy is interposed a piece of history, the Assyrian invasion. At first it may seem strange that a piece of history which can be read in II Kings xviii.-xx. should apparently be recapitulated in the heart of a great Messianic prophecy, but an acquaintance with the unfolding of the purpose of the ages will correct this impression and enable us to perceive that what is past history may nevertheless have also a prophetic import. This principle we find very clearly indicated in the book of Daniel.

In Volume XXXI, page 35, we have given the structure of the book of Daniel, as a whole, showing the relation of the historic section to the prophetic.

While many of the references to the Assyrian in Isaiah may refer to Sennacherib, it is evident that some, at least, look beyond this king to the world's last Destroyer, “The Man of Sin”. We learn from Daniel that this world Destroyer shall set his tabernacle “between the seas” (i.e., between the Dead Sea, the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea), “in the glorious holy mountain”, “yet”, adds Daniel, “he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” (Dan. xi. 45). So, when we read in Isa. xiv. 25, “I will break the Assyrian in My land, and upon My mountains tread him under foot”, we are reading of the prophetic future, of which the destruction of the host of Sennacherib was an historic type. Moreover, Isa. xiv. 26 continues: “This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth; and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations.”

From an examination of Isa. xxxvi. we gather that Rabshakeh's weapon is his tongue. Daniel reveals that the Man of Sin will have

“A mouth speaking great things” (Dan. vii. 8).

“Because of the voice of the great words which the Horn spake, I beheld even till the Beast was slain” (Dan. vii. 11).

“And he shall speak great words against the Most High” (Dan. vii. 25).

“He shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods” (Dan. xi. 36).

John also informs us similarly:

“There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies” (Rev. xiii. 5).

Paul reveals that this Beast should exalt himself above all that is called God or worshipped, and Rabshakeh asks:

“Hath any of the *gods of the nations* delivered his land out of the hand of the King of Assyria?” (Isa. xxxvi. 18).

Further, we learn that Sennacherib’s projected attack upon Jerusalem was diverted by a rumour:

“He heard say concerning Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, He is come forth to make war with thee” (Isa. xxxvii. 9).

So also of the last Assyrian it is written:

“But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him, and he shall go forth in great fury to destroy” (Dan. xi. 44).

The destruction of the Assyrian host by night, by the Angel of the Lord, foreshadowed the day when the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming,

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders” (II Thess. ii. 9).

The reader will see how a knowledge of the times of Sennacherib illuminates much that belongs both to past Biblical history, and to future prophecy. We therefore devote the remainder of our available space to a resumé of the testimony of antiquity to the life and times of this great type of the Man of Sin.

The archæological resurrection of Nineveh and its kings reads like a romance, but as we cannot here traverse the fascinating history, we must be content to establish the historic accuracy of the Scripture references to Sennacherib. In the mind of students the name of Layard will always be associated with the recovery of the palace and records of Sennacherib. Layard turned his attention to the mounds of Kuyunjik, which were opposite Mosul. Here were unearthed the famous winged, human-headed bulls, with which visitors to the British Museum are familiar. A palace, paneled with sculptures slabs, was also excavated. This building had evidently been destroyed by fire, but, while many of the slabs had been reduced almost to lime, a sufficient number of them were found to be in a state of preservation good enough to bring Sennacherib and his times vividly before the mind.

One bas-relief, of great importance to us at the moment, represents Sennacherib, not in Assyria, but at Lachish, where the Scripture tells us Sennacherib was at the time referred to in Isa. xxxvii. 8 and II Kings xviii. 17. This important slab can be seen in the Assyrian Saloon of the British Museum. The King is represented as seated on a throne, outside the city, in a setting of vines and fig trees. Officers and prisoners stand or kneel before him.

No such exact description can be penned of, say, Alfred the Great, or even of William the Conqueror, but Sennacherib is made to live before our eyes. His name, as it appears on his own monuments, agrees with the Hebrew spelling, *Sin-akhi-erib*. Sennacherib's third campaign after ascending the throne was against "the land of Hatti", which included Judaea. Sidon, Tyre, and Cyprus, "which is in the middle of the sea", are mentioned. After a lengthy enumeration of towns subdued by him, whose rulers, as Sennacherib records, "kissed his feet", we come to a mention of Zedekiah: "And Zedekiah (*Sidga*), king of the city of Askelon (*Isgalluna*), who was not submissive to my yoke I removed"

After seeing how Sennacherib then swept along the sea coast, overthrowing the strongholds of the Philistines, we come to the first reference to Hezekiah:

"The prefects, the princes, and the people of Ekron, who had thrown Padi their king, who was faithful to the agreement and oath of the land of Assur, into fetters of iron, and given him to Hezekia (*Haziqiau*) of the land of the Jews (*Yaudaa*) I caused Padi, their king, to come forth from the midst of Jerusalem (*Urusalimmu*) as for Hezekiah of the land of the Jews, who had not submitted to my yoke, forty-six strong cities, fortresses and small towns which were around them, which were innumerable, with overthrowing by battering rams, and advance of towers, infantry attack, breaching, cutting and earthworks I besieged and captured as for him, like a cage-bird I shut him up within Jerusalem, the city of his dominion with thirty talents of gold, eight hundred talents of silver caused to be brought after me to the midst of Nineveh" (*Dr. Pinches' translation*).

Be it noticed, Sennacherib says nothing of capturing the city, or of entering it, yet the Scriptures, silent regarding a regular siege, say that, "The king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rab-shakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem" (II Kings xviii. 17). Why, after receiving the tribute from Hezekiah, did Sennacherib suddenly turn on him in an endeavour to blot out the kingdom of Judah, as his father Sargon had blotted out the ten tribes? While the Scriptures do not give a formal answer to the question, their historical account of the times contain the explanation:

"Hezekiah strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance" (II Chron. xxxii. 2-5).

This act of Hezekiah's looked like preparation for a fresh rebellion, and Sennacherib himself tells us that this was the cause of his assault on Jerusalem: "Siege towns I

constructed, for he had given command to renew the bulwarks of the great gate of his city.”

From the Assyrian inscription we learn that the amount of the tribute sent was 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, but while in the scriptural record we also read of 30 talents of gold, the amount of silver is stated to have been only 300 talents. Learned commentators have exhibited a good deal of misplaced ingenuity in their attempts to deal with this apparent discrepancy, yet it turns out that *both* records are correct. Mr. Basil T. A. Evetts, formerly of the Assyrian Department of the British Museum, says:

“The amount of the tribute in the two accounts the Palestinian talent of silver was *exactly eight-thirds of the Babylonian*: the talent of gold, on the other hand, was the same in both countries.”

We learn from II Kings xviii. 17 that

“The king of Assyria sent Tartan and Rabsaris and Rabshakeh from Lachish to King Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem.”

These titles can be identified in the inscription of the monuments, and the O.T. record is seen to be true in every minute particular. There is no difficulty in the title “Tartan”, which is easily identified as the *Turtanu* of the inscriptions, the meaning of which is “Commander-in-Chief”. The titles Rabsaris and Rabshakeh, however, have been the subject of conjecture and criticism. Jewish commentators regarded the words as being Hebrew, translating them, “Chief of the Eunuchs” and “Chief Cup-bearer”, but these speculations have been entirely discredited, for *Rab-shakeh* has now been discovered to be an old Sumerian word, found in the Assyrian inscriptions as *Rab-sa-rish*, “Chief of the Captains”. It is found in an inscription of Tiglath-pileser II, as the title of a trusted statesman whom that monarch sent to Tyre on a mission similar to that indicated in II Kings xviii.: “My officer, the Rabsak, I dispatched to Tyre.”

We have seen that the old Sumerian *Rab-sa-rish* appears in Assyrian as *Rabshak*, and some reader may have jumped to the conclusion that here we have also the *Rabsaris* of II Kings xviii. 17. This has not escaped the eye of the critics, but such jumping to conclusions has once again proved to be wrong; the facts showing the Scriptures to be right. Dr. Winkler and his followers were not slow in attributing to the Scriptures “a blunder”, whereas the blunder was their own, for the *Rabsaris* which they said was not on the monuments was there all the time. A brick in the British Museum gives an Aramaean translation of an Assyrian inscription, and reads: “In the eponymy of the *Rabsaris*, Nabusarusar.” As this date is the last year of Sennacherib’s reign, there is every probability that we have the name of the official who stood before the walls of Jerusalem with Rabshakeh. Dr. Pinches has since discovered that *Rab-sa-rasu* is “Chief of the Heads”.

ISAIAH.

#15. Sennacherib's Threat and his Destruction

(xxxvi. - xxxvii.).

pp. 154 - 158

Having seen how fully the scriptural record of Sennacherib's invasion is subserved by archaeology, we now turn to the more important side of attempting to discover the teaching that is embedded in that record. One of the first things we must do is to endeavour to get an idea of the passage as a whole. We note that the Companion Bible sorts the subject-matter out under the sub-heading of three "kings",

xxxvi.1 - xxxvii. 13	THE KING OF ASSYRIA.
xxxviii. 1	THE KING OF TERRORS.
xxxix. 1	THE KING OF BABYLON.

If "kings" are to form the nucleus of this structure, then some are omitted, for the "kings" of Judah, of Egypt, of Ethiopia, of Hamath, and of Arphad, are also named in the passage. We have therefore omissions from the structure, and also the intrusion of the name "The King of Terrors". While it is true that Hezekiah was "sick unto death", the title "The King of Terrors" is not found here but in Job xviii. 14, and found, too, in the argument of Bildad the Shuhite, whose reasoning concerning Job and Job's "wickedness" was fallacious. We feel obliged to omit this title, therefore, which leaves the structure of our passage still unascertained, for we have made it a rule never to import into a passage words that belong elsewhere. In doing so we nevertheless gladly record that we have nothing but admiration for the colossal pioneer work exhibited in The Companion Bible. Indeed, we but follow the spirit that actuated its author. It is, however, beyond the limits of our space, the purpose of these studies, and the usefulness of these articles to the reader, to provide a structure that will account for every detail. While our aim is the truth, our ability may never permit us to display all that there is of the truth, and we are therefore limited to making selections. Here again, under God, the human element is present. Who is to select? Who will guarantee the accuracy of the selection? With great diffidence, therefore, we submit the following very simply outline, believing that upon these selected recurring words the whole story of Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix. may be based.

We observe in the opening of the narrative that while Sennacherib is mentioned, it is Rabshakeh who is prominent, "The king of Assyria *sent Rabshakeh*" (Isa. xxxvi. 2). Moreover, we observe that in the sequel, where Hezekiah fails, it is connected with another embassy. "The king of Babylon *sent* letters and a present" (Isa. xxxix. 1). In these two passages the word used in the original is the same, namely *shalach*. It occurs eight times in this section and punctuates the record as follows:--

Isaiah xxxvi. - xxxix.
Shalach: Hebrew word, “To send”.

- A | a | xxxvi. 2. Embassy from king of Assyria.
 b | xxxvi. 17. “Until I come to take you away to a land like your own.”
- B | c | xxxvii. 2. To Isaiah from Hezekiah.
 d | xxxvii. 4. Reproach the living God.
- C | xxxvii. 9. Messenger sent from Sennacherib,
 suggesting trust in God to be vain.
- B | d | xxxvii. 17. Reproach the living God.
 c | xxxvii. 21. To Isaiah from Hezekiah.
- A | a | xxxix. 1. Embassy from king of Babylon.
 b | xxxix. 6, 7. “Thy sons shall they take away.”

The opening embassy, with its threats and its plausible suggestion of “an agreement by a present” (Isa. xxxvi. 16), failed. The closing embassy, with its letter and present, succeeded. The idea that Hezekiah should tamely submit to allow himself and his people to be “taken away” is treated with righteous scorn: “Answer him not” (xxxvi. 21). Yet, when the messengers come from the king of Babylon with letters and a present, and without sword or spear, Hezekiah succumbs, and the very thing unsuccessfully threatened by the Assyrian is accomplished by the Babylonian, “Thy sons . . . shall they take away” (Isa. xxxix. 6, 7).

However meager therefore this outline may appear, the great lesson is enforced; a lesson pertinent for all times and peoples. Today, we too may successfully resist spiritual *attack* only to succumb to spiritual *flattery*. We too have our spiritual adversaries, the Assyrian, Babylon and Rabshakeh, and need protection from “the wiles of the Devil”.

Let us now make ourselves acquainted with some of the material that is linked together by this outline.

Rabshakeh’s Speech.

First, Rabshakeh touches a weak spot in Judah’s defence: “What confidence is this wherein thou trusteth?” (Isa. xxxvi. 4). Isaiah himself had pronounced a “woe” on those that “strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and trust in the shadow of Egypt” (Isa. xxx. 2). Rabshakeh knew, of course, that the king of Judah had turned to Egypt for help, and his scoffing words must have cut deeply: “Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt” (Isa. xxxvi. 6). But he had heard also of the reform which Hezekiah had accomplished, and sought therefore to make capital of the fears of the half-hearted, saying, “But if thou say to me, We trust in the Lord our God; is it not He Whose high places and altars Hezekiah hath taken away?”

With all his worldly wisdom Rabshakeh here manifested himself to be utterly ignorant of the true situation. Hezekiah had entered into the spiritual nature of the worship of God, whereas, to Rabshakeh, the God of Hezekiah was but one of many gods, all of which had failed their respective worshippers:

“Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad?” (Isa. xxxvi. 18, 19).

To all this, the king’s instruction was “Answer him not”.

We turn from the spectacle of Rabshakeh strutting before the walls of Jerusalem, already confident that the city would fall an easy prey to Hezekiah within its walls, “shut up like a bird in a cage”, distressed by the reproach leveled at the name of the living God. Hezekiah makes much of the fact that Rabshakeh had blasphemed God, and little of his own distress and that of his people. In other words, he “sought first the kingdom of God”. The Lord sent a message through Isaiah the prophet, saying:

“Thus shall ye say unto your master, Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed ME. Behold I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land” (Isa. xxxvii. 6, 7).

From this it would appear that Rabshakeh received some inkling of Isaiah’s encouraging prophecy, for the remainder of Isa. xxxvii. is taken up with the fact that the rumour caused Sennacherib uneasiness, that he suddenly returned without delivering a blow at Jerusalem, and was ultimately put to death in his own land. Rabshakeh makes an immediate move to counteract the effect of this fulfillment of Isaiah’s words. He heard that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, threatened war, and immediately sent further messengers to Hezekiah, saying:

“Let not thy God in Whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria” (Isa. xxxvii. 10).

Once more, Hezekiah’s reply was to turn to the Lord, and in his prayer he makes it manifest, that to himself, at least, the God of Judah was no mere tribal deity.

“O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, That dwellest between the Cherubim, Thou are the God, even Thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: Thou hast made heaven and earth Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all kingdoms of the earth may know that Thou are the Lord, even Thou only” (Isa. xxxvii. 14-20).

To this noble and unselfish prayer the Lord sent the encouraging answer of Isa. xxxvii. 22-35. Addressing the Assyrian, the Lord said:--

“Because thy rage against Me, and thy tumult, is come up into Mine ears, therefore will I put My hook in thy nose, and My bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way which thou camest” (Isa. xxxvii. 29).

A sign is then given to confirm the faith of the people. Invasion goes hand in hand with devastation, the ordinary procedure of agriculture being entirely upset, yet for two years there should be sufficient food provided by that which “groweth of itself” and which “springeth of the same”. In the third year sowing and reaping could once more be undertaken.

Reverting to the threatened siege of Jerusalem the prophet continues:--

“He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a back against it For I will defend (Heb. shield*) this city to save it for Mine Own sake, and for My servant David’s sake” (Isa. xxxvii. 33-35).

[NOTE: * - See the series “*The Eternal God is thy Refuge*”.]

How “the angel of the Lord” smote the camp of the Assyrian, and what, or who, actually constituted the “messenger” thus indicated, we do not know. Some say a plague was spread among the camp by hosts of mice (deriving some support for the idea from an Egyptian inscription), but this is mere speculation. “He maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire.” All things subserve His purposes. An east wind brought Israel a supply of food in the wilderness (Psa. lxxviii. 26) even as the Lord used a strong east wind to open a way for them through the Red Sea (Exod. xiv. 21). Miracles are no less miraculous because, in the execution of them, natural agents are used.

“Then the angel of the Lord went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses” (Isa. xxxvii. 36).

So was Hezekiah delivered, and, as history and prophecy are intimately blended together in this book, so we see here a forecast of the day when the last great Blasphemer and Oppressor shall be “broken without hand”. There can be little in common between “Byron” and “Berean”, yet few can read unmoved the poet’s description of the destruction of Sennacherib.

“The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold:
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.
Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown,
For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed on the face of the foe as he pass’d.

* * * * *

And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!”

--(*Lord Byron*).

ISAIAH.

#16. Hezekiah's testing under favour and flattery (xxxviii. - xxxix.). pp. 193 - 198

Judged by their own annals and the illustrations left to us, there could be nothing much more to be dreaded than an attack by the Assyrians, yet, as chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. succeed chapters xxxvi. and xxxvii., we become conscious that there are spiritual forces of which these earthly and visible foes are but shadows.

Hezekiah, having been delivered from the threatenings of Sennacherib, faces the threat of death by sickness, and, being spared, is laid open to the insidious approach of Babylon by flattery, only to succumb.

“In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live” (Isa. xxxviii. 1).

Some have found a difficulty in the fact that Isaiah's prediction that Hezekiah should die was not fulfilled. But we must learn to distinguish between prophecy uttered as a prediction of future events, and prophecy uttered as a warning and addressed to an individual, or a people, on some particular occasion. Of the latter, Jonah's utterance against Nineveh was an example: “Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” Yet, on repentance, Nineveh was spared.

Jeremiah makes an explicit statement regarding the principle that underlies the apparent discrepancy.

“At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it. If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them” (Jer. xviii. 7, 8).

From this it is clear that the words of Isaiah, though apparently unconditional, were not so, and that the deciding factor would be Hezekiah's response and attitude.

It is just here that the special purpose of the books of the Chronicles can be discerned. In both the record of Isa. xxxviii. and the parallel passage in II Kings xix. and xx., there is no word dropped as to the state of Hezekiah's heart before the Lord. If we had only the external history we might be at a loss to explain several things. For example, we learn from II Kings xviii. 15, 16 that

“Hezekiah gave him all the silver that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of the Lord, and from the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.”

Both the Temple and the king's treasure were therefore depleted, yet when the emissaries of the king of Babylon arrived with congratulations at Hezekiah's recovery:

"He showed them the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures; there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not" (Isa. xxxix. 2).

Where did this wealth come from? The answer is supplied from II Chronicles:

"Thus the Lord saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib And many brought gifts unto the Lord to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah, king of Judah, so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from henceforth. *In those days* Hezekiah was sick to the death, and prayed unto the Lord: and He spake unto him, and He gave him a sign. BUT Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, FOR HIS HEART WAS LIFTED UP: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of the Lord came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. And Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honour; and he made himself treasures for silver, and for gold, and for precious stones, and for spices, and for shields, and for all manner of pleasant jewels And Hezekiah prospered in all his works. HOWBEIT in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to enquire of the wonder that was done in the land, GOD LEFT HIM, to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart" (II Chron. xxxii. 22-31).

Here is the Divine comment; humbling in its illumination, not only of the recesses of the heart of Hezekiah, but of our own.

Hezekiah was, at this time, without a son, so that there was no heir to the throne of David. This would intensify his grief on receiving Isaiah's communication that he should "die and not live". It is therefore with purpose, that in the message of hope and restoration sent to the sick king, the Lord is called "The God of David thy father". Hezekiah was granted another fifteen years of life, and as his son Manasseh was twelve years old at his father's death, he must have been born three years after the sign and promise had been given to Hezekiah. The sign was:

"Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sundial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward" (Isa. xxxviii. 8).

In the record of II Kings we find that the original sign promised by the Lord was that the shadow should move *forward*, but Hezekiah, conscious of the growing shadow over his own life, and the relentlessness of the *forward* moving shadow, cried,

"It is a light thing for the shadow to *go down* ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow *return backward* ten degrees" (II Kings xx. 10).

As is natural, various explanations of this miracle have been suggested, as that the earth may have been made to reverse its revolution; or the sun have been move in the firmament. But such solutions are contrary both to common sense and the teaching of the

Scriptures. The Babylonians were noted for their astronomical observations and calculations and, had such a mighty thing happened, Babylon and the whole world would have been aware of the miracle of the ten degrees. We are distinctly told, however, that the embassy from Babylon referred to the sign of the sundial as, “The wonder that was done in the land” (II Chron. xxxii. 31). *How* the Lord made the shadow go back we do not know, but that He did so, without upsetting the solar system, we are perfectly sure.

At the conclusion of Isa. xxxviii. we read:

“The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord” (Isa. xxxviii. 20).

More than 250 years ago Dr. John Lightfoot suggested that there might be a reference, here to those Psalms which are called “The Songs of the Degrees”, but it was left for Dr. J. W. Thirtle, in our own day, to bring this truth to light. “The Songs of Degrees” are fifteen in number, corresponding with the fifteen years of life granted to Hezekiah. They are Psalms cxx.-cxxxiv. Hezekiah’s name does not occur in them, and four are said to have been written by David and one by Solomon. From this it would appear that Hezekiah wrote some and adopted others that fitted his case, calling the whole group of fifteen “My songs”.

The Companion Bible devotes an appendix (No.67) to these Songs of the Degrees, and we here acknowledge our indebtedness to that great work. We tabulate therefrom eleven out of the fifteen items:

- (i.) RAB-SHAKEH’S BLASPHEMOUS TONGUE.—Referred to in Psa. cxx. 2, 3 and cxxiii. 3, 4.
- (ii.) SENNACHERIB’S REPROACHES.—Practically quoted Psa. cxxix. 5-7.
- (iii.) SENNACHERIB’S SHAME.—Referred to in Psa. cxxix. 4, 5.
- (iv.) HEZEKIAH’S EARNEST PRAYER.—Finds more than an echo in Psa. cxx. 1; cxxiii. 1-3 and cxxx. 1, 2.
- (v.) GOD, “THE MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH”.—See Psa. cxxi. 1, 2; cxxiv. 8 and cxxxiv. 3.
- (vii.) JEHOVAH’S PROMISED HELP.—Psa. cxxi. 2-8; cxxiv. 1-3, 6; cxxv. 2.
- (viii.) “FOR MY SERVANT DAVID’S SAKE.”—Psa. cxxxii. 1-10 and cxxvii. 3-5.
- (x.) HEZEKIAH’S TRUST IN JEHOVAH.—Psa. cxxi. 2; cxxv. 1-3; cxxxv. 5-8.
- (xi.) HEZEKIAH LIKE A BIRD IN A CAGE.—Psa. cxxiv. 7; Hezekiah re-lived David’s experience.
- (xiii.) HEZEKIAH’S ZEAL FOR “THE HOUSE OF JEHOVAH”.—cf. II Chron. xxix. 3 with Psa. cxxii. 1, 9.
- (xv.) THE PASSOVER FOR “ALL ISRAEL”.—Read Psa. cxxxiii. in the light of II Chron. xxx. 12.

Among the public benefactions recorded of Hezekiah must be noted that which is mentioned in II Chron. xxxii. 30:

“This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper watercourse of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David.”

A more extended reference to this act is found in II Chron. xxxii. 1-4, which associates the work with the threatened siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib.

Wellhausen, the “Father of Higher Criticism”, ridiculed the attempt to construe these notices as authentic history, but the excavator’s spade has dug the grave for his criticism. Referring to this work of Hezekiah, we have several interesting items which can best be described in the archaeologist’s own words on the work which was done on the East side of the city. W. F. Birch says:--

“Sir Charles Warren discovered one entrance to three staircases, a little north of the well, one of them leading to a semi-natural cistern in the rock, where a natural cleft was also visible at the bottom of the wall a hole or duct was left six and three-eighths by four inches, and on the northern side a stone plug to fit, and twelve inches long, was found in it. Why? Here is THE VERY PLUG Hezekiah put in when Sennacherib invaded Judah.”

When the 1,800 feet long aqueduct from the cistern was brought down the Kidron, the brook was stopped and buried forty or fifty feet out of sight, beyond the hearing or discovery of the Assyrians. By a providential accident, an inscription in ancient Hebrew was found in the wall of rock about nineteen feet from the place where the subterranean conduit opens out of the Pool of Siloam. The inscription is as follows:--

Translation of the Siloam Inscription.

- Line 1.—(Behold) the excavation. Now this is the history of the breaking through.
While the workmen were still lifting up
- Line 2.—the pickaxe, each toward his neighbour, and while three cubits still remained to
(cut through, each heard) the voice of the other calling
- Line 3.—to his neighbour, for there was an excess (or cleft) in the rock on the right
And on the day of the
- Line 4.—breaking through, the excavators struck, each to meet the other, pickaxe against
pickaxe; and there flowed
- Line 5.—the waters from the spring to the pool over (a space of) one thousand and two
hundred cubits. And
- Line 6.—of a cubit was the height of the rock above the heads of the excavators.

Such was one of Hezekiah’s works of which he might naturally have felt proud. Man is a mixture. Even the N.T. saint is the possessor of two natures, and the record of Hezekiah’s is a warning to us all. II Chron. xxxii. 32 speaks of Hezekiah’s “goodness”, and the same chapter speaks of his pride and his ingratitude (verses 25, 26). There is no contradiction here: all who have experienced the grace of God will know how true this is to life. The redeeming feature, the synthetizing element, which brings concord and makes “pride of heart” and “goodness” possible in the same person is found in verse 26: “Notwithstanding, Hezekiah *humbled* himself for the pride of his heart.” In this he

followed the footsteps of his father David, a man who sinned grievously, yet who was nevertheless “A man after God’s Own heart”.

With these notes we must bring to a close the study of this intensely interesting history, and look forward to our further studies together in the glorious prophecies which open with the words, “Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people”.

ISAIAH.

#17. An introductory study of Isa. xl. - lxvi., with a note on the prophetic import of the opening message of “Comfort”. pp. 222 - 227

We have now reached the great prophetic portion of Isaiah’s prophecy which speaks “to the heart” of Jerusalem and looks forward to the day when “the kingdom” shall be “restored again to Israel” (Acts i. 6). The reader may welcome a reminder of the structure of this prophecy, and accordingly once again we set out the seven great heads, omitting detail. The full structure is given on page 43 of Volume XXX.

- A | PRE-ASSYRIAN INVASION (i.-xxxv.).
 - a | i.-xii. THE REMNANT SHALL RETURN.
 - b | xiii.-xxvii. BURDENS AND BLESSINGS.
 - c | xxviii.-xxxv. WOES AND GLORIES.
- B | ASSYRIAN INVASION AND DELIVERANCE (xxxvi.-xxxix.).
- A | POST-ASSYRIAN INVASION (xl.-lxvi.).
 - a | xl.-xlviii. COMFORT AND CONTROVERSY.
 - b | xlix.-lx. LIGHT AND PEACE.
 - c | lxi.-lxvi. ACCEPTABLE YEAR AND DAY OF VENGEANCE.

At this point we are concerned with the last great member:--

A | Isa. xl. - lxvi.

It will be seen that the sub-titles are not only “Comfort”, “Light”, and “Acceptable Year”; (that would be but half the truth, and false to fact), but that “Comfort” is not divorced from “Controversy”, “Light” is associated with “Peace”, and “The Acceptable Year of the Lord” cannot be fully appreciated or understood if separated from the concomitant “Day of Vengeance of our God”. Throughout this prophecy, as throughout the Bible, or throughout any and every single one of its books, sin is in the background, and the unfolding of the Divine plan of the ages shows that plan to be occupied with the *righteous* removal of sin. This characteristic unites every book of Scripture, and every phase of the Divine purpose.

The prophet does not speak “comfortably” to Jerusalem in words of sentiment or mere pacification, but distinctly associates that part of his message with the results of redeeming love when he says, “Her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins” (Isa. xl. 2). This close association we shall discover throughout the chapters that await us, so we leave the examination of such terms until we meet them in the progress of exposition, when we can acquaint ourselves more intimately with the subject-matter as it comes before us. The section which occupies Isa. xl.-xlviii., which we have entitled “Comfort and Controversy”, is, like every other section of Isaiah, sevenfold.

**A / a | Isaiah xl. - xlviii.
Comfort and Controversy.**

<i>a</i>	xl.-xlviii. COMFORT AND CONTROVERSY.	
	(1) xl. 1-11.	Good tidings to Zion.
	(2) xl. 12 - xlii. 17.	My Servant (Israel and Messiah).
	(3) xlii. 18 - xlv. 15.	My Witnesses (Israel).
	(4) xlv. 16-25.	God and none else.
	(5) xlvi.	Israel My Glory.
	(6) xlvii.	Babylon said, “I am and none else”.
	(7) xlviii.	His servant Jacob, redeemed.

Our subject, therefore, for the present study is Isa. xl. 1-11, “Good tidings to Zion”.

Before we can proceed to the structural analysis of these verses there is one item that must be settled. In verse 9 we read:--

“O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem *that bringest good tidings*, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!” (Isa. xl. 9, A.V.).

“O thou *that tellest good tidings* to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou *that tellest good tidings* to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!” (Isa. xl. 9, R.V.).

As an alternative, the A.V. places in the margin, the rendering subsequently adopted by the R.V., while contrariwise the R.V. places in the margin the translation found in the A.V. It is evident, therefore, that the passage is one of considerable ambiguity, and where so many authorities differ it would be temerity on our part to assume anything like finality in coming to a judgment.

Among those who favour the A.V. rendering are Aquila, Theodoret, Symmachus, Calvin, Vitranga, Ewald, Umbreit, Drechsler, and Stier. Among those who favour the R.V. rendering may be enumerated the LXX, Chaldee, Vulgate, Grotius, Lowth, Gesenius, Hitzig, Maurer, Knobel, Henderson and the Companion Bible. The balance, if anything, is in favour of the R.V. But the reader may find counterbalancing arguments from Young’s Literal Translation or Rotherham’s Version, and this balance and counterbalance of opinion might be pursued indefinitely, leaving us still in a state of indecision. There is, however, one appeal that we can make, and that is to an obviously

parallel passage where none of the great Versions allow of the existence of ambiguity. Such a passage is Isa. lxii. 10, 11:--

“Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people. Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy Salvation cometh; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him” (Isa. lxii. 10, 11).

We observe the parallels:--

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord.”
“Prepare ye the way of the people.”
“Make straight a highway for our God.”
“Cast up the highway.”
“The crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain.”
“Gather out the stones.”
“Lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up.”
“Lift up a standard for the people.”
“Say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God will come.”
“Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy Salvation cometh.”
“His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.”
“His reward is with Him, and His work before Him.”

In the near context of Isa. lxii. is a parallel with Isa. xl. 2:--

“She hath received of the Lord’s hand double for all her sins” (Isa. xl. 2).
“For your shame ye shall have double therefore in their land they shall possess the double” (Isa. lxi. 7).

There is much in these parallels to lead us to conclude that the passage we are considering, namely Isa. xl. 9, 10, is a proclamation of good tidings “*to Zion*”, as the R.V. indicates, rather than one made “*by Zion*”, as the A.V. gives it, and so far as we are concerned, this parallel passage decides the matter for us.

We now turn our attention to the structure of the passage as a whole.

Isaiah xl. 1-11.

A | 1, 2. Message of comfort to Jerusalem. Pardon.
B | 3-5. The VOICE. The Forerunner.
 “A highway for our God.”
 The mouth of the Lord hath spoken.
B | 6-8. The VOICE. The Prophet.
 “The Word of our God.”
 The word of our God shall stand for ever.
A | 9-11. Good tidings to Zion. Protection.

“Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God” (Isa. xl. 1).

It is with such words that the glorious prophecy of restoration opens. The first chapter saw Israel in a condition in which neither bandage nor ointment were of use. Nothing but desolation and distress awaited this disobedient and gainsaying people. When the “Voice” is first heard (Isa. vi. 8) it is to commission the prophet to utter such words of desolation that he could only wailingly cry, “Lord, how long?” Yet, the reader will remember, that, with all its woe, the chapter does not conclude without a prophecy of “return” and “revival”. And now, with the opening of Isa. xl., that blessed day of restoration dominates the prophetic vision. We shall at times descend into the valley of human frailty, rebellion and sin; we shall never be allowed to forget that restoration is by grace and not by law or works, but the true light has at length broken through the clouds, and nothing can dim its lustre, or, for long, keep back the prophet’s pæen of triumph.

While no better English word than “Comfort” can be found appropriately to translate the Hebrew word *nacham*, with which this prophecy opens, the word contains more than can be known by a superficial acquaintance with it. When we consider that *nacham*, here translated “comfort”, is elsewhere 41 times translated “repent”, it is evident that the original has a fuller meaning than is generally understood by the English word “comfort”.

The first occurrences of the word in Scripture are suggestive. They are found in Gen. v. and vi., in reference to the flood, and there we meet with the two conceptions “comfort” and “repent”. The parents of Noah so named their son because, said they, “This same shall *comfort* us” (Gen. v. 29). That Noah did not afford his parents individual and personal exemption “from the toil of their hands because of the ground that the Lord hath cursed” is evident, for Noah did not accomplish the purport of his name until he was 600 years old. No, the “comfort” was theirs by prophetic anticipation. In the account in Gen. vi., when the flood was about to come on the earth, the self-same word occurs, this time translated “repent”: “It repented the Lord that He had made man” (Gen. vi. 6). The word has its basis in the idea of the intaking of the breath, and is used as a symbol of grief, pity, vengeance or comfort, according to circumstances.

“I will *ease* Me of Mine adversaries” (Isa. i. 24).

“Thy brother Esau . . . doth *comfort* himself purposing to kill thee” (Gen. xxvii. 42).

While *nacham* occurs but three times in the first part of Isaiah, it occurs fourteen times in the second. These latter occurrences are near the very heart of this great prophecy of restoration, and we must see them together.

**The 13 occurrences of “Nacham”, (*)
that pertain to the restoration of Israel, in Isa. xl. - lxvi.**

- A | xl. 1. | Comfort ye, comfort ye My people.
The Lord God will come.
All flesh shall see salvation.
All flesh is as grass.
- B | xlix. 13. | Sing the Lord hath comforted His people.
In an acceptable time have I heard thee.
Say to prisoners go forth.
- C | li. 3. | The Lord shall comfort Zion.
Look unto Abraham.
He will make the wilderness like Eden.
- D | li. 11, 12. “Sing.” “Joy.”
E | lii. 19. “By whom shall I comfort thee?”
D | lii. 9. “Joy.” “Sing.”
- C | liv. 11. | O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted.
The waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth.
- B | lxi. 2. | Preach good tidings comfort all that mourn.
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.
The opening of the prison to them that are bound.
- A | lxvi. 13. | As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you,
and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.
The Lord will come with fire.
All flesh. The Lord shall plead with sword.
All flesh shall come and worship.
All flesh shall abhor the transgressor.

(*) **Corrected according to Volume XXXIII, page 20.**

Old structure based on Volume XXXII, page 226.

- C | li. 3. | The Lord shall comfort Zion.
Look unto Abraham.
He will make the wilderness like Eden.
- D | li. 19. By whom shall I comfort thee? *Question.*
E | lii. 9. The Lord hath comforted His people.
How beautiful him that bringeth good tidings,
That saith *Thy God reigneth.*
- C | liv. 11. | O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted.
The waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth.
D | lvii. 6. Should I receive comfort in these? *Question.*

Green (Volume XXXII) has been changed to **Red** (Volume XXXIII).

Even a superficial observer can hardly fail to see that these occurrences are joined together as links in a chain, and the earnest student who uses these notes in the right spirit, and is dissatisfied with a casual survey, will see the great desirability of a scrutiny of the passages and their contexts in order that the import of the opening cry of Isa. xl. 1 may be gathered up at something like its true worth.

What this “comfort” implies, how far it is possible of attainment, what place human agency has in it, and many other features, must await our next article. Meanwhile let us rejoice that there is room for such a word in the purpose of the ages, and that even though the Church of the Body of Christ be far removed in sphere from the kingdom of Israel, yet are they all one in their need of forgiveness and in being met in wondrous grace.

The intent reader will find a field of interest in the study of the rather obscure prophecy of Nahum. As may be surmised, *Nahum* is *nacham*, “comfort”. The prophet deals with Nineveh (*see* Isa. xxxvii. 37), quotes Isaiah (Nahum i. 15), asks “Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?” (Nahum iii. 7), and shows by the figure that uses “wounds” and “bruises” (Nahum iii. 19), that Assyria was like Israel (Isa. i. 6) except that God remembered His covenant and redeemed Israel, whereas no such “comfort” is ministered to Nineveh. However, the matter is somewhat obtruse, and its explication would occupy more space than is at our disposal.

The Gospel of JOHN.

#16. The Marriage at Cana (ii. 1 - 12).

The First of the Eight Signs

pp. 6 - 12

Having given our attention to the successive witnesses that are brought forward by John in substantiation of the great truth unfolded in the prologue (i. 1-18), we arrive at the body of the Gospel, extending from chapter ii. 1 to chapter xxi. 14, and with the opening of chapter ii. we come to the first of the eight signs that are so distinctive a characteristic of the Gospel. We have already given the outline structure of this great section in Volume XXIX, page 127, and have shown how these eight signs form as it were the backbone of the book.

We must now acquaint ourselves with another remarkable feature, which has been dealt with very fully in Appendix 176 of the Companion Bible. As it takes at least two pages of type to set out in full the inter-relationship of these eight signs, we shall adopt the briefer method of setting out the grouping in skeleton only, and then, as our studies proceed, lift out each pair of signs and show their balance *in extenso*.

THE EIGHT SIGNS OF JOHN'S GOSPEL.

- A | ii. 1-12. THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.
The third day. No wine. Glory manifested.
- B | iv. 43-52. THE NOBLEMAN'S SON.
After two days. At the point of death.
- C | v. 1-17. THE IMPOTENT MAN.
Pool Bethesda. 38 years. Sabbath. Sin.
- D | vi. 1-14. FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.
The only sign (with *D*) recorded in the other Gospels.
- D | vi. 15-21. WALKING ON THE SEA.
The only sign (with *D*) recorded in the other Gospels.
- C | ix. 1-41. THE MAN BORN BLIND.
Pool. From birth. Sabbath. Sin.
- B | xi. 1-46. THE SISTERS' BROTHER.
Two days. Lazarus is dead.
- A | xxi. 1-14. THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.
The third time. No meat. Lord manifested.

We now lift out the first and eighth signs, in order to show their complete parallelism.

- A | ii. 1-11. THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.
- a | i. 49-51. THE BACKGROUND.—Nathaniel’s diffidence, then full confession.
- b | ii. 1. THE PLACE.—Galilee.
- c | 1. TIME.—The third day.
- d | 2. INVITATION.—Jesus called, and His disciples.
- e | 3. FAILURE CONFESSED.—They have no wine.
- f | 6. NUMBERS.—Six waterpots. Two or three firkins.
- g | 7. COMMAND.—Fill the waterpots with water.
- h | 7. OBEDIENCE.—They filled them.
- i | 7. WATERPOTS FILLED.—Up to the brim.
- j | 8. THE SERVANTS.—The servants bare (*enenkan*).
- k | 11. RESULT.—Glory manifested (*ephanerose*).
- A | xxi. 1-14. THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.
- a | xx. 24-29. THE BACKGROUND.—Thomas’ unbelief, then full confession.
- b | xxi. 1. THE PLACE.—Galilee.
- c | 14. TIME.—The third time.
- d | 12. INVITATION.—Come and dine.
- e | 3, 5. FAILURE CONFESSED.—Nothing. No meat.
- f | 8. NUMBERS.—200 cubits; 153 fishes.
- g | 6. COMMAND.—Cast net into water.
- h | 6. OBEDIENCE.—They cast therefore.
- i | 8, 11. NETS FILLED.—So many.
- j | 10. THE DISCIPLES.—Bring the fish (*enenkate*).
- k | 14. RESULT.—Manifested (*ephanerothe*).

But as we discover that this detailed parallelism extends to the whole of the eight signs, it becomes evident that, not accident or coincidence accounts for the phenomenon, but purpose and design. John assures that he had a wealth of material to select from, and if, out of hundreds of miracles performed, he selects but eight, we may well believe that these form such a chain of evidence, that they set forth “the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of true grace”, so fully that no further evidence could be demanded, or has been given. With these eight signs and the recurring “witness” of this Gospel, the evidence is complete, and since that moment heaven has been silent.

In the record of the opening sign at Cana the first assertion is one referring to time: “And the third day there was a marriage.” We have already seen that John i. 19-51 gives the witness of four consecutive days: 1st day (19-28); 2nd day (29-34); 3rd day (35-42); 4th day (43-51); 7th day (i.e., third day after last event, ii. 1). It was on the seventh day of the creation week that the Lord rested and the day was sanctified. On the seventh thousand year-day of earth’s great week, the sabbath-keeping for the children of God shall come (Heb. iv. 9, *sabbatismos*), and “The Marriage of the Lamb”. On the first day of his testimony John pointed out the Lord as “The Lamb of God”; no other writer uses the title

Dr. Lightfoot gives a long list of laws and regulations regarding marriage, as found in the Talmud and Rabbinical writings, but it is only the last of these that has any bearing upon John ii.: "The nuptial festival was continued for the whole seven days: which we also see of old (Judges xix. 12)." We have earlier evidence than the book of Judges, for we find Laban saying to Jacob at the marriage of Leah, and also at his request for Rachel, "Fulfil her week".

As seem to have been the case at Cana, it will easily be understood that at a festivity extending over a period of seven days, the supply of wine might prematurely run out.

"And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto Him, They have no wine" (ii. 3).

The way in which Mary speaks and acts in this passage makes it fairly clear that she was a relative of the household, and the fact that she told the Lord of the lack of wine indicates that she was in expectation of some action on His part to remedy the fault, for she knew of the baptism of John, the descent of the Spirit as a dove, and the attestation of the Baptist and others. To our ears, the Saviour's reply sounds rather abrupt, but we must remember that the use of the word "woman" was a respectful form of address, as can be seen from xix. 26 and xx. 13, 15. We must also understand that these words were spoken exclusively for Mary's ear, and that we have nothing to indicate the accompany tone, inflection or look that so modify the spoken word. On more than one occasion the Lord had to check the intrusion of even His own mother, into that sphere which lay outside all earthly relationships. At the age of twelve, when Mary, having found Him in the Temple, said, "Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing", the Lord gently told them that these home ties were to be broken and that He must soon be about His Father's business (Luke ii. 48, 49). Similarly, on another occasion, when "His brethren and His mother" sought Him, He answered "Who is my mother or my brethren?" (Mark iii. 31-35). Again, the expression, "What have I to do with thee?" may not have sounded so harsh in Mary's ear as in our's, for it seems to have been in Hebraism, and therefore not to be taken by us too literally. It was used in II Sam. xvi. 10 and xix. 22 by David, and in I Kings xvii. 18, by the widow of Elijah. It was also used by the demons who were cast out by the Lord (Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24; Luke iv. 34). The words were however decisive enough, and indicated that the Lord had now embarked upon that ministry wherein the Father's will alone was supreme and which inflexibly led on to the death of the cross. The words "Mine hour is not yet come" seem to suggest that the cross was in mind, even at the marriage at Cana. Some have said that, in the present case, no such solemn association must be read into the words, but the way in which this saying recurs in this Gospel compels us to see in this occurrence, even at a festive marriage scene, the shadow of the cross. Here are the eight occurrences of this or similar expressions:

"Mine hour is not yet come."—Answer to mother's suggestion (John ii. 4).

"My time is not yet come."—Answer to brethren's suggestion (vii. 6).

"My time is not yet full come."—Reason for secrecy at feast (vii. 8).

"His hour not yet come."—Hence, no man laid hands on Him (vii. 30).

"His hour was not yet come."—Hence, no man laid hands on Him (viii. 20).

"The hour is come."—Greeks seek Him. Death mentioned (xii. 23).

“Jesus knew that His hour was come.”—His departure from the world spoken of (xiii. 1).
“Father - the hour is come.”—The work finished (John xvii. 1).

To this list might be added John xii. 27 and xvi. 25 or 32.

Whatever view we may take, it is clear from her caution to the servants, which immediately follows, that Mary did not feel altogether set aside: “Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it.”

Before proceeding it is necessary to notice the material with which the Lord worked.

“And there were set there six water pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.”

Authorities differ as to the exact amount of water a firkin represents. The LXX uses the word to translate the Hebrew measure of a “Bath” (II Chron. iv. 5). Josephus in his Antiquities says, “Now a bath is able to contain 72 sextaries” (Ant. viii. 2, 9). As a sextarie was a little under an English pint, a firkin was probably about eight or nine gallons. The Companion Bible gives for “Bath”, “About six English gallons”, and for “Firkin”, “About nine gallons”. If we take the highest figures, that is six water pots at three firkins, and each firkin reckoned as nine gallons, we have a total of one hundred and sixty-two gallons; if we take the lowest figures, six water pots at two firkins and each firkin reckoned as six gallons, we have the total seventy-two gallons, which gives us a mean of one hundred and seventeen gallons. This amount of water may seem excessive, but we have checked our findings with other commentators and find that there is general agreement. Alford makes the amount one hundred and twenty-six gallons; a figure endorsed by Bloomfield. Theodoret, born at Antioch A.D.386, says, “Follow in these things Josephus, who well understood the measures of the nation”.

It was the ceremonial necessities of the Jews that brought into requisition such large quantities of water. For instance, we learn from a rabbinical writer, that

“They allot a fourth part of a log (a log is two-thirds of a pint) for the washing of one person’s hands, it may be of two; half a log for three or four; and a whole log for five or ten, to a hundred; with the provision, said Rabbi Jose, that the last that washeth, hath no less than a fourth of a log to himself” (*Jadaim* Ca. i. pat. 1).

It will thus be seen that so large a quantity of water as has been considered would not be at all out of place for a festival lasting seven days, and at which a number of guests were present.

The question that now arises is “Why was so enormous a quantity of wine provided at the end of the feast?” To this question all sorts of answers have been given. Unbelievers and critics have caviled at it or made unseemly fun of it. Devout commentators have sought to justify the superfluity by various conjectures. Before we attempt a solution let us first make sure from Scripture that the Lord made such a quantity. The general belief is that the whole six water pots were converted into wine. This however we hope to show is not the case. Our attention was drawn to this, many years ago, by a writer whose name

we have forgotten, or we would have given him his due, but, seeing that in “that day” sower and reaper shall stand together, all is well.

The water pots were first of all filled to the brim with water. This water must have been drawn from a well, and the fact that the servants passed and repassed from the well to the water pots would suffice to show that there had been no tampering with the water beforehand. When the last drop of water was emptied into the water pots, the Lord said “Draw out now”, and the reader, in spite of the statement that the water pots were for purification, jumps to the conclusion that He meant the servants to “draw out of the water pots”. This however, we believe, is not so, and here is the reason for our belief.

The word translated “draw out” is *antleo*. *Antleo* is derived from *antlos*, “the hold of a ship where bilge water settles”, and so came to stand for “the bilge water” itself. *Antlema* is “a bucket”, and *antleo* meant in the classics “to bale” out a ship. In the LXX version of the Old Testament it is confined to the one idea of drawing water from a well.

“Moses stood up and helped them, and *drew water* for them and watered their flock” (Exod. ii. 17).

“An Egyptian *drew water* for us, and watered our sheep” (Exod. ii. 19).

“Lo, I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of them that inhabit the city come forth to *draw water* she ran to

“Therefore with joy, shall ye *draw water* out of the wells of salvation” (Isa. xii. 3).

The only other occurrence in the LXX is Prov. ix. 12, where the word is used in a highly figurative sense “to bear” evil, a use of that word that demands a deeper acquaintance with manners and customs than we possess. We have recorded the passage for the sake of completeness, but it makes no contribution to the point at issue.

We now come to the use of *antleo* in the New Testament and find that there are four occurrences, John ii. 8, 9; iv. 7 and 15; and one occurrence of *antlema*, “a bucket”, “something to draw with” (John iv. 11). The references in John iv. are, confessedly, to drawing water out of a very deep well, and the references in the LXX of the Old Testament all speak to the same effect.

With this information we return to the marriage at Cana and understand what the Lord did. After the servants had filled the water pots to the brim, in full view of the guests, He said, in effect, “Go now once more to the well, and draw out again, but, this time, take it to the governor of the feast”. Having tasted it the governor expressed astonishment at its excellent quality, and that his testimony was entirely unbiased is clear from the words, and “knew not whence it was”. We are told however that the servants which drew (*antleo*, drew out of a well, with an *antlema*, a bucket) knew.

The method adopted by our Lord was such that everyone must have admitted the genuineness of the miracle. In John’s Gospel we are dealing with “testimony”, hence this very evident miracle is brought forward.

“This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him” (John ii. 11).

John had already said that he had beheld “His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of real grace” and in this miracle that glory was “manifested”.

The homely associations of marriage and the turning of water into wine, form a striking contrast with the severe character of John the Baptist who came “neither eating nor drinking”. Ceremonial water gives place to wine, the Law of Moses to true grace, and out of this fullness all we have received. Not only did the Lord “manifest” His glory, but the great aim of the Gospel was attained also, “His disciples believed on Him” (John ii. 11).

Matthew uses the word *dunamis*, “wonderful works” (vii. 22), “mighty works” (xi. 20, 21, 23; xiii. 54, 58; xiv. 2), a word used also by Mark and Luke to describe the Lord’s miracles. This word is not used by John, but, in its stead he uses *semeion*, which is translated in his Gospel by “miracle” thirteen times, and “sign” four times. The Synoptic Gospels use *semeion* about as many times as they use *dunamis*. John’s purpose is not to point out mighty power, but to provide evidence. Just as the miracles wrought by Paul were “signs” of his apostleship (II Cor. xii. 12), so were these miracles selected as signs of “the Apostle” (Heb. iii. 1), the great “Sent One*”, the Son of God.

The fact that this miracle was the “beginning” of miracles nullifies the validity of the fantastic traditions that have come down from early days of the miracles wrought by the child Jesus, just as the setting aside of Mary in the fourth verse of the chapter is the death blow of Mariolatry. When he has “beheld His glory”, man needs not the intercession of saints, angels or the Virgin.

[NOTE: * - The word “Sent” is found in eighteen out of the twenty-one chapters of John’s Gospel, and is vital to its teaching. This we shall see later.]

THE TESTIMONY IN JERUSALEM, JUDAEA AND SAMARIA.
(John ii. 13 - iv. 42).

THE TESTIMONY IN JERUSALEM.

“The Son of Man.” “The only begotten Son of God.”

- A1 | THE TEMPLE (ii. 13-23). |
 - a | ii. 13. The Passover. Jerusalem.
 - b | 14-16. The Temple. The Scourge.
 - c | 17. Disciples remember the Scripture.
 - d | 18. The Sign. Question.
 - b | 19-21. The Temple. I will raise it up.
 - c | 22. Disciples remember the Scripture.
 - a | 23. The Passover. Jerusalem.
 - d | 23. The Signs. Belief.

- A2 | NEW BIRTH (ii. 24 - iii. 12). |
 - e | ii. 24, 25. Testimony not needed.
 - f | iii. 1, 2. We know.
 - g1 | 3. Verily, verily. The Lord.
 - h | 4. How? Nicodemus.
 - g2 | 5-8. Verily, verily. The Lord.
 - h | 9. How? Nicodemus.
 - g3 | 10, 11. Verily, verily. The Lord.
 - f | 10, 11. We know.
 - e | 11, 12. Testimony not received.

- A3 | AIONIAN LIFE (iii. 13-21). |
 - i | iii. 13. The Son of Man. Ascended.
 - j | 13. He came down from heaven.
 - i | 14. The Son of Man. Lifted up.
 - j | 15. Perish Eternal life.
 - i | 16. The only begotten Son. Given.
 - j | 16. Perish Eternal life.
 - i | 17. His Son. Sent.
 - j | 17, 18. Condemned Saved.
 - i | 18. The only begotten Son of God.
 - j | 19-21. | k | Light has come.
 - l | Deeds evil.
 - k | Light. Not come.
 - l | Deeds reprovod.
 - k | Light. Come.
 - l | Deeds manifest.

Such, then, is the analysis of the testimony given in Jerusalem. (The testimony in Judaea and Samaria we must leave for consideration later.)

The section opens with a reference to the Passover, just as earlier John the Baptist had spoken of the Lord as “The Lamb of God”. As a type of redemption the Passover teaches the absolute necessity of the shedding of blood, but as a “feast” it also stresses the personal response of the participator, expressed, according to the law, by the removal of

all leaven from the house. This symbolic purging out of the leaven is fulfilled in the Lord's cleansing of the Temple. In connection with this there are two facts that should be noticed:

- (1) This purging of the Temple was the Saviour's first public act at Jerusalem.
- (2) The cleansing of the Temple as recorded by Matthew, Mark and Luke, came after His public entry into Jerusalem riding upon the ass, and was His last public act in Jerusalem before his apprehension and crucifixion, which took place, as did the first cleansing of the Temple, just before the Passover.

In John, from under the fig tree the "Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile" comes forth to acknowledge the Saviour as "The King of Israel" (John i. 49). In Matthew, after the cleansing of the Temple in Matt. xxi. we have the Hosannahs of the children, but the fig tree withers away (Matt. xxi. 19, 20), and the house is left desolate (Matt. xxiii. 38) until the second coming of the Lord takes place.

We do not believe that any of our readers will need detailed proof that the cleansing described in John ii. and that recorded by Matthew are entirely distinct occurrences. As is explained in Volume XXIX, pp. 206-212, the whole of the history of Israel, from the time of David up to the return from the Babylonian captivity is vitally linked with the attitude of king and people to the House of God. Mere ceremonial is of no value, but true worship lies at the foundation of all truth. This same principle can be seen in operation even before the overthrow of the world, for we are told that Satan, whose fall is set forth under the figure of the King of Tyre in Ezek. xxviii., was originally associated with holy things. He later became profane, and introduced "merchandise" (Ezek. xxviii. 16). Worship is the basic principle underlying the ten commandments, and the Satanic conflict of the ages has worship as its goal (Rev. xiii. 4: compare also Matt. iv. 9). It will also be remembered that in the section of John that we are now considering the passage occurs that speaks of worshipping the Father in spirit and in truth (John iv. 24).

In John i. 23 John the Baptist declares that he had been sent before the Lord as a forerunner (*John i. 23*) and that this was in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. It will be remembered that those sent by the Sanhedrin had enquired John as to whether he was "Elijah" (John i. 21) and John had replied that he was not. At the same time Matt. xvii. 10-13 shows that there was a definite relationship between John the Baptist and Elijah, and at John's birth the angel declared that he should go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elijah" (Luke i. 17).

The Jew who knew the O.T. prophecies would not be slow in associating the Lord's sudden appearance in the Temple with the prophecy of Malachi: "Behold I will send My messenger and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, Whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple He is like a refiner's fire He shall purify the sons of Levi Behold I will send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord" (Mal. iii. 1-3; iv. 5). We see therefore, that the sudden appearance of the Lord, scourge in hand, was a public witness to His Messianic office.

Coming back to the actual record of John ii. 13-23; we read: “And the Jews’ Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and found in the Temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting” (John ii. 13, 14). While these particular verses speak of those that sold the various animals being found in the Temple, verse 15 clearly shows that the animals themselves were there. It also seems fairly clear from other records that the animals were actually brought into the court. The Talmud, for example, records the zeal of Baba Ben Bota, who, finding the court empty, sent and fetched three thousand sheep and brought into the court of the Temple. It was also necessary that every Jew should pay his half shekel. Maimonides speaks of its being “an affirmative precept of the law, that every Israelite should pay, yearly, half a shekel”. A proclamation was made on the first day of the month Adar, in order that the people should get ready. On the fifteenth day, collectors sat in every street; and the twenty-fifth day they began to sit in the Temple—“and then forced men to pay; and if they refused, they distrained”.

The Saviour’s indignation was not roused by either the selling of the oxen or the changing of the money, for both operations were necessary, but rather by the greed that actuated the dealers, and the profits exacted by the money-changers. Taking up a few “rush-ropes” (*schoinion*, from *schoinos* “a rush”) that had been used for tying the cattle, the Lord drives the sheep and oxen out of the Temple, pours out the changers’ money, and overthrows the tables, saying unto them that sold doves, “Take these things hence: make not My Father’s house an house of merchandise” (John ii. 16). At the beginning of His public ministry, the Lord calls the Temple “My Father’s house”, and refers to their “merchandise”; at the close, He speaks of the Temple as having been made a “den of thieves” and calls it “your house” that is “left unto you desolate”.

In John ii. 18 the Jews ask the Lord for a sign to justify His action in the Temple. Just as on another occasion He gave them “the sign of the prophet Jonah”, so here He speaks of the Temple as a symbol of His resurrection. The Jews, however, misunderstand the Lord’s answer and say: “Forty-and-six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days?” Josephus tells us in his Antiquities that the Temple was begun by Herod the Great in the eighteenth year of his reign. He also states that Herod lived thirty-seven years from that time and that in his thirty-fifth year Christ was born. If the Lord was 30 years old at the time of the cleansing of the Temple, then we have a period of 48 years, which if reckoned exclusively (i.e., not counting the opening or closing years which were incomplete) would become a period of 46 years, as the Jews are reported to have said. The Temple was not actually completed until A.D.64 under Herod Agrippa II, so that the Jews must have been referring to the part of it that had been finished up to that time. The disciples remembered the Lord’s prophecy after His resurrection, and the Jews remembered it against Him, when they sought some evidence upon which to put Him to death. “He spake of the temple of His body” (John ii. 21). We have already drawn the reader’s attention to the fact that when the Word was made flesh, He “tabernacled” among us, and that this is connected with “the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father” and the “real grace” that was found in Him. So here, Herod’s temple, though a magnificent structure and lavishly decorated, is contrasted with the living temple of the Lord’s body. In the Jerusalem Talmud we read:

“In the second temple there wanted the fire from heaven, the Ark with the Propitiatory and the Cherubim, the Urim and Thummim, the Shechinah or tabernacling glory, the Holy Ghost, and the anointing oil.”

“Things are not asked or enquired after now (by Urim and Thummim) by the high priest, because he does not speak by the Holy Ghost, nor does any divine afflatus breathe on him.”

What the Temple of Zerubbabel, and of Herod lacked, was found in its fullness and reality in the Lord Jesus. The fire from heaven, which spoke of the acceptance of the offering, found its fulfillment when heaven was opened and the voice was heard saying: “This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased.” The Ark, Propitiatory, and Cherubim are all included in the fact that Christ was “The Lamb of God”. The Urim and Thummim are found in Him too, and in the Holy Spirit of Whom He said: “He shall lead you into all truth.” We have already explained that the Shechinah glory is referred to in John i. 14, and we also read that the Holy Ghost was not given to Him by measure. Finally, in connection with the anointing oil, we have the advent of the Messiah Himself, the Christ, the Anointed One.

Here we must stop for the time being. In our next article we shall hope to deal with the story of Nicodemus.

#18. The Testimony in Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria (ii. 13-iv. 42). Jerusalem. The New Birth (ii. 24 - iii. 12). pp. 82 - 90

We have heard the first (A1) of the threefold testimony given in Jerusalem, and for the sake of clearness we here repeat the headings.

The Testimony in Jerusalem (John ii. 13 - iii. 21).

- A1 | THE TEMPLE (ii. 13-23). The cleansing. The prophetic sign.
- A2 | NEW BIRTH (ii. 24 - iii. 12). The Kingdom of God.
- A3 | AIONIAN LIFE (iii. 13-21). Condemned or saved.

We now take up the second witness (A2) given in Jerusalem, this time “by night”. The structure is simple, and has been set out on page 38. This section commences in the closing verses of chapter ii., where the words “He knew what was in man” (John ii. 25) are followed by “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus”, and we do not read far before we realize how truly “He knew” what was in that man’s heart. Nicodemus is referred to by John on three different occasions.

- (1) When men came by night, as recorded in John iii.
- (2) When he interposed at a meeting of the Pharisees, saying, “Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?” (John viii. 51).
- (3) After the death of Christ, when Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred-pound weight (John xix. 39).

Nicodemus may have had more than one office and title, but he has passed into the Scriptures and will be known for all time as the Pharisee that “came to Jesus by night” (John iii. 2; vii. 50; xix. 39). We have had the clear, unselfish, testimony of John the Baptist, the bold announcement of Andrew, and the conviction of Nathaniel, but what good purpose is served by the halting admission of this man who came by night? There are at least two great purposes served.

- (1) Nicodemus was a Pharisee, a Ruler, a man of some degree of learning. The testimony of such a man would be valuable addition to that of fishermen.
- (2) An enunciation of the doctrine of the new birth which lies near the root of the doctrine of aionion life; no birth, no life. This, of itself, was of extreme value and demanded early recognition.

As to Nicodemus himself little is known. A Nicodemus is mentioned by the Talmudists as a man of great wealth, and he is reported to have become a “follower of Jesus”, but his man flourished at the time of the destruction of the temple at Jerusalem. It is not, of course, impossible, that Nicodemus lived till that event, but the words of John iii. 4, “when he is old”, might have been a passing reference to himself. The matter cannot be settled and is of small importance. We do know however that he was a Pharisee, so that it will be of interest to note the part played by the Pharisees in John’s record.

We learn from John iii. 25 that a dispute arose between the followers of John the Baptist and the Jews about purifying, and from the account it appears that an attempt was made to create jealousy, for these Jews went to John the Baptist and, referring to Christ, said, “Behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to Him”. When the Lord knew that the Pharisees were using these circumstances for evil purposes He left Judaea (John iv. 1-3). We meet with no further reference to the Pharisees until we are well through the seventh chapter, where we approach the feast of tabernacles and the urgency of the Lord’s brethren upon Him to go up to the feast openly. The Jews sought Him at the feast also, and “some said, He is a good man; others said, Nay; but He deceiveth the people” (John vii. 12). Into this divided company, about half-way through the feast, the Lord came, and as a result of His boldness some of the people began to ask, “Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?” Others, taking an opposite view, sought to lay hands upon Him. When the Pharisees heard that many of the people believed on Him, they sent officers to take Him (John vii. 32), but the power of His testimony was such that these men were rendered powerless. Upon making their report the Pharisees asked, “Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him?” (John vii. 45-48). It was here that Nicodemus made his ineffectual interposition (John vii. 50-52). Failing to take the Lord by force, the Pharisees resort to guile, and we have the incident of the woman taken in adultery with the striking account of the conviction and discomfiture of the accusers (John viii. 3, 9), and for the first time we get the grave charge of blasphemy brought against the Lord by the Pharisees (John viii. 13). Then follows the miracle of the man born blind, his attempted intimidation by the Pharisees (John ix. 13, 15, 16) and their question, “Are we blind also?” (John ix. 40).

The raising of Lazarus is reported to the Pharisees, and they make the confession “This man doeth many miracles. If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe on Him, and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation” (John xi. 46-48). Here is valuable testimony indeed, for the very enemies of the Lord admit the fact of the miracles, yet they are more concerned about the possible loss of prestige, “their place and nation”, than for the truth or Kingdom of God. Again, for the last time, the Pharisees is allowed to speak. We read:--

“The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after Him” (John xii. 19).

With the end of chapter xii. we reach the end of the Lord’s public ministry. From chapter xiii. He ministers to His own with the full consciousness that His hour was come (John xiii. 1). At the end of this outer section we meet a few more Nicodemus-like Rulers:

“Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John xii. 42, 43).

The reluctant testimony of a non-adherent is of great weight as evidence. This must be borne in mind as we attempt to assess the value of the recorded visit of Nicodemus, “a ruler of the Jews”.

Though he may have spoken only for himself, it seems probable that Nicodemus, when he said “We know”, intended the Lord to understand that the Rulers and Pharisees shared his conviction that this new ministry, attested as it was by undoubted miracles, proved that its Minister was a “Teacher come from God”, in spite of His despised Galilean connection and the fact that He was a Nazarene. The word “Teacher”, *didaskalos*, is the same as the word “Master”, an appellation to which men of Nicodemus’ rank were entitled (John iii. 10), and yet this highly-placed official of the Sanhedrin approached an unknown, and apparently unlearned, young Visitor from Galilee by addressing Him as “Rabbi”. This was in the nature of an intended concession. How many have since succumbed to similar approaches only “that day” will reveal. But we have already been informed that our Lord “knew what was in man”, and His “answer” agreed with this divine knowledge, for instead of touching upon anything that Nicodemus had “said”, it answered the inmost need of his heart. It must have come as a shock to the pride and beliefs of Nicodemus to have his overtures apparently ignored, and a plain statement made to him of his need of new birth. John the Baptist warned the Pharisees, saying, “Think not to say, we have Abraham for our father”, and in John viii. we have a continued argument along the same lines. (John viii. 33, 37, 39, 40, 52, 56, 57, 58).

Nicodemus knew and acknowledged that a proselyte became “new-born”, for “if any one become a proselyte, he is like a child new-born (*Feramoith*).” Maimonides taught that the Gentile proselyte was so really like a child new-born, that it became lawful for him to marry his own mother or the sister of his mother, and it was only forbidden upon other grounds. This at least will show that the idea could not have been entirely new to

Nicodemus. What was new, and what was hard to hear, was, that *he*, a Ruler of the Jews, a Teacher in Israel, a Pharisee, an undoubted son of Abraham, needed this same new birth.

The words translated “born again” are *gennethe anothēn*. Now the verb *gennaō* is used for *either* the begetting by a father, or the giving birth by a mother. This word that is used is translated in Matt. i. 1-20 “begat” 39 times, “born” once, and “conceived” once. The word *anothen* occurs in John’s Gospel as follows:--

“Except a man be born *again*” (iii. 3).
“Ye must be born *again*” (iii. 7).
“He that cometh *from above*” (iii. 31).
“Except it were given thee *from above*” (xix. 12).
“Woven *from the top*” (xix. 23).

Elsewhere it is rendered “From the top” (Matt. xxvii. 51; Mark xv. 38), “From the very first”, “From the beginning” (Luke i. 3; Acts xxvi. 5), “From above” (Jas. i. 17; iii. 15, 17), and “Again” (Gal. iv. 9). *Ano* from which *anothen* is formed, is never translated “Again” but, “The brim”, “Up”, “High” and “Above”.

The perplexed answer of Nicodemus, and his reference to natural motherhood, makes it evident that he took our Lord’s words in a wrong sense. In effect, what the Saviour said to Nicodemus was that in spite of all his learning, his dignity and his racial connection with Abraham, he needed to be “begotten from above”.

What this begetting from above implied is made known in the Lord’s second statement. Here He replaces the word *anothen*, “from above”, by “water and spirit”. There is great need for care and unbiased judgment here. In the reference to “water” and “spirit”, the Churchman, the Ritualist, and the Baptist, will find justification for baptism as a church ordinance. Those who have the light of dispensational truth, who know full well that there was no “church” in formation during the opening weeks of Christ’s public testimony, and who have realized that for the church of the mystery there is but “one baptism”, which cannot be that of water; these have looked upon the expression “water and spirit” as a figure of speech, and read “spiritual water”, i.e., “not water but spirit”. We feel however that Nicodemus would not so understand our Lord’s words. The visit of Nicodemus is divided from the witness of John the Baptist by only one chapter and by a few days. John and his baptism come before us once more before this chapter is finished (John iii. 23). John had testified: “I baptize with water the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost” (John i. 26-33).

Among those who went to John’s baptism were “Pharisees”, who received the warning, “Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, Whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire” (Matt. iii. 7, 9, 11).

We do not know whether Nicodemus had himself attended John's baptism, but some of the Pharisees had been baptized, and later many of the Rulers became secret believers, but Nicodemus is warned by the Lord of the futility of trusting to anything accomplished on, in, or by, the flesh, even though it be an ordinance of divine origin. Therefore before the evangelical note of aionion life is sounded, divine and spiritual begetting is shown to be absolutely necessary ("Ye must") for admittance into the Kingdom of God.

The utter repudiation of the flesh in John iii. 6, is somewhat veiled by the A.V. translation, a fault not rectified by the R.V. A literal rendering of the verse is:--

"That which hath been begotten out of the flesh, is flesh; and that which hath been begotten out of the Spirit, is spirit."

The perfect tense gives the thought "That which has been and remains", like Pilate's "What I have written, I have written", an emphatic statement which carries home its message even to those unacquainted with the niceties of grammar.

The word "flesh" has three shades of meaning in John's gospel.

- (1) The sinless humanity of the Son of God (John i. 14, etc.).
- (2) Mankind, "Power over all flesh" (John xvii. 2).
- (3) The flesh as representing fallen human nature and opposed to spirit.

The reference, "Which were born not of the will of the flesh" (John i. 13) may be referred to either (2) or (3), or both.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life" (John vi. 63).
"Ye judge after the flesh" (John viii. 15).

These two references have in view fallen, erring, man. The flesh in Nicodemus was identical with the flesh of the common and despised *fellaheen*. The attitude of mind that characterized the Pharisees and the Rulers of the time is expressed in John vii. 48, 49:

"Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on Him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."

It was the same attitude of mind that led the Jews to marvel and to say: "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" (John vii. 15). But all the lore and learning of the law must be put aside as unprofitable, the pride of the Pharisee must be humbled, and the Apostle Paul's testimony that there is "no difference", either in the matter of sin or of salvation, must be accepted.

Much of what the Lord taught him should have been known by Nicodemus. He was a teacher of Israel, if not "the teacher of Israel", as the presence of the article may indicate, but the Lord says he was "ignorant of these things", yet he might have gathered the necessity of the spiritual begetting from Ezek. xi. 19, 20.

“And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh and will give them a heart of flesh: that they may walk in My statutes, and keep Mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”

Without this new spirit, no man of Israel should “see” or “enter” the kingdom of God.

The Lord follows this statement concerning the flesh and the spirit with the words:--

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be begotten from above. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one that is begotten of the Spirit” (John iii. 7, 8).

This is the only occasion in the N.T. where the words *to pneuma* are translated “the wind”. The word in John vi. 18 is *anemos* and this is so translated 31 times. The word “listeth” is *thelo*, “to will”, and is found in John v. 21, “Quickeneth whom He *will*”. This word occurs 23 times in John’s Gospel, except in iii. 8 (*see* John i. 23; iii. 29; v. 25, 28, 37; x. 3, 4, 5, 16, 27; xi. 43; xii. 28, 30; xviii. 37). The verse therefore should be translated thus:--

“The Spirit breatheth where He willeth, and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh or whither He goeth; thus is everyone that hath been begotten of the Spirit.”

To one who, like Nicodemus, was familiar with O.T. prophecies, the connection between John iii. 6 & 8, and Ezek. xi. 19 (quoted above) and Ezek. xxxvii. 9, “Prophecy unto the wind breathe upon these slain that they may live”, and Ezek. xxxvii. 12-14, “I will open your graves and ye shall live”, would be obvious, and to us who read John’s Gospel and remember the remote context of John v. 21-29, with the parallels, “quicken whom *He will*”, “all that are in their graves shall hear *His voice*”, further associations will be suggested.

Nicodemus, however, apparently still held by the traditions of his sect and still holding to the advantages of being a physical descendant of Abraham, could only reply, “How can these things be?” The Lord, perhaps with sorrow at the thickness of the veil that still blinded his eyes, said: “Art thou the teacher of Israel, and knowest not these things?” Dr. Lightfoot tells us that there were four sorts of teachers. The teacher of children, public teachers in the synagogues, those who had their “midrashoth”, or divinity schools, like the school of Hillel and Shammai or Gamaliel, and The Sanhedrin, the great school of the nation. Of this company of the great doctors and teachers of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus was one.

“Their divinity, that they taught and learned, was generally to this tenor:--to build upon their birth privilege from Abraham, to rest in the law, to rely upon their own works, to care for no faith but historical, to patter over prayers as efficacious How was it imaginable, that ever the doctrine of the new birth should be dreamed of among them, who looked for salvation upon such principles and terms as these” (*Dr. Lightfoot, Volume v. page 44*).

The doctrine of the new birth is not a new revelation, it belongs to the O.T., and the Lord implied as much when He said to Nicodemus: "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believed not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things?" (John iii. 12). Any reference to "heavenly" things should quicken the reader's interest, for such things may belong to his own calling and sphere. It will not be out of place, therefore, if we take a slightly wider survey than the reference of John might at first seem to warrant. But, first, may we speak a word about the use of the concordance?

The reader knows, but he may need reminding, that a concordance is a human invention, and should therefore be treated as such. A concordance deals simply with the *occurrences* of words, and it is entirely outside its scope to deal with the *meaning* of words. Further, while it is a good servant, it is a bad master. Let us show what we means. We turn to any concordance and open at the word *ge*. We note that the occurrences occupy several columns of print. We are assured that we have before us every occurrence of the word *ge*. So far, so good. But what do we "know" about this word? We notice that the first occurrence in the N.T. reads, "The *ge* of Judah" (Matt. ii. 6), and we might (if we did not already know better) think that *ge* was something particularly connected with the Jews. The next reference is more extended but not fundamentally different, "The *ge* of Israel" (Matt. ii. 20). We cannot here go through the 241 occurrences, so we omit a few lines and at Matt. v. 5 read, "Till heaven and *ge* pass" while at Matt. xiii. 5 we read, of seed, that it "had no deepness of *ge*". We pass over the Gospels and our eye lights on I Cor. xv. 47, "The first man is of the *ge*". We glance at Hebrews, where we find that "In the beginning the Lord laid the foundations of the *ge*" (Heb. i. 10), and that this "*ge* drinketh in the rain" (Heb. vi. 7), that if the Lord "were on *ge* He would not be a Priest" (Heb. viii. 4), and that Israel were led "out of the *ge* of Egypt" (Heb. viii. 9).

The reader, however, is not misled by this assortment. He knows that the one word *ge* denotes the *earth* as distinct from heaven, the *ground* into which seed may be sown, or any particular *land*, whether of Judah, Egypt or elsewhere. But the reader should remember that he does not get this from the concordance. A spirit being, wishing to convince other spirit beings, who had no personal acquaintance with the earth, that these various meanings of the one word were fantastic and untrue, might impress some of his hearers by a formidable concordance of passages. To us it would prove nothing, but to them it might prove an end of all argument.

Now let us reverse the point of view and ask, What do we know of "heaven" by acquaintance with it? Is it all one undivided space? Is there a top and bottom to it? Can it be measured by miles? Is it three-dimensional space? Is there anything outside or over heaven? If so, can anything that is over the heavens also be spoken of as in heaven? How can we answer? If at this point another, equally ignorant by acquaintance with the heavens, should produce a concordance of occurrences of the word "heaven", the long list of words might impress the fearful, but it would no more "prove" anything about "heaven" than the list of the occurrences of the word *ge* proved that "land" and "ground" and "earth" were all one and the same in meaning and intention.

Let us now come from the known to the less known, and the unknown. Let us turn from *ge*, “earth”, to *ouranos*, “heaven”. The concordance presents us with a list of 283 occurrences. Let us proceed as we did with *ge*:

- “The kingdom of *ouranos* (*plural*) is at hand” (Matt. iii. 2).
- “Behold the fowls of the *ouranos* (*sing.*)” (Matt. vi. 26).
- “The *ouranos* (*sing.*) is red and lowring” (Matt. xvi. 3).
- “The stars shall fall from *ouranos* (*sing.*)” (Matt. xxiv. 29).
- “The *ouranos* (*sing.*) gave rain” (James v. 12).
- “Descending out of *ouranos* (*sing.*) from God” (Rev. xxi. 1).

Here we find that “stars” and “fowls” and “rain” and the “New Jerusalem” all belong to *ouranos*, in the singular, but that the kingdom which the Lord came to establish upon *earth* was the kingdom of *ouranos*, in the plural.

We read in Eph. iv. 10 that the Lord ascended “far above all *ouranos*” (*plural*), and that we have a Master in *ouranos* (*plural*) (Eph. vi. 9). It is easy to pour ridicule upon the attempt to distinguish things that differ, and, as we know less of the heavens than we do of the earth, the attempt is sometimes sadly successful. But “Bereans” are not daunted by columns of words, they “search and see” whether the things taught about those words “are so”: they use the concordance as a servant, but do not let it become their master. Furthermore, what arguments could be invented as to the basic distinction that must be observed between the heavens (*plural*) or heaven (*singular*)! Yet Matt. iii. 16 says “heavens” (*plural*) and John i. 32 says “heaven” (*singular*). John iii. 13 says, concerning the ascension, “The Son of man which is in heaven” (*singular*), whereas Heb. viii. 1 says He is in the heavens (*plural*) and Eph. vi. 10 that He ascended far above all heavens (*plural*).

Now, just as, from one point of view, a Jew living at Jerusalem could be described as living in (*en*) the *ge* (in the land), he could also be described as living upon (*epi*) the *ge* (on the surface of the earth) without involving a contradiction. So also, and in a greater number of ways, can the heavens be spoken of without confusion or contradiction.

We now turn from this polemic to more constructive reading. In Matt. vi. 10 we must remember that our Lord said, “Thy will be done ON (*epi*) earth as it is IN (*en*) heaven”. Again, speaking of the selfsame kingdom, He said, “All authority has been given to me IN (*en*) heaven and UPON (*epi*) earth” (Matt. xxviii. 18). *Epigeios*, “earthly things” occurs seven times in the N.T. In I Cor. xv. 40 it is translated “terrestrial” and refers to the resurrection body of those whose inheritance will be “on the earth”. In II Cor. v. 1 the reference is to the present body, before resurrection. Phil. ii. 10 contrasts things on earth with things in the heaven (*epouranios*), and things subterranean (*kata*), and in Phil. iii. 19 the exhortation is to avoid the example of those who “mind earthly things”. James uses the word to contrast heavenly wisdom which cometh from *anohen* (James iii. 15).

In Volume XXVII, page 126, we have suggested, in chart form, the relationship that exists between the teaching of John and Paul’s prison ministry, and that while John goes to the “world”, Paul addresses the “saints” who already have “faith in our Lord Jesus”.

Thus John gives an outside testimony, whose goal is “life”, while Paul gives an inside testimony, whose goal is membership of the Body of Christ.

The language of our Lord to Nicodemus warrants our going into the world with John iii. 16, and assuring those who believe that there are “heavenly things” to be entered by the same exercise of faith. The “pastors” included in the gifts of Eph. iv. have legitimate work to do among “the other sheep”, of whom John speaks, without confusing the dispensation of the mystery with the witness of John. We commend to every reader the fuller exercise of the Berean spirit—Search and see.

**#19. The Testimony in Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria (ii. 13-iv. 42).
Jerusalem. “The Son of Man which is in heaven” (iii. 13).
pp. 116 - 120**

If the reader is at all acquainted with Biblical commentaries, he will know what a variety of explanations have been offered of the problem raised by the words of John iii. 13: “The Son of Man Which is in heaven.” In the first place it is important to recognize that grammar and logic are only relevant when kept within their own true domain. It is true in the realm of the flesh that a person cannot be in two different places at one and the same time, but is it necessarily true in the realm of the spirit? It is also true of all that pertains to man and his sphere that that which never had a beginning in the past, does not exist in the present, but is this true of God? Did God have a beginning? And, if not, must we all become atheists?

The grammar of speech is one example of applied logic. No one who was man, and only man, could say with either truth or sense, “Before Abraham was, *I am*”. And yet these were the words uttered by the Lord in John viii. 58. To take another example from the same Gospel, the Lord, in John xvi. 13, uses *ekeinos*, masculine, to go with *pneuma*, neuter, because the need to emphasize personality of the Spirit was more important than conformity to the ordinary rules of language. Similarly, in the passage before us—John iii. 13—we have a statement that transcends the bounds of human logic. No mere man here upon earth could refer to himself as being at the same time “in heaven”.

We have weighed over most of the evidence that has been brought forward, both for and against the suggestion that Christ Himself is the speaker in verses 13-21, and are inclined to agree with the view that the record of the Saviour’s conversation with Nicodemus ends at verse 12, and that the speaker in verse 13 is John the Evangelist. This, however, is no basis for argument or foundation for doctrine. We must simply regard these words as divinely inspired words of eternal life, whether uttered by Christ Himself on earth, or by His servant John, inspired by His Spirit after His ascension.

The first part of verse 13 reads as follows:

“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven.”

References, either direct or indirect, to the fact that the Lord “came down” from heaven and “went back” to heaven are encountered frequently in this Gospel. In the sixth chapter, for example, there are seven references to this “coming down” from heaven, and one to the ascending back again:

Katabaino, “to come down”, in John vi.

“For the bread of God is He Which *cometh down from heaven*, and giveth life unto the world” (33).

“For I am *come down from heaven*, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him That sent Me” (38).

“The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which *came down from heaven*. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith, I *came down from heaven*” (41, 42).

“This is the bread which *cometh down from heaven*, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread which *came down from heaven*” (50, 51).

“This is that bread which *came down from heaven*: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever” (58).

Anabaino, “to ascend”, in John vi.

“What and if ye shall see the Son of man *ascend up* where He was before?” (62).

In John iii. the immediate context of verse 13 speaks of the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness by Moses, and its typical association with the gift of life. In John vi., where the ascension is again referred to, we have a further reference to Moses in the wilderness, but this time in connection with the manna. In the next two chapters of John (vii. and viii.) we have several further allusions to this “coming down” and “going back”:

“Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto Him that sent Me” (John vii. 33).

“Ye cannot tell whence I come and whither I go” (John viii. 14).

“I go My way, and ye shall seek Me, and shall die in your sins. Whither I go, ye cannot come And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world” (John viii. 21, 23).

With the end of chapter xii. the first part of John’s Gospel reaches its close. The new section, beginning with chapter xiii., deals with the more intimate and personal instruction which the Lord gave to “His own” before He was taken from them. We find, however, the same testimony to the ascension in chapters xiii. and xiv. as we have already found in chapters vii. and viii.:

“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God and went to God” (John xiii. 3).

“Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come: so now I say to you Simon Peter said unto Him, Lord, whither goest Thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow Me now, but thou shalt follow Me afterwards” (John xiii. 33, 36).

“I go to prepare a place for you and whither I go ye know, and the way ye know” (John xiv. 2, 4).

“I go away and come again unto you I go unto the Father” (John xiv. 28).

Two similar references to the ascension are found in chapter xvi.:

“And now I go My way to Him that sent Me: and none of you asketh Me, Whither goest Thou?” (John xvi. 5).

“A little while, and ye shall not see Me, because I go to the Father” (John xvi. 16).

In the next chapter (John xvii.), where the finishing of the work which He had come to do is prominent, the Lord’s return to “where He was before” is again referred to:

“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee” (John xvii. 11).

“And now I come to Thee” (John xvii. 13).

In chapter xx., on the glorious resurrection morning, this message of the ascension is the one that the Lord chooses as His first greeting to His grieving disciples:

“Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God” (John xx. 17).

We are not attempting to deal with these passages at the moment, or to consider their contexts. We are merely tabulating them to show how intimately this fact of the ascent and descent of Christ is interwoven into the theme of John’s Gospel.

Coming back to John iii., we find the structure of verses 13 and 14 to be as follows:

- i | iii. 13. The Son of Man. Ascended.
- j | 13. He came down from heaven.
- i | 14. The Son of Man. Lifted up.

Verses 14 and 15 read as follows:

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John iii. 14, 15).

In chapter v. the Lord says of Moses:

“There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me: for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?” (John v. 45-47).

It is reported that a Modernist Bishop, visiting a public school, was asked by the Headmaster what he should do about the teaching of John iii. 16.

“I take it”, said the Headmaster, “that you desire me to teach the truth of John iii. 16”.

“Yes, yes”, replied the Bishop. “By all means.”

“Yet”, said the Headmaster, “I am also teaching these boys Logic”.

“Well”, replied the Bishop, “What of that?”

“If I teach these boys Logic, together with John iii. 16”, said the Headmaster, “and yet teach them at the same time that Moses never existed, or at any rate never lifted up a serpent in the wilderness, will they not see, and quite rightly, that the ‘as’ and ‘so’ of John iii. 14 link Moses, the serpent, the wilderness, and the gospel of John iii. 16 so vitally together that to reject the one is to reject the other?”

It is useless to say that it does not matter whether the O.T. is fact or fiction, so long as we preach “the simple gospel”, for there is no such thing as “the simple gospel” if Moses, Abraham, Adam, Noah and the other O.T. characters are only mythical. The grace of Christ is contrasted with the law of Moses. The fulfillment by Christ is set over against the promises made to Abraham. And the life given by Christ is presented as the glorious substitute for the life forfeited by Adam.

When we consider the superhuman nature of the One Who speaks in this Gospel, in relation to the same Speaker’s testimony to Moses and the records of the Pentateuch is recognized, no doubt can possibly be entertained as to the integrity of the O.T. records by any who believe “the Son of Man, Which is in heaven”. The living Word and the written Word must stand or fall together.

**#20. The Testimony in Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria (ii. 13-iv. 42).
Jerusalem. *Aionian Life* (iii. 13 - 21).
pp. 159 - 164**

We have now arrived at the section of the Gospel which contains one of the most well-known and best loved passages of Holy Writ, namely, John iii. 16.

As, by undue emphasis, tradition often distorts truth, so sectarian bias has the tendency of pushing one aspect of truth to the fore to the concealment or minimizing of another. While this and much more could be said as a warning against the acceptance of traditional views, on trust, it is also true that where any doctrine has received well-nigh universal acceptance; where any particular aspect of truth has been hailed with joy and preached with fervour by men representative of almost every important schism in the Church, and where it has been instrumental in leading souls out of death into life; we do well to hesitate long and meditate deeply before setting aside such unity of testimony.

John iii. 16 is such a text. It stands so arrestingly supreme in comprehensive scope, simply grandeur and clear issues, as to demand the most careful and prayerful consideration.

Upon examination it is evident that what is said in verses 14 and 15 is expanded in verse 16:

that love, but *houto* is an adverb of *manner*, and the following different translations will reveal the meaning which must be attached to the word of John iii. 16.

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was *on this wise*” (Matt. i. 18).

“*After this manner* therefore pray ye” (Matt. vi. 9).

“*Likewise* shall also the Son of Man” (Matt. xvii. 12).

The phrase “even so” in Paul’s epistles, as for example in Rom. v. 18, 21; vi. 4, 19; xi. 5, 31, also shows its meaning, as does the descriptive “thus” in the passage: “Being wearied with His journey, He sat *thus* on the well” (John iv. 6). If we ask what “thus” indicates here, we must reply, “in a manner that expressed weariness”, for that is the verb, without which the adverb is meaningless.

“For”, the casual conjunction, links, not merely by addition, but by logical sequence, the O.T. type with the Gospel fulfillment. “So”, the adverb of manner in the phrase “God *so* loved”, modifies the verb “loved” by showing the manner of that love, as though John had said “loved like this”, loved “in this manner”, loved “on this wise”, loved “thus”. If we ask, “Loved like what?” we are driven back for answer to the O.T. type and its N.T. fulfillment.

In verse 14 we have the “even so” already used.

“As Moses lifted EVEN SO must the Son of Man be lifted up.”

God’s love was “on this wise”; a love essentially associated with the offering of His Son, and not to be confounded with His providence, which sends His rain upon the just and the unjust, or His tender mercy, which is over all His works.

The order of the books in the N.T. is artificial, and no doctrine must be built upon it, but, taking the four Gospels as a unit, we are certain that John’s Gospel was written last. Now here is a wonderful fact. Any believer who was in possession only of Matthew or Mark or Luke, would never have read the statement that “God loved” anybody. It is a startling thing to discover, that while we may learn from either Matthew, Mark or Luke of our obligation to “love the Lord our God” or “to love our neighbour”, or from Matthew and Luke that we should “love our enemies”, yet we could read twenty-three passages, containing *agapao*, “to love”, and never read that “God loved” either Israel, the Church or the world. *The first reference to the love of God in the four Gospels is John iii. 16.* In the past we have, perhaps, used this precious statement too freely, and by so doing have given credence to doctrines that are not of God.

We gather that however much a man may have experienced the *kindness* and *mercy* of God, he can never know the *love* of God apart from the gift of His beloved Son. But as this aspect of truth may seem somewhat strange, let us consider another illustration of this conservative view of the love of God. Is there no love of God manifested in the gospel of Christ which is “the power of God unto salvation”? Most surely there is, but Rom. i. 16, 17, where this statement occurs, breathes not a word about it. Is there no love in the provision of a righteousness as a free gift to guilty sinners? Was there no love

at work in passing over the sins that are past? Can we read that faith is counted for righteousness and forget that love found the way? While we know that love is the source of all these things, yet for all that, in the foundation epistle of Romans we find not one reference to the love of God until we read chapter v. 5. Then, of a truth, the love of God breaks through all constraint and is “shed abroad”, but it was held back until it could be written, “Therefore *being justified* by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”.

The love of God is a limitless ocean, yet there is but one entrance to it, the offering of Christ. The very Gospel that addresses “the world”, nevertheless contains the closest restriction in this respect, that “No man cometh unto the Father *but by Me*”. In an earlier dispensation we read that God “loved *the people*” (Deut. xxxiii. 3), meaning Israel (Deut. vii. 7, 8); later, of the Church we read that nothing can separate *the believer* from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. But here, in John iii. 16, for the first time we read that God loved *the world*.

The intimate association of the love of God with the sacrifice of His Son is implied in the word “so” of John iii. 16, and receives substantiation from other Scriptures. In the first Epistle of John we read:

“Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us” (iii. 16).

“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him” (iv. 9).

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (iv. 10).

Notice the two words “perceive” and “manifest” in these references. In John iii. 16 we are not dealing with God’s timeless love, a term we use for lack of a better, but with the manifestation of that love which took place *in time*. This love is associated with one historic event, the coming into the world of Him Who was the only begotten Son of God, the Word made flesh. This event is not “timeless” but historic, for it took place when “the fullness of time” was come (Gal. iv. 4). The fact that we date all our documents from that period is an admission that the time element enters into the things of God. For this reason we emphatically refuse the translation that has been offered that “God “loves” the world, and “gives” His Only begotten Son. For the English reader it is not possible to read that God “gives” His Son, without dulling the edge of truth. It is the insistent testimony of Scripture that Christ was given “once”, that He was “once” offered, and there is no more offering for sin; He dies no more. Therefore to circulate a translation of John iii. 16 which states that God “loves” and “gives” is misleading and dangerous, and unwittingly gives substance to a vague idea of the doctrine of second chances and kindred errors.

In itself God’s love may be timeless, but its manifestation was once and at a particular juncture. To this, and to this only, John iii. 16 refers.

It is of the very nature of love to give. This we have already seen in the argument of the passages cited above from the first Epistle of John. There are others that come readily to mind, as,

“The Son of God Who *loved* me and *gave* Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 20).

“Christ *loved* the church, and *gave* Himself for it” (Eph. v. 25).

Here, in John iii. 16, it is the “world” that was the object of the love of God. As we have already learned, this word *kosmos*, “world”, is one of the great key words of John’s Gospel. Aristotle defined the *kosmos* as:

“A system composed of the heaven and the earth, and of beings contained in them; otherwise, the order and *beautiful arrangement* of the universe.”

Diakosmesis is the word used by Aristotle for “beautiful arrangement”. Pliny, the Latin writer, says:--

“What the Greeks called *kosmos*, we from its perfect and complete elegance, denominate *mundus*.”

In the N.T. “the world” is a term more often used to denote that part of the universe that we call “the earth”, as when it speaks of Christ coming into the world. Dr. Bullinger’s note in his Lexicon reads:--

“Thus, *kosmos* denotes the order of the world, the ordered universe, the ordered entirety of God’s creation, but considered separate from God. Then, the abode of humanity, or that order of things in which humanity moves, or of which man is the centre; then, mankind as it manifests itself in and through such an order; then, the order of things, which in consequence of and since the Fall, is alienated from God, as manifested in and through the human race.”

It is evident that “the world” of John iii. 16 is the last of these, for its denizens are saved from “perishing” and from “condemnation” only by this interposition of Christ on their behalf.

There is much more to consider before we have traversed the doctrine of John iii. 16, but this we must leave for the moment, hoping to pursue the study in the next article of the series.

**#21. The Testimony in Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria (ii. 13-iv. 42).
Jerusalem. *Aionian* Life (iii. 13 - 21).
pp. 198 - 203**

In our last article on John iii. 16 we considered the bearing of the casual conjunction “For”, the meaning of the adverb “So”, and the very exclusive character of God’s love, which, even though directed to the “world”, was nevertheless mediated only through the sacrifice of His beloved Son, His “Gift”. We now continue our study of this wonderful verse, and our first consideration is the specific title here given to Christ, “His only begotten Son”.

Many and rich are the titles that belong to the Saviour. Some belong to the period prior to His birth at Bethlehem, such as “The Word” and “The Image”, and some to the post-natal period. Among others are the three which follow:--

“JESUS” (Matt. i. 21).
“EMMANUEL” (Matt. i. 23).
“SON OF MAN” (Matt. viii. 20).

To which period shall we ascribe the title, “His only begotten Son”? Had there been no theological controversy in connection with the person of the Lord, reasonable men would never have tried to believe the unintelligible phrase, “The eternal generations of the Son”, for to do so either the word “eternal” or the word “generations” must lose its meaning and be changed. Readers of this magazine know that we believe the doctrine of the Deity of Christ. But while this has been our testimony from the beginning, and is held as firmly as ever to-day, we have no warrant for spoiling the teaching of the Scripture regarding the glorious person of the Lord merely because we want to emphasize His Deity. The Scripture is equally emphatic upon the doctrines of His sinless humanity, and of His coming in flesh, and ever, and essentially, associated with His coming in flesh is the dominating purpose of His sacrificial death, which necessitated the possession of a human body. This is so vital both to all truth and to the testimony of John iii. 16 that we must prove each statement.

“Forasmuch 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).

“Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a *body* hast Thou prepared Me we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. x. 5, 10).

The testimony of Hebrews is clear. One passage speaks of flesh and blood, and another of a body, but in both the object is an offering. In the epistle to the Colossians we read:

“In the *body* of His *flesh* through *death*, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in His sight” (Col. i. 22).

Here again the incarnation has sacrifice in view. Let us see one more passage.

“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*, and for sin condemned sin in the *flesh*”
(Rom. viii. 3, 4).

Here once again, the coming of Christ in the flesh, was in order that He might bear the condemnation which our sinful flesh had merited through the breaking of the law.

We believe that when the Saviour is called “The only begotten Son of God”, the Spirit of God has in mind this blessed condescension of the Son when He stooped to take upon Him the nature of man. Now if we turn to the prologue of John’s Gospel we shall find that this is what the Apostle taught.

“In the beginning was the Word” (John i. 1).

John does not say “In the beginning was the Son”; that is what many creeds confess, and many believers assume to be true, but as our faith stands, not in the wisdom of men but in the testimony of inspired Scripture, we must, perforce, reject such an intrusion.

“The Word was made flesh” (John i.14).

Here is a mighty change: here, if anywhere, we ought to read of the only begotten Son. Let us see.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John i. 14).

When He, the Word, became flesh, His titles were Emmanuel, “God with us”, “The only begotten of the Father”, “The Son of God” and “The Son of Man”. Surely, if we have no creed to support, or system to uphold, John’s clear testimony in i. 14 should be authoritative and final.

What is the Scriptural meaning of *gennao*, “To beget”? If the word is used of a father, it should be translated “to beget”, and if of a mother, “To be born, or give birth”. In Matt. i. 1-16 we have a genealogy from Abraham to Joseph where there is no possibility of missing the meaning of *gennao*. “Abraham *begat* Issac Jacob *begat* Joseph.” In this same, sixteenth, verse the word *gennao* is used of the mother, “Of Whom was *born* Jesus”.

The words “only begotten” represent one word in the Greek, *monogenes*. Is it possible that by the addition of the word *monos* “only”, the normal, rational, meaning of *gennao* should be so changed as to lose all its former meaning? To such a question we can give no answer, but we can show that no such alchemy is practiced by the inspired writers.

“The only son of his mother” (*monogenes*, Luke vii. 12).

“For he had an only daughter” (*monogenes*, Luke viii. 42).

“For he is my only child” (*monogenes*, Luke ix. 38).

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son” (*monogenes*, Heb. xi. 17).

Here are four occurrences of the word, and its meaning is plain. There are five others, and these refer to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the epistle to the Romans the gift of Christ is compared with the offering up by Abraham of his only son. “He that spared not His Own son” (Rom. viii. 32), where the Greek words, “spared not”, are the same as those which are used in the LXX of Gen. xxii. 16. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Word, become flesh, Emmanuel, God manifest in the flesh. He it is Who is the only begotten Son of God, and He it is Who is the only Mediator, Offering and Saviour of man.

Dr. Bullinger, whose orthodoxy on this doctrine is beyond question, says of the word *monogenes* in his Lexicon: “The relation of Christ to the Father.” In that simple statement the whole matter is compressed.

- (1) It is a matter of “relation”. It is not dealing with God as Absolute and Unconditioned, for that is not a subject dwelt upon in Scripture.
- (2) It has to do with “Christ”. Now “Christ” is the title given to “Jesus”, and means “The Anointed”. This title has no reference to a period before creation or before the miraculous birth at Bethlehem.
- (3) It has to do with “The Father”. Wherever we see the title “The Son of God”, “God” refers to the Father” and both “Father” and “Son” are relative terms.

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.” Here is the Divine half of John iii. 16. What follows touches human need and human response.

“That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

First, let us consider human need. It is summed up in the word “perish”. The Greek word which is so translated is *apollumi*, and occurs 92 times in the N.T. It occurs in the LXX nearly 300 times, and in order completely to understand its meaning, these passages should be examined and the equivalent Hebrew words investigated. We shall however find all that we require for our present purpose in the N.T.

An objection has been raised by some advocates of the doctrine known as *Eternal Conscious Suffering*, that it is unscientific and strictly untrue to teach that anything can be “destroyed”, as, for instance, a piece of burning wood. It is pointed out that certain parts of the wood go off into gases which are combined with oxygen in the process of combustion; other components go off as smoke and vapour, leaving a residue of mineral ash, and the Chemist’s scales would show that not a particle of the wood had really been destroyed, but that all of it still existed though in other forms. In spite of the apparently dispassionate and scientific tone of this objection it is fundamentally and experimentally false, for it is not the question of the indestructibility of “matter” that is involved, but the destruction of the piece of “wood” as “wood”. No one who swept up the ashes and presented a few glass jars of gases, could say with truth, “There is your piece of wood”: the falsity and foolishness of the statement would be apparent. So when we teach that the

unsaved sinner will suffer “destruction” or will “perish”, we are speaking of him as *a person*, not a collection of organic minerals, and it is in this sense that the word is used in the Scriptures.

It is further objected that “the soul” cannot be destroyed, and that therefore the unsaved sinner will continue in a miserable state of existence in eternal fire. We have no need to plunge into an examination of the meaning or attributes of the soul, for one plain statement of Scripture will sufficiently answer this objection.

“Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear Him which is able to *destroy* both soul and body in Gehenna”(Matt. x. 28).

Here the word “destroy” is *apollumi*, the same word which is used in John iii. 16. If we bow before the authority of the inspired Word, strictly speaking, there is therefore nothing more to be said. We can however supplement and illustrate a little before passing to the alternative, “Eternal life”. Here are some of the ways in which *apollumi* is used in Matthew.

“Herod will seek the young child to *destroy* Him” (Matt. ii. 13).

Had Herod accomplished his fell purpose, would the advocate of the doctrine we are refuting have found any consolation in the theory of the indestructibility of matter? or that the same word translated “destroy” can also be used of a “lost sheep”?

“If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should *perish*, and not that thy whole body should be cast into Gehenna” (Matt. v. 29).

Would anyone, could anyone, attempt to console a person who had lost his eyes by urging the argument that nothing can really be destroyed?

Need we go on? The word is used of drowning (Matt. viii. 25); of leather bottles splitting (Matt. ix. 17), of sheep being lost (Matt. x. 6); of loss of life, soul or reward (Matt. x. 38, 42), and of the destruction of a person by death (Matt. xxi. 41; xxii. 7; xxvi. 52; xxvii. 20). What is true of the testimony of usage in Matthew, is true of the other Gospels, and the rest of the N.T. Nearly every word in either Greek or English has secondary meanings, but it betrays poverty of argument, and a prepossession, to fasten upon the secondary meaning when some doctrinal teaching is at stake.

It is noteworthy that when the apostle Paul refers to the incident, in the book of Numbers, where Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, he too uses the word *apollumi*:

“Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted, and were *destroyed* of serpents” (I Cor. x. 9).

So also, he uses the word in I Cor. xv. 18 of all who have fallen asleep in Christ, “if so be that the dead rise not”. Jude also in referring to the book of Numbers, when he speaks of the rebellion of Korah and his company, uses this same Greek word (Jude 11).

At the close of John iii. the great and solemn alternatives of John iii. 16 are brought forward. This time, however, the wording is changed. Instead of reading “shall not perish but have everlasting life”, we read

“He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John iii. 36).

This abiding of the wrath of God is consonant with the parallel statement of verse 18, “He that believeth not is *condemned already*”.

In blessed contrast with the fate of the unbeliever, the Saviour places “Everlasting life”, and as this is as important, if not more important, to us than the fate from which, by grace, we have been delivered, let us reserve the consideration of this gift of God for the ampler space of a separate article.

**#22. The Testimony in Jerusalem, Judaea and Samaria (ii. 13-iv. 42).
Jerusalem. *Aionian Life* (iii. 13 - 21).
pp. 227 - 230**

We turn from the dread result of sin, “perishing”, to the blessed gift of “everlasting life”, to those who believe in the only-begotten Son of God. The goal of the Gospel according to John is “life”, life from the dead; life unqualified by dispensational distinctions.

“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have *life* through His name” (John xx. 31).

Here is the simple issue of this record, “Life through His name”. This question of “life” runs through the Gospel of John from chapter i. to chapter xx., and it is helpful to observe the way in which “life” alternates with “eternal life”. As there are thirty-six references involved we will not set them out in detail, but the following presentation may be of service to those who will but “search and see”.

A | LIFE (i. 4).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (iii. 15, 16, 36).
 A | LIFE (iii. 36).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (iv. 14, 36; v. 24).
 A | LIFE (v. 24, 26, 39).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (v. 39).
 A | LIFE (v. 40).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (vi. 27).
 A | LIFE (vi. 33, 35).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (vi. 40, 47).
 A | LIFE (vi. 48, 51, 53).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (vi. 54).
 A | LIFE (vi. 63).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (vi. 68).
 A | LIFE (viii. 12; x. 10).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (x. 28).
 A | LIFE (xi. 25).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (xii. 25, 50).
 A | LIFE (xiv. 6).
 B | ETERNAL LIFE (xvii. 2).
 A | LIFE (xx. 31).

Are we to draw a distinction between these two sets of statements? Are we to say “Life” is one thing and “Eternal life” is another? Apart from the inspired Word none can answer, and none to whom the foregoing list is a list and nothing more is qualified to express even an opinion. For example, upon examination we find that when Christ said, “The words that I speak unto you, they are *spirit* and they are *life*” (John vi. 63); Peter replied, “Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of *eternal life*” (John vi. 68). Are we to see some subtle distinction here? Or does the word “life” cover all its subdivisions? In the same chapter the Lord said, “The bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth *life* unto the world” (John vi. 33). Was there any intentional difference when He said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me, hath *everlasting life*, I am that bread of life” (John vi. 47, 48)? Or, once again, when we read verses 53 and 54, “Ye have no *life* in you hath *eternal life*”, is there an intentional distinction?

In the third chapter we have “eternal life” in the presentation of the gospel (John iii. 15, 16, 36), but in the summary and conclusion we read, “Shall not see life”. It is evident that “life” in John’s Gospel includes “eternal life”, and this life is not to be confused with the life lived by fallen man, for John never once uses it in that way. He does, however, say:--

“In Him was life” (John i. 4).
 “Passed from death unto life” (John v. 24).
 “The resurrection of life” (John v. 29).
 “Life more abundantly” (John x. 10).
 “The resurrection and the life” (John xi. 28).

The life from the dead which was “in Him” and is given to those who believe; who have passed from death unto life and who shall not come into condemnation; evidently is synonymous with, if not greater than, and so inclusive of, “eternal life”, which is the great gift of John iii. 16. The word translated “eternal” and “everlasting” is *aionios* and occurs in John’s Gospel seventeen times. The word *aionios*, “eternal”, is derived from *aion*, a word which is variously translated “world”, “age”, “ever”. In this Gospel *aion* is six times translated “ever” in the phrase “For ever”, “never” (literally “Not for ever”) six times, and “world” once.

We must examine these translations of the same word, for, at least, on the surface they seem too divergent to be true. Let us take the negative form “never”. This is the phrase *eis ton aiona*, with the negative, and has been the occasion of some very foolish attempts at literality. Thus, “They shall never perish” (John x. 28) becomes “They shall not perish *unto the age*”, which leaves the impression on the mind that at the end of the age they will perish, which of course is entirely contrary to the thought. “Thou shalt never wash my feet” (John xiii. 8) becomes “Thou shalt not wash my feet *unto the age*”, an absurdity requiring no repudiation. When the Scriptures intend a statement to carry over from one age to another, it has ample means of making this clear, as in such a passage as “Neither in this world, neither in the world to come” (Matt. xii. 32). In most cases “never” is the idiomatic use of “not ever” or “not for the age”, which is parallel with the etymology and usage of “never” in the English tongue. There is no need to import “age” meanings into such idiomatic and popular usages.

In connection with the renderings “ever” and “world”, there is much more to be said. First of all, however, let us remember that in the best of us a little genuine modesty will never be amiss. For instance whenever we feel tempted to sweep aside renderings that are found not only in the A.V., but retained in the R.V., we should remember that, however remote it may seem, there is the possibility that these men did actually possess a modicum of common-sense, as well as scholarship! It would be so much nearer the true spirit that should animate us, if, first of all, we endeavoured to discover *why* the translators used the words “ever” and “world”, while literalists demand “age” in every case. The truth is that many who are moved to adopt the attitude of critics would, if an answer were demanded of them, have to confess that they did not know the etymology of the English word “world”, and possibly would also have to plead ignorance as to the source and affinities of “ever” and “eternal”. Let us get this matter settled first.

It may surprise many of our readers to learn that under the heading “world”, The Oxford Dictionary devotes sixty-two closely printed lines in a column, dealing with “Human experience, a period of this” (world), before coming to the second great heading: “The earth or a region of it; the universe or a part of it.” Moreover, the English word “world”, through Germanic sources, is derived from *wer* = man, and *ald* = age, “The age of man”, consequently, if language never developed, if meanings never changed by common usage, and if all men were etymologists, then the affinity between the Greek *aion* and the English “world” would be obvious and need no explanation.

There is, in common usage, no evident connection between such English words as “eternal” and “everlasting”, on the one hand, and “age” and “world” on the other, yet, once again, the differences are superficial, being the result of the passage of time, for, at base, they are one. “Age”, derived from the Latin *aevum*, “eternal”, comes from *aeuiternus*, “lasting for an age”. “Everlasting” comes from the Anglo-Saxon *aefre*, which is related to the Gothic *aiw*, which, in its turn, links on to the Greek *aion*. The Revisers have retained most of the passages where the A.V. used “world” for *aion*, but have placed in the margin the note “age”, so that the English reader need not confuse this word with *kosmos*.

However, we must still face the fact that present usage now makes “eternal” and “everlasting” unfit translations for a word which means “an age”, “The period of human experience”, therefore some modification is called for. If, however, in John iii. 16 we substitute “age-enduring life” for “eternal”, or “everlasting”, life, we create another problem as important to resolve as that included by the A.V.

Upon reading the translation: “Should not perish, but have age-enduring life” the mind can hardly help thinking along the line suggested by the latter clause and, thus started, arriving at the possible conclusion that at the end of this age, however long it may endure, life will cease! At this point, the reader may appreciate the analysis of the terms “life” and “Eternal life” found in John’s Gospel and set out on page 227.

An examination of these references proves that “life”, without limits, is the gift of God to those who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. Within this all embracing “life” there will be that special experience called “age-enduring” life, which will be enjoyed by those whose resurrection precedes the end of the ages, but which cannot therefore be enjoyed by those whose resurrection is most certainly unto “life”, but life entered into only when the ages have run their course.

There are various ways in which “eternal life” is used in the N.T. Sometimes it is bestowed as a reward, either under law or under grace (Matt. xix. 16; Rom. vi. 22); sometimes as an equivalent to entering into the kingdom on earth (as for example Matt. xxv. 46); sometimes, as in John iii. 16, or Rom. vi. 23, it is considered as a gift in grace. These have been tabulated and examined in a series entitled “Eternal Life”, which may be found in Volumes VI, VII & VIII, and should be referred to by the interested student.

We conclude therefore that life, not only when time shall be no more, but life abundant and rich in its association with the concluding phases of the Divine purpose, is the blessing for all who believe the testimony of John iii. 16.

“In all their affliction, He was afflicted.”

[THIS SHORT SERIES IS INTENDED TO LEAD THE BELIEVER TO SEE THAT THE “FELLOWSHIP OF HIS SUFFERINGS” IMPLIES THAT GOD HIMSELF SHARES, IN A VERY REAL SENSE, THE SUFFERING THAT IS THE INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCE OF THE FALL OF MAN, AND THUS TO RECEIVE STRENGTH TO ENDURE AND TO TRIUMPH.]

#2. pp. 22 - 24

The only way to “prove” that God actually enters into the suffering of humanity and does not remain aloof and unmoved, is to examine the Scriptures and discover how far such feelings are attributed to God and how far these statements are to be accepted at their face value.

A God afar off, dwelling in isolated majesty, unmoved by the waywardness and folly of man, allowing His “laws” to work quite regardless of consequences, could hardly be said to “grieve” or to “wish that He had never made man”. Such language, if once admitted, with all the margin allowable for the use of “figures of speech”, must shatter for ever the barrier that human wisdom has erected between God and His creatures.

No reader who has spent many years in walking through this vale of tears needs any human commentary upon the meaning of “grief”, and will probably find counterparts in his own experience to the “grief” of Joseph’s brethren, when their brother made himself known to them (Gen. xlv. 5), or of Jonathan’s “grief” for David at the treatment meted out to him by Saul (I Sam. xx. 34). Yet there are some who would attempt to modify the force of the passage where “grief” is attributable to God Himself.

“How oft did they provoke and *grieve* Him”, asked the Psalmist (lxxviii. 40) when dealing with the history of Israel in the wilderness. “They rebelled, and *vexed* (same word as “grieve”) His Holy Spirit”, said Isaiah (Isa. lxiii. 10) of the same period.

A poignant passage is that which records God’s attribute toward the wickedness of man in the days of Noah.

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it *repented* the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it *grieved* Him at His heart” (Gen. vi. 5, 6).

We must be prepared to find the force of this passage blunted by the contention that this is “figurative language”. Let us face this objection. We may ask, Why are figures of speech used at all? Is it not because ordinary speech is not full enough to express all that is intended? If I say, “That man is a lion”, do I say more, or less, than I say “That man is bold”? Surely I say more. We fully grant that God, Who is Spirit, does not “grieve” as

man. Likewise that to speak of “His heart” is a figure of speech, but so also is it a figure of speech in the preceding verse, which speaks of the heart of man. In the case of man “the thoughts of his heart” cannot refer to the muscular organ that circulates the blood; it can only mean the inner man. So also when the heart of God is spoken of we lose nothing when we admit it as a figure of speech. What it amounts to is, that just as ‘grief’ and “repentance” have a definite place in the experience of man, so there are spiritual equivalents in the experience of God. If this be denied the question is urgent, For what purpose is Gen. vi. 5, 6 written? Who has made this tremendous mistake? and what becomes of the inspiration of Scripture? Nor is this all. Gen. vi. is but one of many passages which unequivocally predicate “repentance” of the Lord. Let us examine the usage of this word, to see whether “repentance” is really its true meaning.

Job said “I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes” (Job xlii. 6). Is there anyone who would wish to modify this trenchant passage? “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent”, wrote the Psalmist (Psa. cx. 4) in relation to the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ. Again, can there be two minds as to its meaning? What then shall we say of the following passages?

“Turn from Thy fierce wrath, and *repent* of this evil against Thy people” (Exod. xxxii. 12).
“And the Lord *repented* of the evil which He thought to do unto His people” (Exod. xxxii. 14).

“The Lord raised them up judges for it *repented* the Lord because of their groanings” (Judges ii. 18).

“It *repenteth* Me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following Me” (I Sam. xv. 11).

“The Lord *repented* that He had made Saul king over Israel” (I Sam. xv. 35).

“And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord *repented* him of the evil” (II Sam. xxiv. 16).

“Return, O Lord, how long? and let it *repent* Thee concerning Thy servants” (Psa. xc. 13).

“Nevertheless He regarded their affliction when He heard their cry: and He remembered for them His covenant, and *repented* according to the multitude of His mercies” (Psa. cvi. 44, 45).

The reader will find nearly a score more passages in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Amos, Jonah, Zechariah and elsewhere. In each case the “repentance” is contingent. Saul’s disobedience, Israel’s groaning, or the prospect of the destruction of Jerusalem, are definitely put forward as reasons for the change of mind and plan.

We are morally certain that many of our readers have been waiting for us to consider the “proof text” that God does not repent. Here are the words divorced from their context:

“The Strength of Israel will not *lie* nor *repent*; for He is not a man that he should *repent*” (I Sam. xv. 29).

Their misuse constitutes one of the most glaring examples that we know of falsifying the intention of Scripture.

The intended effect upon the mind by the use of this disconnected “proof text” is that God never did and never can repent, and that all contrary passages, such as those already quoted, must somehow be modified in view of this oracular statement. The exact opposite of the inaccurate construction thus put upon Samuel’s words is the inspired intention. What Samuel told Saul was, that nothing he did, or promised to do, would cause God to change His mind as to *repenting* that He had made him king. If we hold the truth we shall welcome the context of any passage. Here it is:

“Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned turned again with me Samuel said I will not return with thee: for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel The Lord hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent for He is not a man, that He should repent” (I Sam. xv. 24-29).

Lest we should think that God did “repent of His repentance” Samuel reiterates in verse 35 what he had said in verse 11.

The reader who has been expecting words of comfort in times of trouble may find much cause for disappointment in the reading of this article, but if he ponders the truth that has been established, irrespective of the particular words “grieve” or “repent”, he will be convinced that God can and does feel grief; that He can and does change His mind when wickedness or pity or any sufficient reason is forthcoming, and if this be once established, the heart will be free from the thrall imposed upon it by the doctrine of fixed decrees, wherein God is no more free than is an arithmetician free in the use of the multiplication table. The heart will thus be free to rejoice in the teaching of Scripture, that God enters into the burden and the misery of His creatures, and that the suffering of the believer is in reality a share, small though it be, of the great burden borne by the heart of God.

#3. pp. 57 - 59

In our last article we were concerned mainly with establishing the fact that God can feel grieved, that He can and does change His plans, and that He is not aloof from the sorrow and misery of man, made in His Own image. We must now proceed to examine other passages that bear upon this most important truth.

“How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? *Mine heart is turn within Me, My repentings are kindled together.* I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city” (Hos. xi. 8, 9) [a reference to Sodom and Gomorrah, as Admah and Zeboim (Gen. xiv. 8) prove].

What a blessed passage, and what a light it throws upon the character of God! Some may say that, as “He is God and not man”, therefore He will remain adamant in His

purpose and inflexible in His decrees; but the Scriptures say “He is God and not man”, and so “will not return to destroy Ephraim” but will allow “mercy to rejoice against judgment”.

The great revelation of the fatherhood of God was not possible until Christ the Son was born. As John declares, when the Word became flesh we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father. Nevertheless, while this is blessedly true, there are glimpses to be seen of the fatherhood of God in the O.T. though they are veiled and obscure.

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him” (Psa. ciii. 13).

“A son honoureth his father . . . if then I be a father, where is mine honour?” (Mal. i. 6).

“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib, but Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider” (Isa. i. 2, 3).

Is there no spirit of yearning and grieving here, the same spirit as is faintly echoed in the experience of many earthly fathers, the same kind of feeling as is expressed by our own myriad-minded poet when he says: “Sharper than a serpent’s tooth, is an ungrateful child”?

Moreover, unless the title “Father” is to be regarded as empty and unreal (and who is there that would dare to challenge the fullness of this blessed revelation?), then to admit fatherliness into the Divine Nature is simply to admit the truth of what has been revealed. A true father loves, provides for, protects and trains his children, and rejoices in them. A true father cannot remain aloof from the experiences of his family. He must be a sharer in all their joys and sorrows. A true father does not limit his fellowship to high and noble things, but enters with delightful intimacy into his small daughter’s concern for her broken doll, his son’s school problems, his daughter’s love affair, and all the various interests of his married children’s homes. Surely all this, and more, must be true of God Himself.

There is a well-known passage in the Book of Genesis that not only foreshadows the offering of Christ as the Lamb of God, but also speaks of the part played in that offering by the One “Who *spared not* His Own Son”. As we read this passage—in Gen. xxii.—we can appreciate something of what this offering meant to the Father. Did not Abraham suffer as a father, when God told him to take Isaac—“thine only son, whom thou lovest” (Gen. xxii. 2)? Did he not suffer as a father, when he “took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son” (Gen. xxii. 6), and when “he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together” (Gen. xxii. 6)? Can any words describe the anguish that lay behind the simple record of verse 7:

“Isaac said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” (Gen. xxii. 7).

The apostle Paul evidently appreciated this, for he uses the same word in Rom. viii. that the LXX uses in Gen. xxii. 16:

“Thou hast not *withheld* thy son, thine only son” (Gen. xxii. 16).
“He that *spared* not His Own Son” (Rom. viii. 32).

Can there be any doubt that God is intimately concerned with the sufferings of creation, and of man generally, and of His church? Let the comfort of this fact penetrate into the very fibre of our being. We do not suffer alone. God Himself calls us into fellowship with Him.

With regard to the great problem of pain and suffering, we must not magnify the almighty power of God above all His other attributes. The fact that He chose to create man in His Own image implies that He chose to do something that inevitably contained all the potentialities of suffering, even to the extreme limit of the cross. It is for us to see all things in the light of the purpose of the ages, and the constitution of man as created in the image of God.

“In all their affliction, He was afflicted.”

#4. pp. 90 - 92

It is our purpose, in this series of short articles, to lead the believer into a deeper understanding of the character of God, in relation not so much to His isolated and unapproachable majesty as the Lord God Almighty, but rather His tender mercy and sympathetic understanding as “The Father”, to Whom, in one spirit, we have access. Theology, listening too much to the demands of Philosophy, has tended to place God upon a pedestal, far removed from the passions and sorrows of the world. Such a conception is very far from the truth. We hope that the sheer weight of evidence brought forward in the article on pages 57-59 has broken down this prejudice to some extent, as we have seen God “grieving” over the sinfulness of man, being “vexed” by the folly of His people, and “repenting” over and over again because of the utter failure of His human instruments. This aspect of inspired truth we must pursue still further, until prejudice gives way completely to joyous acceptance, and we discover a God Who is not remote or far away, but intimate and near.

In the present article, we desire to draw attention to two passages from the Book of Job. We are well aware of the possibility of mistaking the personal opinions of Job, expressed under the terrible pressure of affliction, for inspired utterances. On the other hand, we must remember that this book of human suffering and experience is part of the Scriptures and has been written for our learning. In time of trouble, an apostle thought well to draw his readers’ attention to “the patience of Job”, while God Himself has grouped together Job, Noah, and Daniel as men of surpassing integrity (Ezek. xiv. 14, 20). While making every allowance for Job’s frailty, and the possibility that he might have erred in judgment, most readers would agree that there are few, if any, who would

to-day be worthy to sit at his feet. Let us at least weigh his words as we would the words of our most respected and valued friend.

In chapter x. Job is baffled by the experiences through which he is passing, and is beset by the growing fear that he has misunderstood the nature and character of God. Barnes, whose commentary on Job is considered his best work, writes with regard to Job x.:

“Is it good unto Thee that Thou shouldest oppress? The sense is, that it could not be with God a matter of personal gratification to inflict pain wantonly. There must be a reason why He did it The state of his mind appears to have been that he is a sincere friend of God, and He is unwilling to believe that God can wantonly inflict pain.”

In verse 8 we read: “Thine hands have made me.” The Margin reads “Took pains about me”, while Gesenius says that the primary idea is that of *cutting*, either in word or stone, and hence cutting or carving with a view to the forming of an image. It would, however, be quite misleading to compel the word to conform to its ancestry and early history. Words are used to-day with a meaning far removed from their etymology. The finest literature would become nonsense if every word were given its primitive meaning. Usage is far more important than etymology, and it is to this that we appeal. The reader may have no facilities for the investigation of dead Hebrew roots, but he *can* survey the language of Scripture, and from the testimony of the word’s usage discover its true meaning.

The verb “to make” in Job x. 8 is the Hebrew *atsab*. It occurs in a variety of forms and, if we include derived substantives, is found in the O.T. 55 times. It is translated “grieve” 10 times as we have already seen in the preceding article. The substantives, in Genesis, refer to the “sorrow” of child-bearing (Gen. iii. 16), and of human toil (Gen. iii. 17; v. 29). In Psalm cxxvii. 2 we read of the “bread of sorrows”, and in Isa. lviii. 3, where the translation “labours” occurs, the Margin suggests “griefs” or “things wherein ye grieve others”.

Judging by its usage in Scripture, we fail to see any justification for the exceptional treatment of *atsab* in Job x. 8. Exactly the same form of the verb is used in Isa. lxiii. 10, where we read: “They rebelled and *vexed* His holy Spirit.” It would obviously be impossible to translate this passage in the same way as in the A.V. of Job x. 8, and yet the two passages are practically identical.

Leaving this passage, for the moment, we pass on now to another passage in the same book. Job is still pondering the same problem, but the light of resurrection and hope now illuminates some of the obscurity. In Job xiv. 14 the question is asked: “If a man die, shall he live again?” In the same verse the answer is given:

“All my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer Thee; Thou wilt have a desire to the work of Thine hands” (Job xiv. 14, 15).

The word translated “to have desire” here is *kasaph*, which gives the word for “silver” and means “to be pale” with longing and desire. The Psalmist says: “My soul *longeth*,

yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord” (Psa. lxxxiv. 2). In the same way, says Job, does the Lord “long for” the day to come, when in resurrection glory, Job and all like him shall at length stand in beauty, to sorrow no more for ever.

When God fashioned Job’s body He knew that His servant’s life would constitute a challenge to Satan, and that at length his body, so wonderfully made, would be afflicted with such loathsome sores that Job—His servant Job—would be glad to take a potsherd to scrape himself. Did God have no feelings of sorrow as He saw all this in prospect? He did. He “grieved” as He made this earthen vessel. Nevertheless, we know something, too, of the other end of the story. From his birth into the world of sorrow, Job leads us to a new birth into a world of joy. If God “grieved” at the fashioning of Job’s body when he was born into this world, He is depicted as “turning pale” with extreme longing as He awaits the day of Job’s new birth into resurrection glory, when “the work of His hands” shall at length attain its goal.

Here, then, is a God to Whom we may stretch out our hands, and feel a grasp almost akin to our own. Here is the “God of all flesh”, Who knows, Who is not untouched, Who shares the suffering brought about by sin, even as He plans to share the joy brought about by grace.

“In all their affliction, He was afflicted.”

#5. pp. 105, 106

In our last article we were pondering the experiences of Job, and came to the conclusion that God is by no means indifferent to the “sorrow” and “toil” that came into the world when Adam sinned. We also found that the words “grieve” in Gen. vi. 6, “made” in Job x. 8, “vex” in Isa. lxiii. 10, “sorrow” in Gen. iii. 16, 17, and “toil” in Gen. v. 29 were all basically the same in the original.

As we think more about this problem of suffering and sorrow, our minds instinctively turn to Gen. iii. to see whether there is any indication there of the same thought as we have found in Job. An unaided reading of Gen. iii. may in itself fail to produce sufficient evidence, but we must remember that we have “all Scripture” available, and we therefore turn to what our own Apostle has written on the matter in Rom. viii.

As he looks upon the “sufferings of this present time” he says that they are not worthy to be compared with “the glory that shall be revealed in us” (Rom. viii. 18). That in itself is a comfort. Even if there were nothing further to be said on the problem of present suffering, “glory” awaits us, and the prospect brings relief.

The Apostle, however, continues in verse 19:

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God” (Rom. viii. 19).

And in verses 20 and 21:

“For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who hath subjected the same in hope. Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 20, 21).

The Emphatic Diaglott version reads as follows:

“For the creation was made subject to frailty (not voluntarily, but by Him Who placed it under;) in hope that even the creation itself will be emancipated from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 20, 21).

When he faced the charge of transgressing the Lord’s commandment, Adam had no basis for “hope”. He had sinned, and he expected death as a penalty. The Lord, however, spoke of “a seed”, and even though it was decreed that sorrow would accompany the activities of both the man and the woman, the bearing of children and the sweating for bread were something quite different from the expected penalty. Moreover, the cherubim at the door of the Garden symbolized not only man’s lost dominion, but also God’s pledge of ultimate restoration.

Amid the groan of creation, and the sufferings that come in the wake of sin, there is a real hope, a hope founded upon the finished work of the promised “Seed”. God created man in His Own image, and He was grieved, intensely grieved, at his fall. He bore the burden from the time of Adam to the birth of the Saviour at Bethlehem, and He in turn bore it until His own sacrifice removed it for ever.

“Hope” is not only associated with man, but also with God Himself. In the Epistle to the Romans He is called “the God of *patience*”, “the God of *hope*”, and “the God of *peace*” (Rom. xv. 5, 13; xvi. 20). At God’s right hand the Saviour is “expecting” (Heb. x. 13), and His believing people can share together with Him that intense desire and longing that we found revealed in Job xiv. May the light of this blessed expectation illuminate the darkness of present grief, until that day comes when we shall actually experience the joy “that cometh in the morning”.

“In all their affliction, He was afflicted.”

The Mystery Manifested.

#5. The Mystery of Christ.

A superlative manifestation.

pp. 12 - 14

In our last article we recognized that there were two mysteries discussed by the Apostle in Eph. iii., one dealing with the peculiar calling of the present dispensation called “the mystery”, and the other called “the mystery of Christ”. It is to the second of these two, and its manifestation that we must now turn.

The Apostle introduces the subject parenthetically, as will be clear from an examination of Eph. iii. 3-5.

“As I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Eph. iii. 3, 4).

What is the purpose of this reference? To what does the Apostle refer when he says “as I wrote afore”? And how does the introduction of this second mystery help the main line of his argument? The main thread of the Apostle’s argument is that to him, as the prisoner of Christ Jesus, a dispensation had been given, and the revelation of the mystery, around which that dispensation revolved. To support this claim the Apostle seems to pause in order to demonstrate the quality of his knowledge in another mystery, namely, the mystery of Christ. As there was no other epistle to the Ephesians, or to any other church, to which the Apostle could appeal, he must have been referring to something already written in the opening chapters of Ephesians. In chapter i., in connection with “the mystery of His will”, the Apostle shows that God had in view a dispensation in which He would “gather together again under one Head the all things (*ta panta*) in the Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things on the earth in Him” (Eph. i. 10). This glorious aspect of the mystery of Christ is further expanded in the same chapter, in verses 21-23, where He is seen as the exalted One, far above all, in the heavenly places, with all things (*panta*) under His feet, and Head over all things (*panta*) to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth the all things (*ta panta*) in all (*panta*). It is to these verses that the Apostle appeals, in order that the reader may understand his knowledge of the mystery of Christ.

It would seem that Paul’s argument is somewhat as follows:

“In making this claim, namely, that as the prisoner of Christ Jesus I have received a dispensation from God, accompanied by the revelation of the mystery, I know that I have made a very great claim, and that it is reasonable that you should demand some credentials from me. My difficulty is caused by the unique character of this ministry. I cannot compare myself with any other of the apostles, for their ministry and mine differ too much to make that comparison possible or of any value. The only thing I can do is to speak of that which other apostles and prophets, both past and present, share together with myself, namely, a knowledge of an associated mystery—‘the mystery of Christ’. If I can show you there, where comparison is possible, my knowledge of this mystery

exceeds all that has gone before, you may be more easily satisfied that, with regard to the accompanying mystery, where comparison is ruled out, my exclusive claim is a just one.”

The first occurrence of the words, “All things under His feet”, which are a part of the O.T. revelation of the mystery of Christ, is found in Psalm viii. As we have before observed, a secret generally supposes an enemy, and the enemy here is in verse 2. The glory of the Lord is also seen to be “above the heavens” (viii. 1). The words used in the LXX here are *huperano ton ouranon*, which are similar to those of Eph. iv. 10 (“far above all heavens”), but not quite so full. The added fullness that marks the Apostle’s statements is even more clearly seen in verse 6 where the Psalmist writes: “Thou hast put all things under His feet” (Psa. viii. 6). So says the Apostle also, but what a difference in the meaning! The Psalmist goes on to explain what he understands by “all things” in the following verse:

“All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea” (Psa. viii. 7, 8).

The “yea” which follows the words “all sheep and oxen” suggests the Psalmist’s sense of wonder as he enumerates the widening circle of this dominion. But what are sheep and oxen when compared with principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, and every name that is named? Surely it is clear that the Apostle, while he shares with David the knowledge that Christ shall one day have “all things” under His feet, has demonstrated how immeasurably vaster and higher is his knowledge of this part of the mystery of Christ.

Whether it was possible, when Paul wrote his epistle to the Ephesians, for the Ephesians themselves to refer to what he had also written in I Cor. xv. 25-28 or Heb. ii. 5-9, we cannot say. Most probably it would not have been possible, and we can well allow his claim to rest upon the one passage in Eph. i. Most certainly, in this particular case, all would have to concede that Paul’s knowledge of the mystery of Christ went far beyond anything found elsewhere in Scripture. If then, argues the Apostle, where you can test my knowledge, you find my claim to be substantiated, it is reasonable to accept my further claim to that exclusive revelation which is associated with the highest phase of the mystery of Christ.

It is clear that God would not reveal to Paul the high glory of the Lord Jesus without some well-defined object. The very fact that Paul had received the added revelation of the mystery of Christ was in itself an argument that something like the dispensation of the mystery was to follow.

It is certainly true that the mystery itself is manifested exclusively in the Apostle’s prison ministry, but it is equally true that the mystery of Christ is manifested in that ministry also in a superlative degree.

#6. Mystery, Marriage and Manifestation. **pp. 24, 25**

We do not meet with any further mention of the word “mystery” in Ephesians until nearly the close of the fifth chapter, when we are well into the great practical outworking of truth, and the high and heavenly calling is shown to have relationship with every phase of human life.

Instead of the high spirituality of this calling finding its expression in celibate lives, in the quiet of the cloister, in aesthetic neglect of the body, we find the Apostle speaking in the highest terms of the relationship of husband and wife, likening the mutual love and submission of the one to the other to the love of Christ for the Church and the submission of the Church to the Lord. Instead of saying “So ought men to turn away from such mundane things as the love of wife and home”, the Apostle says: “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies” (Eph. v. 28). Pursuing his argument, he quotes the words of Moses recorded in Genesis in reference to the marriage of Adam and Eve. “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh” (Eph. v. 31).

It is evident that the revelation of the mystery made no alteration in the revealed will of God regarding the importance of marriage, and it certainly sets aside the ordinances of the law of Moses, which were permitted because of the hardness of men’s hearts, but, as the Saviour Himself said, “From the beginning it was not so”, and He supplements the quotation from Gen. ii. 24 with the words:

“Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. xix. 6).

Viewing marriage in such a light, the Apostle says, “This is a great mystery”, and then turns to the relationship of Christ and the Church, saying “But” (a disjunctive, showing that the great mystery that he has in view is not the mystery of marriage, but the blessed union which such foreshadows), “I am speaking concerning Christ and the Church”. However, lest any should think that by thus turning from the lesser unity to the greater, the Apostle in any sense undervalued marriage, he safeguards his meaning by coming back to the original theme, saying:

“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and to the wife (I speak) with the object that she may reverence her husband” (Eph. v. 33).

It must be abundantly clear that, in the matter of the manifestation of the mystery in the practical sphere, the Apostle has placed signal honour upon the married state. We know some children of God, who, out of a mistaken idea of sanctity and an undispensational view of I Cor. vii., have urged that the superior spiritual standard is the celibate life. In I Cor. vii. the Apostle gave his advice “for the present distress” (verse 26). This not only dealt with the question of marriage, but with those that weep,

and those that rejoice, and with those that possessed, and with those that use this world (verses 29-31). “The time is short” wrote the Apostle, for, at any moment, the repentance of Israel might then have ushered in the day of the Lord. But that period has passed. The “any-moment” theory of the second coming is not true to-day, and the attempt made by some to prevent believers from marrying is therefore mistaken, and will finally be found to be in line with the propaganda of the last days, which includes “forbidding to marry” (I Tim. iv. 3).

With the Epistle to the Ephesians before us, and a heart-belief that its doctrines are inspired, we cannot pass over this matter as of small account: we cannot, without protest, allow any to teach otherwise, without betraying our stewardship. Wherever circumstances permit, it is as much an act of faith and obedience for a man and woman who rejoice in the revelation of the mystery to marry as it is for both to endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit. It is impossible to read the words of Eph. v. 22-27 without seeing that marriage provides a wonderful opportunity for manifesting both to the Church, to the world, and to the principalities and powers that are learning by the Church, something of the fullness of meaning that is intended when the Church is called “the body of Christ”, and that His great self-sacrificing love, together with the Church’s willing submission to His headship, is robbed of a means of manifestation when, other circumstances permitting, man or woman neglects or refuses to enter into this closest of all bonds. There are homes where this unity is not evident. Many a husband loves himself rather than his wife: wives fail to recognize that it is a privilege, as members of the one body, to reverence their husbands, as the Church reverences the Head. All this is sadly true, and even where there is unselfish love or genuine submission, it must necessarily be marked with the imperfections that will ever characterize all service here below. But admitting all this and more, the truth still stands that in the union of man and wife we have a God-given means of manifesting the Mystery.

#7. The Unfettered Word of a Chained Ambassador. pp. 41 - 43

We now have before us the last occurrence of the word “mystery” in Ephesians which is in the Apostle’s request for prayer on his behalf. It comes as a surprise to some to realize that the only specific mention of the mystery in the practical section of Ephesians is in the fifth chapter, where the relationship of husband and wife is in view. The “mystery” will be “manifested” far more truly by our “manner of life” than by our church activities, and it is of especial importance to remember this in a day when home life is the subject of attack, and when organized church work presents little evidence of life and power. In the first chapter of Ephesians the Apostle had prayed for the believers. Now, in the last chapter, he asks them to pray for him. In his prayer, he had asked that there might be given unto them the spirit of wisdom and revelation. In their prayer for himself, he desires that they should ask that there might be given to him utterance. In the prayer for them, he prayed that they might *know*; in this prayer for himself he asked that he

might *make known*. The very interplay of thought and balance of words impress us with the teaching that if there be a speaker, there must be hearers; if some are to get to know, someone must make known, the manifestation of the mystery necessitating both the speaker and the hearers before its message can become effective.

Let us hear what the Apostle requested for himself: “Praying for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak” (Eph. vi. 18-20). The humility revealed in the words “and for me” is refreshing. The evident fact that the Apostle knew what it was to be conscious of fear; to realize the price he must pay for speaking on such a theme, should encourage us. He confesses to some such consciousness of weakness when he asks for prayer that he may “open his mouth boldly” and “that he may speak boldly”. It is good to realize that Paul himself was indeed “an earthen vessel” that the glory of his consistent witness might be the Lord’s. The first thing for which he asked that prayer should be made was “utterance”, the word so translated being *logos*. In I Cor. i. 5 the same word is used in referring to a supernatural gift; “ye are enriched in Him, in all utterance” (*logos*). We can hardly believe that the Apostle needed the prayers of the Lord’s people that he might receive a supernatural gift. During the period when tongues were enjoyed by the church, the Apostle declared that he spoke with tongues more than they all, and, even then, he could add: “Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue” (I Cor. xiv. 19). While these miraculous gifts ceased after the setting aside of Israel at Acts xxviii., we have at least one instance where a gift received before the dispensation changed was not withdrawn. We refer to the exhortation given to Timothy “to stir up the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my (Paul’s) hands” (II Tim. i. 6).

The usage of *logos* in the prison epistles, however, lends no support to the idea that by “utterance” the Apostle meant anything supernatural. We find *logos* in Ephesians as follows:--

“The *word* of truth, the gospel of your salvation” (Eph. i. 13).

“Let no corrupt *communication* proceed out of your mouth” (Eph. iv. 29).

“Let no man deceive you with vain *words*” (Eph. v. 6).

“Pray for me that *utterance* may be given unto me” (Eph. vi. 19).

The distribution of the words comes to our help here, and helps us to see that each time *logos* is used in its ordinary meaning.

A | The *word* of truth The gospel.

B | Let no corrupt *words*.

B | Let no vain *words*.

A | The *word* the mystery of the gospel.

If we turn to the parallel passages in Col. iv. we shall find this usage of the word confirmed.

“That God would open unto us a door of *utterance*” (*logos*) (Col. iv. 3).
“Let your *speech* (*logos*) be always with grace” (Col. iv. 6).

It is clear that the Apostle’s prayer for utterance in Eph. vi. 19 may be the legitimate prayer of every member of the body.

The next word in Paul’s prayer that calls for attention is the twice-uttered adjective “boldly”: “That I may open my mouth boldly (*parrhesia*) to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly (*parrhesiazomai*), as I ought to speak” (Eph. vi. 19, 20). This word *parrhesia* is one that should be dear to all who have been set free from the bondage of sin, the fear of man, and the shadows of the law. It is a member of the large family of *rheo*, to flow. It suggests frankness and freedom, hence a candour that amounts to boldness. Let us look at a few of its occurrences so that we may catch something of its spirit:

“And He spake that saying *openly*” (Mark viii. 32).
“But lo, He speaketh *boldly*, and they say nothing unto Him” (John vii. 26).
“Then said Jesus unto them *plainly*, Lazarus is dead” (John xi. 14).
“I spake *openly* to the world in secret have I said nothing” (John xviii. 20).

Openness was a blessed characteristic of the Lord during his ministry on earth and we shall find it reflected in those who knew and loved Him, when they, in turn, were sent forth to speak in His name.

“Men and brethren, let me *freely* speak unto you of the patriarch David” (Acts ii. 29).
“And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto Thy servants, that with all *boldness* they may speak Thy word” (Acts iv. 29).

Paul “preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus” (Acts ix. 27). The same is recorded of his ministry elsewhere (Acts xiii. 46; xiv. 3; xix. 8; xxvi. 26), and it marks the closing testimony of the Acts: “Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, *with all confidence*, no man forbidding him” (Acts xxviii. 31).

This frankness, fearlessness and openness, characterizes, too, our access to the Father by the faith of Jesus Christ our Lord (Eph. iii. 12). It is this that gives us our greatest encouragement in face of the opposition of man. If we, sinful as we know ourselves to be by nature, have, by grace, “boldness” *there*, in the presence of the Lord, are we to hang our heads and shuffle our feet in the presence even of the greatest mortal on earth? We shall be courteous, for the Scriptures teach us so to be. We shall give every man his due, and esteem other believers better than ourselves, but when it is a matter of speaking freely and frankly concerning that most blessed of all revelations, “the mystery of the gospel”, may we ever pray the prayer of the Apostle in Eph. vi.

The fact that the Apostle makes so light of his imprisonment must not be misunderstood. For the love of the Lord He was willing, not only to be imprisoned, but to die, yet that does not indicate indifference to suffering. Such a champion of liberty as he is revealed to be in Galatians could scarcely be conceived as enduring imprisonment

meekly, were it not for grace sufficient; thus the prayer for boldness in Eph. vi. is largely called forth by the intimidating effect of bonds even upon the most courageous. So he wrote: "For which I am an ambassador in a chain (or I conduct an embassy in a chain), that therein (i.e., that in that state of bondage with all its irksomeness and temptation to purchase a little ease) I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" (Eph. 6:20).

The parallel passage in Col. iv. 4 uses the word which is the key to this series of studies, "That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak".

In the practical section therefore we have two ways in which the mystery may be manifested by the people of God: (i) By their domestic relationships and life in the home; (ii) By a fearless avowal of the truth, in spite of all circumstances.

We make no boast in self, for all we have and are is by grace, but not much imagination is needed to realize that freedom to speak all that we have seen of the truth of the mystery has not been without its cost and its temptations, and if twenty-five years of ministry have left us with few illusions, yet, while we are in this body, we too would value the prayers of all concerned that in this witness to the mystery we may make it manifest, as we ought to speak.

#8. A Ministry of Suffering. **pp. 59 - 62**

In one sense, the reference to this manifestation of the mystery (Col. i. 23-26) was dealt with when speaking of its close parallel, Eph. iii. On the other hand, who can read these wondrous words without realizing that the human mind can never fathom their depths. Therefore, although the ground has, in some measure, already been covered, we remember that God Himself has seen fit to leave on record for our learning this parallel passage, and we are sure that recognition of the wisdom that arranged the repetition will bring with it fuller light and enjoyment.

The reference to the Apostle's "chain" at the close of the last article finds an echo in this opening reference to his ministry:--

"Whereof I Paul am made a minister; who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and *fill up* that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church: whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, 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" (Col. i. 23-26).

In all this wealth of language two words seem to cry out for recognition, namely, the "filling up" of the afflictions of Christ by Paul and the "fulfilling" of the Word of God by the mystery.

The first word, *antanapleroo*, claims our attention in the first place because of its curious construction. It is a double compound, being prefixed by both *anti*, “instead of”, and *ana*, “up”.

Anapleroo occurs six times in the N.T. and is translated “fill up”, “fulfil”, “occupy” and “supply”. *Antanapleroo* occurs but once, in Col. i. 24. *Anti* is a preposition meaning “instead of” and then “against”, and in composition it means either (1) Contrariety, as *anthistemi* = To oppose; (2) Reciprocity, as *antiloideo* = “To revile in return”; (3) Correspondency, as *antlutron* = A ransom; and (4) In the place of, as *anthupatos* = Proconsul. By the use of this word the Apostle most evidently intended something more than “to fill up”, for that is expressed in the simplest verb, *anapleroo*. The *anti* here retains its meaning of correspondency and a little investigation will illuminate the Apostle’s meaning.

Paul never forgot what manner of person he had been before his conversion. A year before his martyrdom we find him writing to Timothy with vivid recollections of the dreadful days that preceded his conversion.

“Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief” (I Tim. i. 13).

Read the two passages together.

“Putting me into the ministry, who was before a blasphemer” (I Tim. i. 12, 13).
“I am made a minister, who now rejoice in my sufferings for you” (Col. i. 23, 24).

One can well understand that Paul would realize something of the correspondency between his earliest persecution and his subsequent suffering. When he was met by the Lord on the road to Damascus he was astonished to hear from heaven the words, “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME?” and it is easy to see that if his persecution of the believer could be taken by the Lord as directed against Himself, then suffering endured later, for the sake of Christ, might be looked upon as something corresponding. At his conversion the Apostle was told that suffering was to be a part of his commission:

“He is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: for I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name’s sake” (Acts ix. 15, 16).

Some years before the close of the Acts, the sufferings endured by Paul for Christ’s sake were of an overwhelming nature. He likened himself and those who stood with him, to the condemned, who entered the arena last, “a spectacle unto the world, and to angels and to men” (I Cor. iv. 9). This statement is followed by a list of sufferings any one of which would mark a man as a martyr, but, taken together, they compel us to confess that here indeed are “great things” suffered for the name of Christ. Yet, when we turn to the second epistle written to this same church, we discover that in the early record the Apostle had refrained from making known all he had suffered. In II Cor. iv. 8-12, we have a prelude to the fuller list, which Paul said he felt a fool in mentioning, though

compelled to do so by the attack upon his office. There, in II Cor. xi., we read of stripes, prisons, deaths, beatings, stonings, shipwreck and perils beyond compute. As we read this list we might be forgiven if we said, surely this man's measure is now full, but it was not.

In Col. i. 24, he makes it known that there were "sufferings of Christ" that were "left over" which he had yet to endure. His Roman imprisonment was part of this tale of sufferings. The attitude of those who, though preaching Christ, thought to add affliction to his bonds (Phil. i. 16), must have been more galling than any Roman chain, and at the end, his course finished, the fight won, he could say:

"Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things" (II Tim. i. 11, 12).

"My gospel, wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds:" (and then comes that flash of spirit, that irrepressible spirit that no amount of bondage or sufferings could crush, saying with a delightful play upon words: "but the Word of God is not bound"). "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (II Tim. ii. 8-10).

"Thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience, persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured" (II Tim. iii. 10, 11).

It is clear that the Apostle's ministry was a ministry of suffering, and the fact that, in the person of His people, he had once persecuted the Lord, enabled him to say: "in my turn", or as a kind of correspondency, I now endure in my flesh the sufferings of Christ, "for His body's sake, which is the church". The other word "to fulfil" in Col. i. 25 means rather "to complete". The word is so translated in Col. ii. 10, "ye are complete in Him", and is the intention in the exhortation to Archippus, that he should "fulfil" or "complete" his ministry (Col. iv. 17). The revelation of the mystery "completes the word of God" and in the ministry of the Apostle it is "made manifest".

Our space has been occupied with but one aspect of the Apostle's ministry, but if it enables us to appreciate more fully than before what underlies the title, "the prisoner of Christ Jesus, for you Gentiles", we shall the more value that ministry, written in tears and sealed with blood, even though our adherence to the "four prison epistles" should bring with it a taste of that cup of which the Apostle drank so deeply.

#9. The Mystery among the Gentiles.

pp. 79, 80

The mystery that was manifested to the saints through the ministry of the Apostle Paul, had been “hid from ages and from generations”. This we saw in our last article. The next theme before us is the manifestation of the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.

“But is now 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, the hope of glory” (Col. i. 26, 27).

Being an Israelite by birth, the Apostle of the Gentiles would realize better than would the Gentiles themselves the riches of grace that were the source of the preaching of the mystery among them. Apart from the Epistle to the Romans, it is to the epistles of the mystery that we turn in order to learn about the riches of grace, and riches of glory, yea, the exceeding riches of His grace; and the Apostle connects the manifestation of the mystery with the making known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles.

Left to ourselves, what would be our answer to the question, “What is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles?” We should be wise if we turned at once to what is written. We could say without fear of contradiction, that “redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins” must be included, for that is “according to the riches of His grace, wherein He hath abounded toward us” (Eph. i. 7, 8). We should certainly include the “inheritance in the saints”, though we could not speak in detail of what constitutes “the riches of the glory” of this inheritance (Eph. i. 18). Looking forward to “that day” when the inheritance shall be enjoyed, to our amazement we learn that whereas redemption is spoken of as “the riches of His grace”, the kindness that He will show to us in the days to come is of such transcendence that the Apostle speaks of it as “the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 7).

With all this the Apostle would naturally be in hearty agreement. In Col. i. 27 he focuses attention upon one important aspect of present truth that reveals the ground upon which we may entertain such a hope: “Which is Christ in (among) you, the hope of glory.” The margin draws attention to the fact that the words “in you” should be translated “among”, as it is in the earlier phrase of the verse, “among the Gentiles”. The Apostle is not here speaking of the blessed realization of the indwelling Christ, but of the dispensational change that had followed the setting aside of the children of Israel: “The salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it” (Acts xxviii. 28). Up till then, salvation had been “of the Jews” (John iv. 22). The gospel had been intimately associated with the promise made to Abraham (Gal. iii. 8). What the Gentiles had heard through Peter had been, “The Word which God sent unto the children of Israel” (Acts x. 26). Even the gospel preached by Paul in Romans was “to the Jews first”

(Rom. i. 16), and the Gentile believer was warned not to vaunt himself against Israel, seeing that he was but a “wild olive” grafted in among the natural branches (Rom. xi.).

But when we commence the Epistle to the Colossians we are conscious of a great change. The hope that was laid up for these believers and which was made known in the truth of the gospel, had been preached to “all the world” (Col. i. 5, 6), and “to every creature which is under heaven” (Col. i. 23), and it is in immediate association with this last quotation that Paul goes on to speak of his special ministry and the manifestation of the mystery. Consequently we come back to Col. i. 27, and learn that the very fact that Christ is now “among the Gentiles” is proved by the preaching of the gospel to them, irrespective of Israel, the once-appointed channel, now set aside. That, of itself, bespeaks a change of dispensation.

“Christ among you” says the Apostle is “the hope of glory”. The hope of *Israel*, which extended right through to the last chapter of the Acts (Acts xxviii. 20), is not in view here, but something distinct. *This* hope is the “one hope of your calling”, “the hope of His calling”, “the hope that is laid up for you in heaven”; it is a hope of “glory”, and will be consummated when Christ, Who is our life, shall be made manifest, for then, said the Apostle, “Ye shall also be made manifest with Him, in glory” (Col. iii. 4).

The mystery receives a present manifestation because Christ is among the Gentiles, through the preached word. *He* is the hope of glory. The mystery receives its final manifestation when the Church of the One Body is manifested with Him in glory. It is good to keep these two passages, Col. i. 27, and iii. 4, together and to remember that in both the present anticipation and the future realization, it is Christ Himself Who is both Manifester and Hope.

#10. The Mystery of God -- Christ.

pp. 177 - 179

Our text in this article has been, and still is, much in dispute. The A.V. reads: “the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ” (Col. ii. 2). The R.V. reads: “That they may know the mystery of God, even Christ.” Alford reads: “The thorough knowledge of the mystery of God”, and rejects all the rest. The Companion Bible agrees with the reading of the R.V. Scrivener says: “We would gladly adopt *Tou Theou Christou* (the R.V. reading), so powerfully do internal considerations plead in its favour, were it but a little better supported.” Hilary, who was born A.D.300, appears to have read the passage as does the R.V.: *In agnitionem sacramenti Dei Christi*—“To the recognition of the mystery of God, Christ”. For what it is worth, the Numeric New Testament, by its own peculiar method of testing, also gives this reading as the true one.

Accepting, then, the R.V. as the more accurate, let us proceed in our study, keeping in mind that the special feature of the series is not only to ascertain what the mystery is, but how it is manifested.

The mystery of Col. ii. 2 is not the mystery of Eph. iii. 3, which speaks of the church, nor of Eph. iii. 4, which speaks of Christ, but it is the mystery of God, the manifestation of which is Christ. Alford draws attention to a most important correction in the translation of Col. ii. 3. The A.V. reads: "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." He says, "The rendering which I have adopted is that of Meyer, and I am persuaded on consideration that it is not only the only logical but the only grammatical one also".

Alford's rendering (given below[?]) is supported by the LXX. There are eleven occurrences of *apokruphos* which is used consistently as an adjective, and never as a verb. For example, in the passage: "He shall have power over *the treasures* of gold and silver" (Dan. xi. 43) the LXX uses the word *apokruphois* for "treasures", evidently with the idea that treasures would be hidden by reason of their value.

Again, in Dan. ii. 22 the same word is used of "secret things", and it is interesting to observe that in ii. 19 the word "secret" is the word *musterion*, or "mystery". In Isa. xlv. 3, "the hidden riches of secret places" is, in the LXX, *apokruphous aoraton*, "secret, unseen". The context speaks of treasures, using the same word as is so translated in Col. ii. 3. Psalm xxvii. 5 provides a good illustration of the use of the verb and the adjective: "He shall hide me (*krupto*) in His pavilion; in the secret (*apokruphos*) of His tabernacle." In II Maccabees i. 23 we have a parallel with Col. ii. 3 which cannot be ignored: "He took the hidden treasures which he found" (*Tous thesauros tous apokruphous*). Therefore instead of reading as in the A.V. we must read: "In Whom are all the secret treasures of wisdom and knowledge." These treasures are priceless. They include "all riches of the full assurance of understanding". They involve the "knowledge of the mystery of God" which is manifested only to those who know Christ in the light of the revelation of the mystery. Often men talk of God as though it were a simple matter to comprehend Him. They argue about His person as though He were subject to the same laws and limitations as themselves. To such philosophers and expositors God might well say, as He said to the wicked in Psalm i. 21: "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself."

Yet God is spirit, and, apart from revelation, what do we *know* of that realm of being? Even angels, who are spirits, take upon themselves the forms of men before man can perceive them. The Saviour declared, in the days of His early ministry concerning the Father, "Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape" (John v. 37). God Himself must ever remain a mystery, indeed the greatest of all mysteries, unless He manifest Himself in such a way that His creatures can apprehend and understand. In general, our knowledge of the outside world is derived through the medium of the senses of sight, hearing and touch, supplemented by taste and smell. In that other sphere where the answer to the mystery of God is Christ, we can understand what may be known of God only by the manifestation of it in His Person. The works of His hands reveal "His

eternal power and Godhead” so that the nations of the earth are without excuse (Rom. i. 19-23). Yet that is but a step, for in the face of Jesus Christ we see the glory of God. He came to “declare” the invisible God; He came and said, “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father”. He was looked upon, and handled, and the conclusion of those thus privileged is written: “My Lord and my God” (John xx. 28), “This is the true God, and eternal life” (I John i. 1, 2; v. 20). Whatever glimpses we may have obtained through other mediums of truth, we must all agree that “In Him are all the secret treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. ii. 3). When one’s completeness is found to be in Him, in Whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily, the folly of turning aside to vain, deceitful, philosophy, or of being shackled by tradition, or loaded with ceremonial ordinances, is apparent.

The mystery of God is Christ. That mystery has been manifested. We thank God that we have seen not only “eternal power and Godhead”, but we have seen “The Father, and it sufficeth us”.

#11. God was manifested in the Flesh. pp. 212 - 218

To write a series of articles on the subject of “The Mystery Manifested” and to omit I Tim. iii. 16 would be futile, yet, if the subject is to be dealt with at all, the problem of compressing what it is essential should be said into the available space, is somewhat perplexing. While, as we have said, our problem is partly due to limitations of space, it is also due to the facts that not all our readers will easily follow the subject, and that in dealing with Greek manuscripts we need photographs and the use of Greek type. We have attempted a solution of the last difficulty by giving an illustration (on p.216) of the Greek words used around which the controversy involved in the passage revolves, and trust that the better knowledge (which we hope will have been gained) of so vital a subject will more than compensate the reader for any weariness that the study of evidence may entail.

We propose then an examination of I Tim. iii. 16 under the following headings:--

- (i) The evidence of the structure of the Epistle as a whole.
- (ii) The meaning of the actual passage itself.
- (iii) The evidence that the A.V. gives the correct reading.

There are two passages in the R.V. in which the hand of the Modernist is evident. They are I Tim. iii. 16 and II Tim. iii. 16. In the first there is an attack upon the Deity of Christ, and in the second there is an attack upon the Scriptures of God. We know not when the storm will break, but we are persuaded that the Enemy of Truth has singled out these two truths for special attack, and while time and opportunity remain, we desire, as unto the Lord, to make it plain where we stand on the vital issues involved.

For the moment we concentrate our attention upon I Tim. iii. 16.

The Testimony of the Structure.

It is possible to give so much “proof” that the untrained mind may be bewildered rather than convinced. To avoid this, we first draw attention to the essential feature of the structure of the Epistle.

- A | i. 17. The King of the Ages, Incorruptible, INVISIBLE,
Honour and glory, to the Ages of the ages.
- B | iii. 16. GOD was manifested in the Flesh. SEEN.
- A | vi. 16. King of kings. Immortal, UNSEEN,
Honour and might, Age-lasting.

These are the great focal points of the Epistle around which the remainder of the structure is grouped.

Many of our readers will be satisfied with the above; but in a matter of this character, where evidence is essential and where we must allow no advantage to the adversary, we must assume nothing but prove each point. We have therefore no option but to set out the structure of the whole Epistle, although our appeal will be to the outline given above.

I Timothy.

- A | i. 1, 2. Salutation.
- B | i. 3-20. *Hetero didaskaleo*, “Teach no other doctrine” (i. 3).
 - The dispensation of God (i. 4).
 - Endless genealogies (i. 4).
 - Committed to trust (i. 11).
 - Aionian life (i. 16).
 - The King, incorruptible, invisible (i. 17).
 - This charge (i. 18).
 - Shipwreck (i. 19).
- C | ii. 1-7. I exhort (ii. 1).
 - The salvation of all men (ii. 4).
 - Paul’s ministry (ii. 7).
- D | ii. 8 - iii. 15-. These things I write (iii. 14).
 - Men. Women. Adam. Eve (ii. 8 iii. 13).
 - I hope to come shortly (iii. 14).
- E | iii. -15, 16. The MYSTERY of GODLINESS. Angels.
- E | iv. 1-8. The APOSTACY. Doctrines of demons.
- C | iv. 9-12. Command and teach (iv. 11).
 - The Saviour of all men (iv. 10).
 - Timothy’s example (iv. 12).
- D | iv. 13 - vi. 2. These things teach and exhort (vi. 2).
 - Men. Women. Elders. Widows (v. 1-17).
 - Till I come (iv. 13).
- B | vi. 3-20. *Hetero didaskaleo*, “Teach otherwise” (vi. 3).
 - The good deposit (vi. 20).
 - Profane and vain babblings (vi. 20).
 - Committed to trust (vi. 20).
 - Aionian life (vi. 12).
 - King, immortal, unseen (vi. 15, 16).
 - I give thee charge (vi. 13).
 - Drowning (vi. 9).
- A | vi. 21. Salutation.

Instead of working out the members *B* and *B* we have placed the corresponding subjects in the same order in each section so that the parallel thoughts may be obvious without going minutely into detail. For example, “the shipwreck” of i. 19 and “the drowning” of vi. 9 are an interesting parallel. It will be sufficient for our purpose if the simple outline given above is seen to be in line with the Epistle as a whole and that both these important sections, *B* and *B*, are associated with a warning against heterodox teaching. The true doctrine is found in I Tim. iii. 16, section *E*, while the contrary, the doctrines of demons, is found in the great apostacy of I Tim. iv. 1-7, section *E*.

We can now confidently say that the structure of the Epistle emphasizes the mystery of godliness, in i. 17 and vi. 15, 16, where God is said to be invisible and unseen, and also points to iii. 16 where it is stated that God has been manifested in the flesh and

“seen”. Here therefore we might pause and say, When the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, He manifested the invisible God and revealed the Father. In Him the mystery of God and of godliness alike find their exegesis.

The Meaning of I Tim. iii. 16.

We now pass from the testimony of the structure to the text itself. Chapter iii. is largely devoted to the qualifications of bishops and deacons, and the Apostle states that he has so written that Timothy may know how to behave himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God. A question now arises from the last clause of verse 15. Is the *church* “the pillar and ground of the truth”? If we use the word “church” in its most spiritual meaning, we shall find no basis in Scripture for such an important doctrine. The case before us, however, is most certainly not “*the Church*” but “*a church*”, a church wherein there are bishops and deacons; in other words, a local assembly, and surely it is beyond all argument that the truth does not rest upon any such church as its pillar and ground. The reader will observe that in the structure, iii. 15 is divided between D and E, and that the latter part of verse 15 belongs to verse 16. There is no definite article before the word “pillar”, and a consistent translation is as follows. Having finished what he had to say about the officers of the church and Timothy’s behaviour, he turns to the great subject of the mystery of godliness with the words:

“A pillar and ground of truth and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness.”

Here the teaching is that whatever or whoever the mystery of godliness shall prove to be, it or He, is the pillar and ground of truth. The mystery of godliness is then explained as “God manifest in the flesh” and He, we know, is a sure and tried Foundation.

We now come to the question of the true reading of I Tim. iii. 16. The A.V. reads “God”; the R.V. reads “He Who”, and some versions read “Which”. As it is not possible for us to depart from our practice, and use Greek type, we have prepared the following explanation to which the reader, unacquainted with the Greek or with the ancient manuscripts, is asked to refer as we proceed.

Anyone who has examined an ancient Greek manuscript will have noticed the large number of abbreviations that are employed. For instance, the Greek word for God, *Theos*, is always contracted to THS. Now this contraction is only distinguishable from the relative pronoun HOS by two horizontal strokes, which, in manuscripts of early date, it was often the practice to trace so faintly that they can now scarcely be discerned. Of this, any one may be convinced by inspecting the two pages of Codex A which are exposed to view at the British Museum. Need we go in? An archetype copy, in which one or both of these slight strokes had vanished from the contraction THS, gave rise to the reading HOS, “who”, of which non-sensical substitute traces survive in only two manuscripts, Aleph and 17; not, for certain, in *one single* ancient Father, no, not for certain in *one single* ancient version. So transparent, in fact, is the absurdity of writing *to musterion hos* (“the mystery *who*”), that copyists promptly substituted *ho* (“which”), thus furnishing another illustration of the well-known property which a fabricated reading

has of, sooner or later, begetting offspring in its own likeness. Happily, to this second mistake the sole surviving witness is the Codex Claromontanus of the sixth century (D): the only Patristic evidence in its favour being Gelasius of Cyzicus (whose date is A.D.476): and the unknown author of a homily in the appendix to Chrysostom. Over this latter reading, however, we need not linger, seeing that *ho*, “which”, does not find a single patron at the present day.

Theos is the reading of *all the uncial copies extant but two*, and of *all the cursives but one*. The universal consent of the Lectionaries proves that *Theos* has been read in all the assemblies of the faithful since the fourth or fifth century of our era. At what earlier period of her existence is it then supposed that the church availed herself of the privilege to substitute *Theos* for *hos* or *ho*, whether in error or in fraud? Nothing short of a conspiracy, to which every region of the Eastern Church must have been a party, would account for the phenomenon.

We enquire for the testimony of the Fathers; and we discover that, (1) Gregory of Nyssa quoted *Theos* no less than twenty-two times. That *Theos* is also recognized by (2) his namesake of Nazianzus in two places; as well as by (3) Didymus of Alexandria; and (4) by pseudo Dionysius of Alexandria. It is also recognized (5) by Diodorus of Tarsus, and (6) Chrysostom quotes I Tim. iii. 16 in conformity with the Received Text at least three times. In addition there are twelve others, bringing the number up to eighteen.

We are indebted to Dean Burgon for these facts and would strongly recommend all who have any doubt as to the true reading to consult the masterly investigation contained in the Dean’s book “The Revision Revised”.

Some may suppose that whether we read the A.V., “God was manifest”, or the R.V., “He Who was manifested”, it comes to much the same thing, and question the necessity of the foregoing investigation. To such we would explain that the reasons for our concern are:--

- (1) We must resist, on principle, *any* tampering with the text, irrespective of its immediate effect.
- (2) We must be on our guard against anything that would “modernize” the teaching of the Word concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus.
- (3) We must remember that, sooner or later, they who adopt *hos*, will slide into *ho*. They will feel unsettled until they cut out all reference to “God” and translate the passage “which was manifest”. Dean Burgon expressed his thankfulness that there were no patrons for the discredited reading “which”. Yet we are sorry to say that this reading is being revived, and will suit the teaching that subordinates the Word from His true place in the Godhead.

- - - Illustration - - -
(BE-XXXII.216).

The Alexandrian Manuscript.

A great deal of controversy has gathered around the Alexandrian manuscript which is to be seen in the British Museum. Since this came to England 250 years ago the writing has faded considerably and we are not therefore to find our warrant for substituting *hos* for *Theos* by what can be seen to-day, but by what competent observers saw at the time of arrival of the manuscript.

“That Patrick Young, the first custodian and collator of the Codex (1628-1652) read *Theos* is certain. Young communicated the various readings of A to Abp. Ussher; and the latter, prior to 1652, communicated them to Hammond, who clearly knew nothing of *hos*. It is plain that *Theos* was the reading seen by Huish, when he sent his collation of the Codex (made according to Bentley, with great exactness) to Brian Walton, who published the fifth volume of his Polygott in 1657. Bp. Pearson who was very curious in such matters, says, ‘we find not *hos* in any copy’, a sufficient proof how *he* read the place in 1659. Bp. Fell, who published an edition of the N.T. in 1675, certainly considered *Theos* the reading of Codex A. Mill, who was at work on the text of the N.T. from 1677 to 1707, expressly declares that he saw the remains of *Theos* in this place. Bentley who had himself (1716) collated the MS with the utmost accuracy, knew nothing of any other reading. Emphatic testimony on the subject is borne by Wotton in 1718. ‘There can be no doubt (he says) that this MS always exhibited *Theos*. Of this, *anyone may easily convince himself who will be at pains to examine the place with attention*’.” (Dean Burgon).

“Two years earlier (we have it on the testimony of Mr. John Creyk, of St. John’s College, Cambridge) “the old line in the letter *theta* was plainly to be seen”. It was “much about the same time” also (viz. about 1716), that Wetstein acknowledged to the Rev. John Kippax, “who took it down in writing from his own mouth—that though the middle stroke of the *theta* has been evidently retouched, yet the fine stroke which was originally in the body of the *theta* is discoverable at each end of the fuller stroke of the corrector”. And Berriman himself (who delivered a course of lectures on the true reading of I Tim. iii. 16 in 1737-8), attests emphatically that he had seen it also. ‘*If therefore*’ (he adds) ‘*at any time hereafter the old line should become altogether undiscoverable, there will never be just cause to doubt but that the genuine, and original reading of the MS was THEOS: and that the new strokes, added at the top and in the middle by the corrector were not designed to corrupt or falsify, but to preserve and perpetuate the true reading, which was in danger of being lost by the decay of Time*’.” (Dean Burgon).

To this testimony must now be added that of modern photography. The camera has not only revealed the faded bar that proves that *Theos* is the true reading; it has also restored other faded parts of letters about which no controversy has arisen, but which might have become the basis of argument had the words been vital.

After reviewing the testimony of the different cursive copies of the epistles of Paul that are known, Dean Burgon says:--

“Behold then the provision which the Author of Scripture has made for the effectual conservation in its integrity of this portion of His written Word! Upwards of eighteen hundred years have run their course since the Holy Ghost by His servant, Paul, rehearsed the ‘mystery of godliness’; declaring *this* to be the great foundation fact, namely, that, GOD WAS MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH. And lo, out of *two hundred and fifty-four* copies of S. Paul’s Epistles no less than *two hundred fifty-two* are discovered to have preserved that expression. Such ‘consent’ amounts to *unanimity*; and, unanimity in this subject-matter is conclusive.

The copies of which we speak (you are requested to observe), were produced in every part of ancient christendom, being derived in every instance from copies older than themselves, which again, were transcripts of copies older still. They have since found their way, without design or contrivance, into the libraries of every country of Europe, where, for hundreds of years, they had been jealousy guarded. And, for what conceivable reason can this multitude of witnesses be supposed to have entered into a wicked conspiracy to deceive mankind?”

Such is the testimony of antiquity. This we sum up, for the benefit of those who may not have cared to wade through the evidence.

The reading of I Tim. iii. 16, “God was manifest in the flesh” is witnessed by 289 manuscripts, by 3 versions and by upwards of 20 Greek Fathers. Moreover the text of the R.V. does not make grammatical Greek. The relative pronoun *hos* should agree with its antecedent. *Musterion* is neuter. Bloomfield in his Synoptica says “*hos ephanerothe* is not Greek”.

We would conclude this series, with the calculated affirmation of our belief that the original reading of I Tim. iii. 16 is, “GOD was manifest in the flesh” and, like Thomas of old, we bow in this Presence and say “My Lord, and my God” and, like Philip, we say “Show us the Father, and it sufficeth us”.

Some of the evidence quoted from Dean Burgon will be found, together with other items of interest, in the series “The Volume of the Book” (Volumes XX - XXV). We feel that the subject is too important merely to refer the reader to that series, and that in collecting the evidence there was no help for it but to cover the ground, even at the risk of slight repetition. But who that love the Lord will begrudge a few pages of print? And who among our readers has an infallible memory?

The detailed examination of the terms used in I Tim. iii. 16 must await a future opportunity.

The Pulpit of the Opened Book.

#1. “A Pulpit with a Purpose” (Neh. viii. 4). pp. 165 - 168

Just as the epistles of Paul written during the period covered by the Acts, and the record of his public ministry which constitutes the bulk of Acts ix. - xxviii., must be taken together and considered as one work, so the written ministry of *The Berean Expositor*, and the spoken ministry at “The Chapel of the Opened Book” are one. Naturally the two phases of ministry differ in the method adopted to make known the truth, and each appeals to a different circle of hearers, but, apart from the previously written ministry, the Central Witness would have no existence, even as the doors of the Chapel of the Opened Book would have remained closed, so far as our witness is concerned, were it not for the generous fellowship of many readers who can themselves entertain little or no hope of ever attending its services.

As a means of strengthening the link that binds us all in one unbroken fellowship, we hope to reproduce in these pages some of the ministry already accomplished at the London Centre, and, as an introduction to the series, give the following gist of the address delivered at the inaugural meeting on 30th September, 1943, on “A Pulpit with a Purpose” (Neh. viii. 4).

As one listens to the account of the experiences of Nehemiah and Ezra in their endeavour to fulfil the will of the Lord in the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the restoration of the Temple, and follows the efforts of their successors, one hears an echo of those experiences right down the centuries, for, while manners and customs change, humanity remains the same, and from one generation to another the conflict between truth and error follows much the same course. Those of us who sought to put into effect the will of the Lord as we understood it, met with many experiences parallel with those of Nehemiah and Ezra. There were those who “laughed” and “despised” (Neh. ii. 19), and those who “mocked” and reminded us of our “feebleness” (Neh. iv. 2), and intimidation, if not reiterated “ten times” (Neh. iv. 12), was nevertheless repeated. We are never so susceptible as when the enemy appears conciliatory and invites us to a “conference” (Neh. vi. 2), and we are peculiarly vulnerable to the insidious attack of the “open letter” (Neh. vi. 5), besides having to bear the charge of seeking to exercise lordship over the Lord’s heritage (Neh. vi. 6, 7). This is the dark side of the picture, but neither Nehemiah, Ezra nor ourselves would be true to fact and experience if we did not testify to the bright and blessed side of the conflict too.

There were those who recognized that the time had come and said, “Let us rise up and build” (Neh. ii. 18), and there were those, like the nobles of the Tekoites, who, while not falling into line with their brethren, nevertheless “repaired another piece” (Neh. iii. 27) and so helped forward the work in unexpected ways. Then there were those who “gave unto the work” not only in labour and prayer, but in kind (Neh. vii. 70, 71). In either case, both lines, whether of opposition or help, converge, in the book of Nehemiah, in

chapter viii., in the “Pulpit erected with a purpose” and the “Opened Book”, even as our own experiences of 1943 converged in the opening of “The Chapel of the Opened Book”.

“And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose And Ezra *opened the book* in the sight of all the people” (Neh. viii. 4, 5).

The purpose of that pulpit was not to magnify Nehemiah the Tirshatha nor Ezra the Scribe. Most certainly it was not erected to enable a priestly cast to establish an ascendancy over the people, for its prime object was expressed in the words, “Ezra opened the book”.

Let us consider three aspects of this theme that must be true of the work now inaugurated, as it was true in the days of Israel’s return from captivity.

(1) The Opened Book must be read.

“So they read in the book in the law of God **DISTINCTLY**, and gave the **SENSE**, and caused them to **UNDERSTAND** the reading” (Neh. viii. 8).

To the Ethiopian riding in his chariot, Philip the evangelist put the question, “Understandest thou what thou *readest*?” (Acts viii. 30). To Timothy Paul wrote, “Till I come give attendance to *reading*” (I Tim. iv. 13), and even our Saviour, Who spake as never man spake, “stood up for to *read*” (Luke iv. 16).

It will therefore be the duty of all who minister in the Chapel of the Opened Book to see that the reading of the Word finds a prominent place in its services. But “reading”, to be a service and not a soporific, must be clear for “If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?” Reading therefore must be “distinct” and this lowly feature of public ministry will not be forgotten in the training of students in the days to come. Distinctness of enunciation, however, covers more than the emission of the sounds of words: it also has a bearing upon the sense of the words read. We have heard Luke xxiv. 25 so read as to make it seem that our Saviour rebuked the disciples for being such fools as to believe all that the prophets have spoken! or Rom. vi. 17 so read as to make the Apostle thank God that the Roman Christians were the servants of sin!

The first lesson then that we learn is, that in the ministry of the Word the Book must be “read”, and so read that its message shall be given “distinctly” and its “sense” preserved.

(2) The Opened Book must be “divided”.

At the beginning of His ministry our Lord entered the synagogue at Nazareth and stood up for to read, “And when He had opened the book” at Isa. lxi. we find that He read one verse and the one sentence following, and then closed the book, sat down and said, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears” (Luke iv. 21). A perusal of Isa. lxi. 1, 2 will show that the Lord put into operation that great principle of

interpretation entitled “right division” (II Tim. ii. 15), for He concluded His reading at the words, “To preach the acceptable year of the Lord”. Had He read on to the next line and said, “and the day of vengeance of our God”, He could not have also said, “This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears”, for those two sentences, though divided in our version by but a comma, belong to the two different advents of the Lord, at least 1900 years lying between them.

Therefore the second lesson that we learn is, that not only must the reading be “distinct”, to give the sense, but that it must also be “rightly divided”, otherwise passages that belong to differing dispensations will be confused and the hearers misled.

(3) The Opened Book speaks of Christ.

“And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?” (Luke xxiv. 32).

If we enquire what it was that caused this glow within the breasts of the saddened disciples, we discover that it was not eloquence, although we are sure that when He read the Holy Book. He, as none other, read “distinctly” and “gave the sense”; neither was it right division, although He could never confuse the dispensations that He Himself came to fulfil. No, He made His disciples’ hearts burn within them because,

“Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things CONCERNING HIMSELF” (Luke xxiv. 27).

So we, too, in type and shadow, in prophecy and in doctrine, shall see Him, and we shall preach Him, otherwise all our “distinctness” and all our “division” will be dead and fruitless. If, on the other hand, the ministry of the Opened Book follows the lead given by these three examples, we may confidently expect the sequel, “Their eyes were *opened*” (Luke xxiv. 31); “Then *opened* He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures” (Luke xxiv. 45).

It was announced from this “Pulpit with a purpose” at the inaugural meeting, that for the first six months the theme at the Sunday morning service would be the basic doctrine of the inspiration of all Scripture, so that there should be no uncertainty on the part of new-comers as to our attitude to the Word of God. We do not, of course, propose reproducing these thirty addresses on this one great theme, but we believe every reader and every supporter of the Central Witness would appreciate some idea of the way in which this theme has been presented, and we trust that the record may not only indicate the position taken up by the Central Witness, but that it will prove a blessing to those who read the outlines, and possibly provoke further testimony in the hands of those who are already engaged in public ministry. We therefore look forward to meeting the reader again in these pages, there to repeat the testimony given from the “Pulpit of the Opened Book”.

**#2. “A Threefold Cord is not quickly broken” (Eccles. iv. 12).
pp. 185 - 187**

Quite apart from the question of inspiration, we should expect that men like Peter and Paul, when conscious that their days on earth drew to a close, would not trifle with truth, nor waste precious opportunities, but that they would speak plainly of those things that were of lasting importance. If this be expected of fallible men, how much more of the Son of God Himself? If therefore we find that in the final scenes of their lives Peter, Paul and the Lord Himself chose to emphasize the inspiration and integrity of the Scriptures, we shall in that fact, possess a threefold testimony that will not quickly be broken by the fleeting and fickle opinions of fallible critics.

PETER, when he wrote his second epistle, knew that the hour of his death drew near:

“Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me” (II Pet. i. 14).

PAUL, when he wrote his second epistle to Timothy, knew that he had reached the end of his earthly life.

“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand” (II Tim. iv. 6).

CHRIST, when He prayed, as recorded in John xvii., knew that death drew near, for He said:

“Father, the hour is come” (John xvii. 1).

What is the testimony of these two great witnesses and that supreme Witness, to the truth of the Scriptures?

PETER.—“No prophecy of the Scripture is of its own unfolding (*idias epiluseos*), for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Pet. i. 20, 21).

Such is Peter’s explicit testimony. He declared that he had not followed “cunningly devised fables” (II Pet. i. 16), and he endorsed as historic facts the flood in the days of Noah, the destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, the deliverance of Lot, and the record of Balaam and the dumb ass that spoke (II Pet. ii. 5, 6, 7, 15, 16).

To Peter, the words written in the Scriptures are “holy commandments” (II Pet. ii. 21), whether written by prophets of old or apostles of the Lord and Saviour (II Pet. iii. 2). Finally, he does not hesitate in the same epistle to include the epistles of Paul as part of “the *other* scriptures” (II Pet. iii. 16).

PAUL.—“All scripture is given by inspiration of God” (II Tim. iii. 16).

Such is the testimony of Paul before his martyrdom for Christ’s sake. The truth especially entrusted to him as “The Lord’s prisoner” (II Tim. i. 8, 11, 12, 13), to be passed on to “faithful men who shall be able to teach others also” (II Tim. ii. 2), and the testimony to the Scriptures as a whole, are all associated with Paul’s own appointment and trust (II Tim. iii. 14).

These inspired Scriptures are equally fitted both to make a child “wise unto salvation” and to provide complete equipment for the service of the man of God (II Tim. iii. 15, 17).

In view of that solemn day when the Lord shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and kingdom, Paul exhorts Timothy to “Preach the Word” (II Tim. iv. 2), and assumes that this Word is both “Truth” and “Sound doctrine”, the preaching of which constitutes the “Work of an evangelist” (II Tim. iv. 3, 4, 5). For his own part testimony to the veracity of the Holy Scriptures formed no small portion of the “faith” which he had so faithfully “kept” (II Tim. iv. 7). Finally, if Paul was mistaken in his attitude to the Scriptures, how can the “Righteous Judge” be expected to approve of such mistaken zeal “in that day”?

CHRIST.—“I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me I have given them Thy Word Thy Word is truth” (John xvii. 8, 14, 17).

The Saviour, in full view of the fact that His hour had come, with emphasis upon the knowledge of the “true God”, the finishing of His work, and His investment with the glory which He had before the world was, brings into prominence both “The Words” and “The Word” which He had received and passed on, declaring that this Word was “Truth”.

Here then we have a threefold witness that cannot be set aside without destroying the whole Christian fabric. But the endorsement of the Holy Scriptures by Peter, Paul and the Lord is not confined to their last testimonies, for it forms the very warp and woof of their whole witness. In illustration of this, and as a supplement to the threefold testimony to which we have referred, we append the headings of a discourse upon the Saviour’s endorsement of Holy Scripture.

(1) THE O.T. CANON . . .

“THE LAW OF MOSES—
THE PROPHETS—
THE PSALMS.”

(2) SPECIFIC AUTHORS . . .

MOSES (John v. 46, 47).
DAVID (Matt. xxii. 41-46).
ISAIAH (Luke iv. 16-19).
JONAH (Matt. xii. 40, 41).
DANIEL (Matt. xxiv. 15).

Such is the general testimony concerning the appointment and equipment of Moses. Let us note one specific period in that long ministry which is covered by the last reference cited above.

The Law at Sinai.—“And God spake all these words saying” (Exod. xx. 1). If this initial sentence were false, the truthfulness and validity of the whole of the law that follows would be called in question, and if the law, then the covenants, the promises, and finally Him Who came, not to destroy, but to fulfil, the law and the prophets.

“For who is there of all flesh that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of fire, as we have, and lived?” (Deut. v. 26).

DAVID.

“David, the son of Jesse, said The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue” (II Sam. xxiii. 1, 2).

“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which spake with His mouth unto David my father, and hath with His hand fulfilled it” (I Kings viii. 15).

Here is not only assertion, but confirmation. Solomon could add that God’s hand had fulfilled what His word had declared.

ISAIAH.

“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken” (Isa. i. 1).

JEREMIAH.

“To whom the word of the Lord came Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak Behold I have put My words in thy mouth” (Jer. i. 1-9).

This is not only the consistent testimony of the O.T. itself; it is endorsed by the Apostles after the resurrection of the Lord.

PETER.

“Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus” (Acts i. 16).

THE PROPHETS.

The testimony of Heb. i. 1, “God hath spoken by the prophets”, but gathers up and endorses the burden of both Old and New Testaments. I Sam. ix. 9 says that “before time” the prophets were called “seers”, a word that translates two Hebrew words, *chozeh* (II Sam. xxiv. 11) “the prophet Gad, David’s *seer*”, and *roeh* (I Sam. ix. 9) “Come, let us go to the *seer*; for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a

seer". Both words lay emphasis upon "seeing" and "vision". The word usually translated "prophet" is *nabi*. The function of a prophet is well illustrated by the relationship instituted by God between Moses and Aaron, when He said,

"See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh; and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet" (Exod. vii. 1).

"Thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God" (Exod. iv. 15, 16).

Here is an inspired definition of the office of a prophet:--

"He shall be unto thee instead of a mouth."

"God hath spoken by the prophets."

Let us look at some of the ways in which the divine message was given to the prophets.

- (1) By human, articulate, speech (I Sam. iii. 4).
- (2) By handwriting (His hand upon me) (I Chron. xxviii. 19).
- (3) By dumb show (Ezek. iv. 1-8).
- (4) By personal relationships (Hosea i. 2-11; iii. 1-5).
- (5) By vision (Acts x. 11).
- (6) By dream (Dan. ii.).
- (7) By interpretations of dreams (Dan. ii.).

Among the O.T. prophets who are mentioned by name in the N.T. are Isaiah (Luke iv. 17); Jonah (Matt. xvi. 4); Elijah and Elisha (Luke iv. 25, 27); Jeremiah (Matt. ii. 17); Daniel (Matt. xxiv. 15) and Joel (Acts ii. 16). Beside these, the prophets are mentioned in general terms in the Gospels, the Acts and the epistles of Paul, Peter and James.

We have therefore unequivocal testimony as to what the office of a prophet involves, the historic position which the prophets occupy, and the intimate relation instituted by the apostolic writers of the N.T. between the Gospels and the earlier Scriptures.

"God hath spoken by the Prophets."

#4. The Inspired Book. pp. 230, 231

Many and varied definitions of the term “Inspiration”, when used of the Scriptures, have been suggested. The following adapted from that given by Dr. Henderson may be helpful:--

“Divine inspiration is an extraordinary and supernatural influence exerted by the Holy Spirit on the minds of the sacred writers, in such words and degrees as to lead to, and secure, in documentary forms, the depositions of such historical, doctrinal and prophetic truth as Infinite wisdom deemed requisite for the immediate and future guidance of His people.”

Inspiration is found in operation in the Scriptures in two modes:

- (1) Immediate, without the use of external means.
- (2) Mediate, by the intervention of outside agencies.

Under the first heading we place such passages and statements as II Sam. xxiii. 2, “*in me*”, Matt. x. 20, “*in you*” and I Pet. i. 11, “*in them*”.

Under the second we place those cases where a variety of means is employed.

- (1) *Audible and articulate sounds* (as recorded in Numb. vii. 89; viii. 1 and xii. 8).
“There fell a voice” (Dan. iv. 31; Matt. iii. 17; xvii. 5; II Pet. i. 17, 18; and John xii. 28, 30).
- (2) *Appearance accompanying the spoken word*.
We have the fire, blackness, tempest and sound of a trumpet at the giving of the law (Heb. xii. 18-21); the vision of the Seraphim in Isa. vi.; the appearing of the Lord to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts ix. 4; xxii. 9; xxvi. 14); the appearing of angels to Abraham, to David, to Gideon and Mary, and the mediation of angels at the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai (Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ii. 1, 2), and at the birth of Christ at Bethlehem (Luke ii. 9-14).

The inspiration of “words” (I Cor. ii. 13; John xvii. 8), as well as of the Scriptures as a whole, is stressed; indeed the testimony of the Scriptures regarding inspiration is rather to the inspired *Book* than inspired *men*, for the instruments used by God may be as holy as Moses and as wise as Daniel, or they may be as crafty as Caiaphas and as greedy as Balaam: as insensible as the hand at Belshazzar’s feast, or as intangible as the phenomena at Sinai.

The whole of the O.T. Scriptures are the work of men named “Prophets”. Moses was a prophet (Acts vii. 37); David was a prophet (Acts ii. 30); all who “spoke since the world began” were prophets (Luke i. 70). The O.T. Scriptures are therefore the work of prophets.

What of the N.T. writers? Peter was a prophet (II Pet. iii. 2), and Paul was a prophet (Rom. xvi. 24). N.T. prophets are greater than those who were before them (Luke vii. 28). Moreover, the apostle is always placed higher than the prophet (I Cor. xii. 28; Eph. ii. 20; iv. 11), so that if inspiration is associated with prophetic office, much more is it to be associated with the apostolic gift. The apostles spoke "as though God did beseech" by them (II Cor. v. 20). Their words were received, not as the words of men, but as the words of God (I Thess. ii. 13); the new covenant message given through the apostles is in every way "more excellent" than the old covenant message of Moses. These apostles were led into "all truth" by the Holy Ghost (John xvi. 13); and Paul asserts that the revelation of the mystery, made known by himself as the prisoner of the Lord, "completes" the word of God (Col. i. 25). Luke declares that he received perfect understanding "from above" (Luke i. 3), as the words "from the very first" should be translated, and the Book of the Revelation declares itself a prophecy, with solemn warning (Rev. i. 3; xxii. 18, 19).

We may speak of Shakespeare, of Beethoven, or of Michael Angelo as being "inspired", for their thoughts were indeed raised above the common level of mankind, but we search in vain throughout the writings of Shakespeare for such an expression as "Thus saith the Lord".

To repeat, and to conclude, we do not contend so much for the inspiration of the *men*, who wrote as for the fact that in what they wrote; in the Bible; we possess an inspired *Book*, and we would ever press upon ourselves and our hearers the fact that:

"Men doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. viii. 3).

The Self-Drawn Portrait of the Apostle Paul.

#4. Earnest Indignation.

pp. 47 - 48

“Here we see that earnest indignation which bids his converts ‘beware of dogs, beware of the concision’, and pours itself forth in the emphatic ‘God forbid’, which meets every antinomian suggestion.” (Conybeare and Howson).

The Apostle Paul could use great plainness of speech when the occasion required, and he did not hesitate when the truth was at stake, to speak of the enemies of the faith in the strongest terms. The Dictionary defines “indignation” as “extreme anger caused by a sense of injury or injustice; contemptuous hatred of what is mean or base; the action of counting or treating as unworthy of regard”. The word is associated with the Latin *indignari*, “to regard as unworthy”. Conybeare and Howson are careful to speak of the Apostle’s “earnest indignation”, realizing only too well that, while we are in the flesh, “wrath” and “hatred” can easily spoil our protests against evil. Nor for a moment must we countenance “railing for railing”. The Apostle himself bids us to let our “moderation” be known to all men. Nevertheless, if we rule out all passion that has the flesh as its origin, there is still a place for “earnest indignation” in the make-up of the saint, and it certainly found a place in Paul’s own character. The Apostle approved this holy intolerance when practiced by the Corinthians in connection with their own evils, although, at the same time, he urged them to exercise forgiveness, and love toward the repentant offender (II Cor. ii. 6-11). “Ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation!” (II Cor. vii. 11). It is incumbent upon us to repudiate “anything that is unworthy”, even though sorrow temper our zeal, and love lead us to help the very one whose errors we so vehemently reject. This double attitude is characteristic of the apostle Paul. It is almost impossible for us, with the two natures that belong to this present life, to “hate” without sin, and yet we read that He who was perfect “hated iniquity” (Heb. i. 9). “Indignation” is certainly right and legitimate if it is not spoiled by what is of the flesh.

We can sense a little of the Apostle’s “earnest indignation” in his reply to the questioner of Rom. ix. “Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast Thou made me thus?” (Rom. ix. 19, 20). Or again, when replying to the questioner of I Cor. xv. 35, 36: “Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die.”

The Apostle’s indignation is again apparent in I Thess. ii., where he feelingly refutes some of the charges made against him:

“For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile; but as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, Which trieth our hearts. For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloke of covetousness; God is witness; nor of men sought we glory,

neither of you, nor yet of others, when we might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ" (I Thess. ii. 3-6).

There are many occasions in the life of a servant of God when he should allow slanderous statements made against him to pass in silence. Only when the ministry entrusted to this charge is in danger of being compromised, or the glory of the Lord tarnished, is self-vindication justified. During the years that *The Berean Expositor* has been published, we have naturally had our share of misrepresentation, but, while "earnest indignation" has often been felt, there has seldom been any need for public refutation.

Some believers object to the A.V. translation "God forbid", and point out that the name of God is not used in the original. This is certainly true, and various alternative renderings, such as "Far be it", "Far be the thought", "No, indeed", "May it not come to that", "Certainly not", have been suggested. There is not much to choose between these various suggestions—all express the Apostle's utter repudiation and abhorrence. The R.V., however, retains the translation given in A.V. in most places, and we must confess that, much as we should deprecate using the name of God carelessly, the possible alternatives hardly seem to do justice to the indignation, unhesitating, uncompromising repudiation that the Apostle intended. We give below fourteen occurrences of the expression as used by him.

Me genoito, "God forbid" (A.V.).

"For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid" (Rom. iii. 3, 4).

"If our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous Who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid" (Rom. iii. 5, 6).

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid" (Rom. iii. 31).

"What shall we then say? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid" (Rom. vi. 1, 2).

"What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid" (Rom. vi. 15).

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid" (Rom. vii. 7).

"Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid" (Rom. vii. 13).

"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid" (Rom. ix. 14).

"I say then, Hath God cast away His people? God forbid" (Rom. xi. 1).

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid" (Rom. xi. 11).

"Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid" (I Cor. vi. 15).

"If, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid" (Gal. ii. 17).

"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid" (Gal. iii. 21).

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. vi. 14).

These fourteen repudiations throw a wonderful light upon the spiritual portrait of the Apostle. If the reader will ponder these passage, he will understand a little of our own feelings of "earnest indignation" at some recent attempts to shift human responsibility and make Christ "the minister of sin".

The fourteen references group themselves as follows:

Faith without effect?	\	} The dealings of God.
Unrighteous who taketh vengeance?	/	
Void by faith?	/	
Continue in sin?	\	} The saint's relation to sin and law.
Shall we sin?	/	
Is the law sin?	/	
Was good made death?	/	
Unrighteousness because hate?	\	} The dealings of God.
Cast away His people?	/	
Stumbled that they fall?	/	
Members of an harlot?	\	} The saint's relation to sin in the flesh, the world, and law.
Christ the minister of sin?	/	
Law against promises?	/	
Cross and the world?	/	

#5. His Fervid Patriotism.

pp. 179 - 181

“Here we see that fervid patriotism which makes him ‘wish that he were himself accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites.’ (Conybeare and Howson).

It was Nurse Cavell, whose patriotism was sealed with her life's blood, who was responsible for the famous words: “Patriotism is not enough.” If it is untempered and unguided, patriotism may lead to injustice, blindness, narrowness, and many other excesses. For the Christian to-day who confesses himself a pilgrim and a stranger, patriotism needs purging before it can be used with a good conscience. In Paul's case, however, no scruples concerning other-worldliness and the common relationship of all men would arise. Israel were a chosen people, and their law a chosen law. Their city was destined to be the hub of the earth, and their priestly kingdom was designed for the blessing of all nations. On the other hand, it was true that the Jews as a whole had allowed their patriotism to degenerate. They hugged to themselves their descent from Abraham as though it were an exclusive privilege, and forgot the connected fact that they were thus chosen so that all families of the earth through them should be blessed. Not so, however, the Apostle to the Gentiles. In the very heart of his epistle to the Romans and with the blessing of the Gentiles in view, he says that his heart's desire for Israel was “that they might be saved”.

In our exposition of Rom. ix. (Volume XXVII, page 157) we have discussed the Apostle's intention when he used the words: “I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ” (Rom. ix. 3). Whatever his meaning may have been—whether he really meant that in the spirit of Christ's great sacrifice he would even be willing to suffer

eternal reprobation for Israel's sake, or whether he fully understood and sympathized with Israel's rejection of their Messiah, because he himself had in ignorance blasphemed that same Name—whatever may be the true interpretation, one thing is abundantly evident, and that is his most intense longing for Israel's salvation, and his keen realization of the wonderful privileges that belonged to them (see verses 4 and 5).

At the close of the dispensational section of Romans (xi. 26-36), the Apostle rejoices in that glorious future day when “all Israel shall be saved”, and in verse 33 he speaks of the “depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God”. This is indeed true patriotism—desiring the very best for one's own people.

The word “patriotism” is derived from *pater*, “father”. At one time Saul of Tarsus was an “exceeding zealot” for the traditions of his fathers (Gal. i. 14)—a patriotism that was Pharisaic, blind and bigoted. This, however, he had now cast aside with all his self-centred hopes as an Israelite (Phil. iii. 7, 8), and had found a new *patria*, “the whole family in heaven and earth” (Eph. iii. 15)—and in particular that section of it whose sphere of blessing is far above principalities and powers. At the same time he realized that his kinsmen according to the flesh would one day, by grace, form a part of the *patria* that would fill earth as well as heaven with the redeemed of Israel and the nations. The “fervid patriotism” of Gal. i. 14 and Acts ix. 1 had been translated into higher and more spiritual terms, and the Apostle found that he could still desire the best for his kinsmen according to the flesh, while at the same time rejoicing in that ministry which set aside the distinction between “Jew and Greek”, and made them “all one in Christ Jesus”.

There was no possibility of Paul ever falling into the snare that has entrapped many to-day. Only recently, in the correspondence columns of a Christian journal, one writer has been seeking to prove that the blessings forfeited by Israel have been transferred to the Church. This is a suggestion that the Apostle would have been the first to repudiate as he does, in effect, with his “God forbid” in Rom. xi. 11.

As Gal. iii. 28, 29 was written some year or two before Rom. ix., it is clear that the higher spiritual teaching entrusted to Paul did not in anyway alter the gifts and calling of God concerning Israel. Since Acts xxviii., however, the “Lo-ammi” condition of Israel has altered the face of things considerably, and the insistence upon the “Jew first” as found in Romans and the Acts is no longer dispensational. Nevertheless it remains true that no one who loves the Scripture written by Israel's prophets, evangelists and apostles, no one who is saved by the precious blood of the Messiah of Israel, no one who realizes that that one blessed Name is over the whole *patria* of God whether on earth or in heaven (Eph. iii. 15), but will feel in some degree that same “patriotism” that is so marked a feature in the Apostle's self-drawn portrait.

#6. Separate Features. Generosity. pp. 218 - 220

“Here we see that generosity which looked for no other reward than ‘to preach the glad tidings of Christ’ without charge, and made him feel that he would rather die ‘than that any man should make this glorying void’.” (Conybeare and Howson).

The word “generous” comes from *genus*, stock or race, and its first meaning is, “Of noble lineage; high born” and it is so used by Shakespeare, “Most generous Sir”, where we would say “High born” or “Noble”. The meaning “liberal in giving” is secondary but in modern usage has come to the fore.

In Hamlet Shakespeare makes play upon this connection between *genus* and *generosity*. When the king, who has murdered his own brother and married his brother’s widow, addresses Hamlet, the murdered king’s son, with the words: “But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son”, Shakespeare, playing upon the double meaning of the word “kind”, makes Hamlet interject, as an aside, “A little more than kin, and less than kind”.

Generosity serves out of love; it is disinterested; it is chivalrous; it scorns the hireling’s motive. This quality is well-marked in the portrait of the Apostle. He might have been burdensome as an apostle, yet, he acted rather as a nursing mother (I Thess. ii. 6, 7), a figure which earth’s store of language cannot surpass as a type of self-forgetting, free-giving, love. Writing to the Corinthians the Apostle said:--

“Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth” (II Cor. xi. 7-11).

Generosity is not manifested only, or even chiefly, in the sphere of finance. Nothing could be more generous than the Apostle’s attitude to the churches, whose divisions, whose failings, and whose cares, were such a burden upon his heart. It is characteristic of the opening of his epistles that he gives thanks for some spiritual quality evident among those addressed, even though he finds it necessary to follow with severe censure, as in I Cor. i. The complete absence of such commendation in Gal. i. is therefore the more striking. The white heat of his concern for the Galatians and his indignation at the inroads of the Judaizers, brooked no delay, not even for courtesy or for generosity. Yet, if generosity is associated with one’s genus or kind, surely the kindest thing that Paul could do was, without truce or parley, to smite to the ground, that which threatened the free men of God with the chains and fetters of bondage.

Paul’s generosity is again manifested in his word to the Philippians:--

“If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, reckon these things” (Phil. iv. 8).

It is the first of that blessed series of statements made about Christian love in I Cor. xiii.: “Love suffereth long, and is kind.” Generosity springs out of the very salvation we have received.

“Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you” (Eph. iv. 32).

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal. vi. 2).

Chrestotes, “kindness”, “gentleness”, “goodness”, as it is translated, is found only in the writings of Paul. *Haplotēs*, translated “liberality” and “bountifulness”, is also found only in Paul’s epistles.

The world has a proverb, however, that it will be well to remember: “A man must be just before he is generous.” There is a so-called generosity that plays havoc with truth. To this the Apostle was a stranger. He would willingly surrender his *own* rights. He would gladly abstain from eating this, or drinking that; he would become a Jew that he might win the Jew; he would be as one without law to win the Gentile; he could be made all things to all men, that by all means he might save some (I Cor. ix. 22). But, any who misinterpreted this generous latitude for slackness in stewardship were profoundly surprised when they discovered that, contrary to the opinion they had formed, the pliant flexibility of the Apostle’s character was like that of the finest steel, for while he was willing to concede all the non-essentials to a degree that called down on his devoted head the judgment of partisan and pedant, not one atom of the sacred trust that had been committed to him would he yield, no, not for all the “somebodies” and “somewhats” at Jerusalem.

This is true generosity, all else is marred by the presence of indifference, of low ideas of stewardship, or of cowardice. The Apostle’s own interpretation of generosity, is “first give yourselves” (II Cor. viii. 5), and this he did, saying, so truly:

“I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved” (II Cor. xii. 15).

Three Spheres of Blessing.

(Being a series of articles in which proof is given from the Scriptures as to the existence, and the distinctive character, of three spheres of blessing; together with an examination of the terms used in Scripture to define these spheres, and an exhaustive analysis of controverted items, with a view to establishing the believer, and lifting these questions, once and for all, above the possibility of legitimate objection).

#1. Far above all. pp. 75 - 79

The following articles were written several years ago, after an attack had been made upon THE BEREAN EXPOSITOR concerning its teaching on the subject of "The three spheres of blessing". At the time, however, we had so much positive teaching to give and, as always, the space at our disposal was so restricted, that the attack was allowed to pass without comment and, though written, the articles were not printed.

Recently some of our readers will have seen a revival of this attack, in which many of the arguments of the earlier critic are repeated. In the circumstances, continued silence on our part may be misconstrued, and as we have a moral responsibility to do all we can to preserve those who have seen the truth from being spoiled by fallacious arguments, we feel constrained to publish at this later date the previously prepared articles dealing with the subject.

One of the items particularly stressed by the critics is the interpretation of the Greek word *huperano*, which is rendered "far above" in the A.V. of Eph. i. 21. We draw the reader's attention to the fact that in the articles now published the doctrine of the three spheres is established before the word *huperano* is considered, and that whatever the accepted interpretation of this word may be, it does not affect the doctrine in question.

With fellow-believers or with fellow-workers we must not strive, but while we have the example of the Apostle Paul before us it becomes impossible to see the truth wrested and misrepresented without accepting the challenge to contend earnestly for the faith.

Writing to the Philippians, the Apostle said: "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Phil. iii. 1), and in another context, he wrote to the Thessalonians: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. v. 21).

We have on several occasions expatiated on the exalted sphere of the church of the present dispensation, and to put pen to paper once again in the interest of that high calling is indeed by no means “grievous”, the more so as the truth concerning it is repeatedly challenged. In dealing with this subject we shall assume nothing as true until every point has been proved from scripture. We shall “prove all things”, and then, against all opposition, endeavour to “hold fast that which is good”. This being the intention, progress must necessarily be “slow” to be “sure”; we shall have to cover ground already traversed, and “prove” many a point about which we have ourselves no doubt. But the cause of truth demands our utmost, and the establishment of fellow-members can only be “in the faith”. If, therefore, the labour be sometime tedious, the goal is glorious, and so, as we have already quoted, to us who write, such reiteration will not be “grievous”, and for those who read we believe it will be “safe”.

Not only has the claim that “three” spheres of blessing are revealed in the Scriptures been challenged, but even the employment of the English word “sphere” has been questioned. For anyone whose mother tongue is English, to question the propriety of this usage of “sphere” sounds the reverse of true criticism. It seems to result from either lack of knowledge, or an attempt to utilize a specious argument for the sake of victory rather than for the love of truth. Perhaps we should be justified in dismissing such an objection, but as our endeavour is to prove all things we waive the point, and give the judgment of the Oxford English Dictionary. After defining the primary meaning of a sphere, the Dictionary proceeds to its figurative use, thus:

“A province or domain in which one’s activities or faculties find scope or exercise, or within which they are naturally confined; range or compass of action or study 1606.
The whole province, domain or range of some quality or activity 1602.”

When, therefore, we use the term “spheres” of blessing we use a word that has the highest sanction, and can well afford to ignore our would-be mentor.

For the sake of the truth we restate our theme thus: “There are three distinct *provinces within which* the distinctive blessings of the various callings revealed in Scripture are naturally confined.” In order to avoid circumlocution we adopt the word “sphere” to express this fact.

As this item has been established beyond the possibility of denial, so we intend to establish every other item, and ask the reader to keep check upon our procedure and its results.

Preparatively, let us settle another point. A phrase or an expression may not be “scripture”, yet it may be “scriptural”, but, because the distinction between these two terms is not clearly understood, the unwary may be impressed by the statement that a particular expression is not “scriptural”.

Now because the term “sphere” does not occur in the Scriptures, is it therefore unscriptural? According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word “scriptural” is anything “based upon, derived from, or depending upon Holy Scripture”. Because, therefore, an

English *word* does not appear in Holy Scripture, such word need not be unscriptural; it could only rightly be called unscriptural if the *idea* contained in the term was not based upon, derived from, or depending upon Holy Scripture. Therefore, to say, regarding the use of the term “sphere”: “As it is not an inspired term we have no means of fixing its force”; seems either to manifest ignorance of the English language or to be an effort unduly to influence the unwary. In either case the matter is no loner disputable, for the use of the term “sphere of blessing” has been proved to be both good English and scriptural.

Our next step is to enumerate, in scriptural terms, the actual “spheres of blessing” that are spoken of in the Scriptures, and then to compare and contrast them so that by trying the things that differ we may avoid confusion and keep each calling in its appointed place. Let us begin with our own calling as revealed in the Epistle to the Ephesians.

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

At the moment we are not concerned with the *kind* of blessings here set forth, namely, “all spiritual”, but with the “province”, “range” or “domain” in which these blessings naturally find their setting, and we have but to record:

(1) *The sphere of blessing found in Eph. i. 3 is defined as “in heavenly places”.*

Again we are not yet concerned as to whether these “heavenly places” are no higher than the firmament in which birds fly; whether they denote the starry heavens; or whether they refer to a position far above all. All that we are immediately concerned with is that a distinct “sphere” is indicated by the words “in heavenly places”.

We now turn to another part of the N.T., where we read of another sphere of blessing: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt. v. 5). Once more, we are not concerned with the character of those here referred to, nor with their inheritance, but exclusively with the “sphere” of their inheritance, and we therefore record:

(2) *A sphere of blessing is found in Matt. v. 5, which is defined as “the earth”.*

We assume, but have not yet proved, that “the earth” and “heavenly places” are two distinct spheres. Common sense says that they are distinct, but we leave the proof until later.

Here, then, are two spheres of blessing concerning which there is no controversy. But, in addition to these two, we discover what appears to be an intermediate sphere of blessing, a sphere above “the earth”, yet not “in heavenly places”. For this we turn to Gal. iii. 14: “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ.” The question which now arises is, Does this passage refer to a distinct sphere of blessing, or is this blessing of Abraham to be enjoyed in one or other of the two spheres already considered? A complete answer can only be given after careful examination, but for the sake of conscisness, and to bring our first study to a conclusion, we note that in

this calling, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. iii. 28).

This unity does not sound like the constitution of a kingdom, which is what is in view in Matt. v. Rather it so resembles the later revelation of Ephesians that some have adopted the expression “All one in Christ Jesus” with the idea that it declares the Unity of the spirit of Eph. iv. Before seeing the proofs, most, if not all, will agree that Gal. iii. 14 does not refer to an inheritance on the “earth”. Yet when we read on to Gal. iii. 29, we are prevented from asserting that it belongs to the sphere of the mystery made known in Ephesians, for we find it stated: “and if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

So entirely contrary is it to the scriptural teaching concerning the mystery to make it a fulfillment of any promise to Abraham that we must hesitate to place this company, which is Abraham’s seed, “in heavenly places”. We therefore search further in this epistle, and in the fourth chapter we find the following statement: “But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise” (Gal. iv. 26, 28). “Jerusalem which is above”, is neither on “the earth” nor “in heavenly places far above all principality”, and as this city forms the theme of Heb. xi. 9-16 and xii. 18-23, where the “heavenly country” is contrasted with the “earth”, we are obliged to record a third sphere of blessing:

(3) A third sphere of blessing, differing from that of Eph. i. 3 and that of Matt. v. 5 is recorded in the Epistles to the Galatians and the Hebrews, and is associated with the heavenly Jerusalem, a sphere distinct on the one hand from the earth and its kingdom, and on the other hand from the heavenly places which are the sphere of the church of the mystery.

Our further studies must be directed to a fuller explanation of the distinctions that Scripture makes between these three spheres, and an examination of what is intended by such expressions as “in heavenly places”, and “far above all”, but no doubt can be entertained as to the existence in Scripture of these separate callings and their corresponding spheres.

THE THREE SPHERES OF BLESSING.

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|--------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| (1) “The Earth” . . . | (Matt. v. 5) . . . | <i>The Kingdom.</i> |
| (2) “Jerusalem which is above” . . . | (Gal. iii., iv.) . . . | <i>The Bride.</i> |
| (3) “In heavenly places” . . . | (Eph. i. 3) . . . | <i>The Body.</i> |

#2. Earth. pp. 92 - 96

In our opening article (pages 75-79) we established the *fact* that Scripture speaks of three distinct spheres of blessing but left unexamined the *terms* used to define them. To this we now address ourselves and begin at the lowest, the one with which we are all familiar, “The earth”. In the near context of Matt. v. 5, which speaks of the meek who shall inherit the earth, we learn of a kingdom which is yet to be set up on the earth: “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done *on earth*, as it is in heaven.” (Matt. vi. 10). In that prophecy of His second coming, The Revelation, one of the titles of the Lord is: “The Prince of the Kings of *the earth*” (Rev. i. 5). The extent of this kingdom is defined in Psalm lxxii.: “He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of *the earth*.” And again in Psalm ii. 8: “Ask of Me and I will give Thee the heathen, Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of *the earth*, Thy possession.” Yet again, the prophet Zechariah says:

“He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of *the earth*” (Zech. ix. 10).

Moreover, in The Revelation we read:

“The seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of *this world* are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever” (Rev. xi. 15).

This kingdom on the earth will have an administrative centre:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for *out of Zion* shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord *from Jerusalem*” (Isa. ii. 3).

This is supplemented by Zechariah the prophet:

“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be that whoso will not come up of all the families of *the earth* unto *Jerusalem* to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be *no rain*” (Zech. xiv. 16, 17).

It will be seen by the two later references from Isaiah and Zechariah that not only is the city of Jerusalem represented as the capital of the kingdom, but also as the centre of worship, and this is in harmony with the destiny of Israel, when that nation is at length saved, for Israel is to be a kingdom of priests unto God (Rev. i. 6). They will be made so under the New Covenant and the blood of Christ, in fulfillment of the original purpose of

God expressed at the foot of Mount Sinai but, by reason of the weakness of the flesh, rendered impossible of accomplishment under the law (Exod. xix. 6).

Inasmuch as the bulk of Scripture is taken up with the history and prophecy of this earthly people and kingdom, no attempt on our part, particularly considering the limitations of our space, can possibly do more than indicate the fact of its existence. There is, however, unanimity among most believers regarding this first, or lowest, sphere of blessing, and while we shall have to return to the subject, when certain of its features will be compared with those of other spheres, we now pass on to the consideration of the next sphere, having left nothing unproved or resting upon mere assumption. Therefore we feel that we can safely make this statement:

The earth will be a sphere of blessing in which there shall be set up a kingdom, over which the Lord shall be King, with Jerusalem the chosen centre, and Israel a Kingdom of Priests. This we will call the First Sphere.

We come now to the second sphere; that which is associated with the *heavenly* Jerusalem, and it must be recorded a fact of importance, that no hint of such a sphere is to be found in the whole of the Old Testament. Yet when we study the New Testament we learn that its existence was intimately known by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For this information we turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews.

In Heb. xi. the Apostle illustrates the statement that “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”, by the examples of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Coming to the example of the patriarchs, the Apostle pauses to add:

“By faith he (Abraham) sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange land, dwelling in tabernacles (*tents*) with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. *For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God*” (Heb. xi. 9, 10).

After speaking of Sarah’s faith, the Apostle reverts to the subject of this city, saying:

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. *For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.* And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. *But now they desire a better country, that is a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He hath prepared for them a city*” (Heb. xi. 9-16).

After a further and fuller expansion of the theme of Heb. xi. 1 the Apostle returns to the subject of the heavenly city in chapter xii., but approaches it from another angle. We reserve comment upon the significance of this new angle until we have established the fact of the revelation of all three spheres, and meantime pass on to verse 22:

“But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven” (Heb. xii. 22, 23).

Other references to this sphere of blessing are found in The Revelation:

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God: and I will write upon him My new name’ (Rev. iii. 12).

The significance of the fact that this is associated with the overcomer, together with the similar significance of the context of Heb. xii., will be considered when we come to deal with the subject of the spheres themselves: at present we confine ourselves to establishing the fact that the Scriptures speak of such spheres:

“And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. xxi. 2).

“He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (Rev. xxi. 10).

The testimony of Heb. xi. 16 alone is sufficient proof that this heavenly city is a separate sphere of blessing from that of the earth, and while much must yet be studied if we would appreciate its true significance, we can, without hesitation, affirm that there is full scriptural testimony to the existence of this second sphere of blessing.

Granting that these two spheres of blessing are actual, scriptural, facts, the question that now awaits an answer is: Do they exhaust the teaching of Scripture on the subject? In other words, is there a third sphere of blessing distinct from both the earth and the heavenly city? We believe there is, and proceed at once to state the evidence for this belief.

The Epistle to the Ephesians was written by Paul as “the prisoner of Jesus Christ” (Eph. iii. 1). Israel, as a nation, had been set aside by the quoting of Isa. vi. 10, as recorded in Acts xxviii., and with that setting aside had of necessity gone the hope and the blessings of which they were the appointed channel. While Israel remained as a nation before God, the Gentile believer could be “blessed with faithful Abraham” (Gal. iii. 9); could be associated with Israel under the New Covenant (II Cor. iii. 6); could entertained the hope of Israel (Rom. xv. 12, 13); and “partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree” (Rom. xi. 17); but, with Israel set aside, there arose the necessity of a further revelation from God—if all was not to be plunged into confusion and end in despair. This revelation is claimed by Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians:

“If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me to you-ward (Gentiles): How that *by revelation* He made known unto me the mystery” (Eph. iii. 3).

This mystery has particular reference to the new position assigned to the Gentiles:

“That the *Gentiles* should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ, by the gospel, whereof I was made a minister” (Eph. iii. 6, 7).

Here we have a “dispensation” which was particularly concerned with the Gentiles; a “revelation” that makes known that which was a “mystery”, and that, hitherto, this mystery had been “hid in God” (Eph. iii. 9). And not only was it “hid in God”, but “from the ages and from the generations, though now made manifest to His saints” (Col. i. 26).

In order that no statement shall be accepted as true that is not proved from the Scriptures, we pause to justify the remark that “the dispensation of the mystery was revealed after the setting aside of Israel”. Usually it is enough to produce the missing link in a chain, but, if the play of words may be pardoned, we have a complete chain of evidence, and that none other than the one which fettered the Apostle Paul in his Roman prison.

Until the all-day conference with the leaders of the Jews, which concluded with their dismissal at the quoting of Isa. vi., there was the human possibility of the national repentance of Israel, and the realization of that nation’s hope. Consequently, the Apostle rightly says in Acts xxviii. 20: “For *the hope of Israel* I am bound with this chain.” When next he speaks of his bonds as his chain, the dispensation of the mystery had been entrusted to him, and in Eph. iii., iv. & vi., and Col. iv., his chain is most intimately associated with the mystery.

While there is much more to be said concerning the unique character of this new revelation, enough has been adduced to prove beyond dispute that this dispensation of the mystery, revealed after the setting aside of Israel, must be different from both the earthly sphere, and the new Jerusalem, and as we have seen that these latter terms represent two very distinct spheres, we are compelled to subscribe to the doctrine of three spheres of blessing, thus:--

- (1) FIRST SPHERE . . . *The Earth*.—Subject of O.T. and part of N.T.
Israel dominant.
- (2) SECOND SPHERE . . . *New Jerusalem*.—Subject only of part of the N.T.
Both Jew and Gentile as seed of Abraham.
- (3) THIRD SPHERE . . . *The Mystery*.—Subject of the “prison” epistles only.
Gentiles especially.

We do not see how it is possible to deny that there is reference, in the Scriptures, to these three spheres—unless we confuse either the New Jerusalem with the earthly sphere or the mystery with the New Jerusalem. As this is impossible, if we are to keep both our faith and our reason, we believe that every unprejudiced reader must be convinced that there is recorded in the Scriptures three spheres of blessing.

#3. Adoption. pp. 106 - 112

In the two preceding articles has been demonstrated the fact that the Scriptures make known three distinct spheres of blessing, namely, the earth, the New Jerusalem, and the heavenly places of Eph. i. 3. As yet we have said nothing concerning the controversial question of the correct interpretation of the words translated “heavenly places” and “far above all”. Those are adjuncts to the teaching; not the foundation on which the teaching rests. The reader is especially asked to note that we prove the fact of the three spheres of blessing independently of any disputed translation, finding all we need to demonstrate the truth of our position in either the A.V. or the R.V. This, we believe, renders that position invulnerable.

We now approach a secondary means of proof, that does depend somewhat upon the true translation of a Greek word. This may be rejected by some, but that will still leave the main argument of articles #1 and #2 exactly as it was, and unchallenged.

In order to enable the reader to appreciate the line of argument we intend to follow, let us use an illustration. Suppose we were to point out an elderly man and say, “There goes a man who has three firstborn sons”; the reader might at first exclaim, “Impossible!” yet on second thoughts, he might reply, “Yes, I see it is quite possible for the man to have three firstborn sons, for he may have married three times, but he can only have three firstborn sons provided that they are the firstborn of three distinct families”. We hope to prove that God has three distinct companies of the redeemed who have the dignity and privilege of being His firstborn, and that these three firstborn sons are given an exalted position in each of the three spheres of the earth, the New Jerusalem, and the Mystery.

The word which supplies this argument is translated in our version “adoption”, and our first duty will be to arrive at the scriptural meaning of this term. Except we perceive the *meaning* of a scriptural term, not only will it be valueless but possibly harmful, that is if we invest it with our own conception of its meaning. Sometimes etymology of a word establishes its meaning; often it needs an understanding of its usage in Scripture, and, sometimes, a knowledge of the way in which the word was used in secular writings contemporary with the Scriptures concerned. This is very true of the word under consideration, namely “adoption”. The Greek word is *huiiothesia*, and means, literally, “to place a son”. No modern writer has greater firsthand knowledge of this term than Sir William Ramsay, and in order to acquaint ourselves with its usage in Galatia, we will first of all quote from Sir William Ramsay’s *A Historical Commentary on St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians*:

“The idea that they who follow the principle of faith are sons of Abraham, whatever family they belong to by nature, would certainly be understood by the Galatians as referring to the legal process called adoption, *huiiothesia*.”

“Adoption was a kind of embryo will; the adopted son became the owner of the property, and the property could pass to a person that was naturally outside the family

only through his being adopted. The adoption was a sort of Will-making; and this ancient form of Will was irrevocable and public. The terms 'Son' and 'Heir' are interchangeable."

"An illustration from the ordinary fact of society, as it existed in the Galatian cities, is here stated: 'I speak after the manner of men.' The Will (*diatheke*) of a human being is irrevocable when once duly executed. But if Paul is speaking about a Will, how can he say, after it is once made, it is irrevocable?"

"Such irrevocability was a characteristic feature of Greek law, according to which an heir outside the family must be adopted into the family; and the adoption was the Will-making. The testator, after adopting his heir, could not subsequently take away from him his share of the inheritance or impose new conditions on his succession. The Roman-Syrian Law Book will illustrate this passage of the Epistle. It actually lays down the principle that a man can never put away an adopted son, and that he cannot put away a real son without good ground. It is remarkable that the adopted son should have a stronger position than the son by birth; yet it is so. The expression in Gal. iii., verse 15, 'When it hath been confirmed' must also be observed. Every Will had to be passed through the Record Office of the city. It was not regarded in the Greek law as a purely private document. It must be deposited in the Record Office."

Here it will be seen that one may be "adopted", or made the heir, without being at the same time a true child, but in the case of the Scriptural usage of adoption there is no idea that the believer is only an "adopted" child, for the testimony of the Word is explicit on the point, making clear that adoption is something added:

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God"
(Rom. viii. 16).

The argument of Gal. iv. 1-7 proceeds upon the supposition that there is a difference between a "child" (Gal. iv. 1-2), and one who has received the "adoption" (Gal. iv. 5). "If a son, then an heir of God through Christ" (Gal. iv. 7). That "adoption" is related to "inheritance" we can see by examining Eph. i. There we find the word "predestinate" used twice, once in verse 5, where it is "unto adoption", and again in verse 11, where it refers to "inheritance".

Let us now observe the way in which this important word is used in connection with three different companies of the redeemed.

In Rom. ix. the Apostle enumerates the distinctive and exclusive privileges of Israel "according to the flesh", "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption" (Rom. ix. 4). The structure of the passage relates "adoption" with "promises" and the whole is important enough to claim our attention before passing on. Accordingly we set out the structure.

- A | According to the flesh, Brethren.
- B | Who are Israelites.
- C | To whom pertaineth the ADOPTION.
- D | And the glory.
- E | And the covenants.
- E | And the giving of the law.
- D | And the service of God.
- C | And the PROMISES.
- B | Whose are the fathers.
- A | As concerning the flesh, Christ came.

No one who has any understanding at all can interpret “Israel” and “according to the flesh” as of the Church, or of that company where there is “neither Jew nor Greek” (Gal. iii. 28).

When Israel were about be brought out of Egypt, God called the nation His “firstborn” saying, “Israel is My son, even My firstborn” (Exod. iv. 22).

Attached to this position is a citizenship, the city being Jerusalem, which is destined to be the centre of the earth when the Kingdom is set up. This we have already seen in our second article, and we need now do no more than quote the references (Isa. ii. 3; Zech. xiv. 16, 17). One item, however, we did not emphasize, and it must now be given due prominence. It is obvious that if one nation is to be granted pre-eminence, the others must be subservient, and one of the accompaniments of the privilege of adoption, which we find true of each sphere, is the grant of pre-eminence over other companies in the same sphere.

“The nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted” (Isa. lx. 12).

“Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vinedressers; but ye shall be named the Priests of the Lord: men shall call you the Ministers of our God” (Isa. lxi. 5, 6).

We shall find that the following features are inseparable from adoption as used in the Scriptures.

- (1) The appointing of the heir.
- (2) The dignity of the first-born.
- (3) The close association of a citizenship.
- (4) Some special pre-eminence over other companies in the same sphere.

Let us put this to the test by turning to the Scriptures that speak of the second sphere. We have already given proof that Gal. iii. 28, 29 cannot refer to “Israel according to the flesh”, and that the company here in view is associated with the New Jerusalem (Gal. iv. 26). Nevertheless, although Rom. ix. categorically declares that to Israel according to the flesh pertaineth “the adoption”, this new company, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, and where the “flesh” is excluded, has this privilege also, “That we might receive the adoption of sons” (Gal. iv. 5).

We turn therefore to Heb. xii., which speaks of the second sphere of blessing, for light upon this question of adoption. The first part of Heb. xii. treats of that which is common to all children (verses 5-14), and then passes to that which relates particularly to the firstborn son; in other words, the adoption.

As we are intent on proving every statement before proceeding, we acknowledge that the actual word “adoption” does not occur in Heb. xii. Gal. iii. and iv., however, have made it clear that those who claim “Jerusalem that is above” have the “adoption”, and until Euclid’s maxim can be disproved that “Things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another”, the logical association of Galatians and Heb. xii. must be acknowledged.

Having made the admission that *huiiothesia* is absent from Heb. xii., we must, with equal justice and regard for truth, assert that the ideas of birthright and firstborn are insisted upon, and that the same argument, namely, the allegorical use of Sinai and Sion, which we find in Gal. iv. 22-31, is introduced in much the same way in Heb. xii. It will help if we observe the structure of the passage.

Hebrews xii. 15 - 25.

- A | 15. | a | Looking diligently.
 - b | Lest any man fall back.
- B | 16, 17. The birthright bartered (*prototokia*).
- C | 18-21. Ye are not come. Six “ands”. SINAI.
- C | 22, 23. But ye are come. Seven “ands”. SION.
- B | 23, 24. The birthright enjoyed (*prototokos*).
- A | 25. | a | See.
 - b | Lest ye refuse.

Esau despised his birthright (*prototokia*). In the heavenly Jerusalem that birthright is to be enjoyed (firstborn, *prototokos*). Here, therefore, we have the adoption in the second sphere.

We come now to the prerogative of adoption, namely, some form of ascendancy or pre-eminence. We shall not expect to find *nations* subservient to those who have this exalted position, at least not until the New Jerusalem descends from heaven to earth. In this second sphere we have an innumerable company of *angels* (Heb. xii. 22), and angels are “ministering spirits” who minister to the “heirs” of salvation. Both Peter and Paul, when speaking of the ascended Christ, speak of “principalities and powers” being subject to Him, but Peter adds “angels”, a word entirely out of place in the third sphere of Eph. i. 19-21 and Col. i. & ii. In Heb. iii. 1 those who have position and privilege in the heavenly city are called “partakers of the *heavenly* calling”. This is the second sphere.

But adoption is used once more, and for this third usage we must turn to Eph. i. 5, “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself”. In case any should think that there is a difference between “adoption”, “adoption of

children” and “adoption of sons” we would draw attention to the fact that the difference is found only in the English version: the Greek word itself is the same in every case.

If we found it impossible to confuse the company who have the adoption in Rom. ix. with those who have in Gal. iii., iv. and Heb. iii. 1 & xii., much more shall we find it impossible to confuse the high and holy calling that goes back before the foundation of the world, and leads up to where Christ sits at the right hand of God, and which was a mystery hid in God until revealed to the apostle Paul as the prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles, with either of these two spheres. This third sphere of blessing belongs to the dispensation of the Mystery. It has no connection with the promises made to the fathers or with any covenant, old or new.

Once again, we pause. We have been reminded that there is a covenant in the Scriptures that was made before Abraham, namely, the covenant made by God with Noah, but whoever thinks that this covenant was made with an elect people needs to read the Scriptures for himself, where he will find that it belongs to all mankind and so does not come into the argument at all. They who snatch at such irrelevant items must be destitute of sound reasons for their claims, and will only mislead those possessed of but the smallest knowledge of the Scriptures, or who virtually wish to be thus persuaded.

This high calling of the mystery has its citizenship.

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God” (Eph. ii. 19).

The citizenship of Israel is not in view here, neither is the citizenship of the New Jerusalem, for this citizenship belongs to a sphere where Christ sits at the right hand of God. This church is not actually called “The Firstborn”, but as it forms the very body of Christ, Who is revealed in Col. i. as both Firstborn of all creation and Firstborn of the dead, it amounts to the same thing. If, by virtue of the adoption, Israel has pre-eminence over the *nations*, and if those whose sphere is the New Jerusalem have pre-eminence over *angels* (“know ye not that we”, the saints of the second sphere, the church during the Acts period, “shall judge angels”?) (I Cor. vi. 3), then, by the analogy of faith, we shall expect that those who have the adoption and citizenship in the highest sphere of all, will have a corresponding pre-eminence. This indeed is the case for, in His capacity as Head of the Church, which is His body (Eph. i. 23), the ascended Christ is said to be set

“at His Own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named” (Eph. i. 20, 21).

and the Church is said to be “seated together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 6). In this exalted sphere, neither nation nor angel is mentioned, but only the spiritual rulers of glory. This is adoption indeed!

There is only one way in which the argument of this article can be overthrown, and that is by showing that the Scriptures do not use the word “adoption” with intention and with discrimination; or that Rom. ix., Heb. xii. and Eph. i. do not refer to three distinct companies of believers.

This, however, would not only overthrow our argument, it would make all similar argument a waste of time, for, to achieve its end, it would overthrow the doctrine of inspiration itself. For the sake of clearness, let us recapitulate:

There are three spheres of blessing set out in the Scriptures, each sphere being clearly marked off from the other, yet repeating, within its own domain, similar features, such as citizenship, pre-eminence, and adoption. These three spheres have been proved, by more lines of teaching than one, to be,

- (1) The EARTH.—Israel. Kingdom.
- (2) The NEW JERUSALEM.—Abraham's seed. Heavenly calling.
- (3) The MYSTERY.—The Church which is His body. In heavenly places.

In the subsequent articles we must concentrate our attention upon some of the statements used in the Scriptures to define the peculiar sphere of the mystery, consider some objections that have been raised, and give attention to one feature, pertaining to the second sphere, to which allusion has not yet been made.

#4. Earth. **pp. 120 - 122**

In the three previous articles we have placed before the reader Scriptural grounds for believing that there are “three spheres of blessing”. We must now examine each sphere more closely. In the present article we shall be dealing principally with the important contribution made by the earthly sphere to the true understanding of the words *epouranios* (“heavenly”), and *huperano* (“far above”), but before we come to this, we must draw attention to a feature that is common to each of these three spheres, namely, that each one in its own way and degree sets forth the NEW CREATION. This fact has been used, like many other doctrines, to oppose the truth on the basis of the mistaken idea that only one company can be so intimately associated with that glorious future. When Israel enter into their inheritance, they will occupy the promised land, with the subservient nations occupying their respective territories in harmony with the Divine plan foreshadowed in the law:

“When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deut. xxxii. 8).

The nations will not only learn the law of the Lord from Jerusalem, but will see before their eyes a marvelous foreshadowing of the New Creation, towards which both law and gospel ultimately point.

“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy” (Isa. lxv. 17, 18).

The student of prophecy will realize at once that to put the New Creation into the Millennial kingdom would be to disregard the injunction of II Tim. ii. 15. A comparison of Isa. lxv. with Rev. xxi. will show that these two passages do not refer to the same period. In Rev. xxi. 4, for example, we read that “there shall be no more death”, whereas in Isa. lxv. 20 we learn that “the child shall die an hundred years old”. The “new creation” of Israel’s glorious kingdom is the final foreshadowing, before the glorious reality.

The typical character of Israel’s favoured land is further illustrated by the prophecy: “They shall not hurt nor destroy *in all My holy mountain*” (Isa. xi. 9). “All the earth” is not referred to until later.

The central and typical character of Israel’s land, city and temple is further explained in Isa. ii. 2:

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills: and all nations shall flow unto it” (Isa. ii. 2).

We must now examine this passage rather closely. A great deal of vital truth is at stake, and we must not spare either ourselves, or our readers, or our critics. If we appear to be prolix or to be proving the obvious, our defence must be the extreme importance of our theme, and the nature of our opponent’s criticism.

While we have no evidence to show that the ancients differentiated between a “mountain” and a “hill” precisely according to our own geographical standards, it is obvious that where the two words are used in the same context, a difference is intended. We read in the passage above that “the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains”. Here we have two points that indicate the high glory of Jerusalem and its temple. The house of God is itself a “mountain”, and this mountain is said to be established “in the top of the mountains”. The LXX here uses the word *akron* for “top”. The same word is rendered “top” in Heb. xi. 21, “tip” in Luke xvi. 24, and “utmost part” in Mark xiii. 27. We further read that this mountain shall be exalted “above the hills”. The word *hupsos*, “to exalt”, gives us “Most High” and “height”, while the compound *huperupsos* is used in Phil. ii. 9, where it is translated “highly exalted”. The similar word *hupseloteros* is used in Heb. vii. 26, which speaks of Christ being “made higher than the heavens”.

The exaltation of the mountain of the Lord’s house is not said to be *above* the mountains, but “on” (*epi*) the “top” (or “tip” or “utmost part”) of the mountains. On the other hand, it is said to be exalted “above” (*huperano*) “the hills” (*ton bounon*). Is there no “distance” implied in this comparison? Referring to the use of *huperano* in Heb. ix. 5, our critics maintain that it shows that the meaning is “up over”, but as closely joined as the lid is to a box. The highest peak of the Himalaya Mountains reaches the

immense altitude of 29,140 feet, while a hill is any eminence up to 1,000 feet. Surely then the exaltation of the mountain of the Lord's house *huperano ton bounon* cannot be likened to the position of a lid in relation to a box, nor can we accept the view that *huperano* denotes *position*, but never *distance*.

The first occurrence of *huperano* is in Gen. vii. 20. The context here is exceedingly illuminating, for in verse 17 and 19 we have the phrase *epi tes ges*, "upon the earth", while in verse 18 we have *apo tes ges*, "off the earth".

"And the flood was *upon the earth*, forty days and forty nights, and the water abounded greatly and bore up the ark, and it was lifted (*hupsoshe*) from *off the earth* and the water prevailed exceedingly *upon the earth*, and covered all the high mountains which were under heaven. Fifteen cubits upwards (*huperano*) was the water raised, and it covered all the high mountains" (Gen. vii. 17-20, Septuagint).

Will any one have the temerity to say that *huperano* knows nothing of distance, when this very word is linked with a measurement of 15 cubits in a book which has influenced the phraseology of the N.T. on almost every page? Moreover, while the flood was necessarily *upon the earth*, i.e., actually in contact with the earth, it should be noted that the same Greek words in the same narrative are also used to indicate how far these waters prevailed *over the earth*, and that this reference is explained in the next sentence by the word *huperano*. If *epi* with the word "earth" can be used, as it is here, to indicate not only close contact with the surface of the earth, but also 15 cubits above the top of the highest mountain, and if this meaning is expressed by the word *huperano*, what can we say of the "criticism" that denounces this same interpretation when the same words *epi* and *huperano* are used of heaven?

Whatever our own opinions may be, there is enough evidence here in these two passages—Isa. ii. 2 and Gen. vii. 17-20—to liberate any who may have been led captive by error. We are now, therefore, free to proceed to the investigation of the sphere of the Mystery, described by the words *en tois epouraniois*, "in the heavenly places". This we propose to do in a future article. Meanwhile let us remember that God's "nobility" bow the knee to no human authority—they search and see "whether these things are so". May we then be numbered among the faithful and the free.

#5. Heavenly. pp. 135 - 138

We have demonstrated from Scripture that the redeemed, while they are all saved by the one great sacrifice of Christ, comprise different groups or callings, and that these various callings have distinctive provinces for their enjoyment, which we have called “spheres” of blessing. The use of this term has been justified, and proof has been given that there are in fact *three* “spheres of blessing”. These “spheres” we have discovered to be “the earth”, “the heavenly Jerusalem”, and “the heavenly places” of Eph. i. 3. We have also learnt that the earth is the sphere belonging to Israel, who constitute the Kingdom. The teaching of Scripture in relation to the heavenly Jerusalem and the “heavenly places” of Eph. i. 3 we have yet to examine.

One further, and independent, proof of the reality of these three spheres is provided by the teaching of the epistles concerning the “adoption”. This has also been considered in a previous article.

The main line of attack that our teaching has had to withstand has been concerned with our interpretation of the words translated “far above all” and “heavenly places”. The reader should note, however, that we have demonstrated the presence of three distinct spheres of blessing in the scriptures, quite apart from these disputed terms. In our last article we considered, a little more in detail, the characteristics of that sphere of blessing which belongs to Israel and the earth. We must now turn our attention to the next sphere, the one associated with the heavenly Jerusalem.

The two epistles that speak of the heavenly Jerusalem are Galatians and Hebrews, and we must now acquaint ourselves with their teaching. Dr. J. W. Thirtle, in two articles (from which we quote) contributed to *The Christian* of 27th April and 4th May, 1916, presented a good case for his contention that the epistle to the Galatians was a “covering letter”, and that the epistle to the Hebrews was an “enclosure”, written, in the first case, for the Hebrews in the Churches of Galatia.

“What in reality, do we find? Just this—two epistles, or writings, in close succession, in a professedly Pauline section of the New Testament, are merely separated or divided off, the one from the other, by the words *pros Hebraiouis* ‘to Hebrews’.”

“Both epistles quote Hab. ii. 4, ‘The just shall live by faith’ (Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 38), both develop the ‘allegory’ of Sinai and Sion (Gal. iv. 24-31; Heb. xii. 18-24), both deal with ‘perfection’ (Gal. iii. 3, Hebrews throughout), both speak of Jerusalem which is above, both speak of the Mediator.”

Another very cogent argument which supports this connection is the fact that, although circumcision is at the very heart of the Jewish problem, yet the Apostle never speaks of it in the epistle to the Hebrews. This would be difficult to explain or to understand if Hebrews stood alone, but if “Galatians” and “Hebrews” go together, then

circumcision would have been effectively dealt with in the “covering letter”, leaving the way clear in Hebrews for the exhortation that it gives to go on to perfection.

The first definite indication of the “sphere of blessing” that is in view in the epistle to the Hebrews is found in chapter iii. 1, where those to whom the Apostle wrote are called: “Holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly* calling.” This is the first of six occurrences of *epouranios* in Hebrews, which we give below:

“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the *heavenly* calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus” (Heb. iii. 1).

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the *heavenly* gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost to renew them again unto repentance” (Heb. vi. 4-6).

“Who serve unto the example and shadow of *heavenly* things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount” (Heb. viii. 5).

“It was therefore necessary that the pattern of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the *heavenly* things themselves with better sacrifices than these” (Heb. ix. 23).

“But now they desire a better country, that is, an *heavenly*: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city” (Heb. xi. 16).

“But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the *heavenly* Jerusalem” (Heb. xii. 22).

We must now examine these passages, so that our conception of what is “heavenly” shall be moulded, not by our own views, but by what is actually written.

In the first passage, we read that these Hebrews were “partakers of the heavenly calling”, but whether or not this means that they were going to enjoy their inheritance in the heavenly places “where Christ sitteth”, is not here stated. In the first place, however, let us note that there is the most positive testimony that the *position* occupied by Christ in Hebrews, is identical with that of Ephesians. In Ephesians, Christ is said to have ascended “far above all heavens” (Eph. iv. 10), while in Hebrews He is said to have “passed through the heavens” (*dierchomai*, Heb. iv. 14), and to have been “made higher than the heavens” (*hupseloteros*, Heb. vii. 26). What is *never taught in Hebrews*, however, is that any of the redeemed could entertain the hope of being there, “where Christ sitteth”. The teaching is all in the other direction. We are reminded, for instance, that when the High Priest entered the most holy place (a type of heaven itself) he entered “alone” (Heb. ix. 7). These Hebrews had certainly “tasted the heavenly gift”, but they did not ascend to heaven to do so—they tasted this heavenly gift while here on earth. It is therefore folly to point to the fact that the word *epouranios* occurs both in Hebrews and in Ephesians, and to deduce from this that there is nothing distinctive about the Ephesian sphere. In Hebrews it is Christ, and Christ alone, Who sits in the heavenly place. In Ephesians, the essence of the Mystery is that an elect company of the redeemed sit there with Him. It is this fact that makes this new sphere of blessing unique, a fact which an indiscriminate list of the occurrences of *epouranios* can neither establish nor overthrow.

While Hebrews speaks of a “heavenly calling” and a “heavenly gift”, we are not left in doubt as to “where” this calling is to be enjoyed. The sphere of blessing connected with

the “heavenly calling” is the “heavenly country” or “heavenly Jerusalem” which filled the vision of Abraham, and for which those who walked by faith in the O.T. days suffered the loss of all things.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth Wherefore God hath prepared for them a city” (Heb. xi. 1, 13, 16).

This calling differs from the one that is associated with Mount Sinai. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were all “before the law” (*see* Gal. iii. 17, 18), and the inclusion of Abel, Noah and Enoch shows that it is not essentially connected with the Abrahamic covenant. Moreover the inclusion of Rahab, after the law, reveals that it is of wider scope than the covenant of Sinai, and the presence of such names as Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephtha, David and Samuel (Heb. xi. 32) shows that after the law of Moses had been given, there were still those who reached out for this higher and heavenly sphere.

In contrast with Sinai and its terrors, we have Sion with its blessings.

“Ye are come unto Sion, *and* unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, *and* to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly, *and* to a church of firstborn ones, which are written in heaven, *and* to God the judge of all, *and* to the spirits of perfected righteous ones, *and* to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, *and* to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than Abel” (Heb. xii. 22-24).

The reader will notice a slight departure from the A.V. here. The “general assembly” should be linked, not with the “church of the firstborn”, but with the “innumerable company”. The church of the firstborn is made up of “the spirits of perfected righteous ones” (Heb. xii. 23)—or “the spirits of righteous ones having been perfected”. This “perfecting” is the key to Hebrews, and is the basis of its exhortation. Either those to whom the Apostle wrote would leave the things that were connected with the beginning and go on unto perfection (Heb. vi. 1) or, failing to endure, would draw back unto “loss” and “waste” (Heb. x. 32-39). The word “perdition” is translated “destruction” in Phil. iii. 19, and is put in contrast there, as in Hebrews, with “attaining” and a “better resurrection” (Phil. iii. 11; Heb. xi. 35). The primary meaning of the word is seen in Matt. xxvi. 8, where it is translated “waste”.

We would mention here in passing, the important principle that what constitutes the initial calling of one company (e.g. the Galatian converts) may also be the added “prize” of another company (e.g. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who had already received the “land” and the “nation” in their initial calling). A further example of the same principle is provided by the fact that “eternal life”, which is a “gift” in Romans, is spoken of as an “award” in Matt. xxv. We will not however, pursue this matter further, as it is not essential to our present purpose.

It is clear from Heb. xi. and xii. that the sphere of blessing there in view is that of the city which will at the last come down from God out of heaven. This reference takes us to

the Book of the Revelation, where we discover two things. First, that those whose blessings are found in the New Jerusalem are spoken of as the “Bride”—a company that differs from the divorced wife, who will be restored at the end; and secondly, that this company are “overcomers” who have a “crown” (Rev. iii. 11, 12)—a further parallel with the overcomers of Phil. iii., who attain the “prize”.

We discover, therefore, that the second sphere of blessing is in the nature of reward. It is the “heavenly” phase of the kingdom. Abraham could not have forfeited the land of promise, for it was his as an unconditional gift; but *in addition* to this, he received the “heavenly country”, which was associated with his “perfecting”. This “perfecting” of his faith is the theme of the Epistle of James, which regards the offering of Isaac as the “fulfilling” of the initial act of faith whereby Abraham was justified (James ii. 23). James also has much to say, in the first chapter, about patient endurance and its perfecting work in view of the crown (James i. 3, 4, 12). The heavenly country and city are not for “righteous ones” simply, but for “*perfected* righteous ones”, just as the “prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus” and “the out-resurrection” of Phil. iii. are for those who go on unto perfection.

If the heavenly country, for which Abraham gave up so much, differs from the land of promise in which he lived as a pilgrim, then we must obviously recognize this heavenly calling as a separate sphere. Moreover, it is clear that one of the chief characteristics of this sphere is that it represents a reward for faithful obedience, as distinct from the land of promise which was quite unconditional. We have not attempted, in this series, to differentiate between the covenant made with Abraham regarding the land, and the covenant made at Sinai. As both operate on the earth, they are both included in the one sphere.

It now remains to examine the claim that the sphere of the Mystery is neither in the land, nor in the heavenly city, and to this and its associated studies we must turn in our next article.

#6. Heavenly Places. pp. 147 - 153

We have established by positive proof that the Scriptures speak of three distinct companies of believers, and that these three companies, constituting the Kingdom, the Bride and the Body, have three distinct spheres in which the blessings appropriate to each are to be enjoyed. We have given some attention to the information contained in the Scriptures concerning two of these spheres, and we conclude this series by an examination of the statements made in Ephesians concerning the peculiar sphere in which the Church of the Mystery is to enjoy its blessings. It is not the unique character of Paul's ministry as the prisoner of Christ Jesus that we are to examine, but the unique *sphere* of blessing to which that ministry points.

The distinctive place, "where", and the time, "when", the Church of the Mystery shall enjoy its blessings, and was chosen in Christ by the Father, are given in Eph. i. 3, 4. We are not now concerned with the true translation of the words, "before the foundation of the world" in verse 4, but with the latter clause of verse 3:

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

As the phrase *en tois epouraniois* is exclusive to Ephesians, and as every other occurrence of *epouranios* has reference to the character of the "heavenly" thing concerned, but not the place "where" it will be enjoyed, a mere list of the occurrences of *epouranios* would have only the appearance of argument while lacking validity.

"In heavenly places" is the translation of the Greek words *en tois epouraniois*. We have seen that the word *epouranios* occurs six times in the Epistle to the Hebrews, but there it speaks of a heavenly calling, a heavenly gift, heavenly realities, and a heavenly country or city. There can be no comparison between a "heavenly gift" that was enjoyed on earth with "the heavenly places" of Eph. i. 3: the one refers to character, the other to a sphere. The occurrences of *epouranios* in Ephesians must be segregated, for they form a group by themselves. The phrase *en tois epouraniois* occurs only in Ephesians and nowhere else in the N.T.

The second occurrence of the phrase is found in Eph. i. 20, 21, where we learn that this sphere is "where Christ sitteth" at the right hand of God. Whether we continue the use of the phrase "far above all heavens", or whether we exchange it for a more limited rendering, nothing is more certain than that there can be no conceivably higher position in the whole universe than the right hand of God. Such is the height of this exaltation of Christ that the passage continues:--

"Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. i. 21).

Quite apart from the words “far above”, there can be no denial of the fact that there is here indicated a sphere without compare in the whole range of Scripture.

To conclude the first part of our examination, we turn to Eph. ii. 6 where we have a categorical statement that there, where Christ sits, is the sphere of blessing for every member of the Church which is His body.

In these three passages (Eph. i. 3, 20, 21 and ii. 6) we have indubitable evidence of a sphere of blessing that differs entirely from anything that had hitherto been revealed.

But our task will not have been completed if we fail to take note of the attempts that have been made to discredit the teaching of the three spheres by concentrating attention upon the A.V. rendering of *huperano*. The words translated “far above all” in Eph. i. 20 and iv. 10 are adjuncts of the teaching we have already proved by other means, and no alteration or re-translation can make the slightest difference to the three-fold distinctions we have already seen. As the word in question only occurs three times in the N.T. it is a matter of importance to ascertain whether it occurs in the Septuagint, and if so, in what connection. A writer who has gone out of his way to denounce the teaching of *The Berean Expositor* says:--

“As the adverb *huperano*, OVER-UP, appears so seldom in the later Greek Scriptures, we have given all of the occurrences in the Septuagint also.”

But when we consult the Septuagint, we discover that our critic omits the first occurrence, and upon examination we further find that this first occurrence is antagonistic to this contention that *huperano* means position, but never distance. The omitted reference is Gen. vii. 20: “Fifteen cubits *upward* did the water prevail, and the mountains were covered.”

If the subject before us was the comparative value of the various manuscripts which we have to consult in seeking the original text of the Scriptures, it would be right and proper to assess the respective merits of the Vatican, the Sinaiticus, the Alexandrian, and other MSS, and at the close of the investigation we should be within our rights if we were to express a preference for one manuscript above another. But if we are investigating the usage of a particular word, and we profess to have given “all of the occurrences”, then the omission of one reference, especially one that militates against our own conclusions, is serious. This first reference to *huperano* in the Septuagint most emphatically uses the word to express distance in cubits, whereas our self-appointed mentor grows almost hysterical in his denunciation of our retention of the A.V. rendering, “far above”, calling it, among other things, a blot on the A.V. translation, and adding that “so long as it remains it is impossible for the English reader to get the truth”. These words would have sounded rather empty if Gen. vii. 20 had been cited, and our critic’s dictum that *huperano* denotes “position, never distance” looks absurd in the presence of these 15 *cubits*!

We have more to bring forward from Gen. vii. 20 in a moment, but it will be better appreciated after we have allowed our critic a little more space.

The third and last occurrence of *huperano* in the N.T. is found in Heb. ix. 5, which reads: "And over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat." The critic's comment is:--

"In the ark of the covenant we have the best possible illustration of the force of this word. Surely the Cherubim were not 'far above' the ark."

He further suggests that probably the lower parts of the Cherubim were "below" the crown of the ark, and gets so enamoured of this idea that he even goes so far as to say: "*Huperano*, in this case, may denote *near* rather than *far*", but we recall that he has already prefaced his investigation by saying:

"As few of us are sufficiently adept in either Greek or English to pass judgment upon such grammatical and idiomatic problems, we will base nothing on expert evidence."

so that we need not be greatly concerned. The Scriptures themselves are the only and final appeal.

The Apostle is not concerned, in Heb. ix. 5, with the fact that the Cherubim and the mercy seat were made out of one piece of metal. His statement is confined to *one feature*, and *one feature only*, namely, that the Cherubim "overshadowed" (*kataskiazo*) the mercy seat, and in so doing he is referring to Exod. xxv. 18-20, where we read:--

"And the Cherubim shall stretch forth their wings *on high*, covering the mercy seat with their wings."

Here, we have *inspired* usage of words, and need not be adepts either in Hebrew, Greek or English to understand the meaning of the Hebrew word here translated "on high". *Maal* is translated in the LXX by *huperano*, and so provides an infallible authority for the usage and meaning of the word. *Maal* occurs in such passages as "In heaven *above*" (Exod. xx. 4); "From his shoulders and *upward*" (I Sam. ix. 2); "The clouds *above*" (Prov. viii. 28). Whoever used the word *huperano* in Gen. vii. 20 and elsewhere, had no hesitation in using it for a *measurable distance*, whether for the height of the water above the mountains, or the height of the wings of the overshadowing Cherubim. Doubtless he would have been surprised to have learned that *huperano* contained no idea of "distance", and that in the reference to the Cherubim, it might mean *near* rather than *far*. However good our intention may be, we are all liable to go to such lengths when seeking support for any particular line of teaching. Although we have written on the subject again and again, our critic has never understood that when we speak of a position "far above all heavens", we have no idea that when Christ ascended up far above all heavens He was "outside the heavens". What we have maintained is that "the heavens" that are in view since the six days' creation are the only heavens associated with the redeemed *until the revelation of the mystery*, and that no redeemed child of God has any prospect of association with the heaven of Gen. i. 1 except the church of the mystery chosen in Christ before the period referred to in Gen. i. 2. As many of our readers may not have access to our early writings, and as it is essential that this matter should be clarified, we repeat what has been in print for over twenty years, so that all

may see, if they will but take the trouble, that *so far as we are concerned*, we have nothing in common with any teaching that puts the church of the one body outside the realm of Gen. i. 1. In 1917 (Volume VII, page 8) we wrote:--

“In the original of the New Testament, two words are employed, both translated ‘heavenly’ (*ouranios* and *epouranios*). The added word *epi* signifies *upon* or *over*, and refers to the heavens that are above the firmament, and beyond the limitations of the present creation (compare Gen. i. with Psalms cxlviii. 4, I Kings viii. 27, and Heb. vii. 26).

As two words are used, both translated “heavenly”, we are justified in attempting to discriminate, and as *epi* is added to *ouranios*, and *huperano* supplies the idea, we adopted the Latin equivalent of *huper*, and added *super*—coining the word “super-heavens” for the special usage found in Eph. i. 3, 20 and ii. 6.

On page 45 of the same Volume we have the following:--

“On many occasions the Scriptures speak of God ‘stretching out the heavens’. Psa. civ. 2, ‘Who stretched out the heavens like a curtain’; also Isa. xl. 22; xlii. 5; xlv. 12; li. 13; Jer. x. 12; li. 15; Zech. xii. 1 When we grasp the significance of the firmament, and the purpose that is carried out within its expanse, we may then see the perfect fitness of the statements of Ephesians, where in the words ‘the heavenly places’ (*epouranios*, a word which literally means ‘upon the heavens’), we are taken beyond the firmament Ephesians always speaks of the blessings of the one body as being in the *epouranios*, the sphere above the heavens. Peter, however, does not pierce the firmament, the inheritance he speaks of is reserved ‘in the heavens’, not in the sphere above the heavens.”

In such translations as “super-heavens”, “far above all heavens”, “made higher than the heavens”, it is evident that a sphere beyond the limitations of the heavens of Gen. i. 8 is intended. That this was and is our meaning let the following quotation from Volume XI (1921), page 76, bear witness:

“THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH.—To this period belong the blessings of the mystery. The only calling or revelation that has pierced the present temporary heaven and touched that which can be spoken of as eternal is that dispensation of the grace of God which has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the super-heavenlies far above all. This shows the unique character of the church of the one body. It is connected both by time and place with that which begins before the present heavens were made and goes on when the present heavens shall be no more.

The church of the mystery is the only link during this age between the time before sin entered and the time when sin shall be no more. All other purposes are ‘under the heavens’. This one alone places those who are blessed under its terms ‘above the heavens’. If these things are so, it would be very surprising if the doctrine and practice of this peculiar people were not different from all others.”

In our pamphlet entitled “Far above all” occurs the following:--

“Of no other company of believers is it said that their sphere of blessing is ‘IN the super-heavenlies’. The special sphere of blessing which belongs alone to the Church of the One Body is mentioned five times in this epistle, and a study of these

occurrences will supply us with valuable information. First of all, we translate the word 'super-heavenlies' in recognition of the presence of the particle *epi* with which the word begins. It is not simply *ouranios*, which is the usual word, but *ep-ouranios*. Secondly, information supplied by the five references demands some such translation. Passing, therefore, to the second reference, we find, in i. 20, 21 that this sphere of blessing is:

- (a) At the Father's right hand.
- (b) Far above all principality and power.

That this tremendous height is the destined sphere of the Church of the Mystery ii. 6 declares. There the believer is associated with the risen Christ, 'made to sit together in the super-heavenlies in Christ Jesus'. Christ the Head and the Church His Body are blessed together THERE."

"The next two references, iii. 10 and vi. 12, show the super-heavenlies as the abode of principalities, powers and rulers. Be it noted that angels are not mentioned. Angels are heaven's messengers. The Church of the One Body is blessed even above heaven's nobility. Dominions and thrones are beneath it in its super-heavenly sphere While *epouranios* is used outside Ephesians, no other company of believers is blessed IN these exalted regions as their sphere. The blessings of the Church of the One Body are not only 'heavenly' but 'up in heaven'."

Having established from the Scriptures, quite independently of the occurrences or the meaning of either *epouranios* or *huperano*, the fact that there are three distinct companies of believers who are destined to inherit blessings in three distinct spheres, we can dismiss the question as to how "far" this exalted sphere is above all others; the answer to the question makes no difference to the *fact* that the Scriptures speak of three different spheres. For the sake of clarity we summarize our findings.

There are blessings that are to be enjoyed on earth. Those who will occupy the central position in this sphere are Israel, and this calling is expressed in the terms of a Kingdom. Gentile nations, while blessed in this same sphere, will be subservient, for to Israel, and Israel alone, is the Kingdom, and to Israel on the earth pertains that adoption. Israel is the firstborn among the nations.

There are other blessings that are to be enjoyed in the heavenly country and the heavenly city. These are the blessings of Abraham, and the calling is that of "The Bride" (a calling that must be kept distinct from that of the restoration of Israel, "The wife"). Gentiles, as well as Israel, go to form this company called "The Bride", where there is neither Jew nor Greek, but where both alike are reckoned as Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Instead of nations being subservient to this company of the redeemed, it is angels who are associated with them in a subordinate position. To this company, in this sphere, pertains this particular adoption; they are the church of the firstborn whose names are written in heaven.

There are, however, blessings that are neither those of Israel as a Kingdom, nor of the heavenly calling of the Bride, and these are enjoyed in heavenly places, where Christ sits, far above all principality and power, and far above all heavens. They who enjoy them constitute neither a Kingdom nor the Bride, but are the Body of Christ and a perfect Man. While individuals of Israel who believe are not precluded, this calling is mainly Gentiles, for it operates during the period of Israel's blindness. This company also has a

citizenship, but it is one which has nothing to do with the New Jerusalem: not nations nor angels are subservient to it, but principalities and powers. To this company pertains the adoption associated with this sphere, and Christ, as the Firstborn from the dead, is its Head, each believer of the company forming a member of the Church which is His body.

As this highest of all callings is the subject of a secret that goes back before the overthrow of the world (Gen. i. 2), so it goes up beyond the “firmament that was called heaven” which spans the ages, and finds its sphere in the super-heavens; those heavens of Gen. i. 1 which remain unmoved by the ebb and flow of time, sin, death, or dispensation change.

If any item in this summary can be challenged, then let us patiently re-examine the Scriptures. If it cannot, then no contention about the question of *huperano* can influence the matter one way or another.

We apologize to all readers who needed no repeated arguments to convince them of the glorious fact of their super-heavenly calling, and who have themselves realized the shallowness of the criticism that has been leveled against it. For any who may mistake bombast for argument and superficial wordlists for proof, we are profoundly concerned, and if we have but induced any such to halt and to act as true “Bereans” we shall not have used our space and time in vain.

The SECOND EPISTLE to TIMOTHY.

#5. A Threefold Exhortation. Be not Ashamed (i. 8 - 18). pp. 26, 27

The opening section of the epistle (II Tim. i. 8-18) deals mainly with the sad fact that Paul and his message had been forsaken. This, however, is introduced rather as a background than for its own sake. In spite of this rejection, says Paul in effect to Timothy, do not be ashamed of the testimony—I myself am not ashamed, even though I suffer these things, and think too of Onesiphorus, who was not ashamed of my chain.

The section is divided up by the recurrence of the word “ashamed”:

- (1) “Be not thou therefore *ashamed* of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner” (II Tim. i. 8).
- (2) “I am appointed a preacher For the which cause I suffer these things; nevertheless I am not *ashamed*” (II Tim. i. 12).
- (3) “The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not *ashamed* of my chain” (II Tim. i. 16).

The subject of the section is “Paul and his message forsaken”, and it is interesting to notice that in the structure (Volume XXXI, p. 130) i. 8-18 balances iv. 9-18. Did Phygellus and Hermogenes turn away because they were “ashamed”? Did Demas forsake the Apostle out of “shame”? If so, and it looks very much like it, what a word for us all!

Closely linked with this subject of the Apostle’s peculiar ministry is the principle of “right division”:

“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).

Closely associated with this principle and in the same chapter is the great theme of the epistle—“suffering and reigning”. While the actual word “ashamed” is not used in II Tim. ii. 1-13, we find there its synonym, “deny”, “If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him: if we deny Him, he will also deny us” (II Tim. ii. 12). That “denying” Him is equivalent to “being ashamed of” Him, the following parallel passages will make clear:

“For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed; when He shall come in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels” (Luke ix. 26).

“He that denieth Me before men shall be denied before the angels of God” (Luke xii. 9).

The preceding verse in Luke xii. places “confessing” over against “denying”. In I Timothy we find the exhortation to “confess”, while in II Timothy we have the warning not to “deny” or “be ashamed”.

“I give thee charge in the sight of God, Who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, that thou keep this commandment without spot O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust” (I Tim. vi. 13, 14, 20).

Closely linked with the thought of not being ashamed in II Tim. i. is the “testimony of our Lord, and of Paul His prisoner” (II Tim. i. 8). This is called “My deposit” (A.V. “that which I have committed”) in II Tim. i. 12, and “That good thing which was committed unto thee” in II Tim. i. 14. This same trust is also in view in II Tim. ii. 2, where the Apostle writes:

“The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

We must remember that II Timothy contains a message for ourselves at the present time, and, as in Philippians, set before us “examples” both of those to whom the prize will be awarded, and of those who will be “denied” (II Tim. ii. 12). No one can rightly entertain the remotest hope of “reigning with the Lord” or of receiving a “crown”, who is ashamed of the special “deposit of truth” associated with the Lord’s prisoner.

Before going further we must attempt to discover the structure of the passage. We have already seen that the three references to “being ashamed” seem to divide the section up into three parts. We therefore note this fact as follows:

Not ashamed of the testimony.—Paul the Prisoner (II Tim. i. 8).
Not ashamed though suffering.—Paul the Prisoner (II Tim. i. 12).
Not ashamed of my chain.—Paul the Prisoner (II Tim. i. 16).

We next observe that in the first division the Apostle speaks particularly of the gospel:

“Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (II Tim. i. 8-10).

In the second section, the subject is “that good deposit” (II Tim. i. 12, 14), service is prominent; “He oft refreshed me”; “He ministered unto me” (II Tim. i. 16-18). We therefore note these facts as follows:

The subject of verses 8-12 is the Gospel.
The subject of verses 12-14 is the “good deposit”.
The subject of verses 15-18 is service.

These three subjects, each associated with being unashamed, are connected by the Apostle with two time periods. The Gospel is connected with a period “before the world began” (II Tim. i. 9), while the “good deposit” (II Tim. i. 12) and the recognition of the service of Onesiphorus (II Tim. i. 16-18) are both connected with “that day”.

We now have sufficient material to enable us to arrive at the structure:

II Timothy i. 8 - 18. Paul and his message forsaken.

- B1 | 8-12. Timothy—Not ashamed of testimony of prisoner.
SUBJECT.—The Gospel.
TIME.—Before age-times.
- f1 | 8. The Prisoner. Jointly suffer evil.
- g1 | 8. The Gospel.
- h1 | 9. Before age-times.
- h1 | 10. Now manifested. Life illuminated.
- g1 | 10. The Gospel.
- f1 | 11, 12. The Preacher. I suffer these things.
- B2 | 12-14. Paul—Not ashamed of suffering as prisoner.
SUBJECT.—The good deposit.
TIME.—That day.
- f2 | 12. He is able to guard.
- g2 | 12. The deposit.
- h2 | 13. Have a form of sound words, heard of me.
- f2 | 14. Do thou guard.
- g2 | 14. The good deposit.
- B3 | 15-18. Onesiphorus—Not ashamed of chain of prisoner.
SUBJECT.—Service.
TIME.—That day.
- f3 | 15. Thou knowest.
- g3 | 15. In Asia. All turned away from me.
- h3 | 16. The Lord give mercy.
- g3 | 17. In Rome, He sought and found me.
- h3 | 18. The Lord grant mercy.
- g3 | 18. In Ephesus, He ministered unto me.
- f3 | 18. Thou knowest very well.

It is evident from this outline that the subject-matter before us is of supreme importance. Issues that are beyond our ability to estimate hang upon our due appreciation of this gospel, and this “good deposit”. In our next article we shall hope to consider the first sub-division of the passage (i. 8-12). Meanwhile, let us ponder the solemnity of the theme: and especially let us pray for grace that we may never be found ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of Paul his prisoner.

**#6. Power for those who partake of gospel afflictions (i. 8).
pp. 43 - 46**

We now turn our attention to the first subdivision of section B1 | II Tim. i. 8-12 which has the “Gospel” for its subject, and “before the age-times” as its time period. We will repeat the structure of this section so that we can have it before us during the study.

f1 | 8. The Prisoner. Jointly suffer evil.
g1 | 8. The Gospel.
h1 | 9. Before age-times. Grace given
h1 | 10. Now manifested. Life illuminated.
g1 | 10. The Gospel.
f1 | 11, 12. The Preacher. I suffer these things.

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God: Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For the which cause I also suffer these things” (II Tim. i. 8-12).

Throughout the Epistle the reader will find an insistence upon the special ministry of the apostle Paul.

“Through the gospel: whereunto *I* am appointed a preacher of the Gentiles” (II Tim. i. 10, 11).

“Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of *me*” (II Tim. i. 13).

“All they which are in Asia be turned away from *me*” (II Tim. i. 15).

“The things which thou hast heard of *me* the same commit thou to faithful men” (II Tim. ii. 2).

“Remember that Jesus Christ was raised from the dead according to *my* gospel, wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer” (II Tim. ii. 8, 9).

“Thou hast fully known *my* doctrine” (II Tim. iii. 10).

“That by *me* the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear” (II Tim. iv. 17).

Before any of these sentences was written, however, the Apostle had penned II Tim. i. 8, “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord nor of me His prisoner”. In all the consciousness of his peculiar ministry, and with all the emphasis noticeable on “me” and “my”, we nevertheless realize that the Apostle is magnifying not himself but his office. What he had to give others he had received of the Lord by revelation. In such circumstances false modesty would have been as harmful to his work as spiritual pride. With a good conscience, without conceit, without in the least forgetting that he was but an earthen vessel, the Apostle could couple the name of the Lord he served with his own.

It is shallow criticism unworthy of refutation that calls a believer a “Paulite” because he seeks to honour this testimony of the ascended Christ. That testimony was not given to all the apostles or to some of the apostles. It was given to one, Paul the apostle, and now the “prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles”. Any withdrawal therefore from fear, or a sense of shame, now that Paul was standing his trial for the truth’s sake, would be tantamount to being ashamed of the testimony of the Lord. And, although uttered in the period of the presentation of the Kingdom, in principle, the solemn words of our Lord in Luke ix. 26 were still true: “For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come.”

While the phase of the second coming may change from that of the *Parousia* (used in the Gospels, early Epistles, James and Peter) to that of the *Epiphaneia* (translated “appearing” and used in the prison epistles) the believer’s attitude to the Lord and His word is influenced by the way in which that glorious coming holds his affection and constitutes his hope. If shame is to be suffered by those who have denied the Lord, a crown awaits those who have “loved His appearing” (II Tim. iv. 8). Demas, who forsook the Apostle, is said to have “loved” this present world (II Tim. iv. 10), and the interrelation of these passages must not be missed.

In II Tim. i. 8 the Apostle addresses Timothy on the subject of shame or otherwise, negatively and positively:

NEGATIVELY.—Be not thou ashamed of the testimony.

POSITIVELY.—Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel.

An essential part of the testimony delivered to the Apostle was the gospel. Over and over again a misguided, though perhaps earnest, believer will say “We don’t want Paul’s doctrine; all we want is the simple gospel”. Yet, if we take the words *euaggellion*, “gospel”, and *euaggelizomai*, “preach the gospel”, what do we find? The four Gospels and the first half of the Acts (Acts i.-xii.) contain twelve references to the “gospel”, and nineteen references to “preach the gospel”, whereas Paul’s epistles and Acts xiii.-xxviii. contain sixty-one references to the “gospel” and thirty-two references to “preaching the gospel”. To this we might add the word “Evangelist” (Acts xxi. 8; Eph. iv. 11; II Tim. iv. 5). If we take the other word, *kerugma*, “preaching as a herald”, *kerux*, “preacher as a herald”, and *kerusso*, to “preach as a herald”, we find *kerugma* occurs but twice in the Gospels and early Acts and six times in Paul’s epistles and Acts xiii.-xxviii. *Kerux* occurs only in I Tim. ii. 7 and II Tim. i. 11. (The only other reference is II Pet. ii. 5), and *kerusso* occurs thirty-five times in the Gospels and early Acts, and twenty-four times in Acts xiii.-xxviii. and Paul’s epistles.

If the number of occurrences of a word has any bearing upon the place that the subject occupies in the mind of a writer, then the fact that these words, relating to the gospel, occur nearly twice as many times in the writings of Paul as in the rest of the N.T. put together, must surely give the lie to that report that a study of Paul’s epistles slackens interest in the gospel and its preaching. Here, in his last letter, and in view of his death for the truth’s sake, the Apostle couples the gospel with that special testimony of the Lord that was associated with himself as the Lord’s prisoner. In this last testimony he is not

only concerned with the Gospel itself, but also with its continued proclamation. He who urges Timothy to “preach the word”, and places such stress upon “doctrine” (II Tim. iv. 2), calls upon him, almost with his dying breath, to “do the work of an evangelist” (II Tim. iv. 5) and rejoices, not merely because of the spell of freedom his acquittal from the first charge laid against him had brought, but in the opportunity it afforded to “preach”, so “that all the Gentiles might hear” (II Tim. iv. 17).

In addition to the generally accepted qualifications of a preacher of the gospel, the work of an evangelist in the perilous times in which Timothy was called upon to take up the ministry, made great demands upon courage and endurance, and called for willingness to suffer imprisonment and death itself. Paul did not lose sight of the fact that they who attempt to teach others should be apt in the work (II Tim. ii. 2), and that they would have little hope of true success if they neglected the grand equipment of the Word (II Tim. iii. 17). He knew all this yet, in his opening exhortation, what he stresses is the necessity of willingness to suffer as a first qualification, “Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel” (II Tim. i. 8). When writing to the Philippians concerning this same characteristic, the Apostle said: “Inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace” (Phil. i. 7). Here the word “partaker” is the word that means “fellowship”, as it is translated in Phil. i. 5. In II Tim. i. 8, the Apostle does not use the word meaning fellowship, but a compound of *sun*, “together with”, and *kakopattheo*, “to suffer evil”.

Preachers of the gospel were under a ban for Roman law now looked upon them as “evil doers” (II Tim. ii. 9), and it was impossible therefore in such circumstances to contemplate, unmoved, the call to preach the gospel.

In the last chapter the Apostle once more links together the preaching of the gospel with the word *kakopattheo*, “suffer evil”, for, while he sought to encourage Timothy in every possible way, faithfulness as well as kindness did not veil from him the perils of this calling. To encourage Timothy, and all who are called to follow his steps, the Apostle elaborates this matter of suffering evil in chapter ii., where it occurs in the third and ninth verses, in both of which the immediate context speaks of a crown or of reigning with the Lord. This is the one grand inducement which the Apostle would hold out to Timothy, and which had so long been before his own eyes. In Phil. iii. he was running with the prize in view, in II Tim. iv. he knew that he had finished the course, and that a crown awaited him, and he knew that what had helped him would help Timothy and others; consequently he chooses his words with precision.

But before Timothy reached the second chapter, to learn of the possibility or “reigning”, or the fourth chapter and learn of the certainty of the “crown”, the Apostle reminds him of the one thing needful, apart from which neither crown nor prize could of itself prove strong enough to ensure perseverance to the end, “Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel *according to the power of God*” (II Tim. i. 8). *Dunamis*, “power”, occurs three times in II Timothy:

“God hath not given us the spirit of fear but of *power*” (II Tim. i. 7).

“Be partaker according to the *power* of God” (II Tim. i. 8).

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the *power* thereof” (II Tim. iii. 5).

Dunatos, “powerful”, occurs once, “I am persuaded that He is *able*” (II Tim. i. 12).

Endunamoo, “to empower”, occurs twice, “Thou therefore be *strong* in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. ii. 1); “The Lord stood with me and *strengthened* me” (II Tim. iv. 17).

The power which is introduced into these different parts of the epistle, had received a very full exposition in the ministry of the apostle Paul. Timothy would be fully acquainted with the teaching of Eph. i. 19; iii. 7; and iii. 20. He would know that the Apostle himself placed the knowledge of the *power* of His resurrection before the experience of fellowship with His sufferings or conformity to His death. Timothy would not look within, to the gift that was within him, he would not look around, not even to Paul himself, his father in the faith, but to that place above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, the Source of all spiritual power for His believing children. The use of *dunatos* in II Tim. i. 12, would be a confirmation of Timothy’s faith. Paul was persuaded that the Lord was powerful enough to keep that which had been entrusted, and the Apostle’s own experience of this mighty power, to which he refers in II Tim. iv. 17, would be further confirmation.

If the ministry of the gospel entailed suffering, it was also guaranteed unlimited power, for this is the power that overcomes death and the grave. Therefore both Timothy, and we ourselves, may receive abounding encouragement to endure and maintain our witness, in spite of all that man may say, threaten, or do, and moreover, in spite of our own conscious weakness, error and waywardness. If the gospel be the power of God unto salvation, it certainly brings with it the mighty power of God for subsequent service.

#7. Before the “age times”, and now (i. 9, 10). pp. 65 - 69

In verses 9 and 10 of II Tim. i. we read:

“According to the power of God, Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

How much there is in these few words if we can only take them to heart.

Am I fearful? Then let me remember that He has *saved* me. Before my wondering eyes pass the story of love so vast and deep that fear departs, and in the salvation that encompasses past, present and future (II Cor. i. 10) I am strong.

Do I hesitate? Then let me remember that He has *called* me, and that His commands are His enablings. Will He call me to an act of service and leave me to my own devices? Surely not. The very consciousness that we are called of God puts courage into our hearts and nerves us for the conflict.

Am I intimidated by the awful character of the enemy with whom we have to contend? Then let me remember that I have been *called with an holy calling*. The conflict is a conflict between light and darkness, between Satan and the Lord. If we know anything of the moral condition of the world at the time that Paul wrote of this “holy calling”, it will be clear that here are two conflicting camps, one standing for truth and all that it connotes, the other for the lie and its terrible accompaniments. A conflict such as this demands our utmost, and even this is vain and valueless apart from the grace of God. So the Apostle reminds us that this holy calling is “not according to our works”. This, however, does not in the least suggest that good works in their scriptural place are not acceptable. They are the fruit, but they cannot find a place as the source or means of our salvation or calling.

Before going further, let us confirm, from this same epistle, the importance of good works when given their rightful place. In II Tim. ii. 15, the injunction rightly to divide the word of truth is addressed to one who is described as a “workman”. In II Tim. ii. 21 the servant of the Lord is likened to a clean vessel, meet for the Master’s use, and “prepared unto every good work”. In II Tim. iii. 16 and 17, the Word of God is to be studied and read, so that by it the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every “good work”. Moreover, in the last chapter, Timothy is exhorted to take up, not the profession, or office, or calling of an evangelist, but rather the “*work*” of an evangelist.

If ever there was a worker, Paul was one, and yet, more than any other writer of the N.T., he emphasizes again and again the grace of God.

“By the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (I Cor. xv. 10).

Returning now to II Tim. i. 9, let us examine a little more closely the end of the verse: “According to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before age times.” The Apostle looks back to a period before the ages began, and looks forward to “that day” when Onesiphorus would find mercy of the Lord (II Tim. i. 18), and he himself would receive the crown of righteousness (II Tim. iv. 8). It was in view of “that day” that the Apostle could stand unashamed by the circumstances of his own immediate time (II Tim. i. 12). In contrast with “the present age” (literally, “the age that is now”) he puts “that day”, and is sustained in all his trials by “the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with *aionion* glory” (II Tim. ii. 10).

The A.V. translation of II Tim. i. 9: “before the world began”, while conveying a sense of great distance back in time, hides from the reader the Apostle’s reference to the ages. The same A.V. translation of the same phrase occurs in Titus i. 2: “In hope of eternal life, which God, That cannot lie, promised before the world began.” If we insert

two of the actual Greek words here, it will be obvious that some alteration in the translation is required: “In hope of *aionion* life, which God, That cannot lie, promised before *chronon aionion*.” The word “eternal” has very little connection with a “world” that “began”, and yet in the same verse the same word is rendered in these two very different ways. Also there is no word in the original that means “began”. *Chronos* means “time”, and in this case the noun is in the plural. J. N. D. translates both occurrences “before the ages of time”, while Weymouth renders them “before the commencement of the ages”. At least there is a recognition here of the word *aion*, “age”, but we feel that *aionion* should be kept as an adjective, and *chronon* as a noun in the plural. The phrase “before age times” would seem to fulfil all essential requirements and it is also understandable English.

II Timothy is one of the four great epistles that reveal the truth of the Mystery. In the epistle to the Ephesians, which was written before II Timothy, the Apostle speaks of time period that was directly connected with the election of the Church: “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy” (Eph. i. 4). This statement obviously cannot contradict the later passage in II Tim. i. 9: “An holy calling before age times.”

We have already discussed the translation and bearing of Eph. i. 4 in a number of articles in Volumes IV. 25, 48, 73 (IV/V. 19, 39, 61); XIV. 62; XVI. 173; XVIII. 147; and have also considered the word translated “foundation”, *katabole*, IV. 28 (IV/V. 22); XII. 122; XIII. 125; XVIII. 16. Without going over the ground again, we merely state here that the results of our investigations into the etymology and usage of *katabole*, both in the N.T. and in the LXX, led us to reject the translation “foundation”, and to adopt instead the word “overthrow”. Further study led us to see in Gen. i. 2 the actual “overthrow of the world”, and so to realize that the church of the Mystery was chosen in Christ before Gen. i. 2. II Tim. i. 9 supplements this revelation by speaking of the same church as being called according to that purpose and grace which was given to it in Christ “before age times”. We are therefore able to say that the “ages” began after Gen. i. 2, and hence are coincident with the present creation.

Scripture also indicates that the ages will cease. The same two Hebrew words as are used in Gen. i. 2 also appear in Isa. xxxiv. 11, where “without form and void” becomes “confusion and emptiness”. In the same chapter we have a passage that indicates the dreadful judgment that will come at the end of the day of the Lord:

“And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll” (Isa. xxxiv. 4).

This even ushers in the day of God, as we learn from II Pet. iii. 12:

“Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, by reason of which (not ‘wherein’) the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. iii. 12, 13).

It looks, therefore, as though the “ages” begin and end with the present creation, while the Mystery goes back before the ages for its inception, and anticipates the new creation in its present character and calling.

In contrast with the period denominated “before the age times” is the “now” of the succeeding verse in II Timothy, and the “due times” in Titus.

“Before the age times, but is *now* made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles; for the which cause I also suffer these things” (II Tim. i. 9-12).

“Before the age times, but hath *in due times* manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour” (Titus i. 2, 3).

If, as we have seen, the phrase “before the age times” is characteristic of the Mystery, the evident parallelism of the two passages makes it impossible to place the epistle to Titus anywhere except after Acts xxviii.

The Apostle uses a very unusual word in connection with the birth and earthly ministry of Christ—he speaks of it as an “appearing” or “manifestation”. This word *epiphaneia* usually refers to the Saviour’s future “manifestation”, as in II Tim. iv. 1, 8; Titus ii. 13; I Tim. vi. 14; and II Thess. ii. 8. The verbal form *phaneroo* is also found in Col. iii. 4. Before going further it will perhaps be helpful if we see all these passages together:

“The Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing (*epiphaneia*) and His kingdom” (II Tim. iv. 1).

“A crown of righteousness, which the Lord shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that have loved His appearing (*epiphaneia*)” (II Tim. iv. 8).

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing (*epiphaneia*) of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus ii. 13).

“That Wicked whom the Lord shall consume with the brightness (*epiphaneia*) of His coming (*parousia*)” (II Thess. ii. 8).

“Keep this commandment until the appearing (*epiphaneia*) of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Tim. vi. 14).

“When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear (*phaneroo*), then shall ye also appear (*phaneroo*) with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 4).

The particular aspect of the Second Coming referred to in II Thess. ii. is that of the *parousia*, a term used throughout the Scriptures covered by the hope of Israel. All the other passages quoted above refer to the hope of the church. As, however, we must go into this question thoroughly when dealing with II Tim. iv. 1 and 8, we will not say anything more for the moment.

II Timothy, Titus, and I Timothy all use the word “appearing” in connection with both the first and the second advents. We have already mentioned the dual reference of II Tim. i. 9 and iv. 8, and we must now add Titus iii. 4, and I Tim. iii. 16:

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared (*epiphaino*), not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us” (Titus iii. 4, 5).

“A pillar and ground of truth, and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest (*phaneroo*) in the flesh” (I Tim. iii. 16).

When we look at II Tim. i. 10 again we perceive that there are two words in this verse that mean “manifest”: “But is now made manifest (*phaneroo*) by the appearing (*epiphaneia*).” The Apostle’s intention is evidently to show that the grace that was ours by promise and purpose “before the age times”, and consequently sealed up in the “secret” that was “before the overthrow of the world”, was made manifest by the coming of Christ in the likeness of sinful flesh. Titus brings these two aspects together in chapter ii.:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared (*epiphaino*) that we should live looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing (*epiphaneia*)” (Titus ii. 11, 13).

Moreover, as the reader may have observed, just as Paul speaks of a “sound mind” (*sophronismos*) in the context of II Tim. i. 9, 10, so in Titus ii. 12 he speaks of “living soberly” (*sophronos*). The internal evidence that I Timothy, II Timothy, and Titus all belong to the same group and period is too strong to be set aside.

The appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, both at His first and at His second advent, is a subject so vital to our hope and peace that we cannot possibly deal with it hurriedly at the close of an article. That wonderful theme must be given due consideration in our next article, so for the moment we must stop. What wealth there is in this short epistle, and what a privilege to be free to enter into its teaching in the day of departure that it so forcefully predicts.

#8. Light on Life and Immortality (i. 10 - 12). **pp. 122 - 128**

The Apostle introduces the promise of life into his salutation in each of the three pastoral epistles—I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus (I Tim. i. 1, 2; II Tim. i. 1, 2; Titus i. 1-4). There is much in common between this last passage, Titus i. 1-4, and II Tim. i. 9-11. Both speak of life, and of promise or purpose, and both refer to the period before the “age times”. Both speak of “now” or “due times”, both speak of this message as being committed to Paul, and both speak of “the Saviour”.

We must now take up our study again from the point where we were obliged to leave it—namely, at the mention of the Saviour’s first “appearing”:

“Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (II Tim. i. 10).

There are two little particles here (*men* and *de*), often left untranslated in the A.V., that must not be passed by without comment. *Men* is defined as a “conjunction implying affirmation or concession”, while *de* is “generally placed in opposition to it in an adversative sentence”. The two words occur, for example, in II Tim. iv. 4:

“And they will indeed turn away their ears from the truth, yet unto fables they will be turned aside.”

The particles are also used several times by Peter in his first epistle:

“Who *verily* was foreordained before the foundation of the world, *but* was manifested in these last times for you” (I Pet. i. 20).

“Disallowed *indeed* of men, *but* chosen of God and precious” (I Pet. ii. 4).

“Being put to death *indeed* in the flesh, *but* quickened by the spirit” (I Pet. iii. 18).

“That *indeed* they might be judged according to men in the flesh, *but* live according to God in the spirit” (I Pet. iv. 6).

The English expression, “On the one hand on the other hand”, would often be a suitable translation of these two words *men* and *de*. In II Tim. i. 10, for example, the Saviour came, *on the one hand* to abolish death, but *on the other hand* to bring life and immortality to light. Let us ponder these two sides of His gracious work.

First—He hath abolished death. The word *katargeo*, “to abolish”, reminds us of the reference to “not according to our works” in II Tim. i. 9, for the word is a compound made up of *kata*, an intensive preposition, and *argos*, “idle”, “not working”—from *a*, “not” and *ergon*, “work”. The word *katargeo* enters so intimately into the Apostle’s teaching that we must spare no pains to possess ourselves of its meaning.

The true significance of the word cannot be settled merely by its dictionary meaning. We must also examine its usage. We note first that no other writings, outside Paul’s epistles, contains the word, except the Gospel according to Luke. As Luke is specially associated with Paul and his ministry, we may say, therefore, that the word is exclusively Pauline in its usage.

The Usage of *Katargeo* in the N.T. (A.V. renderings).

“Cut it down; why *cumbereth* it the ground?” (Luke xiii. 7).

“Shall their unbelief make the faith of God *without effect*?” (Rom. iii. 3).

“Do we then make *void* the law through faith?” (Rom. iii. 31).

“The promise made of *none effect*” (Rom. iv. 14).

“That the body of sin might be *destroyed*” (Rom. vi. 6).

“She is *loosed* from the law of her husband” (Rom. vii. 2).

“Now we *are delivered* from the law” (Rom. vii. 6).

“*To bring to nought* the things that are” (I Cor. i. 28).

“The wisdom of the princes of this world, that *come to nought*” (I Cor. ii. 6).

“God *shall destroy* both it and them” (I Cor. vi. 13).

“Whether there be prophecies, they *shall fail*” (I Cor. xiii. 8).

“Whether there be knowledge, it *shall vanish away*” (I Cor. xiii. 8).

“That which is in part *shall be done away*” (I Cor. xiii. 10).

“When I became a man I *put away* childish things” (I Cor. xiii. 11).

“When He shall have *put down all rule*” (I Cor. xv. 24).
 “The last enemy that *shall be destroyed* is death” (I Cor. xv. 26).
 “Which glory was *to be done away*” (II Cor. iii. 7).
 “If that which *is done away* was glorious” (II Cor. iii. 11).
 “Could not look to the end of *that which is abolished*” (II Cor. iii. 13).
 “Which vail is *done away* in Christ” (II Cor. iii. 14).
 “That it should make the promise of *none effect*” (Gal. iii. 17).
 “Christ *has become of no effect* unto you” (Gal. v. 4).
 “Then is the offence of the cross *ceased*” (Gal. v. 11).
 “*Having abolished* in His flesh the enmity” (Eph. ii. 15).
 “*Shall destroy* with the brightness of His coming” (II Thess. ii. 8).
 “Who hath *abolished* death” (II Tim. i. 10).
 “That through death *He might destroy* him that had the power of death” (Heb. ii. 14).

The exact opposite of this word *katargeo* is *katergazomai*, which occurs 24 times. Of these 24 Paul is responsible for 21. If forms, therefore, a fitting comparison with *katargeo* in its scope and distribution. We will not ask the reader to go through the 24 occurrences at the moment, though this must certainly be done if the true sense of this important word is to be obtained. For the moment, we simply note that the A.V. translates the word as follows: “Be wrought” (1); “cause” (1); “do” (6)—not “4” as in Young’s Analytical Concordance Index-Lexicon—; “perform” (1); “work” (14); “work out” (1).

As *ergazomai* means “to work”, *katergazomai* would mean “to work thoroughly”, or, as we would say, “to work out”. This is the meaning that we recognize in II Cor. iv. 17:

“Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, *worketh out* for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory.”

This also is the meaning which the structure of Ephesians forces us to give to Eph. vi. 13: “Having *worked out* all”, the corresponding passage speaking of the mighty power which is “*worked in*”.

If *katergazomai** means “to work out”, the negative *katargeo**, must mean “not to work out”, or, in our way of putting it, “to fail”, “to cease”, “to be prevented from working out”, or in other words, “to render inoperative”. The Devil has not yet been “destroyed”, but he has been rendered inoperative so far as the exercise of his erstwhile power of death is concerned (Heb. ii. 14). It is still, alas, possible for the child of God to sin, but sin’s *dominion* has been broken, and the body of sin rendered inoperative, so that henceforth we *need not* be enslaved to sin.

[NOTE: * - The different endings *eo* and *omai* are simply indications of a change from active to passive.]

So, in II Tim. i. 10, we learn that by His work on the cross, Christ has rendered death inoperative. This, however, is only the negative side; there is also the positive side—He “hath shed light on life and immortality”.

We have seen that the word *katargeo* is used in connection with death in I Cor. xv. 26: “The last enemy that *shall be destroyed*, is death.” It must be

remembered, however, that I Cor. xv. is entirely devoted to the question of resurrection, and, in particular, resurrection from the death brought in by Adam (I Cor. xv. 21, 22). It would hardly seem necessary to insist upon this most evident fact, were it not true that no part of Scripture is exempt from the effects of bias. When one wants a text to prove that there will be a resurrection from the lake of fire, the temptation to use I Cor. xv. 26 is very difficult to resist. And yet the lake of fire and the second death are quite foreign to the theme of the chapter.

The structure of this chapter places the two sets of references to Adam in correspondence, and with them the two-fold reference to the abolition of death. There can be no doubt about the fact of Adamic death in both these sections:

I Corinthians xv. 12 - 58.

- A | 12. The fact of resurrection. "How?"
- B | 13-33. Adam and Christ. Death destroyed. "When."
- C | 34. Exhortation. "Awake."
- A | 35. The manner of resurrection. "How?" "With what?"
- B | 36-57. The first and last Adam. Death swallowed. "When."
- C | 58. Exhortation. "Be stedfast."

When two sections such as B and B are in correspondence, it is usual to find the theme of the first member expanded and further explained in the second, after the intervening subject has been dealt with. The following five subjects in the first section B | xv. 13-33 are expanded in the second section B | xv. 36-57:

- (1) THE DIFFERENCES IN THE "ORDER" OF THE RESURRECTION.—"Every man in his own order. Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ's at His coming. Then cometh the end" (I Cor. xv. 23, 24).
- (2) THE RELATION OF ADAM TO MANKIND AND DEATH.—"For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For, as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. xv. 21, 22).
- (3) THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO MANKIND AND TO DEATH AND RESURRECTION.—"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept . . . by man came also the resurrection of the dead . . . in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. xv. 20-22).
- (4) THE FACT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF DEATH AND ITS MEANING.—"The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (I Cor. xv. 26).
- (5) THE TIME PERIODS.—"Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (I Cor. xv. 24).

These five subjects receive amplification in B | xv. 36-57:

- (1) THE DIFFERENCES IN THE "ORDER" OF RESURRECTION AMPLIFIED.—"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differeth from star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead" (I Cor. xv. 41, 42; also 42-44).
- (2) THE RELATION OF ADAM TO MANKIND AND DEATH IS AMPLIFIED.—"And so it is written, the first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a life-giving Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that

which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven" (I Cor. xv. 46, 47).

- (3) THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO MANKIND, AND TO DEATH AND RESURRECTION IS AMPLIFIED.—“The last Adam is a life-giving Spirit the second man is the Lord from heaven we shall also bear the image of the heavenly” (I Cor. xv. 45-49).
- (4) THE FACT OF THE DESTRUCTION OF DEATH AND ITS MEANING ARE AMPLIFIED.—“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, that giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. xv. 54-57).
- (5) THE TIME PERIODS RECEIVE AMPLIFICATION.—“When then shall be brought to pass” (I Cor. xv. 54).

This reference is found in Isa. xxv. 6-8, and is Millennial in character. The events described take place before the Great White Throne is set up.

If the parallels set out above have any true significance, it is clear that the “destruction” of death in verse 24 is equivalent to the “swallowing up” of death in victory at the blessed resurrection of the saints. Christ Himself was the “firstfruits” of them that sleep. He has “abolished” death so far as He Himself is concerned by His resurrection on the third day, and He has rendered it inoperative now, by extracting its sting, and robbing sin of its strength. When in that future day the believer awakes in resurrection glory, the abolition of death will be complete.

The finest commentator on the Apostle’s writings is usually the Apostle himself, and we have sought as far as possible to let him speak for himself. Applying this principle to the verse under consideration, we note that there are two words translated “immortality” in the A.V. The first of these, used in II Tim. i. 10, is *aphtharsia*, “incorruption”. This occurs 8 times, all the references being in Paul’s epistles. *Aphthartos*, the adjective, occurs 7 times, 4 of the occurrences being found in Paul’s epistles and 3 in I Peter.

The second word for “immortality” is *athanasia*, which occurs 3 times, all the references being in Paul’s epistles. The word *athanasia* is made up of *a*, the negative, and *thanatos*, “death”, so indicating a state exempt from death. The three references are given below:

- “This mortal must put on *immortality*” (I Cor. xv. 53).
- “This mortal shall have put on *immortality*” (I Cor. xv. 54).
- “Who only hath *immortality*” (I Tim. vi. 16).

The eight occurrences of *aphtharsia*, “incorruption”, are given, below. The word is made up of *a*, the negative, and *phtharsis* from *phtheiro* “to corrupt”.

- “Seek for glory and honour and *incorruption*, eternal life” (Rom. ii. 7).
- “It is raised in *incorruption*” (I Cor. xv. 42).
- “Neither doth corruption inherit *incorruption*” (I Cor. xv. 50).
- “This corruptible must put on *incorruption*” (I Cor. xv. 53).
- “So when this corruptible shall have put on *incorruption*” (I Cor. xv. 54).

“Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ with *incorruption*” (Eph. vi. 24).
“Shed light on life and *incorruption*” (II Tim. i. 10).
“In doctrine showing *uncorruptness*” (Titus ii. 7).

The four occurrences of *aphthartos* in Paul’s epistles are as follows:

“Changed the glory of the *incorruptible* God” (Rom. i. 23).
“Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an *incorruptible*” (I Cor. ix. 25).
“The dead shall be raised *incorruptible*” (I Cor. xv. 52).
“Now unto the King eternal, *incorruptible*, invisible” (I Tim. i. 17).

We observe that in I Timothy both words are used. In chapter i. 17 we have the word “incorruptible” and in chapter vi. 16 the word “immortal”; while in both passages we have the statement that God is invisible. Between these two passages we have the wonderful statement that “God was manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. iii. 16). He Who is invisible has shown Himself to man. He is and ever must be incorruptible. And so we read:

“He Whom God raised again, saw no corruption” (Acts xiii. 37).

He ever lives, to die no more. Death hath no more dominion over Him, and He will one day show Who is that blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords, Who only hath immortality.

The resurrection figures prominently in Paul’s testimony before his various judges. In Acts xxiii., before the High Priest, he says:

“I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question” (Acts xxiii. 6).

Before Felix, he says:

“I have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust” (Acts xxiv. 15).
“Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day” (Acts xxiv. 21).

Before Agrippa, Paul’s testimony is the same:

“Certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive” (Acts xxv. 19).
“And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope’s sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts xxvi. 6-8).

In chapter xvii. we again find the thought of resurrection emphasized:

“Because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection” (Acts xvii. 18).

It was in connection with this truth, enshrined in the gospel committed to him, that Paul was appointed a “preacher”, and an “apostle”, and a “teacher of the Gentiles” (II Tim. i. 11). This same threefold ministry is referred to in I Tim. ii. 7, and the reader should note the interesting parallel between this passage and Titus i. 1-4. Both passages speak of “due time”, and the Apostle’s solemn words in I Tim. ii. 7: “I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not” are echoed by the words “truth”, and “cannot lie” in Titus i. 1-4.

We have now dealt with II Tim. i. 8-12—, and we must next pass on to verses 12-14. In both of these sections the thought of not being ashamed is prominent. As we realize the issues of life and death involved, and begin to apprehend the love that gave and planned, shame will surely give place to a desire to serve, and, if need be, to suffer any loss rather than deny the Lord, Whose sacrifice and resurrection on our behalf have opened the door to life and glory.

The second section (II Tim. i. 12-14), which passes from the gospel committed to Paul to “that good deposit” of truth in which is enshrined the Mystery, we must take up in our next article.

#9. The Good Deposit (i. 12 - 14). pp. 139 - 143

Like the first subdivision of this section, verses 12-14 of II Tim. i. speak of being “unashamed” of a message, “the good deposit”, and of a particular time, “that day”. As some time has elapsed since we set out the passage as a whole we here repeat its structure.

B2 | 12-14. Paul—Not ashamed of suffering as prisoner.

SUBJECT.—The Good Deposit.

TIME.—That Day.

f2 | 12. He is able to guard.

g2 | 12. The Deposit.

h2 | 13. Have a form of sound words heard of me.

f2 | 14. Do thou guard.

g2 | 14. The Good Deposit.

As we have introduced a new translation into the structure, we will deal with that first. The words of the A.V., “that which I have entrusted unto Him” (II Tim. i. 12), are, in the original, *Ten paratheken mou*, and those of verse 14, “That good thing which was committed unto thee”, are *Ten kalen paratheken*. It will be seen that, with the exception of the two words *mou*, “of me”, and *kalen*, “good”, the same words are used in both passages. The R.V. margin informs us that the Greek means “my deposit”. If we turn to I Tim. vi. 20, we shall find the same word used there, “O Timothy, keep that which has been committed to thy trust”, *Ten paratheken*.

In II Tim. ii. 2, where we read: “The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same *commit* thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also”, the verb *paratithemi* is used. Moreover, in I Tim. i. 18, the Apostle uses the same verb where he says: “This charge I *commit* unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience” (I Tim. i. 18, 19).

It is evident that the Apostle has some specific body of truth in view when he uses this word *paratheke*. This is not only obvious by the way in which he uses it, but in the way in which he hedges it round. He closely associates it with what he calls “things heard of me”, and even the gospel itself is that gospel of which Paul was made the herald, and which, in II Tim. ii. 8, he dominates “my gospel”. We shall therefore be well advised to go on with our search, so that we may have the full advantage of all the Apostle has to say of this “good deposit”.

First of all, in the verse quoted above from I Tim. i., we find that what had committed to Timothy was a “charge”. Now the word translated “charge” is *paraggeleia*. Dr. Young sees in the composition of the word the meaning of “private, or extra, message” which, if it could be supported by evidence of usage, would admirably fit in with the idea implied by *paratheke*, but, so far as we have discovered, there is no warrant for this opinion. The verbal form *paraggello*, “to charge”, occurs several times in these pastoral epistles, and it will be a contribution to the subject before us if we make ourselves acquainted with its occurrences and contexts.

“That thou mightest *charge* some that they teach no other doctrine” (I Tim. i. 3).

This is an important feature in I Timothy, for the question of the teaching of “other doctrine” comes up again in I Tim. vi. 3, where the A.V. translates the words “teach otherwise”. It will be remembered that in II Timothy prominence is given to the thought that Paul and his doctrine had been forsaken. Here, the first step toward that end is seen in the substitution of some other doctrine. It was a part of the charge laid upon Timothy to resist this innovation. The Apostle told Timothy that as the times grew worse, the day would come when some would not endure sound doctrine, and exhorted him to “preach the word” and “do the work of an evangelist” (II Tim. iv. 2-5), and while he uses neither *paraggeleia* nor *paraggello* the Apostle still introduces this exhortation with a “charge” (II Tim. iv. 1).

Returning to the first Epistle we find the next reference.

“Now the end of the *charge* (A.V. ‘commandment’) is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned” (I Tim. i. 5).

Surely it is clear that the repetition of the words “pure”, “conscience” and “unfeigned faith”, in the opening charge of the second Epistle binds the two epistles together as dealing with a common subject. For clearness and completeness we will repeat the reference already given from the first Epistle.

“This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies that went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare” (I Tim. i. 18, 19).

Here “good warfare” is *kalen strateian*. Is it accident or design that links together the “committing” of II Tim. ii. 2, with the good soldier (*kalos stratiotes*) of II Tim. ii. 3?

“Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise (same word as ‘charge’) of the life that now is, and of that which is to come” (I Tim. iv. 8).

Here we have a reference to the “promise of life” which the Apostle introduces into II Tim. i. 1.

“I give thee *charge* in the sight of God, Who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, Who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; that thou keep this commandment, with spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Tim. vi. 13, 14).

What Paul enjoined on his son Timothy, he did himself. In view of that same “appearing” he finished his course, and knew that he would be “preserved” unto that heavenly kingdom (II Tim. iv. 8, 18).

The reader will have noticed that the word *paraggeleia* contains the same root that gives us the word *euaggelion*, “gospel”. There are four references to this gospel in the pastoral epistles.

“According to the *gospel* of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust” (I Tim. i. 11).

While the actual words translated “committed to my trust” are not the same as those examined above, the sentiment is similar, for this gospel was “entrusted”.

“Hath shed light on life and incorruptibility through the *gospel*, whereunto I am appointed a preacher” (II Tim. i. 8, 10).

“Remember Jesus Christ, raised out from dead ones, of the seed of David, according to my *gospel*, wherein I suffer trouble as an evil doer, even unto bonds” (II Tim. ii. 8, 9).

We note the insistence upon the words “my gospel”, and remember that the word “preacher” in II Tim. i. 11 is *kerux*, a “herald”. *Kerusso*, “to preach”, *kerugma*, “the preaching”, as well as *kerux*, “the preacher”, occur several times in these pastoral epistles.

“A pillar and ground of truth, and confessedly great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, *preached* unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory” (I Tim. iii. 15, 16).

“God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, whereunto I am ordained a *preacher*, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity” (I Tim. ii. 3-7).

The Apostle does not limit prayer to any class. Most unlikely ones may be subjects of grace; “Kings” are mentioned, and any knowledge of the kind of persons Kings were when Paul wrote these words makes his language startling.

That all men do not come to a knowledge of the truth is stated in II Tim. iii. 7, but while such are likened to Jannes and Jambres they are not under a decree of reprobation, but they “resist” the truth, which implies the possession on their part of intelligence, therefore responsibility rests upon them.

“The gospel whereunto I am appointed a *preacher*, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. For which cause I also suffer these things” (II Tim. i. 11, 12).

“Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me and strengthened me; that by me the *preaching (kerugma)* might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear” (II Tim. iv. 17).

“On hope of *aionion* life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the age-times, but hath in due times manifested His word, through *preaching (kerugma)*, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Saviour” (Titus i. 2, 3).

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the good deposit was that revelation of the mystery committed first of all to Paul, as the prisoner, and, by him, re-committed to Timothy and to faithful teachers down the age.

Closely associated with this good deposit, which Timothy is enjoined to guard, is the parallel exhortation:

“Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. i. 13).

The word “hold fast” is simply “have”. The word “form” is *hupotuposin*, and occurs in but one other passage.

“Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me, as a first one, Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a *pattern* to them which hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting” (I Tim. i. 16).

The word translated “form” and “pattern” is in use as the name of a figure of Rhetoric. One of the Latin names for this figure is *Adumbratio*, “a shadowing out, or a sketching out, in words”. Paul’s life and doctrine, the manner of his conversion, and the message he was raised up to give, form the preliminary sketch that all must follow who seek to bear their testimony to the truth of the mystery.

There is the possibility that the expression, “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am first” (I Tim. i. 15) really means that he, Paul, was the first one to be saved by “Christ Jesus”. We know that the Lord met him on the road to Damascus, and that Paul asked, “Who art thou, Lord?” The reply was, “I am Jesus”, and while it is true that “Jesus Christ” and “Christ Jesus” are both names of the one glorious Person, the reversal of names in the title has important significance.

From the text of the R.V. we discover that Paul is the only N.T. writer who uses the title “Christ Jesus”. According to the R.V. Acts xxiv. 24 should read “Christ Jesus”, as also Rom. vi. 3, 11, 23; viii. 11, 34; xv. 16, 17; I Cor. i. 4; II Cor. i. 1; Gal. ii. 16 (2nd ref); iii. 14; v. 6, 24; Eph. i. 1; ii. 20; iii. 1, 6; Phil. i. 1 (twice), 8, 26; Col. iv. 12; I Tim. i. 1, 2 (three times); iv. 6; v. 21; II Tim. i. 1, 10; ii. 3; iv. 1; Titus i. 4; and Philemon 9.

On the other hand, in the R.V. Heb. iii. 1 reads “Jesus”, while I Pet. v. 10 and 14 both read “Christ”. According to the Revised Text, the Apostle has used the title “Christ Jesus” with greater frequency than the A.V. shows, but only in the epistles to the church or to Timothy, Titus and Philemon; never in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The revelation of the mystery is impossible apart from the ascended Christ, and He is accordingly set forth in Paul’s ministry as “Christ Jesus”. The number of occurrences of this title in Paul’s ministry is 80, the number that stands for resurrection, lordship, the octave, a fresh start, newness. This number includes the one reference in the Acts, namely, xxiv. 24. Paul did not hesitate to speak to the Roman ruler concerning the faith that is in “Christ Jesus”. Sometimes the preaching of what is mis-called “the simple gospel” is a betrayal, and often is neither “simple” nor “good news”.

Coming back therefore to II Tim. i. 12-14 we see that the Apostle so believed the truth entrusted to him that neither prison, suffering, nor desertion could make him ashamed, for he had implicit confidence that the Lord Who had entrusted him with so sacred a deposit of truth was well able to guard it until that day. To help Timothy in this sacred stewardship, Paul tells him to have ever before him, as an adumbration, or sketch, the sound words that he had heard of him among many witnesses (II Tim. ii. 2), and which Timothy had believed and towards which he had shown such love. “Guard”, said the Apostle, “that good deposit by the holy ghost which dwelleth in us”.

Pneuma hagion (“holy spirit”) without the article (the) usually refers to one of the “gifts of the Spirit” and, in this case, to that gift which was in Timothy by the laying on of the Apostle’s hands (II Tim. i. 6), and which he had exhorted him to stir up and use.

To-day we have no gift like that possessed by Timothy, yet we have something which Timothy did not possess, the complete Scriptures, and to-day He Who knows the frailty of the earthen vessel will stand by every one of like mind with Timothy as He stood by Paul at the beginning. May we be mindful of the “pattern” and “guard the good deposit”.

#10. A Ministry of Refreshing (i. 15 - 18).
pp. 232 - 234

There now remains to be considered the third reference to being ashamed which completes the study of II Tim. i. 8-18:

- B3 | 15-18. Onesiphorus—Not ashamed of chain of prisoner.
SUBJECT.—Service.
TIME.—That day.
- f3 | 15. Thou knowest.
g3 | 15. In Asia. All turned away from me.
h3 | 16. The Lord give mercy.
g3 | 17. In Rome, He sought and found me.
h3 | 18. The Lord grant mercy.
g3 | 18. In Ephesus, He ministered unto me.
f3 | 18. Thou knowest very well.

The lowly yet faithful ministry of Onesiphorus may have been introduced here for Timothy's encouragement in his stand for the truth that was now the object of such animosity and opposition.

- “This thou knowest” (II Tim. i. 15).
“Thou knowest very well” (II Tim. i. 18).

In reminding Timothy of the service of Onesiphorus, two words which we must notice are used by the Apostle, *eideo* and *ginosko*.

When Paul would speak of the defection of those in Asia, he was telling Timothy something of which he had but heard, not of which he had full and personal knowledge, for *eideo*, means “to perceive” and that the subject of the knowledge has come within the observer's sphere. But the ministry of Onesiphorus at Ephesus was something more intimately known and understood by Timothy, seeing that he was present at Ephesus at the time concerned, and had been there for some time prior to Paul's second apprehension (I Tim. i. 3).

The occurrences of *eideo* in II Timothy are:--

- “Greatly desiring *to see* thee” (i. 4).
“This thou *knowest*” (i. 15).
“I *know* Whom I have believed” (i. 12).
“*Knowing* that they do gender strifes” (ii. 23).
“*Knowing* of whom thou hast learned them” (iii. 14).
“Thou hast *known* the holy scriptures” (iii. 15).

The occurrences of *ginosko* in II Timothy are:--

- “Thou *knowest* very well” (i. 18).
“The Lord *knoweth* them that are His” (ii. 19).
“This *know* also” (iii. 1).

“Very well” is the comparative, and means “This thou knowest better (than I can tell you)”.

While the expression “all they which are in Asia” could indicate a universal apostacy in the area concerned, such is not the fact, for at least Timothy, Onesiphorus, Aquila and Priscilla stood firm (II Tim. iv. 19). He appears therefore to refer here to his “first defence” when *all* men forsook him (II Tim. iv. 16). Doubtless there would have come with Paul, from different centres, witnesses whose testimony to the law-abiding character of the Apostle’s ministry would have been valuable, but the attitude of Nero and the Roman government to Christianity was so terrifying that, when the moment arrived, Paul was left in the lurch so far as human aid was concerned. We do not know why particular mention is made of Phygellus and Hermogenes, but it is possible that they were special witnesses, and their defection would therefore be keenly felt by the Apostle. Or they may have been leaders of a party that was antagonistic to the apostle’s teaching.

From the references made by the Apostle to persons and places associated with his second imprisonment, we gather that the Jews of Asia were among his most bitter enemies. Evidently Paul had stood in need of the ministry of Onesiphorus, and the reference to his being unashamed of Paul’s chain comes before the reference to his diligent search in Rome, and may indicate the service Onesiphorus rendered while Paul awaited the preliminaries of his trial at Ephesus. Demetrius the silversmith (Acts xix. 24) and Alexander the coppersmith (II Tim. iv. 14) had become enemies of Paul. The attempt on his life and liberty at Ephesus having failed, renewed attacks were made by “the Jews which were of Asia” while Paul was at Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 27-29). Their enmity was increased by the subsequent release of the Apostle, and intensified by the references made to them in the Epistles to the Colossians, to Timothy and to Titus, of which they would not fail to learn. The apprehension of the Apostle at Troas and his arrival before the pro-consul at Ephesus would have been the signal for a renewal of hostility. When Polycarp was martyred in Smyrna, another city of Asia, it is expressly recorded that the Jews were specially eager for his death, “as their custom is” (Polycarp c. 13). Again, Peter’s epistles addressed to the believing Jews in Asia, Pontus and the surrounding districts reveal the breaking out in these parts of an intensely fiery trial of Christians.

Into this atmosphere of strife and hatred came the refreshing ministry of Onesiphorus: “He oft refreshed me.” *Anapsucho* is a unique word. It is written of no other servant of the Lord in the N.T. We find the word used in Exod. viii. 15 for a “respite”, and the substantive occurs in Acts iii. 20 in the phrase “the times of refreshing”.

In the midst of all the evidences of mortal fear, hate and failure, one man is permitted to bring in, with his humble ministry, a foretaste of the day when creation’s groan shall be hushed, when “He shall come down like showers upon the parched fields from which the grass has been cut” (Psa. lxxii. 6). It was a ministry like a breath of fresh, pure, air, entering into the room of a fever-stricken sufferer. Neither learning nor great talent is required to perform this service, but it demands unbounded and unselfish love. Could

Timothy listen to this record of loving service unmoved? Would he not provoked to emulation—he, the son of the Apostle in the faith? Later in this epistle Paul urges Timothy to use “diligence” in coming to him at Rome. Is it for this reason that he notes the further ministry of Onesiphorus?

“But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me” (II Tim. i. 17).

It appears that had Onesiphorus been ashamed of Paul’s chain, or faint-hearted in his search, he might readily have found plenty of excuses for failing to find that Apostle. A great change had come since Acts xxviii. 30, 31. There, Paul had his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him no man forbidding him. But now! What could the Apostle do to requite this service? Of himself, nothing. His earthly course was well-nigh run. But there was a crown for all who loved the Lord’s appearing, and the attitude of Onesiphorus proved that he possessed this love that will not fail of remembrance in “that day”. So the Apostle and this humble fellow-servant will enter their reward together.

“O Timothy! be there with me, too; O my son! my son! remember that no man is crowned except he strive lawfully. Endure affliction; do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of thy ministry.”

Thus, the Apostle seems to have written and chosen his subjects, forgetting his own sorrows in his overwhelming love for his beloved son.

Did Timothy use all diligence? and did he arrive in Rome before winter? Did he stand firm? and did he overcome all his evident timidity? None now can answer. But there will be a day when Paul and Onesiphorus, Timothy and Demas, the writer of this article and his readers, shall stand in the presence of the Lord Who loves us and gave Himself for us. Shall it be said of any of us that we have been ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of Paul his prisoner? May the Lord forbid! and rather set His seal upon the study of this epistle to confirm and strengthen us all in this good fight.

Some Titles of Scripture.

#8. The Word of God. p. 112

In Volume XXX, page 208, we noted nine occurrences of the phrase “The Word of God” in the Acts. There are fourteen passages in the epistles that employ this term (Rom. ix. 6; I Cor. xiv. 36; II Cor. ii. 17; iv. 2; Col. i. 25; I Thess. ii. 13; I Tim. iv. 5; II Tim. ii. 9; Titus ii. 5; Heb. iv. 12; xiii. 7; I Pet. i. 23; II Pet. iii. 5; I John ii. 14).

There are one or two illuminating contrasts used in these passages.

- (1) “THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT BOUND” (II Tim. ii. 9).—The joyous and irrepressible spirit of the man who *was* bound is here wonderfully evident.
- (2) “NOT AS THE WORD OF MEN” (I Thess. ii. 13).—Praise that its reception from God by the Thessalonians worked effectually in their conduct.
- (3) “NOT OF CORRUPTIBLE SEED” (I Pet. i. 23).—The context proceeds to contrast the withering grass and falling flower of the flesh and its glory, with the word of the Lord which endureth for ever.

“What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord.”

#9. The Word of Truth. p. 143

Five times do the epistles use the title “The Word of Truth” (II Cor. vi. 7; Eph. i. 13; Col. i. 5; II Tim. ii. 15; James i. 18).

The apostle Paul included “the word of truth” among those things that approved him as a minister of God; he uses it as a synonym for the gospel of the salvation of the Ephesians believers. The word of the truth of the gospel included the hope which was laid up in heaven for the Colossian believers. In his last epistle, Paul gives us that most important principle, “rightly dividing the word of truth”, and James uses the word of truth in connection with the believer’s begetting, as Peter uses the word of God (I Pet. i. 23).

#10. The Scripture. p. 240

While *graphe*, the Greek word translated “Scripture” means anything “written”, being derived from *grapho* “to write”, yet it is a remarkable fact worthy of attention, that while *graphe* occurs 51 times in the N.T. it is never translated by any other term than “Scripture”. These are “The Writings” *par excellence* and stand in a class by themselves. Similarly, the expression, “It is written” is used exclusively to refer to what is written in the Holy Scriptures, and not what is written generally.

These “Scriptures” are denominated “holy” (*hagios*) in Rom. i. 2, and “holy” (*ta heira*, priestly, sacred) in II Tim. iii. 15. Here, however, another word is introduced. The word translated “Scripture” in II Tim. iii. 15 being not *graphe* but *gramma*, referring to the “letters” themselves rather than the resulting “Scripture”. *Gramma* occurs in Gal. vi. 11, II Cor. iii. 6, John v. 47, vii. 15 and elsewhere.

In usage *graphe* “implies a reference to the authoritative character of the Scriptures as a whole”, whereas *gramma* “describes them (the Scriptures) as the object of study” (DR. E. W. BULLINGER).

Tools for the Unashamed Workman.

#1. The History of the Concordance.

pp. 234 - 237

The “unashamed workman”, in the title of this series, is, of course, a reference to II Tim. ii. 15, and the “tools” are, therefore, those belonging to the study rather than to the workshop. In the series entitled “The Volume of the Book” (Volumes XX to XXV) we sought to give some idea of the composition and growth of the inspired Volume. In the series “With all thy getting, get understanding” (Volumes XXII to XXVII) we sought to give a word of guidance on the use of argument. In the present series we deal rather with those aids to understanding and research that God in His providence has supplied for our use—beginning with that most useful of “tools”, the Concordance.

We do not know who it was that devised the first Concordance to the Scriptures, but the first of which we have authentic record was that published by Anthony of Padua (A.D.1195-1231). His work was entitled *Concordantiæ Morales*, and was founded upon the Vulgate. Cardinal Hugo, who died about 1262, followed Anthony, and compiled a Concordance to the Scriptures, in which he employed the labours of no less than 500 of his brethren. The reader has probably never seen a single sheet of this work, and possibly has never even heard the name of the compiler. Nevertheless from this man’s work have sprung the many and improved Concordances that have since seen the light. Conrad of Halberstadt in A.D.1290, and John of Segovia in the following century improved upon Hugo’s Latin Concordance, while in A.D.1438 Rabbi Mordecai Nathan commenced his Hebrew Concordance—a work which involved ten years of strenuous labour for himself and his assistants. This Hebrew Concordance was printed in Venice, Basle and Rome, and in 1556 was translated into Latin by Reuchlin. In A.D.1621 Calasio, a Franciscan friar, corrected many errors in Rabbi Nathan’s work, and remedied certain other deficiencies. He entitled his work, which was in four folio volumes, *Concordantiæ Sacr. Bibl. Hebr. Et Latin.* Another Hebrew Concordance, based upon Rabbi Nathan’s, but of greater accuracy and more satisfactorily arranged, was prepared by John Buxtorf, and published in Basle by his son in 1632. Leaving out several further modifications of this work published on the Continent, we come next to 1754, when John Taylor, D.D., published in London his *Hebrew Concordance, adapted to the English Bible, disposed after the manner of Buxtorf.* Another important name in this connection is that of Dr. Julius Furst, of Leipzig, who improved upon Buxtorf’s concordance, using Vanderhoogt’s corrected text, and incorporating Rabbinical significations, explanations in Latin, references to the LXX and other helpful features. This Concordance is a work of very great value.

Of Concordances to the LXX (the Greek translation of the Old Testament) two ancient, and one modern, must be mentioned. In 1602 Conrad Kircher of Augsburg, published his Greek Concordance of the Old Testament, containing Hebrew words in their alphabetical order. In 1718, a minister of Groningen, Abraham Trommius by name, published in his 84th year his Greek Concordance to the LXX. In this work the Greek

words are placed in alphabetical order, and the equivalent Hebrew references to the Greek Versions of Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion are also given* (* - For these and allied matters the reader is referred to the series entitled: "The Volume of the Book"). The words of the Apocrypha are also listed, and two Indexes are included, one Hebrew and one Chaldee. The volumes are bulky, and the print is not easy to read, but they are immensely useful, and we regard this work by Trommius as one of the finest "tools" we possess. The reader will see it occasionally offered for sale by second-hand book-sellers, generally from thirty shillings upwards. It is worth a small library of books to the workman who will use it.

The Concordance to the Septuagint, compiled by Hatch and Redpath and published in six volumes, in 1892-6, with a supplement on Proper Names in 1900, is the most recent work on the subject.

Of Concordances to the Greek N.T., the earliest of which we have record was that published in Basle in 1546 entitled *Xysti Betuleu Concordantiae Graecae Novi Testamenti*.

The Greek N.T. was first divided into verses by Robert Stephens. He purposed making a Greek Concordance, but had only commenced the work, when he died in 1589. The Concordance was at length published by his son Henry Stephens in 1594, but there were many inaccuracies in it. In 1638 Erasmus Schmidt's Concordance to the Greek N.T. was published by his heirs. Erasmus Schmidt himself died before his work could be published—he rests from his labours and awaits his reward. The work was re-issued in 1717 at Geneva, and again by the University of Glasgow, in 1819. In 1842 Carl Bruder issued a complete edition of it and in 1868 another, slightly modified, was published by Otto Schmoller. A worn and battered Concordance of pocket size is never absent from the desk of the present writer. It is an abridged edition of Erasmus Schmidt's Concordance made by William Grinfield in 1830, and published by Bagster. This is most useful "tool", and one that no student can easily do without.

Two Concordances published during the last hundred years must next be mentioned. *The Englishman's Greek Concordance to the New Testament* gives alphabetically every word in the Greek N.T., together with the passages in which the word occurs in the English Translation. An index at the end of the volume enables any one who has the slightest acquaintance with Greek to use the Concordance with ease. In 1877 Dr. E. W. Bullinger published his *Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, together with an index of Greek words and several appendices. This Concordance shows at a glance the Greek word, with its literal meaning, corresponding to every English word in the text or margin of the New Testament. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to the *Englishman's Greek Concordance*, and to the *Critical Greek and English Concordance* by Hudson, Boston, 1871-5. The work is characterized by the lucidity and thoroughness that are rightly associated with the name of Dr. Bullinger.

Reverting to Concordances that deal with the Hebrew, we must now refer to *The Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance of the Old Testament* (1843). To read the introduction to this work is to be humbled. The prodigious labour involved, and the pains that were taken to ensure completeness and accuracy, can only be appreciated by patiently reading the Editor's explanation. Upon revising the second sheet of the Concordance it alone was found to contain 300 citations not found in the works of Rabbi Nathan, Buxtorf, Marius, Trom, or Kircher. Furthermore it became necessary that a *census* should be made of the words of the Bible. For example, there are seven words in the Hebrew of Gen. i. 1, and seven separate labels were therefore prepared—and so on throughout the O.T. The work is an invaluable help to those who otherwise, through ignorance of the Hebrew, would never have access to the deepest treasures of the Scriptures.

Other Concordances of interest are *The Bible Student's Concordance* by Aaron Pick (1845), which places every word found in the O.T. in alphabetical order, followed by all the Hebrew words and their occurrences, together with pronunciation; and *The English Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon and Concordance of the English Translation*, by Dr. W. Wilson (1846).

Of those Concordances that are concerned only with the English Version, that of Alexander Cruden comes easily first. He published it in 1737, and the three editions produced during his lifetime indicate something of the way in which it was received. It should be borne in mind, however, that while this Concordance enables the reader to find his way about the A.V., it is liable in the hands of the unwary to lead to some false deductions. When it is realized that some English words may represent half a dozen Greek ones, and *vice versa*, it will be readily understood that any doctrine built upon a list of words found in Cruden's Concordance, is a doctrine built upon very insecure foundations. The difficulty is overcome in the Concordances produced by Dr. Strong and Dr. Young. Strong's *Exhaustive Concordance to the Bible*, and Young's *Analytical Concordance to the Bible* enable the English reader to avoid false connections based upon the English translation. Strong has a system of numbers, to which all words may be referred, while Young divides up the English words under their corresponding Hebrew or Greek equivalents. Of the two, we prefer the latter.

Another useful, but perhaps not so well-known, Concordance is that produced by Dr. Eadie in 1855. This deals with the Scriptures topically. For examples of these various methods we must ask the reader to wait for the next paper.

There are also other Concordances of varying merit, such as *Hazard's Concordance to the American Standard Bible* (1922), *Moulton and Sedon's Concordance to the Greek Testament* (1897), and *Walker's Concordance* (1894). We have said enough, however, we trust, to make it impossible for us in future to use our various Concordances without a feeling of thankfulness for all the unselfish and unrequited work undertaken by those responsible for their production. We enter to-day into the fruits of their labours, and we shall surely share with them whatever of reward or recognition may be ours by grace

when every unashamed workman shall have laid aside his tools to stand in the Master's presence.

Waiting on the Lord

#3. The waiting upon God that respectfully waits “for” Him. p. 144

We saw in Volume XXXI, page 131, that there is a silent waiting upon God, a being silent in His Presence, and a patient waiting in quiet expectancy.

We now turn our attention to a further aspect of waiting which is expressed in Isa. xxx. 18:--

“Therefore will the Lord *wait*, that He may be gracious blessed are all they that *wait* for Him.”

Here the waiting is on both sides. The Lord waits, and His people wait. This follows well upon the waiting in silence already considered, for we read:--

“Now Elihu had *waited* till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he”
(Job xxxii. 4).

It was because he discovered that neither Job nor his friends had uttered all that was true that Elihu was at length constrained to speak. But the reasons that kept Elihu “waiting” are only fully justified when we enter into the presence of God. Elihu said:--

“I am young, and ye are very old: wherefore I was afraid, and durst not show you mine opinion. I said, Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom”
(Job xxxii. 6, 7).

This consciousness, deepened as it must be when we enter, not the presence of our elders, but the presence of “The Ancient of Days”, “The Only Wise God”, is well expressed by the attitude of “waiting”.

We wait in silence, we wait expectantly. We *wait*, for the One in Whose presence we tarry is great and wise, just and holy. We do well therefore to hear the injunction of the book of Ecclesiastes:--

“Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. De not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter anything before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few” (Eccles. v. 1, 2).

#4. The waiting upon God that waits confidently. p. 184

We have already seen something of the silent waiting upon God (Volume XXXI, page 131), and the respectful waiting (Volume XXXII, page 144), and before we pass on to other aspects of the subject, there are one or two other passages to be considered, in which the same word is used as that which occupied our attention in the last article.

In Psalm cvi., after describing the passage of the Red Sea and the destruction of the Egyptians, the Psalmist continues:

“Then believed they His words; they sang His praise. They soon forgot His works, they waited not for His counsel: but lusted They envied They made a calf They forgot God their Saviour” (Psa. cvi. 12-21).

The Margin draws attention to the Hebrew of verse 13, and reads: “They made haste, they forgot.” Waiting for the Lord keeps memory bright, and it is good for the redeemed to experience and practice it.

Another salutary lesson is found in Isa. viii. It is a day of declension, and departure from the living God. The testimony is “bound up”, the law is “sealed”, and “the Lord hideth his face from the house of Jacob”. Under conditions such as these, the prophet says:

“I will wait upon the Lord, that hideth His face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for Him” (Isa. viii. 17).

Again, in Habakkuk, in another day of darkness and despair, the prophet learns the lesson of waiting:

“The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, and not tarry the just shall live by his faith” (Hab. ii. 3, 4).

The Lord’s silence must not be misconstrued. It is not indifference, it is not inertia. He awaits His Own appointed time, and the believer, if he would be in harmony with the Lord, will confidently wait too.

We read in Dan. xii., in connection with the prophetic visions: “Blessed is he that waiteth” (Dan. xii. 12), and in Isa. lxiv. The “patience of hope” reaches its fulfillment in the words of verse 1:

“For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him” (Isa. lxiv. 4).

#5. The waiting upon God that waits in hope. p. 204

We turn now to a word which means not only “to wait”, but “to wait with hope” (Hebrew *yachal*).

Job’s use of this word in Job xxix. is particularly illuminating:

“Unto me men gave ear, and *waited*, and kept silence at my counsel. After my words they spake not again; and my speech dropped upon them. And they *waited* for me as for the rain” (Job xxix. 21-23).

The Psalmist, also uses this word over and over again, as for example in Psalm cxix.: “I have hoped in Thy Word” (Psa. cxix. 74).

In Job xiv. this “waiting with hope” is associated with resurrection:

“If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I *wait* till my change come” (Job xiv. 14).

In certain constructions of the verb, *yachal* means “to tarry”, but even then the thought of hope is still present.

In Gen. viii. 12 we read:

“And he *stayed* yet other seven days: and sent forth the dove: which returned not again unto him any more.”

In verse 10 of the same chapter we read:

“And he *stayed* yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark.”

What a great deal is missed by not reading the original. The same word “stayed” comes in the A.V. of both verses, and yet there is all the difference in the world between the tormenting anxiety of one verse and the confident hope of the other. In Gen. viii. 10 the word means “to twist, to turn, as in a whirlwind, or to writhe as in pain, to tremble, probably from the leaping and palpitation of the heart”, whereas in viii. 12 the word means “to wait in hope”.

Coming back to Job again, we find the same confidence begotten of hope in chapter xiii.: “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him” (Job xiii. 15). And in Psalm xxxiii. we read:

“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy: to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waiteth for the Lord (‘to wait confidently’, as in #4 (page 184) of this series): He is our help and our shield. For our heart shall rejoice in Him, because we have trusted in His holy name. Let Thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, *according as we hope in Thee*” (Psalm xxxiii. 18-22).

#6. The waiting upon God that is waiting on Him in service. p. 220

We turn for a while from waiting on the Lord in prayer, or from waiting for the Lord in hope, to waiting on the Lord in service.

“They waited on their office according to their order” (I Chron. vi. 32).

“The priests waited on their offices” (II Chron. vii. 6).

“Judah rejoiced for the priests and for the Levites that waited” (Neh. xii. 44).

In the Hebrew this word “wait” is *amad*, “To stand”, and, followed by different prepositions, it is used of service rendered to a king.

“And Joseph was thirty years old *when he stood before* Pharaoh king of Egypt” (Gen. xli. 46).

“Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which *stand* continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom” (I Kings x. 8).

“And the king appointed them a daily provision of the king’s meat, and of the wine which he drank: so nourishing them three years, that at the end thereof they might *stand* before the King” (Dan. i. 5).

The words of the Queen of Sheba concerning the felicity of those that stood before Solomon, take on a deeper meaning when applied to those who stand before the Lord. The careful provision and preparation of Daniel and his friends, in order that at the end of the time they might be able to stand acceptably before earthly majesty, should help us to realize somewhat the blessed acceptance that must be ours which makes us meet not only for glory, but for acceptable service here below.

Prophets as well as priests are said to stand before the Lord.

“Elijah the Tishbite said As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before Whom I stand” (I Kings xvii. 1).

This word translated “wait” and “stand” has in its meaning the elements of the thought of firmness and endurance:

“The counsel of the Lord *standeth* for ever” (Psa. xxxiii. 11).

We are exhorted by the Apostle “To stand”, “To hold fast”, “To run with patience”, “To finish”. “Moses said unto them, *stand still*” (Numb. ix. 8).

War in Heaven (An Analogy).

#3. The Objects before the enemy: “Dominion” and “Worship”. pp. 28, 29

We have seen from the teaching of Scripture that the great enemy, the prime antagonist, in the conflict of the ages, is Satan. We need not be disciples of Hegel to reach the conclusion that contraries are a very real part of any given thing. Though he stand all day in the market place, no man can be a “seller” unless another becomes a “buyer”. To eliminate the idea of “husband” and to think only of the idea of “wife” is to attempt an impossibility. The two ideas must always be present in order that either of them can be conceived of as existing. So, also, it is impossible for Satan to be an enemy, or an antagonist, without the existence of some other opposing being or power. When we read “There was war in heaven” we find that Michael and his angels are ranged against the Devil and his angels. At the actual revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ, we see

“Heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war” (Rev. xix. 11).

The Psalmist also saw this apocalypse in anticipation, for he said:--

“Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with Thy glory and Thy majesty. And in Thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and Thy right hand shall teach Thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king’s enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (Psa. xiv. 3-6).

Likewise the prophet Zechariah spoke of the same great advent:--

“Behold, thy King cometh unto thee and He (LXX) will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem and His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth” (Zech. ix. 9, 10).

“Then shall the Lord go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives” (Zech. xiv. 3, 4).

We will not multiply references. The reader can find allusions to battle and war, in association with God himself, throughout the Scriptures. The great title “The Lord of Hosts” is in itself a reference to warfare.

There is a second reason for quoting the passages cited above, for, besides teaching us that the Lord Himself is engaged in this great fight, they indicate something of its object. In later verses of the chapter in Revelation from which we have already quoted occur the words,

“Out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. XIX. 15, 16).

The passage quoted above from Psa. xlv. includes the address to The Son, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (Psa. xlv. 6). Likewise Zech. ix. 10 declares “His dominion shall be from sea to sea”. The first thing said after the creation of Adam in the image and likeness of God is, “And let them have dominion” (Gen. i. 26). This is expanded in Psalm viii.:

“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet” (Psa. viii. 6).

The words, “all things under his feet”, find their real fulfillment only in Christ.

In Heb. ii. 8, 9 we discover that the first great step to this glorious end was taken at the cross, where He Who was destined to universal dominion, is seen, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. In Eph. i. 22, 23, as Head of the Church during the dispensation of the mystery, we find that the position of having “all things under His feet” is associated with His glorious ascension and session at the right hand of God.

Finally, when the goal is in sight, we find the expression “all things under his feet” associated with the destruction of death, the last enemy, when, at last, God shall be “all in all” (I Cor. xv. 24-28).

Satan, as prince of this world, has, and seeks to retain, dominion over the earth as the god of this age, but he further desires to extend that dominion to the hearts of men, and in such a manner as to have their worship. He would not only sit upon *a* throne; he would sit upon *the* throne of God. All idolatry can be traced back to that climax of attempted usurpation when our Lord was personally tempted in the wilderness by Satan, who dared to offer Him the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them if He would but “fall down and worship” him. This failed, as it could not but do, but in the book of the Revelation, though it be short-lived, we see at last Satan’s end achieved, for it is stated “And they worshipped the dragon” (Rev. xiii. 4).

From these scriptures we may gather some idea of the cause and purpose behind the conflict of the ages, and consequently realize that in that conflict there can be no neutral ground. Either we are “for” the Lord or “against” Him.

#4. Types of the Usurpation. pp. 62 - 64

When we read the blessed words, “The Lord God omnipotent reigneth” we know that they refer to Christ; He Who was born at Bethlehem, Who lived as man, and Who died and rose again. When Satan is said to be worshipped in Rev. xiii. 4, his agent, the Beast, who was slain and who had been raised again, is, according to verse 12, worshipped too. Throughout the unfolding of the ages there have been men who were outstanding types and foreshadowings of this final “Man of Sin and Son of Perdition”. The Pharaoh of the Oppression and of the Exodus is one such character. He “knew not” Joseph (Exod. i. 8), and he “knew not” the Lord (Exod. v. 2). When the Lord visited Pharaoh with judgment, He at the same time executed judgment “against all the gods of Egypt”. Egypt not only was an oppressor of Israel, but became a snare, and, in more than one sense usurped the place of God. It snared Abraham and involved him in deceit and loss (Gen. xii.). After the Exodus the people of Israel turned back in heart to the land of bondage; they thought of the “leeks, the onions and the garlick”, and said one to another: “Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt” (Numb. xiv. 4).

In later days their children trusted in Egypt. Isaiah cried,

“Woe to the rebellious children that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked counsel at My mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt” (Isa. xxx. 1, 2).

“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help the Egyptians are men, and not God: and their horses flesh, and not spirit” (Isa. xxxi. 1, 3).

It will be seen that Egypt is presented in the two very different guises of Oppressor and Refuge. These represent not a change of heart or purpose on the part of the enemy, but only of tactics, leaving unchanged the strategy or main purpose of the conflict.

When Israel were redeemed from Egypt and settled in their land, they were still the object of Satan’s attack, and, in the book of Judges, we find this exemplified by another instance of his methods. To anyone acquainted with the significance of number in Scripture, the fact that there were *twelve* judges of divine appointment and *one*, making the total *thirteen*, who usurped this authority over Israel, will suggest a type of evil. The parable which Jotham uttered as a warning to Israel sheds light upon Abimelech’s action. In the parable

“the trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive tree, Reign thou over us they said to the fig tree, Come thou, and reign over us then to the vine, Come thou, and reign over us Then said all the trees unto the bramble, (or thistle, see *margin*) Come thou, and reign us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and *put your trust in my shadow*; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon” (Judges ix. 8-16).

Under the figure of the Olive, the Fig and the Vine, Israel's religious privileges, national privileges and spiritual privileges are relinquished in favour of the apostate nation under Antichrist, which will bring destruction in its train.

In the two cases of Pharaoh and Abimelech, the means used differ, but the end is the same.

Saul, the first king of Israel, provides another lesson on the same subject. Israel said to Samuel: "Make us a king to judge us *like all the nations*" (I Sam. viii. 5). The heart of the matter is revealed in the reply which the Lord made to Samuel's prayer:

"Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee, for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them" (I Sam. viii. 7).

The reader can supplement this brief analysis by his own study, and will also find the matter extended and developed in the series entitled "FUNDAMENTALS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH". He will find that the additional details thus accumulated will but intensify the impression left by the opening words on the subject, "They have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them".

The reader will already have noted the words referring to Egypt, that though they were "men" and not "God" yet Israel went down to them for help, and "trusted in the shadow of Egypt". So with Abimelech, he made the test of Israel's allegiance just this one thing, "If in truth ye have anointed me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow".

When the time came for Israel's kingdom to pass away and the Gentile to be elevated to the throne, we see in Nebuchadnezzar, a further foreshadowing of Satan's final bid for universal dominion. After his accession to the throne, we read that he set up an image in the plain of Dura and sent out a proclamation, bidding all men gather together to its dedication. The essence of Satan's attack through Gentile dominion will be found in the word "dedicate". Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream in which the whole of the Gentile dominion had been set forth under the figure of an image, commencing with a head of gold, degenerating through silver, brass, and iron to potter's clay, and which was finally destroyed at the setting up of the kingdom of the Lord. This is recorded in Dan. ii. In Dan. iii., we find this king setting up an image made entirely of gold, and calling upon all men to attend its dedication, which involved the "falling down and worshipping" of the image under penalty of destruction in a fiery furnace. Here is the dedication in the worship of "The State" forced upon the world, a worship which takes the place of the worship of God. It was rejected by the faithful three, as it must ever be by such, until the Lord Himself reigns in righteousness.

In connection with what we have already seen, it is not without significance that in Dan. iv. Nebuchadnezzar's dominion is likened to that of a tree, which, among other things, provided for the beasts of the field, "shadow", so bringing Nebuchadnezzar into line with Pharaoh and Abimelech in their assumption of the divine prerogative.

In all these characters there is one thing that is constant. The working upon the mind of man to “choose” (as he blindly imagines) his own ruler, which ruler actually usurps the place that God alone should occupy. This will be fully demonstrated when the Beast, the False Prophet and the Antichrist bring Satanic rebellion to its dreadful end.

#5. The typical character of the Canaanite. pp. 181 - 183

While nothing short of a survey of the whole Bible would be necessary to set out full details of the conflict of the ages, we believe that were it undertaken the essential features already adduced would remain unchanged, though they might be more clearly seen in the light of the fuller study. As however we cannot contemplate so exhaustive a study in this series, we pass to others aspects of the subject, and in this article would look rather to the ultimate triumph of truth than dwell longer upon the temporary triumph of evil. For this purpose, we may find much help in the record of Israel’s crossing of the Jordan, the fall of Jericho, the partition of the Land of Promise, and the added reward given to Caleb, the overcomer. Before we picture the situation at the brink of Jordan, it will be necessary to go back in history to discover something of the origin and purpose of the Canaanite inhabitants of the Land of Promise against whom Joshua’s offensive was directed.

Who were the Canaanites? How did they get to Palestine? and what is their spiritual significance? The Canaanites were a people descended from Canaan, the son of Ham, who was a son of Noah. It will be remembered that upon awakening from sleep induced by drinking the wine he had made, Noah, with prophetic insight, pronounced a curse upon Canaan, the offspring of Ham. In Scripture therefore Canaan stands as one who is already at enmity and subjected to a curse.

The “Land of Canaan” is the name of the land known to us as Palestine, and the Land of Promise, and it is significant in connection with the analogy of terrestrial warfare which we are using, to mark how and when the land of Canaan, and the Canaanites themselves, first appear on the page of Scripture. Abram had received the call of God to go forth into a land that God would show him, and Gen. xi. 31 records the beginning of Abram’s response.

“And they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go unto the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran, *and dwelt there*” (Gen. xi. 31).

The journey commenced, it is true, but it came to a standstill too soon, for having reached Haran, they dwelt *there*. But after the death of Abram’s father, Terah, Abram responded to the divine call:

“And Abram took Sarai his wife and they went forth into the land of Canaan; *and into the land of Canaan they came*” (Gen. xii. 5).

This second step is followed by a third. Abram passed through a portion of the land of Moreh, but instead of taking possession of the Land of Promise and settling in it, we find him a “tent dweller” possessing no more than a burial place, for which he paid current money to the owner. This third step is partly explained by the next reference to the Canaanite in Gen. xii. 6, “And the Canaanite was then in the land”. The note in the Companion Bible on this passage is as follows:

“It is evident that from Terah’s and Abraham’s call, Satan knew the line by which ‘the seed of the woman’ (iii. 15) was coming into the world. In chap. vi. he aimed at the whole human race. Now he aims at Abraham and his land. Here is the second explanation of the words ‘after that’ in vi. 4. He pre-occupies the territory ready to dispute the advance. The Canaanite ‘was there’—‘being already there’ (xiii. 7). The progeny of the later attempt to corrupt the race had to be destroyed by the sword of Israel, as those ‘in the days of Noah’ had been by the flood. This attempt to corrupt the ‘seed’ is evident in Gen. iii., Gen. vi., and in the two attacks made upon Sarah as recorded in Gen. xiii. 11-20 and Gen. xx.”

That these Canaanites were not of pure Adamic stock is evident from the description given of them. We read of a race of giants called Anakim, Rephaim, Nephilim, etc., and we must expect that right down the ages Satan’s “men” will be supernaturally endowed.

Returning to the record of Gen. xi. and xii., we are conscious that the halt called at Haran and the statement, that by the time Abram did enter the land the Canaanite was already there, are intentionally linked together. We shall find that these Canaanites are indeed indicated as usurpers that must be evicted, and that the interval during which this usurpation was effected is linked with a moral purpose. The interval which enabled Satan to forestall Abram’s entry into the land is attributable to human frailty, but when we read Gen. xv. we become conscious of another aspect of this circumstance.

Abraham is told by God that his seed, which are destined to inherit the land of Canaan, shall, nevertheless, for a time, “be strangers in a land that is not theirs”; that a period of four hundred years shall elapse before they return, with great substance, and the inner reason given for this strange interval is, “In the fourth generation they shall come hither again, *for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*” (Gen. xv. 16). Israel’s failure to possess the land of promise therefore is closely linked with deeper measures of the divine plan. Satan and the Canaanite are “permitted”. They shall yet be judged, when the time is ripe, but meanwhile the true heir of promise waits in patience for the ultimate triumph of faith.

When the moment came for Israel to enter into the possession of their inheritance, the Canaanite blocked the way, and so became the object of Israel’s attack. We cannot deal with Joshua, Jordan and Jericho here, but will pick up the subject of the relationship of the Canaanite with Joshua’s entry into the land and its conquest, as a sequel to Abraham’s entry and deprivation, in the next article of this series. Let us however anticipate the ultimate end of the struggle by quoting one passage from the prophets.

“In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the Lord’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: and all they that sacrifice shall come and take them and see the therein; and in that day there shall be NO MORE CANAANITE in the house of the Lord of hosts” (Zech. xiv. 20, 21).

#6. The Conquest of Canaan. pp. 237 - 239

In our last article we devoted most of our space to consideration of the typical character of the Canaanite, and saw that in the Canaanite we have an example of Satan’s method of attempting to forestall the purposes of God, and supplant the true heirs of promise.

It will, however, be observed that, as always, the aggressor is first in the field and, for a time, apparently successful, but it is of the very essence of final victory that it shall be based upon truth and righteousness, and often therefore it is correspondingly slow, because no unrighteous advantage may be taken. A further reason for the long delay is a principle suggested in the words of Gen. xv. 16, “The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full”. But, at last, under the leadership of Joshua the time for Israel’s entry into his inheritance drew nigh, and in the approach to the land, and in some of the statements made in the record of the conquest of Palestine, we may see certain foreshadowings of the greater conflict of the ages.

There are explicit commands given by God to Joshua that forbade Israel from attacking or attempting to seize the inheritance of Esau, Moab and Ammon: “Meddle not with them” (Deut. ii. 1-5, 8-12, 18-21). We discover that Esau, Moab and Ammon found “giants” in possession of their territory, and “succeeded them”, “*as Israel did unto the land of his possessions*” (Deut. ii. 12).

Access to Israel’s inheritance was barred by the Amorites, and the command went forth, “Behold, I have given into thine hand Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land: begin to possess it, and contend with him in battle” (Deut. ii. 24).

When the reader discovers that the words “meddle” of Deut. ii. 5 and “contend” of Deut. ii. 29 are the same in the original, he will therein perceive that there is a principle at work differentiating Esau, Moab and Ammon from the Canaanites. This information will prove serviceable when we come to examine the question as to who are the foes against whom the believer is authorized to contend in the spiritual conflict.

The crossing of the Jordan, the presence and power associated with the Ark and much of the precious typical teaching contained in Josh. iii.-v. cannot be touched on here, but the reader should make a point of re-reading the articles in Volume XXV which deal with this great episode. The actual taking of Jericho, however, must be given a place in

this series, and we draw particular attention to one outstanding feature of the siege. We refer to the strange encircling of the city for seven days, culminating, on the last day, in the collapse of the walls, following the sevenfold encompassment of the city on that day.

The trumpets used on this occasion were not the silver trumpets specified in Numb. x. 1, 9, but ram's horn trumpets and "trumpets of Jubilee". The word "Jubilee" is a translation of the Hebrew word *Yobel*. Its first occurrence is in Exod. xix. 13 and the last in Josh. vi. 4-13. The remaining occurrences are all found in Leviticus and Numbers.

"And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month ye shall proclaim liberty ye shall return every man unto his possessions" (Lev. xxv. 8-19).

The sounding of the trumpet upon the seventh day of the encircling of Jericho is prophetic:

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to his servants the prophets" (Rev. x. 7).

"And the seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come there was seen in His temple the Ark of His testament" (Rev. xi. 15-19).

While the collapse of Jericho's walls at the very entry of Israel into the land was prophetic of the end, that initial triumph of faith is followed by a slow-moving story in which many lessons are learned by the way. Among them we may instance three that bear upon our theme.

- (1) Taking the land (Josh. x. 23).
- (2) Possessing the land (Josh. xiii.).
- (3) The reward of the inheritance (Josh. xiv., xv.).

These three stages need to be carefully distinguished. First, there is a great difference between "taking" the land, and "possessing" it.

"So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes" (Josh. xi. 23).

"Now Joshua was old and stricken in years; and the Lord said unto him, Thou art old and stricken in years, and there remainest yet very much land to be possessed" (Josh. xiii. 1).

The land was "divided" (Josh. xiii. 7) before it was "possessed", and we can find doctrinal parallels in the New Testament. For example, we read in Rom. vi. 6 that "the old man" was crucified with Christ, yet, just as God said he would drive out the enemy before Israel "not in one year" but "by little and little" (Ex. xxiii. 27-30), so,

even though the old man was crucified at the cross, and even though the believer is never exhorted to attempt what Christ alone has already accomplished on the cross, yet he is enjoined to put off the old man *with his deeds*, and to repudiate his *former conversation* (Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 9).

In concluding this article we would refer to the distinct line of truth devoted to the matter of reward for faithful service, in which connection the overcomer and going on unto perfection are spoken of and the running of a race and winning a prize. Col. i. 12 speaks of “the inheritance” in terms of a free, unmerited, gift, but Col. iii. 29 speaks of “the *reward* of the inheritance” in connexion with faithful service. This feature is found in the record of the conquest of Canaan, not at Jericho or in the taking of the land, but in connection with Caleb whose added portion was called Hebron “because he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel” (Josh. xiv. 6-15).