

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 FELLOW-MEMBERS,

This is Volume XL, and it completes fifty-one years of witness. We think of two words, as we record this fact, they are “Ebenezer” and “henceforth”.

Ebenezer, as we all know, refers in the first place to a stone memorial erected to commemorate some signal deliverance, and is actually engraved on the famous Moabite Stone. In Scripture we read:

“Then Samuel took a stone, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.”

We not only look back over the years with grateful recognition of past deliverances, but

“His love in times past
Forbids us to think,
He’ll leave us at last
In trouble to sink.
Each fresh Ebenezer, He brings to review
Confirms His good pleasure to help us right through.”

In the confidence that past grace begets, we go forward with the witness entrusted to us, and pray that all our readers will more abundantly share the hazards and the triumphs that are inseparable from such a work as is represented by *The Berean Expositor*.

Yours by All-sufficient grace,

CHARLES H. WELCH,
STUART ALLEN

November 1960.

INDEX

A CORRECTION	8
AN ADVISORY MAKEWEIGHT--	9
ANOINTED WITH THE HOLY GHOST	12
EPHESIANS—	
Chamber No.5. The Audience Chamber (ii. 11-19)	
Gentiles, “far off”, “made nigh”	18
Gentiles, Aliens and Strangers (ii. 11, 12)	21
The Middle Wall of Partition	27
The Creation of the New Man	34
Reconciliation, or Alienation reversed	38
Chamber No.6. The Living Room (ii. 19-22)	
Tabernacle, Temple, Dwelling Place	41
The Living Room (ii. 21)	45
Chamber No.7. The Secret Chamber (iii. 1-13)	
A Parenthesis of Extreme Importance (iii. 2-13)	49
The New Dispensation (iii. 2)	52
The Mystery made known “According to a revelation”	56
The Mystery, the term examined	59
Muth-labben, or the Secret of the Son	63
FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE ORACLES OF GOD--	
The corruption of man and the preservation of the Seed	67
The Fall, and the sin of the angels (Gen. vi.)	70
Why Adam? Why a little lower than the angels?	75
Enoch the seventh from Adam. Noah the eighth person	78
“There were giants in the earth in those days” (Gen. vi. 4)	84
The preservation of the Seed in Noah	88
“Abraham, The Hebrew”	91
Cain and Canaan “of that wicked one”	94
Flesh v. Spirit, as set forth in Gen. xii.-xxii.	98
Promises, true and false. The two seeds	102
“Not of God” “Of that wicked One”	
The Enemy and the tares which he sowed in God’s field	105
“Their blot is that they are not His children”	108
FAITH--	
“With sword and trowel”	8
FUNDAMENTALS OF DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH--	
GALATIANS: “Jerusalem which is above” (iv. 26) Its dispensational place	111
The call to Freedom -- iv. 21 - v. 10	
“To the liberty stand fast” (v. 1)	113
Fallen from grace (v. 2-9)	116
“Faith which worketh by love” (v. 5-10)	121
The troubler and the restorer -- v. 10 - vi. 10	
Love, the fulfilling of all the law (v. 14)	126

Flesh v. Spirit (v. 16-26)	132
Sowing and reaping (vi. 3-10)	136
The large letter (vi. 11)	140
The Emphasized Summary and Salutation -- vi. 12-18	143
“GO YE AND LEARN WHAT THAT MEANETH” (Matt. ix. 13)--	
Words—the material of the unashamed workman	147
Every word has a meaning	149
The meaning of a word is to be sought in its usage	151
Figures of speech	156
Scope and Structure	158
A few guiding principles in closing	161
HEBREWS--	
The Right Hand of the Majesty on High	164
“He came where he was”	168
“This day have I begotten Thee”	174
“The oil of gladness”	179
Jesus Christ the Same (i. 12)	184
Confirmed Covenants and their Responsibilities (ii. 1-4)	190
The So Great Salvation (ii. 1-4)	193
Gifts for confirmation	197
HITHERTO—HENCEFORTH	5
“THE HOUSE OF JACOB SHALL POSSESS THEIR POSSESSIONS”--	
The significance of the word “possess”	201
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST, THE--	
“Saved, yet so as by fire”	206
The Judgment of intention	209
Chastening <i>now</i> , instead of condemnation <i>then</i>	213
What shall the believer “receive”?	
LETTER AND SPIRIT--	
“So they read in the book in the law of God <i>distinctly</i> , and gave the <i>sense</i> and caused them to <i>understand</i> the reading” (Neh. viii. 8)	7
MEDITATIONS ON PSALM LI.--	
The “blotting out” of transgressions (verse 1)	224
Some characteristic marks of sin	226
David’s plea for mercy (verse 1)	227
MILLENNIAL STUDIES--	
This is the sum	230
ONE LORD--	
“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one LORD” (Deut. vi. 4)	
Why is Elohim, the plural form, employed?	232
Jesus Christ is Jehovah	235
Jehovah and Kurios in O.T and N.T.	242
The Only True God	248
The doctrine of the Trinity, and the use of the word “Person”	250
TRUSTEESHIP	11

Hitherto-----Henceforth

pp. 39, 40

The Editor of this magazine was given the honour of conducting the funeral service on Saturday, January 10th, of a dear and loyal sister in Christ, Mrs. Edith Coulson, who fell asleep on Wednesday the 7th at her home in Draycott, Derby. She, together with her husband, opened her house and unreservedly devoted time and possessions, that a meeting place should be provided where the Word of Truth rightly divided should find a hearing and a home. This took place some thirty years ago; since when some who were children have become adults, and have not only stood for the Truth, but have carried it far and wide for many years.

If ever a place of assembly can be said to have been 'consecrated', the room of meeting in Plum Tree House was indeed 'sacred ground'. This room on the Saturday gathering was filled to overflowing, and sadness gave place to gladness as the true comfort of the Scriptures took possession of every heart.

Quoting of Churchill at a critical moment in the last war we said:

"This is the end of the beginning, and the beginning of the end."

Most certainly an end had come, but it was the end of a pilgrimage, not the end of all things. The earthly house of the pilgrimage which is likened to a frail tent, had fulfilled its purpose and was dissolved; the tired body was now being laid aside to rest in hope. At the same time let us remember that our sister's life is "Hid with Christ in God". What words are here! Time no longer counts for her; her next moment of consciousness is to "Awake with His likeness, and be SATISFIED".

The words at the head of this brief notice are borrowed from the experience of Samuel and of Paul, and should be true of us all.

"Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpeh and Shen (*Mizpeh* meaning a 'watch tower', and *Shen* a 'tooth', symbols of Divine and watchful providence on the one hand, and the gnawing tooth of opposing circumstances on the other), and called the name of it EBEN-EZER, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (I Sam. vii. 12).

This was a monument erected to commemorate deliverance, the 'hitherto' suggesting continued grace in time of need.

Portions of two hymns come into mind here.

<p>“His love in time past Forbids me to think He’ll leave me at last In trouble to sink. Each fresh Eben-ezer He brings in review, Confirms His good pleasure To help me right through.”</p>	<p>“Here I’ll raise my Eben-ezer Hither by Thy grace I’m come, And I trust in Thy good pleasure Safely to arrive home. Christ did seek me, when a stranger Without hope, or peace or God; And to rescue me from danger Interposed His precious blood.”</p>
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This day of mingled grief and joy was the end of a pilgrimage. The *hitherto* of the past and of GRACE, anticipates the *henceforth* of future and of GLORY.

We stand in an interval, a few beats of slow and quiet music, before the Hallelujah chorus becomes inevitable and bursts forth in praise. This waiting time is of unapproachable and almost unbelievable security, HID with CHRIST in GOD. The day approaches when this body of humiliation shall be transfigured like unto His body of glory (Phil. iii. 21) the *henceforth*.

Paul knew this ‘henceforth’ saying:

“I have fought a good fight,
 I have finished my course,
 I have kept the faith, HENCEFORTH” (II Tim. iv. 7, 8).

The crown laid up for him would not be received until ‘that day’, but the waiting time would be to him as nothing.

We who are left and allowed a little further time and opportunity to serve, gather courage from what we have learned at this solemn meeting. May we too keep the faith unsullied, undiluted, rightly divided, and Christ honouring, and may we too:

“Live looking for that blessed hope” (Titus ii. 12, 13).

Letter and Spirit

No.1 pp. 47, 48

“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).

We read that Daniel, after he had received a vision “sought for the meaning” (Dan. viii. 15), and Zechariah is found continually asking “What be these?” The Scriptures are *valueless* if they are *meaningless*. Their message is mediated through human language, and the first step to ascertaining “What is the mind of the Spirit” is to make sure of the meaning of the words that the Spirit has used. We hope to take up a number of expressions and key words, and give what light we possess or can discover upon their meaning. In the first place, we must have some idea of ‘the meaning of meaning’ before we can proceed (see the series “*Go ye and learn what that meaneth*”). Meaning cannot be settled by the *etymology* of a word only, although that is the first thing we investigate. The quest for meaning must also take into account the *usage* of any word under consideration so that dictionary and concordance will represent the irreducible minimum of apparatus necessary. In addition to this we must give a place to the *context* in which any particular word is found, and this will often be the first thing to take into account. We will make our meaning plain by an illustration. Suppose the word before us is the word “light”. Now it is useless to commence our investigation into the etymology of the Greek word *phos*, which means ‘light’ in the sense of radiance, for the word might be the Greek word *elaphros* ‘not heavy’, and both of these words occur in II Cor. iv. In verse 6 we have *phos*, and in verse 17 we have *elaphros*. Even if the context decides that the word ‘light’ refers to the natural agent of vision, even then the word may not be *phos*, light itself, it may be *luchnos* a lamp (John v. 35), or *lampas* a torch (Acts xx. 8) or *phengos* a shining (Matt. xxiv. 29); or *phoster* a light giver (Phil. ii. 15) or *photismos* illumination (II Cor. iv. 4) or *hapto* to kindle (Luke viii. 16), or *kaio* to burn (Matt. v. 15) or *epiphaino* to shine upon (Luke i. 79); or *apokalupsin* an unveiling (Luke ii. 32). We need, therefore:

- (1) Context.
- (2) Etymology found by intelligent use of the dictionary, with the consciousness that it is only too easy in this subject to jump to conclusions.
- (3) Usage, found by a survey of the concordance and an examination of the context.
- (4) Illustration—as we have tried to illustrate the problems by the examples given above. We hope to apply this fourfold method in the elucidation of a number of words the meaning of which is essential to the true understanding and ministry of the Word of God.

p. 80

A CORRECTION. There is need for a correction in the *Berean Expositor* of January on page 7, where we stated that Lamech was 'childless'. What we should have said was that Cain's line ended in Lamech and his three sons, but our mind was influenced by the words of Jer. xxii. 30 where Coniah, who also had sons, was nevertheless 'childless' so far as the throne of David was concerned.

Faith
“With Sword and Trowel”
p. 186

In an earlier article we considered the foundation upon which faith rests. We may, however, consider faith as a foundation upon which one may build. When 'faith' is used in this sense it means the whole of the doctrine embraced by the believer and called "The Faith".

“But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith” (Jude 20).

That 'the faith' here is looked upon as a 'foundation', the usage elsewhere testifies. The verb 'to build upon' occurs in I Cor. iii. 10, 12, 14; and in Eph. ii. 20 where there can be no doubt as to the meaning of the Apostle.

Someone has said that the believer must act like the Jews did in the days of Nehemiah, who worked at the building of the wall:

“With one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me” (Neh. iv. 17, 18).

Jude does not only say 'build', but says:

“Ye should earnestly contend for the faith” (Jude 3).

The activities of faith are carried on in the presence of adversaries; when the adversary ceases to trouble, faith will be exchanged for perfect knowledge.

AN ADVISORY MAKEWEIGHT

pp. 187, 188

The articles for this issue of the magazine have overrun their allotted span and so your distribution secretary has been promoted to use these two pages! My position in the centre of the production and distribution of literature supplies me by correspondence received, with an overall picture of the spiritual needs of people and, to some extent, the fruit discovered by those who seek to pass on the precious truths they have made their own.

In conversing with friends and chance acquaintances, common experience finds the Bible accepted only in parts or misused or misunderstood. To demonstrate that all the Bible is inspired, and to show the virtues of Right Division and the implications of Dispensational Truth, require many hours with the person in question and the Open Book. Many of us, and I speak for myself, find difficulty in speaking convincingly and clearly. Proof texts are not always at our finger tips. Whilst these are drawbacks which we should ever endeavour to remove, yet our witness should not wait for the eloquence of Apollos. It is here at this point that the literature provided by the Trust can come to our aid.

Apart from the wonderful expository volumes on specific books such as *Just and the Justifier*, there are booklets to meet error and difficulties; among these are:

THE RECONCILIATION OF ALL THINGS.—Some teach that God is love and will eventually reconcile all men to Himself. God has said: “My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways” (Isa. lv. 8). We need to look closely at what God has said on the subject. While it is not our province to judge the unbeliever, we need to hold fast to and proclaim the clear positive statements God has recorded regarding the means of grace and our salvation. This booklet has been written to meet many objections that have been raised.

HELL: OR PURE FROM THE BLOOD OF ALL MEN.—The doctrine of eternal torment as the end of sinners is a belief which is widely held and for many today is a spur to the conversion of souls. The booklet follows the usual method of Mr. Welch in collecting all the terms used for Hell and other terms related to the judgment and the destination of sinners, and demonstrating their true usage and implications from other passages of Scripture and the use of the Greek equivalent in the Septuagint.

ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.—Here is a book, not so much for the unbeliever as for the one who has not realized the amazing provision God has planned for us in His Son. What we could never hope for from our own efforts,

God has declared He will extend to us through our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. God goes to the length of applying to us, who can understand and accept this offer, the word *charitoo* translated 'made us accepted'. The word *charitoo* occurs in only one other N.T. passage, namely Luke i. 28 when the angel greets the Virgin Mary with the words:

“Hail, thou that art *highly favoured* among women.”

Here is a booklet that sets forth some of these inestimable blessings.

WISDOM HUMAN AND DIVINE.—Universities and scholastic attainments produce the attitude of mind in many a young man and woman, that, having investigated the conclusions of ancient and not so ancient philosophers, they feel they would support those who can do without God, because 'after all you can't prove God exists'. In this booklet however, the conclusions of ancient thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle are reviewed, with the quest that they all had in common. The treatment is challenging and most interesting, and throws much light on the background of John's Gospel. Again you find a booklet designed to evoke a response from a certain grade of character or learning.

TRUE FROM THE BEGINNING.—A booklet that reviews the Bible, not as a production of man, reliable in parts, but as one harmonious whole and fully inspired by God. The Lord, mark you the risen Lord, in Luke xxiv. 25-27, beginning at Moses and all the prophets expounded unto His disciples in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself and set His seal upon that inspiration and truth. Consideration of testimony such as this, structures, numerics, and archaeological evidence, etc., are carefully weighed and clearly presented. Here is food for the sceptic and the man with a problem.

THE TEMPLE OF TRUTH.—Beside the apocryphal books of the O.T. it is known that there were many spurious writings about our Lord's life and early childhood. We say spurious, but how in those early years was our present N.T. collection finally fixed? We believe God intervened to ensure only the writings that He had inspired and thought necessary for our learning and guidance were included. The Canon of Scripture then, that is the agreed collection, one might expect to show the same perfect construction as the text of the Bible itself. This little leaflet demonstrates just this, and provides an added proof of our Father's hand in the Word of Truth.

The members of the Trust are here to support your witness by literature, your fellow readers by their prayers and donations. May you receive all guidance and blessing in your fellowship with us in seeking to make known the Truth committed to our charge.

Trusteeship

p. 208

While it is necessary, when property and finance are involved, that legally appointed Trustees should be responsible for the management and for the faithful fulfillment of spiritual as well as general obligations, no work can hope to thrive or to remain steadfast unless a sense of Trusteeship is living and active among all who form a part of any society, even though, as in the case of *The Berean Forward Movement*, no 'membership' is desired or allowed.

Every reader of the *Berean Expositor*, every member of the Church which is the Body of Christ is addressed as being 'faithful' (Eph. i. 1; Col. i. 2), and faithfulness is the outstanding quality in a steward (I Cor. iv. 1, 2) and faithfulness is the outstanding quality in a steward (I Cor. iv. 1, 2). This stewardship will not allow us to say to our Lord's creditors 'Write down fifty' (Luke xvi. 6), or as Paul puts it in II Cor. ii. 17:

"We are not a many that 'water down' the word of truth."

We have been entrusted with a wondrous message which clings closely to the 'sound words' received from Paul and passed on down the age "To the faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. i. 12-14; ii. 2). On the other hand, while we must be 'steadfast' and 'unmoveable', that does not mean obdurateness. Only the steadfast can at the same time successfully 'abound' in the work of the Lord (I Cor. xv. 58).

Anointed with the Holy Ghost

An examination of the place that the Holy Spirit occupies in the life and ministry of the Son of God.

pp. 244 - 248

“Hemade Himself of no reputation” (Phil. ii. 7). This translation is unfortunate in that it does not express the intention of the inspired Apostle, and tends to establish a false connection with the passage concerning Epaphroditus in the same chapter where we read that ‘such’ should be held in reputation (Phil. ii. 29). The R.V. avoids the twofold mistake, rendering the former passage ‘but emptied Himself’ and the latter ‘hold such in honour’. While the R.V. makes the teaching of the Apostle clearer, it creates a new problem for the modern mind. How, we ask, can a person speak of ‘emptying’ himself? We may empty a room of its furniture or we may speak of empty vessels and to avoid what appears to be too strange a figure, the tendency has been to attempt a paraphrase and say ‘He divested Himself of the glory He had before the world was, He laid aside the insignia of Deity’. One of the reasons for our diffidence to accept the literal rendering “He emptied Himself” resides in the fact that we are facing that which Scripture itself says is ‘confessedly great’ namely ‘the mystery of godliness’, and sometimes the contemplation of a lower example of the truth helps our understanding of the higher. In Phil. ii. 17 the Apostle’s turns from the great example of Christ, to the lesser example of himself, saying:

“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.”

The Greek word *spendomai*, here translated ‘offered’, has a well defined meaning. It means ‘to pour out as a drink offering’ as in Exod. xxv. 29 (margin). The recognition of the true rendering of *spendomai*, while it puts us in possession of one great fact, opens the door to further problems and there are people, alas, who have concluded that the self-emptying of the Saviour when He became Man must mean that He knew no more than the average Nazarene peasant, and that consequently, His pronouncements for example concerning the integrity of the O.T Scriptures, are but an echo of the accepted tradition of His times. That this dreadful inference is not necessarily the one that such self-emptying implies is most blessedly true, as the following extract from the notes of Bishop Mowle testifies:

“The Greek positively involves the conclusion that the ‘emptying’ whatever it was, was coincident in time with taking the form of a servant. According to well recognized laws of Greek idiom the aorist verb (‘He emptied’) and aorist participle (‘taking’) in verse seven give us one fact from two sides ‘He made Himself void’ not anyhow, but *thus* taking Bondservant’s form. God has spoken His final message to us through a Son Who became also Bondservant. So the *kenosis* itself (as Paul meant it) is nothing less than a guarantee of infallibility.”

Whether the Redeemer in the days of His voluntary assumption of the ‘form of a servant’ was still at the same time omniscient, who can say? But that He can and must be

trusted absolutely in any assertion He may make is certain, for “He Whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God”. We believe that there is a full and adequate guarantee both for the Saviour’s sinlessness and for His utter and complete infallibility to be found in the recurring references at certain junctures of His life and ministry to the purposeful interposition of the Holy Spirit. These references we must now consider together, rejoicing already in the knowledge that God ‘gave not the Spirit by measure unto Him’.

While the Scriptures maintain that Christ was indeed ‘man’, that He partook of ‘flesh and blood’, that He was indeed ‘The Son of Man’, that there is one Mediator, Himself man (R.V.) Christ Jesus, and that ‘since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead’, it also maintains at every turn that He was ever and always ‘holy, harmless, undefiled’, that He knew no sin, that He did no sin, He was ‘Jesus Christ the righteous’. No explanation is offered that accounts for this but two statements of fact are given which in the eyes of God are all-sufficient. The Saviour was born of a virgin. This while contrary to nature is no more to be rejected than that the first man had neither father nor mother, but came into the world at the creative decree of God. The Virgin Birth cuts through the entail that descends to all men from Adam, for in the Scriptures genealogy is always computed through the male line. This fact is actually recognized in the Hebrew language by the employment of one word *zakar* for ‘man’ that means ‘to remember’ and one word for woman *nashim* which means ‘to forget’. The Virgin Birth therefore cuts through the line to Adam. This is not all however. When the angel Gabriel announced the news to Mary that she had been chosen of all women to be the mother of the Messiah, she, as a right minded, intelligent and sensible woman, exclaimed “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” (Luke i. 34). The angel’s answer is explicit, even if it be not fully explanatory:

“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke i. 35).

To the mind of Gabriel, the power and overshadowing of the Holy Ghost was a sufficient answer, ‘therefore’ is a logical connection.

“In the annunciation to Mary, as well as in the vision of Joseph, not only is the supernatural conception declared, but the part of the Spirit in that mystery, about which it is almost impossible to speak, is defined and emphasized. Before the first stage of organic development had dawned, He so wrought and ruled, that the life fostered in the unique mother was protected against all the frailties of an earthly lineage, and made fit to blend with that divine consciousness now and hereafter to be infused into it.” (T. G. Selby).

The record of Matthew’s gospel is brief and to the point:

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. i. 18).

The reactions of Joseph are perfectly natural, and he had to be assured by Divine intervention that all was well.

“The angel appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. i. 20).

A parallel on a lower plane is found in Luke’s Gospel in the record of the birth and life of John the Baptist. He was not born of a virgin, he was not sinless, he was not ‘from above’, but certain features are discoverable between the accounts of the birth of these two, the Lord and His forerunner, that demand attention. Elizabeth the mother of John had no miraculous conception, but when she heard Mary’s salutation we are told ‘the babe leaped in her womb: and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost’ (Luke i. 41). In absolute contrast, we have seen that before the conception of the Saviour, the Holy Ghost is said to have come upon his mother. The Saviour, said Gabriel, shall be called “The Son of the Highest” (Luke i. 32), whereas of John it was said that he should be called “The prophet of the Highest” (i. 76). While John and the Saviour differ essentially as to their birth, identical language is used by Luke of their subsequent growth. Of John he wrote:

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit” (Luke i. 80),

and of the Saviour he wrote:

“And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit” (Luke ii. 40),

a most evident and intentional parallel. Such a sober statement sets aside all the apocryphal miracles and precocious sayings of the infant and growing Son of God. The Spirit that ensured His sinless birth, presided over His growing years, so that at the age of twelve He astonished the doctors at Jerusalem with His understanding and answers. Yet even so, it is written:

“He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man” (Luke ii. 51, 52).

Nothing more is recorded of the life of Christ until He attained His thirtieth year, when once again the Holy Ghost intervenes. The particular reason why it is written “Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age” (Luke iii. 23), is discoverable in the law that pertained to the priesthood. “From thirty years old and upward” (Numb. iv. 3), is the requirement repeated seven times in this chapter, and this rule was observed in the days of Solomon for in I Chron. xxiii. 3, we read:

“Now the Levites were numbered from the age of thirty years and upward.”

Here at the next critical period in that spotless Life we find prominence given to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. At the age of thirty years He stepped out of the obscurity of Nazareth into the fierce light of religious criticism and antipathy.

At the river Jordan, the Spirit of God descended upon the Saviour, and at the same time a Voice was heard from heaven saying:

“This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased” (Matt. iii. 16, 17).

This baptism of the Spirit is recorded in each of the four Gospels. Following this baptism and confirmation we read:

“And immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness” (Mark i. 12),

there to be tempted of the devil, there to overcome not by the employment of His innate Deity, but as the humblest of His followers may do, to overcome by the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. His threefold ‘It is written’ was all sufficient to defeat the attacks of the devil. This ‘test’ moreover set the course of all the Saviour’s subsequent ministry. He reiterates that the doctrine He taught was not His own, but that He spake the words that had been given to Him. Of all the preachers and teachers that have ever spoken in the name of the Lord, this Beloved One surely *could* have spoken out of His own heart. What He could have done we may not know, but what He did, and did willingly we do know, and rejoice one more in this great condescension. When He took the ‘form of a servant’ it was no piece of theatricals. From first to last it could be written of Him ‘He pleased not Himself’, He came to do the will of Him that sent Him. Luke’s Gospel says:

“And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” (Luke iv. 1).

“And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all” (Luke iv. 14, 15).

Immediately following this statement, comes the Lord’s public acknowledgment that He was anointed by the Spirit of the Lord, thus to preach.

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke iv. 18).

Following this opening proclamation in the synagogue of Nazareth, comes a long series of miracles and mighty works. These too are attributed to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

“If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you” (Matt. xii. 28),

and so important is the fact that these miracles were the work of the Holy Ghost, the Saviour proceeds to make one of the most solemn pronouncements of His ministry.

“Whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come” (Matt. xii. 32).

Peter summed up this aspect of the Saviour’s ministry, saying:

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him” (Acts x. 38).

To the believer, the gifts of grace are given in measure, for our capacity is very limited, but it could be written of the Son of God,

“For He Whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the spirit by measure unto Him” (John iii. 34).

When the last great act was accomplished at Calvary, here once again the power and presence of the Spirit must be recognized, for the Apostle wrote:

“Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God” (Heb. ix. 14).

Both the final ‘offering’ and the lifelong freedom from all ‘spot’ are guaranteed by the Spirit that was given without measure unto Him. Let it be remembered, that if His redeemed people have been slow to recognize the complete voluntary self-emptying of the Son of God, the devil was fully aware of its significance and importance, for His first temptation was that of accomplishing something in the strength of His own inherent Godhead, an attack upon the very purpose of the Incarnation. However much we may wish to know the inner secrets of this ‘mystery of Godliness’ they are Divinely hid from our eyes. When He emptied Himself, the wisdom, knowledge and power that were His by right were held at His disposal by the Holy Ghost, and given to Him at those crises in His ministry that demanded them. Even after He had been raised from the dead, ‘until the day in which He was taken up’, He had through the Holy Ghost given commandments unto the apostles whom He had chosen (Acts i. 2). His miraculous birth, with its accompanying freedom from all taint of Adam’s transgression, is attributed to the power and overshadowing of the Holy Ghost. His opening ministry, commission and proclamation, were directly associated with the coming of the Holy Ghost upon Him. His subsequent miracles were definitely attributed to the power of the Holy Ghost, even as His final act of complete self-surrender on the cross of Calvary, was offered ‘through the eternal Spirit’. “No man knoweth the Son, but the Father” (Matt. xi. 27), and all speculation is unwarranted and approaches blasphemy.

What we are assured of is that from Birth to Death, in Resurrection and Ascension, every step of the way of the Saviour along the path of His voluntary self-emptying was safeguarded by the Spirit that was not given by measure unto Him. Most of us have been given ‘posers’ by objectors, who in their ignorance or their arrogance demand to know whether the babe at His mother’s breast, was at the same time conscious that ‘by Him all things were created’. They ask how can it be possible that He Who had made all things could nevertheless sit weary on a well and ask a woman for a drink. We gladly admit that we have no need to probe into these sacred things. The persistence with which the Scriptures introduce the ministry of the Holy Ghost at every turn and crisis has been written to satisfy the believer once and for ever on all such matters and we rejoice in such a Saviour, Who acted throughout the whole course of His ministry as One Who ‘though He was rich, YET FOR OUR SAKES He became poor’ and instead of using this most

blessed 'poverty' as a weapon against His essential Deity or His most wondrous Love,
we realize that 'through His poverty' we can alone become rich.

EPHESIANS.

“To make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery”
(Eph. iii. 9, R.V.)

No.47. The Audience Chamber (ii. 11 - 19-).

Gentiles, “far off”, “made nigh”.

pp. 1 - 4

We saw when examining Eph. ii. 1-4 that the interposition of the words “But God” changes the whole doctrinal position of the unsaved Gentile. On the one side of this gracious interposition was sin, with an energizing spirit of evil, on the other side salvation by grace, and His workmanship. So we now see that the interposition of the words “But now” in Eph. ii. 13 changes the whole dispensational disability of the Gentile from distance to nearness, giving him access in ‘one spirit’ and exchanging citizenship for alienation, and the creation of a new man in the place of the hopeless condition of the Gentile in the flesh and in the world. These Gentiles were “far off”. In the O.T. this term ‘far off’ was used of the people of Israel in the lands of their captivity, and the same Greek work *makran* that is used here, is used in the Septuagint:

“If they sin against Thee (for there is no man that sinneth not), and Thou be angry with them, and deliver them over before their enemies, and they carry them away captives unto a land *far off or near*” (II Chron. vi. 36).

“And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters unto all the Jews that were in all the provinces of the king Ahasuerus, both *nigh and far*” (Est. ix. 20).

‘Far off and near’ refer in both cases to the one people, Israel. So Daniel prayed for all Israel “that are near and that are far off, through all the countries whither Thou hast driven them”. Likewise Peter intended his words to be understood on the day of Pentecost, when he said:

“The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off” (Acts ii. 39).

Up to this point the words “far off” applied solely to the dispersed of Israel and to these both James and Peter addressed their epistles.

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting” (James i. 1).

When the Jew wanted to use an expression that indicated remoteness from their own centre of activity, they thought of the Gentile world lying about them; so when the Saviour told them that He was going away, and that where He would be they cannot come, they replied:

“Will He go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?” (John vii. 35).

Even Galilee, which was a part of the holy land, was called “Galilee of the Gentiles” and the people there are said to have “sat in darkness” (Matt. iv. 15).

Now, when Ephesians was being written, the people of Israel had become *Lo-ammi* “not My people” and during their blindness a new revelation had been made known, calling the far off Gentiles into an unprecedented state of nearness. In the sequel, after the nature of this nearness is explained, the Apostle invests the words of Isa. lvii. 19 with a fuller meaning: “Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near” (see Eph. ii. 17). This passage however cannot be understood or correctly interpreted unless it be read in relation to the whole context. It is time therefore that we considered the structure of the passage in order to comprehend its scope.

Ephesians ii. 14 - 18

a1 He is our Peace.	a2 Reconciled to God.
b1 “The Both” One.	b2 “The Both” one body.
b1 “The Twain” One.	b2 “The Both” one spirit.
a1 So making Peace.	a2 Access to the Father.

What we have omitted in this synopsis are the references to enmity and the middle wall, which enmity was destroyed at the cross. Before these features are examined, the glorious basis and sphere of this great change must be considered:

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. ii. 13).

The state of the Gentiles by nature was “without Christ”, their state by grace is expressed by the opposite “in Christ Jesus”. Expositors do not agree as to the interpretation of the words translated “by the blood of Christ”—Alford says:

“I prefer ‘in’ to ‘by’ the difference between *en* here and *dia* in ch. 1:7 is, that there the blood of Christ is spoken of specifically as the medium of our *apolutrosis* (redemption)—here inclusively as representing the *apolutrosis*.”

Elliott on the other hand reckons that *en* here has its instrumental force. However we translate the words, we should be aware of the repetition of this preposition *en* in the context, and to see it in the outworking of the Apostle’s argument will compel us to use care in its rendering. Let us tabulate the use of *en* in this section (Eph. ii. 11-19), and for the sake of clarity, we will render *en* by the word “in”, in each passage. In the flesh; in the world; in Christ Jesus; in the blood of Christ; in His flesh; in ordinances; in Himself; in one body; in it, or in Himself (thereby verse 16); in one spirit. With all this insistence upon ‘sphere’, in the flesh, in the world, in the spirit, etc., it seems wrong to lift the words “in the blood of Christ” out of this category, by translating the phrase “by the blood of Christ”. It would appear therefore that the Apostle would expand the words ‘now in Christ Jesus’ by the added words ‘nigh in the blood of Christ’ in order that there shall be no chance of misunderstanding the sacrificial basis of this mighty change. When he came to write on this subject of alienation and reconciliation in Colossians, he puts the matter thus:

“And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in the body of His flesh through death” (Col. i. 20-22).

If we allow the Apostle to be his own interpreter we shall read together the two passages:

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off.”
“You that were sometime alienated.”

The ‘aliens’ from the Commonwealth of Israel, were those who had become ‘alienated from the life of God’. They could not merely refer to the ‘lost tribes of the house of Israel’, for Paul’s reference to ‘things in earth, or things in heaven’, or ‘every creature which is under heaven’ is too wide for such a limitation.

When addressing the people of Israel, the prophets and Peter spoke of some indeed who were far off, but of others who were nigh. These Gentiles however were *all* far off, and *all* needed to be ‘made nigh’. The word *engus* “nigh” is used in the LXX for the next of kin “his kin, that is near unto him” (Lev. xxi. 2), and so of the Kinsman-Redeemer. “If his father have no brethren, then ye shall give his inheritance unto his kinsman that is next of kin to him of his family” (Numb. xxvii. 11). Job uses the word in the chapter where he declares “I know that my Redeemer (Kinsman-Redeemer) liveth”, for in Job xix. 14 he complained ‘my kinsfolk have failed’. It is with some feeling that we see in the immediate context of these words of Job such expressions as hope removed, counted as enemy, brethren far from me, estranged, STRANGER and ALIEN, showing how the absence of the Kinsman-Redeemer was associated, as in Eph. ii., with alienation and enmity. Just as Job, however, found his complete satisfaction in the Kinsman-Redeemer, so the Gentile addressed by Paul was made nigh only ‘in the blood of Christ’.

While the chief emphasis in Scripture when ‘blood’ is mentioned is on the sacrificial aspect, we must not forget such passages as Heb. ii. 14 and Acts xvii. 26, without which the *Kinsman-Redeemer* aspect would not be possible. In Eph. i. 7 the blood of Christ is the instrument of deliverance and forgiveness, which sets the bondman free, in Eph. i. 14, redemption is of the purchased possession, the work of the Kinsman-Redeemer retrieving the inheritance forfeited by death, and in Eph. ii. 13 this Kinsman-Redeemer makes us one with Himself. So we shall read presently of this redeemed company being reconciled to God ‘in one body’ and when we are weighing this matter over, we shall discover that it is exceedingly difficult to feel sure as to whether the ‘one body’ refers to the body of His flesh, as in Col. i., or to the one body, namely the newly-formed church of the Mystery. Happily, consciousness of the Kinsman-Redeemer enables us to see that there is no great disparity here, but a most marvelous oneness, ‘all of one’ in Heb. ii. 11 being made possible by the partaking of flesh and blood of verse fourteen.

The Gentiles who were ‘far off’ are said to be ‘made nigh’. The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of ‘things that are made’ (Heb. xii. 27) as being vulnerable, the Greek

work translated ‘made’ being *poieo*. This cannot be taken universally, for Eph. ii. 10 says ‘we are His workmanship’ (poem *poiema*); He ‘made’ peace and He ‘made’ both one (Eph. ii. 14, 15). Yet the Apostle does not use *poieo* when he says ‘made nigh’ and we shall be wise to observe the difference implied. The word used in the phrase ‘made nigh’ is the Greek verb *ginomai* a word related to birth, generation, etc., and so in line with the living union with the Kinsman-Redeemer that seems to be the dominant feature of this verse of Ephesians. The nature of this nearness is further indicated by the terms employed in the verses that follow. ‘Made nigh’ is followed by peace, made one, middle wall of partition, enmity, reconcile, access, and these terms when examined make it very clear that the distance that is here cancelled was one that lay at the root of Gentile disability. To this we must devote our attention in succeeding articles.

**No.48. The Audience Chamber (ii. 11 - 19-).
Gentiles, Aliens and Strangers (ii. 11, 12).
pp. 21 - 26**

Just as Eph. ii. 1-10 is related to time past (Eph. ii. 2, 3), so the present section is related to time past (Eph. ii. 11), the two sections being related thus:

- A | DOCTRINE |
 - a | 1-3. TIME PAST. Walk. World and flesh.
 - b | 4. But God. Mercy. Love.
 - c | 5-10. Made Alive together.
Raised together.
Made to sit together.
- A | DISPENSATION |
 - a | 11, 12. TIME PAST. Gentiles. flesh. world.
 - b | 13-18. But now. Nigh. One.
 - c | 19-22. Citizens together.
Fitly framed together.
Builded together.

In the doctrinal section of Eph. ii. we have such terms as ‘dead’, ‘trespass’, ‘sin’, ‘disobedience’, ‘wrath’, ‘make alive’, ‘save’, ‘faith’ and ‘walk’. These are consistently employed because the subject is the original state of the believer in relation to sin and death. None of these terms is used in the dispensational section now before us, for the viewpoint here is not that of sin and death, but of distance and nearness, of being Gentiles and aliens, of being far off and made nigh, of a middle wall, of ordinances, in fact of the *dispensational disability of being a Gentile*, irrespective of individual character. In the doctrinal survey, the flesh and the world are used as they are related to the walk and the lusts of the unregenerate. In the dispensational section the flesh and the world are used as they are related to the enmity that was aroused between the circumcision and uncircumcision. Salvation issues in a new creation; the revelation of the Mystery leads to the creation of a ‘new man’. If these differences are realized, then the reader from

Eph. ii. 16 will be proof against any attempt to teach universal reconciliation irrespective of the limitations of the Mystery, or from the related theme in Col. i. 16-22.

‘In the flesh’ finds its echo in Eph. iii. 5 ‘in Spirit’, which, when we reach that passage, we hope to show stands at the head of the threefold fellowship of verse six. While the flesh in all men is the same, yet it did not disqualify the Jew as we have seen in Rom. ix. 3-5, from dispensational privilege, but it did the Gentile. What depths of degradation and misery are found in the words ‘in the flesh’ and ‘in the world’, and between them lies the whole case of Gentile disability, contained in the terms uncircumcision, without Christ, aliens, strangers, no hope, and without God.

‘Without Christ’ *choris Christou*. As the A.V. stands we are likely to look at the two expressions ‘without Christ’ and ‘without God’ as being very similar. The word translated ‘without God’ is *atheoi*, to which we will return presently. What does ‘without Christ’ mean? Out of its context it would spell simply damnation, and utter and irrevocable loss; but in the confines of the subject before us it rather emphasizes the fact that, whereas ‘according to the flesh’ “Christ came” from Israel, the Gentile had no such hope or privilege. The Scriptures had plainly revealed that the promised Seed of the woman, should come through the line of David, of the tribe of Judah; consequently Gentiles as such were ‘without a Messiah’, Dr. J. Armitage Robinson reads verse twelve:

“That at that time without Christ ye were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” and says “A contrast is here drawn between their old position ‘at that time without Christ’ and their new position ‘now in Christ Jesus’. This contrast is somewhat obscured if we render, as in the A.V. they are called upon to remember not simply that they were without Christ, but *what* they are without Christ.”

The structure of Eph. ii. 11-19 is as follows:

D | O1 | 11, 12. IN TIME PAST.
 P1 | n | 11. Gentiles IN THE FLESH.
 o | 12. Without Christ.
Distance | p | 12. Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.
 p | 12. Strangers from the covenants of the promise.
 o | 12. Without hope.
 n | 12. Godless IN THE WORLD.
O2 | 13, 14. BUT NOW.
 P2 | q1 | 14. He is our PEACE.
 r1 | "The BOTH" made one.
 s1 | 14. Middle wall broken.
Peace | t1 | 15. Enmity in flesh.
 s1 | 15. Decrees abolished.
 r1 | 15. "The TWAIN" created one new man.
 q1 | 16. So making PEACE.
 q2 | 16. Reconciled to GOD.
 r2 | 16. "The BOTH" in one body.
 s2 | 16. Through the cross.
Reconciliation | t2 | 16, 17. Enmity slain. Peace.
 s2 | 18. Through Him.
 r2 | 18. "The BOTH" in one spirit.
 Qq2 | 18. Access to the FATHER.
O3 | 19. NO LONGER.
 P3 | 19. Strangers and foreigners.

Something of the position of the Gentile 'without Christ' is seen in the dealings of the Lord with the Syrophenecian woman (Matt. xv. 21-28); the attitude of the Lord being influenced not by the question of whether the woman was a sinner or not, but that she was a Gentile; that the people of Israel were 'lords' (masters *Greek*); that she was in comparison a dog; and that all she could expect at that time were 'crumbs'. What a change has been wrought since she learned the disability of being a Gentile!—riches beyond expression, in place of crumbs. Wealth that Israel never knew is now lavished upon them who were classed among the dogs or the unclean. If only those detractors of misunderstood terms would ponder the glory of Ephesians over against the condition of the Gentile according to Matt. xv., we should hear less of the false charge that those who teach dispensational truth 'rob' the believer who follows their teaching. Whoever was 'robbed' by the substitute of wealth undreamed for 'crumbs'! The Gentile had none of the privileges enumerated in Rom. ix., for they were Israel's 'in the flesh', and in that sphere 'all spiritual blessings' could not exist. In the flesh, the Gentile has no place, his only hope of life and blessing is 'in the spirit', and that demanded a miracle for its accomplishment. The condition of the Gentile 'without Christ' is revealed by the words that follow 'being aliens and strangers'. The word translated 'alien' is one of many compounds of the Greek root *all*, which means 'other', and which necessitates, as we shall see, 'reconciliation', another word from the same root to accomplish the cancellation of distance and enmity implied. There is so much teaching associated with

this family of words, that even though it holds up the exposition of the passage before us for a while, the light which we shall receive will more than compensate. Let us take a survey of this root and some of its developments.

Alla. “But.” The ‘disjunctive conjunction’ prevents the mind from coming to a certain conclusion by the introduction of some ‘other’ factor. For example, Eph. ii. 3 ends with the words ‘children of wrath even as others’. Instead of going on to the conclusion ‘therefore these children of wrath are of necessity condemned’, the interjection of the words ‘But God’ introduces ‘another’ and qualifying factor.

Allos. “Another” or “other” as ‘other foundation can no man lay’.

Allaso (some lexicons *allatto*) “change”. There are six occurrences as follows: Acts vi. 14; Rom. i. 23; I Cor. xv. 51, 52; Gal. iv. 20 and Heb. i. 12.

Allos (long “o”) Adverb “otherwise” I Tim. v. 25.

Allogenes “stranger” Luke xvii. 18.

Allotrios translated “stranger”, “other”, “another” and “alien”.

The several words which are rendered ‘reconcile’ and ‘reconciliation’ are derivatives and compounds of this same root, namely *katallasso*, *katallage* and *apokatallasso*. The word translated ‘being aliens’ in Eph. ii. 12 and ‘being alienated’ in Eph. iv. 18, is the Greek *apallotrioo*. The Gentiles as such, were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. This ‘commonwealth’ translates *politeia*, citizenship, with especial reference to the ‘freedom’ or enfranchisement that went with it, as in Acts xxii. 28, the only other occurrence of *politeia* in the N.T. *Politeuma*, found in Phil. iii. 20 ‘conversation’, has a similar meaning, and Paul tells these ‘Gentiles’ that even though they could have no place in the polity of Israel, they had lost nothing, but had gained infinitely, for their polity was ‘in heaven’. Consequently, when this passage in Eph. ii. runs its course, we find in verse nineteen that those thus denied the citizenship of Israel were nevertheless ‘fellow citizens of the saints’. In similar vein we have the corresponding member of the structure of Eph. ii. 12 namely ‘strangers from the covenants of promise’.

If the reader consults the A.V. or the R.V. of Eph. ii. 12, he will read ‘strangers from the covenants of promise’. The only alteration that J.N.D. makes in his translation is to read ‘strangers to the covenants of promise’ instead of ‘strangers from’. Rotherham reads exactly as the A.V. Weymouth translates the passage:

“With no share by birth in the covenants which are based on Promises.”

These five versions of the N.T. differ from one another in several particulars, but apparently, none of the Editors seem to have felt it necessary to translate *xenos* by ‘guest’ in Eph.ii. 12. The fact that there is this unanimity however, is not proof of accuracy, and the *Berean Expositor* would be the last to refuse an examination of any rendering put forward in good faith. The matter is important for at least two reasons.

First. Quite apart from its possible bearing upon our own hope or calling, we should be zealous for the truth, and jealous of the truth, earnestly desiring as near as is humanly possible a translation in our own tongue that shall express the meaning of the original.

Secondly. Coming as the word does in a context that deals with the status of the Gentile before the revelation of the Mystery, the whole passage must be coloured by the translation adopted, and must influence our minds and our teaching concerning the constitution of the church of the One Body.

The first thing we must do is to note the occurrences of the word in the N.T. The Greek word under consideration is *xenos*, and occurs fourteen times:

Matt. xxv. 35, 43.	“I was a stranger.”
Matt. xxv. 38, 44.	“When saw we Thee a stranger?”
Matt. xxvii. 7.	“The potter’s field to bury strangers in.”
Acts xvii. 18.	“A setter forth of stranger gods.”
Acts xvii. 21.	“All the Athenians and strangers which were there.”
Rom. xvi. 23.	“Gaius mine host.”
Eph. ii. 12.	<i>The passage under consideration.</i>
Eph. ii. 19.	<i>This passage also goes with Eph. ii. 12.</i>
Heb. xi. 13.	“Strangers and pilgrims.”
Heb. xiii. 9.	“Divers and strange doctrines.”
I Pet. iv. 12.	“As though some strange thing happened.”
III John 5.	“To the brethren, and to strangers.”

It is evident that the five references found in Matthew can have no other meaning than ‘stranger’, a ‘stranger’ can only become a ‘guest’ if he is ‘taken in’; such a meaning is not resident in the word itself. The ‘strange’ gods of Acts xvii. 18, and the ‘strange thing’ of I Pet. iv. 12 allow of no alteration. The believers mentioned in Heb. xi.13, were most certainly ‘strangers’ and not ‘guests’. The ‘resident strangers’ at Athens are very like the ‘strangers of Rome’ (Acts ii. 10) and cannot be translated ‘guests’. In Rom. xvi. 23, we have the word *xenos* translated ‘host’. This can only be justified if the word is used figuratively, for no one would suggest using the translation ‘host’ in any of the thirteen references given above.

Eustathius says, concerning the usage of *xenos*:

“Both he who entertained and he who was entertained were called *xenos*, in respect of each other.”

Parkhurst says of this word:

“Properly a person who, belonging to one country, dwells or sojourns in another, a stranger, foreigner.” “In a more general sense, a stranger, a person of another nation or religion.” “As an adjective, strange, foreign, wonderful.”

The transition from the idea of ‘stranger’ to ‘hospitality’ is natural, and this has taken place; but because this is so, that does not justify the substitution of ‘guest’ for the translation ‘stranger’ unless the evidence of the context be overwhelmingly in its favour.

Cremer, in his *Biblico-Theological Lexicon* does not treat of *xenos* except to place it as a synonym with *paroikos*. *Paroikeo*, in Biblical Greek means, according to Cremer:

“Strangers who dwell anywhere, without citizen rights or home title.” *Paroikia* only in Biblical and patristic Greek.

“(a) Dwelling as a sojourner in a foreign land without home or citizen rights; (b) a foreign country as the dwelling place of him who has no home rights here.”

Paroikos expresses a conception capable of many applications. Guest of God (Lev. xxv. 35), earthly homelessness (Psa. cxix. 19), etc.

The LXX uses *xenos* to translate the following Hebrew words:

- (1) Traveller, *helek* (II Sam. xii. 4). This word means primarily to go, or to walk, and so by an easy transition it becomes a tax, custom or duty, laid on ports of ways. Should the reading *arach* be preferred here, there is no essential difference, *arach* meaning ‘to go in a track’ and as a noun, ‘a common road, highway, a traveller’.
- (2) Stranger *gur* (Job xxxi. 32). To sojourn, to dwell anywhere for a time, to live as not at home. Translated ‘alien’ in Exod. xviii. 3, associated with the name *Gershom*.
- (3) Stranger *nokri* (Ruth ii. 10). A foreigner, outlandish. As a verb the word means ‘to alienate’.

Nekar is used of ‘the stranger’ and ‘the alien’ as contrasted with Israel in Exod. xii. 43; Isa. lx. and lxi. In Lamentations the word is used in a sense very suggestive of Eph. ii. 12.

“Behold our *reproach*, our inheritance is turned to *strangers*, our houses to *alien*” (Lam. v. 1, 2).

- (4) Those bidden *qara* (I Sam. ix. 13).

This passage indicates that *xenos* is once used in the LXX in the sense of ‘guest’.

The reader can see for himself that ‘stranger’, ‘alien’, ‘foreigner’, is the primary significance of the word *xenos* and that ‘guest’ and ‘host’ is a derived or secondary meaning.

We now come to Eph. ii. 12 to see what the context demands. The scale is already dipped by the weight of Scripture usage in favour of the translation ‘stranger’, and there will have to be very strong reason to justify any alteration. The phrase under consideration is in correspondence with another of like import.

“Being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” (Eph. ii. 12). This alienation finds its dreadful echo in the practical section of the same epistle where we read:

“That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God” (Eph. iv. 17, 18).

The reader may have seen in his newspaper some sort of ‘Quiz’ in which general knowledge and intelligence tests are a feature. One such test is that which is known as

‘spot the intruder’ or some such name, and is generally a collection of words containing one that is outside the category. For example, in such a list of names as Shakespeare, Tennyson, Shelley, Beethoven, Byron and Browning, it is obvious that ‘Beethoven’ is the intruder, a musician among poets. Eph. ii. 11-13 contains a list of words and it will be seen that ‘guest’ would be an intruder among such words and phrases as Gentiles in the flesh, uncircumcision, made by hands, without Christ, aliens, *guests*, no hope, without God in the world, and far off.

Is it conceivable that one who was a ‘guest’ of the covenant of promise could be at the same time Godless, Christless and hopeless? The church that the Apostle has in mind in Eph. ii. is a new thing, created so by God, for the passage in the fifteenth verse that reads “To *make* in Himself of the twain” should be translated “To *create* in Himself of the twain” as the R.V. indicates.

The Church of the Mystery is no mere evolution; it is a new creation, and as with all other ‘new creations’ of God, ‘former things’ pass away, and with that passing of ‘former things’ the dispensational place of the Gentiles, whatever it may have been, is swept aside, the new thing completely taking its place.

We have already placed Rom. ix. 3-5 over against Eph. ii. 11, 12, where the dispensational advantage of an Israelite ‘in the flesh’ is placed in strong contrast with the dispensational disability of a Gentile ‘in the flesh’. Only as he is translated and found ‘in the spirit’ can Christ profit him or blessing be enjoyed.

We must now devote our attention to the wondrous change that grace has wrought, but this must await another study together.

No.49. The Audience Chamber (ii. 11 - 19-).

The Middle Wall of Partition.

pp. 41 - 47

The far off Gentiles, under the gracious provision of the dispensation of the Mystery are ‘made nigh’. To appreciate the nature of the distance that hitherto marked the position of the Gentile, we must pay attention to the explanatory matter that follows in Eph. ii. 14-18.

Before taking up the separate terms ‘peace’, ‘enmity’, ‘access’, etc., it will be profitable to consider what is implied in the figurative use of the ‘middle wall of partition’. Josephus, speaking of the temple as it stood in his day, tells us that it consisted of an outer square six hundred feet wide, and a second inner area, which he describes as follows:

“On advancing to the second temple a stone balustrade was thrown around it four feet and a half high, and withal beautifully wrought, and in it stood pillars at equal distances proclaiming the law of purity, some in Greek and some in Roman letters, that no alien might pass within the sanctuary.”

“Such was the first enclosure, and far from it in the middle was the second, ascended by a few steps and encompassed by a stone balustrade for a partition, which prohibited by inscription any alien from entering under penalty of death.”

In 1871 one of these inscribed stones was discovered by Mr. Clermont Ganneau *built into a wall of the Via Dolorosa* at Jerusalem. The original is the possession of the Palestine Exploration Fund and a cast is in the British Museum. The inscription being as follows:

“No one, being foreigner, may enter into the enclosure around the holy place. Whosoever is apprehended will himself be to blame for his death which will certainly follow.”

The word foreigner *allogene* is a word derived from the same root that gives us ‘alien’ namely *allos*. The veil of the temple which was rent in twain from top to bottom indicated that at the death of Christ the way into the holiest of all was opened (Heb. ix. 8; x. 20), and this removed the barrier between *the believer* and *the Lord*. Here in Ephesians, the barrier not only kept the Gentile at a distance from the Lord, but it separated the *believing Jew* from the *believing Gentile*. During the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles this barrier stood, and the problem to which the differences between Jew and Gentile gave rise caused the calling of the council at Jerusalem, as is recorded in Acts xv.

This chapter has not only suffered at the hand of those who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, but at the hands of those whose basis is the integrity of Holy Scripture. We will not advertise the publication from which we shall quote, but the reader can be assured that these things have been said by some who profess not only to believe the Word, but to abide by the principle of ‘right division’. Acts xv. deals with *two* related subjects (1) The imposition of circumcision upon the believing Gentile and (2) the problem of the different attitude of Jew and Gentile to such things as ‘things strangled’ which is solved for the time being by the decrees issued. The seriousness of this point of view will be evident to any who ponder the following ‘explanation’ given on this passage. With reference to James—who is described as the ‘fleshly James’—it is stated that “when he makes his decision, saying, ‘Wherefore *I* decide’, he does not consult Peter or the rest of the apostles”. The reader will probably realize at once the inaccuracy of this view, for in Acts xv. 22 we read: “It pleased *the apostles and elders, with the whole church*, to send chosen men of their own company.” If this so called interpretation were true what could we make of the express statement: “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost”?

Continuing our quotation from this questionable source, we read:

“It is to be noted that this epistle claims that this ‘burden’ was placed upon the nations because ‘it seems good to the Holy Ghost and to us’. It would have been more honourable for this flesh-controlled council to assume responsibility for their fleshly decision, instead of trying to place the responsibility upon the Holy Spirit Whom they wholly ignored.”

How many other false views of the Acts have been linked up with so-called ‘apostolic mistakes’! Some, with wrong ideas as to the constitution of the Church, teach that the apostles made a mistake in Acts i. 6. Others find apostolic mistakes in the appointment of Matthias, and other passages. And here, in Acts xv., not only are the apostles and elders found guilty, but Barnabas and Paul, Silas and Judas *surnamed Barsabas*, men who were ‘prophets’ and had hazarded their lives for the Lord, are all accused of moral cowardice and spiritual dishonesty. If these decrees were ‘fleshly’ and not of God, how is it that we read in Acts xvi. 5 “And so were the churches *established in the faith*, and increased in number daily”? Is this another ‘mistake’?

Upon examination we find that the passage falls into three pairs of corresponding sections as follows:

- A | xv. 1, 2. Antioch. The question. Paul, Barnabas, Men of Judæa.
- B | 3-5. Phenice, Samaria, Jerusalem. The Pharisees’ demand.
- C | 6-12. Apostles and Elders. Peter. Why put a yoke?
- C | 13-21. Men and brethren. James. Trouble not the Gentiles
- B | 22-29. Antioch, Syria, Cilicia. No such commandment.
- A | xv. 30-35. Antioch. The answer. Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas.

The complete analysis of this passage would occupy considerably more than a full page of this magazine, and we shall therefore only give the above skeleton outline and then fill in each section as it comes before us. Those who are keen students of the Word will be more than compensated for their pains if they will take the trouble to reproduce the structure as a whole after the details have been set out.

The first member of the structure in this epoch-making fight of faith is comprised in the first two verses:

“And certain men which came down from Judæa taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question” (Acts xv. 1, 2).

- A | xv. 1, 2. Antioch. The question. Paul, Barnabas and the men of Judæa. |
- a | Certain men came down from Judæa.
- b | Their teaching.
- b | The dissension.
- a | Paul and Barnabas go up to Jerusalem.

The glorious doctrine of justification by faith, apart from legal works of any kind, had been the central feature of Paul’s gospel on this wonderful journey through the cities of Galatia.

“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are JUSTIFIED from all things, from which ye could not be justified by *the law of Moses*” (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

After such a gospel had been preached, it was obviously nothing less than diametric opposition for anyone to say: “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.” On such an issue compromise was utterly impossible, for essentials were at stake. When it was a matter of conscience with regard to the keeping of certain days, or of eating certain meats, Paul was most willing to meet the troubled believer more than half-way, but to suggest that the glorious doctrine of justification by faith should be dethroned from its place and replaced by a legal ceremonial, was a call to arms that no follower of the Lord could fail to answer without shame.

We must now pass on to the testimony of James, and before examining his words in detail, we give the structure of the passages.

C | xv. 13-21. Men and brethren. JAMES.
My sentence is that we trouble not the Gentiles. |
f | James . . . me.
g | Gentiles visited.
h | The agreement of prophecy.
i | The knowledge of the Lord.
f | James . . . my.
g | Gentiles turn to God.
h | Write that they abstain.
i | Moses is preached.

James takes up the claim made by Peter—calling him by his Hebrew name Simeon—and, directing his argument to those who revered the O.T. writings, draws attention to a passage from one of the prophets:

“As it is written, After this I will return and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, Who doeth all these things which were known from the age” (Acts xv. 15-18).

It should be noted that James does not say ‘This fulfils what is written by the prophet’; he simply says “To this agree the words of the prophets”. The word translated ‘agree’ is *sumphoneo*, which gives us the word ‘symphony’, and as a noun is translated ‘music’ in Luke xv. 25.

We could therefore paraphrase James’ meaning as follows:

“The inclusion of the Gentile upon the same terms as the Jew is in harmony with such a passage as Amos ix. 11, 12 (which in the Septuagint version reads as above) and it is therefore clear that the spirit in which Peter enjoins us to act now, is that in which the Lord has revealed He will act in future. He has known these things which He has commenced to do since the age, and to object or to impose restrictions, is but to tempt God as our fathers did in the wilderness, with dreadful consequences as we all know.”

The fact that James could give such hearty support to the position taken by Paul and subsequently by Peter, was a shattering blow to the Judaizing party in the Jerusalem church. A little man might have been content with this victory and have ignored the susceptibilities of the Jewish believers. Not so, however, the apostle James. He realizes the feelings of shock and abhorrence which would almost inevitably result from the Jewish Christians coming into contact with the revolting customs of the Gentiles, and he therefore gives a double sentence:

- (1) With regard to the immediate question, as to whether believing Gentiles must submit to circumcision and the law of Moses before they can be sure of salvation, my answer is "No". 'My sentence is, that we *trouble not* them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.'

In the body of the letter sent to the Gentiles it is categorically stated that such teaching was a 'subverting of souls' and that no such commandment had been given by the leaders at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 24).

- (2) My sentence is not, however, harsh or mechanical. I am by nature and upbringing a Jew, and I know the horror that seizes the mind at the bare possibility of contact with those who have partaken of meat offered to idols, or with those who have not been particular about the question of blood. While we yield no ground with regard to justification by faith, we must not forget that we are called upon to walk in love, to remember the weaker brethren, and to be willing to yield our rights if need be. My sentence therefore is that we write to the Gentiles that believe "that they abstain from pollutions of idols and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood" (Acts xv. 20).

Three of these items we can readily understand as being offensive to a Jewish believer, though inoffensive to a Gentile. One, however, is a grossly immoral act and cannot be classed as in the same category. The reason for its inclusion here is not that James meant for a moment to suggest that sexual immorality was a matter of indifference, but rather that, knowing how the Gentile throughout his unregenerate days looked upon this sin as of no consequence, James realized that he was likely even after conversion to offend by taking too lenient a view. This is brought out most vividly in I Corinthians, an epistle that deals with the application of the decrees sent from Jerusalem, and which we must examine before this study is complete.

James follows his counsel of abstinence by a reference to Moses:

"For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath day" (Acts xv. 21).

This meaning appears to be that there was no need to fear that, by reducing the appeal to only four points, the scruples of the more rigid Jewish believer would be invaded. Moses was preached every sabbath day in the synagogue, and the synagogue was the nursery of the Church. If we will but put ourselves in the position of the early Church we shall see the wisdom of this decision. The coming into the synagogue of the men whose

practices filled the body of the people with horror, would be a serious hindrance to the advance of the gospel. It might even mean the destroying, for the sake of ‘meat’, of one for whom Christ died. We shall see presently that Paul’s spiritual application of the decrees of Jerusalem went much further than James’ four items. He would not eat meat, or drink wine, or do anything that would cause his brother to stumble.

Such then, was the two-fold decision of the Church at Jerusalem, a decision which, taking the state of affairs at that time into account, must commend itself to all who have any sympathy with the teaching of the Apostle Paul. Such a state of affairs was not ideal and could not last. It was, as the decrees put it, a question of imposing ‘no greater burden than these necessary things’—much in the same way as the Apostle Paul in I Cor. vii. enjoined abstinence ‘because of the present distress’ (I Cor. vii. 26).

The assembled church, together with the apostles and elders, agree with one accord to the appeals of Peter and James, and their decision is recorded in a letter sent by the hands of Barnabas, Paul, Silas and Judas. This letter is of intense interest, not only on account of its teaching, but also because it is the earliest church letter in existence. Let us take it out of its setting for the moment and look at it as a letter, complete in itself.

“The apostles and the elders and the brethren, to the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, Greeting.

Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well” (Acts xv. 23-29).

Such is the letter itself. Its inter-relation with the context is best seen by expanding the structure of this section as follows:

Acts xv. 22 - 29

- B | xv. 22-29. Antioch, Syria and Cilicia.
“We gave no such commandment.” |
n1 | IT SEEMED GOOD.
o1 | To apostles, elders and whole church.
p1 | Send chosen men.
q1 | Chief men among the brethren.
r1 | Greeting. No such commandment.
n2 | IT SEEMED GOOD.
o2 | Assembled with one accord.
p2 | Send chosen men.
q2 | Men who hazarded their lives.
r2 | Tell you the same things.
n3 | IT SEEMED GOOD.
o3 | To the Holy Spirit and to us.
p3 | Lay no other burden.
q3 | That ye abstain.
r3 | Fare ye well.

Three times the word “It seemed good” occur. First, ‘it seemed good to the apostles and elders and the whole church’. Secondly, ‘it seem good unto us, being assembled with one accord’. And thirdly, ‘it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us’. To break this threefold cord, the whole church, with the apostles and elders, together with Barnabas and Paul, and Silas and Judas, as well as the Holy Spirit Himself, would have to be regarded as in the wrong. Any system of interpretation necessitating such an assumption is self-condemned.

If man failed under the law of Sinai, it is not surprising to find that he fails some times under grace. The moderate request that the Gentiles should abstain from the ‘four necessary things’, while the Jewish believers had ‘Moses preached in the synagogue every Sabbath day’ would lead, in time, wherever the flesh became prominent, to a line of demarcation between the churches of Judaea and those of the Gentiles that had not been the intention of those who drew up these decrees. This gradually grew to become ‘a middle wall of partition’, a division that could not be permitted in the Church of the One Body. The One Body however was not in view in Acts xv. Only those things known of the Lord ‘since the age’, only those things that harmonized with the O.T. prophecies were in operation in Acts xv., and nowhere throughout the Acts is there a hint that a Jew ceased from being a Jew when he became a Christian. On the contrary, he became the better Jew, for he was believing the testimony of the law and the prophets. Even justification by faith, as preached by Paul, was to be found in the law and the prophets and was, therefore, not a part of a mystery or secret purpose.

We have, therefore, in Acts xv. two vastly different themes. One is *eternally* true, and independent of dispensational changes. The other is *relatively* true, but to be set aside when that which is perfect has come. The former is doctrinal truth, the latter the practical manifestation of graciousness and forbearance.

Returning to Acts xv. we come to the conclusion of the matter.

Acts xv. 30 - 35

- A | xv. 30-35. ANTIOCH. *The answer.*
 - Paul and Barnabas, Judas and Silas. |
 - a | *Apoluo* dismissed.
 - b | The epistle delivered.
 - c | *Paraklesis* consolation.
 - c | *Parakaleo* exhorted.
 - a | *Apoluo* dismissed.
 - b | Teaching and preaching.

We learn from these verses that, upon reading the letter from Jerusalem, the Gentiles “rejoiced for the consolation”. The word here not only means ‘consolation’ but also ‘exhortation’, as can be seen in the next verse. We read further that Judas and Silas, ‘being prophets also themselves, exhorted the brethren and confirmed them’. Verse thirty-four is probably an interpolation (*see Revised Text*), being evidently added by some scribe because of the presence of Silas At Antioch in verse forty.

Such is the middle wall of partition; such were the ‘ordinances’; such was the ‘enmity’ of Eph. ii. 14-19.

No.50. The Audience Chamber (ii. 11 - 19-).

The Creation of the New Man.

pp. 61 - 64

We have seen that, during the Acts, a veritable ‘middle wall’ divided the Jewish believer from the Gentile believer, and while the Jewish believer stood to the Gentile believer as the true olive tree is to the wild olive graft contrary to nature, the blessed condition of perfect equality that characterizes the church of the ONE BODY was impossible of fulfillment, and was not the subject of revelation. Only with the setting aside of Israel at Acts xxviii., and the revelation of the new dispensation of the Mystery, could such a condition obtain.

We must now consider the way in which this reference to the middle wall is approached. “For He is our peace.” ‘He’ *autos* gathers up the references to ‘Christ’ and ‘Christ Jesus’ that have gone before, making the meaning ‘He and no other’ a true rendering of the Apostle’s meaning. It does not say He *made* peace here, that follows at the end of verse fifteen, but He IS our peace and MADE both one. He Himself is our peace; we are still dealing with the Kinsman-Redeemer. The Jewish believer who becomes a member of this newly called church, becomes at the same time a member of

the body of Christ; the Gentile believer who becomes a member of this newly called church, he too becomes at the same time a member of *the Body of Christ*, and in that new unity Christ Himself is the bond of peace.

“Both one.” Who are the ‘both’? A superficial reading of this passage sees no more in it than another presentation of the glorious truth of the believer’s acceptance with God, but the middle wall of partition separated one believer from another, and the words ‘both’ and ‘twain’ here are preceded by the article ‘the’. “The both” are made one; “the twain” are created one new man; “the both” are reconciled in one body, and “the both” have access in one Spirit. We might have thought that the Apostle should have used the words “the both” four times, thus:

“The both” made one. The middle wall gone.

“The both” made one new man, so making peace.

“The both” reconciled in one Body by the cross.

“The both” have access in one Spirit.

But this is not so. “The both” are made one, are reconciled and have access, but “the twain” are created in Himself into one new man. We shall discover there is a reason for this that is of dispensational importance. The middle wall is said to have been ‘broken down’; the enmity which this middle wall symbolized is said to have been abolished. The word translated ‘broken down’ is the Greek *luo* ‘to loose’. When used of a temple it is translated ‘destroy’ (John ii. 19). When used of a congregation it is translated ‘to be broken up’ (Acts xiii. 43), where the context emphasizes the difference that existed between the Jewish and the Gentile hearers of the Apostle (Acts xiii. 42-48). While the idea of ‘breaking down’ a wall or a building is a common one in the O.T., there does not seem to be a passage where the LXX have adopted this particular word *luo* to translate the Hebrew terms used.

Apart from John ii. 19, there does not appear to be any other instance in the Scriptures where *luo* is so translated. This being the case, some reason must have prompted the choice of this word. *Luo* is the root from which such terms as *lutroo* ‘redeem’, *lutron* ‘ransom’, *lutrosis* and *apolutrosis* ‘redemption’ are derived, and the Apostle seems to have blended the physical idea of the breaking down of a wall with the liberation that followed the setting aside of the condition that this middle wall typified. The ‘chain’ of Eph. vi. 20 is *halusis*, and it is not beyond possibility that the Apostle already envisaged the ‘bond’ of peace, a most blessed exchange for the fetters which were dissolved with the breaking down of the middle wall. The parallel expression is the word ‘abolished’ of ii. 15, a rendering of the Greek *katargeo*. This word is used of making anything ‘void’ or of ‘none effect’ (Rom. iii. 3, 31) and is used of the veil in II Cor. iii. 14. The word *katargeo* is a compound of *kata* ‘down’ and *erg* ‘work’, and literally means to put anything out of working order, to render inoperative, to abrogate. What was abrogated or rendered powerless, was ‘the enmity which was contained in ordinances’. These ordinances, we have already seen, were the decrees issued by the council of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts xv. which, while solving an immediate problem, only intensified another. This, together with the whole system of ceremonials

‘meat, drink, holy day, new moon or sabbath day’ were after all but shadows of things to come and have been nailed to the cross (Col. ii. 14-17), or as Eph. ii. 15 put its:

“Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.”

While we read of the veil ‘that is to say His flesh’ which was rent, so making a way into the presence of God, we must set aside the suggestion that the enmity was ‘in His flesh’ in Eph. ii. 15. The order of the words *ten exthran en te sarki autou* ‘The enmity in His flesh’ if lifted out of the passage, might lead to such a translation, although, as Alford and others point out, it would certainly require the specifying article *ten* to be repeated. Just as ‘in Himself’ is preceded and linked with the verb *ktizo* ‘to create in Himself’ so in the same verse the words ‘in His flesh’ are preceded and linked with the verb *lusas* ‘Having abolished in His flesh’ and that flesh is but a prelude to the fuller statement ‘by the cross’ of verse sixteen where this enmity was slain.

Peace and reconciliation are placed over against enmity and explain its nature. It was not the enmity of the unregenerate heart; it was rather the incipient enmity contained in the separating decrees, decrees which made ‘fish of one and fowl of the other’ as the proverb has it, in entire opposition to the extraordinary equality of the members of the One Body presently to be explained (Eph. iii. 6). The goal before this wondrous creation was peace. We have already indicated that the R.V. is to be followed here. *Ktizo* means to create, as distinct from making, moulding or fashioning. It nearly always carries with it the idea of something new. In one passage creation is ascribed to man, namely in I Pet. ii. 13 where the A.V. reads ‘submit yourselves to every ordinance (*ktisis*) of man’, and then goes on to speak of kings and governors and magistrates. So, in Eph. ii. 15, we have created of the twain ‘one new man’ even as the Romans said *creare consulum* ‘to create a consul’, the material man remaining the same, but the new office being created. The four occurrences of *ktizo* in Ephesians are as follows:

- A | Eph. ii. 10. Created in Christ Jesus unto good works.
- B | ii. 15. To create in Himself of the twain one new man.
- A | iii. 9. The mystery . . . hid in God Who created all things.
- B | iv. 24. The new man . . . created in righteousness.

Where the ‘new man’ of the doctrinal position is echoed by the new man of the practical. The former is created, the latter is put on.

We must now turn our attention to the words ‘the twain’ and ask the question, why did the Apostle not use the word ‘the both’ as in the three other instances? The both were made one, the both were reconciled, the both have access. These three statements give the positive position of this new company. The change over to the ‘twain’ was in preparation for the references to Gen. ii. 24 which is quoted in Eph. v. 31 “They two (*duo*) shall be one flesh”. The ‘new man’ is the goal towards which the purpose of the ages moves. It is in process now, as may be seen from Eph. iv. 24. The immediate concern of the dispensation of the Mystery is the production of the ‘perfect man’

(Eph. iv. 13) where the word translated 'man' is not *anthropos* as in the passages already examined but *aner* 'an adult male', 'a man not a woman', 'a husband'.

The word occurs two hundred and thirteen times in the N.T., fifty of which occurrences are translated 'husband', and of these seven are found in Ephesians and Colossians. The perfect man is the 'husband' seen alone and to the exclusion of the wife. A husband however is a contradiction in terms if there be not also either in fact or in prospect a wife. Gen. ii. 24 foreshadows the state of affairs *when paradise is restored*; there will then be two redeemed companies, not one. The church of the One Body then complete will be the perfect husband; the Bride of the Lamb will be the perfect wife, and Christ will be the Head of both. There was a period in Adam's experience when he was alone. We are living in a period during which there is no 'Bride'—the advent and presentation of the Bride is future. Some have objected to the idea that the husband, i.e. the church of the Mystery, should be blessed in one sphere, while the wife, i.e. the bride of Rev. xix. should be blessed in another. Yet with all their protestations, the most loving and loyal of husbands necessarily have some spheres of activity into which their wives do not and should not enter. Husbands may be ministers of State, they may be financiers, merchants, scientists or soldiers; they may be the many who earn their bread by manual labour, but there has never been an outcry of disloyalty or lack of affection because a minister of State does not insist that his wife be co-elected with him to Parliament, or that a miner is disloyal and without natural affection because he does not insist that his wife shall work with him at the coal face! These objections confuse distinctive calling with basic salvation and are valueless, and those who make them do not attempt to put their objections into operation so far as they themselves and their own domestic economy are concerned. Gen. ii. 24 is to be attained, but it is not in operation yet; the new man created of the twain is the husband, the formation of the bride awaits the Day of the Lord.

In Volume XXIX we opened our pages to a contributor who taught that the creation of the new man 'refers to a future creation, when two bodies or assemblies, one mainly Jewish and the other mainly Gentile, are made one in Christ'. In Volume XXX we wrote:

"The statements we have quoted from Genesis are all associated with Paradise, *before* the entry of the Serpent and before the Fall."

"The perfect man (or husband) and the perfect bride will, while retaining the distinctive peculiarities of their respective callings, become in the future 'one new man' even as Adam was in the beginning the covering name of both male and female."

There is no need to obtrude into the constitution of the Mystery now, that which is only to be realized *in the future*; but it illuminates many features of the present dispensation when we not only recognize that they are peculiar and distinct, but that they are destined to fall into their respective place when the goal of the ages is attained. The church which is the Body of Christ is now being fashioned into the perfect 'husband' and when the dispensation of the Mystery ends, the dispensation which follows will complete another company who will constitute 'The bride', the union of which will form an integral part of that blessed purpose when God shall be all in all.

A very pertinent remark made by a reader is worth recording. It was to this effect. “How can the making of twain one new man, refer to marriage, when the revealed object of this union was to make ‘peace’? Whoever heard of an engaged couple being at such ‘enmity’ that it had to be ‘slain’, whose marriage ended in ‘peace’? To obtrude the idea of marriage into this passage with its middle wall separating ‘the both’ with its enmity contained in ‘ordinances’, seems too ridiculous for serious attention”, yet as some believers have nevertheless entertained the idea, duty and love of truth demanded that pertinent remark should be recorded.

**No.51. The Audience Chamber (ii. 11 - 19-).
Reconciliation, or Alienation reversed.
pp. 81 - 84**

The two companies represented by ‘the both’ have been reconciled, the reconciliation being expressed ‘in one Body’. This passage finds its correspondence in verse 18 thus:

- A | Eph. ii. 16. The both reconciled to God in one Body.
- A | Eph. ii. 18. The both access to the Father in one Spirit.

The two come together in Eph. iv. 4 “There is one Body, and one Spirit”. The only time when the actual physical body of the Saviour is mentioned in the Prison Epistles is in Col. i. 22 “in the body of His flesh through death”; all other references speak either of ‘Church which is His Body’ or the actual bodies of the believer. The fact that ‘the one Body’ in Eph. ii. 16 is linked with ‘the cross’ has made some lean to the idea that here, in this passage, the actual body of the Saviour is intended. But there is no point in referring to the physical body of Christ as ‘one body’ whereas, the ‘one Body’ is a very true title of the church of this dispensation.

The both were made ‘one’, the outcome ‘one’ new man; the reconciliation was expressed by ‘one’ Body, and experienced in ‘one’ Spirit. It is ‘the both’ who were reconciled to God in this one Body; *there*, as the apostle triumphantly affirms, “*there* is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all” (Col. iii. 11). The doctrine of reconciliation does not appear in the O.T. The LXX uses *katallage* once, namely in Isa. ix. 5, and *katallasso* once namely in Jer. xxxi. 39 (xlviii. 39 in the A.V.), but neither of these passages has anything to do with reconciliation as it is found in the N.T. *Katallasso* occurs in Rom. v. 10; I Cor. vii. 11 and II Cor. v. 18, 19, 20; *katallage* occurs in Rom. v. 11; xi. 15 and II Cor. v. 18, 19. These two forms of the word do not occur in the Prison Epistles. Instead the fuller form *apokatallasso* takes its place, occurring in Eph. ii. 16 and Col. i. 20, 21.

First we must acquaint ourselves with the root meaning of the term, then with the import of the added prefix *apo*. *Katallasso*, is one of the many words derived from *allos* which has already come before us in the word *apallotrioo* 'to be alienated' (Eph. ii. 12; iv. 18 and Col. i. 21). Alienation is the state which is exchanged for reconciliation, the change being the removal of the enmity that existed. If, therefore, we can discover the nature of the enmity in any particular case, we shall at the same time discover the nature both of the alienation and the subsequent reconciliation. We shall be prevented from starting with a moral alienation and ending with a dispensational reconciliation, we shall also be prevented from starting with a dispensational alienation and ending with a moral reconciliation. The enmity *echthra* which caused the alienation of Eph. ii. 12 was, as we have seen, not the enmity of sin as such, but the enmity arising out of the different dispensational positions occupied by Jewish and Gentile believer. The enmity *echthra* which caused the alienation of Rom. viii. 7 was the nature of the carnal mind and this was rectified by the reconciliation already noted in Romans and I & II Corinthians.

Alienation in the prison epistles arises either out of the dispensational disability of being born a Gentile, without specific reference to sin, to the alienation that arises out of a darkened understanding (Eph. iv. 18), or through the enmity consequent upon wicked works (Col. i. 21). In the latter case, the reconciliation effected presents such alienated ones 'holy and unblameable and unproveable in His sight' (Col. i. 22); in the former case the reconciliation cancels the original alienation that belonged to the Gentile, and reconciles the two conflicting parties in one Body to God by the cross. The reconciliation of Eph. ii. therefore is dispensational in character.

We next inquire what is the import of the added prefix *apo* in the word 'reconcile' found in Ephesians and Colossians. One attempt suggests that the lesser word used in Romans and Corinthians should be rendered 'conciliation' leaving the fuller word for 'reconciliation'. Unfortunately this creates a bias in the mind, for accepting this, we naturally assume that the further reconciliation of the later epistles is but the perfecting of the lesser reconciliation of the earlier ones. Strictly speaking there is not this difference in the two English words that their adoption as above indicated would justify. Conciliation is the term generally used of men in public stations of life, while reconciliation is indifferently employed for those in public or private.

Apo means away from, and the condition from which the Gentile is brought in Eph. ii. is from the alienation of *being a Gentile* to the reconciled position of *being a fellow member*, on equal terms with every other fellow member of a newly created New Man, or of a newly formed 'one Body'. The prefix *apo* belongs to both words, as can be seen: *APallotrioo* aliens, *APOkatallasso* reconciled; the alienation was 'from' the commonwealth of Israel, the reconciliation was 'from' the state of enmity *thus induced*. Here in the church of the One Body we have no mere evolution from an existing but lower order; rather we have an entirely newly created thing. When God says that there is a 'new creation', old things pass away, new things come into being, and it is a disaster for any one to attempt to bring over the hope, the promises, the constitution, the gifts and the ordinances of the earlier calling which were all related to a specific covenant and people, into this new creation where there are no promises that were made to the Fathers,

no covenants, no supernatural and miraculous gifts, and a hope that is lifted from that of I Thess. iv. to the manifestation of Col. iii.

One of the evidences of difference that we find in the period of the Acts is that of 'access'. Peter and Cornelius may be saved by the same Saviour, redeemed by the same precious blood, and look up to God as the same Father in Christ; nevertheless Peter can pass the middle wall of partition, but if Cornelius attempted to do so he would imperil his life. Peter and Cornelius may be saved by the same grace, may believe with the same faith, yet Peter will withdraw himself from the table of the Gentile, Peter will even say 'not so Lord' to the vision of Acts x.; he will even tell Cornelius to his face that he would not have hesitated to class him with the 'common and unclean'! The church at Jerusalem was so surprised to hear that a Gentile had been saved, that they actually called the Apostle to account saying in shocked tones:

"Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them" (Acts xi. 3),

and while the door at length swings open to the Gentile (Acts xiv. 27), the epistle to the Romans makes it clear in the eleventh chapter that dispensationally the Gentile believer was a wild olive grafted contrary to nature into the true olive tree. Such conditions, though palliated by the decrees of Acts xv., are inimical to true unity, and they were 'abolished' at the introduction of the Mystery. Those who were reconciled in one Body to God, have access in one Spirit to the Father; the former position 'to God' being that of the church of the one Body, the latter 'to the Father' that of the family (Eph. iii. 15). Chapter ii. 18 commenced with the particle *hoti* "seeing that through Him, etc." as though the experimental fact that could not be denied, proved the dispensational fact that was being explained. What they had was 'access' *ten prosagogen*. This word in the LXX answers in the majority of cases to the Hebrew *corban*, a word we have already considered when dealing with salvation as 'the gift' of God. There, in Eph. ii. 8, it is God Who in infinite grace comes forward and brings His unspeakable gift *to us*; here, in virtue of that gift, we are entitled to draw near *to Him*. There are thirty-six occurrences of *prosagoge* in the LXX of Leviticus, of which the following are examples:

"And Moses *brought* Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water."

"And Moses *brought* Aaron's sons, and put coats on them."

"And he *brought* Aaron's sons, and Moses put of the blood upon the tip of their right ear" (Lev. viii. 6, 13, 24).

We learn from Eph. i. 4 that this church of the one Body was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world that it should be 'holy and without blame before him'. We find in Eph. v. 25-27 that Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it; that He washes it by the water of the word that it may be presented 'holy and without blemish', and here in Eph. ii. 16-18 we see the work in process. What this church was in electing choice 'holy and without blemish', so will they be when presented at the last, and in the reconciliation with its accompanying 'access' we see that they are in Christ what Aaron and his sons were only in type. Aaron had access but once a year into the holiest of all, of a tabernacle made with hands. We have access at all times into the holiest of all (see the meaning of the word 'saints' in article No.34) of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, namely into heaven itself. Aaron never 'sat down' as a priest, for

his work was never completed. Christ, after He had offered one Sacrifice for sins for ever, 'sat down', His work done. No one of Israel would have entertained the thought that anyone of that favoured race, however holy, could ever 'sit down' in that august Presence, yet we have already read the overwhelming statement of Eph. ii. 6 that we, who once were aliens and strangers, have been raised up together with Christ and 'seated together in heavenly places'. This is reconciliation indeed.

What God planned before the world was overthrown He has in His own good time effected through the cross and the shed blood of His Beloved, and now those who were once 'far off' are indeed 'made nigh' and have access, yea access with boldness and confidence by the faith of Him (Eph. iii. 12). To other callings may be appended the titles 'A Kingdom of Priests' and 'The Bride of the Lamb', but none can be so near as those who are the very members of His Body. Such is the high calling of the dispensation of the Mystery.

'Once' or 'in time past' children of wrath.
But God. The intervention of love.
'Once' or 'in time past'. Aliens and strangers.
But now. The intervention of peace.
'No more', 'no longer'. Strangers and foreigners.
The Middle Wall broken down. The enmity abolished.
One new man created, so making peace.

No.52. The Living Room (ii. -19 - 22).

Tabernacle, Temple, Dwelling Place. pp. 101 - 104

The figure that is now before us is a holy temple, and at first sight the denomination 'The Living Room' may savour of irreverence-but the title has been chosen with care.

What is our conception of a temple? The English word is derived from the Greek *temno* 'to cut', meaning a part cut off or separated for religious purposes. Associated with a temple, are priests, altars, sacrifices, veils, incense and elaborate ritual, yet these are 'accidental', being rendered necessary because of the unclean and sinful nature of man. The 'essential' purpose of a temple is to provide a 'dwelling-place' for the Most High among men, and only the necessity to preserve the holiness of the Divine Occupier called for all the elaborate ritual associated with the place. First of all let us remember that both Stephen and Paul declare 'The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands'. Stephen, in Acts vii. 48, 49 quoting from the O.T. because he was speaking to Jews, and Paul in Acts xvii. 24 appealing not to O.T. Scriptures but to common sense:

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands",

because he was speaking to Gentiles. This is an example of method and approach that should not be lightly set aside. The fact that these words are a deduction drawn from the confession of Solomon as recorded in II Chron. ii. 6, shows how great an impression the witness of Stephen had upon that young man whose name was Saul (Acts vii. 58). The language of Stephen and Paul, if isolated from the rest of Scripture, could be used to flatly deny that God ever did or ever will 'dwell' in any temple made with hands, but this is not according to truth. The words of Stephen are based upon the prayer of Solomon, which he goes on to quote. In II Chron. vi. 18 Solomon says:

“But will God in very deed dwell with men on earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this house which I have built!”

The argument that would make it impossible for God to dwell in a temple on earth, because it could not 'contain' God, would also make it impossible for God to dwell in the highest heaven, for they too cannot contain God. In both cases He must condescend, and if He can do so in the one, He may do so in the other. Let us hear therefore the language of the Most High.

“For thus saith the HIGH and LOFTY ONE that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is HOLY; I dwell in the HIGH and HOLY PLACE”,

and we might be pardoned if stopping here, we drew the conclusion that 'God can never dwell with man' but this is reckoning without grace, the Prophet continues:

“with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit” (Isa. lviii. 15).

So God will dwell with men.

Upon arriving at Mount Sinai, Moses was instructed to build a tabernacle, and several chapters are devoted to a description of this wonderful structure. Its purpose however was simple:

“Let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them” (Exod. xxv. 8),

and we are told that Moses was given a pattern, and according to that pattern the Tabernacle was made. This insistence upon a 'pattern' is repeated when Solomon was commissioned to build the temple (I Chron. xxviii. 11, 12). If this were all that had been said, we might infer from the emphasis upon the 'pattern' that both Moses and Solomon were not left to their own devices, but the N.T. use of this emphasis upon 'pattern' reveals something fuller and deeper. Summing up what he had already said, the Apostle in Heb. viii. 1, 2 concentrates the whole teaching in 'A seated Priest in a heavenly sanctuary'. Now the priests he says serve unto the example or 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).

These 'patterns' are set over against 'the heavenly things themselves' in Heb. ix. 23, the holy places 'made with hands' being 'figures of the true'. These heavenly things

were purified with the better sacrifices of the New Covenant, even as the typical things of the Tabernacle were purified by the blood of bulls and goats. It appears therefore that whether in the heavens, or in the earth, the dwelling of God, either among angels or men, must be looked upon as ‘a condescension great’. The house of the Lord was not only a dwelling place for God among His people, it was looked upon as a dwelling place for the believer also ‘And I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever’ is the closing note of the Shepherd Psalm. The aspiration of David is further expressed when he said:

“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple. For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me” (Psa. xxvii. 4, 5).

The sons of Korah did not hesitate to liken the humble nesting place of the sparrow and the swallow, with dwelling in the house of the Lord (Psa. lxxxiv. 3, 4). So, even though the section before us is mainly that of a holy temple, it ends with the words ‘for an habitation of God through the Spirit’ (Eph. ii. 22). These words will need some revision, but before we deal with any particular word or phrase, let us see the structure of this new section:

- A | a | 19. Fellow-citizens (*sun*).
- b | 19. Of the saints (*hagios*).
- a | 19. Household (*oikeios*).
- b | 19. Of God.
- B | c | 20. Built On (*epi*).
- d | 20. The Foundation.
- e | 20. Apostles and Prophets.
- e | 20. Christ Jesus Himself.
- d | 20. Chief Corner-stone.
- c | 21. The Building In (*en*).
- A | a | 21. Fitly framed together (*sun*).
- b | 21. Holy Temple in the Lord (*hagios*).
- a | 22. Builded together (*oikodomeo, sun*).
- b | 22. Habitation of God in Spirit.

The sequence of events in Gen. i. and ii. is creation man paradise where, at the close of Gen. iii. the word ‘placed’ being in the Hebrew *shaken* ‘to dwell as in a tabernacle’, leads Rotherham to put a footnote: “Probably as a habitation for himself; I Sam. iv. 4; Psa. lxxx. 1; xcix. 1, esp. chap. iv. 14.” No intelligible meaning can be attached to the note ‘esp. chap. iv. 14’, we believe it to be a misprint, and should read iv. 4 referring to the reference already given I Sam. iv. 4. From the garden of Eden onward God is said to have dwelt ‘between the cherubim’ and both Tabernacle and Temple are built to enshrine the holiest of all where the cherubim rest on the mercy seat. This first reference to ‘dwelling as a tabernacle’, finds its corresponding fulfillment after the conflict of the ages has passed, in the closing reference to the Tabernacle in the Scriptures, namely in Rev. xxi. 3, 4:

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them and God shall wipe away all tears no more death sorrow, nor crying.”

It is evident, however great the wonder of it, that God has sought a home, a dwelling place among His people, since the creation of man, and though the calling of Ephesians is entirely distinct from that of any other revealed in the Scriptures, this insistence upon a dwelling place is there, as much as anywhere else. The following words, all compounds or derivatives from the root *oik*, which gives us the word *oikos* ‘house’ and ‘dwelling’ *katoiketerion*, are all found in the section before us.

FOREIGNER (ii. 19),	<i>paroikos</i> —Alongside the house.
HOUSEHOLD (ii. 19),	<i>oikeios</i> —The family side of the house.
BUILT (ii. 20),	<i>epoikodomeo</i> —To build upon as on a foundation.
BUILDING (ii. 21),	<i>oikodome</i> —To build as a house.
BUILT TOGETHER (ii. 22),	<i>sunoikodomeomai</i> —To build together as a house.
HABITATION (ii. 21),	<i>katoiketerion</i> —A certain or durable dwelling.

As we have before observed, the sequence of events in Gen. i. & ii. is creation man paradise, with God finding a dwelling mid the cherubim. The sequence in Eph. ii. is creation new man habitation, and this habitation, a Temple. This can be seen more clearly if set out thus:

A		Once.—Strangers and aliens	\	
B		Now.—Made nigh.	\	BODY.
C		Unity.—The two made one.	/	
D		Access.—In one Spirit.	/	
A		No longer.—Strangers and aliens	\	
B		But.—Fellow citizens.	\	TEMPLE.
C		Unity.—Fitly framed together.	/	
D		Habitation.—In Spirit.	/	

A number of terms used in this short section demand attention. They cannot be dealt with adequately at the close of an article, but require as full a space as can be allotted. We therefore reserve their consideration for a future study.

No.53. The Living Room (ii. -19 - 22).

The Living Room (ii. 21).

pp. 121 - 125

Our last article was devoted largely to the concept that a tabernacle or a temple, in spite of the ritual associated with them, were 'dwelling places' of the Most High among men. We must now turn our attention to Eph. ii. 19-22 where both 'temple' and 'dwelling place' are the theme. We have already set out the six compounds of *oikos* 'house' that are found in these four verses, and must now consider the section in further detail.

The first thing that demands attention is the obvious correspondence of this section with Eph. iv. 7-19, for the word translated 'fitly framed together' of Eph. ii. 21, "all the building fitly framed together groweth", is repeated in chapter iv.:

"From whom the whole body fitly joined together maketh increase" (Eph. iv. 16).

It is no new doctrine that 'the Body' is 'a Temple', this truth being enunciated by the Lord concerning Himself (John ii. 21), and of the believer of I Cor. vi. 19, but the references in Ephesians speak not only of the individual believer, but of the complete church of the Mystery. There are three Greek words translated 'temple' in the N.T. that need to be discriminated, the one *oikos* 'house' is found once, namely in Luke xi. 51 'between the altar and the temple'.

Hieron. This word indicates the temple as a whole, the sacred precincts, the courts and colonnade, but *naos*, the other word used, denotes the innermost shrine, the Holy of Holies. *Hieron* is used in Matt. iv. 5 'a pinnacle of the temple', and it was in the sacred precincts, not in the Holy of Holies that the money changers sat (Matt. xxi. 12). *Naos* is used in Matt. xxiii. 16, and in verse 35, where in Luke xi. 51 the Evangelist uses house *oikos*, Matthew uses 'temple' *naos* of the same event, namely the shedding of the blood of Zacharias in the temple. It is the *naos* that is referred to in Matt. xxvii. 51 'The veil of the temple (the innermost shrine) was rent in twain'. While John ii. 14, 15 speaks of the *hieron*, John ii. 19 uses the word *naos*. It was here that the ark was placed, and seen when the temple of God *naos* was opened in heaven (Rev. xi. 19).

The Church, which is the Body of Christ, is not looked upon as the whole temple, with its courts and colonnades, but as the innermost sanctuary, the Holy of Holies. We have, in No.33 of this series, shown that the word translated 'saint' is not necessarily restricted to a believer; it is used of a holy place as well as of a holy person. The inheritance of the saints (Eph. i. 18) is the inheritance of the 'heavenly holiest of all' where Christ sits at the right hand of God or in other words 'in heavenly places'. So here in Eph. ii. 19 we read of 'fellow citizens with the saints', and as the A.V. stands, no difficulty is presented. When, however, we are made aware that the literal rendering of this passage is 'fellow citizens OF the saints' we are conscious of a difficulty. How can one saint

inherit another? How can one member of the Body inherit another member? The difficulty is created by the conception we have already formed, that 'saints' must mean 'people'. *Ton hagon*, the plural genitive, can be masculine, feminine or neuter as the case may be. The epistle to the Hebrews speaks much of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, 'heaven itself', and uses the word *hagon* in:

Heb. viii. 2	A minister of the <i>sanctuary</i> . ' <i>ton hagon</i> .'
ix. 3	Which is called the <i>Holiest of all</i> . ' <i>hagia hagon</i> .'
ix. 8	The way into the <i>Holiest of all</i> . ' <i>ton hagon</i> .'
x. 19	To enter into the <i>holiest</i> by the blood. ' <i>ton hagon</i> .'

It is there that Christ entered, there he sat down at the right hand of God. The epistle to the Ephesians introduces a new and stupendous teaching. Where Hebrews represents the Lord ALONE in Heaven's holiest of all, Ephesians reveals that the member of the One Body is potentially seated together THERE, that he has an inheritance THERE, that he is a fellow citizen THERE. This constitutes the believer a part of the 'household of God', for as we have already seen, the temple is designed to be a dwelling place. All this, of course, in direct contrast to the earlier condition of strangers, foreigners and aliens. The next problem awaiting solution is double foundation that is spoken of here:

"And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. ii. 20).

The fact that Apostles come before Prophets, is proof that N.T. Prophets are envisaged. Perhaps if this passage stood alone we could not be so definite in our assertion. If I Cor. xii. 28, 29 and II Pet. iii. 2 and especially Eph. iii. 5 and iv. 11 be consulted, the fact will be sufficiently established for us to proceed. What does the passage mean when it speaks of 'the foundation OF the Apostles and Prophets'? The most serious objection to the idea that these Apostles and Prophets were themselves a 'foundation' is taken from I Cor. iii. 11 where Paul declares 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ'. But in that passage Paul is speaking not of those who are built into a building, but of those who are builders.

In I Cor. iii., Paul does not look upon himself as a 'living stone' in the building under review, but as 'a wise master-builder' and those to whom he speaks are looked upon as builders also who can use either gold, silver and precious stones, or wood, hay and stubble. In this context Christ alone can be the foundation. However, in Eph. ii. the metaphor is applied differently. Let us turn to Eph. iv. 11-13. Here we have a ministry given by the ascended Christ which has in view both 'the perfecting (or re-adjusting) of the saints' and 'the edifying (building up) of the Body of Christ'. Now the first pair of gifts "Apostles and Prophets" were a 'foundation' ministry and were not continuous. The second pair, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher, *were* continuous. In II Timothy when the initial foundation had already been laid, and the gift of Apostles and Prophets was not repeated, we find the Evangelist (II Tim. iv. 5) and the Teacher (II Tim. ii. 2). The Apostles and Prophets were a foundation ministry, but they in turn rested squarely and completely upon the Chief Corner Stone, Christ. Now Christ as "Chief Corner Stone" does not belong exclusively to the Mystery, for Peter also speaks of Christ with the same title (I Pet. ii. 6, 7).

As we have already observed, the temple covered a greater area than did the Holiest of all, consequently, while the innermost shrine, the *naos*, that which belongs exclusively in this figure to the Mystery, was built upon that portion of the one foundation which was overlaid with the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Peter also could build other portions of the holy structure according to the plan of the ages, without confusing their separate positions and character.

“In Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. ii. 21).

The words translated “all the building” are the Greek *pasa oikodome* and so should be translated strictly “every building”. Tyndale reads ‘every bildynge’, Cranmer ‘what buyldynge soever’, the R.V. ‘each several building’. To interpret this as though the Apostle conceived of a number of different buildings, growing into a holy temple is contrary to the teaching of the whole context, yet, unless we are going to assume that we need not be too particular over shades of grammatical accuracy, some recognition of the peculiar wording is called for.

“In English the word ‘building’ has various shades of meaning, each of which is found equally in its counterpart in the Greek. It may mean ‘the process of building’, it may mean ‘the building itself when complete’ or it may have a sense intermediate between these two, and mean ‘the building regarded as in process’.” (J. Armitage Robinson, D.D.).

‘Every building’ then will not mean a number of separate buildings but as though the Apostle had said ‘However many may take part in this building, whatever their share or particular constitution, whether of executive, of transport, of direction, of actual labour or attending to the needs of those thus engaged, every act of building is directed to one end, the erection of a *naos* a most holy place, ‘a dwelling place of God in the Spirit’. A glance at Eph. iv. 16 will show that this co-operative idea is there presented in the figure of a Body, Christ being the Head, instead of the Chief Corner Stone; the believers the several joints of supply, instead of being builders, the ‘building up’ and the ‘growing’ (increase) being repeated.

The reader may feel that a fair amount of time and space has been devoted to a very small and not very important item, but mature reflection will show that the meaning at which we have arrived has a far reaching effect. If every act of building which is rendered by every member of the church of the Mystery has in view the building of a *naos* or heavenly holiest of all, then a very definite understanding will have been reached concerning the nature and scope of ministry as it pertains to the dispensation of the Mystery. The parallel passage, Eph. iv. 16, is equally emphatic that the main purpose of the mutual ministry of ‘every joint’ is the increase and edifying of the body of Christ. A little earlier the Apostle had spoken of the ministry as follows:

“For the perfecting (re-adjusting) of the saints,
for the work of the ministry,
for the edifying of the Body of Christ:
Till we all come in the unity of the faith” (Eph. iv. 12, 13).

Others may be called by the same Lord to be ‘fishers of men’; others may be called to organize evangelistic campaigns, to spend themselves in promoting youth movements and other most important and necessary services. With all such we are in sympathy and would help to the full extent of our powers, so long as our loyalty to the Truth remained untouched. The trouble is that so many of these dear fellow believers are not content to leave us to the work which the same Lord has entrusted to us. We have been taken to task because we have not organized great evangelistic campaigns, although we have been told that we often ‘teach’ a fuller and more effective gospel message than many widely advertised Evangelists.

So with all other activities that occupy the energies of the child of God ‘to every man his work’ is a sound motto. Let him that ‘teacheth’ wait upon his ‘teaching’ (Rom. xii. 7), and let us all remember that to our own Master we stand or fall. To make known ‘what is the dispensation of His calling’, to endeavour to make all men see ‘what is the dispensation of the Mystery’, to hold fast the form of sound words, to keep the helm of the *Berean Expositor* steadily on its course, to resist blandishments and to accept without resentment misrepresentation—these have required the fullest measure of grace available, and in this temper we proceed and with this goal before us we run.

We trust the reader will have seen how profitable it is to ponder the Word, to recognize that every grammatical form is there by ‘inspiration of God’ and that much loss of teaching must follow any disregard of apparently unimportant details. We have already stressed the idea that all is directed to a ‘habitation’ or ‘dwelling place’ of God, we must give attention to the closing clause ‘a habitation of God through the Spirit’. The words ‘through the Spirit’ translate the Greek *en pneumatī* ‘in spirit’. In four places in the book of the Revelation, John tells us that he was ‘in spirit’, the results being that he was transferred as it were to the future day of the Lord (Rev. i. 10; iv. 2; xvii. 3; xxi. 10). Another use of the phrase is found in Paul’s epistles, where ‘in spirit’ represents the new sphere of Christian activity. For example:

“He is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, IN SPIRIT, and not in letter” (Rom. ii. 29).

“We should serve IN newness of SPIRIT, and not in oldness of letter” (Rom. vii. 6).

“But ye are not IN FLESH, but IN SPIRIT, if so be the Spirit of God dwell (*oikei*) in you” (Rom. viii. 9).

In Eph. iii. 5, as the passage reads in the A.V. the words ‘by the Spirit’ refer to the revelation made to the holy apostles and prophets. When we are examining that passage we hope to show that the words ‘in spirit’ stand as a preface to the threshold unity of verse six, but that exposition must wait until the whole section is before us. There are many other examples of *en pneumatī* in the epistles, but those given are a fair sample of this particular usage. “In spirit” as we have seen in Romans, is placed over against ‘in flesh’ or ‘in letter’, and in Eph. ii. it is placed over against the former sphere *en sarki* ‘in flesh’ (Eph. ii. 11) and parallel with such blessed changes of sphere as ‘in Christ Jesus’, ‘in one body’, ‘in one spirit’, and ‘in Lord’ of Eph. ii. 13, 16, 18, 21. A reader once complained about the mixed metaphor used by the Apostle here, for he not only speaks of

the temple being 'built' but of its 'growing'. The words *auxano* and *auxesis* occur again in Eph. iv. 15, 16, and in Eph. iii. 17 we have the two figures again 'rooted and grounded in love' as also in Col. ii. 7 'rooted and built up in Him'. God is using 'living stones' and consequently the Apostle can use both the words 'built UPON' and 'IN Whom all the building groweth' without any incongruity. Alas in many buildings or societies erected by men, the interchange of the terms 'build' and 'grow' would not only be incongruous but untrue.

So another blessed section of this epistle ends. In this temple, no middle wall exists, here 'the both' have access in one spirit, here 'in spirit' is prepared a dwelling place for God. There is a sequel to this, but it awaits the prayer of Eph. iii. 14-21 for its elucidation, and a most important section of the epistle dealing specifically with the dispensation of the Mystery intervenes.

No.54. The Secret Chamber (iii. 1 - 13).

A Parenthesis of Extreme Importance (iii. 2 - 13).

pp. 141 - 144

The reader who has the teaching of Ephesians in heart and mind will already have realized that some explanation is necessary to account for the extraordinary revelation of grace that is made known in the two chapters now reviewed.

The blessings promised are unique	“Every blessing that is spiritual.”
The sphere of their enjoyment is unique	“In heavenly places.”
The period of choice is unique	“Before the overthrow of the world.”
The position is unique	“Made to sit together in heavenly places.”
The unity is unique	“The twain created one new man.”

Here are five items, each of which, if taken alone, is enough to establish a change of dispensation, and if taken together present so overwhelming an evidence that such a dispensational change must have taken place as to make further argument superfluous. 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear' may be repeated in this connection as it was pronounced at the blindness of Israel and the introduction of the 'mysteries' of the kingdom. The section now before us Eph. iii. 1-13 is devoted to the revelation and the explanation of the dispensation of the Mystery. The opening words 'For this cause' show that the Apostle was about to make a deduction and an application of what he had just been saying about the 'habitation of God in spirit', but it is evident that at the close of verse one, some necessity compelled him to postpone the teaching that he had in mind because of the need to give a fuller explanation. The words 'for this cause' are repeated in verse fourteen, and the subject resumed.

Eph. iii. 2-13 therefore is a great parenthesis. The word parenthesis, *para* beside, *en* in, *thesis* place, is the covering title of any form of speech which could reasonably be

placed within brackets (. . . .). However, if we would be perfectly accurate, we must call the inserted verses (Eph. iii. 2-13) a *parembole*, for words in *parenthesis* are not complete in themselves, but words of a *parembole* are. The place occupied in the outworking of the theme can be seen if the whole passage be set out thus:

- A | Eph. ii. 19-22. The church a temple, a habitation or dwelling of God in Spirit.
- B | iii. 1. For this cause.
- C | iii. 2-13. A parenthesis made necessary by Paul's claim that his imprisonment was connected with the blessing of the Gentiles, which he explains as linked with a dispensation given to himself. He returns to the matter of his tribulations which are for their glory, and repeats the words:
 - B | iii. 14. For this cause.
 - A | iii. 14-21. The individual believer should pray that he may experimentally enjoy this privilege of ii. 19-22, which for the present is expressed in the words: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith".

We will, therefore, follow the Apostle in his argument, and postpone the examination of the connection suggested by the words 'for this cause' until we reach verse fourteen. The reason why the Apostle paused to explain is because of the claim inherent in the words:

"I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles" (Eph. iii. 1).

This is the first occurrence of the personal pronoun *ego* in the epistle. Here, the message is placed first, the messenger second. On the other occasions, as for example the fight for the faith in the epistle to the Galatians, the commission and the independence of the messenger takes precedence. The occasions upon which the Apostle was led to use the personal 'I Paul' are six in number, as follows: II Cor. x. 1, Gal. v. 2; Eph. iii. 1; Col. i. 23; I Thess. ii. 18 and Philemon 19. The only two which are used to make a claim to special revelation and stewardship are those in Ephesians and Colossians:

"I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles."
"Whereof I Paul am made a minister."

It is evident that so much is involved and implied in the claims of Eph. iii. 1 that it justifies the long digression of the next twelve verses. What was this claim? Let us notice the last claim first. "For you Gentiles." It was no new thing for Paul's name to be intimately associated with the Gentiles. At his conversion he was described as a chosen vessel to bear the name of the Lord "before the Gentiles" (Acts ix. 15) and in Rom. xi. 13 he declares himself to be 'the Apostle of the Gentiles', a claim already recognized by Peter, James and John (Gal. ii. 8, 9). It was the connection of Paul's imprisonment with the Gentile that introduced the claim that demanded explanation. He was the Prisoner of Christ Jesus (R.V.) for the Gentiles, and it is the 'Prison ministry' that must claim our attention.

We must commence our survey with Paul's own introduction of the subject as described in Acts xx. It is evident that Paul has come to the end of one ministry, and is

now facing another. Verses 18-21 are his own survey of the ministry that was closing, and verses 22-24 an anticipation of the ministry that awaited him. Already, before a visible shackle was on his wrist, he was 'bound in the spirit' and knew that 'bonds' as well as affliction awaited him. His attitude to these things, tempered by his one absorbing desire, however, is made known:

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24).

The Apostle then told these Ephesian elders that they would see his face 'no more', and with a word of exhortation and a display of mutual affection the chapter closes. The fears expressed in Acts xx. were soon realized, and Paul found himself a prisoner. It is during his defence before King Agrippa that the next statement concerning his prison ministry is made. He recounts his experience on the way to Damascus, where he was met by the Lord, converted and commissioned. Up till this time we only know what the Lord said to Ananias about Saul of Tarsus, and what Ananias said to him, but now that all need of secrecy is past, Paul makes known what the Lord had said to him on the way to Damascus, and before Ananias visited him after the three days blindness.

"I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest" (Acts xxvi. 15 and ix. 5).

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee" (Acts xxvi. 16, 17).

"I HAVE appeared I WILL appear." Here are two appearances.

"BOTH of these things of those things." Here are two ministries.

"Which thou HAST seen WILL appear." Here are two subjects.

In Acts ix. there were no 'Gentiles' from whom Paul needed to be delivered, the words 'Delivering thee unto whom now I send thee' being quoted by Paul from the commission given to him at the second appearing, early promised and at length fulfilled. In Acts ix. he only knew that he had a twofold ministry; subsequently he realized that the second ministry was associated with prison and particularly directed towards the Gentiles. So, in Eph. iii. 1 he calls himself 'The prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles' which is proof that the second ministry had then been entered. Paul is called a 'prisoner' for the first time in Acts xvi. 25 when he, together with Silas, had been thrown into prison at Philippi. Writing to the Corinthians he told them that already he had been in 'prison more frequently' (II Cor. xi. 23), but these imprisonments could not have lasted long at a time, as they do not even figure in the record of his journeys in the Acts. In Acts xxiii. Paul is a prisoner on a serious charge, and was held prisoner at Caesarea for two years (Acts xxiv. 27). His bonds are mentioned fourteen times and twice his examiner pronounced that he had done nothing worthy of death or bonds. Paul calls himself a prisoner in three places:

"I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles" (Eph. iii. 1).

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you" (Eph. iv.1).

"Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner"
(II Tim. i. 8).

Ephesians and II Timothy therefore are “Prison Epistles”. Philippians speaks very definitely of his ‘bonds’ (Phil. i. 7, 13, 14, 16), and so does Colossians (Col. iv. 18) and Philemon (verses 10, 13). These epistles form the basis of the teaching of the Apostle concerning the Mystery, and constitute the standard of truth for the dispensation of the Mystery. This does not mean that nothing outside these five epistles has a message for the member of the One Body. Redemption, justification and the great truths of the Gospel of grace, are assumed rather than taught in these epistles. Here, as everywhere else, the Scriptures are accepted as inspired truth. Here in a pre-eminent manner, Christ is exalted, ordinances once valid retire and a new sphere of blessing is revealed. The hope of Israel being suspended while Israel is blinded, a new aspect of hope is revealed. Some of these distinctive blessings have been before us in the two chapters of Ephesians now studied, and more awaits the diligent student as he has unfolded before his wondering gaze the exceeding riches of grace that these prison epistles reveal.

ETHNOS (Gentile) in Ephesians

- A | ii. 11-12. Aliens. Dispensational.
- B | iii. 1, 6, 7. The Mystery.
- A | iv. 17, 18. Alienated. Doctrinal.

An attempt has been made to prove that ‘Gentiles’ in Eph. ii. 11-12 refer to dispersed Jews. No comment of ours, however, is necessary. Look for yourself. “Search and see.”

No.55. The Secret Chamber (iii. 1 - 13).

The New Dispensation (iii. 2). pp. 161 - 165

It seems evident that when the Apostle made the statement contained in Eph. iii. 1, he was conscious of having made a very great claim, a claim that needed some measure of substantiation. It is easy to make a claim to some extraordinary vision, revelation or commission, and history provides abundant evidence of the duplicity of many so called seers, and the dupability of the untaught hearer. When Paul was apprehended, the Roman Captain had imagined that he had laid hold on the ‘Egyptian’ who led away four thousand men in 55A.D. (Acts xxi. 38). Some years previous a person named ‘Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody’, led away a number and was afterwards slain (Acts v. 36), and had Paul made the most fantastic claims to the most preposterous revelations and uttered the most improbable prophecies he would have found a following.

However, many and wonderful the revelations made to him he nevertheless spoke ‘the words of truth and soberness’ even though one of his hearers had said of him ‘Paul thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad’ (Acts xxvi. 24). When Moses received his commission to return to Egypt and demand of Pharaoh the liberation of

Israel, his contention was that Israel would disbelieve his claim and would say ‘The Lord hath not appeared unto thee’, his objection was accepted as valid and two great signs were given, the one touching a serpent, the other leprosy, symbols of Satan and Sin (Exod. iv. 1-7). It is not without significance that the words ‘hath appeared unto thee’ are almost the same as those used in Acts xxvi., of the appearing of Christ to the Apostle Paul. Coming nearer to the Apostle’s time we have a greater example of this concession, namely that provided by the Saviour Himself. In the ninth chapter of Matthew a man sick of palsy is brought before the Lord, but instead of first healing him of his disease, the Saviour forgave the man his sins. This caused great feeling among His hearers, who considered any such a claim to be blasphemy. The Saviour admitted their contention so far as to say:

“Whether is easier, *to say*, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or *to say*, Arise, and walk?”
(Matt. ix. 5).

Well, obviously, it was easy to ‘say’ thy sins be forgiven thee, for no physical change would be evident, therefore, in order that the greater claim should be substantiated, the healing of the sick man followed ‘That ye may know’ (Matt. ix. 5-7). In like manner the Apostle paused, after claiming to be the prisoner of the Lord for the Gentiles, and broke the thread of his discourse, to explain and prove his claim:

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

As in Eph. iv. 21 ‘If so be that ye have heard Him’, these words are conditional ‘For surely you have heard’ is the translation of Eph. iii. 2 by Moffatt. *Eige* ‘If indeed’. The word only occurs five times in the N.T.:

“If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked” (II Cor. v. 3).*
 “Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain” (Gal. iii. 4).*
 “If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. iii. 2).
 “If so be that ye have heard Him” (Eph. iv. 21).
 “If ye continue in the faith” (Col. i. 23).

[NOTE: * - The reader who uses Dr. Bullinger’s Greek English Lexicon, should correct these references, as the first reads II Cor. v. 5 and the second Gal. iii. 14.]

In each of these passages the subject is taken for granted. The word ‘if’ must not be treated casually as of little importance. That master of language, Shakespeare, knew better; “much virtue”, he said, “in your ‘if.’” The following Greek particles are translated ‘if’ in the N.T. and their distinctive meanings should be realized:

Ean “If haply.” This implies a condition, which only experience can determine.
 “If he come unto you, receive him” (Col. iv. 10).

Ei “If” putting the condition simply,
 (a) With the indicative it assumes the hypothesis as a fact.
 “If ye be dead with Christ” (Col. ii. 20).
 (b) With the optative (the wishing) mood, it expresses mere assumption.
 “If the will of God be so” (I Pet. iii. 17).

Eige “If at least”—what is spoken taken for granted (as above).

Dr. Bullinger in his Lexicon illustrates the meaning of these words thus:

“If this counsel or this work be of men (*ean* followed by the subjunctive *a point which the result will decide*)” “But if it be of God (*ei* with the indicative, *a case which I put*)”
Acts v. 38, 39.

“If ye know these things (*ei* with indicative, *assuming the case as a fact*)”, “happy are ye if ye do them (*ean* followed by the subjunctive *a result which remains to be seen*)”
John xiii. 17.

No uncertainty therefore must be read into Eph. iii. 2; iv. 21 or Col. i. 23. “Assuming that ye have heard” would translate the Apostle’s meaning. Here in this opening epistle of the new dispensation Paul assumes that those to whom he now writes ‘had heard’. How and when did they hear? The elders of Ephesus had heard, at least in part, as Acts xx. 17-25 makes clear, and after the setting aside of Israel in Acts xxviii., we read “Paul dwelt TWO YEARS in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him” (Acts xxviii. 30). Among those who visited him during these two years were Timothy, many of the brethren, Epaphroditus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, Marcus, Jesus named Justus, Epaphras, Luke and Demas, and through the ministry of these brethren traveling back and forth between the assemblies and the Roman prison, all the churches would have become apprized of the new dispensation that had been given unto the Apostle for the Gentiles.

Even when the Apostle suffered a severer imprisonment with much more irksome restrictions, even as a malefactor, he could rejoice that the preaching had been fully known and that all the Gentiles had heard (II Tim. iv. 17). Doubtless we should like to ‘have heard’ but in the wisdom of God, we learn by study, by prayer, by meditation, so that they who have ears to hear shall hear, but those not so blessed will pass this high and holy calling by and protest that ‘they see nothing in it’. For us, it is as certain as the day that for two years the believer had the opportunity to hear and that many did so with blessed results. In Eph. iii. the Apostle is but reminding them of what was acknowledged among them, to pass on to a more detailed exposition of some of the distinctive features of this new dispensation.

“The dispensation of the grace of God.” The word ‘dispensation’ in the sense of a stewardship comes into our language from the Latin which uses *dispensatio* as a translation of the Greek *oikonomia*. The *Oxford Dictionary* says:

“*Theol.* A religious order or system, conceived as a stage in a progressive revelation, expressly adapted to a particular nation or age, as the *Patriarchal, Mosaic, Christian* dispensation.”

A dispensation was used of a steward, but is rarely so used now. Dispensative means administrative. The objection made by some to the use of the word ‘dispensation’ in Eph. iii. 2 and in similar passages is a quibble, and prompted by a desire to avoid the consequences of accepting the teaching that makes Paul, the Prisoner, the Steward of an entirely new dispensation. *Oikonomia* is translated in Luke xvi. 2, 3 and 4 by ‘stewardship’ even as *oikonomos* is translated in Luke xvi. 1, 3 and 8 by ‘steward’. Paul

claimed to be a steward of the mysteries of God (I Cor. iv. 1, 2), and the fact that the word is used of a ‘chamberlain’ of a city (Rom. xvi. 23), or of ‘governors’ who were responsible for an heir during his minority (Gal. iv. 2) further illustrates the meaning of the term. The LXX uses the word *oikonomos* of one “that was *over* the household” (Isa. xxxvii. 2), which if read in connection with Eph. ii. 19 will show the nature and extent of the Apostle’s claim. Eph. iii. 9 reads in the A.V. ‘fellowship of the mystery’ which is corrected in the R.V. to ‘dispensation of the mystery’. It is a slip of the pen that any scribe might make, and write *koi* instead of *oik*, *koinoia* being ‘fellowship’ and *oikonomia* ‘dispensation’.

Let us examine this structure before attempting the analysis of details, for if we comprehend the structure we shall perceive the scope of the Apostle’s argument, and if we perceive the scope we shall avoid that ever present danger of failing ‘to see the wood for the trees’. It will be observed that he returns in the thirteenth verse to his imprisonment, saying this time ‘My afflictions for you’ and in Acts xx. 23 when he first visualized this new ministry ‘bonds and afflictions’ were linked together.

Eph. iii. 1-13. The prisoner of Christ Jesus.

- A | 1. Prisoner for you (*huper humon*).
- B | Dispensation of the grace of God. Revelation of mystery. |
 - a | 2. Dispensation given.
 - b | 2. To me.
 - b | 2. To you-ward.
 - a | 3. Mystery revealed.
- C | Two mysteries and two ministries. |
 - d | 4. Mystery of CHRIST.
 - e | 5. Apostles and Prophets (*plural*).
 - f | 5, 6. The Mystery. |
 - g | In Spirit.
 - h1 | Joint-heirs.
 - h2 | Joint-body.
 - h3 | Joint-partakers.
 - e | 7. Paul alone (*singular*).
 - d | 8. Unsearchable riches of Christ.
- B | Dispensation of Mystery. Making known the wisdom of God. |
 - a | 9. Dispensation hidden since the ages.
 - b | 9. By God Who created through Christ.
 - c | 10. Knowledge through the church.
 - a | 11. Purpose of the ages.
 - b | 11. Which He made in Christ.
 - c | 12. Access through faith of Christ.
- A | 13. Afflictions for you (*huper humon*).

The next pair of correspondencies relate to the Dispensations. In the first passage it is called ‘The dispensation of the grace of God’ with which we can compare Acts xx. 24, where Paul speaks of this future ministry as testifying the gospel of the grace of God.

The corresponding member in Eph. iii., speaks of 'the dispensation (R.V.) of the mystery'. In the former passage this Mystery is said to have been made known to Paul by revelation, and in the latter passage we read of his desire 'to enlighten all' (*tisai pantas*) as to what is the dispensation of the Mystery. The central member verses 4-8 is occupied with TWO MYSTERIES, not one. There is the Mystery of Christ, shared by the Apostles and prophets of the N.T. times, with those who were taught of God in earliest days, and there is *the* Mystery itself, which Paul shared with no man.

The Mystery of Christ has been unfolded in the Scriptures since the primal promise of Gen. iii. 15 was made to our first parents, the Mystery of the present dispensation is called, in the balancing member 'unsearchable', no trace of *these* riches being found in earliest writings because 'hid in God'. Let us repeat, while we have to learn of both the fact and of the character of this new dispensation, those to whom Paul wrote had 'heard' of it throughout the two whole years in which he was permitted to receive visitors from all the churches under his care, and they took back the glad message. He had explained and expounded it for at least a year before the epistle we are now studying was written. While this may call for exceeding patience and prayerful vigilance while we follow out all the clues that are here imbedded in this epistle, let us remember that no such ambiguity existed at the beginning, the hope of these glad tidings had been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, according to Col. i. 23. This fact is a support to us and an encouragement to continue in our search, being assured that what was so openly proclaimed at the beginning, will not be withheld from any true member even at the end of the days.

No.56. The Secret Chamber (iii. 1 - 13).

The Mystery made known "According to a revelation". pp. 189 - 192

The expansion and explanation of the meaning of the words "The dispensation of the grace of God which is given to me to you-ward" is found in the next verse, and introduced, as it is, by the connective 'how'.

"How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery."

The word translated 'how' is the Greek *hoti* used epexegetically, an *epexegetis* being a full or detailed account or explanation of something which has gone before, and makes the sentence dependent upon the precious verse 'If ye have heard' and explains the peculiar character of the dispensation' given. The peculiarity of the dispensation is further established by the mode of its endowment "How that BY REVELATION He made known". A superficial criticism may object that this 'explanation' does not say a dispensation was entrusted, but that something was 'revealed', and to this we must make an answer. The word translated 'revelation' is *apokalupsis* and generally supposes something hitherto hidden or veiled, as in Eph. iii. 5. The word generally opposes the

thought that the subject thus ‘revealed’ could have been discovered by human wit or sagacity (I Cor. ii. 10).

A new and wonderful body of truth, such as is found in the epistles of the Mystery, was not revealed to Paul for his own private enjoyment, but given to him because he was Divinely chosen to be an earthen vessel. In the first place, even though the gospel had been preached unto Abraham (Gal. iii. 8), yet the gospel preached by Paul was given him ‘by revelation’ (Gal. i. 12), and the apostles of the circumcision ultimately admitted that it had something special and peculiar about it (Gal. ii. 7), even as he declared the purpose “I went up by revelation, and communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles” (Gal. ii. 2) makes clear. Here the original reads *kata apokalupsin* ‘according to revelation’ not ‘through’ *dia* as in Gal. i. 12. The words used in Eph. iii. 3 are *kata apokalupsin* ‘according to a revelation’ and the difference should be noted. *Kata* followed by the accusative is translated ‘by’ in the A.V. twenty-five times. A few instances must suffice, which we will translate each time literally ‘according to’:

“According to our law”; “That it might be according to grace”; “According to permission”; “According to commandment”; “I went up according to a revelation”; “How that according to a revelation He made known unto me the Mystery”; “According to the effectual working of His power” (John xix. 7; Rom. iv. 16; I Cor. vii. 6; II Cor. viii. 8; Gal. ii. 2; Eph. iii. 3, 7).

While we do not suggest that the word ‘by’ should be exchanged for ‘according to’ in these passages, the English idiom hardly allowing it, it should be remembered that the word ‘by’ has a very great variety of meanings which should be kept in mind when reading, its distinction being under the following headings:

- (1) Of place ‘by land’.
- (2) Of time ‘by day’.
- (3) Of agency ‘by grace’.
- (4) Of the effect of causation ‘by this I know’.
- (5) Of relation ‘by the ounce’.
- (6) Of specification ‘Greet the friends by name’.

Had the Mystery been made known to Paul ‘by’ revelation simply, the language of Gal. i. 12 *di apokalypseos* would have been sufficient; instead the Apostle employs the language of Gal. ii. 2 “I went up *kata apokalupsin* in harmony with a revelation”, for no one believes that the revelation was the mode of transport ‘by’ which Paul went up to Jerusalem. He went up because a revelation had been made to him, and in harmony with that revelation it was incumbent upon him to go up to Jerusalem, lay before those in charge ‘that gospel’ which he preached among the Gentiles, and to ‘yield’ not for an hour to any pressure put upon him. In like manner Paul had received a revelation, first at his original commission (Gal. i. 16) and at the subsequent appearing to him of the Saviour (Acts xxvi. 16-18). This revelation included such terms as:

“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God”,

and no one acquainted with the Prison epistles will need chapter and verse to be quoted here to show that these are an integral part of their testimony. So, says Paul ‘in harmony with this all covering revelation given to me, there was made known unto me the

mystery'. The bulk of the occurrences of *gnorizo* 'to make known' is found in Paul's epistles (18 refs: out of 24 in the whole N.T.). *Gnorizo* is used six times in Ephesians, two references (Eph. iii. 10 and vi. 21) deal with making known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, and the making known by Tychicus the affairs of the Apostle. The remaining four references are used exclusively of some phase of the Mystery:

"In all wisdom and prudence having made known unto us the mystery of His will."

"How that by revelation He made known unto me the Mystery."

"The Mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets."

"And for me that I may make known the Mystery of the gospel"
(Eph. i. 9; iii. 3-5; vi. 19).

Three of these passages refer to related mysteries; one only to THE Mystery of the present dispensation. The mystery of His will is found in the section of Eph. i. that deals with sin and its redemption. Sin did not come in the will of the Father (Eph. i. 3-6), but although unrevealed, we know that God was not taken by surprise. Although no reference was made to the provision of a sacrifice for sin to Adam when he was warned of the consequences of disobedience, that sacrifice had been foreordained as I Pet. i. 19, 20 establishes. *This* is the mystery of His will. The mystery of Christ awaits our attention in the section before us; the third reference is to the mystery of the gospel, but whether this means that the gospel itself is a mystery, or whether it means that associated with the gospel of grace there was attached a mystery, must be considered in its place.

The presence of 'all my affairs and how I do' in this list of occurrences of *gnorizo* may at first seem of little consequence, but a moment's consideration will suggest that if "Mystery" and Paul's 'affairs' come together by things that can be 'made known', then a mystery as used in the Scriptures, while it may defy the wisdom of man to uncover, is intelligible and communicable as soon as it has been revealed. Here in Eph. iii. 3 we have the Mystery par excellence.

Because the British postage stamp was the first to be issued, it does not bear the name of this country—all other stamps, issued subsequently do. Because the British founded the first Alpine Club, that is its title; all other Alpine clubs add the name of the country responsible.

London is a great town, and for good or ill it contains thousands of monuments both in public buildings and in the open air, yet a visitor boarding a taxi at any of the London termini and asking simply for 'The Monument' would be taken without demur to the monument at the foot of London Bridge. All other monuments need some distinguishing and differentiating title. THE Monument is that erected by Christopher Wren to commemorate the great fire of London.

All other mysteries found in the N.T. are given a title 'The mystery of the kingdom of heaven', 'the mystery of Israel's blindness' for example—this mystery of Eph. iii. 3 stands out above them all in importance, and must be treated accordingly. Just as the New Covenant lies at the heart of the epistle to the Hebrews, and the great doctrine of Justification is the life blood of the epistle to the Romans, so the Mystery is the great

essential centre from which every doctrinal, dispensational and practical message radiates. All spiritual blessings are the peculiar blessings of the Mystery. In heavenly places is the peculiar sphere of the Mystery. Before the overthrow of the world is a time period that belongs only to Christ Himself and to the Mystery. The Church which is His Body, the Fullness of Him that filleth all in all, is the title of the church of the Mystery. The present dispensation is the dispensation of the Mystery, and Paul as the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles is the one initial steward of this Mystery. If these things are so, then no apology is needed for a careful study of this term, for if we are right here we may reasonably hope to be right in our interpretation of the whole epistle, but if we are wrong here, then all our efforts will be in vain. Accordingly we must devote the succeeding article to an examination of the word 'mystery' and its peculiar position in the purpose.

No.57. The Secret Chamber (iii. 1 - 13).

The Mystery, the term examined.

pp. 209 - 213

In the preceding article we have seen that according to a revelation Paul received the Mystery, and we became aware of the intrinsic importance of this term. To appreciate the meaning of the word 'mystery', and the place it occupies in dispensational truth is to possess the key to unlock the treasures of both Ephesians and Colossians. Accordingly we devote all the space at our disposal in this article to an acquaintance with the meaning and message of the Mystery.

The Greek word *musterion* occurs twenty-seven times in the N.T. and is translated 'mystery' throughout. The word is distributed as follows:

Gospels.	3 references. No occurrence in John's Gospel.
Epistles.	8 occurrences in Paul's pre-prison epistles (Rom., I Cor., II Thess.). 10 occurrences in Paul's prison epistles (Eph., Col.). 2 occurrences in interim epistles (I Tim.).
Revelation.	4 occurrences.

The word does not occur in Hebrews, nor in any of the circumcision epistles. The LXX contains 9 references, all of them in the book of Daniel. In addition there are twelve occurrences in the Apocrypha which indicate, by the way the word is employed, something of the meaning it must have attached to it when it is found in the N.T. As this word occupies such an important place in dispensational truth we must waive our rule and set out a complete concordance of its occurrences in both the O.T. and the N.T.

Musterion N.T.

- The mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. (Matt. xiii. 11).
- The mystery of the kingdom of God. (Mark iv. 11).
- The mysteries of the kingdom of God. (Luke viii. 10).

Not be ignorant of this mystery. (Rom. xi. 25).
 The mystery, which was kept a secret. (Rom. xvi. 25).
 The wisdom of God in a mystery. (I Cor. ii. 7).
 Stewards of the mysteries of God. (I Cor. iv. 1).
 Though I understand all mysteries. (I Cor. xiii. 2).
 In the spirit he speaketh mysteries. (I Cor. xiv. 2).
 Behold, I show you a mystery. (I Cor. xv. 51).
 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work. (II Thess. ii. 7).
 Having made known unto us the mystery of His will. (Eph. i. 9).
 He made known unto me the mystery. (Eph. iii. 3).
 My knowledge in the mystery of Christ. (Eph. iii. 4).
 The fellowship of the mystery. (Eph. iii. 9).
 This is a great mystery. (Eph. v. 32).
 To make known the mystery of the gospel. (Eph. vi. 19).
 The mystery which hath been hid. (Col. i. 26).
 This mystery among the Gentiles. (Col. i. 27).
 The mystery of God. (Col. ii. 2).
 To speak the mystery of Christ. (Col. iv. 3).
 Holding the mystery of the faith. (I Tim. iii. 9).
 Great is the mystery of godliness. (I Tim. iii. 16).
 The mystery of the seven stars. (Rev. i. 20).
 The mystery of God should be finished. (Rev. x. 7).
 Mystery, Babylon the great. (Rev. xvii. 5).
 The mystery of the woman. (Rev. xvii. 7).

Musterion O.T. (LXX).

Mercies concerning this secret. (Dan. ii. 18).
 Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel. (ii. 19).
 The secret which the king hath demanded. (ii. 27).
 There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets. (ii. 28).
 He that revealeth secrets. (ii. 29).
 The secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom. (ii. 30).
 Lord of kings and a revealer of secrets seeing thou couldst reveal this secret. (ii. 47).
 No secret troubleth thee, tell me. [iv. 6 (9)].

So far we have been concerned with the material that we are to use. We must now inquire into the essential meaning of the term and this we shall gather (1) from its etymology and (2) from its usage. Etymology used alone is an unsafe guide, for language is living and the folk who use it are not all students; it is therefore wise to balance etymology with usage. This we will do.

Muo, does not occur in the N.T. but is the basic word from which *musterion* is derived. It means 'to close', especially the lips or the eyes.

Muzo, which likewise does not occur in the N.T. means 'to murmur with closed lips, to mutter'. It will be observed that in the English words MURmur, MUtter, MUbble and MUte this meaning persists.

Mueo. To initiate into the mysteries, this is not only found in classical Greek, but is used by the Apostle in Phil. iv. 12 'I am instructed' better 'I am initiated'. Moffatt translates the passage 'I have been initiated into the secret', Rotherham renders the word 'I have been let into the secret'.

Muopazo (myopia in English), II Pet. i. 9 ‘cannot see afar off’.

Kammuo (derived from *katamuo*) to shut, especially the eyes (Matt. xiii. 15; Acts xxviii. 27). The etymology therefore of the word *musterion* is something ‘hidden’, a secret, something that requires initiation, something not discoverable by ordinary methods. It is an unsafe analogy to argue from the use of the word ‘mystery’ as employed in the articles of indenture and referring to the mysteries of a trade, for this word should really be spelled ‘mistry’ coming as it does from the French *mistier*, or *métier* which in its turn is derived from the Latin *ministerium*. It will not do therefore to teach that there is no more ‘mystery’ about the mysteries of the Bible than there is about trade secrets, for this approach to the subject omits the presence and influence of the pagan mysteries that will eventually come to a head in ‘the mystery of iniquity’, even as the mysteries of the Scriptures come to a head in ‘the Mystery of godliness’. Is there anyone who knows all that there is to know concerning either the mystery of iniquity or the Mystery of godliness? Are there not ‘depths of Satan’ and ‘the deep things of God’? Are there not unspeakable words which “it is not lawful or possible for a man to utter” (II Cor. xii. 4)? And is there not in the same epistle the offering of thanks to God for his ‘unspeakable gift’ (II Cor. ix. 15)? From very early times, there were in the pagan world vast and widespread institutions known as Mysteries, celebrated for their profound secrecy, admission to which was only by initiation. The Greek, Egyptian and Persian mysteries can be traced back to a common source, namely Chaldea, and constitute one of the travesties of truth that is so characteristic of Babylonianism. Babylon is represented as bearing a golden cup, and to drink of mysterious beverages, says Salverte, was indispensable on the part of all who sought initiation in these mysteries.

To musterion. This is not the only term borrowed from the ancient mysteries which Paul employs to describe the teaching of the Gospel. The word *teleion* (Col. i. 28 ‘perfect’) seems to be an extension⁴ of the same metaphor. In Phil. iv. 12 again we have the verb *memuetai* (‘I am instructed—literally I am *initiated*’), and in Eph. i. 13 *sphragizesthai* (‘sealed’) is perhaps an image derived from the same source. So too the Ephesians are addressed as *Paulou summustai* ‘fellow initiates of Paul’ in Ignatius’ Epistle, and the Christian teacher is thus regarded as a *heirophantes* (see Epict.3:21 13sq) ‘who initiates his disciples into the rites’ (Bishop Lightfoot). It becomes very clear that no knowledge of the mysteries was obtainable apart from initiation, and this fact must be borne in mind when we approach the mysteries of the Scripture. No mere instruction, or quoting of verses of Scripture, nor even the most lucid presentation of Dispensational Truth will ever ‘convince’ any one apart from the gracious enlightening that God alone can give.

“It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them” (Matt. xiii. 11, 17).

“Who hath ears to hear, let him hear” (Matt. xiii. 9).

The recognition of this great fact of initiation would save the believer many hours of fruitless anxiety. The truth of the Mystery is not to be made known by the organizing of campaigns, it will never be a subject of popular appeal; our attitude must be a readiness

at all times to help and guide wherever we see a desire to know and follow on, being assured that none will come to see the Mystery apart from the Lord's own illuminating. We ourselves can at best be but the earthen vessels that He stoops to use in this most wondrous work.

When we come to usage, there are several avenues of approach. (1) The pagan mysteries. (2) The references in the Apocrypha. These two give an idea what the word mystery stood for in the great outside world. (3) The usage of the word in the LXX book of Daniel. (4) Its usage in the N.T. These show how it was used by Holy Scripture. We can say little that would be profitable of the pagan mysteries. The Greek mysteries which were prevalent in the days of the Apostles were derived from Egypt, which in its turn received them from Chaldea, and so in them we have the mystery of iniquity in germ. A search into the annals of the past would bring to light some of the horrible doctrines and corresponding practices associated with these mysteries, but the attitude of the Apostle must be ours:

“It is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret” (Eph. v. 12),

and pass on to the positive teaching.

In the Apocrypha the word ‘mysterion’ rarely rises above the idea of a secret, either of king or friend. Twice it refers to secret rites and ceremonies but nothing more. The fact that the LXX did not use *mysterion* until translating the book of Daniel may be accounted for by many natural explanations, but when all is said, there must still be room left for the exercise of Divine Providence. Some Lexicographers say that the Greek *mysterion* is derived from the Hebrew *mistar*, which is translated ‘secret’ a number of times, yet the Greek translators never use *mysterion* for that or its cognate *sether*. The only word translated *mysterion* in the Greek O.T. is the Chaldee *raz*, which is used consistently throughout Dan. ii., and as this word does not occur anywhere else in the O.T., we have no means of comparison. While the Chaldee word *raz* stands alone, we are not left entirely without help, for on one occasion, Daniel uses the Chaldee from the Hebrew word *sether*, a word translated ‘secret’ and ‘secret place’ in many passages. This provides us with the link that we felt we needed, teaching us that in the Chaldee *raz* we have the equivalent word. The passage in Dan. ii. 22 ‘He revealeth the deep and secret things’ which the LXX renders ‘*Bathea kai apokrupha*’ reserving apparently, the use of the *mysterion* for the Gentile term. Its usage is confined to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar in two ways. Nebuchadnezzar had either actually forgotten the substance of his dream, or as a matter of policy withheld it in order to make sure that the interpretation should be something more than a clever human invention (Dan. ii. 8, 9, 10,11). When Daniel went into the presence of the king, he did not concentrate his attention on the substance of the dream, but its interpretation (Dan. ii. 16), but of course, as the substance of the dream had to be known before the interpretation could be given, both dream and interpretation were included in the ‘secret’ concerning which Daniel and his fellows prayed (Dan. ii. 18, 19). Nebuchadnezzar asked him “Art thou able to make known unto me the dream which I have seen, and the interpretation thereof?” (Dan. ii. 26). One cannot avoid the feeling that there is a Divine overruling in the choice of this word *mysterion* here, and for this reason. Daniel, in measure, was the O.T. equivalent of Paul; he too was the prisoner of

the Lord for the Gentiles, and when Israel failed, mystery comes into the record. So, following Israel's rejection of their Messiah (Matt. xi. and xii.), the 'mysteries' of the kingdom of heaven follow.

No.58. The Secret Chamber (iii. 1 - 13).

**Muth-labben, or The Secret of the Son (iii. 4; Psa. viii.).
pp. 229 - 232**

Paul was conscious as he penned the words "He made known unto me the Mystery" that he was making a tremendous claim. He claimed to be in a special manner the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the Gentiles; he claimed that a dispensation had been entrusted to him and that to him had been made known 'the Mystery'. The history of the Christian church provides abundant evidence both of the overweening ambition of Christian leaders and of the gullibility of their followers. The reader can doubtless call to mind claims that have been put forward by individuals at different times to the reception of revelations, of prophetic gift of a special revelation of truth. Scattered about the country are monuments such as "The Tower of Jezreel", and companies of Gentile believers, whose great hope is to be numbered among the 144,000 regardless of the revealed limitation 'of all the tribes of the children of Israel'.

Consequently, before the Apostle is free to communicate the special terms of this new dispensation of the Mystery, he feels under an obligation to justify his claim. The very personal and peculiar nature of his commission made it utterly impossible for any 'letter of commendation' to be provided by any existing authority. He stood alone. He was not one of the twelve; he would never sit on one of the twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Unlike the twelve, he had been appointed by the Ascended Christ (Eph. iv. 7-11), and was the first of his order. If, as he claimed, the Mystery had not been a subject of revelation before his time, if it had never figured in either type, shadow or prophecy, it was in vain to appeal to earlier revelations of truth. The Mystery had been 'hid in God' and 'hidden from the ages and generations'. There was but one way open to him. To show that where he shared with other teachers, the revelation given to him was superior, in the hope that the reader would conclude that where he could put the matter to the test and the Apostle's claim was justified, then it was reasonable to believe his further and related claim was also true. Consequently, Paul turns from 'The Mystery' to the 'Mystery of Christ'.

"As I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets . . ." (Eph. iii. 3-5).

"As I wrote before." These words have sent some students off on a search for a 'lost epistle', but as this reference is so vital, we cannot believe that the Holy Spirit refers us to a piece of evidence which in spite of its extreme importance has not survived, for next

only to the inspiration of All Scripture is the miracle of its preservation. The reference to 'the epistle from Laodicea' mentioned in Col. iv. 16 belongs to a different category, the Colossians were simply advised to interchange epistles but no argument rests upon this advice as it does in Eph. iii. Added to this could be the many references in the O.T. to books not incorporated in the Canon such as "The book of the acts of Solomon" (I Kings xi. 41), and "the book of Nathan" (II Chron. ix. 29). The reference by Paul to what he had written afore however is crucial. If we cannot find it and do not possess it, we can proceed no further with him in his argument. Whatever it was that Paul had written afore in a few words, the Ephesians were able to read for he continued 'whereby when ye read'. Now Paul had already written seven epistles, namely, Galatians, I & II Thessalonians, I & II Corinthians, Hebrews and Romans. It is not very likely that the Ephesians would at that time have seen the epistle to the Hebrews; they may or may not have seen one or more of the others. But there is no necessity to look further than Ephesians itself. Occasionally an author will refer his reader back to some earlier paragraph; he may say 'see above' or 'c.f. page so and so'. Paul says 'as I wrote afore in a few words'. His subject is "The mystery of Christ", a mystery shared with other ministers of the truth in other ages but which had been revealed in a superlative degree to the Apostles and Prophets. What is this "Mystery of Christ"? As an initial contribution to the subject, we use the remainder of our space to present the reader with an interpretation of Psa. viii., and the heading of Psa. ix. ("Upon Muth-labben") and with the knowledge thus gained, we will pursue the matter further in a subsequent article.

THE SECRET OF THE SON

These words, so full of suggestion and meaning for the believer, we hope to show belong to the eighth Psalm, and associate the Mystery of Christ (Eph. iii. 4) with Adam, the figure of Him that was to come (Rom. v. 14). Our enquiry relates particularly to the words that, in the A.V., stand at the head of Psalm ix. and read "Upon Muth-labben", words which have received a variety of interpretations. We will subdivide our material under a series of sub-headings, thus:

(1) The place that the words *Muth-labben* occupy.

The ordinary reader may express some surprise at this heading, for his Bible, whether he read the A.V. or the R.V. places it at the head of Psalm ix. We believe, however, that many of our readers (who evidently are not "ordinary readers"!) are already in possession of the findings of Dr. J. W. Thirtle, of which the following is a summary: He observed that in the third chapter of Habakkuk and Isa. xxxviii. 10-20, we have two complete Psalms. The Psalm falls under three heads: (1) The Superscription; (2) The Psalm itself; (3) The subscription thus:

A Prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth (iii. 1).

The Psalm proper (iii. 2-19).

To the chief singer on my stringed instrument (*Neginoth*) (iii. 19).

Applying this principle to the book of Psalms, we find that Psalm iii. has a superscription, but that the words of Hab. iii. 19, instead of being used as a subscription to the Psalm are transferred as a title of Psalm iv. These titles and subtitles are all restored to their true place in the "Companion Bible", Psalm viii., reading:

A Psalm of David.
The Psalm itself (verses 1-9).
To the Chief Musician upon Muth-labben.

The words Upon Muth-labben being the subscription of Psalm viii., not superscription of Psalm ix.

(2) The meaning of the words of the subscription *Upon Muth-labben*.

The reader may not be conscious as he reads the words "upon Muth-labben" that it is already assumed without proof that the word "upon" is of necessity a true translation of the Hebrew word employed. *Al* standing alone is often translated "upon", but until we are sure that these two letters do stand alone, we are prejudicing the reader from the start. It seems that the Septuagint translators knew that *AlMuth-labben* came at the end of Psalm viii., for the word *eis to telos* "unto the end" are inserted. If the reader consults Young's "Analytical Concordance", he will find that the words *Muth-labben* are not translated "death of the champion" but "death of Ben, or of the Son". Again, if he looks for the word *labben* in the Englishman's Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon, he will not find it, but he will find the term under the heading *Ben* "Son". We cannot therefore endorse the statement that there is nothing about a "son" in either Psalm viii. or ix., for most readers will know that the word *Ben* "son" occurs in Psalm viii. Neither is it true that all are agreed that *muth* can only mean "death" for the LXX does not so translate the word, and these translators were nearer to the times of David than we are by over two thousand years. What the LXX saw in the words *AlMuth-labben* is made evident by their rendering *huper ton kruphion ton huion* "concerning the secrets of the Son". There is another Psalm where the LXX uses these words *huper ton kruphion* "concerning the secrets" and that is at the foot of Psalm xlv., where the A.V. reads "Upon Alalamoth". Do these words strike any chord in the reader's mind? Remembering that originally there was no division made between words, as now, let us put in English letters, the two subscriptions to these two Psalms.

The subscription to Psalm viii. reads *AlMuth-labben*.
The subscription to Psalm xlv. reads *Alalamoth*.

In both the Septuagint sees the word "secret". How is this? *Alalamoth* is considered to mean "relating to the maidens", the word *almah* being the Hebrew for a maiden.

At the close of Psalm xlvi., we have the words "unto death" which in the Hebrew reads *Almuth*, but which this translation divides into two, *al* "unto" *muth* "death". The LXX however considered it to be one word *almuth*, *eis ton aionas* "for ever", or "unto the ages". The structure of Psalm xlvi., (*see* "Companion Bible") places this passage in correspondence with verse 8. Here is another instance where the word *almuth* "secrets" has been wrongly divided to read *al muth*, "unto death".

How does it come about that the word *almuth* can mean either “maiden” or “secret” or “for ever”? The Hebrew root *Alm* means to hide or conceal, and gives us “secret” (Psa. xc. 8), “hide” (Psa. x. 1) and in the East in old time, a virgin (maiden, damsel or youth) was called *almah* because of the concealed or retired state of the unmarried of both sexes. “The virgins shut up in chambers” is an expression found in the Apocrypha. From this same root comes the word translated “age” and “ever”, being a period of time, whose end or duration is hidden from view. It will be seen therefore that the rendering “concerning the secrets of the Son” given by the LXX two centuries before Christ, has much in its favour.

(3) The internal evidence of Psalms viii. and xlv.

At first there does not appear to be any distinctive feature common to both Psalms, until we realize the way in which they are quoted in the epistle to the Hebrews.

Hebrews i. & ii.

A | i. 1, 2. God spoke once by the prophets. Now by His Son.
B | i. 2-14. The Son. His glories. Better than angels.

Quotation from Psalm xlv.

“Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.”

A | ii. 1-4. God spoke once by angels. Now by the Lord.
B | ii. 5-18. The Son. His sufferings. Lower than angels.

Quotation from Psalm viii.

“What is man or the Son of Man?”

With these evidences before us, we feel that the translations given “death to the champion” and “concerning maidens” must give place to the ancient interpretation “the secrets of the Son” and “concerning secrets”, and we can read with richer and fuller understanding both the Psalms themselves and the quotations from them in Heb. i. and ii.

This subject is discussed at greater length in a series entitled “In Adam”, but as this cannot be printed for several years, it was felt that the reader would value this rather condensed presentation of the subject, owing to its extreme importance in the matter of dispensational truth.

The First Principles of the Oracles of God

(A series especially addressed to new readers)

No.16. The corruption of man and the preservation of the Seed.

pp. 6 - 9

One of the illuminating discoveries that the student of Scripture makes, is the fact that at the call of Abraham we have traversed but eleven chapters of the book but that in time we have move half way from Adam to Christ. There is at first sight an element of disproportion. If we take a chapter as a standard unit, we have the following. There are 939 chapters in the O.T. and consequently eleven chapters form only one eighty-fifth part of the whole. Yet the time covered by the one eighty-fifth portion of the O.T. from the creation of Adam to the birth of Abraham is 2,008 years (reckoning Adam as B.C.4004 and the birth of Abraham to be B.C.1996, which for the present purpose is near enough to be accepted without dispute). This leaves 1,996 years from Abraham to Christ, and as the year 2002 is exactly half way between Adam and Christ, it will be seen that it is correct to say that when one reads the twelfth chapter of Genesis, the record is chronologically half way through the O.T. This apparent disproportion is explained by the purpose that lies behind the Inspired Record.

If it had been the Divine intention to have satisfied the human mind with a scientific explanation of Creation, can we believe that even the 939 chapters, or the whole of the O.T., would have been sufficient? Had it been the Divine intention to have put on record a history of the world, then inasmuch as there are seventy nations listed in Gen. x., at least seventy separate Bibles would have been necessary. Nor is this all, even though we have so great a literature of Israel, we are obliged to admit that the half has not been told. In some cases we have a fairly detailed account of some episode in a family's history; in other cases the reign of a king is compressed into a few verses. When we become aware that the Bible is concerned with Redemption, and Redemption is concerned with sin and death, then its apparent disproportion suddenly takes new shape, its omissions are readily understood and the call of Abraham and the history of the chosen people are seen in something of their true light. Now closely allied with Redemption is the purpose of God vested in "The Seed" and it is because the channel through which the Seed should come is narrowed down from Gen. iii. 15 to the line of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, that the history of Israel becomes the history of the conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent.

The link between Adam and Abraham is established by references to the seed. The attack by Cain upon his brother Abel manifested the enmity that existed between the two seeds, and the birth of Seth was acclaimed with the joyful words "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew" (Gen. iv. 25). The line of Cain is given in Gen. iv. 16-24, a line containing names identical in some cases, and similar in others to names that are found in the true line through Seth, and indication and

a warning that deception and misdirection are the methods adopted by the Enemy to divert the testimony of the Scriptures away from the true Seed, to the false.

Cain's first child is called Enoch, and so, when Jude would refer to Enoch "who walked with God", he is careful to speak of him as 'the seventh from Adam' (Jude 14). The succeeding names in the line of Cain, namely, Irad, Methusael and Lamech, which last-named boasted of his prowess and used the phrase 'sevenfold' and 'seventy and sevenfold', are not unlike the names that occur in Gen. v., namely Jared, which differs from Irad by one letter, and Methuselah which could easily be confused with Methusael, while Lamech who made no boast like his evil name sake, nevertheless has this in common, namely a reference to the seventy and seven, in that he live seven hundred and seventy and seven years. This Lamech had a son, Noah, but the other Lamech, even though he was the first to have two wives, was childless, the evil line of Cain ending in this boastful descendant.

When the genealogy was written as a preface to the books of Chronicles the succession reads 'Adam, Sheth; Enosh' (I Chron. i. 1) and the name of Cain is blotted out of the record, never occurring after Gen. iv., in the remainder of the O.T. A son was born to Seth, whom he called Enos, and the Scripture adds as a comment "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord" (Gen. iv. 26). As the passage stands in the A.V. it would give cause for rejoicing to think that consequent upon the extinction of the line of Cain, and the continuance of the line through Seth, godliness was now established in the earth. It is however evident from the early pages of Genesis, that men called upon the name of the Lord before the days of Enos, and that extreme ungodliness had so developed by the time that Enoch lived, as to call for the pronouncement of judgment by the Lord (Jude 15) and a prophecy of the coming flood, for Enoch's son Methuselah means 'at his death it shall be'.

That there was something hidden beneath the surface in Gen. iv. 26 the following notes will make evident. The LXX insert the verb *elpizo* 'to hope' and reads as follows ". . . . Enos: he hoped to call on the name of the Lord". The translators of the A.V. also were not quite satisfied, for they insert in the margin the words "Or to call themselves by the name of the LORD". Now one may call himself by the name of the Lord for good, or for evil reasons, and there is a persistent tradition from early days, to show that the Rabbinical interpretation of these words indicated that they were evil in intent.

The Targum of Onkelos reads: "Then in his days the sons of men desisted from praying in the name of the Lord." The Targum of Jonathan says: "That was the generation in whose days they began to err, and to make themselves idols, and surnamed their idols by the name of the Word of the Lord." Rashi reads "Then was there profanation in calling on the name of the Lord", and Maimonides in a treatise on idolatry, traces the probable origin to the days of Enos. With this interpretation the "Companion Bible" is in entire agreement. To the English reader there does not appear in the words 'began to call' anything that suggests profanity, yet, if masters of the language have consistently represented the passage as so doing, the English reader will naturally desire to become more closely acquainted with the original.

The word translated 'began' is the Hebrew verb *chalal* but the idea of 'beginning' is entirely secondary. *Chalal* primarily means 'to perforate or pierce through' (Gesenius), thus 'to wound' Psa. cix. 22; Isa. liii. 5. From this primitive meaning comes the derived sense of 'laying open, giving access to' and so 'to profane' as we might a sanctuary (Lev. xix. 8), and is actually used of 'profaning seed' (Lev. xxi. 15). Moreover *chalal* is translated in the A.V. 'be defiled, polluted, profaned, and prostitute', seventy times, so that its true significance is beyond dispute.

The word *chalal* occurs in Genesis just eight times, and we give the references in order to provide every help possible in arriving at a true understanding of the passage before us:

- "Then *began* men to call upon the name of the LORD." (Gen. iv. 26).
- "When men *began* to multiply." (vi. 1).
- "Noah *began* to be an husbandman." (ix. 20).
- "Nimrod *began* to be a mighty one." (x. 8).
- "This they *begin* to do." (xi. 6).
- "The seven years of dearth *began* to come." (xli. 54).
- "He searched, and *began* at the eldest." (xliv. 12).
- "Reuben then *defilest* thou it." (xlix. 3, 4).

It is not without significance that the one occasion in Genesis where the verb *chalal* is translated 'defile', the reference is to Reuben who committed such a vile sin against his father and his mother that he lost excellency of the firstborn's position. Here was a most definite attempt to pollute the seed, and is but one of many similar attempts that are recorded in the book of Genesis which we must see later. The second reference, Gen. vi. 1, is recorded as a preface to the violation of God's will by 'the sons of God', another attack upon the seed. Even the innocent record 'Noah began to be an husbandman' is but a preface to his drunkenness and the illegitimate begetting of Canaan (Gen. ix. 20-27), and Nimrod stands as the head of the abomination that is associated with Babylon throughout the entire Word of God. Gen. iv. 26 also is connected with Babylonian rebellion 'this they *begin* to do' being balanced by 'which they have imagined to do'.

"Eminent and learned men are of opinion that the word rendered 'began' should be translated 'began profanely'; and that the spirit of inspiration has recorded the fact in this place, as being the first public step in that course of audacious impiety which was rapidly manifesting itself, and by which the ambitious and infidel leaders arrogated to themselves the name, prerogatives, and attributes of Divinity" (Robert Jamieson, D.D.).

In effect, the spirit of Anti-christ was already abroad, and led on to the deluge. The line of Cain might be extinct, but the Enemy of truth was still alive, and was preparing the minds of men for the next invasion of humanity by the attack upon the purity of the seed as revealed in Gen. vi.

The next occurrence of the word 'seed' in Genesis is found in chapter vii., where the purpose of the Ark is indicated 'to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth' (Gen. vii. 1-3). Something most terrible must have taken place since the days of Enos for

so marvelous a provision for the preservation of seed to be called for. That, we shall discover, was the corruption of man's way upon the earth, and the consequent deluge.

Gen. vi. deals with a phenomenon so unnatural, that the mind at first turns from it and searches for a more 'reasonable' interpretation than that which lies upon the surface. This chapter is to the world of Noah and to his three sons, what Gen. iii., is to Adam and to the entire race. We must therefore spare no pains in our endeavour to understand its teaching.

Who, and what are 'the sons of God'? In what way could such beings take to themselves wives, and how could such wives bare them children? How are we to understand the word 'giants'? And what is the meaning of the words 'And after that' in Gen. vi. 4? What is the significance of the word 'perfect' when applied to Noah (Gen. vi. 9) and what the intention of the words 'all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth'? (Gen. vi. 12).

It is evident that the consideration of such a theme, demands as much time and space as possible; we therefore hope to devote the next article to the elucidation of this most critical passage.

Meanwhile let us ponder with wonder the words of Isaiah concerning the Saviour:

"He shall see His seed" "He shall . . . satisfied" (Isa. liii. 10, 11).

No.17. The Fall, and sin of the angels (Gen. vi.). pp. 33 - 37

We have seen that the progress of the true seed as recorded in the early chapters of Genesis, most surely justifies the primeval prophecy concerning the enmity that should exist between the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman. As promised at the close of the last article, we now turn our attention to the teaching and meaning of Gen. vi.:

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose" (Gen. vi. 1, 2).

The fifth chapter of Genesis is "The book of the generations of Adam" and the names of his sons, together with their ages, are given down to Noah and his three sons, "and Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth" (v. 32). At verse nine of chapter vi. a new section opens with the generations of Noah which extends to Gen. ix. 29 where it ends with the words "And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died". The first eight verses of Gen. vi. belong to the

previous section “The book of the generations of Adam”, and the following structure given in *The Companion Bible* makes this clear:

- A | v. 1, 2. Unfallen: Adam a “son of God” (Luke iii. 38).
- B | v. 3-5. Fallen Adam, and his years. The total 930, and the first 130.
- C | v. 6-27. The progeny of Adam, and their deaths.
- D | v. 28-32. Noah, and his promise of “comfort”.
- A | vi. 1, 2. The fallen angels: “sons of God”.
- B | vi. 3. Fallen Adam, and his years. The total 930, and the last 120.
- C | vi. 4-7. The progeny of fallen angels,
and their threatened destruction. The *Nephilim*.
- D | vi. 8. Noah and his possession of “grace”.

It will be seen that this book of the generation of Adam falls into two parts. Gen. v. 1-32 recording the genealogy of the normal and natural descendants of Adam, while Gen. vi. 1-8 introduces the abnormal and the unnatural. In the structure given above it is already assumed that ‘the sons of God’ are ‘fallen angels’, and that the progeny of their illicit marriage were the *Nephilim*—a word left unexplained in the structure. These subjects we must now consider, and the following sequence seems to be suggested as the most helpful.

- (1) Has there been a ‘fall’ among the angels?
- (2) If so, could these angels be called ‘the sons of God’?
- (3) In view of Luke xx. 35, 36 how can we speak of ‘the progeny’ of the fallen angels?
- (4) Who and what are ‘the giants’ and ‘the Nephilim’?
- (5) What is the significance of the words “and also after that” (Gen. vi. 4)?

Our first question is “Has there been a fall among the angels?” While the word ‘angel’ is often used without qualification, there are a number of occasions where the writer says ‘The holy angels’, ‘The angels of God’, ‘The angel of the Lord’, ‘His angels’, etc., that at least makes it possible that there are two kinds of angels.

We read in Matt. xxv. 41 of a place of punishment ‘prepared for the Devil and his angels’ and in Rev. xii. 7 we read of war in heaven, Michael and his angels, fighting with the Devil and his angels, and by reason of defeat, Satan and his angels being cast out of heaven unto the earth (Rev. xii. 7-13). Unless therefore we are to believe the monstrous doctrine that God actually created the Devil and his angels in their present state, there must have been a ‘fall’ among angelic beings. Further, when the Devil and his angels were expelled from heaven, it does not say in Rev. xii. that they dispersed themselves throughout the limitless spaces of the universe; it tells us that Satan at least ‘came down’ to the inhabitants of the earth, ‘having great wrath’. It is not only a fact that angels fell, but it seems fairly certain that fallen angels found, and will yet find, an abode in the earth among the sons of men.

The book of the Revelation deals with the Day of the Lord and the time of the end, and, like the passage in Eph. ii. 1-3, it shows that Satan, though fallen, is not yet bound. With this knowledge we approach two other passages of Scripture that speak of a fall

among the angels, which, by reason of the context, compels us to fix upon Gen. vi. as the date and occasion of their fall.

The two passages are here set out side by side that they may be better compared:

II Peter ii. 4 - 6.	Jude 6, 7.
<p>“For if God spare not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrhah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.”</p>	<p>“And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrhah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal life.</p>

Let us note in some measure of detail the extraordinary features of these two passages. These angels ‘sinned’, they ‘kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation’. The reader is aware that the basic meaning of ‘sin’ is ‘to miss the mark’ (Judges xx. 16), and it is evident by the expansion of their sin given by Jude, that some of the angels appear to have ‘kept not’ and ‘left’ the position allotted to them by God and to have transgressed bounds which He, the Creator, had set.

The word translated ‘to keep’ in Jude 6 is *tereo*. It is employed by Paul when he speaks of keeping one’s ‘virginity’ (I Cor. vii. 37); keeping one’s self ‘pure’ (I Tim. v. 22); being preserved ‘blameless’ (I Thess. v. 23); Jude uses the word 5 times as follows:

“Preserved in Jesus Christ”; “The angels which *kept* not”; “He hath *reserved* in everlasting chains”; “To whom is *reserved* the blackness of darkness”; and “*keep* yourselves in the love of God”.

The angels therefore failed to keep themselves pure, they failed to preserve their integrity, they failed to keep the trust committed to them. Jude specifies the particular failure that was their sin, thus:

“They kept not their first estate.”

Alford translates this “Those which kept not their own dignity”. Weymouth reads: “Those who did not keep the position originally assigned to them”; and Moffatt renders the passage “the angels who abandoned their own domain”. The word translated in these various ways is the Greek *arche* ‘beginning’ (John i. 1); which in the plural is translated ‘principalities’ (Eph. i. 21).

These angels ‘left their own habitation’. There are two words that are translated ‘to leave’ in the N.T. One *aphiemi*, which means to send away or dismiss; the other, various

compounds of *leipo*, which are rendered lack, forsake, abandon, leave behind. The word used by Jude is *apoleipo* to leave away from one's self, to leave behind. Paul uses the word of 'the cloak' that he had left at Troas (II Tim. iv. 13), and of Trophimus, who had been left at Miletum sick (II Tim. iv. 20).

The word translated 'habitation' is *oiketerion*, a derivative of *oikos* 'a house' or a 'home', and occurs in II Cor. v. 2 where it refers to the *resurrection body*.

"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house (*oiketerion*) which is from heaven."

The Apostle contrasts 'the earthly house of this tabernacle' with 'the house which is in heaven', and earnestly desired the exchange. The angels that sinned left their 'own body' and Paul, speaking of the resurrection, says 'to every seed its own body' (I Cor. xv. 38). Before the seed is sown it is likened to 'bare' grain, *gymnos* 'naked' (I Cor. xv. 37); before the *oiketerion* is entered, the believer is looked upon as unclothed or 'naked' (II Cor. v. 3) and these are the only occurrences of *gymnos* in Paul's epistles. The angels, therefore, when they left their 'own' (*idios*) body, the one that was 'proper' (I Cor. vii. 7), and 'private' (II Pet. i. 20), descended to an unclothed condition, and so could be classed as 'naked'. The reader will now appreciate something of what is intended in Gen. iii. 1 where we read 'Now the serpent was more subtil', remembering that the word translated 'subtil' is the Hebrew *arum*, and the word translated 'naked', of our own unclothed parents, is the Hebrew word *arom*, both words being derived from the same root.

It would appear from the use made of such words as 'naked grain' 'not being found naked' and the conception of the resurrection as a condition that can be described as 'clothed upon', that man at his creation must be thought of likewise as 'naked grain', and that he would have continued as such without shame until the transformation took place, equivalent to resurrection, when being glorified and given his destined place above the angels, he would then have been 'clothed upon'. The coming in of sin and death however exposed man to the attack of the enemy, and so the Lord 'clothed' our first parents with coats of skin, symbols of the redemptive covering made by Christ until resurrection is attained. All mankind from Adam to the end of the race are conceived of as being 'naked', all need the covering provided by redeeming Love, and all who attain unto the resurrection of life and righteousness will at last find themselves fully clothed. These elements of truth that illuminate Gen. iii. must be kept in reserve until we are in a position to return to that chapter and read its story more closely in the light we are receiving.

The fact that *oiketerion* is used to speak of the resurrection body of the believer, and of that which the angels sinfully left, raises a question. In what way can we speak of the 'body' of an angel?

We must remember that the Apostle declares that 'flesh and blood' cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and that consequently at the resurrection we shall all be changed. We shall not however, put off a body to become pure spirit, we shall exchanged the body of

our humiliation, for a body like unto the Lord's body of glory. "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body" (I Cor. xv. 44). At this, the Apostle paused, realizing apparently the need for explanation, so he adds 'there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body'.

"A creature without any bodily form is wholly inconceivable, since that which is created can only work and subsist within the limits of time and space, and since corporeality alone confines the creature to time and space. God alone is infinite, an absolute Spirit. He alone exists above and beyond time and space." (*Kurtz*).

"Only combining itself with matter can mind bring itself into alliance with the various properties of the external world; only thus can it find and be found, be known or employed, be detained or set at large an unembodied spirit, or sheer mind of NOWHERE." (*Fleming*).

"We might as well say of a pure spirit, that it is hard, heavy, or red, or that it is a cubic foot in dimensions, as say, that it is *here* and *there*, and that it has come and it is gone." (*Taylor*).

Among the 'Fathers' who ascribed corporeality to angels, are Origen, Caesarius, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian.

Now if it is possible for those whose bodies are at present flesh and blood to be translated to a place 'like unto the angels', as they will be at resurrection, then it is equally possible for angels to descend into the lower plane and possess bodies like unto men. When we read of the visit of the angels in Gen. xviii., they are described as 'men' whose 'feet' could be washed, and who could partake of a meal composed of 'butter, milk, cakes made on the hearth, and a young calf' (Gen. xviii. 1-8). Two of these 'men' turned their faces towards Sodom, and are then called 'two angels' in Gen. xix. Abraham, according to Heb. xiii., entertained angels unaware.

There is no indication of unreality about this record, and this and other appearances of angels in both the Old and the New Testament confirm the fact that they have bodies, but bodies which in their native sphere are invisible to the eye of man, but which can become visible when occasion so demands. We have therefore arrived at the following conclusion.

Angels have sinned. The sin of the angels associated with Noah and with the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha is partly to do with the forsaking of their own proper sphere, and of leaving the body natural to their state, and of descending to the human plane with bodies to all appearance at least like those of mankind. The fact that Peter connects the sin of these angels with the Flood, that God 'spared not' the angels, and 'spared not' the old world, establishes one link with Gen. vi. The sons of God who saw the daughters of men could have been angels.

Demon possession reveals the fact that fallen spirits can possess and use human bodies. We are not called upon to explain that which is outside of our province, but refer to this acknowledged fact as one possible answer to the difficulty that the angelic possession of human bodies creates.

No.18. Why Adam? Why a little lower than the angels? pp. 54 - 57

In the fifty-third chapter of the prophet of Isaiah we read:

“He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied” (Isa. liii. 10, 11).

He shall SEE two things. “His seed” and “the travail of His soul”. The consequences being that He shall PROLONG His days, the PLEASURE of the Lord shall PROSPER, and He Himself shall be SATISFIED. Here we have related together ‘seed’, and ‘satisfaction’, and a purpose achieved in resurrection. Let us see what justification there is for such expressions, and let us work backwards through this passage, taking the last term first, ‘satisfied’. It is the testimony of Scripture that true satisfaction cannot be experienced in this life (Eccles. i. 8; iv. 8) but that this more blessed state will be attained at the resurrection.

“I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness” (Psa. xvii. 15).

The association of the words ‘prosper’ and ‘seed’ may not be very obvious to us at this remote period, but let it be remembered that Jeremiah had written concerning the wicked king:

“Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not *prosper* in his days: for no man of his *seed* shall *prosper*, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah” (Jer. xxii. 30).

In contrast with Coniah, the Saviour *shall* see His seed, and *shall* prosper. Again, ‘pleasure’ is associated with ‘prospering’, and so in Jer. xxii. 28 we read of Coniah:

“Is he a vessel wherein is no *pleasure*? Wherefore are they cast out, he and *his* seed.”

Resurrection, however, is at the end rather than at the beginning of the purpose of the ages, and we must retrace our steps so that we can understand something of the reason that make such a goal necessary. Let us go back to the period called ‘before the foundation of the world’ which we believe to refer to Gen. i. 1, but which all will accept as being before the advent of man on the earth. Before man, the Lord chose those who are to constitute the Church of the One Body in Christ, and He chose them that they should be blessed with every blessing that is spiritual, and enjoy them in heavenly places. If we had no knowledge of the purpose of the ages and its outworking, we might have thought that having thus chosen this company when the time came, that God would have called them into being ‘holy and without blemish’, placed them in heavenly places, endowed them with all spiritual blessings and secured them in Christ. What He did, however, was vastly different. After geological ages had passed since Gen. i. 1 He brought into being a man Adam, who being flesh and blood and of the earth earthy, could

not inherit heavenly places nor enjoy spiritual blessings, for we are told specifically that he was not created 'spiritual' but 'natural' or *soul-ical* and earthy. There must have been an all sufficient reason for this extraordinary action of the Most High, and to the wisdom of this we bow, whether we understand it or not. There are, however, one or two considerations that may illuminate this reason and purpose which we will now state. Man differs from the angels, in more ways than one.

- (1) He is 'lower'. This we learn from Psa. viii. and Heb. ii.
- (2) He is 'flesh' and not spirit, and is of the earth earthy.

In these two particulars, man is seen at a disadvantage. But there are other things to be said of him.

- (3) The angels are apparently independent creations. No angels stands in relation to another as parent or child.
- (4) The specific purpose for the creation of man 'male and female' is that parenthood, childbirth and family relationships should be instituted.
- (5) It is clearly indicated that angels do not marry, and that difference of sex among them is unknown.

It seems therefore that God would do a new thing. He created a man through whom "the seed" should come, and by the process of generation, all the seed should be 'one' in a sense that no group or company of spirits could ever be. This new movement had its dangers, which we might tabulate thus:

- (1) If the choice of the seed was in any way occasioned by the fall of Satan and his angels, there was the possibility that man would be the object attack.
- (2) If the production and preservation of a 'seed' be the supreme reason for the creation of man, then an attack must be expected upon that seed by Satan.
- (3) Moreover, if all the seed are "In Adam", it becomes a possibility that with Adam's fall and disobedience all the seed would be involved.
- (4) This we know to be the case; the attack took place in the garden of Eden and the immediate consequence was the consciousness of nakedness which implies the consciousness of sex. The first pronouncement of the Lord to Eve was to do with 'seed' and 'child bearing'.
- (5) The first child born is named Cain, he turned out to be a murderer like his 'father', and is said in the N.T. to have been 'of that wicked one', even as some who were 'of Israel' were said to be of their father the devil.

These things must be given more detailed attention—we are but approaching this mighty theme here. It seems evident that at the creation of Adam, he became the repository of the true seed, even as it is taken for granted that Levi was in the loins of Abraham long before Levi was born (Heb. vii. 9, 10). It has been the custom of teachers and writers to speak of "The seed of the woman" as though there were a verse in Gen. iii. that used the term. What is actually said is:

"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. iii. 15).

It must be admitted that this verse is never appealed to in the N.T. when speaking of the Virgin birth, but we would safeguard our testimony at once by saying that we

most surely believe that Christ was born of a virgin. The one outstanding reference to Gen. iii. 15 found in the N.T. however, makes it inclusive of *all the seed*:

“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom. xvi. 20).

While therefore, the primal prophecy of Gen. iii. 15 specifically speaks of Christ, ‘It shall bruise thy head’, ‘Thou shalt bruise His heel’, Paul writing by equal inspiration speaks of all the seed that were in Him. It may be that by coming into the world of flesh and blood, the true seed would learn the lessons of good and evil as they could never learn them in any other way. A ready made experience can never be given to any one, and this experience plays a part in our spiritual make up. Our first father having involved the chosen seed in sin and death, the plan of the ages includes the great plan of redemption, in the course of which those who had thus fallen are translated out of the authority of darkness. They pass out of death unto life, from Adam to Christ. By ‘reckoning’ He became one with them in their sin and shame, so by ‘reckoning’ they became one with Him in Righteousness and Glory.

The story of the seed, its inception, its progress, its battles, and its ultimate victory is the story of the Bible. The epic story of Job is God’s Preface to His Word. All else is subsidiary. Many there be that are *physical* descendants of Adam, who were never ‘in Adam’ in the true sense. In like manner, “They are not all Israel, which are of Israel” (Rom. ix. 6). Such live their lives, but having no ‘Kinsman-Redeemer’ do not come within the scope of the Divine purpose.

None of these things are here proven, they are touched upon only to introduce the subject. A more detailed examination must follow. If, however, the redemptive work of Christ is concentrated upon that seed of promise, we shall discover a consistent line of teaching running from Genesis to Revelation which will completely endorse the words of Isa. liii. “He shall see His seed and be satisfied”. If you, dear reader, feel dissatisfied with this goal of God, how do you account for the divergence. Universal reconciliation is blessedly true of ‘all the seed’, it is an enormity when extended to the seed of the wicked one, but this raises questions that must be considered as this series proceeds. Meanwhile, let no teaching of man rob you of the blessedness of this expected ‘satisfaction’.

**No.19. Enoch the seventh from Adam.
Noah the eighth person.
pp. 75 - 80**

The testimony of II Pet. ii. 4-6 and Jude 6, 7 leaves no room to doubt that there had been a fall among the angels and this fall was associated with leaving an appointed sphere. This sphere, *oiketerion* in the light of II Cor. v. 1, 2, reveals the fact that angels are not incorporeal spirits but, like the resurrection body of the believer, angels have 'spiritual bodies'.

We now proceed. Peter associates the sin of the angels with the deluge in the days of Noah, and both Peter and Jude link the fall of the angels with the sin and destruction of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Peter speaks of Noah as 'the eighth person', Jude speaks of Enoch as 'the seventh from Adam'. There is an evident connection between these two patriarchs that calls for attention.

"Noah the eighth person." This according to classic usage means 'Noah, with seven others', and this is all that most commentators see in the reference. Noah is certainly not 'the eighth' in succession from Enoch who was 'the seventh from Adam', it therefore appears that some fuller meaning is to be attached to the enumeration by Peter, especially when we remember that in his first epistle when speaking of Noah and the ark he says 'wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water' (I Pet. iii. 20).

The subject of Bible Numerics is a dangerous one for any who are likely to let their imagination run riot, but this is no reason why the subject should be avoided; there are too many incontrovertible evidences of its designed presence in the Scriptures for that. Eight is the number of Resurrection, a new beginning. It is the octave in music, colour, and days of the week. The number eight enters into the Gematria of the name Jesus, the numerical value of its letters adding up to 888. In contrast with this, it will be observed that Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth, and at the first stroke of the 600th year 'in the 601st year in the 1st month, the 1st day of the month' (Gen. viii. 13) the waters of the Flood were dried. The numerical values of the names of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth add up to 936, and if the name of Ham be removed (he was associated with Canaan and the curse, Gen. ix. 22-26), the following is the result:

Noah	the letters of this name	equal	58
Shem		equal	340
Japheth		equal	490

			888

We have therefore Noah the eighth person (II Pet. ii. 5); eight souls (I Pet. iii. 20) and the numerical value of Noah, Shem and Japheth 888, all of which stress the idea of a new beginning, a first day of a week, the octave.

Enoch was not only ‘the seventh from Adam’ according to birth, but he also marks a crisis in the development of affairs. Enoch, though living so many years before the Flood is nevertheless most intimately connected with it. First by the naming of his son, secondly by his prophetic denunciation of the ungodliness of his day, and thirdly by reason of his own personal and typical experience. When Enoch was 65 years of age a son was born to him, whom he named Methuselah, the meaning of which is ‘At his death it shall be’. Something therefore of extreme importance was to take place at the death of Methuselah. Noah, as we have already seen, was 600 years old when the Flood came. Lamech, his father, was 182 years of age when Noah was born, and Methuselah was 187 at the birth of Lamech (Gen. v. 25-32). We have therefore the following:

187 Age of Methuselah at birth of Lamech.
182 Age of Lamech at birth of Noah.
600 Age of Noah at the time of the Flood.

969 years

Now Gen. v. 27 tells us that ‘all the days of Methuselah were 969 years: and he died’, consequently the prophecy of Enoch was fulfilled to the letter. At his death (i.e. Methuselah’s) it shall be (i.e. the Flood). Incidentally, let us remember with gratitude that although Methuselah’s name must be for ever associated with judgment, yet seeing he lived longer than any other man has ever lived; it reveals the longsuffering of the Lord, as though God waited until He could wait no longer.

The second prophecy of Enoch is recorded in Jude 14, 15:

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Before we can understand the import of this prophecy, we must observe the general trend of the epistle in order to see the appositeness of Enoch’s witness. If we glance at the earlier verses of Jude we shall see not only a reference to human sin of a deep dye in the mention of Sodom and Gomorrah, but a reference also to angels who kept not their first estate, and are therefore reserved for judgment.

Looking to the end of the epistle, such outstanding apostates as Cain, Balaam and Korah are brought forward as examples of the mockers who shall come in the last times. It is time, therefore, that we consider the structure of the epistle to see just where Enoch’s prophecy comes.

JUDE

- A | 1, 2. Benediction.
- B | 3. Exhortation. Beloved. Earnestly contend for faith.
- C | 4. Ungodly men 'of old'.
- D | 5. Remembrance. The Lord's acts.
- E | 5-16. Judgment. |
 - a | 5-8. Three examples: Israel, angels and Sodom.
 - b | 9, 10. Michael the archangel.
Unrecorded elsewhere.
Reference to Satan.
 - a | 11-13. Three examples: Cain, Balaam and Korah.
 - b | 14-16. The Lord and holy myriads.
Unrecorded elsewhere.
Allusion to Satan.
- D | 17. Remembrance. The Lord's words.
- C | 18, 19. Ungodly of 'last time'.
- B | 20-23. Exhortation. Beloved. Build up on faith.
- A | 24, 25. Doxology.

It will be seen that Jude's testimony is directed to one point, viz., the judgment of the Lord upon ungodliness. Yet he ranges the whole of Scripture, and, by bringing forward the angels that sinned and Michael's rebuke of Satan, penetrates into depths beyond our experience. It is also evident that to lift Jude 14 and 15 out of its context and generalize thereupon, will not help us to understand truth.

Enoch's prophecy is connected with a sin in which not only men but Satan and fallen angels are involved. There is no reticence on Jude's part to indicate something of its evil character. The sin of the angels is likened to that of Sodom and Gomorrah, and those who follow in their evil train are likened to brute beasts that corrupt themselves, being called 'spots in the feasts of love'. Of both angels and men it is written that they have been 'reserved' in darkness for judgment (verses 6 and 13).

Ungodliness. We have long seen that the word 'ungodliness' and 'godliness' by reason of their antithesis in the epistles, and in the expression 'the mystery of godliness', must have a far deeper meaning than 'piety' or the lack of this virtue. This depth of meaning is evident in Jude's epistle where the three words *asebeia*, *asebeo* and *asebes* are found six times.

"Ungodly men, who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness" (verse 4).

"To convince all that are ungodly among them of their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, by ungodly sinners" (15).

"Mockers who should walk after their ungodly lusts" (18).

The sin of angels, Sodom and Satan, together with the sin that shall be judged at the coming of the Lord, is denominated ungodliness. Peter confirms this, for in his second epistle he speaks of the angels that sinned in the time of Noah, and of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Balaam, and speaks of the Flood coming upon the world of the *ungodly*. Sodom and

Gomorrah are examples of those that live *ungodly*; Lot is an example of the deliverance of the *godly*, and of the fire reserved by the Lord for the day of judgment and perdition of *ungodly* men (II Pet. ii. and iii.).

A literal rendering of the words of Enoch must read: “Behold, the Lord *came*.” While the true rendering of the aorist of the Greek verb is still somewhat of a moot point, the rightness of the above rendering is confirmed by the general usage and rendering of the A.V. The R.V. translates the word ‘came’ and puts no alternative in the margin. The interested student may test this translation by noting the occurrences of *elthe* (part of the verb *erchomai*, ‘to come’), which is usually translated ‘came’. If Enoch said ‘Behold the Lord *came*’ he must have been referring back to some judgment that was past when he spoke. To what could he refer? The judgment of the Flood had not then taken place, neither had judgment fallen upon Babel. The description given of the judgment could not refer to Gen. iii. or iv. To what then could it refer?

The reader will probably have traveled back in mind to Gen. i. 2 to the *katabole kosmou* ‘the overthrow of the world’. This connection is more than countenanced by Peter in his second epistle which we have already found to be parallel with that of Jude.

The Second Coming and the overthrow (Gen. i. 2).

II Peter iii. 1 - 6.	Jude 17, 18.
<p>“I stir up your pure mind by way of remembrance: That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken by . . . the apostles of the Lord and Saviour . . . there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue right through as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water; whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.”</p>	<p>“Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.”</p>

Enoch took up this line of teaching. He too, uttered the solemn word: “Behold, the Lord *came*”, and his reference to angels and Satan, as well as to man, removes any sense of disproportion. Enoch named his son *Methuselah*, which means, as we have seen, ‘at his death it (namely, the Flood) shall be’, and in the year that Methuselah died this judgment came. Jude now takes up Enoch’s witness, coupled with Peter’s words (II Pet. ii., iii.), and links together the overthrow of the world that then was, the flood of the days of Noah, and the Second Coming of the Lord, which shall be accompanied by fire. This is indeed a solemn aspect of the Coming of the Lord.

The first words of the Lord’s answer to the disciples’ question concerning the sign of His coming were:

“Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in My name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall deceive many” (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5).

Peter gives this warning in II Pet. ii.; so also does Jude whose citation of Enoch's prophecy we are studying. He says:

“There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men woe unto them! they have gone in the way of Cain Enoch prophesied of these” (Jude 4, 11, 14).

Scripture has given us warning that the teaching concerning the Coming of the Lord will not escape corruption.

“Ten thousands of His saints”—These words are used by Moses in the blessing of Israel:

“The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them” (Deut. xxxiii. 2).

There can be no doubt as to the meaning of the word ‘saints’ here. The law of Sinai we know from various Scriptures was mediated by ‘angels’ (Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ii. 2).

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them as in Sinai” (Psa. lxxviii. 17).

“A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him; thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him” (Dan. vii. 10).

“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels” (Matt. xvi. 27; xxv. 31).

“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels” (II Thess. i. 7).

These quotations are sufficient to prove that the ‘saints’ or ‘holy ones’ of Enoch's prophecy are ‘angels’ and not the redeemed. This also is the meaning of Zech xiv. 5, “And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee”, and of Joel iii. 11, “thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord”, also of I Thess. iii. 13, “The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints”.

COMING “FOR” AND “WITH” HIS SAINTS

There is a school of prophetic thought that stresses the coming of the Lord ‘for’ and the coming of the Lord ‘with’ His saints. Supposing for the purpose of argument we accept this view, how does it stand examination? The Thessalonians were *waiting* for God's Son from heaven (I Thess. i. 10), and exercising the patience of hope (i. 3). They were told that their loved ones who had died would not meet the Lord earlier or later than those living at the time, but that both living and dead would be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air (I Thess. iv. 15, 16). Well, then, what are we to make of I Thess. iii. 13:

“To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ *with all His saints.*”

If these 'saints' are His redeemed people, and if the Thessalonians were to wait for the Lord to come *with all His redeemed people*, then what place do the Thessalonians occupy? They were redeemed, they certainly were not the unwatchful who might have been left behind, for they were to be established 'unblameable in holiness', and if such can be left behind, who then shall go? The distinction between 'coming for' and 'coming with' excludes those to whom the Apostle wrote and contradicts the express statements of I Thess. iv. 15, 16 and v. 10. If we take I Thess. iii. 13 to speak of the 'holy ones', the 'saints' of Deut. xxxiii. and of Enoch's prophecy, we have the coming of the Lord WITH *His angels* and FOR *His people* set before us with clearness and without contradictory statements.

It is interesting to note that the Sinaitic MS reads: "ten thousand of His holy angels." The angels that shall come at the end of the age are doubtless the same that were instrumental in bringing about the overthrow of the first of Genesis and all the divine interpositions through the ages.

"And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone" (Rev. xix. 14-20).

When once we are clear as to the fact that 'the saints' of Enoch's prophecy are the *holy* angels, we begin to realize their relation in the context with the *fallen* angels. Moreover, the structure shows that Michael the *archangel* is placed in correspondence with the Lord and His angels, and both in conflict with Satan. Enoch's prophecy, with its reference to Gen. i. 2, taken in conjunction with II Pet. iii., where it is stated that 'the world that then was' was destroyed by water, and the heavens and earth which are now shall be destroyed by fire, lifts the doctrine of the Second Coming into its true place in the purpose of the ages. There has been a tendency to look upon the Second Coming as a kind of afterthought, the next best thing that could be done in the circumstances. What we call 'the Second Coming' is demanded by the purpose of the ages, whether Israel received their Messiah and His prior presentation or not. Let the scoffers say what they will.

"Behold the Lord CAME" (Jude 14), and
"He that SHALL COME will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. x. 37).

Enoch's rapture, or 'translation' and the complete cycle of time indicated by the 365 years (Gen. v. 23) is another prophetic element in the teaching associated with Enoch and Noah which has a bearing on this great theme.

**No.20. “There were giants in the earth in those days”
(Gen. vi. 4).
pp. 84 - 88**

It is evident that Jude intends us to see a connection between the sin of the angels who left their first estate and who were reserved in everlasting chains, and the sin of the people of Sodom and Gomorrah who are set forth for an example suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. The connection is manifestly implied in the words ‘Even as Sodom in like manner’, and the sin of the angels is reflected in the words ‘going after strange flesh’. The word translated ‘strange’ is *heteros* ‘other of another kind’. As we observe these things the impression deepens that Gen. vi. speaks of an unnatural connection between angels and the daughters of Adam, whose progeny were ‘giants’ and ‘mighty men of old’. Let us now go back to Gen. vi. to examine its wording carefully.

Moses speaks of these ‘sons of God’ as though his readers were informed concerning their identity, and in this he was right. The book of Job was written before Moses was inspired to write Genesis, and in another series of studies we show what an influence this book of Job must have had upon Moses when he fled from Egypt to Midian.

Beni-ha-Elohim occurs in Job i. 6; ii. 1 and xxxviii. 7, where the context makes it clear that angels are intended. Indeed, the LXX translates these words *angeloi* ‘angels’ in each passage, and this was the accepted interpretation throughout the centuries. In Dan. iii. we have an instance where the words ‘the son of God’ is explained by the speaker himself to mean an ‘angel’:

“Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the first? Lo, I see four men loose and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God God hath sent His angel” (Dan. iii. 24-28).

Here we have a form like to ‘a son of God’, yet described on the one hand as one of ‘four men’ and on the other as an ‘angel’. The Chaldee words *bar* ‘son’ and *Elohim* “God” are the equivalents of the Hebrew *beni-ha-Elohim*. While Nebuchadnezzar likens the son of God which he saw both to men and to angels, Gen. vi. places ‘the daughters of men’ over against ‘the sons of God’. If the sons of God simply mean men who have descended from Seth, as some claim, the antithesis is strained and its implications untrue. Moreover, there is no logical connection between the intermarriage of the sons of Seth with the daughters of Adam, and the resulting progeny ‘giants’; but if the sons of God were superhuman the remarkable and monstrous nature of their offspring is something to be expected.

We must, therefore, consider what the Scripture says of these ‘giants’. We find that two distinct words are used, *nephilim* and *rephaim*.

The word *nephilim* is used only in Gen. vi. 4 and in Numb. xiii. 33 where it is translated ‘giants’. This word is derived from *naphal* ‘to fall’ and its meaning, as

applied to these sons of God, can be seen by referring to Isa. xiv. 12 “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!” The *Nephilim* are mentioned twice in Numb. xiii. in the report of the spies, and their statements are too circumstantial to allow of spiritualizing:

“We came unto the land and this is the fruit of it. Nevertheless the people be strong that dwell in the land we saw the children of Anak there there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight” (Numb. xiii. 27-33).

Thirty-eight years after, when Israel were about to enter the land of promise, Moses spoke of the opposition that awaited them, but reminded them that the Moabites and the Ammonites had dispossessed a people ‘tall as the Anakim’ which also were accounted giants (Deut. ii. 10, 11). The bedstead of Og, king of Bashan, which measured nine cubits long, was in Rabbath at the time of Moses’ writing (Deut. iii. 11). Dr. Porter, says of these giants Cities of Bashan:

“The rude architecture and simple structure of the houses, the immense blocks of roughly hewn basaltic stone of which they are built, seemingly hard and durable as iron, the prodigious thickness of the walls, the colossal stone doors, which turn not by hinges, but on stone pivots, and some of which are eighteen inches in thickness all indicate their being reared by the hands and for the habitation of a race of great strength than ours—a mighty nation of giants” (*Giant cities of Bashan*).

In the days of David, men of giant stature were found among the Philistines, of whom Goliath of Gath is a well known example. The passages where ‘giants’ are mentioned in the O.T. other than Gen. vi. and Numb. xii. employ the words *gibbor* (Job xvi. 14), and *rephaim* (Deut. ii. 11, 20; iii. 11; I Chron. xx. 8, etc.). The word is used sometimes as the name of a people, as in Gen. xiv. 5 ‘smote the Rephaims’, but even so the association in that same passage with the ‘Zuzims’ and the ‘Emims’ reveal that the ‘giants’ of Deut. ii. 11 are before us. In eight occurrences of the word *rephaim*, the identity of this people is hidden under the translation ‘the dead’ or ‘deceased’. One of the proofs that this people are not the legitimate sons or seed of Adam, that they were never weakened as being ‘In Adam’, is that they are to have *no resurrection*.

In the day of Israel’s restoration, the song that will be sung in the land of Judah looks back to the evil domination of the Rephaim:

“Others lords beside Thee have had dominion over us they are the Rephaim, they shall not rise; therefore hast Thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish” (Isa. xxvi. 13, 14).

In contrast with these Rephaims that have no resurrection, the song continues “Thy dead *shall live*, together with my dead body *shall they arise*. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the Rephaim” (Isa. xxvi. 19).

One great objection to the idea that the sons of God were angels, is that it does not seem possible to think of marriage and children in their connection. First we have the

statement of the Saviour: “In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven” (Matt. xxii. 30). Here it is clear that angels who do keep their first estate and do not forsake their own habitation cannot be conceived of as entering into the marriage relationship. The teaching of II Pet. iii. and Jude however is that certain angels *left* this position, and consequently the changed condition and environment opens the way for any number of unsuspected possibilities. We have already referred to the evidence that would lead us to believe that the angels were not entirely disembodied, but like the resurrection bodies of the saints, their bodies would be ‘spiritual’.

There is, however, no need to load the passage with unnecessary difficulties, for just as Satan *possessed himself* of the body of a serpent in Gen. iii., and just as demons can and did *possess themselves* of the bodies of men, so, the angels that left their own habitation, could have taken possession of the bodies of those men who had so far profaned the Name of the Lord as to have been abandoned or ‘given up’ (Rom. i. 24, 28) with dreadful consequences.

It appears from Gen. vi. 3 that Adam himself had become involved in the general degeneration, and God said:

“My Spirit shall not always strive with man” that is in testifying against him, but judgment must ensue (Davidson).

The note in the *Companion Bible* at this point needs revision.

“For that he also is flesh.”

As it stands it looks as though the words ‘is flesh’ could be taken as part of the verb to err, Hebrew *shagag*, but every student knows that the word ‘flesh’ is *basar*. What is intended by the note in the *Companion Bible* is that the words ‘for that also’ could be a part of the verb *shagag* ‘to err’ and would indicate that by complicity with the erring of mankind Adam had become like the rest. Adam, however, was not cut off without opportunity for repentance. The longsuffering of the Lord gave him another 120 years of life.

The presence in the earth after the flood of *Nephilim*, Rephaim, Giants, Canaanites, Anakims and the like is not to be interpreted as though the Deluge failed in its purpose, but is to be read in the light of the words of Gen. vi. 4 “In those days; *and also after that*”. Another irruption of the sons of God took place, concentrated more particularly on the land of promise, with the intention of occupying it with the false seed of their evil progeny, so that by the time Abraham reached the land of promise it could be written ‘the Canaanite was then in the land’ (Gen. xii. 6), with an intended emphasis on the word ‘then’.

It is not our custom to seek confirmation of our teaching from pagan sources, but Gen. vi. 4 speaks of the offspring of the unholy union as ‘mighty men which were of old, men of renown’, and as we have so few names given in Gen. iv. and v., this reference by

Moses must be to contemporary 'men of renown' in tradition and history. Bryant in his *Analysis of Ancient Mythology* traces all idolatry back to apostate perversions of the truth of the Deluge. "My purpose is", he said "to divest mythology of every foreign and unmeaning ornament, and to display the truth in its native simplicity; to show that all the rites and mysteries of the Gentiles were only so many memorials of their principal ancestors, and of the great occurrences to which they had been witness". "The history of Noah has been recorded by the ancients through their whole theology, but has been obscured by the many names and characters given him. He is Thoth, Hermes, Menes, Osiris, Atlas and Prometheus."

Greek mythology gives an important place to certain beings described as of a mingled heavenly and earthly origin, and called giants, titans, demigods, heroes. The reader will call to mind many heroes of Greek mythology who were said to be the offspring of the union of gods and men, for example, Achilles, was the only son of a goddess, and was invulnerable except in the heel. Another well-known figure in Greek mythology is Leda, the wife of a king of Sparta, with whom it is said Zeus fell in love, and visited her in the form of a swan. The result was the birth of the twins Castor and Pollux, and the famous or infamous "Helen of Troy".

In Greek mythology *Uranos* (the heavens) was the first king of the gods. The Titans, a family of giants, were the progeny of the union between *Uranos* and *Ge* (the earth), a very palpable reference back to the union of the sons of God with the daughters of men, and a possible corruption of 'the generations of the heavens and the earth' (Gen. ii. 4). These Titans rose in rebellion and were consigned to Tartarus. This last word takes us forward to II Pet. ii. 4, where we read "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell" where the word translated 'cast down to hell' is the word *tartaroo*.

Tartarus is nowhere spoken in the Scriptures, except in this passage, but it evidently referred to a place that was known to the reader. If we refuse to admit the testimony of antiquity, we can assign no meaning to this term. According to the ancients, Tartarus was one of the regions of Hell, surrounded by a brazen wall, a place of intense cold and darkness. Æneas is said to have heard the dragging of the chains of those imprisoned therein. Tartarus was said to be so cold, that Plutarch explained it was so called because 'to shiver' was in the Greek 'to tartarize'. In the lowest pit of the dread abode were 'the subtartaris'd Titans', *Titenes hupotarrarioi* (Hesiod).

While we do not purpose pursuing this evident of acquaintance of the ancients with the facts of Gen. vi., the many parallels that can be discovered, together with the link formed by Peter's use of the pagan Tartarus, prevent us from dismissing the whole subject as irrelevant or meaningless. Dreadful things happened in the early days of this earth, desperate attempts to corrupt the seed, to prevent its continuance and to divert the early prophecy of Gen. iii. 15 away from the true Seed to the false, with all its corrupting effects, and these events in the infancy of the race left indelible marks on the minds of men.

No.21. The Preservation of the Seed of Noah.
pp. 111 - 113

In direct contrast with the prevailing corruption, the patriarch Noah stands out in the record of Gen. vi. as a notable exception.

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. vi. 8).

The wickedness of man was so great in the earth and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, that we read the extraordinary statement “and it repented the Lord that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart” (Gen. vi. 6). This word ‘repented’ challenges us. In what way can God be said to repent? This is not the only occasion when repentance is predicated of the Lord. At the intercession of Moses, the Lord repented of the evil which He had thought to do unto His people (Exod. xxxii. 14) and this repentance is repeated in the days of David (II Sam. xxiv. 16) and is commemorated in Psa. cvi. 45. It was the complaint of Jonah that he knew full well that God being merciful would repent if only Nineveh would turn to Him (Jonah iii. 9, 10; iv. 2). These gracious repentings we can perhaps understand, but it is strange to read that the Lord repented that he had made man.

In the first place we may say that ‘repenting’ and ‘being grieved at the heart’ are instances of the figure of speech known as *Anthropopatheia* a figure which ascribes human attributes to God. The Hebrews called this mode of speech *Derek Benai Adam*, the way of the sons of man, or Paul says, who was himself a Hebrew, ‘I speak after the manner of men’, and without such condescension on the part of God man could never apprehend His revelation. But conceding all this, admitting that the use of such parts of the body as face, nostrils, eyes, ears and hands are accommodations to our limitations, we nevertheless believe that they stand for realities, even though we can affix to such spiritual realities no human name. In like manner, while we may not take the words grief, anger, jealousy and other similar affections and feelings at their surface value, we nevertheless know that they stand for something equivalent on this high plane of Divine experience.

Consequently we are to gather from Gen. vi. 6, that something of extreme antipathy to the purpose of God at creation had come in and spoiled the work of God’s hands, grieved His heart, and made Him repent that He had made man. In the language of the parable the reason is found in the fact ‘that an enemy hath done this’. Throughout the Bible we have the consequences of a conflict, a conflict between good and evil, darkness and light, God and Satan, and that the Bible is intensely real, making demands upon the wisdom and power of the Almighty and culminating in the sparing not of His Beloved Son. If such inroads had been made into the nature of mankind by the evil one that it could be said ‘that all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth’, then God must act and act drastically if the situation were to be saved.

The word translated 'corrupt' in Gen. vi. 11 and 12, and the word translated 'destroy' in Gen. vi. 17 is the Hebrew *shachath*. "The only remedy was to destroy it (*de facto*) as it had become destroyed (*de jure*)" (*Companion Bible*). At the time of the sounding of the seventh angel, the wheel has come full circle, "As it was in the days of Noah" and we read that the time had come to "destroy them which destroy (or corrupt) the earth" (Rev. xi. 18).

Standing separate and almost alone in the midst of well nigh universal corruption was the man Noah. It is not without significance that the name *Noah* is derived from the self same Hebrew word translated 'repent'. The Hebrew word is *nacham* and is found for the first time in Scripture in the words of Lamech "this same shall *comfort* us" (Gen. v. 29) and refers to the Ark and the Flood. The next occurrence of *nacham* is in Gen. vi. 6 where it is written 'it *repented* the Lord'. The reason why this one Hebrew word can have such opposite meanings is that primarily *nacham* means 'a change of mind or affection' and obviously the mind may change sometimes in one way, sometimes in another. God changed His mind regarding mankind as a whole and destroyed them; He changed His mind about Noah in particular and saved him.

What constituted the essential difference between Noah and the rest of mankind? We shall find upon examining the testimony of Israel that they are denounced as wicked, corrupt and evil, yet even though enemies because of the gospel, they are beloved because of the fathers 'for the gifts and calling of God are *without repentance*' (Rom. xi. 29). Israel, for all their sins were the chosen seed, and so will be saved. Even after the Flood, the words are written "I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; although (Heb. *ki*) the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Gen. viii. 21). What was it, therefore, that the Lord saw in the generation before the flood that demanded total destruction? It was the corrupting of the seed, and it is the separation of Noah from this corruption that marks him out in Gen. vi., not simply that he was not so sinful:

"These are the generations of Noah; Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Gen. vi. 9).

Noah, like Enoch 'walked with God', but this was not all, Noah found 'grace', the first to so find in all Scripture, but moreover Noah was 'perfect in his generations'. As the word 'generations' occurs twice in this passage let us note that the first word is a translation of *toledoth* 'family history' and can read either forward or backward, can speak of either one's ancestors or of one's descendants, but the second word is a translation of the Hebrew *dor* which refers to Noah's contemporaries, the men living at the same time as himself. With regard to his contemporaries Noah was 'perfect'. This word, which translates the Hebrew *tamim* means 'without blemish' and primarily refers to physical, not moral perfection. It is in constant use to describe the blemishless character of a sacrificial animal (Exod. xii. 5; Lev. i. 3).

Job was described as 'perfect' as well as upright (Job i. 1, 8; ii. 3), and Jacob is described as a 'plain' man (Gen. xxv. 27), using the same word as is employed in Job and 'undefiled' is the translation of the word in Song of Solomon v. 2. The testimony of

Gen. vi. 9 is that Noah was uncontaminated so far as his pedigree was concerned, and the channel through which the Seed of the Woman could come, though narrowed down by the well nigh universal corruption that had set in, was still preserved.

As we proceed with the history of the Seed of the Woman, we can assemble a series of Divine interpositions, each one marked by its own peculiar character, and together building up a system of teaching that points irrevocably to Christ.

- (1) While no supernatural intervention is to be supposed in Gen. iii. 15, the fact that the seed Who should bruise the serpent's head is called "Her Seed" is suggestive.
- (2) The Seed is in the second place bound up with vicarious suffering; His "Heel" shall be wounded in the conflict with the Serpent.
- (3) Ultimate victory is prophesied for the Seed of the Woman, for although in the conflict He shall be wounded in the "Heel", it is the "head" of the serpent that is bruised.
- (4) The next principle that emerges is the principle of substitution. The attack upon Abel is countered by the "appointment" of "Seth" or as the Hebrew reads God hath "seth" me another seed. Seth was appointed "instead of Abel whom Cain slew" (Gen. iv. 25).
- (5) The sending of the Flood, and the destruction of every living person except "the eight souls" preserved in the Ark, or as Peter puts it, God "spared not the old world, but saved Noah", reveals the solemn fact that the question of numbers does not enter into the plan. If the seed can be preserved, though it cost the destruction of millions, the Lord will do it. If such a conclusion should appear harsh let us remember that the selfsame word "spare" is used of Christ. "He that spared not His own Son".
- (6) The provision of the Ark introduces into the record another aspect of the Redemptive side of the story of the seed. It is common knowledge with students that the noun and verb "pitch it within and without with pitch" (Gen. vi. 14) employs the word *kaphar* and *kopher* which are used by Moses and the rest of the O.T. Scriptures for the propitiation made by the sacrificial offerings, indicating in fuller measure the nature of the "bruising" that should be received in the conflict with the serpent. "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him" said Isaiah, showing that even though "wicked hands" took and crucified the Son of God, that bruising of His heel was at the same time the sacrificial offering made for sin.
- (7) Finally, or at least so far as we have gone, the preservation of the seed is associated with newness of life, resurrection ground, the beginning of a new world, and a new day. This is forced upon the attention of the reader throughout the record of the Deluge, as we have already seen, by the fact that the date when the Ark rested on one of the mountains of Ararat, namely the seventeenth day of the seventh month, became after the revision of the calendar at the Passover (Exod. xii. 2), the "third" day after the offering of the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month, and so the very day of the Saviour's resurrection. The emphasis upon the "first year", the "first month" and the "first day" in Gen. viii. 13 carries the idea forward, while the numerical features associated with Noah and his family, each emphasizing the number "eight" and the commencing of a new period, rounded off this testimony to resurrection and newness.

Although the purpose of God concerning the Seed was so far safeguarded, the words already noted in Gen. vi. 4 "also after that" prepare us for further conflict. This will appear as we continue our study.

No.22. “Abraham, The Hebrew.”
pp. 125 - 129

When Noah and his family stepped out from the Ark, they stepped out into a world that was empty and devoid of life, a miniature of the condition ‘without form and void’ that prevailed after the flood of Gen. i. 2, and to them the words uttered at the creation of Adam were repeated:

“Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. ix. 1).

The dominion given to Adam was passed on to Noah in modified terms, and instead of the sun, moon and stars being indicated as ‘signs’ (Heb. *oth*) the rainbow was appointed for a ‘token’ (Heb. *oth*). This is another feature that we must remember, namely the changed ‘tokens’ that accompany the dispensational changes that mark the onward story of the Seed. If the Seed is to continue, it must of necessity come through Noah and one of his sons. The blessing pronounced in Gen. ix. 26, 27 indicates that the choice fell upon Shem.

“Blessed be the Lord God of Shem He shall dwell in the tents of Shem.”

Japheth was the eldest brother (Gen. x. 21; I Chron. i. 5) but grace seldom recognizes any precedence in the flesh. Consequently we find the generations of Shem lead on to Terah and so to Abraham (Gen. xi. 10-32).

“Unto Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born” (Gen. x. 21).

The additional note “the father of all the children of Eber” calls for attention. No such clause follows the reference either to Japheth or to Ham. Moreover, we observe that Eber himself is not mentioned again until verse twenty-four. Shem had five sons, and Eber is the descendant of Arphaxad, the third of those that are named in Gen. x. 22. Now Eber had two sons, Peleg, so named because in his day the earth was divided, and Joktan. Joktan’s descendants are here named, but Peleg’s descendants are reserved until the generations of Shem are given in Gen. xi. 10, where Joktan finds no place. The line of the Seed therefore from Noah, runs as follows: Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Eber, Peleg and so on to Terah, the father of Abram.

The record of Gen. x. is the record of the Nations, and the words “By these were the nations divided in the earth” show that the settlement of the nations and the lands inhabited by them is the important theme. It is the descendants of Joktan and their lands that is recorded in Gen. x., whereas, in Gen. xi., Joktan is omitted and the generations of Peleg are given in detail. This proves to be of the utmost importance, for this is the line of the true seed. Our attention therefore is called to the fact that the line of Joktan does not exhaust the descendants of Shem. The two names Eber and Peleg demand our attention. The Hebrew name Eber means ‘beyond’, and occurs in such phrases as

‘*beyond Jordan*’, ‘*on this side Jordan*’ or ‘*on the other side Jordan*’ (Gen. 1. 10; Numb. xxii. 1; Josh. ii. 10). The verb *abar* means ‘to pass’ or ‘to pass over’ and is often used in connection with the passing over of the Israelites into the land of Canaan (Deut. xii. 10; Josh. iii. 16). In Gen. xiv. 13 Abraham is called ‘The Hebrew’. This is partly explained in Josh. xxiv. 2 and 3:

“Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood.”

This ‘flood’ is the River Euphrates, the word translated ‘flood’ being the same as that which is rendered ‘river’ meaning the River Euphrates (Josh. i. 4). The LXX translates Abraham ‘the Hebrew’, by the words *ho perates* “The one who crossed over”, the word *peran* being employed in Gen. 1. 10 and Josh. ii. 10 cited above. While therefore *Eber* had many descendants, Abraham stands out pre-eminently not only as one descendant out of many, but as the one who fulfilled the *meaning* of the name.

Peleg, too, is associated with rivers, and is so translated nine times, and once ‘stream’ in the O.T. (e.g. Psa. i. 3). Job uses the word *palag* when he speaks of God “Who hath divided a watercourse” (Job xxxviii. 25). The same form of the word, *pelaggah* is twice translated ‘divisions’ (Judg. v. 15, 16) and once ‘rivers’ (Job xx. 17). Rivers formed natural boundaries in ancient days, so much so that in English the word ‘rival’ comes from the idea that men living on opposite banks of a river would be ‘divided’ in their loyalties.

It is not true to say that the words of Gen. xi. 25 ‘the earth was divided’ cannot refer to the division of the earth as an inheritance, but only to some geological division as that which has formed the continents, for the feminine form of both the Hebrew and the Chaldee is employed to speak of the division of both ‘families’ and of ‘the priests’ (II Chron. xxxv. 5; Ezra vi. 18).

In Peleg’s day the earth was divided among the Nations, ‘according to the number of the children of Israel’ (Deut. xxxii. 8). The reader will discover that there are seventy nations mentioned by name in Gen. x., and the words “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel” have regard to that number seventy:

“Seventy souls went down with Jacob into Egypt, that they might restore the seventy families dispersed by the confusion of tongues. For these seventy souls were equal to all the families of the whole world” (*Zohar*).

“How good is thy love toward Me, O thou congregation of Israel! It is more than that of the seventy nations” (Targum on the Song of Solomon).

So conscious was Israel of this high place, and so equally conscious that the Gentile nations would be provoked should they realize it, that we find the LXX reads ‘according to the number of the *angels of God*’, for the Gentile world would not know that to each nation had been appointed an angel, as is indicated in Dan. x. ‘the prince of Grecia’, ‘the prince of the kingdom of Persia’ and ‘Michael your prince’.

So precious in the sight of God is “The Seed”, He counts the seventy souls that went down into Egypt who formed the nucleus of the nation of Israel of more importance than the whole seventy nations that inhabited the rest of the world, and in order to appreciate this concentration of the Lord’s care, we must continue the story of the generations until we arrive at Abraham, the father of the great nation, whose seed is promised in Gen. xii. 7. While both Joktan and Peleg are mentioned in Gen. x. 25, Peleg only appears in the genealogy of Gen. xi. 10-26, for the seed only is there in view. The line is then pursued from Eber through Peleg to Terah, the father of Abraham.

Man’s attempt ‘to make a name’, and the consequent scattering (Gen. xi. 1-9) was but another attempt to frustrate the purpose of God. The word ‘name’ is actually in the Hebrew ‘Shem’. “The chapter begins with man’s attempt to unify mankind, and ends with God’s new provision to unify all in blessing with Abraham’s seed” (*The Companion Bible*). When we reach the generations of Terah, we are at the central generation of the eleven which are found in the book of Genesis. In both the conclusion of Shem’s genealogy (Gen. xi. 26) and the opening of Terah’s, Abraham’s name stand first, although as subsequent study will reveal, Abraham was not the eldest of Terah’s sons. Like Shem, Abram, is put first because he was the chosen channel of the Seed.

For the first time there now appears the statement that any woman was ‘barren’, and this is said of Sarai, Abram’s wife.

“But Sarai was barren; she had no child” (Gen. xi. 30). So into the story of the coming Seed is now interposed human inability in order that there may be demonstrated that the true seed is indeed of God. The word translated ‘barren’ *aqar* signifies a mere stock or stem without branches, a dry tree. Bateman says of Eccles. iii. 2 where the A.V. reads ‘a time to pluck up’; ‘to lop, as trees, cut them close to the stock or stem’. This supernatural element is emphasized later in the story of Ishmael and Isaac, and a definite reference is made to it in Rom. ix. where we read “In Isaac shall thy seed be called, that is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed” (Rom. ix. 7, 8).

Immediately following the statement concerning Sarai’s barrenness comes the record of Terah’s trek toward Canaan and his tarrying and death at Haran. We learn from Stephen in Acts vii. 2, that “The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran”. Terah, it would appear, was moved by the revelation given to his sons, and ‘took’ Abram, Lot and Sarai, but by so doing contravened the distinct commandment “Get thee out of thy country, *and from thy kindred*”. Moreover, although ‘they went forth’ from Ur of the Chaldees “*to go into the land of Canaan*”, they did not accomplish this purpose for we read “they came into Haran, *and dwelt there*”. This partial obedience to the separating command of God will be met again. For example in Exod. viii. 25 where Pharaoh substituted for the three days journey “Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land”. “Sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness: only ye shall not go very far away” (Exod. viii. 28).

According to Heb. xi., Abraham when he obeyed God did not know the land that God had promised him, and so the language of Gen. xi. 31 written after the event must be considered as supplemental. Terah, whose name among other meanings seems to be 'wanderer', was evidently moved by the call that had come to his son, but the thing to be noticed is that although he made that trek from Ur of the Chaldees as far north as Haran, he never 'passed over' the Euphrates. After six hundred miles separation from Ur, he still dwelt in the same country and had in reality made no essential change. Terah's movement is like many religious movements, they fail in essentials. They change from one denomination to another, but remain a denomination all the same. Abraham was called 'The Hebrew' for he passed over the dividing river. Terah was never a 'Hebrew'. He came out of Ur, but he died in Haran, a city of the same country. He had but changed one denomination for another. Terah died in Haran, and until he died he was a hindrance to faithful obedience.

Terah represents the 'old man' who can be religious and do almost everything except 'pass over'. Only when the old man dies can the believer rise and walk in newness of life. We are, however, tracing the history of the Seed and must not allow ourselves too many doctrinal excursions, but the reader will doubtless perceive that the spiritual history of the individual believer finds an echo many times in the record of the Seed and its conflict.

**No.23. Cain and Canaan were both "of that wicked one".
pp. 144 - 148**

As the different attacks are made by the enemy upon the life and purity of the true seed, certain terms are introduced which mark the spiritual side of the conflict and reveal the character of the provision and protection afforded by the Lord. These we shall have to consider together as a whole when we have pursued this theme further, but the reader may be helped by an anticipation of this particular study. Certain words and phases emerge as the story of the seed progresses, and the following will indicate the nature of this particular aspect of truth.

- (1) The first prophecy of the Seed. Gen. iii. 15.
The bruising of head and Heel.
- (2) The second reference, Seth. Gen. iv. 25.
"Instead." The principle of substitution.
- (3) The third reference, Noah. Gen. v. 29.
"Comfort" because of "curse".
- (4) The fourth reference, The Ark. Gen. vi. 14.
Propitiation (Pitch).
- (5) The fifth reference, barrenness. Gen. xi. 30.
The flesh set aside.

These items will give the reader some idea of what we intend, but the above list is temporary, and must be revised when the subject is considered as a whole. At the moment we are concerned with the onward progress of the true seed, and have reached the moment when, at the death of Terah, Abram was free to 'pass over' and become 'Abraham the Hebrew'.

At Gen. xii., the nations of the earth go into the background and only come into the record as they touch the land and people of Israel. The channel through which the Seed should come is now narrowed down to one man, a descendant of Shem, and to that man a promise was given of a land as well as of a seed, for they were to become a nation.

"Unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. xii. 7).

The delay occasioned by the action of Terah was seized upon the enemy and this will be made clear if we put two passages together:

"And Terah took Abram to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, *and dwelt there*" (Gen. xi. 31).

"And Abram went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came and the Canaanite was *then in the land*" (Gen. xii. 5, 6).

Before we can rightly proceed, some understanding of the Scriptural meaning and intent of 'the Canaanite' is called for, for it is evident that this people were Satan's countercheck to the Divine plan. Canaan, was one of the sons of Ham, his brothers being Cush, Mizraim and Phut (Gen. x. 6). From Cush came Nimrod, the beginning of whose kingdom was Babel, and from Canaan sprang Sidon, Heth and the Jebusite, the Amorite and others who became known as 'Canaanites'. The circumstances of the birth of Canaan are unrevealed, but the record of Gen. ix. 20-29 is highly significant and calls for examination.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard" (Gen. ix. 20).

Now this may be an innocent straightforward statement, containing no hidden or ulterior meaning; and yet, we ask, why does the Scripture use this form of speech, and say "He began to be"? The reader will remember that we found it necessary to retranslate Gen. iv. 26 "Then *began* men to call upon the name of the Lord", by "Then men profanedly called upon the name of the Lord". We find this word 'began' in the opening of that ominous passage Gen. vi., when the sons of God saw the daughters of men, and when there were giants in the earth. We observe that this same word 'began' is used of Nimrod, the rebel. "He began to be a mighty one" (Gen. x. 8). At the building of the tower of Babel, the Lord said "this they begin to do" (Gen. xi. 6), so that we find that in the space of Gen. i.-xi., which covers the history of the ancient world, from creation to Abraham, *chahal* occurs five times, each occurrence being associated with an attack upon the purpose of God, either by the profaning of the name of the Lord, the irruption of the sons of God, the founding of Babel, or by this reference to Noah.

There is evidence that at the Flood such disturbance took place as to alter materially meteorological conditions, and what before had provided 'wine that maketh glad the

heart of God and man' now, for the first time fermented, with the result that 'Noah was drunken' (Gen. ix. 21), and not only so 'naked' or 'uncovered'. Noah, in many ways takes the place of Adam in the earth. A comparison of Gen. ix. with what had previously been said of Adam will reveal several similarities. Among them let us notice, Adam and Noah are both associated with a garden 'planted', indeed the Hebrew word *nata* 'to plant' occurs in Gen. i.-xi. but twice, namely at Gen. ii. 8 "The Lord God planted a garden" and here in Gen. ix. 20. Noah's downfall is connected with an act 'he drank of the wine', even as the fall of Adam is connected with eating the fruit of the forbidden tree. In both cases, there is a strange sequel. Adam and Noah are found 'naked', the only references to nakedness in this early section of Genesis. Adam covered his nakedness with fig-leaves, Shem and Japheth covered the nakedness of their father with a garment. God subsequently clothed Adam with a coat of skin. The enmity between the two seeds is revealed to Adam, and the earth is cursed for his sake. When Noah awoke, he strangely cursed, not Ham, *but the son of Ham*, Canaan, who was doomed to be a servant of servants.

At the door of the garden of Eden the Lord caused the cherubim to 'tabernacle' ('placed' Gen. iii. 24), and Noah continuing his prophecy, said "He (the Lord) shall dwell ('tabernacle') in the tents of Shem" (Gen. ix. 27). These again being the only occurrences of *shaken* 'to dwell' or 'tabernacle' in Gen. i.-xi. These parallels are on the surface, but there are more, not so plainly stated but nevertheless implied.

Is it not illuminating that immediately consequent upon the fall of man, the Lord should speak of child-birth (Gen. iii. 16), and is it not equally illuminating that Noah should speak of Canaan the child of Ham himself? In the case of Adam and Eve, there is the positive statement that "Cain, who was of that wicked one" (I John iii. 12), but nothing positive is said of Canaan, yet by the time one has read all that is written of the Canaanites, there is no room left for doubting that of Canaan it could have been written 'Canaan was of that wicked one' also.

In the record of Gen. iii., Adam is accompanied by his wife who is named and addressed. In Gen. ix., the wife of Noah is not specifically mentioned, but, when we remember that the expression "thy father's nakedness" (Lev. xviii. 8) is definitely said to be that of "thy father's wife", and when we further know that the words spoken of Noah 'to be uncovered' (Gen. ix. 21) are the same as those used in Lev. xviii., the sin of Ham begins to assume a more serious aspect, a 'sin that brought with it a curse' as we can see by reading Deut. xxvii. 20. It appears from the combined testimony of these several passages, that Ham was guilty of the same sin as that of Reuben (Gen. xlix. 3, 4) where the word 'defiled' translates the Hebrew *chahal* already examined.

If Ham, like Reuben, taking advantage of his father's drunkenness was guilty of incest, the door was flung open once more for the Evil One to sow his seed, and the Canaanite was the dreadful result. The Canaanite would therefore take the place occupied by the 'giants' before the Flood, and because the Seed was now known to be destined to come through Abraham, the Canaanite was concentrated in advance in the land of promise.

The meaning of the word Canaan is something 'low' and in a secondary sense a merchant, trafficker or trader. The name 'Canaan' carries with it the debasement pronounced by Noah as the following passages which use the verb *kana* will show. 'To bring low' (Job xl. 12); 'To subdue' (I Chron. xvii. 10); 'To bring into subjection' (Psa. cvi. 42). Their name reveals their end, the Canaanites, whether physical or spiritual, must one day be *subjected* beneath the feet of the Victorious Seed of the woman.

When the time came for Isaac, the true seed, to be provided with a wife, Abraham made his servant swear by the God of heaven and by the God of earth, that he would not take a wife for Isaac of the daughters of the Canaanites (Gen. xxiv. 3, 37). The Canaanites were to be driven out of the land of promise by Israel (Exod. xxiii. 28-30); and by the Lord (Deut. vii. 1); and were to be utterly destroyed (Deut. xx. 17). Something of the horror with which this evil seed was held can be gathered by reading the whole of Ezra ix. and x. This we cannot reproduce here; the extract given does not produce upon the mind the reading of the whole passage:

"The people have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands" (Ezra ix. 1, 2).

The land is said to have spued out the nations that inhabited Canaan, and that the very land was defiled by their abominable customs (Lev. xviii. 24-30). Such are the Canaanites, and one can feel the relief in the prophet's mind when he said:

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

An illuminating chapter in reference to the Canaanites and the possession of the land, is Deut. ii. There, not only Israel but the Moabites, the children of Esau and the Ammonites, all blood relations of Israel, find their possession already occupied by Emim and Anakim 'a people great, and many, and tall'; 'giants dwelt therein in old time'. These the Lord destroyed before them and they succeeded them, and this is put forward as being parallel with the case of Israel.

"As Israel did unto the land of his possession, which the Lord gave unto them" (Deut. ii. 12).

Later in the experience of Abraham, he was to learn that there must be a waiting period during which his seed should suffer affliction in a strange land, and this because 'the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full' (Gen. xv. 16). If we admit the sovereign right of the Lord to destroy the corrupted people of the earth by a flood, and if we admit His justice in destroying the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrha, if we admit His patience and long suffering while He waited for the Amorite to fill up the measure of his iniquity, we can accept the revealed fact that Israel was chosen as the destroying agent of this foul progeny of wickedness, who in their turn typify the 'spiritual wickednesses' that

oppose those whose blessings are to be enjoyed, not in the land of Canaan, but in 'heavenly places'.

**No.24. Flesh v. Spirit, as set forth in Gen. xii. - xxii.
pp. 165 - 169**

The story of the seed, as it is connected with the life of Abraham brings into prominence several new principles, and the passage that covers the active life of Abraham, namely Gen. xii.-xxii. must therefore be studied. Gen. xii. contains the promises "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"; "unto thy seed will I give this land" (Gen. xii. 3, 7); and again in Gen. xxii. we read:

"In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xxii. 18).

In Gen. xii. 1 Abraham was commanded to 'get out' of his land, and in Gen. xxii. 2 he was commanded to 'get into' the land of Moriah. So Abraham 'departed' (Gen. xii. 4) and 'went' (Gen. xxii. 3) where the same Hebrew words are used. In Gen. xii. we see that Abraham, with some trepidation, went down to Egypt to sojourn there. In Gen. xxii., with triumphant faith, Abraham went to Beersheba and dwelt there.

On two separate occasions, two Gentile monarchs took Sarah the wife of Abraham, and were prevented from interfering with the advent of the true seed by Divine interposition. First, being fearful of famine, Abraham took Sarah to Egypt where she was taken from him into the house of Pharaoh (Gen. xii. 15). In the second instance, again going on toward the south (Gen. xii. 9; xx. 1), Sarah is taken by Abimelech, king of Gerar, and once again any interference is checked by Divine interposition (Gen. xx. 3-7). In both cases Abraham resorts to half the truth by describing his wife as his 'sister'. The house of Pharaoh is plagued because of Sarai and Abimelech is spoken to by God in a dream, Who said to him:

"Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife" (Gen. xx. 3).

"What is this thou hast done unto me?" asked Pharaoh (Gen. xii. 18). "What hast thou done unto us?" demanded Abimelech (Gen. xx. 9).

Here are parallel incidents in which Sarah is taken into the harem of the king, and but for Divine intervention the seed would have been corrupted. It is of supreme importance moreover to observe the fact that the first occurrence in Genesis of the verb 'to sin' is Gen. xx. 6 and that the specific 'sin' is not given in detail until we reach Gen. xxxix. 9 where Joseph is importuned by Potiphar's wife! It is impossible to ponder these passages and to avoid the conclusion that two direct attacks were made upon Sarah and through her upon the seed. Time went on, and after the victory gained by Abraham over the kings that took his nephew Lot captive, the fact that Abraham still remained childless is

brought into prominence (Gen. xv. 2). The inspired commentary upon the birth of Isaac is given by Paul in Rom. iv., where we read:

“(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations), before Him Whom he believed, even God, Who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb; he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God” (Rom. iv. 17-20).

This passage passes over in silence the intrusion of the flesh that brought Ishmael into the world, but that was another attempt by the enemy, for Hagar was an ‘Egyptian’, a descendant of Ham, even as were Pharaoh (Gen. xii.) and Abimelech the Philistine (Gen. xx.).

A further comment by Paul is found in Rom. ix., where he says, “In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed” (Rom. ix. 7, 8), and in Gal. iv. 21-31 the Apostle points to the allegory of the two sons, the son of the freewoman, Isaac, the son of the bondwoman, Ishmael. Here are lifted out into prominence, several important features:

- (1) The ‘deadness’ of both Abraham and Sarah, and the utter inability of the flesh.
- (2) That the seed can be brought forth only in resurrection power; and that
- (3) Natural descendants are not to be considered ‘the seed’ but only the children of promise; and that
- (4) Such are ‘counted for’ the seed.

The subject is of such importance that we must tarry to examine Gen. xii.-xxii. with special reference to these four aspects of the subject.

At the creation of man in the beginning, and again at the recommencement after the flood, God said “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. i. 28; ix. 1). The words “Be fruitful, and multiply” were repeated to Jacob upon the changing of his name to Israel (Gen. xxxv. 11), but it will be noticed that this blessing was given to Jacob after all but one of his many children had been born, and so would apply to his posterity. Ishmael too for Abraham’s sake has the same blessing granted to him (Gen. xvi. 10; xvii. 20). Isaac was told that his seed should multiply as the stars of heaven (Gen. xxvi. 4, 24). To Ishmael and to Abraham the word is duplicated in the original ‘multiplying I will multiply’ (Gen. xvi. 10; xxii. 17).

The reader will be able to supplement these instances by many more from the Law and the Prophets, but it is a law of arithmetic that is true for all time that nothing multiplied by any number still remains nothing. Now Abraham was past age, Sarah was barren, yet there sprang ‘even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable’ (Heb. xi. 12). Abraham

not only believed in God ‘Who quickeneth the dead’ but in God ‘Who calleth those things which be not as though they were’ (Rom. iv. 17). While, therefore, within the limitations of the creature it must ever remain true that 0 multiplied by any number however great, remains 0 still, yet when we transfer our reckoning to the realm of Promise and Resurrection, setting the flesh aside and allowing the Spirit full scope, the miraculous happens, 0 multiplied by the power that raised Christ from the dead is abundantly fruitful.

Adam may ‘multiply’ (*rabab*) but such multiplication ended in destruction (Gen. vi. 1) and the wickedness that resulted was ‘great’ (*rab*) (Gen. vi. 5). Abraham was to be multiplied (*rabah*) and his name and nation were to be made ‘great’ but the word used is not *rab* but *gadol*. The former word signifies mere increase in numbers, but the second word implies growth, a nourishing, and greatness of quality as well as of mere quantity is indicated.

The word *zera* ‘seed’ is used of Abraham and of the promise made to him 21 times in the chapters xii.-xxii. It is used another 21 times in the remainder of the book of Genesis in connection with Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. The word is associated with the promise of the land (Gen. xii. 7), but Abraham is not ‘shown’ the land until the separation from Lot takes place. Only then he is bidden to walk through the length of it and the breadth of it, so making it his own (Gen. xiii. 14-18). Abraham’s seed is likened to the dust of the earth, and to the stars of heaven for number (Gen. xiii. 16; xv. 5). Some believe that these passages indicate ‘a heavenly seed’ and ‘an earthly seed’ but the only idea which the Scriptures attaches to the ‘dust’ and to the ‘stars’ is that of great number, and if these passages indicate the earthly and heavenly seed of Abraham, we shall be obliged to find a yet third company who are indicated by the ‘sand that is upon the seashore’ (Gen. xxii. 17; xxxii. 12). It is clear however that sheer greatness of number is intended, for Joseph is said to have gathered corn ‘as the sand of the sea’ so that he left off numbering (Gen. xli. 49). That ‘dust’ also has this association with greatness of number, let Balaam testify “Who can count the dust of Jacob, and the number of the fourth part of Israel?” (Numb. xxiii. 10). Of the eleven references to the ‘stars’ in the Pentateuch seven use them to express greatness of number. Abraham certainly has an heavenly seed as well as an earthly one, but this distinction is founded upon other statements and promises.

In Gen. xv., when the Lord said to Abraham “Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them So shall thy seed be”, we read with joy that Abraham ‘believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness’ (Gen. xv. 5, 6). Justification by faith therefore is vitally associated with the true seed, and although not one of the true seed is exempt from sin, righteousness is provided for each one of them. Later in this chapter, a strange interlude is revealed:

“Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Gen. xv. 13-16).

The Amorite is one of the Canaanite nations that held the land against the true seed, and although Divine justice in longsuffering permits the true heirs to suffer until the iniquity of the Amorite is full, yet the narrative goes on to show that Abraham even then was assured that his seed should possess the land:

“In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates the Amorites, and the Canaanites” (Gen. xv. 18-21).

Chapter xviii. records the coming of the Lord with two angels, and the promise:

“I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son” (Gen. xviii. 10).

The promise is repeated after Sarah’s incredulity was manifested with the prefatory words:

“Is any thing too hard for the Lord?” (Gen. xviii. 14).

Chapter xxi. opens with the fulfillment of this promise:

“And the Lord visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoken” (Gen. xxi. 1).

Before examining these words more closely, let us note the following disposition of the chapters before us. We have quoted from chapters xv., xviii. and xxi. but must now take particular note as to what the intervening chapters relate. Chapter xvi. relates the birth of Ishmael.

“Now Sarai Abram’s wife bare him no children”, and as ten years had passed since the promise made in Gen. xii., the strain upon the flesh was great. The result was an attempt to help God accomplish His purpose and an Egyptian, Hagar, gives birth to Ishmael, son of the bondwoman, but not the true seed of promise. This is followed by that extraordinary rite, circumcision. Abram’s name is changed to Abraham ‘father of nations’ in the very chapter that repudiates the flesh, and that follows the tragic descent into the flesh and the taking of Hagar, and it was only consequent upon the institution of the covenant of circumcision, that the promise concerning the true seed became specific, and ‘Isaac’ is named (Gen. xvii. 21).

Following the promise of the seed in Gen. xviii. 1-16, comes the references to Sodom and Gomorrah, cities whose names are for ever associated with gross sins of the flesh, to which must be added the taking of Sarah by Abimelech. In order that the reader may perceive this continued alternation of covenant purpose regarding the seed, and the different interferences of the enemy, we set out this large section as a simple repeated alternation, without attempting any subdivision of the subject matter.

SPIRIT v. FLESH
Gen. xv. - xxii.

A1 | xv. 18. Covenant. The seed and the land.
B1 | xvi. 1-16. *Hagar and Ishmael. The flesh interferes.*A2 | xvii. 1-8.
Covenant. The seed and the land.
B2 | xvii. 9-14. *Circumcision commanded. The flesh repudiated.*A3 |
xvii. 15-22. Covenant. Established with Isaac.
B3 | xvii. 23-27. *Circumcision performed. The flesh repudiated.*A4 |
xviii. 1-15. Covenant. Reaffirmed.
B4 | xviii. 16-20. *Sodom and Abimelech. The flesh condemned.*A5 | xxi.
1-8. Covenant performed. "As He had said."
B5 | xxi. 9-34. "*Cast out this bondwoman and her son.*"
*The flesh repudiated.*A6 | xxii. Covenant sealed "In
blessing I will bless thee".

What is here set forth in connection with the seed and Abraham is but a picture of what has been going on ever since the creation of Adam, the history of Israel being an epitome of the greater purpose of the ages.

No.25. Promises, true and false. The two seeds.
pp. 192 - 195

If every descendant of Adam or of Abraham was one of the seed of God, Paul could never have written Rom. ix. 8:

"The children of promise are *counted for* a seed."

This line is but a part of a longer argument, and is introduced by the word 'but' which contrasts it with the preceding statements that declare that 'all Israel' does not include all who are 'of Israel', but that a selection is always in mind "*In Isaac shall thy seed be called*", a statement that rules out Ishmael who was as surely the son of Abraham as was Isaac. "Children of the flesh" continues the Apostle 'are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for a seed'. The two terms 'promise' and 'counted for' must be examined for the light they will give on the character of the seed of God. All the promises of God, whatever they are, and wherever they operate, are implemented and enjoyed in Christ.

"For all the promises of God in Him are yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us" (II Cor. i. 20).

We do not need to have a very long acquaintance with the Scriptures to become aware that Satan is the Arch-Imitator; he deceives by imposing upon the world the spiritual equivalent of the Babylonian 'brick for stone' (Gen. xi. 3), and we can be sure that if the

true seed is associated with ‘promise’, the false seed will have their promises too. This is brought out very pointedly by Peter in his epistles:

TRUE PROMISES	FALSE PROMISES
<p style="text-align: center;">II Peter i. 4</p> <p>“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">II Peter ii. 19, 20</p> <p>“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption for if after they have escaped the pollutions they are again entangled the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.”</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">I Peter ii. 25</p> <p>“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">II Peter ii. 22</p> <p>“But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.”</p>

A *sow* that is washed is a *sow* still. A *sheep* that is astray is a *sheep* still. Nowhere throughout the Scriptures is there the slightest hint that by washing a sow, it will at some time, however distant, be turned into a sheep. We have here in these passages from I & II Peter the two seeds associated with their two sets of promises.

(1) “Partakers of the divine nature.” (2) “Wallowing in the mire” what extremes are here! The reference to the ‘divine nature’ follows that which tells of ‘divine power’ (II Pet. i. 3, 4), and indicates one of the essential differences in the true and false promises. There is no power for holiness or truth, life or peace, in the Devil’s substitute. Of the true seed it is written ‘having escaped’, but for the false seed the ‘escape’ is illusory, for they become ensnared and their latter end is worse than at the beginning.

A word that will repay attention is that translated ‘pollutions’ in II Pet. ii. 20; it is the Greek word *miasma*. It occurs in the form *miasmon* in verse ten of the same chapter, and neither word occurs again in the N.T. The word *miasma* is found in the LXX version of Lev. vii. 8 “it is an abomination” and in Ezek. xxxiii. 31, where the A.V. reads ‘covetousness’ the LXX reads ‘pollutions’. The context of the earlier use of the word in II Pet. ii. is exceeding grave. The chapter opens with ‘false prophets’ and ‘false teachers’ who privily brings in damnable heresies. With ‘feigned words’ they make merchandise of the people as of the truth, and are associated both in their sin and in their condemnation with:

- (1) The angels that sinned.
- (2) The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

This false seed are likened to natural brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed, who speak evil of things they understand not, and who shall ‘utterly perish in their own corruption’. These are said to walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness (*miasmon*). This is an unsavoury topic, but so is sin, and the more horrible the travesty of truth, the more need to see the truth clearly. We have read many articles which sought to establish that all, whether true or false seed, angels or demons, will ultimately be fully and

completely reconciled, but we have never read an article advocating that doctrine which referred to II Pet. ii., for it is entirely against such a teaching.

We turn from the evil and the false to consider the good and the true, and assemble the references to the Divine promises which are the background of the chosen seed, as we have seen in Rom. ix.

“Now to Abraham and his SEED were the promises made, He saith not, And to SEEDS, as to many; but as of one, And to thy SEED, which is Christ” (Gal. iii. 16).

The Apostle does not make a general reference to the O.T.; the fact that he goes out of his way to commence his quotation with ‘and’ compels us to look for a similar reference in the book of Genesis. One such is found in Gen. xiii. 15. There, the context enlarges upon the *number* of the seed, likening them to the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then the seed promised to Abraham should also be numbered. At first this appears to contradict the emphasis placed on ‘seed’ as over against ‘seeds, as of many’ but a moment’s reflection will establish the truth, brought forward in this self same chapter, that all the seed, of whatever calling, are looked upon as in Christ. They are only the seed because they are viewed in Him, the True Seed. So in Gal. iii. 29, the Apostle confirms the view saying “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise”.

Again in this same chapter, the law is said to have been given ‘till the seed should come to whom the promise was made’, or as it is said a few verses later “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ” (Gal. iii. 19, 24). It is the exclusive privilege of the true seed to be able to look up to God and cry “Abba, Father”. In the fourth chapter Paul develops a lengthy argument, the pith of which is the essential distinction between the two seeds; the one, the son of the bondwoman, cannot be heir with the son of the freewoman, and must be ‘cast out’ (Gal. iv. 22-31). To the contrasted liberty all the true seed are called upon to stand fast (Gal. v. 1). In the epistle to the Romans, attention is focused upon the birth of Isaac as the true seed and child of promise. Sarah, destined to be the mother of this child, is by nature barren, making a definite interposition by God essential and so emphasizing that the seed is not the mere natural progeny but, being promised, are ‘reckoned for a seed’. In Rom. iv., the ‘deadness’ of both Abraham and Sarah is stressed in order that we might learn the lesson that:

“It is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be SURE TO ALL THE SEED” (Rom. iv. 16).

The miraculous element in the birth of Isaac is again stressed in the epistle to the Hebrews. First we read:

“Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful Who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable” (Heb. xi. 11, 12).

Not only the birth of Isaac, but the deliverance of Isaac on the Mount of Moriah is brought forward to teach the same lesson:

“By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called; accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure” (Heb. xi. 17-19).

Before the age times God promised eternal life (Titus i. 2); before these same age-times there was a purpose and grace given us in Christ Jesus (II Tim. i. 9). From all this evidence, we gather that God chose in Christ a seed, not according to anything that they had done or would do, either good or evil. This seed was not by natural descent, but by reckoning, by election, by choice. This seed may have often become like sheep that have gone astray, but *sheep they remained*. The false seed have often become like sows washed, but *sows they have remained*. The names of the true seed are in the book of life; they shall never perish. For their redemption, forgiveness and re-instatement the Saviour died, and in His resurrection all the seed, of whatever calling, are blessed in whatever sphere it may have pleased God to decide and all the seed are looked upon as ‘one’. The whole Bible is devoted to the story of this seed from the overthrow of the world to the end of the ages when God shall be all in all. The conflict of the ages has been the conflict of the two seeds; the initial victory of Calvary being ultimately entered by all the seed, as a comparison of Gen. iii. 15 and Rom. xvi. 20 will confirm. In this choice of the seed, grace alone operates; the true seed do not find in themselves or in their actions the slightest ground for boasting except in Him.

No.26. “Not of God.” “Of that wicked One.”
The Enemy and the tares which he sowed in God’s field.
pp. 213 - 215

We have sought to demonstrate the presence on the earth of two seeds, the one, the seed of God and of promise, the other, the seed of the wicked one. Before closing this study, it may be useful to look at the revealed character of the wicked one himself, for that will be reflected in his seed as surely as the character of God will be reflected in the true seed. We should not forget that the word ‘image’ that is used by God at the creation of Adam (Gen. i. 26, 27), is the self-same word that is used to speak of ‘molten images’ (Numb xxxiii. 52) and idolatrous images throughout the O.T. Scriptures. In the same way, the glorious title of the Saviour “The Image of the invisible God” (Col. i. 15), is used in Rom. i. 23, and in nine passages in the book of the Revelation. The wicked one has a number of titles that indicate his character. When Matthew recorded the parable of the Sower, he said ‘Then cometh *the wicked one*, and catcheth away that which is sown in his heart’; Mark says ‘*Satan* cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts’. While Luke says ‘Then cometh *the devil*’ (Matt. xiii. 19; Mark iv. 15; Luke viii. 11, 12). Here are three titles of one person and they give a fairly comprehensive account of his character and activities.

THE WICKED ONE *ho poneros*. This word is derived from *ponos* 'labour, sorrow' and so one causing pain and sorrow to others. The word takes us back to the Garden of Eden, where sorrow and sweat of face are super-added to labour, labour both in child-bearing and in food production, but a labour that is marked with vanity and vexation of spirit, for it leads to the grave where dust unto dust returns.

It is not without deep suggestiveness that the English word 'wicked' is derived from an Anglo-Saxon word *wicca* meaning a wizard or *wicce*, a witch. Here wickedness is related to the devil as surely as it is in the Scriptures. Satan is pre-eminently "The wicked one", and Cain is said to be 'of that wicked one' in the same epistle (I John iii. 12). It is highly probable that the clause in the Lord's Prayer 'deliver us from evil' should be rendered 'deliver us from the wicked one'.

SATAN. The word Satan is a Hebrew word meaning 'adversary' and with the definite article it is the title of THE great adversary of God and of the true seed. "Satan standing at his right hand to resist him" (Zech. iii. 1) shows the great adversary acting in character, for the verb 'to resist' is the Hebrew word *satan*. He is called 'the accuser' of the brethren (Rev. xii. 10). The Septuagint (The Greek O.T.) translates this title 'Satan' by *Ho diabolos*, "The Devil", which clearly establishes the identity of the Satan of the O.T. with the Devil of the New. *Diabolos* is one of the great number of Greek word derived from the word *ballo* 'to cast or throw'. Thus we have *katabole* 'overthrow', *ekballo* 'cast out', *parabole* 'throw or cast beside', hence a parable by reason of its construction. *Diaballo* means literally 'to cast through' but in practice it means to slander, to cast aspersions. In Luke xvi. 1 the unjust steward was not slandered but rightly 'accused' and so the Devil is called 'the accuser' in Rev. xii. 10 and in I Tim. iii. 11 we find the word *diabolos* used of some believers where it is translated 'slander'. In Rev. xii. 9 and xx. 2 The Devil and Satan are titles that belong to 'That old and ancient serpent' where the link with Gen. iii. is firmly established. Again in II Cor. xi. we read of the Serpent who beguiled Eve, and of Satan who transforms himself into an angel of light (II Cor. xi. 3, 14). We discover from the actual spoken testimony of the Saviour Himself a most vital truth concerning this evil antagonist of God. "He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth" (John viii. 44). To this, we must add the testimony of the first epistle of John, "The devil sinneth from the beginning" (I John iii. 8). Some have endeavoured to show that Satan was created and appointed *as such* by God and have actually maintained that he did the will of God as surely as did the Saviour! If it is revealed truth that the Devil was a murderer from the beginning, then he cannot have been the executor of the Divine will. God needs no murderer to carry out His behests, and when He appoints a man unto death, *that* cannot possibly be described as murder! John who records the words 'He was a murderer from the beginning' also tells us that 'whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer' (I John iii. 15) leaving us in no doubt concerning the term. It is clear that Satan is a fallen being, for it is written "He abode not in the truth". Further he was a liar from the beginning, and our God is a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He. We read in Job xxxviii. 7 that at the creation, when the Lord laid the foundations of the earth, the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. It would appear that at that time Satan was among them

as yet unfallen and he it is who is addressed in the person of the Antichrist “How art thou *fallen from heaven*, O Lucifer, son of the morning” (Isa. xiv. 12-15) to which stupendous event the Saviour referred when He said:

“I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luke x. 18).

Weighing all these terrible words in the balance, we find it impossible to believe that the Saviour would actually say of the true seed “Ye are of your father (*ek tou patros*) the devil” (John viii. 44). The words *ek tou patros* ‘out of the father’ find an echo in verse 47 ‘He that is OF GOD (*ek tou Theou*) heareth the word of God; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not OF GOD (*ek tou Theon*)’. Note carefully the words here. The passage does not teach that if a person persistently refuses to hear the Word of God, he thereby exposes himself to the possibility of being numbered with the evil seed who are ‘not of God’; the truth is the other way round, those addressed heard not the words of God, because they were the evil seed. HEARING *the word of God is a mark of the true seed*. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear”, suggests the same teaching. So we get such passages as the following “He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me”, which is a spiritual anticipation of the day when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. To some the testimony of the Saviour was a hard saying “Who can hear it?” “Why do ye not understand My speech?” said the Lord, and His answer is ‘even because ye cannot hear My word’ (John viii. 43). “He that is of God heareth God’s words: YE THEREFORE HEAR THEM NOT, because ye are *not of God*” (John viii. 47). “Ye believe not, BECAUSE YE ARE NOT OF My sheep” (John x. 26). Again we draw attention to this deep saying. It does not say “Because ye believe not ye cannot *become* My sheep”. Those addressed were not His sheep and as only the sheep hear, they *not* being sheep, *could not hear*. All this may be in the realm of high doctrine and scarcely comes within the province of the Evangelist. It is nevertheless just as true as John iii. 16, and is a warning to all who preach not to load the English word ‘whosoever’ beyond the legitimate burden of its Greek equivalent.

The English word ‘whosoever’ is exceedingly wide in scope, apparently precluding none, but in many passages it translates the Greek *pas ho*, which literally rendered, makes the blessing limited to a certain class, instead of being offered universally. Thus we read in the original:

Pas ho pisteuon “Every believing one” (John iii. 16).

Pas hos epikalesetai “Every calling one” (Rom. x. 13).

Ho thelon “The willing one” (Rev. xxii. 17).

We now continue our examination of the teaching of the Scriptures concerning ‘the seed’ and shall be able to do so without the liability to ascribe to the evil seed that which pertains only to the family of faith. Let us never forget that in themselves as far as merit or demerit is concerned, there is no difference between the true seed and the false. Ephesians, which ministers to the high calling of the Mystery, nevertheless reminds the recipients of the grace there outpoured that they were:

“By nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Eph. ii. 3).

We should observe moreover that the words translated ‘others’ here are the Greek words *hoi loipoi* ‘the left’, ‘the residue’. We should indeed walk with all lowliness and meekness as we consider the unmerited grace that has been bestowed upon us.

**No.27. “Their blot is that they are not His children”
(Amended translation, Deut. xxxii. 5).
pp. 233 - 235**

There are certain folk who have what are called ‘green fingers’, fruit, flower and vegetable responding to their care where with others no such success follows. Some of these folk have an intuitive faculty in discriminating between seeds and bulbs, forecasting fairly accurately what others have to wait and see at time of harvest. While both good and bad seed must grow together until the harvest, there are one or two traits that, to the discerning eye, indicate what stock they are of. Such attitudes to Divine things as are indicated by the words ‘despise’, ‘mock’, ‘reject’ are among the number of terms that act as an index to essential character. The Scriptures make abundantly clear that the seed were not chosen for any qualities they possessed, but by the sheer choice of God, yet to leave the matter there is to express but half a truth; there is another side of the story that needs to be given attention. Esau and Jacob chosen, and this before either had done any good or evil that the purpose of God according to election should stand (Rom. ix. 11). Nevertheless, Esau and Jacob manifest very different attitudes to the things of God. It is written that ‘Esau despised his birthright’ (Gen. xxv. 34) and is called a ‘profane person’ (Heb. xii. 16). It is true that Jacob cheated both his blind father and his brother, and no words can be too severe in condemning so despicable an act, and yet, if we probe to discover *the reason* for Rebekah’s plan and of Jacob’s complicity, it is that they were both most obviously desirous that Jacob should be in line with the blessing of Abraham, a blessing which was ultimately bestowed freely and without persuasion upon Jacob’s departure to Padan-aram (Gen. xxviii. 3-6). So though one might call Jacob many unsavoury names, one thing could never be said of him that he did despise his birthright. In conjunction with this, we might observe that where the A.V. reads that “Jacob was a PLAIN man” (Gen. xxv. 27), it should be kept steadily in mind that the Hebrew word translated ‘plain’ is translated ‘perfect’ of Job (Job i. 1) and of Noah (Gen. vi. 9), a quality related to one’s generations as of Noah, and a quality additional to that of being upright, as of Job. The word is used in the Song of Solomon twice of the beloved as ‘undefiled’. What was it that drew down such severe judgment upon Israel in the wilderness? In the book of Numbers, the murmuring against the dealing of the Lord with them is said to have given them such an answer to their demand for a flesh diet, that the Lord said:

“Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; but even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have DESPISED the LORD which is among you, and have wept before him, saying, Why came we forth out of Egypt?” (Numb. xi. 19, 20).

The sentence of wandering for forty years in the wilderness pronounced upon Israel until all that generation that had come out of Egypt with the exception of Caleb and Joshua had died, provides another illustration:

“Doubtless ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I swear to make you dwell therein, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which YE HAVE DESPISED” (Numb. xiv. 30, 31).

Ten of the twelve who went in to spy out the land brought up a SLANDER upon the land (Numb. xiv. 36). While there is no real connection between the words ‘espied’ and ‘despised’ they look and sound enough alike to suggest a paronomasia. God *espied* the land (Ezek. xx. 6) but many of the generation that came out of Egypt *despised* it. Coming a little nearer to our times, we find this same word that is translated ‘despise’ used in the book of Samuel:

“They have not REJECTED thee, but they have REJECTED Me, that I should not reign over them” (I Sam. viii. 7).

Saul, the people’s choice, and the symbol of their rejection of the Lord, is himself charged with rejecting the word of the Lord (I Sam. xv. 23-26), is reminded that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and is himself ‘rejected’ as King (I Sam. xvi. 1); ‘refused’ in verse seven being the same in the original. The depth of this rejection can be estimated when we read Lam. iii. 45:

“Thou hast made us as the offscouring and *refuse* in the midst of the people”,

and remember that this is often the estimate of the false seed of the true, as the Apostle indicates, when he said:

“We are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day” (I Cor. iv. 13).

When the raven was sent out of the Ark, seeing that it could feed on the carcasses that floated everywhere after the Flood had done its work, as an unclean bird it found what suited it. The dove however returned, finding no place for the sole of its foot and nothing congenial to its nature. So the two seeds give occasional indication of their basic character by the things that they ‘despise’. The culmination of this attitude is seen in the despising and the rejecting of the Saviour Himself (Isa. liii. 3), and it is on those who are ‘despisers’ that the doom of Acts xiii. 41 is pronounced. When Moses in his great prophetic song saw that some of Israel would not bear the mark of being the children of God (Deut. xxxii. 5) but were a perverse and crooked generation, he put his finger on the root of the evil saying that they ‘lightly esteemed’ the Rock of their salvation. They who crucify unto themselves afresh the Son of God and put Him to an open shame, like Esau, the profane person, find no room for repentance, the two passages, Heb. vi. and xii., being in true structural correspondence. In direct contrast with this act of *despising* the Divine plan and provision is the *delight* taken in it by the true seed. If Numb. xiv. tells us that the ten spies together with those who agreed with them ‘despised’ the land of

promise, Numb. xiv. tells us that the argument of Caleb and Joshua was based on 'delighting' not 'despising'.

"If the LORD delight in us, then He will bring us into this land, and give it us"
(Numb. xiv. 8).

The true seed may for a time become envious at the prosperity of the wicked, but will ultimately exclaim with Asaph:

"There is none upon earth that I *desire* beside Thee" (Psa. lxxiii. 25),

the word 'desire' being the same in the original as the word 'delight' even as at last, when Israel are restored and blessed, her name shall be *Hephzi-bah* 'My delight is in her' (Isa. lxii. 4), and the land itself will be 'a delightsome (*chephets*) land' (Mal. iii. 12). The true seed 'glory' in the Lord, they are full of praise and thanksgiving where the false seed murmur and despise the evidences of divine pleasure and purpose. It is usually a bad thing for a preacher even to seek to know how far his ministry is acceptable to his hearers, it being wisest to seek a conscience void of offence, do all to the glory of God, seek honestly the blessing of the hearer and leave all the rest in the hand of God. But, on one occasion, after having conducted a series of studies on the epistle to the Ephesians, the leader of the meeting said to the present writer, 'You *do* glory in your calling, don't you?' and for this unsolicited testimony we gave thanks, for it is just exactly in line with what we have seen, that the true seed delights in the things of God, whereas, in many instances, the false seed but despise them. We could pursue this theme further. Perhaps one outstanding passage in the N.T. should at least be mentioned and that is in II Pet. iii. 'There shall come in the last days SCOFFERS' and it will be remembered that Psa. i., which most clearly divides the true from the false, puts in contrast 'The seat of the SCORNFUL' with the man whose 'DELIGHT is in the law of the Lord' (Psa. i. 1, 2). The day of harvest manifests the one by its fruit in its season, saying, 'the ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away'. Despising, scorning, lightly esteeming, the evil seed but anticipate the day when by their fruits they will make manifest that they are but the tares whose end is to be destroyed. Let those who have any evidence in their hearts and lives that such a destiny does not await them, remember afresh that none are numbered among the true seed because of anything that they have done, but that the favour manifested in their election to such an honour is all of unconditioned mercy and of sovereign grace.

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth. (Second Series).

No.72. (30) GALATIANS. “Jerusalem which is above” (iv. 26). Its dispensational place. pp. 27, 28

In the covenants and promises to Abraham, a ‘land’, the land of Canaan, the Holy land, the land known as Palestine, occupies a large place. In the covenants and promises made to David a ‘city’ is very prominent, “the city of David”: a city which the Lord did ‘choose’ of which ‘glorious things’ are spoken, Jerusalem, the holy city, a city to be called in the future by many wondrous names, such as ‘a city of truth’, ‘the city of the great king’. It was to Jerusalem that David took the first evidence of his great triumph (I Sam. xvii. 54); it was in Jerusalem that David reigned over all Israel and Judah (II Sam. v. 5). It is this city both in its desolations and in its glorious restoration that fills such prophets as Isaiah with wondrous imagery. The date line of the great prophecy of Dan. ix. is drawn at the time when the command was given to build Jerusalem and all the sorrow that filled the Saviour’s breast, as all the rejection that He endured, was focused at Jerusalem. He must needs go unto Jerusalem, it could not be but that He must die at Jerusalem.

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not” (Matt. xxiii. 37).

It was the same literal and earthly city that was marked out for the Pentecostal manifestation and further extension of opportunity to Israel; the disciples were bidden to ‘tarry’ in the city of Jerusalem to await enduement from on high, and Jerusalem was the centre from which was preached the gospel by the twelve until the call and commission of Paul recorded in Acts xiii.

While the earthly city Jerusalem dominates these Scriptures, we have the hope of Israel, the hope that the kingdom should be restored again unto Israel, the goal unto which the twelve tribes hoped to come, and its sphere of blessing is the earth. The fitting prayer is “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”, and the hope is focused upon that day when the Lord shall stand upon the Mount of Olives.

As the sad fact of Israel’s non-repentance became evident to the illuminated mind, another sphere of blessing comes into prominence. For the first time in Scripture a ‘heavenly country’, a ‘heavenly city’, a ‘city which hath foundations’, a ‘heavenly Jerusalem’, comes into the narrative of Scripture. For the first time we learn that Abraham who received the unconditional promise of the land and of the seed, was encouraged to sojourn in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tents,

and looking for a city that was to be prepared for him, a city associated with a heavenly country, and seen 'afar off' (Heb. xi. 8-10, 13).

When we turn to Heb. xii., and read of the two mountains, Sinai with its blackness and darkness, its death and its terror, and Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, the parallel between this allegory and that of Gal. iv. is most obvious. It is one of the many incidental evidences that the epistle to the Galatians was the 'covering letter' to that addressed to the Hebrews; such a covering letter would fully explain the absence of Paul's name in the introduction of the epistle to the Hebrews as it also explains the extraordinary omission of any reference to circumcision in that same epistle. Moreover, the fact that both Galatians (Gal. vi. 11), and Hebrews (Heb. xiii. 22) at their close refer to the Apostle's writing with 'large letters' and yet sending them an exhortation in a letter of 'few words' is readily understood if the two letters, the one to the Galatians and the other to the Hebrews, accompanied each other.

It is beside the purpose of our present study to attempt a systematic examination of the parallels that exist between these two epistles, or of the way in which the one epistle supplements the other. This we may do at the close of the present exposition. What does come before us with great force is that the emphasis in Heb. xi. and xii. concerning Abraham's association by overcoming faith with the heavenly Jerusalem, unites this epistle with that to the Galatians as entertaining a similar calling, for there not only are all believers reckoned as Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise, but Jerusalem which is above and free, is their mother (Gal. iv. 26).

Gentile believers have no place in Israel's earthly inheritance except as proselytes or subservient nations, but Gentile believers whose faith follows that of Abraham, who was himself one of the Gentile nations and received the promises, being justified by faith before receiving the sign of circumcision (Rom. iv. 9-14), such believing Gentiles have a place in the second sphere of blessing, the heavenly calling of Heb. iii. 1, the heavenly Jerusalem of Heb. xi. and xii., for Jerusalem which is above is their 'mother', the goal of their faith.

In Gal. iii. 8 and 22 the Scriptures are personified, being made to 'foresee' and to 'conclude'. In Gal. iv. 22-31 the Apostle takes this personification a stage further, lifting out the history of Sarah and Isaac, and of Hagar and Ishmael, allegorizing the details, to enforce the essential differences between the two covenants.

The A.V. reads, 'which things are an allegory', but Paul uses the verb *allegoreo*, saying in effect 'I am going to allegorize this piece of O.T. history, but would have you to remember that the record in Genesis is no mere allegory, but a record of sober fact'.

"The modern and common usage of the word *allegoria* is thus quite different from this Scriptural definition. According to the modern sense it is taken to mean a fictitious narrative which has another and deeper meaning than that which is expressed Allegory is always stated in the *past* tense, and *never in the future*. Allegory is thus distinguished from Prophecy. The Allegory brings other

teaching out of past events, while prophecy tells us events that are yet to come.”
(*Figure of Speech Used in the Bible.*—Dr. E. W. Bullinger).

No.73. (31) GALATIANS.
Gal. iv. 21 - v. 10 --- The call to Freedom.
“To the liberty stand fast” (v. 1).
pp. 51 - 54

In the last two articles we were considering the allegory of the two sons of Abraham which occupies Gal. iv. 27 - v. 1, but did not get so far as to include Gal. v. 1 in our study. This verse concludes the allegory by a call to stand fast to the freedom which Christ has given, the concluding member of this section being Gal. v. 2-10 which is Paul’s testimony to those placing themselves under law.

The call to stand fast cannot be passed over without careful examination, for it crystallizes much of the desire of the Apostle and the standing of the believer. It is a call to us as well as to them, and upon our response to this call our peace and experimental growth in grace depends.

A considerable variety of readings are presented by the manuscripts, which, in the language of Lightfoot ‘are the more perplexing, in that they seriously effect the punctuation, and thereby the whole texture of the passage’. The reader who could follow any indication of the way in which these various readings occur and are distributed, would be already independent of any help we could give in these pages, and to those unacquainted with the subject, mere citations of manuscripts Aleph, A, B, C, F, G, P, etc., would prove of little value. The various readings found, may be summarized under three headings:

- (1) The position of *oun* ‘therefore’.
(a) Before “stand” (b) After “liberty” (c) omitted altogether.
- (2) The position of *hemas* ‘us’.
(a) Before “Christ”, (b) After “Christ”, (c) After “made free”.
- (3) A third and more complicated variation is the presence or absence of *he* ‘which’ after the word ‘liberty’.

With this analysis of the different readings of the Manuscripts, we place together for comparison the A.V. and the R.V. of this verse and pass on to its exposition.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. v. 1 A.V.).

“With freedom did Christ set us free: stand fast therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage” (Gal. v. 1 R.V.).

As in most cases of various readings, it is rather a matter of emphasis than of any change in doctrine.

“*To the liberty stand.*” The words *tek eleutheria* are ‘a dative of reference’. Ellicott looks back for the reference, and says that it refers to the exact sphere *in which*, and to which the action is limited. It appears however upon closer consideration that the Apostle is not referring so much to the sphere in which our freedom is found, but rather to the object *to which* we are to stand. Following immediately upon the conclusion of the allegory “We are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” comes the exhortation “To the freedom stand”.

The A.V. reads “Christ hath made us free”, but the verb must be taken *historically* and translated “Christ set you free”. The use of *eleutheroo* ‘to make free’ in Galatians, looks back to the doctrine to be revealed in John viii. 32 and its reference to Abraham’s seed, and looks forward to the fuller presentation of the theme in the epistle to the Romans. This most important doctrinal word occurs just seven times in the N.T. It would be a useful thing to have the complete set of references before us.

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John viii. 32).

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John viii. 36).

“Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. vi. 18).

“But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life” (Rom. vi. 22).

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. viii. 2).

“Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 21).

“To the liberty wherewith Christ set us free, stand fast” (Gal. v. 1).

The freedom of John viii. is the freedom that comes from knowing the Truth, a freedom that comes from Christ as “The Son”. The implications of course were that many of His hearers were not free, and this was resented by them.

“They answered Him, we be Abraham’s seed, were never in bondage to any man.”

Christ does not allegorize the record of Hagar and Sarah as Paul does; He differentiates between the true seed of Abraham by another test. “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin”, and instead of saying that “Abraham had two sons”, the Saviour pursues another thought and speaks of ‘two fathers’!

“Abraham is our father If ye were children of Abraham, ye would do the works of Abraham ye are of your father the devil” (John viii. 39-44).

In Gal. iv. 21 - v. 1 Paul keeps the issue to one feature “You are either bond or free”, but in Romans he can introduce a second form of service, showing that those who are really ‘free’ nevertheless become ‘servants to righteousness’ and ‘servants to God’. Again in John it is the ‘Truth’ that makes free. The doctrine of Justification by faith is not in view. In Galatians freedom from the yoke of the law is in view, but in Romans the deeper doctrines of freedom from ‘sin’ and freedom from ‘the bondage of corruption’ and

‘freedom from the law of sin and death’ are made known. The whole of Paul’s ministry is characterized by this trumpet call to liberty, the word in one or more of its forms occurring in Paul’s epistles some 28 times.

Had the Apostle intended to speak of entanglement, he had the choice of two words; he could have used a word that meant to be ensnared, as is used in Matt. xxii. 15 “entangle Him in His talk”; or he could have used *empleko* as he did in II Tim. ii. 4 “no man that warreth entangleth himself”. He uses neither however, but selects *enecho*, a word that means ‘to hold in’ as with a ‘yoke’ which Weymouth renders ‘Be not hampered’.

The intention of the Apostle is best perceived by passing from the verb ‘to hold in’ to the noun, the thing that does the holding—he calls it ‘the yoke of bondage’.

Yokes were of two kinds. There was the yoke that was used for cattle (Numb. xix. 2); but we read that Jeremiah made bonds and yokes to fit the human neck as tokens of servitude.

To Israel the Lord said:

“I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright” (Lev. xxvi. 13).

When Isaiah looked forward to the ‘acceptable year of the Lord’ he uses this figure of freedom from the yoke:

“For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian” (Isa. ix. 4).

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing” (Isa. x. 27).

“I will break the Assyrian in My land, and upon My mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders” (Isa. xiv. 25).

Acts xv. is devoted to the twofold question:

- (1) Is it needful that Gentile believers should be circumcised and keep the law?
- (2) Should they be asked to abstain from certain practices because of the sensitiveness of Jewish believers?

Paul refers to either this council at Jerusalem or to a similar one in Gal. ii. and his reference to the yoke of bondage would come with force to those who may have been leaning somewhat to Peter’s authority.

The Apostle of the Gentiles was not only “Hebrew of the Hebrews”, he was a citizen of Tarsus, and a Roman citizen also. He had a wide knowledge of the ways and customs of the nations, and he knew that the Galatian Christians would be personally acquainted

both with literal slavery and with the process adopted in setting a slave free. To these there are allusions in Gal. v. 1 which must not be missed.

The following is a translation of an inscription found at Delphi, dating B.C.200-199:

“Date. Apollo the Pythian *bought* from Sosibius of Amphissa, *for freedom*, a female slave, whose name in Nicaea, by race a Roman, *with a price* of three minae of silver and a half-mina. Former seller according to the law: Eumnastus of Amphissa. The *price* he hath received. The purchase however, Nicaea hath committed unto Apollo, *for freedom*.”

The very words ‘bought with a price’ and ‘for freedom’ show how closely Paul followed the wording of these records.

In numerous records the emancipated slave is expressly allowed henceforth to ‘do the things that he will’, to which Paul makes an allusion in Gal. v. 17; and it is expressly forbidden under heavy penalties that such an enfranchised slave should ever ‘be made a slave’ again. These and other allusions with photographs and original wording of inscriptions can be seen in Deissmann’s *Light from the Ancient East*.

To us today the clarion call of Paul resounds. It is as imperative as ever it was that those whom Christ has set free should ‘stand’ to that freedom, and refuse any attempt, however plausible, to put upon their necks the yoke of bondage from which by grace they have been so gloriously set free.

With this call the Apostle concludes his ‘allegory’ and Gal. v. 2-9 completes the closing member of the section which commences at chapter iv. 21, with the words ‘Tell me’ (*legete*) and closes appropriately with the words ‘I Paul say’ (*lego*).

No.74. (32) GALATIANS.
Gal. iv. 21 - v. 10 --- The call to Freedom.
Fallen from grace (v. 2 - 9).
pp. 70 - 74

This section opens with a rhetorical question “Tell me?” (Gal. iv. 21) and closes with Paul ‘telling’ in very strong terms the results that must come from the Galatians deflection.

Paul ‘tells’ these wavering believers, three very serious facts:

- (1) That if they should be circumcised, Christ will profit them nothing.
- (2) That every one so circumcised is under an obligation to perform the whole law.
- (3) That whoever attempts self justification by means of the law, is (a) separated from Christ, and (b) fallen from grace.

The three items are prefaced by the emphatic pronoun “*ego*”:

“Behold, *I* Paul, *I* say to you.”

The remainder of the argument is prefaced by the emphatic pronoun *Hemeis* “we”.

“*We*”, however, “*we* are waiting, in Spirit, for the hope of righteousness by faith”.

This statement is followed by three observations:

- (1) That in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by love.
- (2) That they had run well, but someone has hindered them, and this persuasion did not come from him that called them.
- (3) This hindering influence is likened to a little leaven, which leavens the whole lump.

The structure of this passage is as follows:

- A | v. 2. I (emphatic pronoun) Paul say unto you.
- B | 2, 3. Circumcision and the “whole” law. |
 - a | If circumcised. \ Negative.
 - b | Christ profits *nothing*. /
 - a | Every man who is circumcised. \ Positive.
 - b | Debtor . . . *whole* law. /
- C | 4-5. Grace and Faith. |
 - c | Christ—*none* effect. \ Negative.
 - d | Justified by law. /
 - c | Spirit . . . hope . . . \ Positive.
 - d | Righteousness by faith. /
- B | 6-9. Circumcision and the “whole” lump leavened. |
 - a1 | In Christ Jesus.
 - b1 | Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision.
 - b1 | But faith.
 - a1 | In-working by love.
 - a2 | Ye did run well.
 - b2 | Who hindered?
 - a2 | This persuasion.
 - b2 | The little leaven.
- A | 10. I (emphatic pronoun) have confidence in you.

When the Apostle would impress his hearers with the solemnity or importance of his message, he occasionally used the expression “I Paul” or “of me Paul”. With such a writer and dealing as he was with such truth, none of these features should be lightly regarded. Accordingly we observe that the phrase ‘I Paul’ is used by him as follows:

“Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ” (II Cor. x. 1).

These words introduce a passage which deals with the Apostle's individual position, his official character and authority and the subject is continued to the end of the epistle. It is therefore fittingly introduced in this very personal way.

Passing Gal. v. 2 which is the passage under review, we come to Eph. iii. 1, where the distinctive ministry and dispensation of the Mystery is introduced. Again, we have the personal formula:

“For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles” (Eph. iii. 1).

This passage finds an echo in Col. i. 23 where, dealing with the same claim he said “Whereof I Paul am made a minister”. So to assure the Thessalonians of the intensity of his desire to see them and of the equal intensity of Satanic opposition, he wrote:

“Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us” (I Thess. ii. 18).

In the epistle to Philemon which is so full of the practical outworking of grace, we find the Apostle undertaking to be surety for Onesimus, saying:

“I Paul have written it with mine own hand, I will repay it” (Philemon 19).

So, we are prepared by this introduction to Gal. v. 2 to discover that some solemn words are about to be uttered. Solemn indeed must be that defection of the Galatians from truth that makes Christ to profit them nothing.

“If ye be circumcised.” The verb is a present subjunctive. It does not refer to anything done in the past. It does not say “If ye are or have been circumcised” for that would have excluded Paul himself. It is the contemplated act that is in mind, imposed upon them with great authority (Acts xv. 1), and having the added inducement of greater security (“Ye cannot be saved”), accompanied by immunity from persecution (Gal. vi. 12). The rite itself is not in question, it is the reason why the Gentile Christian was submitting to it that was the Apostle's concern, for it more than suggested that Christ's redemptive work was not alone sufficient for justification and life.

To all such Paul gave the solemn warning “Christ shall profit you nothing”, the R.V. alters this to “Christ will profit you nothing”. There is perhaps a glimpse at ‘the hope of the righteousness by faith’ (verse 5) when all who are thus addressed will find that they have no deliverer, no justifier, no Saviour. Closely associated in the Apostle's mind was this rite of circumcision and ‘profit’. As a consequence of the teaching of Rom. ii. he puts into the mouth of the imaginary objector the words:

“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?” (Rom. iii. 1).

In this case, speaking of a Jew who was rightly under the law, the Apostle's answer is ‘much every way’.

He had however in Rom. ii. 25 said:

“For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law”,

and this gives point to his argument in Gal. v. 3:

“I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.”

Paul, by the use of the word ‘again’, seems to suggest that he had told the Galatians this important fact before. What he had said to them during his visits we do not know, except that one address is recorded in Acts xiii.; we are sure however that there would be harmony between his several discourses, and he who so pointedly said:

“By Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts xiii. 39),

would not leave his hearers without definitely instructing them regarding this law and its terms. We need not go outside the epistle, however, to discover that Paul had already testified concerning circumcision and the obligation to do the whole law. Gal. ii. should be re-read with this in view. Again, in Gal. iii. 10-12, while circumcision is not actually mentioned, it is implied in the title “As many as are of the works of the law”, for such come under the obligation to ‘continue in all things’ with the dreadful alternative of the ‘curse’ before them. So when Paul ‘testified again’ in Gal. v. 3 he was but saying the same thing. The Apostle emphasizes the ‘whole law’, even as he had said ‘all things which are written in the book of the law to do them’.

While it is convenient for students to subdivide the law into several parts, and speak of the moral law, the ceremonial law, etc., we must remember that for the purposes of justification, the law is one. We are either saved by reason of our perfect law-keeping, or we are saved by grace alone. James equally with Paul saw the oneness of the law, saying “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James ii. 10). “The linsey-woolsey garment” of the Puritan hymn is intolerable; a mixture of the righteousness of God through faith, with the attempts of fallen man to present a righteousness is impossible.

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. v. 4).

Translators have been considerably exercised over the best way of rendering into English the original word translated in the A.V. ‘to become of none effect’, especially as it is in what is known as a ‘pregnant structure’ the verb being followed by *apo* ‘away from’ and implying the mental addition of some such verb as *eschoristhete* ‘separated’. The R.V. reads: “severed from Christ” with a marginal alternative, “Gk. brought to nought”. Young’s *Literal Translation* is “Ye were freed from Christ”. Rotherham reads “Ye have been set aside from Christ”. Weymouth has: “Christ has become nothing to any of you”; while J.N.D. very freely renders the passage “ye are deprived of all profit from Christ as separated (from Him)”, and to this he appends a lengthy footnote, saying *katergethete* is “a very hard word to translate. The active means to render anything useless and unprofitable, or miss an opportunity. Here it is passive and with *apo*”.

It is evident from these different attempts to give, in English, the meaning of this passage, that it is one of great difficulty. We cannot hope to succeed where so many eminently fitted for the task have scored only partial success, but we can examine the words in question and so provide the reader with a background to whatever translation the limitation of language shall ultimately compel us to accept.

Katergethete apo Christou. The root of the word *katargeo* is *erg* ‘work’, a word that the science of physics has made familiar to the English ear. The verb used in Gal. v. 4 is the aorist passive, and is made up of *kata* and *argos*. *Kata* often loses its distinctive force of ‘down’, in combination; it usually intensifies the action of the verb.

Argos, meaning idle, is composed of *a* ‘not’, and *ergon* ‘work’. *Katargeo* does not occur in the Septuagint version of the O.T. so there is no appeal to Hebrew usage or equivalents. It occurs in the N.T. 27 times, of which number 1 is used by Luke and the remaining 26 by Paul. We will not survey the whole of these 26 occurrences, although for a full understanding not one can be passed over, but for our present purpose we must be content with the occurrences found in the parallel epistle to the Romans. They are 6 in number, and are as follows:

Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? (Rom. iii. 3).

Do we then make void the law through faith? (iii. 31).

Faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. (iv. 14).

That the body of sin might be destroyed. (vi. 6).

If the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. (vii. 2).

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held. (vii. 6).

In the first two occurrences in Romans, the verb *katargeo* is active, in the remaining four it is passive. The references in Rom. vii. show how the word can be used in the sense of complete nullification, abrogation or evacuation of law—the law being completely abrogated and devoid of power by death. It is in this sense that the Apostle uses it in Gal. v. 4. The believer who puts himself under grace, dies to the law. In the one case the law has nothing to do with him, in the other Christ can do nothing for him.

The A.V. says “Christ is become of no effect unto you” whereas the original says rather ‘You are beyond the operation of Christ’. Just as Paul could use the word ‘free’ in an evil sense on Rom. vi. 20 “when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness” so he used *katargeo* here.

In the estimate of Paul, and in all who know the truth, conversion and justification is not a mere change of opinion, it is a matter of death followed by newness of life.

“I by law to law died, that I might live unto God” (Gal. ii. 19).

If after that I “build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor” (Gal. ii. 18).

If after being delivered from the bondage of idolatry, I turn again to weak and beggarly elements, what place can Christ have in my life or future?

As we have earlier indicated the addition of *apo* in this phrase complicates the translation. We must suppose the mental addition of some such word as *echoristhete*, so that the statement reads 'ye are as nothing as regards Christ, ye are entirely separated from him' as in Rom. vii. 2, 5. (*Lightfoot in loco*).

To conclude the dreadful list of consequences, the Apostle says:

"Whosoever of you are (seeking to be) justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace"
(Gal. v. 4).

This is but the doctrinal restatement of the allegory, where the child of the bondwoman was 'cast out'. If, says Paul, you voluntarily take up your stand with Hagar and Ishmael who were 'cast out', you surely will not be surprised if you 'fall out' of grace.

The Apostle has more to teach us before the subject is cleared and his further arguments must be considered in future articles. Meanwhile let none trifle with Grace. It is easier for a believer to fall out of grace by attempting self justification, than for a sinner who falls into sin. For the latter there is abundant provision; for the former, the way is beset with peril.

No.75. (33) GALATIANS.
Gal. iv. 21 - v. 10 --- The call to Freedom.
"Faith which worketh by love" (v. 5 - 10).
pp. 88 - 93

We have seen how the Apostle viewed the legalizing tendency of the Galatians, and have considered the solemnity of his warning that any one who seeks justification by any other way than that of faith must find:

- (1) That to such, Christ profits nothing.
- (2) That all who thus seek make themselves debtors to do the whole law.
- (3) That Christ becomes of none effect to such.
- (4) That they have fallen from grace.

It is not the Apostle's custom to rely only upon warning; he often turns from such methods to that of personal appeal and personal experience, presenting the positive side of the truth in its warmest and most attractive form. This we have seen him do in Gal. ii. 15-21. He discontinues the use of 'you' and 'ye' and now uses 'we'.

"For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" (Gal. v. 5).

Gar, which is translated 'for' is a logical conjunction, being a contraction of *ge* 'verily' and *ara* 'therefore', and expresses reason, cause, motive, etc., of what has been previously said. Sometimes it introduces a reason that is unexpressed, but which is evidently in the writer's mind, as in Rom. iv. 2. Occasionally it is used in the adversative sense of 'but' as in Rom. xv. 4 and Phil. iii. 20 as Macknight has declared, and if this be the case in Gal. v. 5, we must read the passage, with Bloomfield:

"(But such is not, I trust, the case with us), FOR *we*, etc."

Paul, therefore, is about to institute a most pointed contrast with those who by their defection and legalism were falling from grace.

"For we through the spirit wait."

Pneumati is without the article, it is moreover preceded by *en* 'in', and is put into the dative case. The dative case is that case which is used when we say 'give *me* the book' where of course, the fuller statement must be 'give *to me* the book'.

The Dative implies juxtaposition, and in four ways:

(1) Association. (2) Transmission. (3) Reference. (4) Accessory.

Under the heading 'accessory' is placed 'sphere' in which some quality inheres. So Matt. v. 3 and 8, 'poor in spirit' and 'pure in heart', and Eph. ii. 3 'by nature' are examples of this usage.

This is the meaning of 'through the spirit' *pneumati* in Gal. v. 5, it cannot refer to the Holy Spirit, or to His gifts, neither can it be construed to mean 'spiritually'; it is the sphere in which justification by faith is attained, and 'spirit' *pneumati* is contrasted with 'flesh', 'works' and 'law', in this epistle (Gal. iii. 3; v. 16, etc.) and aligned with 'grace' and 'faith'. In this sphere the Apostle said 'we wait'.

Apekdexomai occurs 7 times in the N.T., every occurrence being in Paul's epistles. No other writer of the N.T. uses the word. The passages are Rom. viii. 19, 23 and 25; I Cor. i. 7; Gal. v. 5; Phil. iii. 20 and Heb. ix. 28. In every case apart from Gal. v., the expectation is of something future, and is associated in the context either with the word 'hope' or its substance. It does not follow that Gal. v. must therefore be put into future; it is sufficient that there is a 'hope' to be 'eagerly expected'. In Gal. v. it is not the future manifestation of the sons of God, or the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; it is 'the hope of righteousness' that is expected. It is entirely foreign to the purpose of the Apostle in Galatians to distract attention from the main issue, namely 'justification is by faith alone', to some future manifestation or conferring of righteousness. He cannot mean 'the hope, namely eternal life, which the righteous have'. The argument surely is not:

"The one rebuked by Paul thinks he *has* righteousness, which he attains to under law, but we just *wait* for it to be revealed in some future day."

The argument surely is rather:

“You indeed expect to attain unto righteousness by the works of law, we on the other hand expect righteousness only in the sphere of spirit and by faith.”

Any exposition that diverts attention for a moment from the point at issue namely “How is righteousness attained?” must be wrong. Moreover, justification is a present ‘standing’. The genitive ‘hope of righteousness’ is not necessarily the genitive of possession, it is not necessary to translate the phrase either “The hope whose object is righteousness” or “The hope which the righteous entertain”. There is another use of the Genitive which conforms to all the requirements of the context, the genitive of apposition.

“Sometimes the genitive is put by way of apposition, in which case some such words as these have to be supplied; ‘that is to say’ ‘which is’, etc.”
(*Figures of Speech*, Dr. E. W. Bullinger).

So when we read “The temple of His body” we understand it to mean “The temple, *that is to say*, His body” (John ii. 21).

“The sign of circumcision” was circumcision itself (Rom. iv. 11).
“The earnest of the Spirit” means the earnest, which is the Spirit (II Cor. v. 5).

So Gal. v. 5 can be translated “The hope which is righteousness” or as we should say in modern speech “We hope to be justified in the sphere of spirit through faith”.

Following this personal summary of the position of the believer in Christ whose hope is not the flesh, law or works, but in spirit, grace and faith, Paul gives the following conclusion:

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Gal. v. 6).

A logical writer like the Apostle would never introduce these words with ‘for’ unless some logical connection were intended; an inspired writer as he was, must have a perfect reason for this sequel. Yet at first sight the connection is not obvious. Had he said, “For in Jesus Christ, circumcision avails nothing, faith only is of any avail” it would seem to round off his argument. He has, however, most disconcertingly introduced ‘uncircumcision’ alongside ‘circumcision’, and has added ‘work’ and ‘love’ to faith, thereby, on the surface, robbing his previous argument of the idea of ‘faith only’.

There is, therefore, something hidden in this new presentation that challenges our interest and will yield precious truth if investigated in prayerful dependence upon the Lord.

First, we observe that this passage is one of three where something similar is found:

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

“Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God” (I Cor. vii. 19).

If the statement ‘circumcision availeth nothing’ sets aside any hope in the flesh, the addition of ‘uncircumcision’ really sets aside anything the flesh can either do, or be. Treat the flesh ceremonially, or leave it naturally, the result is the same—nothing avails. Paul refuses to go half way, and change from the circumcision party, to the uncircumcision party. “A plague on both your houses” he might say. “Uncircumcision can become as much a ground of boasting as circumcision—away with both.”

The passage I Cor. vii. 19 is parallel with one in I Cor. iii. 7:

“So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase (is EVERYTHING)”,

for so the mind must finish the sentence. So in I Cor. vii. 19 “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God is THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS”. The words ‘but faith that worketh by love’ round off the passage much the same as the mentally supplied additions do in these citations from I Corinthians. The only thing that avails is ‘Faith that worketh by love’.

The next question we must ask is why does the Apostle not simply say ‘but faith’ and leave it there? No one who has followed his argument so far can be left in any doubt that ‘faith’ apart from legal or carnal ordinances is the only instrument in justification. The time, therefore, has come when he should make it quite plain that ‘Faith only’ does not mean an empty, lifeless faith. We are reminded by James that the devils believe that there is one God, but although their faith is true, that faith will not save them. We may appreciate the turn taken by Paul here, by turning aside for a moment to consider a parallel argument used by him in connection with the place of the law. In both the epistle to the Romans and to the Galatians the law is said to ‘work wrath’, and to have entered that ‘sin might abound’. The law is shown to have been ‘weak because of the flesh’ (Rom. iv. 15; v. 20; viii. 3).

In Galatians neither life nor righteousness can come by the law, and all who are under the law are under the curse; yet Rom. vii. 12 declares, nevertheless, that the ‘law is holy’, and the commandment ‘holy, and just, and good’, and in Rom. xiii. the full glory of the law is established in the saying:

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law” (Rom. xiii. 8-10).

Now this self same teaching awaits us in Galatians:

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

Here then is the reason for the addition to the argument in verse 6. Circumcision is useless as a means to justification. It is also just as evil to believe that by abstaining from

the rite, that any merit will accrue. Faith alone in the finished work of Christ can avail, but, the insistence on 'faith only' must not be misconstrued. Just as liberty does not mean licence, just as freedom from the law as a means of justification does not mean freedom from the law as a moral code, so faith alone must not be understood as being a dead faith, devoid of grace, but rather is it faith that works by love. Those who would set up James against Paul, and teach that one contradicts the other, make a fatal blunder. James, in his contention that 'faith without works is dead' is but teaching the same truth that Paul is urging here. The only difference between them is, that James does not deal with the initial stages of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, but is concerned rather with the 'perfecting' of the faith. Paul goes to Gen. xv., where Abraham believed in the Lord, and his faith was counted for righteousness, James goes to Gen. xxii., where Abraham's faith is put to the test, where his works perfected the faith he already possessed. Paul, as we have seen, speaks first of the law in its ineffectiveness and weakness and then speaks of its value, but James speaks of the law only as 'the royal law' and 'the perfect law of liberty'.

The following extract from the writing of Professor Jowett, may be appreciated at this point:

"There is no trace in the writings of St. Paul of the opposition of faith and love, which is found in Luther. Such an opposition did not exist in the language of Christ and His apostles. It came from the schools; Luther was driven to adopt it by the exigencies of controversy. At some point or other was necessary to draw a line between the catholic and reformed doctrine of Justification. Was it to include works as well as faith? but if not, was love to be a co-efficient in the work of Justification? Luther felt this difficulty and tried to preserve the doctrine from the alloy of self-righteousness and external acts by the formula of 'faith only'.

Whether we say that we are justified by faith or love (Luke vii. 47, 50), or by faith working by love, or by grace, or by the indwelling of Christ, or of the Spirit of God, the difference is one of words and not of things. For although these distinctions admit of being defined by logic, and have been made the basis of opposing systems of theology, the point of view in which the writers of Scripture regard them is not that of difference but of sameness."

The concluding verses of this section are conciliatory; words of encouragement are used after the somewhat severe tone adopted in verses 2-4.

First he commends them for their past, 'Ye did run well', and then asks, not so much because he wants an answer, but because he is astonished, 'who did hinder you?' The figure of a race, with its possibilities of defeat as well as glorious possibility of a prize is a favourite one with the Apostle. The word used for 'hinder' in the A.V. is *anekopsen* which means 'to beat back', the word endorsed by the majority of textual critics today is *enekopsen*, which means among other things to hinder by breaking up a road, as in a military operation.

To the English ear there is no real affinity between 'obey' and 'believe', indeed there may be a sense of opposition, obedience suggesting law and faith suggesting gospel, and seeing that Paul has made such insistence upon faith without works of law, the reader may wonder why he should now introduce the words 'obey the truth'. Why not 'believe

the truth'? There is no such difference in the original words. The verb *peitho* which gives us 'obey' in verse 7, gives us also 'confidence' in verse 10, and in another form, *peismone* 'persuasion', in verse 8. *Peitho* occurs 55 times in the N.T. There are seven occurrences where it is translated 'obey', the remaining passages being rendered agree, assure, believe, have or be confident, persuade, trust, yield and make friend. Moreover, *pistis* 'faith', is actually derived from *peitho* showing that the obedience which Paul had in mind was the persuasion which begins with faith and ends in conviction.

Whether the Galatians had protested that after all the number who were thus influenced was small, or that the number who were teaching this error was negligible, we do not know, but the quotation of the proverb, 'a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump' suggests something of the sort.

In concluding this section, Paul adopts a conciliatory tone saying:

"I (for my part) (emphatic pronoun) have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded."

With the concluding words of verse 10 a new section opens, and this must be dealt with in our next study.

No.76. (34) GALATIANS.
Gal. v. 10 - vi. 10 --- The Troubler and The Restorer.
Love, the fulfilling of all the law (v. 14).
pp. 106 - 110

It may be as well, before we begin the examination of a new section of this epistle, to revive the reader's acquaintance with the structure of the epistle as a whole. Reduced to simple headings it is as follows:

- A1 | i. - ii. 14. Faith *v.* Works.
- B1 | ii. 15 - iv. 12. Cross *v.* Law.
- A2 | iv. 13 - vi. 10. Spirit *v.* Flesh.
- B2 | vi. 11-16. Cross *v.* World.
- A3 | vi. 17, 18. Grace and Spirit.

The section which is occupying our attention is A2 | iv. 13 - vi. 10, which is subdivided as follows:

- A2 | iv. 13 - vi. 10. Spirit *v.* Flesh. |
 - a | Jerusalem. Free.
 - b | Circumcision availeth nothing.
 - c | Persecution of the Cross.

It is the third of these items, namely *c* | Persecution of the Cross, that is now before us, occupying Gal. v. 10 - vi. 10. The structure of this section is as follows:

- A | v. 10-12. The Troubler, he shall bear his judgment.
- B | v. 13-14. The law of love “fulfilled”.
- C | v. 15-26. Flesh *v.* Spirit. Works and Fruit. |
 - a | Biting and devouring one another.
 - b | Walk in the Spirit.
 - c | Not under law.
 - d | Works of flesh.
 - d | Fruit of Spirit.
 - c | Against such no law.
 - b | Walk in the Spirit.
 - a | Provoking and envying one another.
- A | vi. 1, 2. The Restorer bear one another’s burden
- B | vi. 2, 3. The law of Christ “fulfil”.
- C | vi. 4-10. Flesh *v.* Spirit. Sowing and Reaping. |
 - a | bear own burden.
 - b | communicate.
 - b | sow.
 - a | reap if faint not.

Two very different types of person come before us here. “The troubler” who is the cause of the Galatian defection, and “The restorer” whose tactful and benevolent dealing would help to restore those who had been overtaken by a fault. Two laws are brought into prominence, the law which is fulfilled by love, and the fulfilling of the law of Christ by bearing one another’s burdens. Thirdly, two greater sections are concerned with the conflict of flesh and spirit, stressing in one case the exemption from law that belongs to those who walk in the spirit, and in the other case stressing the reaping that all must expect who sow either to the flesh or to the spirit. Paul has already referred to ‘some that trouble you’ who were perverting the gospel of Christ, here he refers to an individual of that company.

As many be supposed, by the very nature of the term, ‘trouble’ represents some 35 or more words in the original Scriptures. Of these, 14 different words occur in the Greek of the N.T. The word used in Gal. v. 10 is *tarasso* and means literally ‘to agitate’ as for example water (John v. 4, 7; Ezek. xxxiv. 18 LXX). This latter example is much to the point, as the prophet addresses the people of Israel under the figure sheep and rams saying:

“Is it not enough for you that ye fed on the good pasture, that ye trampled with your feet the remnant of your pasture? and that ye drank the standing water, that ye *disturbed* the residue with your feet?”

Bishop Chandler speaking of the various and contrary feelings excited in Herod at the arrival of the Magi, said that there was not any one Greek word more proper and

expressive than *tarassomai*. It was this word that the Apostle used in his opening charge in chapter i. when he said ‘there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ’ (Gal. i. 7).

Here at the opening of the epistle (immediately following the salutation of verses 1-5) we have reference to the rapid moving from the grace of Christ unto another gospel. This is none other than the work of a ‘troubler’ and his teaching ‘perverts’ the gospel. From this point, every statement in Gal. i.-iv. has been an attack or an exposure of this ‘perversion’, and it would be time well spent by any who value the truth of the gospel, if these passages with their consecutive arguments were re-read in the light of this term.

- A | Gal. i. 6, 7. The charge. The troubler.
- B | i. 8 - v. 10. The trouble.
- A | v. 10. The judgment. The troubler.

This troubler, said the Apostle, shall ‘bear his judgment whoever he be’. Here are two solemn utterances concerning one who most probably was a believer in Christ. As a teacher he had a tremendous responsibility, and would be ‘judged’, and ‘whoever he be’, that judgment would be ‘without respects of persons’. James uses this same word ‘judgment’ (*krima*) when he says:

“My brethren be not many teachers (*didaskalos*) knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment (*krima*)” (James iii. 1).

If the immediate context of James ii. 14-26 be read in connection with this reference to ‘teachers’ and their ‘judgment’, the connection with Galatians will be more apparent, for both epistles speak of Justification by faith, one stressing the impossibility of combining legal works with faith, and the other stressing the necessity of combining fruitful works with faith, the two presenting the whole truth—namely that the faith that is reckoned for righteousness is a ‘faith that worketh by love’. The judgment of all teachers and servants of the Lord will take place at the judgment seat of Christ, with whatever sphere of blessing such a believer be associated (the highest sphere of all being no exception), for Colossians, an epistle of the Mystery says plainly concerning those who serve the Lord Christ:

“But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons” (Col. iii. 25).

Commentators find a great difficulty in establishing the connection between Gal. v. 10 and 11. Paul passes from the ‘troubler’ to himself saying “And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased” (Gal. v. 11). Some have taught that he had once ‘preached circumcision’ but had now discounted it, but this is mixing his unconverted zealotry with his apostolic ministry. The little word ‘yet’ causes most of the difficulty, and an examination of its uses is called for. First we observe that in Galatians itself it is used just seven times, as follows:

Eti “Yet”

- A | i. 10. “For if I *yet* pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”
- B | ii. 20. “*Yet* not I (lit. live *no more* I), but Christ liveth in me.”
- C | iii. 18. “If . . . of the law, it is *no more* of promise.”
- D | iii. 25. “After faith . . . *no longer* under a schoolmaster.”
- C | iv. 7. “Thou art *no more* a servant, but a son.”
- A | v. 11. “And I, brethren, if I *yet* preach circumcision.”
- B | v. 11. “Why do I *yet* suffer persecution?”

Thayer groups the usage of *eti* in Gal. v. 11 with Rom. iii. 7; vi. 2 and ix. 19 under the explanatory heading ‘further, longer (where it is thought strange that, when one thing has established itself, another has not been altered or abolished, but is still adhered to or continued).

Dr. Bullinger gives as the meaning of *eti* “Yet, still, implying duration, hitherto; also as implying accession or addition, etc.; yet, further, besides”. We are, therefore, under no necessity to say that Paul had once preached circumcision, but is doing it no more, what he means is that never has he added to his preaching the rite of circumcision as these troublers have done. The same difficulty is met in the use of ‘yet’ in his opening defence of Gal. i. 10. “If I pleased men” can mean “if I, further to the endeavour to please God, seek to please men”.

The first and last references to *eti* have to do with the ‘troublers’ and any who might preach any other gospel. “Let him be accursed” (Gal. i. 8). “He shall bear his judgment” (Gal. v. 10).

“I would they were even cut off which trouble you” (Gal. v. 12).

These words have given rise to no little discussion among commentators. The ‘cutting off’ being taken as a reference to the rite of circumcision, and as Lightfoot puts it:

“Why do they stop at circumcision?” he asks indignantly.
“Why do they not mutilate themselves, like your priests of Cybele?”

Yet there is something indelicate about such a remark, something so unlike the general attitude of Paul, that it cannot be accepted, even though it was held by almost all the ancient interpreters. Instead of “a sarcastic paranomasia between *peritemnesthai* (circumcision) and *apokopsasthai* (cut off)” there is a more natural contrast discoverable. In verse 7 the Apostle said ‘who did hinder you’ where the word used is *enekopse*; he now contrasts this by using the word *apokopsontai* ‘I would that, instead *cutting in* to your path and so hindering you, they would *cut themselves out* of the way, and so set you free’.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another” (Gal. v. 13).

In what way is this verse connected with the words of verse 12? How can Paul say that he wished the troublers cut themselves off ‘For ye have been called unto liberty’? However we strain the meaning of ‘for’, the connection remains artificial. If, however, we will take a wider survey, and not let the peculiarity of the wish of verse 12 blur our vision, we shall see that the Apostle has closed a parenthesis and picked up the earlier reference to ‘liberty’. It may be visualized as follows:

- A | To the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, stand fast.
- B | Paul testifies to the extreme danger into which the Galatians being lured by the ‘troublers’ and wishes he were completely removed from their path.
- A | Resuming the subject of liberty, then, he now goes on to warn concerning its abuse.

The word translated ‘occasion’ is *aphorme* and is found in Rom. vii. 8, 11 and is a compound of *apo* ‘from’ and *horme* ‘an impetus’ (“assault” Acts xiv. 5), and means “the solid ground from which an impetus is derived; such as the place from which a spring is taken, hence generally a basis of operation. Make not your liberty a position to be taken advantage of by the flesh” (Glynne).

Instead of thus abusing your liberty, rather by love serve one another, and the reason that Paul gives is the remarkable one, in the circumstance, namely that it fulfils the law! The superficial believer would take exception to this; he would object that if Paul had occupied four whole chapters in repudiating the law, he would scarcely stultify his argument by speaking now of ‘fulfilling’ that very law. Such an objection however makes it manifest how little the Apostle’s teaching has been appreciated. True, the law has been entirely set aside *as a means of justification*, but it does not mean that the ensuing liberty of the believer is to be a state of lawless licence. Far from it. We have been partly prepared for this by the statement that “Faith worketh by love”.

No epistle compares with Galatians in its repudiation of the law, like the epistle to the Romans, and a combined set of quotations concerning the inadequacy of the law as a means of justification provides an overwhelming and unanswerable evidence, both to the Apostle’s doctrine, and to this parallel, yet in no other epistles does Paul place the law, as a code of morals, on a higher plane than in these two letters.

The parallel between Rom. xiii. 8-10 and Gal. v. 14 is evident and enables the reader to comprehend the meaning. One well intentioned expositor felt that the Apostle does not refer to the Mosaic law in Gal. v. 14, but rather refers to ‘the law of Christ’ referred to in Gal. vi. 2. It is here that the remote context of Rom. xiii. is valuable, for the citation of the commandments dealing with adultery, killing, stealing, false witness and coveting provide positive evidence that when Paul said “He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”, he was referring to the law of Moses. Beside we have the testimony of Christ Himself, Who said concerning love to God and neighbour that ‘on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets’ (Matt. xxii. 36-40).

The Apostle not only introduced this correction to misunderstanding and excessive zeal in Romans and Galatians, he introduced the law without provocation and without the pressure of debate into such an epistle as Ephesians, saying not simply 'Children obey your parents in the Lord; for this is RIGHT' and leaving it there, but extends the exhortation by a full length quotation from the commandment, saying:

"Honour thy father and mother"; (which is the first commandment with promise);
"That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. vi. 2, 3).

Further, Paul accommodates the citation to the Ephesian reader by omitting the words 'which the Lord thy God giveth thee' which were strictly applicable to Israel only, and indicates the reason why he quoted the commandment in extension, by the parenthetical remark concerning the fact that this was the first commandment 'with promise'.

It is perfectly obvious that the Apostle who so vigorously rejected the law as a means of salvation, gave it a high place as a guide to those who were most truly saved. It is as though he would say to these Galatians who had become so zealous for the law "Instead of submitting to circumcision and making obedience to 'the whole law' an obligation, cutting you off from Christ, here is a most gracious opportunity to fulfil 'all the law' by walking in love. The one is a fatal intrusion, the other a living expression. The one seeks to earn salvation and must fail, the other manifests a salvation already possessed and gloriously succeeds".

In the sequel, as the structure reveals, the fulfilling of the law of Christ is put in correspondence with the fulfilling of the law of love. This must be considered in its proper place, but there now awaits us the larger member Gal. v. 16-26 with its conflict between flesh and spirit, its exhortation to walk in the spirit, and its double statement that those who do so walk are not under the law, neither is there any law against those who produce the fruits of the Spirit. To this important theme we must therefore address ourselves.

No.77. (35) GALATIANS.
Gal. v. 10 - vi. 10 --- The Troubler and The Restorer.
Flesh v. Spirit (v. 16 - 26).
pp. 135 - 139

The Apostle's application of the truth that 'faith worketh by love', and 'love is the fulfilling of the law' is intensely practical and pointed. He does not speak in general terms or of some far off contingencies; he applies the moral to the actual state of affairs which marred the Christian witness of the Galatians. He opens this section with such pointed references as:

"But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another",

and closes on the same note:

"Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another"
(Gal. v. 15, 26).

Has Paul put his finger on the root cause of most of the strife that has marred Christian fellowship? He does not speak of zeal for the truth that over-ran the claims of charity; he does not speak of the strain of double loyalties, he speaks of 'vain glory' and 'envy' as being close to the root.

The figures of 'biting' and 'devouring' are borrowed from the habits of wild beasts; the Apostle using such terms to awaken the consciences of his hearers, and by the climax 'consume one another' indicates that such internal strife can end in but one way—the destruction of the whole witness. In the closing words he does not actually accuse the Galatians of desiring vain glory, or of provoking one another or of envying one another; he rather warns them of the danger they were in. These unlovely traits can soon manifest themselves if 'liberty gives an occasion to the flesh'. Just as love indicates by its presence the existence of true faith (Gal. v. 6), and just as love fulfils the whole law (v. 14), so will love prevent the appearance of these evils which spring from the flesh in the believer and not from the spirit.

The exhortation therefore to 'walk in the spirit' is tantamount to saying 'walk in love'. We have indicated in the structure that this section begins and ends with the words 'walk in the spirit', we must now record that two different words are here translated 'walk'.

Peripateo. This word translated 'walk' in Gal. v. 16, often means a mode of life, so the Apostle could speak of 'good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them' (Eph. ii. 10). The believer's emancipation from the dominion of sin and death is said to set him free 'to walk in newness of life' (Rom. vi. 4).

Stoicheo translated 'walk' in Gal. v. 25, looks rather to the rules whereby the walk is regulated. *Stoicheis* are the 'first principles' (Heb. v. 12). This particular walk is in

contrast with the usage of *stoicheia* in Gal. iv. 3 and 9, where Paul refers to the bondage that they had been under the *elements* of the world, and calls their retrograde movement a return to ‘weak and beggarly *elements*’. In Gal. vi. 16 this walk in the spirit is associated with the rule of the new creation, and shows what the Apostle intended by the words ‘walk in the spirit’. While the Holy Spirit Himself can never be completely absent from anything or any sphere that is ‘spiritual’, the thought here in Gal. v. 16 and 25 is rather the new sphere of life and activity, ‘spirit’ as contrasted with ‘flesh’. The argument of verse 26 is ‘If we live spiritually, or in this new sphere, let us walk also spiritually, or in the selfsame sphere’. Walk is therefore to be understood as life manifested. The reader is doubtless well acquainted with this fact, but even so, a reference to ‘walk’ in Romans, Ephesians, Philipians and Colossians would be helpful.

Immediately *following* the reference to walking in the spirit, in Gal. v. 16, 17 is a double reference to the lusts of the flesh, and immediately *preceding* the exhortation to walk in the spirit in Gal. v. 24, 25 is a further reference to these same lusts.

These passages contain all the occurrences of *epithumeo/ia* in Galatians:

“This I say then, Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. v. 16, 17).

“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit” (Gal. v. 24, 25).

The first item to notice is that in verse 16 ‘lust’ is singular, whereas in verse 24 it is plural. That is, in the first case we are looking at a principle, in the second we are looking at particularized lusts. The principle is set before us as in verse 17, in the essential antagonism of flesh and spirit as such; while the particular lusts are enumerated in verses 19-21 under the heading “The works of the flesh”. Most, if not all, are able to discern some one particular sin or short-coming, this passage takes us deeper and reveals the root cause.

Before examining verse 17 more closely a word is necessary regarding the intention of the Apostle in the word translated ‘lust’. Today, the word has lost most of its primary meaning and is limited to ‘libidinous desire, degrading animal passion’, but in earlier days it had the meaning of ‘desire’ without necessarily meaning an evil desire. For example Foxe writes “Little leysure and lesse lust to hear sermons or to read bookes”. We still use the word in the sense of strong overmastering desire in such phrases as “The lust for power”. So in the N.T. *epithumeo* not only refers to the lower lusts of the flesh, but is the word translated ‘desire’ in a good sense (Matt. xiii. 17; Luke xxii. 15; I Pet. i. 12), and “desire” in a bad sense, namely ‘to covet’ (Rom. vii. 7). *Epithumia* also is used in the same way. Paul’s “desire” to depart (Phil. i. 23) had nothing evil or base about it, yet the self same word is found in Col. iii. 5 where it is translated ‘concupiscence’. Strong desire, however, if it arises from the flesh in which ‘dwelleth no good thing’ cannot but be evil. Consequently the ‘desires of the flesh’ and the ‘desires of the spirit’ are “contrary” the one to the other.

Antikeimai 'contrary' occurs in the N.T. 8 times, once 'oppose', twice 'contrary' and five times 'adversary'. In Galatians the opposition may not always be active, but is always latent. The result of this innate opposition is expressed by the Apostle 'so that ye cannot do the things that ye would'. It is a poor interpretation that does not see a ground of hope here as well as a reason for sorrow. Uppermost in the mind of the reader and sometimes the only aspect presented by the commentator is that the flesh prevents the believer from accomplishing the good that he sees to be required, and this truth has the full support of such a passage as Rom. vii. 15, 19. There is however another side to the picture, a bright side. The spirit also lusteth against the flesh, so that the believer is prevented from doing some of those evil things to which the flesh unchecked would lead him.

Here in Gal. v. 17, we have a statement of principle and of fact, but no hint is given of the believer's source of power except that it is derived from the Spirit. In the corresponding verse, where separate and individual 'desires' are in view, there the true source of all such spiritual antagonism and overcoming is revealed. "They that are Christ's"—these will be the ones that live in the spirit. These 'have crucified the flesh with the affections and desires'. As in chapter ii. and chapter iii. the Galatian believer in this battle of flesh and spirit, of law and grace, of faith and works, is taught to see the great dividing line made by the Cross, and to learn that from the Cross of Christ comes alone the strength to overcome.

"Affection" like 'lust' is a word that needs handling with care. Nowhere in the Scriptures is there the slightest thought that human affections are to be denied or deprecated. Such passages that come to mind point all in the other direction. "Set your affection on things above"; "kindly affectioned one to another"; "Being affectionately desirous of you". Paul not only deplored in Rom. i. that the heathen world had been given up to 'vile affections', he also deplored that these same heathen were 'without natural affection'. *Pathema*, the word translated 'affections' in Gal. v. 24 is translated 'sufferings' in Rom. viii. 18, and Phil. iii. 10, and out of the 16 occurrences, 14 are used in the highest and best sense, leaving but 2, namely Rom. vii. 5 'the motions of sins' and the passage before us, in a bad sense.

Those who are in the spirit actuated by the spirit, walking and living in the spirit, or as verse 18 sums it up "If ye be led of the spirit", such are not under law. "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God" and have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but have received the spirit of adoption, even as those of the Galatians, whereby they cry Abba, Father (Rom. viii. 14, 15; Gal. iv. 5, 6). "Under law" and "under grace" are terms indicating a complete change of dispensation, the death of Christ intervening and making a boundary never to be re-crossed (Rom. vi. 14).

The Apostle now looks at the 'flesh' and the 'spirit' not so much as they are in themselves, but with regard to their products. These he calls 'works' when speaking of the flesh, and 'fruit' when speaking of the spirit, and the contrast is not only the contrast of work and fruit, but of 'works' in the plural and of 'fruit' in the singular.

Paul makes no exhaustive list of the works of the flesh—he does not say ‘The works of the flesh are manifest, *which are—*’ but *atina* ‘such as are’. In Rom. ix. 4 he uses the word in the sense who are of such a kind that whatever else they may or may not be, they are Israelites. These works of the flesh will be representative, and were the Apostle alive today he would probably omit some and add others. We must therefore not dwell so much upon each individual work of the flesh, as to observe what sort of act it is, consequently we discover upon examination that the works of the flesh to fall into groups:

- (1) Sensual passions.
- (2) Superstitions.
- (3) Disruptive movements.
- (4) Excesses.

The inclusion of sensual passions and idolatry may sound strange to our ears, but the pagan world had too long looked upon such practices with condonement for the Galatians to have the same moral outlook as a believer who has never had contact with the awful degradation of idolatry. The works of the flesh that come under the third heading however, are, alas, never long absent from Christian testimony.

“Hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings.”

“Hatred”, in this, we have the negation of love, and from this lack of true charity, all the rest spring.

“Variance and emulations.” “Here we have strife and rivalry, leading to exhibition of wrath and ‘factious cabals’ a stronger development of ‘emulations’; and at ‘sedition and heresy’ we reach the point where the contending parties separate; such separation is either temporary *dichostasia* (seditions or divisions), or permanent *aireseis* (sects, heresies)” (Lightfoot). After adding murder, drunkenness and revellings to the dreadful list the Apostle said: “Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. v. 21). Salvation is not at stake, but all that goes to make up the conception of ‘inheriting the kingdom of God’ is. This most solemn warning is as applicable to the church of the Mystery as it was to the church of the Galatians.

“Walk in love but fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. v. 2-5).

As in Eph. v., Paul passes from these works of the flesh, to speak of the ‘fruit of the spirit’ (Eph. v. 9) so he does here in Gal. v.: he says, “Be not deceived, God is not mocked”.

The fruit of the spirit is a lovely cluster, a refreshing subject after the uncleanness of the previous list. If the works of the flesh commenced with ‘hatred’ the fruit of the spirit commences with ‘love’. Those who produce this fruit are in an enviable position “Against such there is no law”. After urging the believer to walk in the same sphere as he now lives, namely in the spirit, the Apostle makes one more reference to the evils

arising out of the flesh, this time putting 'vain-glory' at or near the root. The remainder of this section, which occupies verses 1-10 of chapter vi. must be studied in our next article.

No.78. (36) GALATIANS.
Gal. v. 10 - vi. 10 --- The Troubler and The Restorer.
Sowing and reaping (vi. 3 - 10).
pp. 148 - 152

In blessed contrast with the 'troubler', the Apostle places the 'restorer'. The word so translated means to 'mend' as a net (Matt. iv. 21), and is found in medical works of N.T. times for the resetting of a fractured limb. Again, in contrast with the overbearing spirit of the troubler, Paul speaks of the spirit of meekness in which the truly spiritual seek to restore one overtaken either 'in' or 'by' a fault, considering at the same time themselves lest they also be tempted.

In chapter vi. 2 we read "Bear ye one another's burdens" yet in verse 5 "every man shall bear his own burden". There is no contradiction here. Two distinct words are translated 'burden' and two distinct aspects of truth are presented to us. In verse 2 the Greek word *baros* (familiar in the word barometer) refers to pressure or weight, and the believer is enjoined to help his brother when thus overloaded. In verse 5, however, it is the Greek word *phortion*, the lading of a ship, the freight that is a legitimate load, the knapsack and equipment of a soldier. This can be shared with none. The Apostle puts no stress upon doctrine when he speaks of the restoration of a brother who has been overtaken by a fault; no word is uttered as to 'right division', no warning about 'things that differ', his chief concern is the spirit in which the restoration is attempted. "The spirit of meekness"; "considering thyself"; "bear one another's burdens". These are the things that are stressed.

That an argument persists from verse 3 to verse 10 is apparent, for we have the links "For", "But", "Therefore", in these verses, and the words of verse 3 are a continuation of the Apostle's insistence upon the 'spirit of meekness':

"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Gal. vi. 3).

Dokeo 'to think' does not mean so much the process of thought that involves perception and reason, it means rather to esteem, to form an opinion, which as Dr. Bullinger in his Lexicon points out *may be right* (John v. 39; Acts xv. 28); but which *may be wrong* (Matt. vi. 7; John xvi. 2). Here, the person who thought himself 'to be something' was wrong, for, said the Apostle 'he is nothing' and so 'deceiveth himself'. There is something familiar about the words *Ei gar dokei tis einai ti* "For if

anyone thinketh himself to be something”, for we have met similar wording before and in connection with this same contention for the truth of the gospel:

“But of these who seemed to be somewhat” (Gal. ii. 6).

Apo de ton dokounton einai ti, where the reference is to Peter, James and John ‘who seemed to be pillars’. If, said Paul, such reputable and evident persons of high position in the church, are of no account the moment they antagonize the truth, the troubler in your midst, who has intimidated you by his own estimate of himself, can surely be seen in his true colors. No ‘respect of persons’ can ever be permitted in the fight of faith.

“When he is nothing.” The Greek language has two words with which to express the idea of ‘nothing’. *Oudeis* the objective, and *medeis* the conditional negative. Here the Apostle uses *medeis*. It is beside the point to say that “He is nothing, to wit, in himself, but by the grace of God he is what he is” (Whitby), for that is a gracious truth and a blessed acknowledgment, rather does Paul express the opinion that one must entertain of all similar boasters, “He deceiveth himself” but not his neighbour. This self deception meets us again in the warning of verse 7 ‘be not deceived’, and helps us to see the continuation of the argument. Instead of forming such vain estimations of one’s importance, the Apostle suggests that a more salutary procedure would be to keep in mind the judgment seat of Christ.

“But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden” (Gal. vi. 4, 5).

We have already observed that the word ‘think’ in verse 3 is *dokeo*, and it is important that we should remember this for the thought appears again in verse 4 “Let every man *prove* his own work”, where ‘prove’ is *dokimazeto*. The word means to ‘try’ as one does a metal (see I Pet. i. 7). It is used in II Tim. ii. 15 for the idea of being ‘approved’. The insistence of ‘proving his *own work*’, and having rejoicing ‘in himself alone’ refers to that fallacious standard which often set up ‘comparing ourselves with ourselves’ which is ‘not wise’ (II Cor. x. 12). Paul pauses a similar line of argument to that of Gal. vi. 3-5 in I Cor. iv.:

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self.

For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes: that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another” (I Cor. iv. 1-6).

“Every man’s work shall be made manifest the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (I Cor. iii. 13).

In that day every man shall bare his own burden both of responsibility and of reward, it would be wise to make all our estimates in the light of that day.

“Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things” (Gal. vi. 6).

Is this the opening sentence of a new subject? Or is there a logical connection with what has gone before? The adversative conjunction *de* is used by the Apostle; this is left untranslated in the A.V., but is included in the R.V. “*De* arrests a former topic before it passes out of sight” (Lightfoot).

Do not think, Paul seems to say, that because every man must bear his own burden, this exempts any one of you from sharing in the general welfare of the church as a whole or with those who by virtue of their calling may be more dependent upon your liberality. More so, in that in the foregoing sentences, certain warnings and strictures have been made particularly applicable to those who rule and teach in the assembly. Each man must bear his own burden: but this does not exempt any one of you from the responsibility of sharing with those who are teachers of the Word. The figure of ‘sowing and reaping’ with which the Apostle endorses this lesson here, is found elsewhere in the epistles. “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” (I Cor. ix. 11).

In the closing verses of the epistle to the Hebrews there is a reference to this need for practical ‘communication’, set over against ‘the fruits of the lips’—thus:

“But to do good and to communicate forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Heb. xiii. 16);

and it is recorded by a thankful Apostle to the continual praise of the Philippians that when he departed from Macedonia “No church communicated” with him “as concerning giving and receiving” but the Philippian church only (Phil. iv. 15).

Katecheo ‘to teach’ which is used here, is not of very frequent occurrence, the word commonly used being *didasko* which gives us the word ‘doctrine’ which is either *didaskalia* (the substance) or *didache* (the act). The word used in Gal. vi. 6 will be more familiar to some in its English garb ‘catechize’, ‘catechism’ and the like. Teaching in this form was usually oral, and in the form of question and answer, a method in the hands of those ‘apt to teach’ that is truly excellent. Moreover this form of teaching ‘brings both teacher and taught very close together, and the ‘communication’ consequently could not be one sided.

“God is not mocked.” An undiscerning use of ‘texts’ for preaching purposes has placed undue emphasis upon this text from the point of view of the ‘sinner’, what we need to do is to reinstate the warning as one primarily addressed to the ‘saint’. Moreover, Paul has chosen a peculiar word here. The most usual word for ‘to mock’ is *empaizo*, to treat as a child, but the word used by Paul in Gal. vi. 7 is *mukterizomai*, a word not very familiar to the reader, but which nevertheless appears in the English dictionary as “mycterism, a gibe, a scoff”. The word derived from *mukter* ‘The nose’ and alludes to

the habit of putting the finger to the nose, to indicate derision. In writers of rhetoric *mykterismos* is ordinarily treated as a species of irony. Dr. Bullinger gives it separately under *Chleuasmos or mocking*, and Luke uses an intensive form of this same word in chapter xvi. 14 where he describes the scoffing attitude of the Pharisees. Just as men 'mocked' God by saying 'corban' (Mark vii. 11) so the believer may fall into the same evil by a hypocritical parsimony. The Apostle uses the figure of sowing and reaping in II Cor. ix. 6, where the particular reference is to the collection for the poor believers of Judaea. The churches of Galatia also were invited to take part in this gift (I Cor. xvi. 1).

Under this figure of sowing and reaping is included the whole of life's activities, and without using one word of philosophical jargon nevertheless brings before us the whole philosophy of cause and effect. Every action may be likened to 'sowing'. Reward and punishment alike may be compared with 'reaping', and just as men do not gather figs from thorns, nor grapes from a bramble bush (Luke vi. 44), so any action that has 'the flesh' as its goal must assuredly reap corruption, every action that has 'the spirit' as its goal must as assuredly reap life everlasting. The brother who undertakes to restore another who has been overtaken in a fault can do it in a spirit of meekness, or a spirit of spiritual pride; one believer may fulfil the law of Christ by bearing the burden of a fellow believer, the other may think himself 'something' and refuse to stoop so low, one who is taught in the Word may communicate with him that teaches, or he may withhold such fellowship. It matters not, all such sowing must have a corresponding reaping.

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9).

The Apostle passes from the beneficence that belongs to 'him that is taught in the word' (verse 6) to the general underlying principle of all such action (verses 7, 8), and now in verse 9 he rounds the matter off with an exhortation to continuance and patience, acknowledging the intrusion of weariness at time, but exhorting all to keep the end in sight, bring the practical call to liberal and generous fellowship to a conclusion by saying:

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Gal. vi. 10).

It appears that at this point Paul takes the pen from the hand of the writer, and with evident labour, writes the closing verses. This we must consider in our next article thus bringing the study of this most important epistle to a fit conclusion.

**No.79. (37) GALATIANS.
The Large Letter (vi. 11).
pp. 169 - 173**

The closing section of this epistle opens with the words: "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with mine own hand" (Gal. vi. 11); the R.V. translates this: "See with how large letters I have written unto you (margin 'or write') with mine own hand."

It is remarkable what differences of opinion have been expressed by commentators concerning the meaning of these words, but they may be summarized under the following headings:

- (1) That Paul wrote the whole epistle to the Galatians with his own hand, and calls this epistle "a large letter".
- (2) That the words "how large a letter" refer to the length of the epistle, being equivalent to "how long an epistle".
- (3) That Paul wrote the whole epistle to the Galatians with his own hand, and calls the attention of the Galatians to "the large letters" he used, referring to the size of the characters and not to the length of the epistle.
- (4) That Paul dictated, as was his custom, the bulk of the epistle, but at verse 11 he took the pen from the hand of the amanuensis and wrote the postscript himself.
- (5) That the postscript alone was written "with large letters".
- (6) That the large letters were a sign of the Apostle's earnestness, the largeness of the letter used being equivalent to the use of CAPITALS or *Italics* on the printed page.
- (7) That the large letters were not adopted by the Apostle for the sake of emphasis, but that owing to his defective eye-sight (already alluded to arouse the latent affection of the Galatians) he could not write otherwise than with "large letters".
- (8) Finally, Deissmann's opinion that to soften the angry tone of the epistle, Paul concluded with a little joke, so that 'his dear silly children' should understand that with the "large letters" "the seriousness of the punishing schoolmaster had vanished from his features" (Bibelstudein p.263).

We need spend no time on Deissmann's fancy, but we must give attention to the alternatives set out under the first seven headings. This we will do, not by taking them *seriatum*, but by keeping them in mind while examining the actual wording of the passage.

First, the structure of the sentence and the words used.

Idete pelikois humin grammasin egrapsa te eme cheiri.

Idete. "Ye see." The word is emphatic, and not to be translated 'ye see' but rather 'look ye', drawing attention to a feature of unusual interest. In Gal. v. 2 the Apostle uses *ide* 'behold', as though he said 'mark well'.

Pelikois. Ellicott says that the word *strictly denotes geometrical magnitude* 'how large', in contradistinction to arithmetical magnitude expressed by *posos* 'how many'.

Pelokois is so used in the LXX of Zech. ii. 2. In Heb. vii. 4 the idea of magnitude in an ethical sense is expressed by this same word. We must, therefore, avoid confusing the ideas of 'how large' with 'how many' or with 'how lengthy'.

Grammata. Once only does *grammata* signify an epistle, namely in Acts xxviii. 21, where the Jews at Rome declared 'we neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee'. This, however, is an isolated usage and not used by Paul but by the Jews. Where Paul desires to speak of an epistle he uses the regular *epistole* and that seventeen times.

Grammasin is in the dative plural, and we are compelled to translate these words as they are in Luke xxiii. 38 "and a superscription also was written over Him in *letters* of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew". The fact that the word here in Galatians is in the plural prevents us from translating it by the word epistle in this place.

Egrapsa. This word is in the aorist tense, but whether this is what is known as 'the epistolary aorist' where the reference would be to the time when the epistle is received, or whether it should be translated 'I wrote' or in idiomatic English 'I have written' referring to the writing of the epistle itself is something we must attempt to answer presently.

It was the custom of writers in Paul's time to employ the service of a trained scribe, and one, evidently a believer, has inserted his name in the epistle to the Romans:

"I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you" (Rom. xvi. 22).

It is common knowledge that Rom. xvi. 25-27 was added as a 'postscript' to the epistle, and Alford has suggested that 'we may conceive him (Paul) to have taken his pen off from one of the pastoral epistles and to have written it under the same impulse'. He gives a list of words and expressions found in the postscript and in the pastoral epistles that point to this conclusion. For example, 'my gospel' is found in II Tim. ii. 8; *kerugma* 'preaching' is found in II Tim. iv. 17 and Titus i. 3; *chronois aioniosis* 'age-times' in II Tim. i. 9 and Titus i. 2; etc.

The Apostle makes a pointed reference to his 'sign-manual' when writing to the Thessalonians, for they had been deceived by a letter purporting to come from himself (II Thess. ii. 2), consequently he draws their attention to a feature in his salutation:

"The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" (II Thess. iii. 17, 18).

Here the Apostle draws attention to two features:

- (1) The handwriting 'so I write';
- (2) The form of the salutation 'Grace with you'.

The Apostle did not always call attention to the fact that he concluded his epistles with a note in his own hand. He does in I Cor. xvi. 21, "The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand", and again in Col. iv. 18. The form of the salutation varies in small particulars in the several epistles, but ALWAYS includes the words "Grace be with" As this is a matter of first importance let us not begrudge the time spent in

noting this evidential feature, especially as Paul himself has been at pains to call our attention to it.

“THE SALUTATION OF ME PAUL WITH MINE OWN HAND”

ROMANS.	“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” Repeated in verse 24 (xvi. 20, 24).
I CORINTHIANS.	“The salutation of me Paul with mine own hand the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.” (xvi. 21-23).
II CORINTHIANS.	“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy ghost, be with you all. Amen.” (xiii. 14).
GALATIANS.	“Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.” (vi. 18).
EPHESIANS.	“Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.” (vi. 24).
PHILIPPIANS.	“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” (iv. 23).
COLOSSIANS.	“The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen” (iv. 18).
I THESSALONIANS.	“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.” (v. 28).
II THESSALONIANS.	“I Paul add the greeting with my own hand, which is the credential in every letter of mine. This is my hand writing. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.” (iii. 17, 18, Weymouth).
I TIMOTHY.	“Grace be with thee. Amen” (vi. 21).
II TIMOTHY.	“The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.” (iv 22).
TITUS.	“Grace be with you all. Amen.” (iii. 15).
PHILEMON.	“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen.” (25).
HEBREWS.	“Grace be with you all. Amen.” (xiii. 25).

Here is a consistent witness, made even more definite by observing the concluding words of the epistles of Peter, James, John and Jude. In this list the epistle to the Hebrews finds a place, and while we do not limit the evidence to the Pauline authorship to this one feature, an unbiased reader cannot but feel that unless some evidence to the contrary is forthcoming, the epistle to the Hebrews is as clearly by the Apostle Paul, as any one of his accepted epistles. If the word *egrapsa* be taken as the epistolary aorist, then the actual words written with large letters will be the postscript, Gal. vi. 11-18. If, however, *egrapsa* refers to what has already been written, then the Apostle must be supposed to have departed from his usual custom and to have written the whole epistle with his own hand. The aorist usually refers either (1) to a former letter (I Cor. v. 9) or (2) to an epistle now concluded (Rom. xv. 15), or (3) to a foregoing portion of the epistle (I Cor. ix. 15).

“With this partially conflicting evidence it seems impossible to decide positively whether St. Paul wrote the whole or only the concluding portion” (Ellicott).

Our own conclusion, which coincides with that of Lightfoot, Conybeare and Howson, and *The Companion Bible*, is that the ‘large letters’ written with Paul’s own hand refer to the postscript only. Conybeare and Howson print as a note the following illustrative incident:

“The writer of this note received a letter from the venerable Neander a few months before his death His letter is written in the fair flowing hand of an amanuensis, but it ends with a few irregular lines in large rugged characters, written by himself, explaining the cause of his needing the service of an amanuensis, namely, the weakness of his eyes (probably the very malady of St. Paul). It is impossible to read this autograph without thinking of the present passage, observing that he might have expressed himself in the very words of St. Paul—*Ide pelikois soi grammain egrapsa te eme cheiri*. "Humin 'to you'. Standing after *pelokois* 'large', this word can scarcely be taken with 'I write' or 'I wrote' *to you*, it is connected with *pelokois*, as though the Apostle said 'How large, mark you'.".”

Whether the large letters were for emphasis, a thought already incipient in the figure of the 'placard' ("evidently set forth") of Gal. iii. 1, or whether Paul's handwriting was, unlike that of the trained slave, rather irregular, to which may be added the affliction of his eyes which he mentions in Gal. iv. 15, may not be easy to decide, but emphasis there is from single or combined causes. Whether Paul wrote the whole epistle in large letters, or whether the postscript only was written by his hand, and the postscript only in large letters, the fact remains that we have an emphatic personal summary given by the Apostle at the close of this most personal epistle.

In Hebrews we have a 'summary' given in chapter viii., where we learn that 'a seated priest in a heavenly sanctuary' sums up what Paul had been teaching in the first seven chapters. Here in Gal. vi. 12-16, we have the Apostle's own underlining, and we should be foolish in the extreme if we neglected a guide so capable to the understanding of the main theme of this most important epistle.

**No.80. (38) GALATIANS.
The Emphasized Summary and Salutation (vi. 12 - 18).
pp. 195 - 198**

The subjects underlined by the Apostle in this personally hand written summary are:

- (1) Circumcision. (2) The Cross of Christ. (3) Crucifixion of self.
(4) Creation (new) and (5) Canon (rule).

Of the Circumcision he says:--

“As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrained you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; but desire to have you circumcised, that they may glory in your flesh” (Gal. vi. 12, 13).

After an expansion of the place of 'the cross of Christ' in verse 14 the Apostle returns to the place of circumcision, saying:

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

He then speaks of ‘this rule’ or ‘canon’ namely the rule of the new creation, saying:

“As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God” (Gal. vi. 16).

Paul’s summing up of the circumcision party and their alms is reducible to the following heads:

- (1) A desire for a fair show ‘in the flesh’ and for glorying or boasting ‘in your flesh’.
- (2) This desire to stand well in the flesh ‘constrains’ these teachers to have the Galatians circumcised, but with an added reason, not that they can ever hope to keep the law, but in order that they may avoid persecution for the cross of Christ.
- (3) Instead of ‘glorying’ (or boasting) in the flesh and of attempting to avoid persecution for the sake of the Cross, the Apostle’s attitude was to ‘glory’ (or boast) in nothing save the very Cross that was an offence to the Judaizers, and by this cross he realized that the world and all it stood for was crucified to him, even as he recognized that by the Cross he too had been crucified to the world.
- (4) Yet he would be the last to give colour to the thought that he was forming an opposition party called “The Uncircumcision”.
In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails or ‘is’ (so the texts) anything. He had but one answer to all such alternations: the position of the believer ‘in Christ Jesus’, the state of the believer ‘dead’ to sin, law and the world.
- (5) This was however no mere negative attitude and doctrine; it was definitely and positively ‘a new creature’, or better ‘a new creation’ in which ‘old things have passed away and new things have come into being’. This new creation pulses with life; it is the only ‘rule’ or ‘canon’ by which ‘new creatures in Christ’ can hope to ‘walk in newness of life’.
- (6) The Galatians had been reprov’d for submitting to the bondage of ‘rudiments’ (*stoicheia*) and of returning to weak and beggarly ‘elements’ (*stoicheia*), but now they are reminded of a new, living ‘walk’ (*stoicheo*), a walk that is ‘in the spirit’ and according to the rule of the new creation.
- (7) Upon all such the Apostle writes ‘peace and mercy’ and he adds ‘upon the Israel of God’—looking to the true believers from among the Jews, who were in vivid contrast with “Israel according to the flesh”.

Even an apostle, strengthened and equipped as he was by the Spirit of God, by grace and by truth, must at some time cry ‘Hold, enough’. To say more would be but the multiplication of words, and so he concludes by saying:

“From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” (Gal. vi. 17).

The “I” is emphatic. “He bore in his body the proofs that by no subterfuge, such as they attributed to him, had he evaded the consequences of a faithful delivery of the doctrine of the cross” (Gwynne). These ‘marks’ are *stigmata*, the scars left by the scourging, the imprisonment, the stoning, the ship wrecks that had accompanied his ministry, and had, as it were, recompensed his faithfulness by affliction. In the days of

Paul, *stigmata* indicated either that the persons bearing them were domestic slaves, or slaves attached to a temple. In accord with this significance is the reading of the Revised Text, which, instead of reading as the A.V. "The marks of the Lord Jesus", omits the word 'Lord', for the personal name of the owner of the slave is all that was wanted. Moffatt's translation of Gal. vi. 17, is "Let no one interfere with me after this, for I bear branded on my body the owner's stamp of Jesus".

The Apostle, from the commencement of his commission, knew that 'suffering' for the name of Christ formed an integral part of it. Not only was Ananias informed by the Lord that Paul was a chosen vessel to bear His name before the Gentiles and Kings and the children of Israel, but the peculiar nature of this commission was emphasized by the added words "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake" (Acts ix. 15, 16).

When he summed up his early ministry in Acts xx. and looked forward to the next phase of his commission he said, "And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me" (Acts xx. 22, 23).

After his imprisonment, when he became "the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles" (Eph. iii. 1), he assured the Ephesians that his tribulations on their behalf were their 'glory' (Eph. iii. 13), and realized that there were reserved some sufferings which he now 'filled up' (Col. i. 24). In Philipians, Paul's Lord and Master stooped to the form of a 'slave' (Phil. ii. 7) and a slave could be punished with crucifixion, but a Roman citizen (as Paul was) could not. Nevertheless it was the Apostle's prayer that he might know the Lord and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, 'being made conformable unto His death'. The *stigmata* or brand marks which Paul bore in his body were definitely associated with fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and for ever separated him from those who, to avoid the offence of the cross, adulterated the gospel of grace with the dregs of Jewish ceremonial.

Paul was constrained to write two epistles on the great theme of Justification by faith without works of law, namely Galatians and Romans. In Galatians, at the beginning of the conflict, he threw the whole weight of his apostolic authority and independence into the scale (see structure of Gal. i.), and not until the last word is uttered can he take the attitude which love dictated, namely to subscribe himself, 'a bond slave' of Jesus Christ. At the opening of the epistle he stresses his credentials; at the close, he draws attention to the *marks* his body bears of his faithful adherence to the truth. By the time he came to write Romans, the conflict with Judaism had died down and he was then free to open that great epistle not with his apostolic authority, but with the words "Paul a bond-slave of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle" (Rom. i. 1).

Farrar remarks that in verses 12 and 13 Paul resumed the polemical, and in verses 14 and 16 the dogmatic theses of the epistle; and that the personal (17) as well as the doctrinal truth (18) on which he had been dwelling recur in the last two verses.

The salutation with which the epistle ends contains one unusual word. In every salutation made by Paul there are to be found the core as it were of all his greetings "Grace be with" Once this is expanded in II Cor. xiii. 14 to include the Trinity, and the salutation of Ephesians make special reference to those that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, while II Timothy and Philemon, together with Galatians, add the words 'with my (or your) spirit'; but in the salutation of the epistle to the Galatians alone the word 'brethren' occurs. The word is placed at the very end of the sentence (not as in the A.V. at the beginning). Apart from 'Amen' it is the Apostle's last word. It seems as though he would remind them that in spite of all his censure, and in spite of all the trouble they had caused him, they were and always would be 'brethren'. A blessed word with which to end an epistle in which so much felling has been manifested, and so much error exposed and condemned.

Thus we bring to an end a study that embraces doctrine that lies at the very centre of the gospel of grace. Its importance cannot be overrated; no one can fully appreciate the glories of the dispensation of the Mystery who does not whole-heartedly follow Paul in this great conflict for the truth.

Luther's translation of Galatians was one of the main instruments in promoting the Reformation, and all who have the responsibility of teaching and preaching are urged to give this epistle a place in their witness. We feel we cannot do better than end these studies with the clarion call of Gal. v. 1:

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

“Go ye and learn what that meaneth”
(Matt. ix. 13)

(A series of studies on the importance of, and the comprehension of, “meaning”)

No.13. Words---the material of the unashamed workman.
Every word has a meaning.
pp. 14 - 17

Rule #2. A word is the medium whereby the thoughts and ideas of one person may be made intelligible to another. Words are therefore the current coin, the material of the unashamed workman.

The principle of ‘right division’ which we considered in the preceding article, cannot of course be put into use apart from ‘the Word of truth’. Timothy was not exhorted to ‘rightly divide’, merely, for that does not make sense; he was exhorted to ‘rightly divide the Word of truth’. A well set saw, a well grounded chisel are valuable tools but, without timber to work upon they are as useless as the dullest implement. The exposition deals with ‘words’, words of truth, inspired words, living words, words that are spirit and life, but nevertheless words.

“The examination of the Scriptures”, says Dr. Chalmers, “is a pure work of grammatical analysis; it is an unmixed question of language. We must admit of no other instrument than the vocabulary and the lexicon” (which includes as we shall see the concordance in order to discover the usage as well as the original meaning of a word).

“The mind or meaning of an author who is translated is purely a question of language, and should be decided on no other principle than that of grammar and philosophy” (By philosophy here is meant the axioms and bases of all legitimate thought).

“But this principle has been most glaringly departed from in the case of the Bible. The meaning of the Author instead of being made simply and entirely a question of grammar has been made a question of metaphysics or of sentiment. It has been ‘such must be the rendering by the analogy of faith, the reason of the thing, the character of the Divine mind, etc.’”

When the Most High condescended to speak to man, He chose the Hebrew and the Greek languages as His instruments. When He chose those languages, He of necessity chose to use their grammar, their modes of expression, their syntax and their vocabulary. From the Divine standpoint and from the human standpoint the language remains unchanged. In His Sovereignty and in His Providence, however, the Lord exercised wondrous wisdom in selecting or rejecting items of these languages so that His Will should be clearly made known. This is taught in Psa. xii.:

“The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times” (Psa. xii. 6).

The Companion Bible gives reasons, grammatical and otherwise for rendering this verse as follows:

The words of Jehovah are pure words.
As silver tried in a furnace:
(Words) pertaining to the earth
Purified seven times.

The word 'of' in the phrase 'words of earth' is the Hebrew *lamed* which is the sign of the dative 'to' not the genitive 'of'.

The meaning of this verse appears to be, that though the words used by the Lord in making known His will to man must necessarily be words that 'pertain to the earth', yet such is His grace and power, these words have been used with such discretion and with such precision that they are like silver purified to perfection. While therefore, in our dealing with the Scriptures we are dealing with the Hebrew and the Greek language, and are not permitted to take any liberties with its grammar, its vocabulary or its syntax (syntax refers to the disposition of the words in a sentence; grammar deals with the actual words themselves as to whether they be nouns, verbs, etc., and the various changes that must be made in order to express number, gender, case, etc.), yet we are encouraged in our search and emboldened in our trust by the consciousness that these words of earth have been purified seven times, so that without reserve we may believe all that they legitimately mean.

There are one or two other references that speak of the fact that the word of God has been 'tried' or 'refined':

"The word of the LORD is tried (margin *refined*)" (II Sam. xxii. 31; Psa. xviii. 30).
"Thy word is very pure (margin *tried* or *refined*)" (Psa. cxix. 140).
"Every word of God is pure (margin *purified*)" (Prov. xxx. 5).

It is objected by some that it is not the sign of great spirituality to be concerned about 'mere words'. True, 'mere words' may be a barren field, but the pure, tried, refined words used by God demand the highest spiritual powers for their appreciation. There are few who would question the sincerity of Melancthon, friend and helper of Luther. He said:

"Scripture cannot be understood theologically unless it has already been understood grammatically."
(*Scriptura non poset intelligi theologice, nisi antea sit intellecti grammaticae*).

Sawyer says:

"We cannot believe any further than we understand the true meaning of the divine communications."

If a sentence were to be printed here from the original Hebrew or Greek of the Scriptures, and the reader be unacquainted with those languages, although these words would be the words used by inspiration and full of life and peace, they would be 'mere words' apart from understanding, and valueless to faith.

It has been a matter of great interest to many to seek the origin of language. The most important theories are:

- (1) *The Automatic Theory.* Different sounds correspond with different feelings, and so originated language, just as iron when struck has a note peculiar to itself. This has been satirized as ‘The Ding Dong’ theory.
- (2) *The Onomatopoetic Theory.* This theory is based upon the evident imitation in such words as ‘splash’ and has been satirized as ‘The Bow-wow’ theory.
- (3) *The Interjectional Theory.* Certain ejaculations are natural to man in his expression of horror, joy or surprise. This has been satirized as ‘The Pooh-pooh’ theory.

Neither theory is sufficient to account for the wonder of language.

We cannot avoid concluding, both from the use of language in Eden, by Adam’s evident ability to name the animals that were brought before him, and by the names given to the first children born, that language is a gift of God to man.

The reader, as did the present writer, acquired his first knowledge of language not from a book, not at a school, but in his home. What ordinarily takes several years in the home training of a child, could be accomplished immediately by the Lord in His first contact with Adam. The ‘miracle’ is not in the fact that language is imparted, but in the brevity of the period of instruction.

“We count it no gentleness and fair dealing in a man of power, to require strict and punctual obedience, and yet give out his commands ambiguously. We should think he had a plot upon us The very essence of truth is plainness and brightness, the darkness and the ignorance are our own.” (Milton).

The words used by God have been chosen by Divine wisdom as the fittest to convey His meaning without ambiguity to the mind of man. It is incumbent upon all who have the privilege and responsibility of interpreting those inspired words into common speech, to see to it that so far as it is humanly possible, the same clarity be observed by them in their work.

Rule #3.

Every word has a meaning.

It is the work of the interpreter to convey the meaning intended by the speaker to the understanding of the hearer. Simplicity and directness must be aimed at.

The business of the interpreter is primarily to do with words, and the interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, with words purified, tried and approved of God. We must remember however that words are signs, and their distinctive meanings are only binding upon the minds of men because of common consent.

Schleiermacher puts as a rule of the first importance:

“A system resting upon principles which are immediately evident from the nature of thought and language.”

Accepting the language under consideration, our own, the Hebrew or the Greek, there still remains some fundamental basis upon which all who are concerned must of necessity build. This resolves itself into the necessity to hold in the mind certain fundamental laws of thought that are axiomatic, to apply them with uniform consistency, and to realize that, wherever a difference occurs, the error lies in some misapplication of, or fault in the principles entertained.

What do we mean by an axiom? An axiom is some self evident proposition, not requiring demonstration, as for example, *the whole is greater than its part*. It would be useless to argue with anyone who did not immediately assent to this axiom; it lies outside the realm of debate and its discernment is associated with the very nature of the mind itself.

“As man could not reason with man except upon the ground of a common experience and consciousness, and a community of ideas and language, so God could not communicate with man, and man could not receive instruction or revelation from God, except upon a basis of common feeling and thought.” (Bosanquet).

We shall have to recur to this aspect of things when we deal with anthropomorphism (i.e. a figure of speech which speaks of God as though possessed of the members, passions and ways of man, such as ‘nostrils’, ‘hate’, etc.).

“The wisdom of God created understanding fit and proportionable to truth, the object and end of it, as the eye is to the thing visible.” (Milton).

It will be seen therefore that there must be something that is held in common by Him Whose word is interpreted by the one who interprets it, and by the one who receives the interpretation.

“Nearly all the treatises on hermeneutics”, says Moses Stuart, “since the days of Ernesti, have laid it down as an axiom which cannot be controverted, that the Bible is to be interpreted in the same manner, that is by the same principles, as all other books these principles are coeval with nature the person addressed has always been an interpreter in every instance where he has heard and understood what was addressed to him.”

Should the reader feel some objection to thus treating the Word of God ‘as all other books’, let us remind him that we are for the moment, not dealing with its exposition, its preaching, its application, but its simple interpretation. We cannot treat a noun as a

verb simply because we deal with Holy Writ, nay rather, we shall feel the importance of treating nouns as nouns, verbs as verbs, and observing every phase and detail with scrupulous care, *just because it is Holy Writ*.

Every author, whether sacred or profane must be supposed to employ such words for the conveyance of his thought as he believes will excite the same thoughts in his readers. Grimm has said “The English tongue possesses a veritable power of expression, such as, perhaps, never stood at the command of any other language of man”.

Let us summarize thus: Language is the medium whereby one person conveys his thoughts and ideas to another. The following features should be kept in mind:

- (1) Oral. That is, his ideas are expressed by articulate sounds which are recognized by speaker and hearer as referring to the same thing.
- (2) The connection between words and ideas is arbitrary. The idea expressed by the Greek word *Logos*, the Hebrew word *Dabar* and the English word *Word* are the same, but the sounds are totally different.
- (3) The Written word is expressed by letters grouped into words which are symbolical representations of the oral sounds and of the thoughts and ideas expressed by them.
- (4) Every language is its own interpreter to those who are acquainted with its elements.
- (5) Where there are no fixed principles of language, there can be no certain rules or results of interpretation.

**Rule #4. The meaning of a word
is to be sought in its usage.
pp. 29 - 33**

It is a proverb that should be kept in mind when dealing with words and their meaning, that ‘fire is a good servant but a bad master’. Etymology is a good servant, but if it controls the mind of the interpreter instead of being a useful adjunct it can very seriously mislead.

In the early books of the O.T. we might expect the words that are used to retain much of their primitive force, but as time goes on, words change in their meaning; new shades of meaning are taken on, old meanings fade and are forgotten and consequently the interpreter is faced at every step with a problem. Who, today thinks of a ‘diploma’ as ‘a thing folded double’? Who associates ‘influenza’ with astrology and the ‘influence’ of the planets? Who thinks of the god ‘Mercury’ when he speaks of ‘merchandise’? To

translate such words literally, so that the etymology of the word could be reproduced, would in cases like the above, and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, not be translating at all. We are not concerned with the 'word' that our author has used so much as we are concerned with his 'meaning', and his meaning is not settled by the *etymology* of the word, but its accepted *usage* at the time when it was spoken or written. How easy it is to arrange a word for word literal translation of any book but how misleading its results! One writer of foreign nationality wrote 'his provisions were disappointed'. While the etymology of 'foresight' and 'provision' are the same both meaning 'to see beforehand' in usage they are far apart.

Language has its value and currency only by the agreement of speakers and hearers"—*Whitney*.

This leads us to the next great principle that underlies all true interpretation: *usus loquendi* or 'common usage'. The following hints may help the reader in seeking to apply the rule of 'common usage'.

(1) *The writer may have defined the word himself.* Take the word 'prize' as found in Phil. iii. 14. In I Cor. ix. 24 - x. 12 the Apostle has used the word 'prize' in such a way as to preclude the idea of gift in grace. The context speaks of a race to be run, and the historic example of the failure of many of Israel renders his meaning certain. If Paul has so used the word 'prize', and if Phil. iii. reproduces the imagery of the race with its eager contestants; if like I Cor. x., he introduces those whose example must be shunned, then the interpreter is bound by all the laws of thought, honesty and impartiality, to use words that will give the same atmosphere and colouring as is found in the Apostle's own contexts.

It has been well said by one writer, whose name we have forgotten:

"We may, with the help of a Lexicon, put together a set of words in one language corresponding to a set of words in another. But the correspondence will not necessarily be such that the meaning expressed by the translator shall be the meaning intended by the author. The meaning of words is purely conventional. Their connection with notions is to be discovered only by usage."

In prosecuting this search for the usage, we should ask:

"What notion was affixed by persons in general who spoke the language in question at the time? If there should be several senses attached to the word, we should be at pains to discover what notion attached to the word in *a particular connection*."

Then we should remember:

"That a particular application may depend upon a particular situation of the person to whom the word is *immediately addressed*. We should seek to discover what meaning would be affixed to any particular word by those for whom the author immediately wrote." For example what would 'Pentecost' mean to the "Jews out of every nation under heaven" (Acts ii.)?

“Every author writes immediately for his contemporaries.” “That interpretation should be preferred which accords best with the genius and language of the writer’s contemporaries”—*Seiler* (and another).

(2) *The immediate context must be taken into account.* Think of the translations of such a word as *pneuma*. It is rendered in the A.V. “Ghost” (both small and capital “g”), “life”, “breath” (margin), “spirit” (both small and capital “s”), “spiritual gift”, “spiritually” and “wind”.

Stoicheion means, in Peter’s usage ‘the elements out of which the visible fabric of creation is built’ (II Pet. iii. 10, 12), whereas when used by Paul, the word means:

“those rudimentary first steps that belong to the dispensation of the law, or in the world, as contrasted with the fullness found under grace.”

(3) *Antithesis and contrast are often deciding factors.* We remember one friend who had accepted the doctrine that God was the author of sin, maintaining in proof that there was a passage that read:

“I make good and create evil.”

He had unconsciously accommodated the Scripture to his own terrible doctrine. The actual passage says:

“I make *peace*, and create evil” (Isa. xlv. 7) not “I make *good* and create evil.”

The Hebrew word translated ‘evil’ is *ra*, and is rendered adversity, affliction, bad, calamity, displeasure, distress, evil, grief, grievous, harm, heavy, hurt, hurtful, ill, mischief, ill favoured, mischievous, misery, naught, naughty, noisome, sad, sorrow, trouble, sore, wicked, wickedness, wickedly, worse, wretchedness and wrong.

Now while it may be true that the A.V. translators exercised a considerable latitude in rendering the Hebrew and the Greek of the originals, such an array of renderings cannot be dismissed without examination. We discover that evil may refer to moral evil or it may refer to calamity and grief that follows judgment for sin. This being the case, the matter is settled by contrast. If the word ‘good’ is used in contrast, then evil will most likely be moral, if ‘peace’ be used in contrast, then evil will refer to some affliction. Isa. xlv. 7 does not countenance the idea that God is the author of moral evil, it teaches that God is the One Who both awards peace and Who sends affliction according to His righteous judgment of man.

We now consider in the next place the importance of investigating parallel passages.

(4) Parallel passages must be considered before deciding the meaning of any word used in Scripture, and this comparison must cover the following seven subdivisions:

- (a) Parallel passages in the writings of the same author.
- (b) Parallel passages in the writings of other authors.
- (c) Obscure passages compared with simple and clear parallels.

- (d) Seek some addition in a parallel passage such as a qualifying adjective.
- (e) Look for a verbal form to explain a noun and vice versa.
- (f) Look for parallel passages which use a synonym.
- (g) Look for parallel passages that give any added information.

There will be no need to illustrate (a) since it is self evident, and we have alluded to it earlier when speaking of Paul's usage of the word 'prize' in I Cor. ix., deciding the meaning intended by the same writer in Phil. iii. When putting into practice (b), one should be careful to use 'real' and not 'superficial' parallels. Paul's readers numbered among them Gentiles who had had no previous knowledge of God, or His law, and consequently care would have to be exercised in comparing passages from his epistles with either the O.T. or in the writings addressed to the circumcision. For example the word 'Gospel' as found in the phrase 'the gospel of the Kingdom' or 'the everlasting gospel' would have very different connotations from the same word found in the phrase used by Paul 'my gospel'.

It is obvious that obscure passages (c) should always be read in the light of parallels that are clear and simple, and never in the inverse order. The plain statements of the Scripture concerning the state of the dead must be used as guides in interpreting the Rich Man and Lazarus, but many seem to work in the opposite direction and use an allegorical form of teaching to override the plain utterances of other Scriptures.

The value of rule (e) can be illustrated by the use of the words translated 'perfection', 'make perfect', and 'perfect', in the epistle to the Hebrews.

We read that Christ was 'made perfect' (Heb. v. 9), but other Scriptures that speak of His holiness forbid the idea that He was thereby 'improved'. We observe that the verb thus translated is *teleioo*, and find that the noun form *teleios* occurs in Heb. v. 14, where it is translated 'full age' and is contrasted with 'babes' (Rule 4 section (c) above), and used elsewhere by the same writer (Rule 4 section (a) above) in similar connections, as for example Eph. iv. 13 and 14. By pursuing this method and observing the usage of both noun and verbal forms a fairly clear conception of the meaning intended by the Apostle when he speaks of 'being made perfect' will be obtained.

In like manner, the use of synonymous words in parallel passages (f) is of great help. For example Paul explains what he means by 'the dying' of the Lord Jesus, in II Cor. iv. 10 by being "delivered unto death for Jesus' sake" in II Cor. iv. 11. In like manner the obscure reference to baptism being for the dead if the dead rise not in I Cor. xv. 29, is explained by the Apostle in verses 31 and 32:

"I die daily", "I have fought with beasts", "What advantageth it me if the dead rise not".

The value of (g) parallel passages that give further information is obvious. Those who deny that Gen. i. 2 refers to a chaos resulting from judgment, ignore or belittle this parallel use of words in Jer. iv. 23-26, and in Isa. xxxiv. 11.

Passing to another rule:

(5) Ancient versions of the Scriptures should be consulted in the endeavour to establish the meaning of a word by its usage.

Foremost among the versions, easiest of access and of translation by the student, and earlier than any existing copy of the Hebrew Scriptures is the Septuagint version (usually represented by the letters LXX and given some explanation in *The Berean Expositor*, Volume XXII, page 33). Many words of doctrinal importance that occur in the N.T. are to be found in the LXX. *Dikaiosune* righteousness, *lutron* and *lutroo* redemption or redeem, *hamartia* sin, *soteria* salvation, *zoe* life, *psuche* soul, etc., were in daily use for a couple of centuries before the N.T. was written, and if the writers intended their hearers to put a new meaning into any of these or similar words, it would have been incumbent upon them to have said so. Moreover, the LXX, being a translation of the Hebrew O.T., forms a bridge by which the student of the Greek N.T. can discover legitimate parallels in the more ancient Hebrew. The LXX translates the word 'atonement' by the Greek word *hilasterion*. This word is translated in the N.T. 'propitiation', and therefore it is a most serious thing for anyone to say that 'the Atonement' is not used in the N.T. to speak of the Sacrifice of Christ. It is a quibble not an argument; it is confusing the mere occurrence of an English word with the meaning of the original. Let us illustrate the value of getting some common denominator that shall include all the shades of meaning of a word and yet give an intelligent meaning to each reference. Let us take the Greek word *ethnos*. This word is found 164 times in the N.T. It is translated in the A.V. Gentiles, heathen, nation and people. The word Gentile means one of any of the non-Jewish nations. The word heathen, in modern usage, means those races whose religious belief is neither Christian, Jewish nor Mohammedan; in other words a pagan, and usually an idolator.

The word nation means a distinct race or people, characterized by a common descent, language or history, usually organized as a separate political state and occupying a definite territory. The word people means a nation looked upon as a community or family, often with a stress on the commonality, and a suggestion that such are ruled over by a king or chief. The Apostle Paul uses the word *ethnos* 10 times in Galatians, and the A.V. translates the word 'heathen' three times in i. 16; ii. 9 and iii. 8; 'Gentiles' six times ii. 2, 8, 12, 14, 15; iii. 14 and 'nations' once in iii. 8.

Whichever of these words we care to use in the rendering of these ten occurrences, leaves the sense pretty much the same. Paul was appointed to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. These Gentiles were at the time pagans or heathens, and they were 'the nations' of the earth as distinct from one 'nation'—Israel.

Yet the modern reader is apt to think of the black or yellow races when he reads of the heathen, forgetting that, in the teaching of Scripture, the English nation is heathen.

When however we read in Luke vii. 5, "He loveth our nation" or in Acts xxiv. 17 "I came to bring alms to my nation" it is obvious that neither the word 'heathen' nor the

word 'Gentile' could be used with propriety or truth, for here Israel is intended. When moreover we discover that the rest of the world outside of Israel is looked upon as 'the nations' we realize that this is the one all covering word that will suit every reference and distort none. We can speak of Israel as a 'nation' and we can speak of the Gentiles as 'nations', and this method when applied to any of the words of Scripture always help to clarity and avoids ambiguity. It is therefore a useful procedure, and should be in constant use by the unashamed workman.

No.16. Figures of speech. pp. 48 - 50

Rule #5. Value at its true worth the fact that God has condescended to use figures speech in revealing Himself to man.

"It is not too much to say that the whole dictionary of ancient religion is made up of metaphors. With us these metaphors are all forgotten. We speak of spirit without thinking of breath, of heaven without thinking of the sky, of revelation without thinking of a veil."—*Max Müller*.

Some of us, because we have become acquainted with the Scriptures, do think of a veil or of breath when we use the above terms, but Max Müller is speaking generally, and is right.

"What if earth
Be but the shadow of heaven and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?" (*Milton*).

Our ability to understand by human language anything to do with the nature and being of God, is, at the base, closely associated with the fundamental fact that man was created in the Image of God. If this had not been so, terms used by God could have meant nothing. There is but one thing we can apprehend immediately and apart from any figure of speech. We can know what God means when He says "He is", because we find within ourselves the ability to say 'I am'. We may have no theory as to 'personality', but we understand sufficient without learning or study to believe the fundamental fact of faith 'He that cometh to God must believe that He is'.

All further knowledge of God that reaches us through the instrumentality of words, must come by the use of words that are necessarily associated with human experiences and with created objects. We cannot understand the meaning of a word whose origin and reference lie outside our own orbit. All words therefore that are used in the Scriptures concerning God are *founded upon resemblance*. No title of God *comprehends* Him. He is more than Mighty, He is more than Love. We read "God is spirit", but what do we know of 'spirit'? We dare not conceive of form, shape or visibility, without destroying its essential meaning. If we read "God is light", we may have stated a profound truth that

is independent of all externals, but is only intelligible to us upon a lower plane and we instinctively think of light in the way in which we perceive it by our senses.

All words used to express the nature and attributes of God are used analogically.

“When a country which has sent out colonists is termed the mother country, the expression is analogical”—*Mill*.

It will be perceived that care must be taken so that analogical expressions be not pushed beyond their legitimate boundaries. For example it would be easy to reduce the idea of a ‘mother country’ to ridiculous nonsense if pushed to extremes.

The figure of speech known as *Anthropopatheia* from *anthropos* ‘man’ and *pathos* ‘feeling’, is used in the ascription of human passions, actions or attributes to God. We have touched upon it when dealing with the subject of Figures of Speech in the series entitled *With all thy getting get understanding* (Volumes XXII-XXVII). Type, and teaching by type is the character of Scriptural revelation by sheer necessity.

Bosanquet says “Paley’s analogical argument (of the watch necessitating a watchmaker, so creation necessitating a Creator) is unanswerable, and entirely convincing to the unsophisticated mind. It is only the refinement and subtlety and conceit of philosophy that finds and approves distinctions that can weigh against it”.

What a different book the Bible would be if it had been framed by a theological professor! It would have been beautifully subdivided, all the attributes of God would have been brought together in a long list, doctrines would have been dealt with systematically, but it would never have spread over the earth with its life-giving message. It would have been placed upon the shelf of a museum or library to be consulted by the learned. Instead, we realize the greatness of the Creator by the description given of Creation. We realize the character of sin by the story of Eden. Justification by faith lives and breathes in the biography of Abraham, and John iii. 16 takes a deeper meaning when we read of Abraham’s son, his only son Isaac whom he loved (Gen. xxii.).

Even in those epistles which touch the highest spiritual note, namely the prison epistles of the Apostle Paul, we find figure after figure. The church is called ‘the body’ of which Christ is ‘the Head’ and believers ‘members’. It is called a ‘Temple’ of which believers are ‘living stones’ and Christ ‘the chief corner stone’. The figure of adoption is used of this company as of Israel. Citizenship is theirs, and the middle wall of partition that stood in the courts of Herod’s temple is employed to teach the profound truth of the newly created new man. In *Philippians* and *II Timothy*, the Apostle uses imagery borrowed from the Greek games, in order to enforce the teaching he gives concerning prize and crown, saying of himself:

“I have contested a good contest (race) (Heb. xii. 1), I have finished my course (the figure of the runner), I have kept the faith” (II Tim. iv. 7).

When one perceives this character of revelation, while grateful for the condescension that stoops so low, one will be humbled by the recognition of human weakness. Truly, even with the inspired book we must still say ‘we see through a glass darkly’ and it ill behooves any of us to speak as though we were at present ‘face to face’. What we see and what we know we must hold fast. If we believe we must also speak and speak plainly; but with it all let our readers and hearers ever remember that, like the Queen of Sheba, we shall all have to confess the half had not been told us.

Let us at the same time glory in the figures of faith. Let us be thankful for the fact that sin is explained as ‘missing the mark’, that forgiveness means ‘a loosing from’ bondage or from penalty, that sanctification is expressed in the terms of separation both *from* the world and *to* God and that “Hope” is an “Anchor”. Let us realize moreover, that every figure of speech that speaks of God in the terms of man, cries out in the Scriptures for the Son of God, Emmanuel, God with us, Who in the days of His flesh said:

“He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.”

He is THE Word pre-eminent.

“The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us no man hath seen God at any time He hath declared Him” (John i. 14, 18).

In the written Scriptures we learn of God analogically, and we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

No.17. Scope and Structure. **pp. 65 - 67**

Rule #6. The scope of a passage often determines the exact meaning of a word that has several shades of meaning. The scope is determined by the structure. Put the structure therefore in the forefront of your investigations.

A word has a meaning by reason of its etymology and origin. It has a meaning by common usage which modifies the original meaning, and it has a special meaning which is decided by its context and by the scope of the passage which contains it. The scope of a passage is determined by its structure, and the structure is found by noting outstanding items that balance, and that carry the theme on in definite logical steps. In searching for the evidences of structure do not think that of necessity only important looking words will be used. Sometimes it is the reverse. The scope of Gal. i. is determined by its structure, and the structure hinges upon three simple words, ‘not’, ‘neither’, ‘but’. Yet the sense of independence these three words bring to the one who has made their message his own must be experienced to be appreciated. Divested of all subsidiary matter, Gal. i.

tells us that the Apostle had before him three related subjects that are at the basis of his ministry to the Gentiles.

Paul's independent Apostleship. "Not, neither, but" (Gal. i. 1).

Paul's independent Gospel. "Not, neither, but" (Gal. i. 11, 12).

Paul's independent Commission. "Not, neither, but" (Gal. i. 16, 17).

He who sees this is independent of human expositions, and he who believes it is independent of all human criticism or authority so far as the things of God are concerned.

The knowledge of the scope of a book, discovered by its structure, enforces true translation. This can be illustrated from the A.V. rendering of Eph. vi. 13 "Having done all". Had the translators realized that Ephesians has a perfect balance of parts, and that Eph. i. 19 - ii. 7 is in structural correspondence with Eph. vi. 10-13, they would have been compelled to balance the words 'work in' of Eph. i. 19 by 'work out' in Eph. vi. 13, even as they have so translated the two words in Phil. ii. 12, 13. Supplementing this we quote from Dr. Bullinger's *Figures of Speech*:

"The subject, which may not be mentioned in one member may be named in the other. We are thus helped to a correct interpretation. For example, in the structure of I Pet. iii. 18-22, it is not clear who or what may be 'the-in-prison-spirits' of verse 19. But in the corresponding member (verse 22) they are mentioned by name as 'angels'. We thus learn that the subject of the former member (verse 19) is the *disobedience* of angels in the days of Noah (Gen. vi.), while the subject of the latter (verse 22) is the *subjection* of angels and authorities and powers. Having thus got the scope of the passage, we get the meaning of 'spirits' and remember how it is written 'He maketh His angels spirits' (Psa. civ. 4; Heb. i. 7). We at once connect their sin in the days of Noah and their prison with Gen. vi. 1, 2 and Jude 6. We have thus the clue to the true interpretation of this passage, which if followed out will lead to a correct exegesis."

The Editor of the magazine, if given half an hour in which to prepare to speak on any given passage of Scripture, would devote twenty minutes of that precious time in ascertaining the scope of the passage by means of the structure, and would not begrudge the time, knowing that no knowledge of words, or of doctrine, could make up for essential truth provided by the structure and the scope. We do not give this as the only method of study, we but state a personal fact and speak of what is characteristic of our own mode of study and presentation. We can only say to fellow students and fellow teachers 'it works'.

A few examples may be of service, illustrating the way in which the structure points to the teaching of any given passage.

PSALM xix.

A | 1-4. The Heavens.

B | 4-6. The sun in them. (*Bahem in them*)

A | 7-10. The Scriptures.

B | 11-14. The servant in them. (*Bahem in them*)

The structure is of extreme service in preventing one from losing the thread of any passage. For example, if one knew the structure of Heb. i.-ii., one would not be confused by the introduction in two different places of 'angels', but would realize the development of the theme.

Hebrews i., ii.

A | i. 1, 2. God once spoke by prophets. Now by His Son.

B | i. 2-14. The Son. His Glories.

God and Lord, better than angels.

A | ii. 1-4. God once spoke by angels. Now by the Lord.

B | ii. 5-18. The Son. His humiliation.

Man and Abraham's seed. Lower than angels.

The structural background of Scripture falls into four groups:

- (1) *Cognate or Gradational*, where the same thought is expressed in different or progressive terms:

"Seek ye Jehovah while He may be *found*,
Call ye upon Him while He is *near*" (Isa. lv. 6).

- (2) *Antithetic or Opposite*.

"*Faithful* are the *wounds* of a friend;
But *deceitful* are the *kisses* of an *enemy*" (Prov. xxvii. 6).

- (3) *Synthetic or Constructive*.

"O the happiness of that man
Who hath not *walked* in the *counsel* of the *ungodly*;
And hath not *stood* in the *way* of *sinner*s
And hath not *sat* in the *seat* of the *scornful*" (Psa. i. 1).

- (4) *Introverted*.

"Make the *heart* of this people fat,
And make their *ears* heavy,
And shut their *eyes*;
Lest they see with their *eyes*,
And hear with their *ears*,
And understand with their *heart*" (Isa. vi. 10).

Fuller analysis and many more examples can be seen by consulting the works of Dr. Louth, or Dr. Roe on the correspondencies of Scriptures, and the great work of Dr. Bullinger on *Figures of Speech used in the Scriptures*.

Examples could be multiplied, but these can never take the place of personal investigation. The unashamed workman will never rest satisfied with his own interpretation or that of any other, until he has tested it by scope and structure.

A word of caution regarding structure may not be amiss. We early discovered that by inventing our own head-lines in arriving at the structure, we could save a lot of time, cut out a lot of work, make a very presentable show, BUT FAIL TO ARRIVE AT TRUTH! We therefore discarded 'headings' and pinned ourselves down to using actual words from

the passage before us. This meant that much that had been put forward both by ourselves and others had to be scrapped, and the work commenced afresh. This is the reason why the reader does not find in the structural outlines submitted in the *Berean Expositor* mere copies of those in any other work. Where they coincide with the findings of others, it is a confirmation for which we are thankful. Where they differ, it will be discovered generally that the structure of the *Berean Expositor* adheres to the *actual wording* of the passage (using of course the original in every case), whereas the structure that is discarded has employed merely conceived headings.

As the *Berean Expositor* has been published for fifty years, the Editor feels that the method recommended has stood the test of time, and knows that in most cases the results are self evident and useful.

How is a structure of any given passage discovered? We have often been asked the question, but our answers have not given much satisfaction. Few structures of any importance can be discovered apart from protracted study and concentrated effort. There is no short cut. If the subject be a whole book, then the whole book must be read and re-read until the mind is able to hold in suspense the varying items, and until the eye of the mind perceives the disposition of parts. Occasionally the whole matters is settled by the presence of key words, as the whole central member of Galatians is determined by the words 'by nature' (Gal. ii. 15 and iv. 8).

How does one feel sure that a jig-saw puzzle is accurately fitted together? It is self evident, and so should the structure be. Any sense of forcing or distortion should be suspected. After all we do not want 'structures' for their own sake, but truth, and so nothing but the truth in the structure can be tolerated.

Further, just as we say "Columbus discovered America", and not "Columbus invented America", so the student should remember that in seeking the structure of any passage he is simply looking for what is there, clues given by God, the underlinings of the Holy Spirit, and is not inventing an outline, however attractive such inventions may be.

No.18. A few guiding principles in closing. pp. 104, 105

In concluding this series we give a few guiding principles.

(1) Never build a doctrine upon a text which is debateable either for its authenticity or because of its obscurity.

We do not expect our readers to pose as Textual Critics, but it is common knowledge with all intelligent readers of the Scriptures that some readings are doubtful. For example, whether one be a Trinitarian or a Unitarian, one must agree with the R.V. in

omitting from the Scriptures I John v. 7. Consequently, it would be very improper, and expose the one who so used it to well merited suspicion, to attempt to build the doctrine of the Trinity upon this verse. The doctrine of the Trinity must be based upon passages of Scripture that the Unitarian himself must admit to be authentic.

Again, some passages of Scripture are taken by enthusiasts as proofs of their particular doctrine, that only very slightly lend themselves to its establishment. This is extremely unwise. No doctrine that is fundamental to the faith lacks clear unambiguous testimony from the Word, and any attempt to drag in obscure texts weakens rather than strengthens our case.

(2) Words have one signification in one and the same connection:

“The sense of Scripture is ONE, CERTAIN and SIMPLE and is everywhere to be ascertained in accordance with the principles of grammar and human discourse.”
Melancthon.

“We must not make God’s Word mean what we wish, we must not bend it, but allow it to bend us, and give it the honour of being better than we could make it, so that we must let it stand.” *Luther.*

“Every word has some meaning. A word that has no meaning can do no good. Words cannot have a plurality of significations at the same time and in the same position.”
Sawyer.

(3) We must interpret any given passage where there is any element of uncertainty, so that it accords with the plain teaching of passages that are clear. In other words we must regard the analogy of the faith in all our work.

“As grammatical *analogy* is the law and form of language established by usage, to which is opposed *anomaly*, that is departure from the established usage and forms of speech: so the analogy of doctrine and faith rests upon the main points of Christian doctrine evidently declared in Scripture, and thence denominated by Latin Doctors, the *Regula Fidei*. To these everything is to be referred, so that no interpretation is to be received which is not consistent with them.” *Ernesti.*

“This does not mean that we first somehow learn the scheme of truth revealed in the Scripture, and that with this previously arranged scheme in our heads, we then go to the Scripture, not in order to learn the truths it contains, but in order to find something that may be made to satisfy our opinions.

In its fair and legitimate application the principle has respect only to the more doubtful or abrupt parts of the Word of God, and simply requires, that these should be brought into comparison with the other and clearer statements contained in it.” *Fairbairn.*

(4) We must be careful to distinguish the occasions when we must emphasize *differences* and when we must emphasize *agreement*, in dealing with O.T. doctrine.

“In those passages which distinctly and formally exhibit differences between the Old and New Testament things, it is the *difference* which ought to be rendered prominent in our explanation”, while on the other hand “In those passages which simply present Christian things under the form and aspect of those that belong to the Old Covenant, it is the *correspondence* or *agreement* that should be mainly dwelt upon.” *Fairbairn.*

Some reader may have wondered why the more spiritual qualifications that are so truly necessary to a right understanding of Scripture have not been brought forward. These do not come under the heading of 'rules' that guide the workman in the use of his 'tools'. They are too serious, too vital, too far removed from the purpose of this series to introduce them here. They have not been forgotten, and may form a separate series by themselves at some future date. Meanwhile we commend this present series to the prayerful consideration of all true workmen, who would be unashamed of their work 'in that day'.

HEBREWS

Perfection or Perdition

No.9. The Right Hand of the Majesty on High.

pp. 10 - 13

The writer now passes at one step from the death of the Cross to the seating of the Saviour at the right hand of the Majesty on high. He knew, and has clearly taught, that Christ not only died, but “was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. xv. 4). A little acquaintance with the Scriptures will reveal an economy in the choice of subject at all times. Paul does not mention either the Cross, the shedding of blood or the sufferings of Christ in I Cor. xv., because his chief object was to answer those who said that there was no resurrection of the dead (I Cor. xv. 12). The apostle gives a most wonderful exposition of what is involved in the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation in Rom. i.-v., yet never does he mention the Cross, the reason being that his theme was “justification by faith” which is linked with the “death” of Christ, and not the ignominy associated with the Cross. When dealing with the same theme in Galatians, the Cross is introduced, largely because of the “persecution” that is associated with it. The fact that the apostle overleaps so much of the redemptive work of Christ, and links the purifying of sins with the sitting at the right hand of God, is, among other reasons, because he has the High Priestly office of Christ so much in view.

It is seldom we find one type that is sufficient to set forth the great work of Christ. Often it needs a pair. For example the passover lamb most blessedly sets forth redemption, but it takes the goat on the Day of Atonement to complete the story, for He Who delivered His people out from Egypt, gave them access *into* the Divine Presence, and it is *this* second aspect of the work of Christ that is uppermost in Hebrews. Abel needs Seth to complete the typical foreshadowing of Christ, David needs Solomon to foreshadow Christ as King, for David was a man of war, while Solomon was a prince of peace. The story of Joseph, which so miraculously sets forth the story of the Redeemer’s life and work, seems at first sight complete, needing no other to finish the story. Yet his mother gave him the name “Joseph” saying “The Lord shall add (Heb. *yasaph*) to me another son” (Gen. xxx. 24), and that son was named by the mother *Ben-oni*, “son of my sorrow”, but the father called him *Benjamin*, “son of my right hand”. In history Joseph goes through the suffering and eventually ascends the throne, but in the type Benjamin has a place, and the type is incomplete without “The Son of the right hand”. In the redemptive records of other epistles, we have the Joseph aspect worked out in blessed reality, but in Hebrews, Christ is seen pre-eminently as the Benjamin of the Father. Psa. cx. is quoted in the New Testament more than any other of the Psalms; it is the Psalm of the “Right Hand”, and awaits us in Heb. i. 13. When the Saviour at His illegal trial was challenged by the high priest, He claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, by quoting the language of Dan. vii. as of Himself.

“Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven” (Matt. xxvi. 64).

The glorious doctrine of the epistle to the Romans leads us steadily on from chapter to chapter until we are able exultantly to answer the challenge “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” by replying:

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is EVEN AT THE RIGHT HAND of God, Who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. viii. 34).

Neither Ephesians nor Colossians could have even commenced the revelation of the Mystery, if Christ had not been revealed as seated at the right hand of God far above all. There are five references in Hebrews itself to the seating of the Saviour at His right hand, and they are used to enforce certain aspects of truth that are of first importance to the teaching of this epistle.

- (1) The first occurrence is in Heb. i. 3, where it is placed as the climax of the work of the Mediator, and by its association with what follows in verse 4 it is used in the nature of a reward for the redemptive work now done.
- (2) The second occurrence is in Heb. i. 13, where it is used to set forth the essential contrast that exists between “The Son” and “the angels”.
“But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?”
- (3) The third and central reference occurs in Heb. viii. 1, 2. Paul “sums up” the teaching of the previous chapters.
“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the SUM: We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man”.

In this summing up the apostle adds the “heavenly sanctuary” which we must never omit.

- (4) The fourth occurrence is in Heb. x. 12, where it is placed in vivid contrast with the Levitical priests who “stood” offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins, whereas, the apostle continued, “This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God”.
- (5) The last occurrence is in Heb. xii. 2 where the race is run, the shame endured for the joy that was set before, and the Lord is once again expressed as being “set down at the right hand *of* the throne *of* “God”.

We therefore have the references to the Right Hand of God distributed thus:

- A | i. 3. As a reward, the Glory given, the work done.
- B | i. 13. As a contrast with angels who are ministering spirits.
- C | viii. 1, 2. THE SUM.
- B | x. 12. As a contrast with the priests who ministered daily.
- A | xii. 2. As a reward, the joy set before Him, the race run.

This is the glory that was *given* Him, and which the Saviour said “I have given them” (John xvii. 22). It is NOT the glory which was His by right “before the world was”; in *that* the redeemed can never share. To sit at the right hand of Majesty is not the same as absolute Monarchy. Even some of the redeemed are told that:

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, EVEN AS I ALSO overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev. iii. 21).

There can be no possible thought of sharing Deity! The elements of the reward or recognition of faithfulness are still uppermost. Even that majestic passage, Phil. ii. 5-12, is introduced with the words:

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus”,

and concludes with the words:

“Wherefore, my beloved work out your own salvation”.

Again, some, through not recognizing that the seat at the Right Hand is not a claim to essential Deity, have strongly objected to the words of Eph. ii. 6 as though it invaded the Divine prerogative. To return to the type in Genesis, as Pharaoh said to Joseph, or as Joseph himself acknowledged:

“Only in the throne will I be greater than thou.”

“He made him ruler over all.”

“Thou art even as Pharaoh.”

“He hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.”

“God hath made me lord of all Egypt.”

“Tell my father all my glory in Egypt” (Gen. xli.-xlv.).

When the Mediatorial kingdom is finished and the last enemy is destroyed, then the Son vacates the seat at the Right Hand to enter the glory that was His before the world was (see I Tim. vi. 16). The association in Hebrews with this session at the right hand of God is related particularly with the office of High Priest, and the office of High Priest will not be retained for ever. The blessed fact is that just as His sacrifice for sins will never be repeated, just as the glory of the New Jerusalem will not consist in a more magnificent temple than ever, but that rather there will be *no need* for a temple any more, so the perfection of Christ’s priesthood is that it will *not need* to be perpetuated beyond the confines of the ages.

“In the Sanhedrin, the highest court of judicature among the Jews, he who presided in it was called *Ab din* or *Ab beth din*, the father of judgment, or the father of the House of judgment, and sat at the right hand of the prince of the Sanhedrin Of this *Ab din* mention is made in the Targum, Cant. 7:4, The Father of the house of judgment, who judgeth the judgments agreeably to that. The Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (Dr. John Owen).

The fullest description in Hebrews of the place where the ascended Lord is now seated is in chapter viii. 1, where it is said to be not only at the right hand of God, or at the right hand of His throne, but:

“On the right hand of the throne of the *Majesty* in the heavens.”

The only other reference in Hebrews that uses the word *majesty* is Heb. i. 3. This word *megalosune* is used by David in the LXX of I Chron. xxii. 5. “The house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent”, and Heb. iii. 3-6 shows that Christ is building a house “whose house are we”, and Solomon recognized that, however “magnificent” the house he had built might be, God could not be contained even in the “heaven of heavens”. Yet within a few lines, he prayed that the Lord would “hear from thy dwelling place, even heaven” (II Chron. vi. 18, 21), and it is there “in heaven itself”, in the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, that Christ has entered “now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. viii. 1, 2; ix. 24).

Megalosune “majesty” is ascribed to God by Moses in “The Song of Jehovah’s Name” (Deut. xxxii. 3), and in the prophecy of Nathan to David concerning the building of God’s house by Solomon (II Sam. vii. 21, 23). The only other king who has the term “majesty” applied to him in Scripture is Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv. 22; v. 18, 19), and this is doubly significant when we learn that the last and only other reference in Daniel is to the glorious kingdom of the Messiah, with which it was so great a contrast:

“And the kingdom and the authority and the majesty of the kings that are under the whole heaven were given to the saints of the Most High; and His kingdom is an aeonian kingdom, and all principalities shall serve and obey Him” (Dan. vii. 27 LXX).

The reader will observe in this last reference “the principalities and powers” (*arches kai exousias*) of Eph. i. 21. Here we have Moses, David, Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar and finally and completely, the Coming of the Son of Man.

The Ascension and session of the Saviour at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on high is a sign that these prophecies of His glory shall be as surely fulfilled as were all those of His humiliation.

“God hath in these last days, spoken unto us IN SON,
Whom He hath appointed heir of all things.
By Whom also He made (or appointed) the ages.
Who being the brightness of His glory, and
The express image of His substance, and
Upholding all things by the word of His power,
When He had by Himself purged our sins,
Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

No.10. “He came where he was.”
pp. 93 - 100

The revelation given in Heb. i. 2, 3 is comparable with Col. i. 15-19, Phil. ii. 5-11 and John i. 1-18 in the majesty of its theme—the Person of “The Son”, Who in the beginning was “The Word”, “The Form” and the “Image” of the Invisible God. It comes somewhat as an anticlimax after reading that this Son of God was the Express Image of the substance of God, and upholding all things by the word of His power, to read:

“Being made so much better than the angels” (Heb. i. 4).

What angel is ever spoken of as “The Form or the Image of the Invisible God”? What angel could be “The Express Image of His substance”? We have purposely omitted the closing words, the words that form the link and contain the explanation of this strange conclusion. After the attributes of Deity already quoted, we come to terms that refer not to Deity, but to the mediatorial work and reward of the Son of God Who had taken upon Himself the form or status of a slave. These links and explanatory claims are:

(1) He purged our sins; (2) As a *consequence* He sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.

We have already examined the exaltation of the Lord and what is implied by this session at the Right Hand, and can readily see that inasmuch as for our redemption the Son of God was made a little LOWER than the angels (as we shall discover by reading chapter ii.), so as the triumphant Conqueror of sin and death, and still in the capacity of the One Mediator, He can be spoken of as “being made” better than angels, and “obtaining by inheritance” a more excellent name than they.

The reader is aware of the important difference that is intended by the two words “being” and “becoming”. “Being made” is the translation of the Greek *ginomai*, “to become”, and the distinction is well observed in John i. 1-3:

“Being.” The verb *eimi*. “In the beginning WAS the Word WAS with WAS God”.

“Becoming.” The verb *ginomai*. “All things WERE MADE by Him.”
He “was”. They “became”.

Or again in John viii. 58, “Before Abraham CAME INTO BEING, I AM”. The same sequences that are found in Heb. i. 2-4 are found in Phil. ii. 5-11. First we have “original being”, *huparchon*, “Who being, existing all along, in the form of God”, then the sevenfold descent in flesh and blood to the death of the cross. This is followed by the sevenfold exaltation, and, “The Name” that is above every name, a “more excellent name” indeed than angels ever bore. Heb. i. 4 is entirely concerned with the Mediatorial work of Christ, and not with His essential Deity. The exaltation of the Saviour followed

the purging of our sins and so speaks of the resurrection. Acts xiii. 32, 33 gives the identical Old Testament reference that is used in Hebrews,

“Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee”,

and declares that this promise was fulfilled when He raised up Jesus again. Alford very pointedly says of Christ, that:

“The Son of God, *before* His incarnation was Head OVER creation, but *after* His work in the flesh He had become the Head OF Creation.”

Colossians reveals that He Who was the Firstborn of every creature became the Firstborn from the dead, because “in the body of His flesh through death” He had stooped to conquer. This we shall see more clearly as our study opens up the Scriptures that are related to Heb. i. 4. To us Gentiles, the insistence upon angels which is so marked in Heb. i. and ii. may seem a trifle strange, but to a Hebrew it would be both understandable and necessary.

The use of “angel” in Hebrews

In chapter i. Christ in His exaltation to the right hand of the Majesty on high is said to be made “so much better than the angels” (Heb. i. 4).

“Unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son ?” (i. 5).

“Let all the angels of God worship Him” (i. 6).

“Who maketh His angels spirits” (i. 7).

“To which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand?” (i. 13).

In chapter ii., angels are associated with the giving of the law and we are told that the age to come has not been put in subjection to angels. By the testimony of the prophetic eighth Psalm, Adam and Christ are seen “for a little while” lower than the angels, and, at the incarnation, Christ “took not on Him the nature of angels” (Heb. ii. 2, 5, 7, 9, 16). In chapter xii. 22 the heavenly Jerusalem is associated with “an innumerable company of angels” and in xiii. 2 the believer is reminded that, in Old Testament times, the ministry of angels was no uncommon experience. When writing to the Romans, Paul mentioned angels, together with “principalities” (Rom. viii. 38) and asked the Corinthians, “Know ye not that we shall judge angels?” (I Cor. vi. 3), but neither angelic ministry among men, nor the presence of angels at the exaltation of Christ, is mentioned in Ephesians. There, we read that when Christ was raised from the dead, He was set at the right hand of God “in the heavenly places, 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. 20, 21). These “principalities” are mentioned again in Eph. iii. 10 and vi. 12, each time in connection with “heavenly places”, but the epistle to the Hebrews knows nothing of them.

In Scripture, angels have special reference to the people of Israel, and they do not figure definitely in the O.T until after the call of Abraham and the birth of Ishmael (Gen. xvi. 7). Angelic ministry is associated with the destruction of Sodom, the

deliverance of Lot, the birth of Isaac, the quest for a wife for Isaac, and the blessing of Jacob in the book of Genesis. In the book of Exodus the angel of the Lord is intimately associated with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and with their guidance through the wilderness, and so, throughout the Law, the Prophets and the Psalms, the whole course of Israel's history is accompanied by angelic ministry. Nor does it cease with Malachi (which means "My messenger" or "My angel"); it is prominent in the Gospels, being associated with the Birth, the Sufferings, the Resurrection and the prophecies of the Second Coming of Christ. It is prominent in the Acts from Acts i.-xii., but, after the ministry of Paul, which commences with Acts xiii., there are but two references in the Acts to angelic ministry, namely at Acts xxiii. 9 and xxvii. 23. This must be considered in contrast with the seventeen references that are found in Acts i.-xii. In the prison ministry of Paul, that is in the five "prison" epistles, angels are only mentioned to be set aside, i.e., "the worshipping of angels" (Col. ii. 18). In I Tim. iii. 16 angels are mentioned in connection with the Mystery of godliness, namely "God manifest in the flesh", and also in the charge of I Tim. v. 21, where "elect angels" are mentioned.

"Being made *so much* better than the angels." This passage contains the first of several comparisons that are made as the theme of the epistle is unfolded:

- (1) "SO MUCH better than the angels obtained a more excellent name" (Heb. i. 4).
- (2) "This Man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, INASMUCH as He Who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house" (Heb. iii. 3).
- (3) "AND INASMUCH as not without an oath by so MUCH was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (covenant)" (Heb. vii. 20, 22).
- (4) "For SUCH an high priest became us" (Heb. vii. 26).
- (5) "We have SUCH an high priest in the heavens" (Heb. viii. 1).
- (6) "But NOW hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by HOW MUCH also He is the Mediator of a better covenant" (Heb. viii. 6).
- (7) "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy of HOW MUCH sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God" (Heb. x. 28, 29).
- (8) "They that say SUCH things declare plainly that they seek a country" (Heb. xi. 14).

These comparisons of angel and mediator, of better covenants and better country are integral links in the chain of Divine unfolding. They are buried deep, perhaps, but nevertheless there, and visible to the eye of the humble seeker after truth. The following analysis may be of service.

- A | i. 4. The more excellent name (*diaphoros*).
(Angels, mediators of the old covenant).
- B | iii. 3. Counted worthy (*axioo*). Above Moses.
- C | viii. 1. We have such an High Priest in the heavens.
vii. 20, 22. Better covenant.
The Tabernacle pitched by the Lord and not man.
vii. 26. Higher than the heavens.
- A | viii. 6. A more excellent ministry (*diaphoros*)
(Mediator of the New Covenant).
- B | x. 29. Thought worthy (*axioo*). Beneath feet.
- C | xi. 10-16. Such things.
The better and heavenly country.
The city whose builder and maker is God.

For our immediate purpose we need all the light we can get on Heb. i. 4, and the parallel of Heb. viii. 6 therefore is welcome. For the time being we make no further comment on this set of comparisons except perhaps to note how the pilgrim attitude of faith (Heb. xi. 10-16) is apparently the echo of “such an high priest” (Heb. viii. 1), as it ever should be. In both passages there is a “more excellent” name, or ministry. In the second reference, this ministry is the mediation of the New Covenant. In what way does this fact illuminate the insistence of the apostle in Heb. i. and ii. upon the superiority of Christ to angels? The answer is that *angels* were themselves *mediators* of the Old Covenant. This is a matter of importance and must now be set forth.

While it is a Scriptural truth that “The law was given by Moses” (John i. 17), it is also a Scriptural truth that Israel “received the law by the disposition of angels” (Acts vii. 53). To this testimony of Stephen, Paul adds his in Galatians:

“The law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” (Gal. iii. 19).

To this twofold testimony may be added that of the Psalmist:

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in SINAI, in the holy place” (Psa. lxxviii. 17),

which is an echo of the words of Moses when he said:

“He came with ten thousands of saints (His holy ones): from His right hand went a fiery law for them” (Deut. xxxiii. 2).

Yet further, Stephen had earlier spoken of Moses at Sinai saying:

“This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina” (Acts vii. 38).

In Hebrews, chapter ii., the ministry of angels and their relation with the law is further developed.

“For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape?” (ii. 2, 3).

With this passage, Heb. xii. 25 should be read:

“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth”

Chapter ii. deals with “the Lord” speaking, in contrast with angels, and chapter xii. follows by contrasting Sinai with heaven. Let us finish the record of these verses then. Here is both question and answer:

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?” (Heb. ii. 3).

“Much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven” (Heb. xii. 25).

Resuming the references to angels in chapter ii. the apostle says:

“For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak” (Heb. ii. 5).

This assumes that “the world” was at some time under angelic surveillance. The word “world” here is not *aion* or *kosmos*, but *oikoumene*, “the habitable world”, particularly the world as known and visualized in Old Testament times, the prophetic earth. The first occurrence of *oikoumene* in the LXX is in Exod. xvi. 35: “Until they came to a land inhabited”, i.e., the land of Canaan. In Psa. lxxii. which speaks prophetically of the dominion ruled over by David’s greater Son, we read:

“He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the *oikoumene*” (Psa. lxxii. 8).

The kingdoms of the world (*oikoumene*) were shown in the temptation in the wilderness (Luke iv. 5). In contrast with the wide extent of “heaven and earth”, Psa. lxxxix. 11 says, “Thou hast founded them” (heaven and the *oikoumene*), and it is in this Psalm that we have another prophetic anticipation:

“I will make Him My Firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth” (Psa. lxxxix. 27).

When the day comes when man shall “sing a new song” the psalmist says:

“Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth: the *oikoumene* also shall be established that it shall not be moved” (Psa. xcvi. 10).

This verse gives us a positive link with the theme of Hebrews, for there, in chapter xii., following *the shaking* of the earth at Sinai, we read:

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved” (Heb. xii. 28),

where the Greek word, *saleuo* (move or shake) is employed. It is a very wonderful comment on the meaning attached to the *oikoumene* of the future, that where the Hebrew reads: “Thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah (i.e. My delight is in her), and thy land Beulah (i.e. married)”, the LXX of Isa. lxii. 4 reads, “Thou shalt be called My Pleasure (*thelema*), and thy land *oikoumene*”. This is the “world to come” whereof Paul was speaking in Heb. ii. This “world to come” will include more than the kingdom of Israel in the days of their restoration, for the Tempter showed the Lord “all the kingdoms of the *oikoumene*” (Luke iv. 5), and so revealed that more kingdoms than one occupied the territory specified, and this word was used by Roman and Greek historians as well as the LXX to refer to the lands ruled over by Nebuchadnezzar and his successors. Had the Devil known the Scriptures a little better he might have hesitated to tempt the Lord to make stones into bread, for Psa. l. 12 says: “If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the *oikoumene* is Mine, and the fullness thereof.” Satan offered the kingdoms of the *oikoumene* to One Who was their rightful owner.

The Scriptures give abundant evidence of the fact that angels were given some form of control over the world in Old Testament times. The first chapter of the book of Job shows the “sons of God” in conference with the Lord and Satan joining them, the Lord deigning to discuss His servant Job even with Satan, the “sons of God” necessarily being aware of this. Angels, or “the sons of God”, rejoiced at the creation (Job xxxviii. 7). Two angels accompanied Jehovah when Abraham was visited, and angels intervene throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. This council recorded in Job, the joyous fellowship of the sons of God at the Creation, the visit of the “three men” to Abraham, the words of Gen. xviii. 17, “Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” and the fact that God spoke to Moses as a man speaks with his friend, make it highly probable that the Lord did stoop at the creation of man to explain to the wondering angels something of the plan of the ages and their part in it. Gen. i. 2 indicates that there had been an overthrow, and the creation of the six days that followed with Adam as its climax was the first of a series of movements that had I Cor. xv. 24-28 as its goal. “Let us make man in our image”, said the Lord, and “a little lower than the angels”. Pre-Adamite men were made ‘a little higher than brute beasts’. Adam was the first of a new race.

While we learn from Psa. viii. of this relation made with angels, we should note that no angel is mentioned in Genesis until the call of Abraham. Then an angel intervenes on the behalf of Hagar, of Ishmael, of Lot in Sodom, of Isaac on Mount Moriah. The guidance of an angel was promised the servant of Abraham in his quest for a wife for Isaac; angels met Jacob on his journey to Padan-aram; an angel gave Jacob advice as to how to circumvent the dishonesty of Laban over his hire and met him at the place he afterward called *Mahanaim*, saying, “This is God’s host”, and finally, so far as Genesis is concerned, Jacob in blessing the sons of Joseph said, “The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads”. The naming by Jacob of *Mahanaim* in Gen. xxxii. 2 is the last of several places named after the intervention of an angel. Beer-lahai-roi was named by Hagar, Jehovah-Jireh was the name given to the mount at the offering of Isaac, and Bethel received its name after Jacob’s vision of the ladder that reached to heaven. The ministry of angels in the second half of Genesis is as marked as its absence is from the first half. When God placed Adam on the earth, he was left without angelic guidance, but Satan did not observe this rule. He not only in the guise of the serpent brought about man’s fall, but by the inroad of the “sons of God” (LXX Alex. *angeloi*) brought about well-nigh universal corruption and destruction (Gen. vi.).

The first lesson of the ages had been given. There are therefore *two periods* in the ages during which angelic rule was withheld. The first, the period from Adam to Abraham; the second, the present dispensation of the Mystery. It is an inference on our part that “angels” were learning something of the purpose of God from Adam to Abraham and this may be questioned, but it is clearly stated that during the dispensation of the Mystery, “principalities and powers” are learning through the church “the manifold wisdom of God” (Eph. iii. 10). With the call of Abraham, unassisted endeavour was replaced by angelic mediation. Not only in Genesis, as we have seen, but at the call of Moses, the traveling through the wilderness, the giving of the law at Sinai, attest this new economy. Yet Stephen had to tell Israel that in spite of the disposition of angels, Israel miserably failed. The transfer of kingship from Israel to the Gentile under

Nebuchadnezzar carried with it the ministry of angels, for “the son of God” seen by Nebuchadnezzar in the fire with the faithful three is interpreted for us as “God hath sent His angel”. The “Watcher and holy One” of Dan. iv., and the “fingers of a man’s hand” of Dan. v., in the light of Exod. xxxi. 18, show angelic ministry. The angel Gabriel is mentioned in Dan. ix., and Michael, “your prince”, together with Satanic angels of Persia and Greece are mentioned in Dan. x. Man could not stand when left alone. Man could not stand even when hedged about by angel ministry whether the people be Israel, or Nebuchadnezzar or the Gentile dynasty. Angels *looked down* from heaven, in pity, but Christ *came down* Himself. Angels, if they do weep, may have *shed tears* at the fatal folly of man, but Christ not only wept, He *shed his blood*. Angels visited man in the guise of men, but Christ became man, was actually born of a woman. Herein lies the key to open the revelation given in the early chapters of Hebrews. Like the Good Samaritan, Christ “came where he was” saying, “Lo, I come in the volume of the book it is written of Me”.

Angels may still be ministering spirits sent forth to minister to those who are heirs of salvation, but “angels and authorities and powers” are subject unto the ascended Lord. When we come to the dispensation of the Mystery, angelic ministry is entirely absent; instead of saying, “angels to beckon me”, we sing in the language of one of the hymns used at the Chapel of the Opened Book, London:

“Angels will stand aside,
No one, but Christ beside
Can be our heavenly Guide,
Father, to Thee.”

No.11. “This day have I begotten Thee.” pp. 114 - 117

While angels are called “sons of God”, a title endorsed by the translation of Psa. xcvi. 7 “Worship Him, all ye gods”, by “let all the angels of God worship Him” (Heb. i. 6) and other places, no angel has or ever could be called “The Only Begotten Son of God”.

“For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee?” (Heb. i. 5).

A number of commentators see in this passage a reference to “the eternal generation of the Son”, a term that defies explanation, and such are also obliged to interpret “this day” as of eternity. Such an interpretation savours too much of an attempt to bolster up a creed rather than to give an honest exposition of the terms, and arises mainly out of the disastrous error of taking the title “Son” back into eternity instead of using the title “Word” as John does in John i. 1, and reserving the title “Son” for the incarnation when “the Word was made flesh”. In Heb. xi. 17 Isaac too is called “the only begotten son” of Abraham, and it would be strange if this title could be used in so essentially different

ways. The verb *gennao* is used in Matthew in such passages as “Abraham *begat* Isaac”, “Of whom was *born* Jesus”, “That which is *conceived* in her”, “When Jesus was *born* in Bethlehem”. In the epistle to the Hebrews itself it occurs four times, thus:

“This day have I *begotten* Thee.”

“To day have I *begotten* Thee.”

“Therefore *sprang* there even of one.”

“By faith Moses, when he was *born*” (Heb. i. 5; v. 5; xi. 12, 23).

John, in his first epistle, has no hesitation in intertwining references to those who have been “born” or “begotten” of God, and the Saviour Who was “born” or “begotten” of God (1 John ii. 29; iii. 9; iv. 7; v. 1, 4, 18). While therefore we can discover no warrant from Scripture usage to project this “begetting” back before time began, we are warned by the selfsame usage of Scripture not to limit this term to the Incarnation. “This day” have I begotten Thee, cannot refer to the birth at Bethlehem for this is a quotation from Psalm ii.:

“Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee” (Psa. ii. 6, 7).

On either side of this quotation from Psa. ii., Paul, in Acts xiii. 33-37, stresses the resurrection of Christ:

“He hath raised up Jesus again” (Quotation follows from Psa. ii. 7).

“And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead” (Quotation follows from Isa. lv. 3).

This begetting at the Resurrection differed from that at the Incarnation, the one being the entrance into a life of flesh and blood through the overshadowing of the Virgin by the Spirit of God; the other being the quickening power of the selfsame Spirit of that body which was laid in the sepulchre, yet which saw no corruption. This second “birth” was by “decree”. The reader should have no difficulty in believing this twofold “begetting”, for that is also true, in its limited way, of every believer. All men are “born” by natural processes *gennao*, and the believer is “born again”, *gennao* and *another* (John iii. 3) and *anagennao* (I Pet. i. 23). If the believer therefore can be said to have been begotten at his natural birth, and to have been begotten again at conversion, there should be no difficulty in believing the double references to the Saviour. In Colossians the title given the Lord in this connection is *prototokos* “Firstborn of all creation”, “Firstborn from the dead” (Col. i. 15, 18). Again a double use of the same title. This word *prototokos* is found in Heb. i. 6:

“And again, when He bringeth in *the firstborn* into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

“And again.” Readers will remember the repetition of this phrase in Rom. xv. 9-12, but in this passage the words “He saith” are either actually written or implied. The R.V. reads, however, “And when He again bringeth”, attaching the word “again” to the act of “bringing” and not with the words “He saith”. Weymouth reads “But speaking of the time when He once more brings His Firstborn into the world, He says”. There is by no

means unanimity among translators, but the grammar of the passage seems to demand the translation given in the R.V. Alford says “The word can only refer to the great entering of the Messiah into His kingdom”. The “world” here is *oikoumene*, as it is in Heb. ii. 5, and about which we have before written at some length.

The word translated “to bring” here is *eisago*, and in classical Greek its first usage seems to be that of leading a person into his home. It is used in Acts vii. 45, where we read concerning the Tabernacle that was made “according to the fashion” that Moses had seen, that the “fathers” “brought (it) in with Jesus” into the land which God had given them for a possession. This leader, however, was Joshua, a shadow only of the true Captain of salvation even as the Tabernacle was a shadow also. But when the Father Himself bringeth in the true Joshua into the land of His possession, the true *oikoumene* (a word first used in the LXX of the land of Canaan in Exod. xvi. 35), He will minister in the Tabernacle which God pitched and not man, and fulfil in Himself all that Joshua the captain, Aaron the priest and David the king foreshadow. When He is brought into the world at the Second Advent, one thing will be said that is said of no other:

“And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

Angels rightly repudiate worship and affirm that worship is due to God alone (Rev. xxii. 8, 9). Here, at the command of the Father, not merely men but angels are called upon to worship the Only Begotten. The margin of the A.V. tells us that the words “And let all the angels of God worship Him” are quoted from Deut. xxxii. 43, but if we turn to that reference in the A.V., no such words are to be found. It also refers us to Psa. xcvi. 7 which reads “Worship Him, all ye gods”. The LXX translates this “Worship Him, all ye His angels” and so brings the passage nearer to the words of Heb. i. 6. If we, in quoting a passage of Scripture, varied that quotation by even one word, our manuscripts would be marked and sent back to us for rectification. In the case of an inspired apostle we can well admit that should he feel the subject demanded it, a variation would be justified. Yet, we cannot feel quite happy over this. We note that Paul goes so far as to quote even the word “And”, which looks as though he had a definite passage before him. The words of the LXX version of Deut. xxxii. 43 are quoted word for word in Heb. i. 6. Here is the reading of Heb. i. 6:

Kai proskunesatosan auto pantes aggeloi theou.

and the reading of the LXX version of Deut. xxxii. 43:

Kai proskunesatosan auto pantes aggeloi theou.

The reader will see that these two lines are identical. Turpie says of this:

“A passage corresponding to this quotation is found in the LXX at Deut. xxxii. 43. But, that *that* reading is spurious, there is cause to believe from the following reasons. First, there is nothing corresponding to it in the Hebrew text, at the same place. Second, none of the other ancient versions exhibits that clause. Third, nor is it found in all copies of the Septuagint, the Codex Alex., reading *huioi theou* “sons of God” for *aggeloi theou* “angels of God”; and one MSS. at least, viz. the Oxford, wholly omitting the clause.

Fourthly and conclusively, the Messiah is not spoken of nor alluded to in that song. We must look, then, for its original in no other place than Psalm 97:7.”

To this comment we reply: The Septuagint version is quoted by Paul as *authoritative Scripture*, and forms part of an argument that would be destroyed, could the Scriptural authority for it be challenged. Notice the way in which the *undoubted* texts of Old Testament Scriptures are introduced in this chapter. “He saith”, and with these words the quotation from Deut. xxxii. is introduced. The fact which stares us in the face is this, that *the Hebrew of Deut. xxxii. 43 has been tampered with*, and we owe it to the despised and neglected Greek version that this most important text has been preserved to us.

A | Heb. i. 5-7. Unto which of the angels . . . My Son . . .

Angels are “spirits” and “ministers”.

B | i. 8, 9. Christ is addressed as God. “Throne.” “Sceptre.”

B | i. 10-12. Christ is addressed as Lord. “Earth.” “Heavens.”

A | i. 13, 14. To which of the angels Sit on My right hand . . .

Angels are “ministering spirits”.

Before proceeding we must make sure that every reader will be able to follow the references we must make to the presence of “conjunctions of antithesis”. Conjunctions are particles which denote:

- (1) Annexation, like *kai* “and”;
- (2) Comparison, like *hos* “as”;
- (3) Disjunction, like *etoi . . . e* “either” . . . “or”;
- (4) Antithesis, like *alla* “but”;
- (5) Condition, like *ei* “if”;
- (6) Cause, like *gar* “for”;
- (7) Inference, like *oun* “therefore” and
- (8) Result, like *hina* “in order that”.

For the moment we are concerned with the conjunctions of antithesis—the Greek *men . . . de*. These words often occur in distribution, *men* occurring in one sentence, *de* in the sentence that follows, and may be rendered “on the one hand” and “on the other hand”. In Heb. i. 7 we read “And regarding (*men*) on the one hand, the angels He saith” and in Heb. i. 8 we read “Regarding (*de*) on the other hand the Son He saith”. A similar antithesis and with the same object is found in Heb. iii. 5, 6, where Moses on the one hand was faithful as a servant, but Christ on the other hand was Son over His own house. There are about twenty instances of this antithetical conjunction in Hebrews, which we may note as we reach them. An intended contrast therefore with the angels is found in verse 8:

“But unto (*pros* regarding) the Son (*He saith*), Thy throne, O God, is unto the age of the age (*eis ton aiona tou aionos*)” (Heb. i. 8).

This text has been put on the rack, like Rom. ix. 5, by those who cannot tolerate the Deity of Christ. It has been put as a parenthetical exclamation “O God”; it has been rendered “Thy God-like throne” and “Thy throne of God”, but all such are obviously forced and without justification. A “throne”, Greek *thronos*, is described as “a free open seat with a footstool”, and the footstool is seen to be an integral part of this throne “Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool” (Heb. i. 13; x. 13). “Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool” (Isa. lxvi. 1). It must be remembered that of the nine occurrences of the word “footstool” in the New Testament six (*seven?*) speak of enemies, and that not one speaks of worship. It is also an interesting fact that Psa. cx. 1 is quoted in the New Testament more than any other Psalm.

“Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.”

While the verse before us in Hebrews stresses a throne, a sceptre and a kingdom, we are aware that “the principal thing” according to Paul’s own summing up is that Christ is an High Priest. In Psa. cx. 4 we read “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”, and we learn from Hebrews that Melchisedec was also a king. Several items need careful examination in order to enable us to perceive the Divine intention in these related passages. For clearness sake let us tabulate them here:

- (1) The “sceptre” of Psa. xlv. 6 is in the Hebrew *shebet*.
- (2) The “rod” in Psa. cx. 2 is in the Hebrew *matteh*.
- (3) But both words are translated *rhabdos* in the Septuagint.
- (4) The “rod” of iron of Psa. ii. 9 is the Hebrew *shebet*.
- (5) The “rod” of iron of Rev. ii. 27; xii. 5; xix. 15 is the Greek *rhabdos*.
- (6) The priesthood of Melchisedec is “for the age”.
- (7) The throne of the Son is “for the age of the age”.
- (8) Psa. cx. 1 is quoted in six places in the New Testament.
- (9) Three of these quotations are in the Gospels, and record the Saviour’s challenge
“Whose Son is He?”
- (10) One is in the Acts, to prove that Christ ascended.
- (11) One is in Heb. i. 13 and
- (12) One in I Cor. xv. 25 which takes us beyond the “age” of Psa. cx., or the “age of the age” of Heb. i. 13 to the “End” when God shall be all in all.

No.12. “This oil of gladness.”
pp. 129 - 135

In order that the reader may be aware of the nature of the study on which we now embark, we repeat the list of items demanding attention with which the preceding article closed:

- (1) The “sceptre” of Psa. xlv. 6 is in the Hebrew *shebet*.
- (2) The “rod” in Psa. cx. 2 is in the Hebrew *matteh*.
- (3) But both words are translated *rhabdos* in the Septuagint.
- (4) The “rod” of iron of Psa. ii. 9 is the Hebrew *shebet*.
- (5) The “rod” of iron of Rev. ii. 27; xii. 5; xix. 15 is the Greek *rhabdos*.
- (6) The priesthood of Melchisedec is “for the age”.
- (7) The throne of the Son is “for the age of the age”.
- (8) Psa. cx. 1 is quoted in six places in the New Testament.
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“Whose Son is He?”
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- (11) One is in Heb. i. 13 and
- (12) One in I Cor. xv. 25 which takes us beyond the “age” of Psa. cx., or the “age of the age” of Heb. i. 13 to the “End” when God shall be all in all.

The sceptre of Psa. xlv. 6 is *shebet* in the Hebrew. It is this verse that is quoted in Heb. i. 8 and the apostle declares that these words were addressed to “The Son”. Kingship is indicated by the sceptre, as in the prophecy:

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah” (Gen. xlix. 10).

“Of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood” (Heb. vii. 14).

To those readers who can appreciate suggestions without having them worked out for them here, we draw attention to the fact that the first occurrence of the word “sceptre” says that it shall *not depart* from Judah, and that the last occurrence says that it *shall depart* from Egypt (Zech. x. 11). We have enough however before us, not to stop at every interesting aside. We have noted in our list printed above, that the word “rod” is the translation of the Hebrew *matteh*. Now Ezekiel speaking in a parable likens Israel to a vine that had strong “rods” or “sceptres”, but that this vine was cast to the ground, her rods broken, “so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule”, referring presumably to Zedekiah (Ezek. xix. 14). The point of interest to us at the moment is that a “rod” *matteh* can become a “sceptre” *shebet*.

Now Aaron’s “rod” was a symbol, not of kingship but of priesthood (Numb. xvii. 9, 10). The rod of strength that is to be sent out of Zion (Psa. cx. 2) is *the rod of a priest*. We are therefore prepared to discover that “king” (Psa. xlv. 1) and “priest” (Psa. cx. 4) unite in Him Who is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Nowhere else in the New Testament than in the epistle to the Hebrews do we read of Melchisedec, but there he is spoken of nine times, where he is set forth both as King of Righteousness, and King

of Peace, Priest of the Most High God, and made like unto the Son of God. The Melchisedec priesthood is shown to be infinitely superior to the priesthood of Aaron, and Melchisedec himself is shown to have been greater even than Abraham.

“Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils” (Heb. vii. 4),

and the point of this discrimination is reached when we learn that “perfection”, the goal of this epistle, can never be attained under the Levitical priesthood (Heb. vii. 11).

Christ, therefore, must not be thought of simply as a king, neither must He be thought of simply as a priest, He is a King-Priest, and so differs essentially from every king and every priest of Israel. The prophet saw Him from afar under the title “The BRANCH” saying “He shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be *a priest* upon His *throne*; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both” (Zech. vi. 13). The “both” referring to the combined office of King and Priest that Messiah alone can bear. Psa. xlv. 6 tells us that “the King” with His “sword”, His “arrows”, His “terrible things” has a “right sceptre”. Heb. i. 8 says that it is a sceptre of “righteousness”. Neither the word “right” nor the word “righteousness” is the one usually employed. In Psa. xlv. 6 the word is *mishor*, from *yashar*, and in Heb. i. 8 the word used is *euthutes*. There is evidently something distinctive about this “sceptre” and the rule it denotes that we should seek to understand.

First let us observe that this was the original state of man at his creation, not “righteous” for that involves positive deeds, but “upright” (Eccles. vii. 29). It is the character given to Job at the opening of that book; he is described as being “perfect and upright”, although later he was convinced that he had no valid “righteousness”. A number of the kings are said to have done that which was right in the sight of the Lord (I Kings xv. 5, 11 etc.). The verb is used of paths and ways being “made straight”, or the users of these paths being “directed” (Isa. xlv. 2; Prov. iii. 6). The Greek word used in Heb. i. 8, *euthutes*, is one of a group, all of which emphasize either physical straightness or moral equity; “fit” (Luke ix. 62); “meet” (Heb. vi. 7); “make straight” (John i. 23); the street called “Straight” (Acts ix. 11). Some, reading Esther iv. 11, see in the holding out of the golden sceptre a suggestion that mercy is blended with righteousness in the sceptre of the King of kings.

The throne of the Son of God is to be “for the age of the age”; the priesthood of Melchisedec is “for the age”. In the Hebrew of Psa. xlv. 7, 8 the time period is expressed by the words *olam va ed* “unto the age of undefined limits and yet further”; the priesthood of Melchisedec is “unto the age of undefined limits” *l’olam* (Psa. cx. 4). *The office of king is to be in operation longer than that of priest.* By the time the New Jerusalem is seen, one of the glories of that heavenly city is that *there is no temple there*. But right up to the “end”, enemies are dealt with, and not until such are subdued under Him will the Son relinquish the Throne, bringing both kingship and priesthood to an end, that “God” may be all in all.

Psa. cx. is quoted in Matthew, Mark and Luke in connection with the Saviour's unique Sonship. It occurs once in the Acts, once in Hebrews and once in I Corinthians. The references in the Gospels are Matt. xxii. 44; Mark xii. 36 and Luke xx. 42. These three references differ only in their fullness. Mark's account concludes with the comment "The common people heard Him gladly". Luke's account makes no such comment, but leads straight on to the Lord's warning concerning the hypocrisy and greed of the scribes. Matthew's account is the fullest record, and for our present purpose covers the three quotations of Psa. cx. The Pharisees had previously taken counsel together how they might entangle Him in His talk, and perceiving their hypocrisy, He put the question concerning the image and superscription of Caesar. The Sadducees followed by posing a problem concerning the resurrection, and lastly a lawyer asked the question as to the great commandment of the law. Before these disgruntled and defeated antagonists could withdraw, the Saviour using their own methods completely silenced them, saying:

"What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?" (Matt. xxii. 42).

The Lord did not here specifically refer to Himself. Leaving Himself for the moment out of the question, He asked them what they thought the Scriptures taught concerning the Messiah and His Sonship. They replied immediately, "The son of David". With that answer they were apparently satisfied, but the Saviour's next question revealed the gulf that yawned between their conception of the Person of the Messiah and the teaching of the Scriptures. "How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord", and then the Lord Jesus proceeds to quote Psa. cx. 1, continuing "If David then calls Him Lord, how is He his son?" "And no man was able to answer Him a word". Christ is not only man, Christ is not only God, He is the God-Man gloriously and blessedly unique in time and eternity. The quotation in Acts ii. 34 still refers to the relationship of the Messiah with David, but this time not so much with His Sonship, but His Resurrection and Ascension.

"Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day For David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts ii. 29-34).

But even though David must await the resurrection of the redeemed, his Son and Lord was raised from the dead, ascended into heaven, sat down on the right hand of God, and is made "both Lord and Christ". The passage which takes us beyond the limits set in Heb. i. 13 is I Cor. xv. 24-28:

"Then cometh the end that God may be all in all."

This end is reached by a series of steps and stages:

- (1) "When He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."
- (2) "When He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."
- (3) "When all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all."

The sequence of events is broken at the end of verse 24 and again in verse 27. After telling us that all authority and power shall be put down, the apostle breaks in to give an expansion of the subject, saying:

“For He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet.”

The Companion Bible at Psa. cx. 1 has this note:

“Make Thine enemies Thy footstool—set Thine enemies (as) a footstool for Thy feet. In New Testament Gr.—*tithemi* (2 aor. subj.)—‘shall have placed’. I Cor. xv. 25 is the exception, where it is not ‘set as a footstool’, but put ‘under’, because Christ’s session on His own throne (Matt. xxv. 31; Rev. iii. 21) is there referred to, instead of His session on His Father’s throne, as in all the other quotations.”

These considerations are by no means exhaustive, they are rather but indications of what lines of study are necessary to begin to appreciate the apostle’s line of argument in Heb. i. We can only leave it with the reader, and pray that each may be so desirous of attaining to the “knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. iv. 13), that no weariness of the flesh shall be permitted to prevent the exercise of the Berean spirit that it is the purpose of this study to encourage.

We pass now to the conclusion of this section of Heb. i., namely verse 9:

“Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows.”

Knowing the nature of our hearts when bereft of grace, we are somewhat timid in the use of “hate”, leaning rather and exclusively to the emphasis on “love”. We should remember that unholy love may be as harmful as unholy hate, and that true hate and true love go together:

“He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal” (John xii. 25).

“Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (Rom. ix. 13).

Some things are stated to be the objects of true hatred without the alternative that is loved being stated, “Hating even the garment spotted by the flesh” (Jude 23); “Thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate”; “which thing I hate” (Rev. ii. 6, 15). In the Old Testament we read of “men of truth, hating covetousness”, and the Psalmist says “Ye that love the Lord, hate evil”, so others “hate every false way”; “hate and abhor lying”, the climax being reached in Psa. cxxxix., “Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate Thee? I hate them with perfect hatred” (Psa. . cxxxix. 21, 22). Perfect hate can only be achieved where there is also perfect love. In the Son of God there is perfect harmony, and because He had loved righteousness and hated iniquity, the good pleasure of the Lord was manifestly expressed. The anointing here is not the anointing of the Saviour at the commencement of His ministry (Luke iv. 18), for that anointing but led along the path of sorrows to the shame of the Cross. This is an anointing with the “oil of gladness”, it is the “exceeding joy,” of the presentation of the

believer faultless before the throne (Jude 24). This “exceeding joy” is reserved for the believer until the moment “When His glory shall be revealed” (I Pet. iv. 13).

“That the *elaion agalliaseos* here does not mean the *oil of consecration to office*, is plain from the consideration that the administration of the kingly office is described in the preceding context as having already existed” (Moses Stuart).

“We must distinguish this anointing from that of Acts x. 38 and Isa. lxi. 1. For it is consequent upon the righteous course of the Son of God in His humanity, and therefore belongs to His triumph” (Alford).

Two further terms used here show that Christ as the Mediator, and not as He was before the world began, is intended. These terms are “Thy God” and “Thy fellows”. As the Lord, He is God, and God can have no fellows, but one of His most important yet most misunderstood relationships is expressed in the words “The God of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. i. 17). Who is at the selfsame time “The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. iii. 14); indeed “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. i. 3). This relation to His office as “The Son” also relates to His Mediation and His Headship. Throughout the Old Testament from the call of Abraham and on unto the speech of Stephen in Acts vii., the Lord has borne the name of “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”, the covenant-keeping God of Israel. Those who are addressed in the epistle of the Mystery, Ephesians, *had no such God*. They were aliens, strangers, Christless, hopeless and Godless. By the very nature of their natural condition, and by the very nature of the new revelation made known in Ephesians, the believing Gentile could no more approach the Lord as the God of Abraham than the Syro-phoenician woman could approach Him as the Son of David (Matt. xv.). But instead of this being a loss or a disadvantage, we discover it to be but another opportunity for grace to triumph. Who would cling to the God of Abraham, when the Son of God became the Head of his calling? It is for this reason that in the ministry of Paul both before Acts xxviii., and in the ministry also of Peter, Jesus Christ is set forth as “The One Mediator between God and men” and we gladly relinquish all hope of using the title “the God of Abraham” because we can instead call upon “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”.

We come back therefore to Heb. i. 9 and rejoice that here also we read “Therefore God, even Thy God”, realizing that this special anointing is entirely related to His Mediatorial office, and can have no relation to His own intrinsic Deity. The same epistle that says “Thy God” can without contradiction or confusion equally say “Thy throne, O God”, for Christ is both God and Man.

Again, who can be God’s “fellow”? Yet here, the Son of God is anointed with the oil of gladness “above His fellows”. This phrase contains the first of five occurrences of the Greek word *metochos* “partakers” in Hebrews:

“Anointed above thy *fellows*” (Heb. i. 9).

“*Partakers* of the heavenly calling” (iii. 1).

“We are made *partakers* if” (iii. 14).

“The heavenly gift *partakers* of the Holy Ghost, if” (vi. 4, 6).

“Chastisement, whereof all are *partakers*” (xii. 8).

Who are these “fellows”, these “partakers”? Some say angels, some say kings, some say believers. In Heb. ii. 14 Christ “took part” or “became a partaker” *metecho* of flesh and blood, and because He came down and united Himself with our low estate, it becomes gloriously possible for sinful men, redeemed by His precious blood, to contemplate the possibility of sharing the glory that has been given Him. Should one object and say “surely the believer cannot be ranged along with the Lord like that”, we read “He is not ashamed to call them brethren” (Heb. ii. 11), and elsewhere the believer is spoken of as being a “joint-heir with Christ”, so united with Him as to make it possible for him to sit on His throne, even as He has sat down with His Father on His Throne; and to crown all, we remember His words, “The glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them; that they may be one, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE (John xvii. 22). In some of His offices, the Saviour was and must be “alone”. None can intrude into the suffering and death that constitute the “one Offering”. The glory that was His by right and enjoyed “before the world was”, is His alone and can be shared by none; but as the One Mediator, He is not alone, He is exalted, but exalted among His redeemed people. Let us end this study in meditating on the wonder and the grace that can link the Saviour’s Name and glory to such as we were and are:

“Anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows.”

No.13. Jesus Christ the Same (i. 12) pp. 173 - 178

When we read the words “Thy throne, O God” and then go on to read “Therefore God, even Thy God”, we feel that we are facing a mystery, and indeed we are, “the mystery of godliness”, which is nothing less than God manifest in the flesh. If Christ be God and Man, we must be sure at every step whether His Divine or Human nature is in view. The same Person could use the extraordinary words in prayer, “Father, I WILL”, yet ever acknowledge that He came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father that sent Him. So, with nothing to mark the transition, Heb. i. 9, 10 passes from One Who can have “fellows”, to One Who shares an aspect of glory with none, the glory of the Creator.

“. . . . I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things Thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it I am the LORD; and there is none else” (Isa. xlv. 6, 7, 18).

Here there can be no “fellows”. Here we listen to the unchallengeable claim of God, “There is none else”. In the presence of Isa. xlv., we must believe that “the Lord” Who is addressed in Heb. i. 10 as having laid the foundation of the earth “in the beginning” must be God, even as in the presence of Isa. xlv. 23, we must believe that “the Lord” of Phil. ii. 6-11 must be God, to Whom every knee shall bow.

“And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands” (Heb. i. 10).

The Scripture quoted is Psa. cii., a Psalm concerning “The King, in His humiliation” (*The Companion Bible*). Much in this is reminiscent of Psa. xxii., which opens with the words of the cross “My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?” The point of the Psalm is the cry of the afflicted and suffering Messiah, Who says:

“My days are consumed like smoke” (Psa. cii. 3).

“My days are like a shadow that declineth” (Psa. cii. 11).

In contrast with which He says:

“But Thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever” (Psa. cii. 12).

Later, the Sufferer returns to the theme of shortened days:

“He shortened My days” (cii. 23).

“I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days” (cii. 24).

In contrast He says:

“Thy years are throughout all generations” (cii. 24).

Then follows the passage quoted in Heb. i. 10, which concludes with the words:

“But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end” (cii. 27).

The words “In the beginning”, *kat'archas*, are the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *le-phanim* “previously”, and take us back to Gen. i. 1.

He, Who is yet to “appear in His glory” and build up Zion (Psa. cii. 16), He, Who as the Mediator and suffering Redeemer mingled His drink with weeping, nevertheless before His humiliation was the great Creator. This is embedded in Psa. cii. and in Heb. i.

The structure of the Psalm, reduced to a minimum, seems to be as follows:

Psalm cii.

- A | Complaint poured out *before the Lord*.
B | Days consumed like smoke.
 Days like a shadow that declineth.
C | Contrast: BUT THOU shalt endure (*Heb. sit*).
 Thy remembrance unto all generations.
 D | When the Lord shall build up Zion.
 D | He shall appear in His glory.
B | Days shortened.
 Days Take me not away in the midst of.
C | Contrast: Thy years are throughout all generations.
 BUT THOU shalt endure (*Heb. stand*).
 Thou art the same.
 Thy years shall have no end.
A | Seed established *before Thee*.

Another Psalm belonging to the same group, namely Psa. civ., is quoted in Heb. i. 7 “Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire” (Psa. civ. 4). It immediately continues:

“Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever (to the age and yet further, *Hebrew* to the age of the age, Gk.). Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment at Thy rebuke they fled Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over” (Psa. civ. 5-9).

Earlier we read, “Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain” (Psa. civ. 2). These, the heavens and the earth, are to wax old as a garment, be folded up, and put away.

We remember the majestic interposition of the Lord in the book of Job, when He broke through all the arguments of the three comforters, and even of Elihu, and answered Job out of the whirlwind.

“Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth?
When I made the cloud the garment thereof
Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed”
(Job xxxviii. 4-11).

He Who challenged Job, and Who is seen as the Creator in Psa. civ. and Psa. cii., is He Who, when the fullness of time had come, humbled Himself and took upon Him the form of a servant. He Who created man is the One Who redeemed him. “They shall perish; but Thou remainest”. We know from II Pet. iii. 10, from Rev. xx. 11 and from Isa. xxxiv. 4 that “The host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll”, but the purpose for the introduction of this catastrophic event in Hebrews was not for its own sake, but to further the real object of the epistle. Paul knew, for he had been a Pharisee and a zealous upholder of the traditions of the fathers, that

what he was about to say concerning the law, the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the covenants, would come as a great shock to his readers. Here he prepares them by looking further than the confines of Israel. Even creation itself is to “wax old”, yet the believer need have no fear while it is true concerning the Son of God that “He remaineth”. This is the “end” of the conversation of those whose faith they were enjoined to follow:

“Jesus Christ the SAME yesterday, and to day, and for ever” (Heb. xiii. 8).

Angels are set aside, Moses is superseded, Joshua only gave a typical rest, Aaron needed an atonement for his own sins, priests died and had to have successors, the covenant made at Sinai had been broken, and a New Covenant had been brought in:

“In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away” (Heb. viii. 13).

The words “wax old”, “made old” and “decayeth” are all translations of the same Greek word *palaioo*. To this relationship between the law of Moses, the old Covenant and the New, Paul devotes chapter iii. of II Corinthians. There, the old Covenant “had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is *done away* was glorious, much more that which *remaineth* is glorious” (II Cor. iii. 10, 11). *Diameno*, the word translated “remainest” in Heb. i. 11, means “to remain right through” as in II Pet. iii. 4 “all things continue as they were”. The believing Hebrew, with the unchanging Christ before him, could read Psa. xlvi. afresh with growing appreciation. Psa. xlv. 6 is already quoted in Heb. i., Psa. xlvi. might well continue:

“God is our refuge and strength therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.”

“We”, they can say, “receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. xii. 28). After this reference to creation and its dissolution, the apostle returns to his comparison between the angels and the Son of God.

“But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool?” (Heb. i. 13).

Christ made the worlds and upholds all things by the word of His power, yet He was crucified in weakness. He Who was the Express Image of the substance of God, was made a little lower than the angels. He Who thus came so low on our account was raised from the dead, declared to be the Son of God with power, and so made much higher than the angels. He is the Son, and angels are called upon to worship Him. He is addressed as God and as Lord; all things may pass away, whether the physical world, or the old covenant, but while it is written “Thou remainest” we may boldly say:

“The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Heb. xiii. 6).

He, the Beloved Son of God, cried out from the cross for our sakes “My God, My God, Why hast Thou forsaken Me?”, but He has promised:

“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb. xiii. 5).

Heb. i. 14 speaks of an “inherited salvation”. What is meant by this term? In the same chapter Christ is said to have obtained by *inheritance* a more excellent name than the angels, and this has a bearing on the subsequent use of the term.

All who are saved receive salvation by faith, but some of the saved will, in addition, receive salvation by inheritance. Christ suffered and learned obedience by His sufferings, was perfected, and became the Author of *aeonian* salvation to all them that obey Him. Christ is set before the Hebrews as the Author and Perfecter of faith, “Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (xii. 2).

Those who “inherit” salvation suffer, endure, run the race set before them, and like Moses and Abraham, have respect unto the recompence of the reward. To be an heir pre-supposes sonship: “If children, then heirs” (Rom. viii. 17); but before salvation no man is a child of God.

Does the word “salvation” in Hebrews point to something other than salvation from sin? Let us see. We shall not be at all surprised to find that such a word occurs *seven times*, viz.:

***Soteria* (salvation)**

- Inherited salvation (i. 14).
- Neglecting so great salvation (ii. 3).
- The Captain of salvation (ii. 10).
- The Author of aeonian salvation (v. 9).
- Things that accompany salvation (vi. 9).
- Without sin unto salvation (ix. 28).
- Unto the salvation of his house (xi. 7).

Passing by for a moment the first reference, let us briefly notice the others. Heb. ii. 3.—This salvation is called the “so great” salvation, which title indeed, we gladly agree, justly describes the redemption of the sinner. Those who were in danger of neglecting this so great salvation, however, are those who have had its testimony confirmed to them, which hardly applies to unbelievers. Much also depends upon the meaning of the word “neglect”, which must be considered in its place. We hope to show that this salvation does not refer to salvation from sin.

Heb. ii. 10. The underlying idea in this reference is contained in the words “bringing many sons to glory”. This is accomplished by One called “The Captain”, Who, like Joshua, *leads on* to the promised possession, unlike Moses, who *led out* of the land of bondage.

Heb. v. 9. This passage is almost parallel with ii. 10, but gives fuller detail. It is concerned with obedience and the perfecting effect of suffering.

We believe we shall be able to demonstrate that the *aionian* salvation of this passage, the *so great* salvation of ii. 3, the *inherited* salvation of i. 14, and the glory of ii. 10, all point to the one thing.

Heb. vi. 9. “Things that accompany salvation” certainly link us with our first deliverance from sin; yet remembering the purifying and stimulating character of hope, we cannot exclude future salvation and inherited glory from this passage. One has only to read on in the near context to hear of showing “full assurance of hope unto the end”, of “inheriting the promises”, through “faith and patience”, and of “the hope set before us”. These all have a bearing upon the salvation of verse 9 and influence its interpretation.

Heb. ix. 28. This passage not only puts salvation into the future and speaks of believers waiting for it, but it also definitely rules out the idea of salvation from sin, that having taken place once for all. This salvation is connected, not with the first but with the Second Appearing of Christ, and is expressly spoken of as “apart from sin” altogether.

Heb. xi. 7. The salvation of Noah’s house in the Ark is the nearest approach to the salvation of the sinner that these seven references provide. Yet the deliverance from the future day of wrath is clearly foreshadowed, Noah himself being already a saved and justified believer, and the record is part of a series illustrating faith as the substance of things hoped for, rather than faith that saves from sin, the “saving of the soul” of Heb. x. 39 notwithstanding.

Whatever the exact meaning of the word “salvation” may be, as used in this epistle, it is evident that no reference gives a clear *evangelical* statement of the way of salvation. On the other hand, the type of the wilderness journey, its Tabernacle, its Camp, and the rest that remaineth, its temptations and its perils, is so fully applied in this epistle, that we cannot dismiss them without losing great light upon this subject.

The title “Saviour” never occurs in Hebrews. In Acts v. 31 Christ is called both a “Prince and a Saviour”. In Hebrews the title of Prince is retained (ii. 10; xii. 2 Gk.), but the title Saviour is omitted. The contexts of both occurrences speak of suffering in view of glory, rather than suffering to expiate sin. Other epistles speak of Christ as Saviour, this one speaks of Him as Captain and Leader. Other epistles tell of salvation from sin, this one speaks of the salvation that is to be inherited at the Second Appearing of the Lord.

The literal rendering of Heb. i. 14 is those who are “about to be heirs”, and this is an expression frequently used in Scripture. In Hebrews it is found ten times, and often connected with the future kingdom, “The habitable world about to be”, “The city about to be” (Heb. ii. 5; ix. 11; x. 1; xiii. 14). This inherited salvation is something future,

related to the world which will be subjected to the Lord Jesus Christ and closely associated with that city Whose builder and maker is God.

No.14. Confirmed Covenants and their Responsibilities (ii. 1-4) pp. 205 - 208

If we look at Heb. i. and ii. as a whole, we shall see that chapter ii. goes back beyond the intervening revelation and argument to the one outstanding fact—

“God hath in these last days spoken unto us IN SON therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed”

and immediately we are involved in an argument that revolves around the superiority of the Saviour to angels.

Hebrews i., ii.

A | i. 1, 2. God once spoke by prophets. Now by His Son.

B | i. 2-14. The Son. His Glories.

God and Lord, better than angels.

A | ii. 1-4. God once spoke by angels. Now by the Lord.

B | ii. 5-18. The Son. His humiliation.

Man and Abraham's seed. Lower than angels.

The “therefore” of ii. 1 is *dia touto*, “on this account”, or “for this reason”. We must not look for the prime reason in the preceding verse which speaks of the ministry of angels, but to the preceding clause which speaks of the superior testimony of the Son (i. 1, 2). “On this account it behooves us to give more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let slip.” We differ from the A.V. in the rendering of this verse, agreeing more with the R.V. which reads, “drift *away from them*”. *Rotherham* renders the word, “drift away”; *J. N. Darby* renders it “we should slip away”. A great deal of controversy has arisen over this word, one set of interpreters taking the passage to mean “lest we should fall or stumble”, the other taking it to mean “lest we forget”. The one makes the passage teach that we should give earnest heed lest WE slip away; the other that we should give earnest heed so that we do not let the WORDS slip away. Both sides refer to Prov. iii. 21 to prove their point. J. N. Darby says:

“Proverbs is a free translation, for the Hebrew is plural “let them not slip away from thine eyes”, that is, what is spoken of in the end of the verse; but it shows the sense of the word.”

Moses Stuart says:

“This is the very proverb to which Chrysostom and Theophylact appeal as an illustration of the word in question: but the true sense of this word in Proverbs 3:21

they do not seem to have apprehended. *Pararrheo* here plainly does not mean to *perish*, to *fall*, but is in the antithesis to *tereson*, keep, attend to, practice, and consequently means, to pass by, to neglect, to transgress.”

Dr. E. W. Bullinger in his *Lexicon and Concordance* says:

“*Pararrheo*, to flow near, flow by, glide away; here the 2nd Aorist passive carried away, beside, or with, referring, not like the active, to the act of floating away, but to being carried beside, or floating away past anything with the stream (the marginal reading is quite wrong and follows the Vulgate *pereffluamus*).”

The reader may wonder how it can be possible to arrive at a settled understanding where so many learned writers have so differently expressed themselves; yet it is possible to perceive truth in both sets of interpretations. It is certain that if earnest heed be not given we are apt to let the words slip; it is equally Scripturally true that, if we do not give earnest heed, we ourselves shall slip. It appears, therefore, that the true meaning of the passage is a combination of both thoughts; we cannot let slip the words of truth without sliding away ourselves. An extension of the argument comes in chapters iii. and iv.:

“And to whom sware He that they should not enter into His rest, but to them that believed not? Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem *to come short of it*” (Heb. iii. 18; iv. 1).

The two sides of the question appear in chapters v. and vi. In both the “dull” of hearing or the “slothful” are mentioned (same word in each case). Heb. v. 11, 12: “Ye are dull of hearing ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again”; here is the parallel with the A.V. “let *them* slip”. Heb. vi. 12-19: “That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises”. These are “anchored”, and this passage parallels the R.V. rendering, “drift *away from them*”.

On the whole the grammatical form and the general teaching of the epistle inclines to the second meaning, that the lack of diligence was fraught with the danger of slipping away. The argument of the verses which follow is to the effect that, if Israel had to give earnest heed to the message sent by prophets or angels lest they should fail of entering into the rest that remained for them, those who have had the word spoken to them, not merely by prophets or even angels, but by the Son Himself, must even more diligently heed the words spoken. For it is impossible, we shall learn, to renew such unto repentance if they should “fall away”, or, in the words of the verse before us, “how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation”.

The Apostle leads to this question by reverting to an argument parallel with that of the opening of the first chapter. God spoke in the past by many agencies, now He has spoken in the Son. Here the form of the argument is repeated, the details being altered:

“For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect

so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him?" (ii. 2, 3).

The Apostle does not say "the law", but "the word", a term which is wider and embraces the whole of the old Covenant. It will be found that the two Covenants came with new laws. There can be no difficulty in connection with the law being given by the mediation of angels, even though the Scripture definitely declares that "God spake all these words". The problem would meet us in Heb. i. 1 where God speaks, yet uses the mouth of a prophet. Stephen, speaking of Israel, said, "ye received the law by the disposition of angels" (Acts vii. 53). The apostle teaches that the law was "ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator" (Gal. iii. 19). The awful accompaniments of the giving of the law at Sinai are presently to be compared with the wonderful miracles that were wrought to confirm the testimony of the Lord and the apostles. The word spoken by angels was "stedfast" (*bebaios*). It is the word used for establishing a promise (Rom. iv. 16); for the hope of the believer which rests upon "an oath for confirmation" (Heb. vi. 16-19); for the establishing of a covenant over the dead body of the appointed victim (Heb. ix. 17); and for the confirmation of the prophetic promise (II Pet. i. 19).

In the verbal form *bebaioo*, the word occurs again in Heb. ii. 3, "was confirmed". This fact helps us to see the force of the word "stedfast" better. Both the old and the new Covenants have been miraculously confirmed, and this confirmation added to the guilt of those who broke the former covenant's terms. This is brought out in Heb. vi., and again, from another standpoint, in Heb. x. 28-29. "Every transgression and disobedience": the words are nearly synonymous, they indicate a transgression accompanied by stubbornness and rebellion. Let us remember the many examples of those under the old Covenant who transgressed or rebelled against the terms of the Covenant confirmed by God. Let Moses himself bear witness that his act of transgression caused him to forfeit the land of promise; let all Israel who wandered forty years in the wilderness enforce the same principle, and let Caleb and Joshua also declare that the recompence of reward" took into account good as well as evil. It is the transgression, however, that is in view for the time being.

"The recompence of reward" (*misthapodosia*), and "the rewarder" (*misthapodotes*) are both peculiar to Hebrews. They indicate the central idea of the epistle upon which we have again and again insisted, namely, that Hebrews is parallel with Philippians, which speaks of the prize, and of working out our own salvation. "The recompence of the reward" comes as follows: ii. 2; x. 35; xi. 26, where the two sides, the good and the evil, are illustrated. The parenthetical way in which verse 6 comes in chapter xi. indicates that all those witnesses whose overcoming faith is instanced in that remarkable chapter believed that God is the *Rewarder* of them that diligently seek Him.

Without suggesting that the following is verbally accurate, it will nevertheless set out the argument of the Apostle sufficiently for the general reader:

Hebrews ii. 1 - 4

- A | a | Warning, lest let slip.
 - b | Things spoken by angels.
 - c | Confirmed (*bebaios*).
- B | No escape from just recompence.
- B | How escape from similar recompence?
- A / a | Warning, if neglect so great salvation.
 - b | Spoken by the Lord.
 - c | Confirmed (*bebaioo*) in special manner by God.

The argument is resumed in Heb. xii. 25-26, after a vast ground has been covered:

“See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh. For if they ESCAPED not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth” (i.e. at Sinai, when the law was given by the disposition of angels).”

That there was a tendency on the part of the Jews to think they would escape is indicated by the question in Rom. ii. 3:

“And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, *that thou shalt escape* the judgment of God?”

Covenant relationship and privilege notwithstanding, the Jew was in error. There are believers today who so emphasize free grace that it may do good to draw attention to the balance of privilege and responsibility which characterizes the teaching of all Scripture. There are some who, ignoring Col. iii. 22-25, maintain that the judgment seat of Christ has no place in the epistles of the Mystery. This can only lead to imbalance.

No.15. The So Great Salvation (ii. 1-4) pp. 205 - 208

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so GREAT SALVATION?” What is this salvation which is so great? None would be found to demur at the designation if it thereby indicated the salvation of the sinner by the blood of Christ. How great that is none can tell; salvation, as used in Hebrews, however, does not carry with it the evangelical meaning (see previous articles). Shall we allow the Hebrew usage to help us? Granting that the word often means individual salvation as in Rom. i. 16, there are other usages which show that the word has a wider meaning.

Psa. xiv. 7. “Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! when the LORD bringeth back the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.”

The national restoration of Israel is here called their salvation.

Psa. xcvi. 2, 3. "The LORD hath made known His salvation: His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the heathen."

What is this salvation which has been "made known"?

"He hath remembered His mercy and His truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

Isa. xi. 11; xii. 1, 2. "And it shall come to pass *in that day*, that the LORD shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people and *in that day* thou shalt say, O LORD, I will praise Thee: though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation."

Isa. lii. 9, 10. "The LORD hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem. The LORD hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

The close connection between "salvation" and the restoration of Israel makes comment unnecessary.

Rev. xix. 1, 2. "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are His judgments."

Here the overthrow of Babylon ushers in the full redemption of Israel.

Just as we saw in the articles dealing with *The Hope and the Prize* (Volumes VII-XI) that there was something beyond the initial salvation from sin, so those who are under the New Covenant have to learn that there is an aspect of salvation which is beyond the testimony of the Scriptures just quoted. The "so great salvation" is something that could be "neglected"; the salvation of the Psalms and Isaiah referred to above is unrelated to human faith or faithfulness.

Now we know that Abraham, while dwelling in tents in the land of promise, looked for the city which hath foundations, *but we do not learn that from the Old Testament*. There is no hint there of anything of the kind. This special aspect of salvation had its commencement in being spoken by the Lord. Literally the passage reads, "which having received a commencement to be spoken by the Lord". The idea is that the Lord Jesus was the first One to give shape and expression to this new aspect of salvation. It may be asked, why? In the first case, He was born King and came preaching the Kingdom, and until it became manifest that He would be rejected by His people the "so great salvation" was not stressed. When, however, signs began to multiply showing that His ministry would end in rejection, then He spoke more openly of the *added glory* that should be shared by those who in His day of humiliation shared His reproach.

A hint is given in the parables of these two aspects in the distinction made between the Treasure which, having been found in the field, was hidden again, and the One Pearl (Matt. xiii.). For an exposition of these parables, see *Parable, Miracle and Sign*. When the Lord "began" to speak of His own death, He also began to speak of the qualifications of those who should attain the "so great salvation". He speaks of self-denial, of losing

one's soul, and of finding it when the Lord comes with His angels (Matt. xvi. 21-28). To the young man the Lord said:

“If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow Me he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions Peter said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have THEREFORE? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. xix. 21-28).

The parable which comes later in the Gospel, that of the marriage of the King's Son, is a warning to those who “neglect so great salvation”, the very word translated “neglect” in Hebrews being here rendered “to make light of”. The unwise and the unready virgins of Matt. xxv. speak again of the folly of neglect; they neglect the word spoken by the Lord, “Watch therefore”. The Hebrews on the contrary were commended in that they had taken joyfully the spoiling of their goods, and were urged not to cast away their confidence which had great recompense of reward. Parallel with the “so great salvation” of Hebrews is the “saving of the soul” of Peter, a term misapplied in some Evangelical circles. The link is found in Heb. x. 39, where the true rendering is, “believe unto the acquiring of the soul”. Acquiring is the rendering of *peripoiesis* which, occurring but five times in the New Testament, will not take long to consult:

Eph. i. 14.	“Until the redemption of the PURCHASED POSSESSION.”
I Thess. v. 9.	“To OBTAIN salvation.”
II Thess. ii. 14.	“To the OBTAINING of the glory.”
Heb. x. 39.	“Unto the OBTAINING OR THE PURCHASING of the soul.”
I Pet. ii. 9.	“A PURCHASED people” (<i>margin</i>).

The passage in Heb. x. is parallel with Matt. xvi. 24-27. Peter's expression, “the saving of the soul”, contains a very different idea from that which is intended in present day gospel teaching. Paul never taught the saving of the soul when writing to *the churches*. He uses the expression only when addressing *the Hebrews*. Peter uses it when writing to the dispersion. Those to whom Peter addresses his epistle were redeemed (I Pet. i. 18), yet the salvation of their souls was something they could receive as “the end of their faith” (9). This salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time. Concerning this salvation the prophets spoke and searched what the Spirit testified beforehand, “the sufferings FOR Christ (see R.V.) and the glories that should follow . . . the grace to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. i. 11-13). “Rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy” (iv. 13). “The God of all grace, Who hath called us unto His *aionian* glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you” (v. 10).

This *aionian* glory, this share of the glory of the regeneration, this entry into the Marriage Feast, is all related to suffering, vigilance, not neglecting, or as it is in the Revelation, overcoming. The *aionian* glory is similar to the *aionian* salvation of Heb. v. 8, 9, which is closely connected with obedience and suffering. Those who attain this salvation are the church of the firstborn (Heb. xii. 23). To this salvation the apostle

addresses himself here. He brings the wilderness wandering in to illustrate the failure to attain the promise; he exhorts to endurance; he gives a list of overcomers and cites the Lord Jesus Himself in chapters v. and xii. as an example to the overcomer. It is in view of this that the miraculous testimony of Heb. vi. is written, and to this end the solemn conclusion of Heb. xii. is addressed.

The difficulty that many have with regard to Heb. vi. will be solved as we realize the nature of the subject and the character of the confirmation. The miracles which were wrought by the apostles are called the “powers of the age to come”, and to refuse their testimony was fraught with special danger. In this same context comes the nearest hint of the so great salvation in Abraham’s history. Let it be observed what portion of Abraham’s history is brought forward. Romans bases its teaching upon the testimony of Gen. xv. “Abram believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness”. The whole argument excludes works. James bases his argument upon the twofold testimony of Gen. xv. and xxii. Hebrews goes at once to Gen. xxii. The epistle to the Hebrews does not speak of imputing righteousness without works. Its special theme demands such statements as “they wrought righteousness”, and “the righteous shall LIVE by faith”, “he obtained witness that he WAS righteous”, “he became the *heir* of the righteousness which is by faith”.

The passage in Gen. xxii. referred to in Heb. vi. goes beyond justification by faith; as James ii. 22 declares, “seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith *perfected?*” After Abraham had passed the supreme trial of faith come the words:

“Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, *after he had patiently endured*, he obtained the promise” (Heb. vi. 14, 15).

It was here when Abraham had reached this stage of “perfecting”, the master key of “Hebrews”, that it would seem God revealed to him the “so great salvation”, the City which hath foundations.

No.16. Gifts for Confirmation (ii. 3, 4)
pp. 236 - 239

The great salvation which began to be spoken by the Lord was as surely *confirmed* as was the first covenant. It will be remembered that the word “stedfast” in verse 2 is but another grammatical form of the word “confirm”. The first Covenant was confirmed in many ways, both Moses and those who followed after receiving abundant testimony from God that their ministry was from Him. The second confirmation spoken of is “unto us by them that heard Him”. The nature of this confirmation must now be considered.

First we observe that in giving the special blessing to Abraham, as related in Heb. vi., God “interposed with an oath”. This is spoken of as “an oath of confirmation” (*bebaiosis*).

The confirmation of the Lord’s words by the apostle is explained in ii. 4: “God also co-attesting, both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles and distributions of holy spirit, according to His will.” “God hath spoken” (i. 1) and whoever the mouthpiece may have been, responsibility to hear follows. Yet an increased responsibility comes with the fact that God hath at last spoken unto us in the person of the Son. God “co-attesting” must make each miracle something more than a mere “wonder”. As a translation of *sunepimartureo*, Dr. E.W. Bullinger’s concordance gives: “To bear conjoint additional decided witness, to bear further or emphatic witness with.”

It may be remembered how repeatedly the apostles are called witnesses” during the Acts: “ye shall be witnesses unto Me” (Acts i. 8), but notice well what goes before, “but ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto Me”. “Ye shall receive” must come before “Ye shall be”. Acts i. 22; ii. 32; iii. 15; v. 32; xiii. 31; and xxvi. 16 should be consulted. Notice v. 32, “and we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him”.

This is a Scriptural exposition of the word “co-attesting”. So also Acts xiv. 3, “Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, Who testified unto the word of His grace, and granted *signs and wonders* to be done by their hands.” So again Acts xv. 8: “And God bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost”.

Looking at the epistle to the Hebrews we see that God testified to Christ (1) that He liveth (2) that He is a Priest for the age after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. vii. 8, 17). The elders were attested; Abel obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying over his gifts. Enoch received this testimony that he pleased God; and so it was with Noah, Abraham and the rest, “these all, having been attested by means of faith” (Heb. xi. 2, 4, 5, 39). In a special manner God co-attested the word of the Lord through the apostles. The closing verses of Mark’s Gospel seem to refer to Heb. ii. 3, 4:

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In MY name shall they cast out devils (demons); 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 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 every where, the Lord working with them (co-operating), and CONFIRMING the word with SIGNS following” (Mark xvi. 17-20).

The parallel with Heb. ii. is too obvious to justify any detailed comparison, but a word with regard to the character of these confirmatory miracles may be of service.

- (1) They were “signs following”, not mere prodigies, or marvels, but signs, mighty acts that signified something.
- (2) They were “the powers of the coming age” (Heb. vi.). Into this present evil age of demonic control comes the power of that age when such influences will be cast out.

Into this veritable Babel comes the power of that age with its new tongues; in that age the serpent will no longer tempt and destroy; in that age deadly things shall do no hurt; in that age sickness shall flee away.

As an illustration of the miracle being a “sign”, see the healing of the lame man by Peter, and his own application of it to the salvation of the nation (Acts iii. and iv.). To the Corinthians, among whom miraculous gifts abounded, the apostle wrote:

“In every thing ye are enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony (*marturion*) of Christ was confirmed (*bebaioo*) in you: so that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming (revelation) of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm (*bebaioo*) you unto the end” (I Cor. i. 5-8).

Here again Heb. ii. 3, 4 is seen, the testimony, the confirmation, the miraculous gifts, all coming together. In II Cor. i. 21 Paul writes:

“Now He that *conforms* us with you with a view to Christ, and hath *anointed* us, is God” (not AV JP).

Once more confirmation and anointing come together, the anointing referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The three words, “signs, wonders, and miracles” of Heb. ii. 4 are found written of the Lord’s own personal work.

“Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved (publicly attested) of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you” (Acts ii. 22).

It will be remembered that His ministry was a confirmatory one, “to confirm the promises made unto the fathers” (Rom. xv. 8). So the subsequent signs, wonders, and miracles were confirmatory also. Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles (Acts ii. 43); “a notable sign” is what the rulers called the healing of the lame man (Acts iv. 16).

Other passages are Acts iv. 30; v. 12; vi. 8; viii. 6, 13; and xv. 12. It will be observed that “signs and wonders” usually go together. The “wonder” was indeed a

“sign”, not some prodigy to cause men open-mouthed astonishment. Even the terrible things which usher in the Day of the Lord will be of similar character, “I will show WONDERS in heaven above, and SIGNS in the earth beneath” (ii. 19). The word rendered “miracle” in Heb. ii. is as often translated simply “power”, e.g., “ye shall receive power” (Acts i. 8), “as though by our own power” (Acts iii. 12; iv. 7, 33; vi. 8; x. 38), the last reference (“how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him. And we are witnesses of these things”) being a commentary upon the meaning of the anointing already noticed in II Corinthians, the endowment of the apostles in Acts i. 8, and the close connection between this “power” and the “miracle” which was its outflowing.

The scientific mind defines a miracle as the suspension of the laws of nature at the introduction of a higher law. The Scriptural definition seems rather to be that a miracle was the power of the coming age, brought forward as a pledge and a sign of good things to come. What will be normal in that age of glory appears abnormal and supernatural in this. Added to the signs, wonders and miracles for this special confirmation are “the distributions of holy spirit”.

This is described as a *taste* of the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and those who tasted are described as having become partakers of the Holy Spirit (Heb. vi. 4, 5). Not until the Lord was about to leave His disciples did He say, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit” (John xx. 22). With this read John vii. 39, “this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive: for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified”. I Cor. xii. 8-11 gives a full comment upon the “distributions of holy spirit”. These gifts, however diverse, are the working of that one and selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. These distributions of holy spirit covered the ministry of apostles, prophets, teachers, as well as miracles, gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues (I Cor. xii. 28).

Let us notice the explanation of the Scripture as to how the gift of tongues was a sign. In the law it is written:

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

What the law prophesied is foreshadowed in the possession and exercise of the distributions of holy spirit. When the people to whom the signs applied were removed from the scene, the signs went too. It is often stated, but with no Scriptural proof, that the miraculous gifts possessed by the early Church have been lost because of the worldliness and carnality of the Church. The most carnal Church in Scripture is that of the Corinthians, yet they are described as the most richly endowed with supernatural gifts. I Cor. xiii. 9-12 indicates that a dispensational change would be associated with the passing of the gifts, and this is the testimony of the whole of the New Testament.

One word in closing seems necessary. The same words that are used of the mighty works of Christ and His apostles are used of the wicked one, “whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (II Thess. ii. 9), the only added word being “lying”. This reveals the awful deception which shall be thrust upon the earth in the last days. These miracles constitute the “strong delusion” which will lead men to believe the lie. The fact that the false prophet will work actual miracles, and the three frog-like spirits of demons seen in the Revelation will work miracles, should cause us most carefully to pause before we conclude that the possession of a supernatural power today is necessarily an evidence of Divine origin or approval.

“The House of Jacob shall Possess their Possessions”

No.1. The significance of the word “possess”. pp. 222 - 226

It seems strange to some believers that there are still those who, while affirming that they believe the Scriptures, nevertheless deny the possibility of a literal restoration of Israel. Some take this attitude because they have already accepted as a principle of interpretation, that the promises made to Israel in the O.T. must be spiritualized and apply now only to the Church. Others reject the idea on moral grounds, “How could God”, say they, “invest such a disobedient and rebellious people with such a title as Kings and Priests?” in apparent ignorance that this very objection is met in such a passage as Rom. xi. 28 where it is plainly stated that the very people who are at present ‘enemies’ concerning the Gospel ‘for our sakes’, are nevertheless “beloved for the father’s sakes” adding as the one grand reason ‘For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance’. It is good to know that the house of Jacob *shall* possess their possessions. The text of our meditation is found in the prophet Obadiah, and it is utterly beyond the range of legitimate exposition to read Edom, Esau, Teman and Jacob in such a prophecy and then to read into it references to a church unknown and unborn. However, we are not turning to this utterance of Obadiah in order to deal with Israel and their failure, but to use these prophetic words as a text covering a series of studies relative to ourselves.

The believer in Christ already possesses all things if he has Christ (I Cor. iii. 23), yet how poor is our experimental acquaintance with this treasure. The church of the Mystery is blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, yet who among us can claim to any present approximation of such an inheritance? It is plainly revealed in the epistle to the Corinthians and in that to the Hebrews, that the history of Israel, especially from the Exodus to the crossing of Jordan, sets forth in type the general principles which will be found in the church. While we must avoid reading into this history teaching that is foreign to it, members of the One Body will gather much help and guidance as they ponder Israel’s pathway through those ‘forty years’.

The hindrances that prevented Israel from taking immediate possession of their inheritance are many and by no means simple. We shall have to examine the record of Israel’s attempts to enter their inheritance, but before doing so, it will be as well for us to examine the word translated ‘possess’.

The English word ‘possess’ is derived from the Latin *possidere*, which in turn is composed of *pot*, the word giving us ‘potent’, and *sedere* ‘to sit’, the original sense being ‘to remain master’. By other avenues this word is allied to the Greek ‘despot’ which in its turn goes back to the Sanscrit and means ‘the master of the house’.

Possessions can be of two kinds according to the Hebrew Scriptures. There are those that are such by inheritance, Hebrew *nachal* (Numb. xxxiv. 13) inherited by lot, in which

no idea of merit or effort enters. There are, however, possessions which must be taken and possessed. These are indicated by the Hebrew *morash* and the verb *yarash*.

“And it came to pass, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, *to take possession* of it hast thou killed, and also *taken possession*?” (I Kings xxi. 16, 19).

Gesenius gives as the primary meaning of *yarash*:

“To take, to take possession of, to occupy, especially by *force*”, and adds: “This, and not *to inherit* is shewn to be the primary signification, by the derivatives *reshbeth* a net, so called from taking or catching: and *tirosh* must, new wine, from its affecting (taking possession of) the head.”

This element of seizure, or the putting forth of vigorous effort, can be seen in the meaning attaching to certain modes of the verb:

“Drive out” (Deut. iv. 38); “dispossess” (Deut. vii. 17); “destroy (margin *repossess*)” (Exod. xv. 9); “cast out” (Exod. xxxiv. 24);

all with the sequel, the possession of such possessions for oneself. We believe the testimony of all Scripture indicates that over the entrance to no inheritance will the believer find the words written “WITH VACANT POSSESSION”, every inheritance will be found occupied by a usurper, like unto the Canaanites.

Moses enunciates a principle that is closely allied with the idea already expressed, when he said:

“If then will the Lord drive out all these nations from before you, and ye shall possess greater nations and mightier than yourselves. Every place whereon the soles of your feet shall tread shall be yours” (Deut. xi. 22-24).

Here we observe that there are two sides to this question of inheriting. In the first place the action is the Lord’s. He it is Who drives out the nations and grants to Israel the land from which these nations have been dispossessed; but in the second place, Israel had to arise and cross the Jordan and definitely put in an active claim before this possession became a realization. The promise was made four hundred years before to Abraham, but that of itself would not have given Israel possession. Even today as we pen these words, Israel are still without actual possession, even though the title deeds to the land are as good as ever. There are conditions attached which must be fulfilled. Even though Abraham did not actually ‘possess’ the land, but was a pilgrim and a stranger in the land of promise, nevertheless, he too was bid:

“Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee” (Gen. xiii. 14-17).

It was not sufficient even for Abraham merely to lift up his eyes and *look*, he must lift up the sole of his foot and *walk* in order that his title may be established.

The use of the word ‘tread’ has a bearing also on this matter of conquest and possession. Caleb, said Moses, shall be given the land that he hath trodden upon (Deut. i. 36), and in fact there are five references wherein the word specially signifies the ‘overcomer’. Two passages speaking of Israel, and three of the Lord. These references associate ‘high places’ with the verb ‘to tread’.

“Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and Who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt *tread* upon their high places” (Deut. xxxiii. 29).

“God which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and *treadeth* upon the waves (*heights* marg.) of the sea” (Job ix. 8).

“For, lo, He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man what is his thought, that maketh the morning darkness, and *treadeth* upon the high places of the earth, The Lord, The God of Hosts, is His name” (Amos iv. 13).

“For behold, the Lord cometh forth out of His place, and will come down, and *tread* upon the high places of the earth” (Micah i. 3).

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom Yet will I rejoice in the Lord The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hind’s feet, and *he will make me to walk* upon mine high places” (Hab. iii. 17-19).

We hope, by the grace of God, to be enabled to bring to light lessons from the history of Israel that will not fail to be a blessing, a warning and an encouragement to those of us whose blessings are not to be enjoyed on earth, but in heavenly places, where Christ now sits at the right hand of God.

Do we, as believers, ‘possess our possessions’? Do we enter into the blessings that are ours in Christ? This series is intended to be a challenge to us all, so that we may be exercised in this matter and under the benign influence of the Word of Truth ‘be filled unto all the fullness of God’.

Let us consider the matter of our calling. By this we might mean our peculiar calling as members of the Body of Christ, and that is a phase of the truth which we hope to deal with later. At the moment we ignore the dispensational distinctions that exist between one ‘calling’ and another, and look at the subject in its primary significance, namely the fact of the choice, election or calling of God without which dispensational distinctions can have no value, for they could never be enjoyed. Like ‘predestination’, ‘election’ has gathered to itself, though erroneously, the ideas of fatalism and pre-determinedism. ‘Election’ *ekloge*; ‘elect’ *eklektos*; ‘to elect’ *eklegomai* simply refer to the fact that a choice has been made, a selection made. The word *lego* primarily means ‘to lay’ and its first use is to describe someone asleep in bed. It then, like the Latin *lego* takes on the meaning ‘to lay in order’ and so by a natural transition ‘to gather for oneself, to pick out, to choose’. However, we are not at the moment so concerned with the actual etymology of the term ‘election’ as we are with the question ‘how far have we realized this fact in our lives and experience?’ Writing to the Church of the Thessalonians, the Apostle said:

“Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God” (I Thess. i. 4).

“Knowing.” In what way did Paul ‘know’ so profound a matter? He used a word that means “something that has come within the circle of one’s sphere of vision”. In this same epistle we read ‘to see’ your face (ii. 17); ‘to see’ us (iii. 6); which is in the original the same word that is translated ‘to know’. In the same epistle the Apostle refers to current events, using this same word, ‘As ye know’ (ii. 2, 5, 11). What therefore had he ‘seen’ to make him so sure of the ‘election’ of these Thessalonians? Had he seen their ‘work of faith’, their ‘labour of love’, and ‘the patience’ of their hope? Yes, for he follows his claim to the knowledge of their election with an explanation:

“For our gospel came not unto you in word only ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much *affliction*, with *joy* of the Holy Ghost” (I Thess. i. 5, 6).

To take another illustration, Peter, writing to the believers among the ‘dispersion’, said of them:

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

Here once again we see the perfect combination of things high and things lowly; things of eternity and things of time.

We have The Father - - - Foreknowledge.
 The Spirit - - - Sanctification.
 The Son - - - Blood sprinkled.

However, we have omitted one word in our summary, the word ‘obedience’. This is the believer’s response to this gracious choice of God.

“As *obedient* children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as He which hath *called you* is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (I Pet. i. 14, 15).

“Seeing ye have purified your souls in *obeying* the truth through the Spirit” (I Pet. i. 22).

Paul knew the Thessalonian election by their response to the Word; the same was true of Peter’s perception. This he enlarges upon in the second epistle where he speaks of making their ‘calling and election sure’. How could this be accomplished? After speaking of the ‘precious faith’ and the divine power that had given all things pertain to life and godliness, the apostle Peter goes on to urge that to faith should be added virtue, to virtue knowledge, and concludes:

“For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure” (II Pet. i. 8-10).

The calling and election from the Godward standpoint had been settled in the counsels of eternity; but for the believer to enter experimentally into these exceeding great and precious promises, in other words, for the believer to ‘possess his possessions’, the knowledge that he had of Christ must be neither barren nor unfruitful; he must prove the

reality of the calling of God by the activity of the life within. In the phrase ‘Make your calling and election sure’ the Apostle does not mean what Pilate meant when he said of the sepulcher of the Saviour ‘Make it as *sure* as ye can’ (Matt. xxvii. 65), where the word used is *asphalizo*, and which primarily means ‘not falling, unmoveable, safe’, neither did he mean what Paul meant when he said ‘nevertheless the foundation of God standeth *sure*’ (II Tim. ii. 19), where the word used is *stereos*, something solid or stable. He uses the word *bebaios* which indicates not so much that the thing itself is solid or firm, but that it *has been confirmed*, as may be seen from the examples of its translation in the N.T.

The verb *bebaioo* which gives us *bebaios*, is used in the following passages:

“*Confirming* the word with signs following” (Mark xvi. 20).

“The testimony of Christ was *confirmed* in you” (I Cor. i. 6).

“Which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was *confirmed unto us*
with signs” (Heb. ii. 3, 4).

Here it will be seen that the confirmation was not so much the thing itself, the Word or the testimony, but the confirming of that Word or testimony to the heart and conscience of the hearer, and that by external signs and wonders. Thus, no believer can add to the trustworthiness of the Word of God. He cannot make his calling or election more sure than it is in that sense, but by the added evidence of the new life, the added evidence of fruitful and abounding knowledge of Christ, he will confirm to his own heart the calling he has received. He will, in other words ‘possess his possessions’.

The Judgment Seat of Christ

No.3. “Saved, yet so as by fire.” pp. 18 - 20

Expanding the teaching of I Cor. iii. 7, 8, Paul continued:

“For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building” (I Cor. iii. 9).

The translation offered by the A.V. is somewhat misleading, the words ‘of God’ occur three times, and stand at the beginning of the sentence in the original. Thus:

“OF GOD (*theou*) are we fellow workers;
OF GOD (*theou*) are we husbandry;
OF GOD (*theou*) are we building.”

“Members are co-workers with one another, not with God as though He were one of them. Were it so ‘God’ would be in the dative case (*theo*)” (Companion Bible). The last reference, namely to the ‘building’ is now amplified. A building supposes a foundation, an architect, builders and materials. The foundation of God’s building can be no other than Christ. The architect is Paul. The builders are the Apostle’s fellow servants. The materials are likened to gold, silver and costly stones on the one hand, and wood, hay and stubble on the other. The reason for this choice of material is because of the trial by fire which is the feature of the illustration.

“According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder (*architekton*), I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon” (iii. 10).

Paul’s ministry differed from that of the average believer, as an architect’s work differs from that of the ordinary builder. As an Apostle, he could not build on another man’s foundation as he himself declare:

“To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man’s line of things made ready to our hand” (II Cor. x. 16).

“Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another’s foundation” (Rom. xv. 20).

Paul’s responsibilities as an Apostle were tremendous, and no subsequent builder will be judged as to the foundation upon which he builds—that is not the responsibility of any servant of God subsequent to Paul the Apostle. He laid the foundation. Our responsibility is to build on no other foundation than that already laid for us. This same emphasis is found in Eph. ii. 20. The exhortation which the Apostle gives is “Let every man take heed *how* he buildeth *thereupon*”. It is assumed throughout this figure that whatever is built, whether good or bad, accepted or rejected, is “upon this foundation” (I Cor. iii. 12). We are occupied with “God’s building” (I Cor. iii. 9) and “God’s temple”

(I Cor. iii. 17). Owing to modern usage the words 'precious stones' are a trifle misleading, as we generally use them for jewels today; the better rendering would be 'costly stones' such as marble, porphyry, jasper, such as would be employed in the building of a temple. Wood and thatch, whether of hay or reeds, while good enough for the homes of men, are nevertheless transitory and especially so when the test is that of fire. It is quite beside the intention of the Apostle to attempt to invest the building materials with any particular doctrinal significance with the exception of Truth. One writer says:

"Some build with the gold of faith, with the silver of hope, with the imperishable costly stones of love" (Schrader),

but this receives no support from the passage, and any amount of ingenuity can be wasted in this direction. *The* question to which all this supplies an answer is "Will your service stand the test of the day of Christ?"

When the Roman consul Muminius captured the city of Corinth in B.C.146, he burnt the place to the ground. The various metals including gold, silver and copper fused in the conflagration, became united into a compound or alloy, and was called from the circumstances "Corinthian brass". The figure employed by the Apostle therefore would not sound strange to the Corinthians. The believer is not represented as on trial for *his life*, condemnation is nowhere mentioned, neither do such words as guilt, sin or forgiveness appear. It is the believer's *work* that is assessed.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest every man's work of what sort it is.
If any man's work abide If any man's work shall be burned"

The testing of this work is severally stated as being 'made manifest', 'declared', 'revealed', 'tried', 'what sort it is'. The words 'made manifest' translate the Greek *phaneros* which in the form of a verb is found in the passage 'we must all *appear* before the judgment seat of Christ' (II Cor. v. 10). As early as the Sermon on the Mount this feature was made known ". . . . thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee *openly (phaneroo)*" (Matt. vi. 4, 6, 18). When the Apostle applies these principles to himself as a 'steward of the mysteries' he says:

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and *will make manifest (phaneroo)* the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God" (I Cor. iv. 5).

Not only is it impossible for one believer to estimate the true worth of the service of *another*; the believer cannot truly estimate the worth of *his own* work, for we are hindered by the flesh and we are the subject of such conflicting motives that we are obliged at last to say with the Apostle:

"I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord" (I Cor. iv. 4 R.V.).

“The day shall declare it.” The day in view is in direct contrast with the present, and once again we turn to I Cor. iv. for light. The Apostle is speaking of his stewardship, and says:

“It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (I Cor. iv. 2).

Both the words ‘required’ and ‘found’ carry us on to the *bema*, the day when the Lord shall judge our service ‘what sort it is’.

“But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man’s judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self” (I Cor. iv. 3).

Here, the English translation veils the reference to ‘the day’. “Man’s judgment” is literally “man’s day” using exactly the same Greek word *hemeras* as is found in I Cor. i. 8; iii. 13 and v. 5. The day that shall declare the character of our service is not “man’s day” but the day of Christ. The word translated ‘declare’ *deloo* has already been used in I Cor. i. 11; there the divisions among the Corinthians had been ‘declared’ by the house of Chloe—here the whole of one’s service will be declared in the day of Christ. “It shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.”

Peter has a word to say about the revealing and trying by fire:

“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. i. 7).

Fire is not used either by Peter or by Paul in these passages as an instrument of punishment, rather is it for testing and proving the genuine nature of the thing tried. *Dokimos* has particular reference to the testing of metals, and is found in II Tim. ii. 15 where it is translated ‘approved’. The verb *dokimazo* is found in I Cor. iii. 13 ‘try’ and in I Cor. xi. 28 ‘examine’. Writing to the Galatians, the Apostle uses *dokimazo* when he says:

“Let every man *prove* his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another” (Gal. vi. 4).

Two consequences follow this assessment of service in that day:

- (1) “If a man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, HE SHALL RECEIVE A REWARD.’
- (2) “If any man’s work shall be burned, HE SHALL SUFFER LOSS.”

Work will either ‘abide’ or ‘be burned’.

Speaking of service under the figure of fruit, the Saviour had said:

“I have chosen you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain (abide *meno*)” (John xv. 16).

That field which bears thorns and briars is rejected (*adokimos*), and is nigh unto cursing: whose end is to be burned (Heb. vi. 8). Observe that the field is not actually cursed, but is 'nigh unto' it. So, in I Cor. iii. 14 the word 'reward' is left unexplained and unqualified, but in the next verse, 'he shall suffer loss' is expanded. The Apostle is concerned that we should not misunderstand him. "He shall SUFFER loss" does not mean that 'he shall be LOST'. Consequently he proceeds: "But he himself shall be saved, YET SO AS BY FIRE." The builder will escape, but his building will be consumed, his whole work wasted. He will appear before His Lord with nothing.

This line of teaching is found elsewhere, namely for example in II Tim. ii. 11-13 where the distinction is observed. It is a solemn thought, and as stewards and ministers of the Word it becomes us to walk humbly and faithfully.

No.4. The Judgment of intention. pp. 57 - 60

We have seen that at the judgment seat of Christ, the believer's service will either be rewarded or he will suffer loss, and now before examining other Scriptures which speak somewhat particularly about the distribution of reward or loss, let us turn aside and note the way in which the service rendered by others long past has been assessed in the Word of God. In doing so let us remember that the sentence pronounced by the Lord as Judge in that day will be in entire harmony with the Word:

"I judge him not he hath one that judgeth him. The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John xii. 47, 48).

This word is likened to a two edged sword, indeed it is said to be even 'sharper', and it divides asunder 'soul and spirit'; in other words, it is a 'discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart' (Heb. iv. 12). The word translated 'discerner' is *kritikos*, from *krites* 'a judge'. While it is gloriously true that 'there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus', this does not remove the necessity to stand before the Lord as Judge, for Paul, in view of his approaching martyrdom, conscious that he had finished his course and kept the faith said:

"Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous JUDGE, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing" (II Tim. iv. 8).

The word *krites* 'judge' was in common use for the Umpire at the Greek contests, and is so used here by the Apostle.

If Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, and all who love His appearing shall stand before the Judge, it is unscriptural to assume that no member of the One Body, no believer during the dispensation of the Mystery, has any association with the judgment seat of Christ.

Returning to our earlier quest, we ask what judgment does the Scripture pronounce upon service already rendered by saints of old? Heb. xi. gives a list of those who walked and witnessed by faith; let us see whether that chapter provides us with an illustration. Take the reference to Abraham in Heb. xi. 8:

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.”

If this were the only record we have of this act of Abraham, we should imagine that upon receiving the call, Abraham immediately responded ‘when he was called he obeyed’. That is the pronouncement of ‘the Word’, and that anticipates the assessment of Abraham’s action when he stands before his Judge. Yet any one who knows the teaching of the book of Genesis, knows full well that Abraham’s response was by no means so prompt or straightforward. According to Acts vii. 2 the call came while Abraham dwelt in Mesopotamia, and Gen. xi. 31 shows that Terah, his father, took charge of the great trek, and contrary to the conditions of God’s call and promise, took many of his family and kindred with him, only to arrive at Haran and stay there. Even after Terah died Abraham’s response was not completely in harmony with his call, for he still retained LOT (one of his kindred) and his company. Then Gen. xii. records a great lapse on the part of Abraham. He left the land of promise and went down to Egypt, got entangled in ‘white lies’ and had to be delivered by Divine interposition, but this is passed over in silence in Heb. xi. Only because of the strife that made life unbearable did Abraham break with Lot, and receive the vision of the land as originally promised (Gen. xiii. 14, 15). Are we to say that ‘the righteous Judge’ is partial in His judgment of Abraham? God forbid, for if that thought be allowed the whole fabric of redemption totters. Heb. iv. 12 may supply the answer. The Lord discerned the ‘intents’ of Abraham’s heart, even though he was prevailed upon both by his father, his own frailty and by Lot, from fully following this out. Abraham’s “sins” are forgiven, the intents of his heart alone come into the picture. Let us look at another example of this same principle. There can be few places that are associated with such shocking iniquity as the cities of Sodom, yet the Saviour, the One Who will be the Judge in that day, made this solemn pronouncement:

“And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee” (Matt. xi. 23, 24).

Here are the words of the Judge Himself. Tyre and Sidon would have repented; Sodom will be more leniently judged than “Capernaum”, the basis of this discrimination being ‘opportunity’. The Lord can judge what a person **WOULD HAVE DONE, IF** He therefore ignores mere external acts, and discerns ‘the thought and intents of the heart’. Tyre and Sidon did not repent. This is an historic fact. Tyre and Sidon would have repented *if!* That is the judgment of the One Who will judge ‘the secrets of men’, One who can adjust the inner desire with the outer performance, Who may see spiritual triumph where we see disaster.

The Apostle in Rom. ii., speaks of a day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to what he calls “My gospel” (Rom. ii. 16). This is the only passage in Scripture so far as we know, where judgment is to proceed according to a Gospel—usually these two concepts are kept apart. A judgment that is according to a gospel, must differ essentially from a judgment according to law. To appreciate this passage in Rom. ii., the whole chapter and the complete structure needs examination, together with the purpose of its introduction into the epistle at all. We quote a few passages from the book *Just and the Justifier* and trust that where any obscurity may still exist that a fuller examination, both of that book and of the epistle itself will be the result.

“Paul has before him the object of removing every false foundation for justification before God, and one of the most difficult features of opposition that he had to break down was the pride and prejudice of the Jew. In chapter ix. Paul volunteers a statement testifying to Israel’s position in the purpose of God, and the passage in Eph. ii. 11, 12 reveals the contrast between the standing of Israel ‘after the flesh’, and of the Gentiles ‘after the flesh’. Justification before God, however, finds no ground to rest on before God ‘according to the flesh’ (Rom. iv. 1, 2), and when the advantage and profit of being a Jew and of the circumcision is pressed out of the sphere of the flesh into the sphere of the spirit, the Apostle reveals that such distinction ceases to exist, and to rest upon it is to remain under judgment. We will now present the whole structure, including the parts omitted, that we may have the benefit of the whole argument before us.

Romans ii. 1 - iii. 9

- A | ii. 1. | a | *Krino*—Inexcusable, whoever judges.
 - b | *Krino*—Judging another condemns self.
 - c | *Krino*—The one judging practices same things.
- B | ii. 2. *Krima*—Judgment of God according to truth.
- C | ii. 3-25. |
 - D | ii. 3. | d | *Logizomai*—False reckoning.
 - e | *Pratto*—Judging those who practice evil.
 - E | ii. 9-14. | f | *Iuodaioi*—Tribulation for Jew and Greek.
 - g | *Iuodaioi*—Glory for Jew and Greek.
 - h | *Phusis*—Have not the law by nature.
 - F | ii. 15, 16. | i | *Kardia*—Work of law in hearts.
 - j | *Kruptos*—The secrets of men.
 - G | ii. 17-25. *Opheleo*—Profit of circumcision.
- C | ii. 25 - iii. 1. |
 - D | ii. 25-27. | e | *Pratto*—Profit if practice the law.
 - d | *Logizomai*—True reckoning.
 - E | ii. 27-29. | h | *Phusis*—Uncircumcision by nature.
 - g | *Iuodaioi*—True Jew not outward.
 - f | *Iuodaioi*—True Jew hidden man.
 - F | ii. 29. | j | *Kruptos*—Secrets man within.
 - i | *Kardia*—Circumcision of the heart.
 - G | iii. 1. *Opheleia*—Profit of circumcision.
- A | iii. 4-7. | a | *Krino*—God will overcome when judged.
 - b | *Krino*—God is not unrighteous when judging the world.
 - c | *Krino*—God judges sin, though he overrules if for good.
- B | iii. 8, 9. *Krima*—Judgment of God is just.

The central sections C and C are to claim our attention. The development of theme and argument is graphically placed before the eye in the recurring Greek words that are noted. Let us trace it, using the guides provided.

Logizomai—This is an important word in Romans, being translated later on by ‘counted’, ‘reckoned’ and ‘imputed’. In Rom. ii. we do not read of faith of being imputed for righteousness, but we have the principle established. The word occurs twice, and in the first case it is false reckoning (ii. 3). The Jew ‘reckoned’ upon his descent from Abraham, his circumcision, his covenant privileges, to enable him to escape the judgment of God. This is immediately disproved. On the other hand a ‘reckoning’ that would be most distasteful to the Jew was that established by the Apostle in verse 26: ‘Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be *counted* for circumcision?’ This was an argument that seriously disturbed the fancied security of the Jew.”

The two references to ‘nature’ *phusis*, and two references to ‘secret’ or ‘hidden’ *kruptos* should be examined:

“The Gentiles, which have not the law by nature” (Rom. ii. 14).
“The Uncircumcision by nature” (Rom. ii. 27),

and “He is not a Jew, who is one outwardly but he is a Jew who is one inwardly (*kruptos*) of the heart, in the spirit” (Rom. ii. 28, 29). The conscience of the unevangelized heathen will bear witness at that judgment and will either accuse or excuse them, as their secret motives for either good or ill will come to light.

Rom. ii. is not dealing with the *bema* or the judgment of a believer’s “works” but like the references to Tyre, Sidon and Sodom it reveals a searching of the hearts that goes so deep, and that reverses so much that is human in outlook and conclusion, as to render our own judgment of little value.

The instances brought forward, namely that of Abraham, Sodom and the heathen, while by no means exhaustive have given us some idea of the character of that judgment which deals with ‘intent’ rather than with execution, and so presents the *bema* judgment of the believer’s “works” in a new light. The judgment of the nations as recorded in Matt. xxv. 31-46 provides another example of the working of this great principle. No human judge could sentence or reward a man for what *he would have done*; that is the prerogative of the Lord alone.

No.5. Chastening *now*, instead of condemnation *then*.
pp. 68 - 70

The first reaction to the conclusion arrived at after considering the fact that the Lord's judgment is based upon what we 'would have done—if', or upon the intention of the heart rather than the external achievement, is to decline all attempts at forecasting the conclusion of that tribunal. This of itself is justified by the express statement of Paul, as we shall see, but left unguarded by other equally expressed statements. Such an attitude may indicate mere 'drift' and be neither the outcome of faith nor reason. First, the character of the assize is such as to render unfruitful all attempts at anticipating the result of that day.

"It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (I Cor. iv. 2).

The word 'found' is often used in a judicial sense. "I find no fault in Him" (John xix. 6). "Finding nothing how they might punish them" (Acts iv. 21). "And be found in Him" (Phil. iii. 9). "That he may find mercy" (II Tim. i. 18). "Be found of Him in peace" (II Pet. iii. 14). The Apostle passes from the prospect of the 'finding' of that day, to the finding both of "man's day" (I Cor. iv. 3 margin), or of his own self, saying:

"I know nothing against myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth (margin examineth) me is the Lord. Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall each man have his praise from God" (I Cor. iv. 4, 5 R.V.).

It would be an unscriptural conclusion to regard all judgment, either of self or of others, as set aside by the Apostle's words in I Cor. iv., for in the same epistle he wrote:

"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (I Cor. xi. 31, 32).

Here the Apostle urges the believer 'to judge' himself, and uses the word *diakrino* 'discern', a word already found in the context (I Cor. xi. 29). The alternatives are being chastened now, or condemned then. The Corinthians were actually at the time suffering the consequences of their attitude to the Lord's supper.

"Not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (I Cor. xi. 29, 30).

This was the chastening the believer was receiving in this life, in contrast with the condemnation which the world would receive in the future day. Chastening as Heb. xii. teaches is the action of a Father, and presupposes that the one chastened is a son.

In I Cor. v., another aspect of this same principle is revealed. Owing to the fact that the Corinthian believers had been brought up amidst the most awful immorality, they had continued in the practice of such deeds that were 'not so much as named among the Gentiles'. The Apostle, with the day of Christ in view says:

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (I Cor. v. 4, 5).

Here is chastening indeed, involving even the destruction of the flesh now so that the spirit may be saved 'so as by fire'. Such a chastening demands the personal presence of an Apostle and does not apply to the present dispensation. Paul himself knew something of this drastic chastening, for he wrote to the same church:

"Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure" (II Cor. xii. 7).

Externally there is a vast difference between the gross immorality of the Corinthians, and the possibility of spiritual pride in the heart of Paul, and in the one case deliverance to Satan results in the destruction of the flesh, whereas an angel of Satan produces a stake in the flesh and 'buffets' the Apostle. Yet in the solemn light of the *Bema*, and the presence of that word 'if' in connection with the judgment of Tyre, Sidon and Sodom, who is to decide whether spiritual pride in a deeper and fuller knowledge of dispensational truth, may not be a grosser evil than an immoral act practiced by those who like the Corinthians had been brought up in an atmosphere of defilement? Writing to the Corinthians in connection with the crown and prize, he said "I keep under by body lest I should be a castaway" (*adokimos* disqualified from entering into the race or from receiving an award – I Cor. ix. 27). Here, in II Cor. xii., the angel of Satan buffets him with a like end in view.

While these experiences belong more particularly to the Church of the Acts period, and find no parallel in the epistles of the Mystery, we must beware of setting them aside entirely, for the Prison epistles speak of a judgment comparable with the *Bema* and consequently many of these principles will apply now as then. We have seen that from one point of view 'we judge nothing before the time' yet from another, and easily understandable point of view, we should judge ourselves now. There is another principle enunciated in the Scriptures that should be added to our list, and that is the standard of judgment whereby we ourselves shall be judged, is the standard whereby we ourselves already judge others. This was enunciated at the first in the Sermon on the Mount:

"With what judgment ye judge ye shall be judged" (Matt. vii. 2).

"Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee" was the statement of the Lord to the servant who complained that his master was 'an austere man'. Writing to the Romans, and particularly to the Jew, Paul said:

"Wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself" (Rom. ii. 1).

Here again, contingency, “if”, motive, intention, heart and not appearance, desire and not deed, come in and influence the judgment of that day. The believer who by reason of his upbringing has imbibed many prevalent errors both of doctrine and practice may be severely condemned by more enlightened brethren now. A man may be a believer, yet have a very poor conception of the integrity or inspiration of the Scriptures. He may be completely muddled about the question of hope, immorality, the Second Coming, right division, the Mystery, etc., and yet the believer who has been enlightened enough to see that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, who is clear regarding that blessed Hope, who is entirely free from the traditional teaching concerning the immorality of the soul, who appreciates and practices right division (and as the Apostle says to this very church, he may understand all mysteries), he should remember that while all this light brings joy and blessing beyond computation, there is also at the same time added responsibility. He should, while judging the error in the other man, ‘consider himself’, for he is putting up a standard whereby he himself will be judged.

We must carry with us the principle which is embedded in I Cor. xi. 32 when we turn to one or two passages which on the surface seem to speak of an adverse judgment being given against the believer at the *bema* in the future, but the subject is sufficiently solemn and important to merit a consideration by itself.

No.5 (Con’t). Chastening *now*, instead of condemnation *then*. pp. 156 - 160

It will be remembered that in our opening survey of this great subject, we quoted among other passages I Cor. xi. 31, 32:

“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.”

We must give a fuller consideration of this idea of ‘chastening’ as being something which a believer may receive here, rather than ‘condemnation’ in the future, and the passage that provides much food for thought in this matter is Heb. xii. The passage with which we are concerned is comprised with verses 5-14:

Hebrews xii. 5 - 14

- A | 5-10. Mark of sonship. Discipline received.
- B | 10. The end. Partakers of His holiness.
- A | 11-13. Fruit of righteousness. Discipline exercised.
- B | 14. The pursuit. Peace and holiness.

Going back to Heb. xi. we observe that the first verse speaks of faith under two aspects. (1) The substance of things hoped for. (2) The evidence of things not seen. The word translated ‘evidence’ is the Greek word *elengchos*, and as it is the bearing of

this word on the passage of Heb. xii. that is before us, let us attempt a true apprisement of its meaning.

Elengchos occurs but twice in the N.T., Heb. xi. 1 and II Tim. iii. 16. The A.V. translates it once 'evidence' and once 'reproof'. When we turn to the verb *elengcho* we have a wider field for investigation. The following are the renderings in the A.V., convict, convince, rebuke, reprove, tell one's fault. In no one place is it ever translated 'prove' or 'demonstrate' or by any such word that is parallel to 'evidence'. We find the word in Heb. xii. 5 where it is translated 'to be rebuked'. Now structurally this passage balances Heb. xi. 1 thus:

A | Heb. xi. 1. Faith. Substance and *elengchos*.
B | xi. 2-40. The cloud of witnesses.
B | xii. 1, 2. The cloud of witnesses.
A | xii. 3, 5. Faith. The *elengchos*.

Now if the last passage is rightly rendered 'rebuke', how can the only other occurrence of the word in Hebrews, bound as it is by all the ties of structure and consistent argument, be rightly translated 'evidence'? The reader may by this time be ready to consult the LXX, and the first passage we note will be Hab. ii.1, "I will stand upon my watch what I shall answer upon my *reproof*", which is in the immediate context of the quotation, "the just shall live by faith". Instead of 'proof' we find 'reproof'. Let us search this matter further. Now *elengchos* occurs some 21 times, and *elengcho* some 53 times in the LXX. It is manifestly impossible with our limited space to provide a concordance of the occurrences here. We will give a few, but would here assure the reader that every one of these 74 occurrences has been investigated, and that all point in one direction, namely, that *elengchos* does not mean 'evidence', but 'rebuke'. Let us see a few examples:

"And Abraham REPROVED Abimelech because of a well of water" (Gen. xxi. 25).
"Thou shalt in any wise RBUKE thy neighbour" (Lev. xix. 17).
"The Lord had REBUKED him" (II Chron. xxvi. 20).
"Behold, happy is the man whom God CORRECTETH" (Job v. 17).
"My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His CORRECTION; for whom the Lord loveth He CORRECTETH" (Prov. iii. 11, 12).

The Apostle has quoted this passage of Prov. iii. 11, 12 in Heb. xii. 5, 6 and there, instead of giving the word 'correction' twice as does the LXX, he uses the word 'chasteneth'. For confirmation of this synonym we may turn to Rev. iii. 19, "As many as I love, I *rebuke* and *chasten*". Those desirous of searching out this matter more fully will doubtless find opportunity. Sufficient has been here noted to show that the primary idea of Heb. xi. 1 is "Faith is a substance of things hoped for, a reproof of things not seen". This, however, does not convey sense to English ears, so we must consider the matter further. As the verse stands in the A.V. we have a repetition. Faith is a substance and an evidence. When we look at the actual thing in progress, and in fact we find that faith has a twofold association: (1) It looks forward to future glory; (2) It endures present suffering.

Elengchos is balanced by *elengcho* in Heb. xii. 5 where it is translated ‘rebuked’. Now the quotation, “the just shall live by faith”, in Heb. x. 38, takes us back to the same word, for, as we have seen in Hab. ii. 1, we find it in the word ‘reproved’. In Heb. xii. the Apostle quotes Prov. iii. 11, 12, already set out above. This ‘rebuke’, ‘correction’, or ‘discipline’ is an essential accompaniment of sonship and growth.

Let us now look at one or two passages that illuminate the purpose and instruments of chastening:

“Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee” (Deut. viii. 2-5).

We are apt to fix our minds upon the painful side of chastening, and, by reason of our folly, there is often a need for that phase, but it is good also to notice that a part of this discipline or chastening was the provision of the daily manna, the marvelous preservation of clothing, and the care of the wanderers’ feet!

“The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Blessed is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teacheth him out of the law” (Psa. xciv. 11, 12).
“We are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world” (I Cor. xi. 32).

Here is another comfort; chastening is not condemnation. Chastening is for sons, condemnation for the world. Man’s thoughts are vain, he needs a twofold treatment; chastening to remove folly, teaching to supply the needed instruction. Chastening is not only the work of the Father, for Christ Himself says to the church: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent” (Rev. iii. 19).

The Apostle puts the matter of this chastening before the reader in a variety of ways. First, the attitude of mind towards it. Do not despise it. Do not faint when rebuked. Perhaps ‘despise’ is too strong a word. Rather what is meant is to hold lightly, to have very little concern about a thing. That is one attitude to be avoided. There is the opposite extreme however, that is, of magnifying the chastening endured, and so ‘fainting’ at the rebuke. This also is wrong. We have to remember that the chastening has to do with us ‘as sons’ (Heb. xii. 5-7). It comes to us from One Who loves us (Heb. xii. 6). To be without chastening is to be without proof of sonship. The little gutter child, unkempt, uncorrected, uncared for, is free from the discipline, restraint, training, care and correction that loving fatherhood imposes, but who, knowing the truth, would exchange the ‘discipline’ of the one for the ‘liberty’ of the other?

The Apostle proceeds to reason from the lesser to the greater. We have had fathers in this life whose discipline was brief, and as far as they knew right, but which was

sometimes in error, yet we held them in respect. God is the Father of our spirits, His discipline is never at fault, and it tends to life. Shall we not then much rather render submission to Him?

The object that the Lord has in view all this time is revealed in Heb. xii. 10: "That we may be made partakers of His holiness." Holiness is the atmosphere of Hebrews, as righteousness is of Romans. The sanctification of the believer lies entirely outside his own deeds or endeavours. He is sanctified by the blood of Him who suffered 'without the gate' (Heb. xiii. 12). If he is called upon to go unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach (Heb. xiii. 13), it is but manifesting in act and character what has been already accomplished. The going without the camp will never sanctify, but it can manifest sanctification.

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. x. 10).

"For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. x. 14).

This 'perfecting for ever' is in no wise altered or minimized because the epistle proceeds to urge each to 'go on unto perfection', or because it associates perfecting with suffering and obedience. When, therefore, we read that this discipline has in view the partaking of His holiness, we do not understand that any amount of scourging can sanctify, but that the believer, being already perfectly sanctified in Christ, is now trained and encouraged to walk in harmony with such a blessed position.

While the Apostle urged the believer to treat with all due reverence the chastening of the Lord, he assumed no stoic indifference. There is something intensely human in the admission: "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. xii. 11).

Three items in this verse demand attention. First, the words 'Nevertheless afterward'. While mother-love is immediate and protective, father-love is concerned with the future. The one sees the *babe that is now*. The other visualizes *the man that is to be*. The underlying thought is very close to that of II Cor. iv. 16-18, which hinges upon the words, 'while we look not at the things which are seen'.

Then comes the Greek expression translated 'The peaceable fruits of righteousness'. We understand this to mean in English, 'the peaceable fruits, *namely* righteousness'. Holiness in Christ is manifested, and imputed righteousness has produced its peaceable fruit. The chastening and the discipline has had the effect of pruning; it has produced fruitfulness. Here is a parallel with Phil. i. 11 which speaks of bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

All, however, turns upon the third expression: "To them which are exercised thereby", just as prayer in Philippians urges the need for discernment and trying the things that differ. Watch the effect of discipline upon two of the Lord's children. One becomes mellow, the other hard and sour. The one is going on unto perfection, the other

drawing back to perdition. Look at Israel in the wilderness. After their first experience at Marah one would have thought that the next problem concerning water would at once have thrown them back on the memory of the Lord's earlier intervention on their behalf, and that they would have trusted in quiet confidence. But no, so far as they were concerned, the discipline of Marah was wasted upon them; they were 'exercised' thereby. O let us not pass through trials and reap no reward! Let us ever seek to be 'exercised' by the discipline of our pathway, and then it will turn to our profit and the Lord's glory. This 'exercise' is the mark of the 'perfect': "But strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, even those who by reason of use have their *senses exercised* to discern both good and evil" (Heb. v. 14). A baby has senses, a man has senses exercised. A true son of God is exercised by the chastening of the Lord: he is unworthy of the name if he is indifferent or hardened.

It is not without bearing upon the theme of Heb. xii. that the word 'exercise' is *gumnazo*, which of course gives us the word gymnasium. The word actually means 'to be naked', because in the Greek sports the competitors were stripped. So we have *gymnos* translated 'naked' in Matt. xxv. 36; II Cor. v. 3; Heb. iv. 13 and other places. Coming, as it does, after the exhortation to "lay aside every weight and the easily-entangling sin, and run with patience the race set before us", the word *gumnazo* is very apt.

Seeing then that chastening, though unpleasant, is fruitful, we are exhorted to: "Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be dislocated; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men" (Heb. xii. 12-14). In other words, we are not to seek martyrdom, we are not to pose as sufferers, we are not to pick the roughest tracks and run the thorniest way. Rather are we to gird up the loins and hope to the end; make the place for our feet as level as we can, not aggravate the lame ankle, but rather get it well, that we may finish our course with joy. Our discipline will sometimes come through the permitted oppression of man, and when it does we must bow before the Father's good pleasure. On the other hand we should not go out of our way to irritate our fellows or ask for trouble, but as far as in us lies, we are to make for peace.

Another line of exhortation is discovered here by observing a parallel with Phil. iii. 19, where the believer is urged to mark those who so walk that their end is perdition. So here, those who were running the race are told to make a firm track so that others not so strong or fleet of foot would be encouraged to continue.

"And holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14).

This will cause us to run up against the elements of the world and the tradition of men, and will probably provide all the chastisement that we can endure, but without it we are warned that 'no man shall see the Lord'.

The two words that should be emphasized in the whole passage under consideration are 'endure', and 'exercise':

“If ye *endure* chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons” (Heb. xii. 7).
“Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are *exercised* thereby” (Heb. xii. 11).

Whatever our relationships may be down here, however diverse our paths or opinions, whatever our estimate of one another may be, whether we seek to help or to hinder, let us never forget that:

“We shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ”,

and let us remember that His approval THEN will outweigh all that man has ever said or done either in our favour or in opposition to us.

No.6. What shall the believer “receive”? **pp. 118 - 120**

We have seen sufficient from the Word to make it certain that the service of a believer will be assessed at the *Bema*; that there will be a reward for faithful service, and that this judgment of service must not be confounded with the question of the forgiveness of sins or with the possibility of condemnation. The feature that demands much prayerful study is related to the question not of ‘reward’ but where the believers service has failed of the that standard. From I Cor. iii., we know that where the work does not pass the test the believer will ‘suffer loss’, and if these were the only passages we could say that there will be either an award, or where an award could not be made, there would be some deprivation but of a negative character. When, however, we read II Cor. v. 10, a problem meets us:

“We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

Not only so, but Gal. vi. 8 says:

“He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption”;

which not only raises the question of future ‘reaping’ but adds the most disturbing word ‘corruption’. In what way, and when will ‘things done in the body whether good or bad’ be received? How can ‘corruption’ be reaped in a state where corruption has given place to incorruption, and mortality has been swallowed up of life? Further, how does this possibility agree with the testimony of Scripture concerning the full and irrevocable forgiveness of all sins? It is certain that the reaping of ‘life everlasting’ (Gal. vi. 8) must refer to the future, even as receiving ‘the reward of the inheritance’ (Col. iii. 24) must refer to the future also. Before attempting an explanation, or examining these and similar passages in detail, let us seek in other spheres and by other examples some principle that will apply to the problem before us.

If there is one child of God in the days of old who fell into most grievous sin, it was David, self confessed of blood guiltiness and adultery. Yet is there a clearer case of the full and free forgiveness of sin? We have only to read Psalms xxxii. and li. to be convinced of this. Are we therefore to believe and teach that any one, like David can 'get away with it' as the common expression has it, be guilty of such outrages, and yet be freely forgiven? Putting it like that, it does seem as though the forgiveness of sin puts a premium upon immorality, and shocks the moral conscience. Let us leave our surmising and turn to Holy Writ. In II Samuel xii. the story is told. Nathan's parable of the poor man's one ewe lamb kindles the anger of David who pronounced judgment on the offender and thereby pronounced judgment upon himself. Upon which Nathan turned to David and said "Thou art the man" (II Sam. xii. 7):

"Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife."

Two results follow on upon David's acknowledgment. Upon saying 'I have sinned against the Lord' Nathan responded with the words of pardon "The Lord also hath put away thy sin". But there was something else, the Lord also said:

"The sword shall never depart from thine house."

"I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour."

"Thou didst it secretly; but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun"

(II Sam. xii. 10-12).

So far as the child born of this unholy alliance was concerned, the judgment was "Howbeit, because of this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die" (II Sam. xii. 14). The subsequent history of David is of a man, rejoicing in the Lord, blessed and engaged in acceptable service, yet living a life of anxiety because of the defection of his sons and servants. We have but to think of Absalom and Ahithophel, and read how David wept as he ascended Mount Olivet barefoot and with covered head, to realize how far a 'forgiven' man, who sows to his flesh, shall in this life reap corruption. *David most surely did.*

Let us take an example of the working of this principle in another direction. Gen. xi.-xiii. records the call of Abraham and the haltings and failings that marked his response before the ultimate obedience of Gen. xiii. 14-18. Acts vii. 2 declares that while Abraham was still in Mesopotamia and before he dwelt in Haran, God had called him to leave country and kindred, but Gen. xi. 29-31 shows that even though Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees, he most certainly did not leave either country or kindred. Haran was still the same side of Euphrates as was Ur and a whole company of Abraham's kindred went unto him. After the death of his father, Abraham moved on to Canaan but 'Lot went with him', so the obedience was still but partial. This is followed by the act of unbelief which drove Abraham and Sarah down to Egypt, and which led Abraham to seek the cover of a 'white lie' in the subterfuge. "Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister." For this, Abraham the man of faith was rebuked by Pharaoh the unbeliever! In addition to this there was the birth of Ishmael, which understandable as it may be when we remember the great test of faith through which the aged couple were passing was nevertheless but another intrusion of the flesh into the realm of faith. Yet when we come

to that list of worthies whose example is recorded in Heb. xi., this is what we read of Abraham:

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out unto a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went” (Heb. xi. 8).

From these two examples a principle emerges that can be used in the interpretation of the terms associated with the Judgment Seat of Christ. David received ‘the things done in the body’ *during the present life*; he had sown to the flesh, and of the flesh he reaped corruption. Abraham’s example, recorded in the N.T. gives us an idea of what will be pronounced upon such a life at the *Bema*. The delay at Haran, the lapse in Egypt, the failure at the first to separate from Lot, these find no mention in Heb. xi. There it reads “By faith Abraham was called obeyed”—all else was forgiven and will never come up again. The intention of his heart, and the fact that he did at length go out in obedience are all that is remembered.

Turning now to II Cor. v. 10, 11 where we read ‘every one may receive the things done in his body’ we observe that there are seventeen words translated ‘receive’ in the N.T.

Lambano, together with five combinations, *dechomai* with seven combinations, these, together with *apecho* and *choreo* are passed by, the word chosen by the Apostle being *komizo*. *Komizo*, primarily means to bring or to fetch, but when used in the Middle voice it means ‘to receive to oneself’ as a recompense or what is due. So we read in Matt. xxv. 27 “I should receive mine own with interest”. The word means also to receive back what was previously one’s own, to *recover*, as in Heb. xi. 19. A parallel with the use of *komizo* in II Cor. v. 10, 11, are the two references in the Prison epistles:

“With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same *shall he receive* of the Lord, whether he be bond or free” (Eph. vi. 7, 8).

“And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong *shall receive* for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons” (Col. iii. 23-25).

Here it will be observed that the Apostle employs *komizo* for receiving ‘whatsoever good thing a man doeth’ in Ephesians, and ‘for the *wrong* which he hath done’ in Colossians. The word translated ‘receive’ in the passage ‘shall receive the reward’ in Col. iii. 24 is the Greek *apolambanomai*. This word, mainly by reason of the prefixed *apo* has the meaning of receiving some reward or recompense as Rom. i. 17 & II John 8 reveal. From I Cor. iii. we have learned that ‘for the wrong which he hath done’ there will be some measure of loss or forfeiture. In II Sam. xxiii., this principle seems to be seen in operation. There we find ‘the first three’ (II Sam. xxiii. 8-12). Then come another list of overcomers, but of one it is written “Howbeit he attained not unto the first three”, of another “He was more honourable than the thirty, but he attained not to the first three” (II Sam. xxiii. 19, 23). Again, Uriah the Hittite, against whom David had so signally offended, finds a place among this honourable company (II Sam. xxiii. 39) but it

is a humbling thought to realize that Joab, the Captain of David's army find *no place at all* among these honoured names. There is indeed 'no respect of persons' at the *Bema*.

There is, therefore no condemnation; there is no canceling of forgiveness already granted; but a greater or lesser 'reward' that is contemplated at the Judgment Seat of Christ. There is more to be said than this, but we must devote another article to its examination.

Meditations on Psalm LI

No.4. The “blotting out” of transgression (verse 1). pp. 38, 39

David’s first great thought is the removal of his guilt and cleansing from its stain. He said “My sin is ever before me” (Psa. li. 3). “Hide Thy face from my sins” (Psa. li. 9), he cried, and to this end, his first request is:

“Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin” (Psa. li. 1, 2).

There is a twofold view of sin here. David sees a record, written against him in the book of God; he prays that this record may be blotted out. David saw moreover that sin is a defilement and that he stood in need of cleansing.

“Blot out wash me cleanse me.”

Let us give our attention to the way which these words “Blot out” are used.

To blot out from a book.

“Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou has written” (Exod. xxxii. 32).

It is this form of the verb *machah*, that David, who knew and loved the law of Moses, used in Psa. li. 1:

“Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book” (Exod. xxxii. 33).

David knew this dread statement. Yet such was his trust in the mercy and loving kindness of his God, that, even though he was about to confess:

“I have sinned against Thee”,

and knew that if he received his deserts he would be ‘blotted out’ of the book which God had written, yet with magnificent faith he prays rather ‘Blot out my transgressions, wash me’ and not as Moses, who, for different reasons, said ‘Blot me out of Thy book’.

David moreover knew what the Lord had spoken concerning Amalek, and Agag, who is associated with the downfall of Saul, was probably a descendant of Amalek. He would therefore be cognizant of the threat recorded in Deuteronomy:

“Thou shalt blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven” (Deut. xxv. 19).

Here we have two figures. (1) The blotting out of a book. (2) The blotting out of remembrance. Deuteronomy moreover, contains the curse written against the idolater in Israel “The Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven” (Deut. xxix. 20), and David in his own Psalms had used the word to speak of this terrible judgment upon the wicked:

“Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous” (Psa. lxix. 28).

“Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out” (Psa. cix. 13).

He knew that where sin was not ‘blotted out’ it was ‘remembered’.

“Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the Lord; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out” (Psa. cix. 14).

From another point of view, Nehemiah reverses the prayer made by Moses and says:

“Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and *wipe not out* my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God” (Neh. xiii. 14).

Perhaps the most terrible passage wherein this word ‘blot out’ is found is in the record of the Flood:

“I will *destroy* man” (Gen. vi. 7);

“Every living substance will I *destroy* (margin *blot out*)” (Gen. vii. 4);

“Every living substance *was destroyed* they *were destroyed* from the earth” (Gen. vii. 23).

As one ponders the usage of this expression, the completeness of the forgiveness of David’s sin becomes apparent. If such a ‘blotting out’ from the Divine record as this term implies be accomplished, David could anticipate the language of another, who though once calling himself a ‘wretched man’ and ‘the chief of sinners’, yet could say:

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”

We will take up the reference to washing and cleansing in our next article. We leave the reader to ponder the grace that can so effectively ‘blot out’ transgression as to justify the use of so strong a word as that employed by David in Psa. li. What was true of David will be true of Israel, and true of all saints.

“I, even I, am He that *blotteth out* thy transgressions for Mine Own sake, and will not remember thy sins” (Isa. xliii. 25).

“I have *blotted out*, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee” (Isa. xlv. 22).

“The Lord God will *wipe away* tears from off all faces” (Isa. xxv. 8).

No.5. Some characteristic marks of sin.
pp. 139, 140

David was king of Israel, the Lord's anointed, the shepherd of the flock of God, the sweet singer of Israel. He had established a secure place in the hearts of his people since the day when he had overthrown Goliath. He is called "the Patriarch"; the Holy Ghost is said to have spoken through his mouth. Yet he sinned, and sinned grievously, and there is no minimizing of his iniquity by reason of his greatness or of his high office, but rather, is there the thought that such high office but intensified his failure. We have seen that David, by his allusion to the Levitical law in the choice of the words 'wash', 'cleansed' and 'hyssop', practically acknowledged that he was a moral leper in need of a greater cleansing than that of any poor leper provided for under the law. He needed a cleansing that would render him 'whiter than snow'.

In his acknowledgment of his sin David does not spare himself. He calls his sin 'my transgressions', 'mine iniquities', 'my sin', 'evil' and 'bloodguiltiness', and confesses not only that he himself had committed sin, but that he had been shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin. We cannot pass such a presentation of guilt, such a confession of human failure with a cursory glance; our whole meditation revolves around the fact and the nature of sin and we understand the references to mercy aright when we know that such mercy as is here revealed is shown to a sinner. We understand the cleansing and the restoring only in the light of the moral defilement and the moral lapse that we call sin. We understand the broken spirit and contrite heart only as we see them associated with acknowledged transgression.

Let us then acquaint ourselves with the language of David in this solemn matter.

"Blot out my transgression", "I acknowledge my transgressions" (Psa. li. 1, 3).

The word translated 'transgressions' is *pesha*.

"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity." "I was shapen in iniquity." "Blot out all mine iniquities" (Psa. li. 2, 5).

The word here is *avon*.

"Cleanse me from my sin"; "my sin is ever before me"; "In sin did my mother conceive me"; "Hide Thy face from my sins" (Psa. li. 2, 3, 4, 5, 9).

The word 'sin' is *chattah*.

"This evil in Thy sight" (Psa. li. 4).

The Hebrew word is *ra*.

"Bloodguiltiness" (Psa. li. 14).

The Hebrew word is *dam*.

In the word ‘transgression’ there is an element of revolt.

“I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled (*pasha*) against Me” (Isa. i. 2).

It is moreover a ‘trespass’ (Gen. 1. 17). David realized that his sin was a rebellion against the commandment of the Lord, and a trespass against the rights of his fellow men. ‘Iniquity’ is the translation of *avon*, which comes from the root word *avah* and indicates the ‘perversity’ of sin. *Avah* means crookedness (Lam. iii. 9) and David realized the perversity of his crime when he used this word twice of his own act, and once of the nature of man represented by the fact that man is ‘born in sin and shapen in iniquity’.

“Sin” is either *chet*, *chataah* or *chattah* (we give the various forms for the sake of the reader who uses the English concordance). In all its forms, the underlying meaning of this word is ‘failure’. The word is found in Judges xx. 16 where we read of:

“Seven hundred chosen men left handed; every one of whom could sling stones at an hair’s breadth, and not *miss*.”

The Apostle had this Hebrew word in mind when he wrote:

“All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. iii. 23).

David acknowledged that he had utterly failed to come up to the Divine standard. He had indeed ‘come short’. When he surveyed the havoc wrought by his sin, he used the word ‘evil’ *ra*. The primary meaning of this word is ‘to destroy’. Adversity, calamity, distress, harm, hurt, misery, trouble, wretchedness, are some of the words used in the English Version to give some idea of the underlying meaning of *ra*. The primitive idea of ‘ruin’ is never absent. David had rebelled, transgressed and trespassed. His act had been one of perversity and added to that he came from a stock that had already become distorted. He, like all mankind, had ‘missed the mark’, and with bloodguiltiness staining his royal hands and besmirching his throne and crown, he stood an abject ruin. If he used these words with intent and with purpose, what else could he plead but the words put into the mouth of the publican in after days:

“God be merciful to me a sinner!”

David’s plea for mercy (verse 1).

pp. 227, 228

The opening plea of the royal penitent is for mercy:

“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness: according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions” (Psa. li. 1).

After this we have the prayer for cleansing, the acknowledgment of the deep sin into which David had fallen, and the prayer for restoration; but not until we reach verse 14 do we find the second great plea. This time however it is not the mercy and lovingkindness of the Lord that is invoked; David can now say:

“Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy Righteousness” (14).

Here, where David can call the Lord God of his salvation, he advances from lovingkindness and tender mercy to that which lies close to the heart of the Gospel of Grace, the fact that God is just at the time that He is the justifier, as the student of Romans well knows. We must not lightly pass over this initial plea, for even though it be true that the Lord is ‘Faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins’, nevertheless the fact that He planned and provided such a way of escape for poor guilty man cries aloud of His mercy and His love. David was right in putting mercy foremost. Let us examine his words a little more closely.

Three different Hebrew words are before us: Mercy *chanan*, lovingkindness *chesed*, and tender mercy *rachamim*. Very near the prime meaning of the word *chanan* ‘mercy’ is the idea of ‘bestowal’, and closely associated is the idea of mere kindness, gratis, and causeless, as may be seen in the word *chinnam*, a word closely related to *chanan* if not derived from the same root. This can be seen in the following reference:

“Wherefore slay David without a cause?” (I Sam. xix. 5).

We are therefore prepared to discover that *chanan* is translated many times in terms of ‘grace’ as well as in terms of ‘mercy’ or ‘pity’:

“God hath dealt graciously with me” (Gen. xxxiii. 11).

“He will be very gracious unto thee” (Isa. xxx. 19).

In the ‘reflexive’ this word is translated generally ‘to beseech’ or ‘to make supplication’.

“I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication” (Psa. cxlii. 1).

‘Have mercy’ therefore fitly opens this Psalm of penitence and plenary grace.

‘Lovingkindness’ *chesed*. The basic idea of the word that gives us *chesed* ‘lovingkindness’ is something ‘swelling, abounding, exuberant, bounty or bountifulness’.

“All flesh is grass, and all the *goodliness* thereof is as the flower of the field” (Isa. xl. 6).

The word is translated 'goodness' in Exod. xxxiv. 6 and 'mercy' in Exod. xxxiv. 7. While 'mercy' is the word used in translating this word more frequently than any other, the particular shade of mercy is indicated by the many passages where 'kindness', 'merciful kindness' and 'lovingkindness' have been chosen because of their fulness. This idea of exuberance and overflowing abundance, gives one translation which if judged by English standards seems at first impossible. The word translated 'goodness' in Exod. xxxiv. 6 occurs but once in Leviticus, where it is actually translated 'wicked' (Lev. xx. 17). If, however, we keep in mind the basic idea of exuberance or abundance, we shall perceive that the word is much like the Greek word *epithumeo*, which means:

- (1) *Desire* in a good sense (I Tim. iii. 1 and Phil. i. 23).
- (2) *Lust* in an evil sense (I Tim. vi. 9 and Eph. ii. 3).

David might have stayed here, for here indeed is enough and to spare. His sin was great, but the grace that awaited him was greater. Knowing the nature of the God to Whom he prayed, he adds one more Divine attribute to his plea, namely 'tender mercy' *rachamim*. The figurative use of the 'heart' as the seat and centre of affection is of such frequent and common use in ordinary everyday speech as to pass without much notice. If and when other organs of the body are similarly employed, it immediately raises the question of good taste, and in this we have departed very far from the intensely human language of the original Scriptures. "The reins" which are associated in the Hebrew Scriptures with intense feeling (Job xix. 27, etc.) refer to the 'kidneys'. When the Psalmist said "Awake up, my glory" (Psa. lvii. 8), he referred probably to 'the liver'. The healthful effect of the 'marrow' of the bones is referred to in Job xxi. 24 and applied figuratively in such passages as Prov. iii. 8, etc. We are therefore prepared to find that the literal meaning of *rachamim* 'tender mercies' is the 'bowels'. In Gen. xliii. 30 we read:

"And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother";

while in the fourteenth verse of the same chapter we read:

"And God Almighty give you mercy before the man."

Millennial Studies

*For a fuller treatment of the Millennium and allied subjects
see "An Alphabetical Analysis" Parts III, 8 and 9.*

No.10. This is the Sum. pp. 4 - 6

When the Apostle reached about half way through the epistle to the Hebrews, he stopped at the end of chapter vii. to say:

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum" (Heb. viii. 1).

He had admitted earlier that there were some things to say concerning Melchisedec that were 'hard to be understood' (Heb. v. 11). *In his case* the difficulty was caused by the fact that his hearers were 'dull of hearing'. *In our case*, the position must be reversed. We do not write as he did by inspiration of God, and we do not for a moment believe that our readers are in any way dull of hearing. We have endeavoured as grace is given, to be careful to avoid ambiguity, to give chapter and verse, to demonstrate by fairly full quotations the interpretation suggested, and to avoid mere text quotations that ignore the context. Even so, we have no right to believe that everyone has followed in every detail so closely that a resumé would not be useful, and as the same Apostle said in another context "To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Phil. iii. 1). We follow his helpful example.

Here then is a summary:

(1) There is no sacredness about the word "Millennium". It simply means 'a thousand' and is used of *that portion* of the future reign of Christ that lasts 1,000 years.

(2) There is one portion of the Scriptures only that speaks positively concerning the Millennial reign, and that a portion consisting of ten verses only, namely Rev. xx. 1-10.

(3) While making this statement we by no means deny that such passages as Isa. xi. 6-9 do not belong to this Millennial day, but if they do, they are seen to be such only by inference.

(4) We do not deny that there will be a pre-millennial kingdom, but we see that this will be the kingdom of the Beast of Rev. xiii.-xviii., and is foreshadowed by the reign of Saul before that of David.

(5) The outstanding features of the Millennium as revealed in Rev. xx. 1-10 are as follows:

- (a) The devil will be shut up in the bottomless pit (abyss), and this, together with Dan. ix. 24, 'finish' 'to make an end', indicates that evil will be 'restrained' throughout the period.

- (b) The bottomless pit, is in Greek *abussos* 'the abyss' and the LXX links this with 'the deep' of Gen. i. 2.
 - (c) The 'overcomer' who is addressed in Rev. ii. and iii., is the slender thread upon which the visions of the Apocalypse are threaded, and the ONLY ONES specifically mentioned in Rev. xx. 1-10 are the martyrs under the Antichrist's persecution, who 'live and reign with Christ a thousand years' (verse 4).
 - (d) The phrases 'the rest of the dead' and 'the first (or former) resurrection' compels us to see that the great white throne judgment that follows is *the second half of one theme*, and that this great white throne judgment is not the judgment of all the ungodly of all time. That subject does not enter into the book of the Revelation.
 - (e) At the close of the Millennium when Satan is let loose for a little season, his deceiving words find ready response in 'Gog and Magog' who invest the camp of the saints in the beloved city, and are immediately destroyed with fire from heaven.
- (6) As an echo, and perhaps a connection with Gog and Magog, we find that there will be 'feigned obedience' among some of the nations of the earth at that time.
- (7) The Lord will rule with a 'rod of iron' and the emphasis on the word 'iron' cannot be ignored.
- (8) When the Lord enters into His kingdom, He will rule in the midst of enemies.
- (9) While full Millennial blessings will be enjoyed in Jerusalem the nations that surround that favoured city will gradually learn the way of peace.
- (10) If the converging lines of prophecy are considered, no gap can be found in which Israel as a nation will be a blessing in the earth. This can only take place *after* their conversion *at* the Second Coming of the Lord.
- (11) The day of the Lord is to be succeeded by the day of God, and care must be taken not to cram all future prophecy into the 1,000 years, leaving little or nothing for the day (or period) that follows.
- (12) Other incidental features and arguments are to be found in the articles of which this is but a synopsis. Until these can be Scripturally disposed of, we shall not feel under any obligation to occupy more space in the *Berean Expositor*, but will gladly return to the main purpose of our ministry, namely, the making known as far as grace will enable, the dispensation of the Mystery with all its blessings, privileges and responsibilities.

One Lord

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one LORD” (Deut. vi. 4).

No.1. Why is Elohim, the plural form, employed? pp. 152 - 156

The Hebrew word *ed* means ‘witness’ and is the word used in Isa. xliii. 10 where the Lord says of Israel ‘Ye are My witnesses’. Israel have for centuries seen themselves as witnesses to the fact that there is ONE God, and this is demonstrated by a curious feature of calligraphy. If we open any Hebrew Bible at Deut. vi. 4 we shall observe that two Hebrew letters are larger than the rest, and so stand out on the page. These two letters are E and D. The sentence which is thus marked, reads in the A.V.:

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.”

The order of the Hebrew words is a trifle different, reading literally:

“Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God, Jehovah one.”

The word translated ‘hear’ is *shamE*, the word translated ‘one’ is *acheD*, and it is these two final letters E and D which spell out the word ‘witness’ which shows how keenly the Hebrew people felt concerning the nature and substance of their peculiar testimony. This witness finds a justification in the words of Isaiah which read:

“Ye are My witnesses, saith the LORD, and My servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe Me, and understand that I am He: before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me. I, even I, am the LORD; and beside Me there is no Saviour” (Isa. xliii. 10, 11).

“Ye are even My witnesses. Is there a God beside Me? yea, there is no God; I know not any” (Isa. xliv. 8).

These words are pregnant with meaning, and their consequences are far reaching. We shall have to weigh them in the balances of the Sanctuary, and pray that we may make no false step and draw no false conclusion. Before we are in the position to do this, we must make some attempt to define our terms.

It is affirmed by some students of the Scriptures that Christ is ‘the *Word* of Jehovah’. This does not go far enough. We believe that the Scripture teaches that Christ is Jehovah. It is affirmed by many, that Christ was begotten of the Father *before time began*. The passage from Isaiah just cited makes Jehovah declare ‘Before Me there was no God *formed*’. A number of believers accept the translation of John i. 1 as being ‘The Word as A God’. We hope to show that this is an impossible translation, but at the moment we place the words ‘The Word was A God’ over against “Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me” and leave the comparison to do its own work. Peter declares that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. The title ‘Saviour’ belongs pre-eminently to the Lord Jesus Christ—yet if

we are to take the words of Isaiah as true, Jehovah has already declared that beside Himself 'there is no Saviour' (Isa. xliii. 11; xlv. 21). These Scriptural statements demand our careful attention. Before we can proceed therefore in the investigation of this most wonderful theme, we propose to seek an answer to the following questions:

- (1) The teaching of the Bible is entirely in favour of the UNITY of God. God is One, all other gods are false. This being so, there must have been an imperative necessity for the employment of the plural ELOHIM in Gen. i. 1. Humanly speaking it would appear to have been an error of the first magnitude for Moses, in his endeavour to teach a people just out of idolatrous Egypt that there is but ONE God, to use the plural form in the very opening sentence of revealed truth. Yet this is what he was constrained to do.
- (2) Upon examination, we shall discover that many of the proof-texts for the doctrine of Divine Unity, do not teach that GOD is one, but that JEHOVAH is one. It will therefore be incumbent upon us to discover the meaning and the relationship of this title to the doctrine of the one God.
- (3) Arising out of this investigation will be the fact that the Jehovah of the O.T. is found to be the "Lord" of the N.T. and we are left in no doubt as to the fact that "The one Lord" of the N.T. is the Saviour, the Son of God Himself, "The Man Christ Jesus".
- (4) Again and again we read that God is incomparable. That no likeness of Him is possible or permitted. Yet the same Bible declares that man was made in the image and after the likeness of *Elohim*, that Moses beheld the 'similitude' of the Lord, and that Christ is 'the Image of the invisible God'.
- (5) In spite of the declaration that God is invisible, that 'no man hath seen nor can see' Him, that 'no man hath seen God *at any time*' the same Scriptures record that the elders of Israel "saw the God of Israel they saw God" (Exod. xxiv. 10, 11).

As these matters are investigated, other items of extreme interest will come to light, but it would only be an encumbrance to attempt to make a list of them here. The first item that demands attention therefore, is the reason for the employment of the plural form *Elohim* for 'God', and to this we must address ourselves. There is no possible doubt that *Elohim* is a plural noun, the A.V. so translates it in Gen. iii. 5 'gods' and in over 200 other places. When we remember the idolatry which had surrounded Israel during their sojourn in Egypt, the law against all other 'gods' given at Sinai, and the extreme need to safeguard this basic doctrine, it is evident that some most imperative necessity compelled Moses to employ such a term, especially when a singular form *Eloah* was in use, and employed very freely in the book of Job. The translation 'gods' meets us not only in Gen. iii. but in Gen. xxxi. 30, 32; xxxv. 2, 4, and in over fifty other places in the Pentateuch. Side by side with the strange use of the title *Elohim* however, is another feature which materially altered the proposition, for the plural noun which ordinarily employs a plural verb, is here found associated with the verb in the singular.

Rules of grammar arise out of the nature of things. Because mankind is made up of male and female, we must have the pronouns 'he' and 'she'. Because we sometimes speak of man in the singular and sometimes in the plural, we have the singular 'he' and the plural 'they'. It is also natural that the verb should be construed with the noun, and change when the singular changes to the plural. So we say, in English "God SEES" but "Gods SEE". This is all so natural and straightforward that the above comments may

seem a trifling waste of time. We find, however, that not only is the word “God” in Gen. i. 1 the *plural* Elohim, but it is followed by the verb *in the singular*, and that this is the general rule. Had there been no overwhelming necessity, Moses would never have introduced so disturbing a word into the opening verse of revealed truth as the *plural* form Elohim. The word *El* was known to him (Gen. xiv. 18; Deut. vii. 9, etc.). He knew also the word *Eloah* (Deut. xxxii. 15) a title used by Job over forty times.

To every believer in the inspired Scriptures, it must be evident that the plural form was *a necessity*, and its choice Divinely dictated. The strange fact that the plural *Elohim* is construed with a singular verb must be a necessity also, for no one would perpetrate ‘by inspiration of God’ a grammatical error. We are immediately confronted with a revelation which indicates that the subject matter lies outside of the ordinary experiences of mankind. The mystery is not solved in Gen. i. 1 but it is recognized, and if we will but notice its presence, we shall have made the first step towards its solution, at least, in part. The employment of the plural *Elohim* in Gen. i. 1 is not an isolated instance of this peculiar fact, for the use of the plural “God” with the singular verb is *the rule* throughout the O.T. Isaiah who so insists upon the unique Person of the Creator, says:

“Thus saith God the LORD, He that created the heavens, and stretched them out”
(Isa. xlii. 5).

Dr. John Lightfoot draws attention to the need for care in translating this verse, and reads “*He* that created and *they* that stretched them out” which is confirmed by the note in the *Companion Bible* on this verse. Who are intended by ‘they’? Again in Ecclesiastes where we read “Remember now thy Creator” (Eccles. xii. 1), the word Creator is plural “Creators”. At the confusion of tongues the Lord said “Let US go down” (Gen. xi. 7) where the grammatical construction is the same as that used in Gen. xi. 3 “Let US make brick”. What was grammatically true of many when speaking of man, is grammatically true of ONE when speaking of God. At the creation of man, this use of the plural is marked “Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness”. Yet this is followed by the words, “so God created man in HIS own image” (Gen. i. 26, 27). With whom did God take counsel? The Scriptures make it clear that He does not stoop to take counsel with any creature (Isa. xl. 14).

It is easy to submit the holiest and most solemn of mysteries of Scripture to ridicule, and those who object to the teaching of Scripture here brought forward, dismiss the idea as absurd that God, Who is One, should hold a consultation with Himself. It may transcend anything that comes within our own experience, but is that to us the final word? However, there still awaits us one passage that cannot be thus set aside.

We are told in Gen. xviii. 1 that “The LORD appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre”, and the title used here is “Jehovah”. Abraham saw three men, two of them, “the two” literally, being subsequently called ‘angels’ in Gen. xix. 1. At the confusion of tongues, the plural is used “Let US go down” but now the singular is used “I will go down now”, “To Me”, “I will know” (Gen. xviii. 21). “The men” turned their faces towards Sodom, as we find in the next chapter, “but Abraham stood yet before the LORD (Jehovah)” (Gen. xviii. 22). It is to Jehovah that Abraham prayed, and it is Jehovah Who

said “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare it for their sakes”. At the conclusion of this prayer “The LORD (Jehovah) went His way” (Gen. xviii. 33). In Gen. xix. 1-23 we have the intervention of the two angels, and the escape of Lot. Then we read these strange words:

“Then the LORD (Jehovah) rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD (Jehovah) out of heaven” (Gen. xix. 24).

This is revealed for our faith, but does not attempt an explanation. Many who oppose the testimony of passages we have brought forward, subscribe to the inspiration of all Scripture. To such this appeal is made:

“Do you believe that Gen. xviii. and xix. is a part of inspired Scripture, revealing to man knowledge that otherwise he could never attain?”

If the answer be “yes” then we must acknowledge that in this twenty-fourth verse we have a revelation that reflects upon the nature of the LORD, and brings to light a constitution and an order of Being entirely foreign to our experience. But it is nevertheless TRUE. Jehovah, in all appearances, a man, is here represented as standing *on the earth* raining down fire and brimstone from Jehovah *out of heaven*, “and HE (not they) overthrew those cities”.

In the presence of these passages, would it not be wise humbly to acknowledge that we do not know and cannot comprehend the essential nature of God, and that any attempt to construct a system of Divinity that ignores this limitation is necessarily doomed to failure? “It is not God *Himself*, but the knowledge He has revealed to us concerning Himself which constitutes the material for theological investigation” (Dr. A. Kuyher, *Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology*).

No.2. Jesus Christ is Jehovah. **pp. 179 - 185**

We turn now to the great text already introduced in the first article of this series that speaks of the unity of God, namely Deut. vi. 4:

“The LORD our God is one LORD”
Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah

In the first place let us notice that it is not ‘God’ Who is said to be one, but the Lord, and before we go further with this great verse, let us remember that over and over again the God of Israel is called “The Lord our God” (Deut. i. 6) or “The Lord your God” (Deut. i. 10) or “The Lord God of your fathers” (Deut. i. 11). This title comes so many times that it is impossible to ignore it. Now in chapter iv., it is twice asserted that ‘there is none else’ (Deut. iv. 35, 39), so that the idea that God could tolerate “A God” beside

Himself, as some ignorantly and blasphemously imagine John i. 1 teaches, is proved to be unscriptural and untenable. Jehovah is God, and there is none beside Him. We are not yet ready to consider the proofs that Scripture contains, that the 'Jehovah' of the O.T. is the 'Jesus' of the N.T.; we have here to examine Deut. vi. 4. Here we have the title already referred to "The Lord our God" *Jehovah our Elohim* "is one LORD (Jehovah)". The word *echad* which is translated 'one' here means a 'compound unity'. Thus it is used in Ezek. xxxvii. 16, 17, where two sticks are taken by the prophet, the one bearing the name of Judah, the other the name of Joseph, and he was told to "Join them one to another into *one* stick; and they shall become *one* in thine hand". So, in Gen. ii. 24, the word is used of the oneness of man and woman in marriage 'they shall be *one* flesh'. Instances can be multiplied.

In Numb. xiii. 23, the spies cut down a branch which carried *one* cluster of grapes. We are therefore compelled by the weight of evidence and the choice of words, to believe in the 'unity' of God, but that assent of the heart in the presence of Revelation does not by any means indicate that the human mind can comprehend what is thus clearly revealed to faith. What the consequence of such a revelation should be, is that with true humility and wonder we should put our hand to our mouth, and worship rather than speculate, refraining from the presumption that argues "If God then He cannot be" for we have nothing in our experience to supply the necessary facts upon which to base an argument or to draw conclusions.

The next subject that awaits our reverent investigation is the one already suggested, namely, that the Jehovah of the O.T. is the Jesus of the N.T. Let us start with Deut. vi. 4. The God of Israel is the 'one Lord'. The Septuagint version translates the name Jehovah by the Greek word *kurios*, and this title is used over and over again of the Saviour in the N.T. It is not the Father Who is called "one Lord" in the N.T. it is CHRIST (Eph. iv. 5; I Cor. viii. 6). It may not be clear to every reader that the N.T. consistently uses the title *kurios* to translate the title Jehovah, so we pause to establish this fact. Rom. iv. 8 is a quotation from Psa. xxxii. 2; Heb. vii. 21 quotes Psa. cx. 4, and in both cases Paul follows the rendering of the Septuagint. Matt. iii. 3 quotes Isa. xl. 3 "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (*Jehovah* in the Hebrew of Isaiah *kurios* in the Greek of Matthew). In addition to this evidence three passages, when taken together are sufficient to prove that Jesus Christ is LORD, in this higher sense, they are Isa. xxxv., Rom. xiv. and Phil. ii. Isa. xlv. reiterates the truth that there 'is none else'. The idea of 'A God' or another who holds the title is intolerable.

"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me."

"I am the LORD, and there is none else."

"Surely God is in thee; and there is none else, there is no God."

"I am the LORD; and there is none else."

"There is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour: there is none beside Me.

Look unto ME, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 5, 6, 14, 18, 21, 22).

At the close of this tremendous chapter we read these words:

“I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That UNTO ME every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear” (Isa. xlv. 23).

Yet Paul *knowing* this chapter, and *believing* the reiterated emphasis that ‘there is none else’ ascribes this claim to universal homage to Christ, saying:

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the name which is above every name; That in the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that EVERY TONGUE should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 9-11).

Yet further, in Rom. xiv., he quotes this passage as follows:

“For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of CHRIST. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to GOD” (Rom. xiv. 10, 11).

What are we to say to this? Is Paul a muddled thinker? Did Paul write by inspiration of God? Did he forget the emphatic ‘none else’ of Isa. xlv.? or did he purposely use the quotation, once of GOD and once of Christ, *because he knew* that Jesus Christ, before His incarnation, was the LORD GOD of Israel?

“Jesus—Jehovah is the only Saviour” (Adolph Saphir).

Recently we had the painful duty of reading a pamphlet which did its utmost to belittle the claims of the Lord Jesus to supreme Deity. At the close, was a list of similar publications, one line read:

“JESUS CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT—Reduced to 25 cents.”! which aptly summarizes this dreadful teaching. There seems to be no neutral ground in this matter. Either Jesus Christ is ‘LORD’ or He must be reduced to ‘25 cents’, and His claims not only discounted but rejected as blasphemy. We either side with those who took up *stones to stone* Him, or with those who *fell at His feet* and *worshipped* Him. If Jesus Christ is ‘LORD’ as the N.T. makes abundantly clear, then He must be the ‘God’ of Israel, as Deut. vi. 4 declares.

“The LORD our God is one LORD.” For Israel had, and could have, ‘no other’.

Let us return to the witness of Isa. xliii. 10-12. It will be remembered that Israel are there spoken of as the Lord’s witnesses “that ye may know and believe that I am He”. The LXX reads here *ego eimi* “I am”, and these words are uttered in some solemn context in the N.T.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was (*genesthai* ‘came into being’), I AM (*ego eimi*)” (John viii. 58).

That this was a claim to be the great I AM of the O.T. is made clear by the immediate reaction of the Jews “Then took they up stones to cast at Him”. One of the sins that was punished by stoning was that of blasphemy, and this was the interpretation which the

Jews put upon the words, and which was not corrected either by the Lord or by the Evangelist.

We have already drawn attention to the fact that the normal rules of grammar were broken by Moses when he construed a singular verb with a plural noun in writing Gen. i. 1. Here again, in John viii., the subject is beyond the experience, the logic, or the language of man to express. Had the Saviour merely meant His hearers to understand that He was born before Abraham, a claim that of itself would be impossible to any ordinary man, he would have been obliged to use the past tense of the verb, saying “Before Abraham was, I WAS”, but to say, “Before Abraham was, I AM” does not make sense if uttered by an ordinary man. Here, the choice of words, *ego eimi* points to the Deity of the Speaker. Can we imagine John the Baptist using any other language than that recorded in John i. 30 “He was before me”.

Referring once again to Isa. xliii. 10 we continue the subject of the witness of Jehovah:

“Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after Me.” The immediate context of these words places ‘no strange god’ over against ‘no God formed’, and in Isa. xlv. 10 speaks of one ‘who hath formed a god, or molten a graven image’. Calvin says of the words “Before Me there was no God formed”—‘This contains a kind of irony, as if it had been said that there was no other god that had not been made and formed by mortals’. Had the passage stayed there, no difficulty would have presented itself but it continues ‘neither shall there be after Me’. If this is taken to mean, that after the revelation given by and through Isaiah, no one would ever make an idol any more, it is manifestly untrue. Again, it does not say “After” a revelation, etc., but “After Me”. The full sentence therefore is:

“Before Me there was no God formed, neither shall (there) be (a god formed) after Me.”

The Hebrew word *yatsar* ‘to form’ is found 4 times in Isa. xliii.:

“He that formed thee, O Israel.” “Every one that is called by My name I have formed him”, “This people have I formed for Myself; they shall shew forth My praise” (Isa. xliii. 1, 7, 21).

From Isa. xlv. 2 and 24 we discover that this word ‘form’ can refer to child birth, and before any of these lines were written Isaiah had uttered the great Messianic prophecy:

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father (lit. The Father of the Ages), the Prince of Peace” (Isa. ix. 6).

“A child BORN The MIGHTY GOD (*El Gibbor* Hebrew). Were such momentous words written before or since? There can be no possible doubt as to the intention of Isaiah here, or possibility of watering down this extraordinary revelation, for in the next chapter the same prophet who had revealed the glorious mystery of the *First Advent*, takes us to the *Second Advent*, and uses the same title:

“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them; but shall stay upon the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto THE MIGHTY GOD (*El Gibbor* Hebrew)” (Isa. x. 20, 21).

The first occurrences of the Hebrew word *yatsar* ‘form’ are in Gen. ii. 7, 8:

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground the man whom He had formed.”

This man was made in the image and after the likeness of his Creator, and in Gen. v. 1-3 that ‘image’ was passed on to Seth, who was begotten in his father, Adam’s likeness. We must consider this revelation further, but before we do let us consider a related theme. The three outstanding passages in the N.T. where creation is ascribed to Christ, are *the three passages* where we have the title “Word”, “Image” and “Express Image”, namely in John i., Col. i., and Heb. i. The one passage where Christ is seen as originally existing in the ‘Form’ of God, the application to Him of the words of Isa. xlv. 23, 24 have already been considered.

Before we attempt any further explanation, let us frankly face the fact that it must of necessity be beyond the ability of man to comprehend the essential nature of God. We speak of the “Being” of God, as “Absolute” and “Unconditioned”, but if we are honest, we shall agree that we might as well use the symbol X—the unknown quantity. God has condescended to limit Himself to the capacity of our understanding, to employ terms that are within our cognizance, and above all to tell us that all we can hope to know of Himself, during the present life, will be learned as we see His glory in *the face of Jesus Christ*. In all our acquisition of knowledge the mind is comparing, contrasting, labeling and drawing conclusions. Into what category must we place God? He is Spirit. What do we KNOW of the conditions and modes of a life that pertain to pure Spirit? Just nothing. An infant on its mother’s knee could more readily be expected to grasp the meaning of the fourth dimension than a man can be expected to understand the nature of Infinite Being. God has no COMPEER, therefore there is nothing with which we may COMPARE Him. We are halted at the start. He has no equal.

“To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?”

“To whom then will ye like Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One” (Isa. xl. 18, 15).

“To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be like?” (Isa. xlvi. 5).

“For who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?” (Psa. lxxxix. 6).

Whenever a comparison is instituted between things, there must follow:

- (1) Either absolute equality in every particular will be established. But this is a contradiction in terms, for wherever there is absolute equality in every particular, there is identity.
- (2) Or there will be manifested differences. Now one may differ from another because one is inferior or because one is superior.

Consequently, when the prophet places together as synonymous statements:

“To whom will ye liken Me?” and “Make Me equal?”,

it is evident that he does not admit the possibility of either comparison or equality. We may take it therefore as a settled truth, God can have no equal. The Hebrew word *sharah* ‘to be equal’ means to be even, to level, and so ‘to countervail’ or be equivalent (Esther vii. 4), and while it is used as a synonym by Isaiah for the word ‘compare’ which is the Hebrew *mashal*, yet comparison is not to be excluded altogether from the concept of equality as the translation given in Prov. iii. 15 and viii. 11 will show. It is evident that the only answer to the question of Isa. xlvi. 5 ‘To whom will ye make Me equal?’ is “With NONE”. God is and must be incomparable.

There is, however, the testimony of the N.T. to be considered before this great question can be considered as closed. The Greek word translated ‘equal’ is the word *isos* or its derivatives (apart from the word used in Gal. i. 14 which means an equal in age). The basic meaning of *isos* seems to be equivalence ‘the same as’, as for example the statement concerning the heavenly Jerusalem that ‘the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal’ (Rev. xxi. 16). In mathematics, we use the word ‘isosceles’ of a triangle, two of whose sides are equal, and this equality must be absolute, the slightest addition or subtraction being intolerable. When the day labourers complained ‘thou hast made them equal to us’, it was because every one received just exactly one penny, neither more nor less. When Peter confessed that God had given the Gentiles “*like* gift as (He did) unto us” (Acts xi. 17) he used the word *isos*. On two occasions the Saviour is said to be ‘equal’ with God. Once by His enemies, who denied the rightfulness of His claim, and took up stones, signifying their conviction that His claim was blasphemous (John v. 18), and once by the Apostle who in an inspired passage testified of the same Saviour that He ‘thought it not robbery to be equal with God’ (Phil. ii. 6).

We are consequently presented with a problem. The prophet Isaiah makes it clear that there is no one who can ever be ‘equal’ with God, the Apostle Paul as emphatically declares that equality with God was the Saviour’s normal condition. As there can be no discrepancy permitted where both utterances are inspired, there is but one conclusion possible. Isaiah and Paul speak of *the same glorious Person*, as we have already seen that Christ of the N.T. is the Jehovah of the O.T. Israel were reminded that at the giving of the law at Sinai, they heard a voice ‘but saw no similitude’ (Deut. iv. 12) and were enjoined to make no graven image or ‘the similitude of any figure’ (Deut. iv. 15, 16, 23, 25). Yet the same Moses is said to have beheld the similitude of the Lord:

“With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold” (Numb. xii. 28).

And again, the Psalmist looked forward in resurrection to beholding the face of the Lord, and awaking in His likeness (Psa. xvii. 15). The word ‘apparently’ (Numb xii. 8) indicates visibility. The Hebrews word *mareh* being a derivation of *raah* ‘to see’. It is, nevertheless, stated soberly and categorically, that “No man hath seen God *at any time*”

(John i. 18; I John iv. 12). In addition to this John records the Saviour's own declaration:

“Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape” (John v. 37).*

[* - These words can bear a different interpretation to which we may refer later.]

Yet every reader knows that passages can be found in the O.T. which declare that man has both ‘seen’ and ‘heard’ His voice. In Genesis, Jacob in some apprehension says of Esau his brother, “Afterward I will see his face” (Gen. xxxii. 20), and before the chapter is finished Jacob says “I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved” (Gen. xxxii. 30). When Moses and the elders of Israel went up into the mountain ‘they saw the God of Israel’ (Exod. xxiv. 40). So with respect to hearing. Moses ask:

“Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, AS THOU HAST HEARD, and live?” (Deut. iv. 33).

No man has seen God at any time; no man has heard His voice at any time, yet Israel both saw the God of Israel and heard His voice. Once again Christ is the glorious solution of the mystery. He is the IMAGE of the invisible God, He is the WORD, the God of Israel seen by Moses and the Elders, the God Who gave the law at Sinai, and the “Man” who would not reveal his name Who wrestled with Jacob at Peniel (the face of God). He is none other than the self same One Who in the fullness of time emptied Himself, took upon Him the form of a servant and stooped to the death of the cross. He is Emmanuel “God with us”. He is God “manifest in the flesh”, and we today, even as Israel of old in their degree, see the glory of God “in the face of Jesus Christ”. If Christ be not God, then we must admit that there are contradictions of a most serious nature in the Scriptures concerning God. No one has seen Him at any time, yet Israel saw the God of Israel. No one has heard His voice, yet Israel heard the voice of the Lord. If, however, the God of Israel be He Who was the Image of the invisible God and the same as the One Who in the fullness of time became man and lived on earth, Who could say “He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father” then, although still confessedly great is the Mystery of godliness (I Tim. iii. 16), this most glorious fact does reconcile all the statements of Scripture that otherwise must remain contradictions to the honest enquirer after truth.

“God was not always Lord until the work of creation was completed. In like manner he contended that the titles of Judge and Father imply the existence of sin and of a Son. As, therefore, there was a time when neither sin nor the Son existed, the titles Judge and Father were not applicable to God.” (The Bishop of Bristol on Tertullian in *The Ecclesiastical History* of the 2nd and 3rd centuries).

These admissions of Tertullian, if taken to their logical conclusion, would have led to the construction of a very different creed from that attributed to Athanasius.

One of the most conclusive pieces of evidence that ‘Jesus’ is ‘Jehovah’ is provided by the last chapter of the book of the Revelation. When John records the actual words of the Lord Himself he says “I JESUS have sent Mine angel” (Rev. xxii. 16) but when he records the statement of the angel he writes:

“THE LORD GOD OF THE HOLY PROPHETS sent His angel” (Rev. xxii. 6).

This is conclusive. Argument must cease and adoring worship takes its place. We bow in this august Presence and unreservedly take the words of the angel, of Thomas and of Paul on our lips and their attitude in our hearts and in our testimony, and in full consciousness of what we are saying and doing we say:

“MY LORD AND MY GOD.”

No.3. Jehovah and Kurios in O.T. and N.T. pp. 198 - 204

Jehovah is the Lord God of the fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Exod. iii. 15). Here the word “LORD” is the translation of the Hebrew *Jehovah* and of the Greek *kurios*. This passage in Exod. iii. goes on to declare that His Name is ‘unto the age’ (*l’olam*, Heb. *aionion* Gk.) and that this Name is His memorial unto all generations. Both ‘age’ and ‘generation’ refer to time, not to eternity. While the title ‘god’ *elohim*, can be used of other than the *Supreme*, “Jehovah” is never so used; it is a proper name denoting the personal God and *Him only*. The A.V. translates the same word (*Elohim*) “God” and “gods” in Gen. iii. 5. So in Gen. xxxi. 32 and xxxv. 2 & 4, the word is translated ‘gods’ when referring to the ‘images’ or ‘teraphim’ stolen by Rachel (Gen. xxxi. 19). The title *Elohim* is given to ‘Judges’ as can be seen in Exod. xxi. 6 and Psa. lxxxii. 1, 6, even to those who shall ‘die like men’. This is not the case with the name Jehovah; that is exclusively used of the Most High and never used of heathen ‘gods’, or of Hebrew ‘Judges’. The name *Elohim* ‘God’ speaks of *power*, *Jehovah* ‘Lord’ of *personality*. *Elohim* is a common noun and can be prefaced by such words as “The Living” or “The Most High”. The Scriptures of the O.T. use the word ‘My God’, ‘Your God’, ‘The God of Israel’, ‘The God of heaven’, but never does it use one of these qualifying words with Jehovah. The Hebrew says again and again ‘My God’ but never ‘My Jehovah’* for when a Hebrew says *my God* he means Jehovah. Over and over again the Hebrew speaks of the God of the fathers, but never does it speak of the Jehovah of Israel, or of the fathers, for He is their God and there is none else.

[* - This is true of the Received Text. Some alterations made by the Sopherim, if restored, would modify some of these comments.]

While *Elohim* is the God of CREATION, Jehovah is the God of REDEMPTION. *Elohim* is the God of PROVIDENCE, Jehovah is the God of PROMISE. Prophecy is introduced with the words ‘Thus saith the LORD’, never with ‘Thus saith GOD’. (See for fuller analysis the words of Dr. Duncan H. Weir.) The LXX translates the title *Jehovah* by the Greek word *Kurios*. It will be profitable to examine this term and its usage before we attempt to build any doctrine upon it. With the exception of *Rabboni*

(Mark x. 51) and *Megistanes* (Mark vi. 21), the word 'Lord' is the N.T. translation of two words, *despotes* and *kurios*. In this connection Cremer says:

"*Kurios* differs from *despotes*, as honourable superiority and authority does from mere force."

Trench in his *Synonyms of the New Testament* writes:

"The distinction which the later Greek grammarians sought to trace between these words was this; a man would be *despotes* as respects his slaves (*Plato*), and therefore *oikodespotes*, but *kurios* in respect to his wife and children, who in speaking either to him or of him, would give him this title of honour 'As Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord' (I Pet. iii. 6) The free Greeks refused this title of *despotes* to any but the gods (*Euripides*); and the sense of this distinction of theirs we have retained in our use of 'despot', 'despotic', 'despotism', as set over against our use of 'Lord', 'Lordship' and the like; the despot is one who exercises not dominion only, but domination."

We must not import into the title *Despotes* where it occurs in the N.T. any of the harshness that was felt by the Greeks, but the distinction between the two words is a useful thing to keep in mind. *Kurios*, "Lord" is derived from *kuros*, 'supreme power, authority, influence' and then in a secondary sense, 'validity, security, certainty'. The word *kuros* does not occur in the N.T. but the verb *kuroo* occurs twice—I Cor. ii. 8 and Gal. iii. 15, where it is translated 'confirmed'. *Kuroo* means 'to make valid, sure, firm'; then 'to settle, finish, accomplish and perform'. From this word, and retaining much, if not all, of these senses, the word for "Lord" is derived. Jehovah "Lord", *Kurios* speak of God as 'The Ratifier', the God of the covenant, the God of the promises. *Kurios* was used by the Greeks of men in the capacity of rulers, and of any one or any thing which had another in its power—e.g. 'the power of life and death' (*Plato*). They used it also of things which were decisive, or upon which all depended and then of times which were fixed or appointed or foreordained. Thus the ninth month was called 'The month of the Lord' because it was the appointed limit in conception and child-birth. Similarly the regular day fixed for the Athenian assembly was called *hemera kuria*—which reminds us of Rev. i. 10 "The day of the Lord". All these things the Saviour gathers up in His title of "Lord".

The Septuagint uses the title *Kurios* as a translation of several O.T. titles of God. We give below a specimen of some of the more outstanding Hebrew words:

Adon, referring to man:

"My lord being old." Sarah refers to Abraham (Gen. xviii. 12).

"My lords, turn in, I pray you." Lot, to the Angels (Gen. xix. 2).

"Thus shall you speak unto my lord Esau" (Gen. xxxii. 4).

"God hath made me lord of all Egypt" referring to Joseph (Gen. xlv. 9), etc., etc.

Adonai, referring to God:

"Lord, how long?" (Isa. vi. 11).

Jehovah Adonai. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon Me" (Isa. lxi. 1).

Eloah. "Let not God regard it from above" (Job iii. 4).

Elohim. "And God spake all these words" (Exod. xx. 1).

Jah. "Who is a strong Lord like unto Thee?" (Psa. lxxxix. 8).

Jehovah. “The Lord came down to see the city” (Gen. xi. 5).
(And many other references).

There are twelve occasions in the N.T. where *kurios* is translated ‘sir’, six of them occurring in contexts referring to Christ. The same word is used by the Philippian gaoler:

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” (Acts xvi. 30).

Kurios is translated ‘master’ twice and ‘owner’ once. It is translated ‘Lord’ 719 times in the N.T. of which 56 occurrences refer to men or beings lower than God, and 663 refer either to God or to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now inquire into the way in which the writers of the N.T. use the title *Kurios*, the Greek equivalent of *Jehovah*, and how it is applied. Matthew uses the word six times in his two opening chapters, in accordance with O.T. usage ‘The angel of the Lord’, ‘spoken of the Lord’, but with the seventh reference, he makes a most vital change in his application of this exclusive and most revered title.

“Prepare ye the way of the LORD” (Matt. iii. 3).

This is a quotation from Isa. xl. 3 where the word ‘LORD’ is *Jehovah*, and where, in chapter xlv. of the same prophet, it is explicitly declared ‘I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside Me’. Quite apart from the question of inspiration, both Matthew and his readers were fully acquainted with the prophecy of Isaiah; consequently when Matthew prefaced his quotation with the words “For this is He that was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, saying Prepare ye the way of the LORD” (Matt. iii. 3) he knew, and his readers knew, the tremendous claim that this quotation makes, that the One who was known as Jesus Christ in the N.T. was indeed He, Who before His Incarnation and birth was Jehovah, the God of Israel. If we supplement this testimony with that of the angel who appeared unto Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, the evidence is overwhelming.

“Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the LORD THEIR GOD. And he shall go before HIM (i.e. ‘The Lord their God’ Who is none other than Jesus Christ) in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke i. 16, 17).

John the Baptist, at his birth, was called “The prophet of the HIGHEST” who should go before the face of the LORD to prepare His ways (Luke i. 76). In the eyes of Stephen “The Most High” (same word in original as ‘The Highest’) is the Creator and God of Israel (Acts vii. 48) and Heb. vii. 1 says it was this God that Melchisedec served in the capacity of Priest. Leaving the Gospels for a time, we come to the Acts of the Apostles, and once again we are left in no doubt but that the title “Lord” is used in its O.T. meaning, the sacred name of the God of Israel. “That great and notable day of the Lord” (Acts ii. 20) is a direct quotation from the prophecy of Joel. “A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up” (Acts vii. 37) being a quotation from Deut. xviii. 15. When Peter answered the voice from heaven which said “Rise, Peter; kill and eat” by replying “Not so, Lord” (Acts x. 13, 14) he refers this command to ‘God’ saying “God hath shewed me”.

When Saul of Tarsus stricken down to the earth by the brightness of the vision on the road to Damascus, said ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ it must be remembered that he was at that moment a bigoted persecuting Pharisee and the last thing that he would tolerate would have been the ascription of the divine title to Jesus of Nazareth. He believed that Jesus was an impostor, and that it was for the glory of God that his disciples be stamped out as a menace. When a Jew like Saul of Tarsus looked up to heaven and said ‘Lord’, only the Most High God, the God of Israel and the God of the whole earth could have been intended by him in the use of the term. To his amazement he heard from heaven that ‘The Lord’ was “Jesus”, and his conversion was immediate and complete. Without a word of debate and without a moment’s hesitation he continued ‘trembling and astonished’ by saying “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?” (Acts ix. 3-6). In his epistles, the Apostle uses the same word ‘Lord’ for the God of the O.T. and for the Christ of the New. He quotes Psa. xxxii. 1, 2 in Rom. iv. 8; Isa. xxviii. 22 in Rom. ix. 28; Isa. i. 9 in Rom. ix. 29; Joel ii. 32 in Rom. x. 13; Isa. liii. 1 in Rom. x. 16; Isa. xl. 13 in Rom. xi. 34; Deut. xxxii. 35 in Rom. xii. 19; Isa. xlv. 23 in Rom. xiv. 11 and Psa. cxvii. 1 in Rom. xv. 11. Here, the references in this *one epistle* provide overwhelming evidence that the ‘Lord’ in the writings of Paul refers to Jehovah, the God of Israel. Not only so, the context of several of these passages actually use the title ‘God’ as an extension or alternative, thus removing the smallest doubt as to Paul’s meaning.

“God imputeth righteousness the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. iv. 6-8).

“Lord, who hath believed faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom. x. 16, 17).

“O the depth knowledge of God Who hath known the mind of the Lord?” (Rom. xi. 33, 34).

In Rom. xiv. we have a complete association of the names Christ, God and Lord:

“We shall all stand before the judgment seat of CHRIST, for it is written saith the LORD, every knee shall bow to ME, and every tongue shall confess to GOD” (Rom. xiv. 10-12).

This combination of titles is all the more remarkable, for the passage cited comes at the conclusion of a chapter in Isaiah which reiterates the solemn fact that the One who swears that every knee shall bow to Him, is the LORD, and GOD, and *none else*, there being ‘none beside’ Him. Yet, not only does Rom. xiv. 10-12 appear to use the titles ‘Christ’, ‘Lord’ and ‘God’ as synonymous, Phil. ii. is just as explicit:

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 10, 11).

“Jesus Christ is Lord.” Unto Him every knee shall bow, and this will be to the glory of God the Father, yet the one who wrote these words knew full well that beside ‘The Lord’ there was ‘none else’ (Isa. xlv. 6). How impossible all this reads when looked at through the spectacles of orthodoxy; how simple it becomes if we perceive that ‘Jehovah’ the God of Israel and the ‘Jesus’ of the N.T. are one and the same. In the O.T. Jehovah is ‘God manifest’, in the N.T. Jesus is “God manifest in the flesh”. The problem which these facts present is great, and in subsequent studies we hope to show that a true

understanding of the term 'Person' and a Scriptural use of the title 'The Father' enable the believer to accept all that is written, without denying the fact that God is one, and without lowering in the slightest degree the glorious fact that in Jesus Christ, we see the God of Israel manifest in the flesh.

In the book of the Revelation we read the glorious title of our Saviour, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords (Rev. xix. 16). In I Timothy this title is associated with His 'appearing' or 'manifestation' in the future. So we can now add to what has been said above, the following:

- (1) In the O.T. economy Jehovah is God manifest.
- (2) In the N.T. economy Jesus is God manifest in the flesh.
- (3) At the Second Coming He will be manifested as Lord of Lords, and King of Kings.
In I Tim. vi. 16 we meet with a group of extraordinary attributes which we must now consider.

"Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, Whom no man hath seen, nor can see" (I Tim. vi. 16).

The same epistle that declares that as "God manifest in the flesh" He was 'seen of angels' declares that in reality He dwells in light unapproachable. The word translated 'immortality' in I Tim. vi. 16 is the Greek word *athanasia*, a state into which death cannot enter. In I Tim. i. 17 "The King eternal, invisible, immortal" the word translated immortal is *aphthartos* which indicates a state into which corruption cannot enter. Both of these words are linked with resurrection. This we will prove in a moment, but before so doing we ask a question. In what way, and under what necessity does the Scripture need to tell us that GOD is either immortal or incorruptible? Surely the very essence of Godhead is that He ever lives, that the idea of death or corruption ever invading the realm of the Infinite God is unthinkable. Further, if both these words *athanasia* and *aphthartos* imply death and resurrection, in what way can *resurrection* be used of the Living God? Before attempting to answer these questions let us satisfy ourselves that death and resurrection are always in view where these terms appear.

Athanasia. "This mortal must put on *immortality*."
"Shall have put on *immortality*" (I Cor. xv. 53, 54).
"Who only hath *immortality*" (I Tim. vi. 16).

Here are the only references to this term on the N.T. Can anyone explain why we should be assured that the Infinite God hath 'immortality' when the usage of the word plainly points to (1) a body, (2) a death and (3) a resurrection? Are we not reading in I Tim. i. 17, just as surely as we are reading in I Tim. vi. 16, a revelation concerning Him Who in the days of His flesh bore the name "Jesus"? *He* is "The King eternal, immortal, invisible, God only wise (or with the critical texts, 'The Only God' as in the RV.)". These three references exhaust the occurrences of *athanasia*. When we turn to the next word, we find it in two forms *aphtharsia* and *aphthartos*. *Aphtharsia* is the 'immortality' that men may seek (Rom. ii. 7), the 'incorruption' associated with the resurrection body (I Cor. xv. 42, 50, 53, 54) and the 'immortality' brought to light by the Gospel (II Tim. i. 10).

Aphthartos is used of God, the incorruptible crown, the resurrection body, the inheritance and the Word of God (Rom. i. 23; I Cor. ix.25; xv. 52; I Pet. i. 4, 23) and of the King eternal, immortal of I Tim. i. 17. The remaining references use the word in a figurative sense, 'sincerity' and 'corruptible' (Eph. vi. 24; Titus ii. 7 and I Pet. iii. 4). If the Lord Jesus Christ definitely became a man of flesh and blood in order that He might die, the necessary conclusion from this revealed fact must be that before the Incarnation, the idea of death and of resurrection is meaningless and never used. We are, therefore, forced to see in I Tim. i. and vi. two references to Him, Who in chapter iii. is revealed as 'God manifest in the flesh'. As spoken of in I Tim. i. 17 He is named as 'the *only* God' (R.V.), in I Tim. vi. 15 as 'the *only* potentate' and in I Tim. vi. 16 as the one who '*only* hath immortality'. In His own times, and related to the future 'appearing', the Saviour will reveal Who it is that bears the title 'only Potentate' and 'the only God', but before 'that day' and during this life we are purposely permitted to see such things only as 'through a glass darkly'. In like manner, we read that God is 'invisible'. But again this is relative to man. Before man was created, before the Heavens and the Earth had a beginning God *was*; but as there did not exist any beings who depended upon light and sight to perceive, the idea of God's invisibility did not arise. "No man (*oudeis* no one, wider in scope than, no man) hath seen God at any time", and so He is spoken of as being 'invisible'. This, like immortality, is a relative term. The God Who is immortal, is the One who for our sakes became man, suffered death and then rose again to die no more. The God Who is invisible is likewise the same glorious Person. If Christ is the One who is to 'appear' (I Tim. vi. 14) and He surely will: if Christ is the One Who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords (I Tim. vi. 15) and He surely is; then it is Christ Who dwells in light which no man can approach unto, these words referring to that sphere which pertains to the Godhead exclusively, Whom no man hath seen, *nor can see*. Only as 'God manifest in the flesh' could He be 'seen' (I Tim. iii. 16) or 'handled' (I John i. 1, 2). It is gloriously possible for the redeemed to behold or see the glory of the Saviour *which has been given Him* in connection with His Mediatorial work (John xvii. 24) but it is another matter when we think of the glory that He had before the Incarnation and before the work of Redemption (John xvii. 5), in which there is no Scriptural warrant to suggest that any can share. The glory which He had given to Him, He has given to us in order that we all may be one (John xvii. 22) but the glory that was His before the world was is given to no-one. The baffling statements put forward in creed and argument mostly arise out of taking for granted that the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost is *essential*, whereas the Scripture teaches that the Trinity of Persons is *economical* or dispensational*. We mention these features here without comment. They will come up for examination in later studies.

[* - The Greek word *oikonomos* occurs frequently in the debates on the Trinity in the days of Athanasius.]

No.4. The Only True God. pp. 219 - 222

As we read the Scriptures we discover that: (1) *Elohim* is God. (2) *El* is God. (3) *Jehovah* is God. (4) *Adon* is God. (5) *Adonai* is God. (6) *Jah* is God. (7) *El Shaddai* is God. (8) The Father is God. (9) The Son is God.

Either these separate names and titles indicate separate Gods, which the Scriptures categorically forbid, or they are separate names and titles of the one God, which Scripture categorically affirms to be the truth. We have, in this series, demonstrated that the N.T. reveals that the Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah, the “One Lord” of the O.T. We must now pursue our study a stage further to a stage that is represented in Scripture as the ultimate and the final revelation of the nature of the Godhead. These are brave sounding words and they are written with some trepidation. We stand on holy ground; we cannot yet behold the glory of the Lord apart from the medium of a glass in which, confessedly, we can only hope to see ‘darkly’; but at the same time, we are sure that what has been written has been written for our learning, and so with expectant yet humbled hearts, we once again ‘open the Book’.

“And this is life eternal, that (*hina* ‘in order that’) they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent” (John xvii. 3).

We rejoice to know that God is ‘true’, for it is revealed that ‘He cannot lie’. God is true, in contrast with all the false gods of the heathen, but that lesson we are learning or have already learned in this life. The language of John xvii. 3 implies something more than this, and something of the import of the word ‘true’ emerges from a consideration of the way John himself uses that term. Christ is set forth as ‘true’ light (John i. 9), not that the light of the sun, or the Scriptures, or of John the Baptist was ‘false’, but rather that all other lights are but ‘figures of the True’ the real, the Anti-typical. ‘True worshippers’ in John iv. 23 are not placed in contrast with idolators, but with that worship which had Jerusalem as its centre; it was ‘in spirit and in truth’ in contrast with the letter and with type and shadow. Christ Himself recognized the reality of the manna which fed the people during their wilderness wanderings, but nevertheless He declared ‘I am the true bread’ (John vi. 32) of which the manna was a very precious type. The epistle to the Hebrews contains similar usage; there we read of ‘the true tabernacle’ and some things which were ‘the figures of the true’ (Heb. viii. 2; ix. 24).

“The law (with its types and shadows) was given by Moses, but grace and truth (i.e. true antitypical grace) came by Jesus Christ” (John i. 17).

This revealing statement is immediately followed by the words already quoted “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).

It is not God *Himself*, but the *knowledge* He has revealed to us concerning Himself which constitutes the material for theological investigation” (Dr. A. Kuyher).

How true these words are and what a waste of argument and of time would have been saved if students but realized the import of such a quotation. We speak of the names and titles of God, but do we really mean that the infinite God actually bears the name Elohim, Jehovah, El Shaddai and the like? Are they not concessions to our finite minds and modes of thought, ‘not God Himself, but the knowledge He has revealed to us’? Before the creation of the world *was*, did He then and for all eternity bear the Hebrew names and titles? Are they not all ‘figures of the true’ just as surely as the Ark, the Mercy Seat, the Cherubim were types and shadows of invisible realities? These titles of God are full of meaning; they direct the mind into certain channels, but the name *Elohim*, when taken to its final analysis and seen with all its connotations is still ‘a figure of the true’ as surely as ‘the eyes’, ‘the nostrils’ and ‘the hands’ of God are figures of unseen realities.

One of the glorious opportunities presented by eternal life will be the privilege of getting to know ‘the only true God’, God divested of type, shadow and figure, a knowledge accompanied with an expanding appreciation of ‘Jesus Christ Whom He had sent’, for the knowledge of ‘The Son’ is even more mysterious and more complex than the knowledge of the Father (Matt. xi. 27). We do not yet know Christ ‘as He is’; that awaits the future day when we ‘shall see Him as He is’ and be like Him (I John iii. 2), and not till we attain unto eternal life shall we either see Him or be like Him. Until that day dawns, types and shadows must perforce form a great part of the stuff of knowledge. At His *appearing*, He will *show* Who is that blessed and only Potentate, King of kings and Lord of lords. If John xvii. 3 points a way to the Father as “the only true God”, I John v. 20 written by the same apostle points to the Son. “We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” *Houstos*, the demonstrative pronoun ‘this’, may refer to the noun which is nearest, but on the other hand, it may refer to one that is more remote, and commentators are divided concerning the question does ‘This is the true God’ refer to “God” or to “His Son Jesus Christ”? Both the A.V. and the R.V. add the word ‘even’, indicating that they lean to the thought that when John here speaks of ‘Him that is true’ He refers to the Son of God. Athanasius is reported to have called I John v. 20 ‘a written demonstration’, saying that as Christ said of the Father, John xvii. 3 ‘This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God’, so John said of the Son ‘This is the true God and eternal life’, and that Arius with whom he was disputing acquiesced, and confessed the Son of God to be the true God. To support this, Glassius appeals to Athanasius (Oper. tom. 3, p.705). John in this epistle does not simply say “This is the true God” but adds “and eternal life”. We know of no Scripture that teaches that ‘the Father’ is eternal life or the personification of eternal life, but this same epistle leaves us in no doubt that John believed this was true of the Son of God.

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us)” (I John i. 1, 2).

There can be but one only True God; of this the Scripture is emphatic. At the same time the Father, and the One Whom He sent, are both spoken of as being "The True God". "This" in I John v. 20 is the same word that is translated 'The same' in John i. 2 and should be so translated here. Both the Father and Son therefore are 'The True God', yet as the explicit teaching of Scripture is that there is One God, Who is Himself the One Lord, we perceive that when the present period of our service has passed, when we 'know even as we are known', when type and shadow give place to reality, when we begin to learn the lesson indicated in John xvii. 3 then, if not now, we may appreciate the depth and wealth of teaching that resides in the much maligned and misunderstood statement of one of the early teachers of Christian doctrine, namely that the titles of God are *economical* (dispensational), assumed for the purposes of Creation, Revelation and Redemption, that they are 'figures of the true' The Goal of the Ages is not expressed in the words "That *Christ* may be all in all", that is the blessed anticipatory truth of the present dispensation of the Mystery (Col. iii. 11) or that 'the *Father*' may be all in all, that is the climax clause of the Unity of the Spirit (Eph. iv. 6); but that GOD may be all in all, that is the last word on the subject in Scripture.

In these articles we have been but pointing onward, anticipating by the 'understanding' that the Son of God gives, just a little of the full orb'd truth that awaits us 'in that day'. Meanwhile we still see by means of a mirror enigmatically; types, figures, symbols, shadows are uppermost in our language and in our thinking. Let us at least recognize these figures, accept them as such, but remember so to frame our arguments and construct our theology that we do not mistake shadow for substance.

**No.5. The Doctrine of the Trinity,
and the use of the word "Person".
pp. 239 - 243**

The orthodoxy of Dr. Chalmers is not a matter of dispute, and therefore his statements concerning the doctrine of the Trinity in his lectures on Divinity may be a helpful introduction to the subject. He declared that it was his intention to depart from the usual order that is, that most theological courses 'begin at the beginning' and tackle the most abstruse and difficult of all subjects, the essential nature of God. He drew attention to the two methods employed in any research, the analytical processes and the synthetic. By the synthetic you begin, as in geometry, with the elementary principles, and out of these you compound the ultimate doctrines or conclusions. By the analytic, you begin with the objects or the phenomena which first solicit your regard, and these by comparison and abstraction you are enabled to resolve into principles. "This latter mode", Dr. Chalmers continues, "is surely the fitter for a science beset on either side with mysteries unfathomable Now we cannot but think it a violation of this principle, that so early a place should be given to the doctrine of the Trinity in the common expositions of theology after having by a transcendental flight assumed our station at the top of

the ladder, to move through the series of its descending steps instead of climbing upward from the bottom of it We should feel our way upward we greatly fear that a wrong commencement and a wrong direction may have infected with a certain presumptuous and *a priori* spirit the whole of our theology.”

“The most zealous Trinitarian affirms of the triune God that He is not the Father, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; neither is He the Son, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; Neither is He the Holy Ghost, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son and Holy Ghost. This is a very general statement, we allow, nor do we think that Scripture warrants a more special description of the Trinity; and most surely if the Scriptures do not, reason ought not To distinguish, then, between what is Scripturally plain and what is scholastically or scientifically obscure in this question, let it first be considered, that there is nothing in the individual propositions of the Father being God, of Christ being God, of the Holy Spirit being God which is not abundantly plain viewed as separate propositions, there is nothing incompatible in the sayings of Scripture.”

“But there is another proposition equally distinct, and in itself intelligible—it is, that God is one. Viewed apart from all other sayings, there is nought obscure surely in this particular saying What, then, is that which is commonly termed mysterious in the doctrine of the Trinity? the whole mystery is raised by our bringing them together, and attempting their reconciliation. But the Scripture does not itself offer, neither does it ask us to reconcile them. It delivers certain separate propositions, and thus it leaves them, to each of which, it must be observed, is in and of itself, perfectly level to our understanding We could have tolerated that Socinians and Arians had quarreled with the phraseology of Athanasius, had it but thrown them back on the simplicities of the Scripture.”

“I should feel inclined to describe (the multiplicity of opinions) by negatives rather than by affirmatives, denying Sabellianism on the one hand on the Scriptural evidence of the distinction between Father, Son and Holy Ghost; denying Tritheism on the other, on the Scriptural evidence of there being only one God, professing the utmost value for the separate propositions, and on their being formed into a compendious proposition, confessing my utter ignorance of the ligament which binds them together into one consistent and harmonious whole.”

“We can make out no more of the Trinity than the separate and Scriptural propositions will let us” (Dr. Chalmers, *Institute of Theology*).

A word of vital importance, but one much misunderstood in relation to the nature of God is the word “Person”. It will be found that even when the Athanasian Creed is honestly accepted, and the warning most solemnly repeated that “there are not three Gods: but one God”, a great number who subscribe to the doctrine of the Trinity, subconsciously conceive of three separate ‘Gods’ or as the term is they are at heart Tritheists. The XXXIX Articles of the book of Common Prayer opens thus:

“There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts or passions: of infinite power, wisdom and goodness, the Maker and Preserver of all things visible and invisible. And in the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power and eternity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.”

The Athanasian Creed goes to great lengths to insist that there are not three eternal, not three incomprehensibles, not three uncreated, not three almighties, not three Gods, not three Lords. Yet with the statement before the mind that at the same time there are three Persons in the Godhead, this reiteration in the creed sounds much like a consciousness that, left to itself, the creed does and will in fact breed the concept that there are three Gods, however the idea be denied. An examination of the defence of the creed through the centuries only deepens the problem, and the earnest inquirer generally finds that he is taken away from the realm of Revealed Truth to the intricacies of metaphysics, leading him either to throw aside his intelligence and 'believe' upon the authority of the Church and tradition, or to take the opposite step, deny the Deity of Christ, become a Unitarian as a protest, and ultimately a deist or an agnostic.

We believe a true understanding of the word 'person' would prevent the idea of 'three gods' forcing itself upon the mind in spite of all the protests of the creed itself, and would recognize the gracious condescension of the 'one Lord' on behalf of us men and for our salvation. To the consideration of this most important term let us address ourselves.

Modern usage equates 'person' with 'individual' but how such a 'person' can at the same time be 'without body, parts or passions' passes our comprehension. Turning first of all to the usage of the word 'person' in the A.V. we discover that it translates the Hebrew word *adam* (Jonah iv. 11); *ish* man, a male (II Kings x. 7); *enosh* mortal (Judges ix. 4); *methim* men (Psa. xxvi. 4); *nephesh* soul (Gen. xiv. 21); *nephesh adam* soul of man (Numb. xxxi. 35). In no conceivable way can any of these terms be used of God. The word *baal* lord (Prov. xxiv. 8) is the only term that approaches the subject. The only other word employed in the Hebrew, that is translated person, is *panim* 'face', and this, we shall discover, approaches nearer to the intention of the word 'Person' in the Creed than any other word used in the O.T. Eighteen of the 20 occurrences of *panim* which are translated 'person' employ it in the phrase 'regard' or 'accept persons', and it is evident that the term here does not think so much of an *individual*, but as of *estate*, whether such be 'high' or 'low', rich' or 'poor'.

In the N.T the Greek *prosopon* 'face' is translated 'person' six times, four of which read "regard" or "accept" a man's person; one speaks of forgiving 'in the persons of Christ' (II Cor. ii. 10). Other places where 'respect of persons' are found, the Greek words are *prosopoleto tes lepsia*, all being derived from *prosopon* 'face'. We discover from Liddle and Scott that *prosopeion* means 'a mask' and hence 'a dramatic part, character, and so the Latin *persona*'. A mask is not an individual, neither is a character or dramatic part in a play a 'person' in the present acceptation of the term. The shorter *Oxford Dictionary* is not a theological work and has no axe to grind, but gives this definition of the word "person":

"PERSON. Latin *persona*, a mask used by a player, a character acted; in later use, a human being, connected by some with the Latin *personare* 'to sound through'. A part played in a drama, or in life; hence a function, office, capacity; guise, semblance; character in a play or story."

If we therefore speak the Queen's English, we shall mean by 'Three Persons in the Godhead' offices, functions, guises and characters assumed in grace and love by the One True, Infinite and Invisible God for the purpose of Creation, Redemption and the ultimate consummation of the ages, 'that God may be all in all'. Lloyd's *Encyclopaedic Dictionary* puts the definition 'an individual' seventh in the list, the earlier definitions agreeing with those of the *Oxford Dictionary*. Here is the first definition:

- (1) That part in life which one plays.

"No man can put on a *person* and act a part; but his evil manners will peep through the corners of his white robe" (Jeremy Taylor).

Archbishop Trench points out that when this old sense of the word is remembered, greatly increased force is given to the statement that God is no respecter of 'persons'. The signification is that God cares not *what part* in life a person plays, in other words what office he fills, but how he plays it. At the time this paper was being written, a friend was preparing to undergo an operation. The malady from which he suffered had influenced his temper and outlook, and we found ourselves saying, without any need of explanation 'When the operation is over, he may be a new person'. Archbishop Whately in his book *The Elements of Logic* has an appendix illustrating certain terms which are peculiarly liable to be used ambiguously. One of these terms is the word 'person'.

"PERSON, in its ordinary use at present, invariably implies a numerically distinct substance. Each man is one person, and can be but one. It has, also, a peculiar theological sense in which we speak of 'three Persons' of the blessed Trinity. It was used thus probably by our Divines as a literal, or perhaps etymological rendering of the Latin word 'persona'."

The Archbishop quotes from Dr. Wallis, a mathematician and logician, saying 'That which makes these expressions (viz. respecting the Trinity) seem harsh to some of these men, is because they have used themselves to fancy that notion only of the word person, according to which three men are accounted three persons, and these three persons to three men'" "The word person (*persona*) is originally a Latin word, and does not properly signify a *man*: (so that *another person* must needs imply *another man*); for them the word *homo* would have served." "Thus the same man may at once sustain the person of a *king* and a *father*, if he be invested with *regal* and *paternal* authority. Now because the King and the Father are for the most part not only different persons and different men also, hence it comes to pass that another person is sometimes supposed to imply another man; but not always, nor is that the proper sense of the word. It is Englished in our dictionary by the *state, quality* or *condition whereby one man differs from another*; and so, as the condition alters, the person alters, though the man be the same." Nearly all who contend for the doctrine of the Trinity maintain that God is *essentially* and from all *eternity* Three Persons, but if we use the word person in its original meaning, it will indicate character, office, function, *temporarily assumed* in time and can be spoken of as beginning, or being limited by time or space, of being subject, of suffering, dying, without intruding such conceptions into the realm of the Eternal, the Absolute or the Unconditional. Our problems begin when we transfer the idea of 'persons' from the realm of the manifest and the ages, to the realm of the timeless, the

essential and the eternal. Reverting to the definitions given in Lloyds dictionary, we read:

- (2) A human being *represented* in fiction or on the stage, a character.
- (3) External appearance, bodily form or appearance, as in Hamlet—“If it assume my noble father’s *person*”.
- (4) Human frame, body; as ‘cleanly in person’.
- (5) A human being; a being possessed of personality; a man, a human creature.
- (6) A human being, as distinguished from an animal, or inanimate object.
- (7) An individual; one, a man.
- (8) A term applied to each of the beings in the Godhead.
- (9) The parson or rector of a parish.

We have so lost the early meaning of the word ‘person’ that some of the arguments of the opening centuries of Christian discussion sound strange in our ears. We quote from *The Incarnation of the Eternal Word* by Rev. Marcus Dods without necessarily endorsing the writer’s own attitude or argument:

“I may give an illustration of the nicety with which expressions were then sifted, out of *Facundus Hermianensis* In Book 1 chapter iii of the work which he addressed to the Emperor Justinian, he proves that a PERSON of the Trinity suffered for us. There were two ways of expressing this—*unas de Trinitate passus est*, one of the Trinity suffered, and *una de Trinitate persona passa est*, one PERSON of the Trinity suffered. At present a man would not readily discover any difference between these two modes of expression, nor would easily detect a nearer approach to heresy in the one than in the other. Yet the difference was clearly understood by Justinian; for while nobody felt any scruples about the latter expression (i.e. ‘one of the PERSONS of the Trinity suffered’) some Catholics hesitated to make use of the former (i.e. ‘one of the Trinity suffered’) lest they should be supposed to ascribe suffering, not to a DIVINE PERSON, but to the DIVINITY A Nestorian would not say that one of the Trinity suffered, but would say readily enough, that a person of the Trinity suffered, meaning that the Man Jesus Christ Who suffered, bore the person of the Word, much in the same way as Paul bore it when he said ‘If I forgave anything, to whom I forgave for your sakes, I forgave it in *the person of Christ*’.”

We have quoted this extract simply to show that the word ‘person’ had the sense which we have endeavoured to restore in this article. We believe the *application* of this sense in the above extract is *radically wrong*.

Returning to the list of definitions given by Lloyd, we see that the emphasis is upon the *assumed* character and not *essential* being, except when the dictionary gives the usual theological usage and speaks of ‘three beings’ in the Godhead which must inevitably lead at last to the conception of ‘three gods’ however the fatal step is circumscribed. We must continue our examination of these vital themes in the next article of this series.