

THE
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MINISTRY OF THE WORD OF GOD.

EXPOSITIONAL AND PRACTICAL PAPERS, BIBLE STUDIES, SCRIPTURAL NOTES, AND
ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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THE BELIEVER'S MAGAZINE.

WALKING WITH GOD.

A WORD FOR THE OPENING YEAR.

THE highest privilege of the believer while here on earth is, to walk with God. To pass along the daily path of pilgrim life in companionship with the High and Holy One, is heaven begun below. To walk with God is to walk safely. No lion shall be there. No enemy can triumph over, no weapon can be formed to prosper against the saint who walks in the company of the Mighty God. He is his Refuge and his Shield. Others stronger and wiser than he may fall around him; great and gifted men may be swept off their feet by the cunning and craft of the great arch-enemy, but the simple saint, whose daily habit is to "walk humbly" with his God (Micah xi. 8), can never be moved. He is under the shadow of the Almighty, and no "arrow that flieth by day," nor "pestilence that walketh in darkness" (Psa. xci. 6) can reach him there. To abide with God, to keep on terms of intimacy with the Lord of heaven and earth, is to be safe and satisfied. And as it is the believer's highest privilege, so it ought to be his loftiest aim to walk with God. Whatever would deprive him of the company of his God, ought to be regarded and treated as a foe. However highly esteemed among men, however indulged by those who bear the Christian name, if it costs the loss of present fellowship with God, of the conscious enjoy-

ment of the "Father's smile beaming upon His child," it must be eschewed and forsaken as sin. To walk with God, is to walk in the light, where sin is seen and judged in its true character, according to God's standard. To walk with God, is to walk in separation from the world, for the world is the enemy of God (James iv. 4). To walk with God, is to walk in obedience to His will as made known in His Word, for it is only to obedient ones He manifests Himself, and with such He makes His abode (John xiv. 23). All this may involve a narrow path, too narrow for most who profess the Christian name in an easygoing and prudential day, when to be charitable, to please and be accounted pleasant, is accounted the ideal of Christian virtues. But the saint who walks with God will ever seek first and chief to do the thing that pleases Him, to render to God the things that are God's, to be unto God a sweet savour of Christ. Effects and results will not be so much his study. How the Church or the world will be affected or pleased, will not so much come into his reckoning, nor will he shrink from the path of obedience because of rejection, shame, and loss following in his steps. For he has learned in the school of God, that as it was with the Master, the Exemplar, who first trod that path, so must it be with His disciple. Thus may the journey of 1907 begin, and thus, through grace, may it continue, until pilgrim days are done, and the homeland reached.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE:

Its Types and Spiritual Teachings.

A SERIES OF LECTURES GIVEN IN GLASGOW.

BY THE EDITOR.

THIRTY years ago, it was my privilege to give a course of lectures on the types and teachings of "The Tabernacle in the Wilderness" in this city. Throughout the intervening years, it has been pleasing to observe an ever-growing interest among the people of God in this great and precious subject. Under the guidance of the Spirit, whose office it is to take of the things of Christ and unveil them to the inquiring soul, these Divine foreshadowings of His Person and work have yielded much spiritual enrichment to those who have given themselves prayerfully to their study, and the great fundamental truths of our most holy faith as enfolded in these types, have been grasped with a firmer faith and held with a deeper devotion than ever before. Whatever leads to occupation with Christ, to a reverent examination of the Scriptures concerning His personal and Divine glory, His true and proper Manhood, the mystery of His Incarnation, His perfect obedience, His atoning death, His glorious resurrection and present place and honour in His session at the right hand of God, must bring untold blessing to the soul. Abstract truths and inductive theories may indeed be culled from the Bible and held with a grasp as cold as steel, without drawing the heart toward the Person of Christ, but when the written Word is read and studied, with the earnest desire to see the Living Word, whose glories it displays, the affections will be engaged

as surely as the mind is instructed. The "light and truth" will lead to "the holy hill," to "the altar of worship," and to God Himself, the "exceeding joy" and supreme object and portion of the soul (Psa. xliii. 3). May thus it be with us in all our inquirings. If the quest of the soul be "We would see Jesus?" (John xii. 21), it will never be disappointed, but first beholding Him as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29)—which must ever be the sinner's first view of Jesus—it will go on to say "We see Jesus crowned with glory and honour" (Heb. ii. 9), in His varied glories as Mediator, High Priest, Lord and Head, learning what is due to Him as filling these great offices, as they are set forth in the Word, while joyfully awaiting the day when no longer in part, through a glass darkly, but face to face, in closest intimacy, and "as He is," we shall see Him, the Eternal Lover and Lord, in all His beauty.

The types of the Temple, like those of the Tabernacle, are full of the same glorious Person and perfect work of Christ, although I do not think they have had the same measure of attention given to them generally among the people of God. They have their characteristic differences as well as their similarities. The Tabernacle was Jehovah's wilderness dwelling-place amongst a pilgrim people. It was but a moving tent passing onward to the rest beyond. Its golden vessels and beautiful curtains, were in a sphere for a season to which they did not belong, and the worshipping priest, clothed in his robes of glory and beauty, stood on the

bare sands of the desert. "The Tabernacle," in its various parts, speaks to us of Him who was a Stranger here, the Son of God, the Lord from heaven, here amid the sins and sorrows of our world, yet always without blemish and without spot, the Holy One of God, in whom the glory of God had its abiding form; the Eternal Word who "became flesh and tabernacled among us" (John i. 14, R.V.). And seeing Christ in the types of the Tabernacle, we see the Church as God's habitation and sanctuary (Eph. ii. 22), in the world, yet not of the world, here for a season, His lightbearer (Rev. i. 20), and testimony (1 Tim. iii. 15) among the sons of men, but soon to be removed—like the vessel in Peter's vision, let down from heaven and received back into the heavens again (Acts x. 11-16)—to its own land.

As the Tabernacle is connected with the wilderness and the pilgrimage of God's people, so the Temple is connected with the land and the kingdom. It stood on Moriah, in the royal city. It was built by Solomon, the king of peace, a foreshadowing type of Christ in resurrection power and glory, now for a season hid from the world, but seen by faith exalted on the right hand of power, and owned there by His people here, as having all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. xxviii. 18). Head of His body, the Church, set as Son over the House of God (Heb. iii. 6), earth's rejected but heaven's accepted King, who shall yet appear as David's Son, the true Solomon, to rule in peace and usher in that kingdom of which Solomon's reign was the shadow. No longer a curtained moving tent set on the desert sand, but

a house of great magnificence and splendour, built of stone and cedar, overlaid with silver and gold, and sparkling with precious stones, founded on the solid rock, with floor of gold, befitted that glorious time, which in its fulness points onward to the first resurrection, followed by heavenly glory for the saints of the heavenly calling, with peace and rule according to God for the weary earth.

In order that we may better see the connection between the Tabernacle and the Temple, with the characteristics of each, it will be needful to trace the history a little. The Tabernacle accompanied the pilgrim people throughout the forty years of their wilderness journey. It crossed the Jordan, and entered the land of promise. When, under the victorious sword of Joshua, that land had been subdued and possessed, the whole congregation assembled and set up the Tabernacle in Shiloh (Josh. xviii. 1). This was the place which Jehovah chose for His habitation as He had promised (Deut. xii. 5, 11), and there He set His Name at the first (Jer. vii. 12). To this chosen place the worshipper brought His offerings (Deut. xii. 11, 14). There the feasts of Jehovah were kept at their appointed seasons (Deut. xvi. 2, 16), from thence the land was divided by lot (Josh. xviii. 10), the Levites had their cities appointed to them (Josh. xx. 1, 2), and there the congregation could be assembled for worship or for war (Josh. xxii. 12). It was the place which Jehovah had chosen for His Name, and there in a tent and in a tabernacle He abode as King (Num. xxiii. 21; 1 Sam. viii. 7) in

the midst of His redeemed and separated people. But this continued only for a brief period, during the days of Joshua and the elders that outlived him, who had seen the great works of the Lord (Judges ii. 7). Instead of rooting out the idolatrous nations of Canaan and destroying their altars, as the Lord had commanded them, in order that their testimony to the true God might be uncorrupted and their separation as a chosen and special people with Him maintained (Deut. vii. 1-6), they allowed the Canaanites to dwell among them, to become tributaries (Jud. i. 21, 23), and finally made leagues and intermarried with the heathen, who led them into idolatry (Jud. ii. 19). Thus it continued throughout the chequered period of the Judges, the tabernacle in Shiloh being only incidently mentioned in contrast to the abounding idolatry (Judges xviii. 3), that covered the land evidently without rebuke, the people taking up unblushingly "the tabernacle of Moloch" (Acts vii. 43), and turning their backs on the tabernacle of the Lord in Shiloh. The Divine answer to this was judgment. "So He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among them" (Psa. lxxviii. 60, 61). The history here has its lessons and warnings for the saints of all ages. To maintain the place of separation unto God, of acknowledgment of His supreme authority, and of hearty obedience to His Word, in whole and in detail, is the place of honour and of blessing. To render it void has always been the enemy's design. This brings judgment.

(To be continued.)

CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD.

I.—LETTERS TO A YOUNG BELIEVER.

WRITTEN IN 1807.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

AS you were once my pupil, and endeared to me by other considerations, and as you are setting out in life, and going into a place of great danger in regard to moral conduct, I have a deep concern for your spiritual welfare, and would seek in love to send you a word of counsel, as one who has known the Lord for half a century, and proved His all-sufficient grace throughout a long life of activity in the world. such as you are now going forth to share. May the God of all grace be your Portion, and His Word your counsellor.

The command delivered by the inspired Apostle in Romans xii. 2, to believers, "Be not conformed to this world," or age, is very emphatic, important, and extensive. It contains a strong prohibition to Christians of every age, and of all ranks, not to be conformed to, or moulded after the fashion of the age (*aion*) in which they live. By the world, is to be understood the men of the world, in their spirit, their maxims, and their customs. When men are converted to God, they are not to become anchorites or hermits. They are not told to retire into the wilderness, or into monasteries, nunneries, and cloisters; but to mingle with mankind, to enter into various relations, and act their various parts in the world. Saints are the lights of the world, and must not shine out of it, but in it, "in the *midst* of a crooked and perverse

generation" (Phil. ii. 16), holding forth the Word of life. Their good works are to be seen by men, that they may glorify God. They are the salt of the earth, and how could they be so, if they were not in a corrupted world? They are *in* the world, but not *of* it. This is a distinction everywhere understood. A good man is weary *in*, but not *of* the service of God. An Englishman is in China, but not of China. A Lascar is in London, but not of it. God's people are delivered from this present evil world by the Cross of Christ (Gal. vi. 14), and are to live as thus separated, and to save themselves from this "untoward generation" (Acts ii. 40). They are men, like Caleb, of another spirit from the world. The spirit of this present evil world is in opposition to God and Christ, a selfish, unholy, and at length a persecuting spirit. It discovers itself by excessive delight in earthly things when enjoyed, and in great grief when deprived of them, as Micah, when his images were taken from him. It displays uncommon sagacity in the acquisition and preservation of the good things of this life, but it has no place for God, no heart for Christ, no love for His people, no taste for His Word. The present world is all it seeks and lives for: it is of the earth, earthy. By the Spirit of God believers are joined to the Lord in heaven, and "one spirit with Him" (1 Cor. vi. 17; They are not of the world, even as Christ is "not of the world" (John xvii. 14). He whom the world despised, rejected, and crucified is their Lord and their Lover. How then can they be aught but separate from that

world which cast Him out. They pass through it as "strangers and pilgrims" (1 Pet. ii. 11).

From its spirit the saints are delivered. Their treasure is in heaven, and their heart is there also. They use the world, but they ENJOY God. All that carnal men call good, and great, and pleasant, the saints contemplate with a settled indifference. They belong to a kingdom that cannot be moved, and all the changes of this life do not affect their best interests. They are a heavenly people, and their eye is on the joys of the land to which they belong. O the beauty, the loveliness of a life so ordered, so fashioned! The heart set on Christ and heavenly things, the world having lost its hold, and worldliness its charm! May such be your experience.

To so live, will expose you at once to the criticism and it may be to the scorn of the worldlings around you, and not to them only, but to all who are in alliance with them, of the people of God. Lot in Sodom, the old prophet in Bethel, and Jehoshaphat in alliance with Ahab, all tell how saints may drift into strange associations and become like them, even to the extent of misunderstanding and opposing those who seek to walk with God, apart from the course of this present world. But the loss is theirs, and the gain here and hereafter is with those who love not the world, "neither the things that are in the world" (1 John ii. 15), but are content to be as their Master, unknown and unacknowledged here. May such by your experience

Your sincere friend by grace,

W.L.G.

SONGS OF THE "GOINGS UP."

PSALMS CXXX—CXXXIV.

A NEW YEAR WORD AT A CONFERENCE.

BY JOHN SMITH, CLEVELAND.

WE like to remind ourselves—and I am sure it is well for us to do so—in reading Old Testament Scripture, of that word written to Timothy, "All Scriptures is given by inspiration of God"—is God breathed—"and is profitable" (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17). And these five Psalms are no doubt part of the "all Scripture" which Timothy had. In this same Epistle the Apostle writes to him, "Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;" He speaks of the "unfeigned faith," which dwelt first in his grandmother and in his mother; and the Apostle adds, "I am persuaded that in thee also" (2 Tim. i. 5). I would pass this on as a word of encouragement to mothers and grandmothers. The Lord grant that all who have any such responsibility, may keep the Holy Scriptures before the young. We cannot tell when it is to bear fruit. We are not sure whether these women lived to see Timothy saved and going on for God or not; but one thing is certain, the Word he was made familiar with in his early years bore fruit. If the children do not hear the Word of God at our own firesides, they will not hear much of it in their schools.

I suppose we all know that Psalm cxxiv. is the last of the "Songs of Degrees." There are fifteen of them. They are grouped together and have this title, or, as Mr Newberry gives it, "Songs of the Goings Up." I have heard it said that

the remnant which went up out of Babylon sang these songs on their way up to Jerusalem. There is no doubt they will sing them by and by in a better day. If we had spiritual discernment and understanding enough, we would see there is a spiritual order in these "goings up" from the first to the last one.

The first one (Psa. cxx.) begins, "In my *distress* I cried unto the Lord," and the last (Psa. cxxxiv.) begins, "Bless ye Jehovah." That surely is "going up." There are five of these songs, we would look at briefly.

1. Psalm cxxx., "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord." It is well to begin at the beginning. That is where God began with all of us. He found us "in the depths" of sin and trouble, and awakened us to see that we were lost sinners. We have little faith in that kind of conversion where people get into salvation so easily, without being in any "depths," who are reasoned or educated into it. These are the kind of "converts" which, when they get into God's assembly, bring in all sorts of worldliness with them.

2. Psalm cxxxi.—None but the Lord Jesus could fully say, "My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty." O think of that blessed One, the lowly Son of God, uttering these words, "Neither do I exercise myself in great matters." How many of God's children are exercising themselves in things far beyond their reach or their depth, which they have not learned from God, but from men. You cannot get them to sit down quietly and patiently to read and meditate on

God's Word, to behave themselves, "as a child that is weaned." They will run to meetings of certain kinds, follow preachers of the popular sort, but have little heart desire for prayer and the Word of God. It is good for our souls to ask, "Do I behave myself" as a child that is weaned of his mother? Am I able to say of all God's dealings, "Thy will be done?" If I do not get on in business as I would like: "Thy will be done." If no "success," as the world counts it, but hard times is our lot: "Thy will be done." "Having food and raiment let us therewith be content" (1 Tim. vi. 8). What is good the Lord will give. He gives "bed, board, and washing" all the way home. He has never disappointed any who are true to Him; He never will.

3. Psalm cxxxii.—In this Psalm, we have David saying he would neither sleep nor slumber, till he had found out a place for Jehovah to dwell. That is progress, "going up." God has made our body "the temple of the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. vi. 19). He has taken up His abode in us. How careful we should be not to "grieve" or to "quench" Him! O to have a clean dwelling-place for God! He cannot manifest Himself to us if we are disobedient; only with those who keep His words, the Father and the Son make their "abode" (John xiv. 23). Of the saints, collectively, it is written, "Ye are the temple of God" (1 Cor. iii. 16). Think of that. The assembly at Corinth—God's beloved people, saved by grace and gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ—He calls them the "temple of God." It is in this same chapter that we

read, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (verse 11). He is the foundation of our individual salvation. He is also the foundation of the whole church, and He should be the Foundation of each assembly and its Centre as well. No sect in Christendom has Christ for its Foundation and Centre. If they had, they would have room for all His blessed Word. Many are letting slip these precious truths. They will never be popular with carnal professors, or with believers who are in the world. Only as our hearts are kept in the love of God and true to Christ, shall we have the ear to hear His Word, and the willing feet to walk in His ways. The truth of "separation to God" is fast dying out in many of our Conferences. It is considered "out of place" to speak the truth of God that separated some of us from the sects many years ago, lest it should give offence. The Lord have mercy on any of us who have reached such a condition! If any part of God our Father's Word has become offensive to any child of His, or if he is ashamed to hear it spoken, it is high time he was looking to the state of his soul. The Lord help us to be out "unto Him" in our hearts and in our ways.

4. Psalm cxxviii.—"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." If we are gathered together in His Name, it is well-pleasing to God to see us "dwelling together in unity." If there were more individual seeking in "lowliness of mind" to esteem others better than ourselves, there would be more of it. How this

unity is marred by self-seeking. How often there are independent feelings, and bitterness and evil speaking! God tells us, "If any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Col. iii. 13). That is how God would have us act. Most of us, I fear, are like the man in Matt. xviii. that had been forgiven the great debt, and took his fellow-servant that owed him a few pounds, and grappled him by the throat, saying, "Pay me that thou owest." How many of us are like that! I have no hesitation in saying that such feelings are of the devil. We would like to be able to say—and I trust we can by the grace of God—we do not want to carry an unforgiving spirit toward any child of God. If they cannot or will not have fellowship with us, let the fault be theirs, not ours. This dwelling together in unity gives God pleasure, and brings forth fruit on earth.

5. Psalm cxxxiv.—The last word is worship. "Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which, by night, stand in the house of the Lord" And if we are "standing in the house of the Lord," as we ought to be, and in fellowship with God, we will be "true worshippers." This is the night, the dark, dark night of His absence, but "the night is far spent, the day is at hand" (Rom. xiii. 12). Our Lord Jesus Christ is coming quickly. O just to be ready to go at His call! This may be our last year; indeed, we may say with certainty, we will never all meet here again. Somebody will have gone home, if the Lord has not come for us before another year.

But He is coming, and when He comes we will be in His unclouded presence, at home with Him for ever. What a sight, to see that blessed Face, that visage marred more than any man's! To look into those eyes that wept in Gethsemane, to gaze on that brow that was crowned with thorns, and the hands and the feet that were pierced for us. As Charles Wesley puts it,

"We'll fall at His feet, and the story repeat,
And the Lover of sinners adore."

Till He come, let it be ours to be true to Him, to own and honour His peerless Name, to hold fast His precious Word, and to be more and more confirmed to His blessed image.

A CONTRITE SPIRIT.

[I]t is not my doings, past or present, that trouble me most. So long as a man is taken up with these, he will never know himself. Neither is it what I am, that troubles me most. The thing that grieves me, even to heartbreak, is this: What I am not, while yet I should be. It is this dreary margin, these miles on miles of waste, between what I ought to be, and what I am NOT, that lays me in the dust, and makes me oftentimes feel that such a word as "abhor myself" is too feeble to express my feeling. Yet out of all these humbling and heartbreaking experiences come my sweetest hours. Such a frame of spirit God so loves, that He cannot keep out of the heart where He sees it; it is His choicest dwelling-place (Isa. lvii. 15). Of all the sacrifices which men render Him, there is no sacrifice so acceptable as to offer to Him a broken and contrite heart (Psa. li. 17).

JOHN DICKIE.

OUTLINES IN ACTS.

PART VII.—PAUL'S GOSPEL.

THE Gospel of heavenly life and glory, Paul was specially called out to minister. Peter and the others forwarded it we know; but Paul was the distinguished steward of it. And Peter and the others did not forward this Gospel as being the twelve at Jerusalem. As the twelve, they had borne their testimony to Israel, and been rejected like their Lord, and now had become witnesses to the heavenly calling of the church. The vision which instructed Peter in the fact that God had sanctified the Gentiles, might also have told him that God had made heaven, and not earth, the place of their calling, and the scene of their hopes. The vessel with its contents was let down from heaven, and then again taken up into heaven. This was, by a symbol, a revelation of the mystery hid from ages. It denoted that the Church had been of old written in heaven and hid there with God, but now for a little season was manifested here, and in the end was to be hid in heaven again, having her glory and inheritance there. This was signified by the descending and ascending sheet, and such, I judge, is the character of the mystery hid from ages and generations. And according to this, Peter, under the Holy Ghost, speaks to the saints of their inheritance "reserved in heaven;" and exhorts them to wait with girded loins, as strangers and pilgrims on the earth. He presents the Church as having consciously come to the end of all things here, and looking, like Israel in the night of the

passover, towards Canaan, having done with this Egypt world.

But Paul was apprehended in a special manner for this ministry. A dispensation of the Gospel was committed to him, and woe to him if he did not preach it (1 Cor. ix. 16, 17). Though, as he speaks, it were even against his will, yet he must preach it. The Son was revealed in him for this very purpose, that he might preach Him among the heathen (Gal. i. 16). For when the Lord converted his soul, He sent him out with this Gospel, "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."

I do indeed judge that it is very profitable to the saints that they discern rightly, that Paul's ministry was thus one stage in the divine process of telling out the purpose of God. That he holds a distinguished place in the Church, the feeling of every saint will at once and without effort bear witness; for there is no name more kept in the recollections of the saints than that of our Apostle, save the name of Him who in the hearts of His people has no fellow.

 Blood-bought Hours.

I would not like to meet
 My Lord at His judgment seat,
 With a record of wasted years;
 My time is bought by blood,
 To be used in serving God,
 Whether in joy or tears.

The Bible Annotator.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE STUDY.

NEW YEAR WATCHWORDS.

RETROSPECT: "Remember all the way" (Deut. viii. 2.)

ASPECT: "Look up and lift up your heads" (Luke xxi. 28).

CIRCUMSPECT: "Holding forth the Word" (Phil. ii. 16).

PROSPECT: "Looking for that Blessed Hope" (Titus ii. 13).

THE BELIEVER'S POSSESSIONS.

A Life which is imperishable (John x. 28).

A Relationship which is unbreakable (1 John iii. 2).

A Righteousness which is untarnishable (2 Cor. v. 21)

A Title which is indisputable (Heb. x. 21).

An Inheritance which is incorruptible (1 Pet. i. 4).

THE ABILITY OF CHRIST.

Able to save to the uttermost (Heb. vii. 25).

Able to guard from stumbling (Jude 24, R.V.).

Able to succour the tempted (Heb. ii. 18).

Able to do exceeding abundantly (Eph. iii. 20).

Able to subdue all unto Himself (Phil. iii. 21).

Texts with Perverted Meanings.

1 Cor. xi. 3.—"The head of every man is Christ." It is not here Christ the head of His body, the Church, as in Col. i. 18, nor Christ as federal head of a new race, as in Rom. v. 15-19, but Christ's relative position of dignity and power. There is no union of Christ with man as such, apart from redemption and regeneration.

Heb. ii. 13.—"Behold I and the children which God hath given Me." The relation of these words to the verse following, has led some to build upon them the doctrine of Christ's union with sinful humanity by Incarnation, with the result that all mankind become God's children. But such is not the teaching of the Word of God; very far from it. Sinners become children of God "by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28), by being born of the Spirit (John iii. 5), through the Word (1 Pet. i. 23). The dogma of the "Universal Fatherhood of God;" leaves no need for the new birth, or for the atoning work of Christ in virtue of which it is wrought, and is therefore subversive of the fundamentals of the Gospel. Yet, where is it not held and taught, after some fashion, even among professed evangelicals?

Notes from Wm. Lincoln's Bible.

Eph. vi. 24.—"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption." This is undoubtedly the true reading, as the Greek demands. And this totally changes the commonly accepted meaning of the text, which is, that no matter what iniquity or unscriptural system one may be connected with, if "sincere," his false position is to be palliated. This would constitute us judges of men's hearts, whereas we are only responsible to judge their ways (Matt. vii. 20). Specially ought we to judge and test by Scripture, the ways of those with whom in holy things we fraternise.

Gen. xviii. 19.—"I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." In the families of many of God's people, this rule is exactly inverted. First, the children lead the mother, then the wife rules the husband. Nothing but evil can accrue from such a condition. God always owns His own institutions, and blesses where His way is honoured and kept.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Do the words of Isa. xi. 1, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a Branch shall grow out of his roots," refer to the Lord Jesus, and if so, is the reference to the time of His first or second coming? The subject of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, is the millennial glory of the Lord Jesus, and in striking contrast to the fifty-third, in which His humiliation and sufferings are so vividly set forth. Here He is spoken of as "a root out of a dry ground," telling of His lowly estate, growing up in seclusion, unknown to the world, the carpenter's son, the Nazarene, although of David's lineage and offspring. There the rod—a symbol of power and kingly authority—"comes forth" as in freshness and beauty. "The Branch of the Lord, beautiful and glorious" (Isa. iv. 2), comes from His present place, where, as Aaron's rod which, while it was hid in the sanctuary, had budded, to flourish before men in glory and beauty. This refers to the manifested glory of the Lord at His second advent, which all flesh shall see and own.

1. Is the city of Rev. xxi. literal or symbolic?
2. Is it the Bride, or the home of the Bride?
3. Is the Bride the Church, or Israel? As many know, there exists great divergence of thought and teaching on these subjects, among able Bible students and

exponents of the truth, which may well cause us to approach them with godly and reverent mind, freed from preconceived opinion or prejudice, desiring only to have our minds formed by the Word of God.

1. The Book of Revelation is, as we are informed in chap. i. 1, a book of "signs," and thus the great spiritual teachings in it are "signified" or conveyed through sign and symbol. Therefore the "city" is symbolic, but the interpretation given by the angel is "the Bride the Lamb's wife." Thus the city, as described in chap. xxi. 2, 10, and xxii. 1-2, is symbolic of the risen and glorified Bride of the Lamb.

2. It was not the home of the Bride, but "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," that the angel shewed to John, and the symbol employed cannot be interpreted literally, but as conveying to minds not yet able to conceive of that resurrection and glorified condition, something of the majesty, magnificance, and blessedness of it. The city "prepared for the patriarchs" (Heb. xi. 16), for which they "looked," and whose "builder and maker is God" (v. 10), is evidently different, and refers to the abiding heavenly home of the redeemed, whose glories are permanent.

3. The descent of the symbol city "out of heaven"—"from God"—"having the glory of God," are descriptions which leave no doubt as to the heavenly character of those thus described. It cannot therefore be Israel, the earthly people, but can only be the Church, whose present position is compared to an espoused virgin (2 Cor. xi. 2), and finds its Divine type in Eve, the bride of Adam, formed from him and for him (Eph. v. 27-30).

Answers to Correspondents

INQUIRER, HADDINGTON.—The papers you name appeared in "The British Herald" of 1871, edited by Wm. Reid, Carlisle, and were very helpful to very many.

A. N., DUMFRIESSHIRE.—You will find reports of present day work for the Lord in India, in the bi-monthly issues of "Echoes of Service." Our new volume, "India's Sunny Plains," is, will give you the information you seek, on the first entrance of the Gospel three hundred years ago.

A. E. M., CARDIFF.—There is no Divine authority for relegating the truth of believer's baptism to the place of "meats and drinks" in Rom. xiv. There, it is a matter of individual conscience in things

concerning which God has given no legislation. Baptism is not so. It is included in the Lord's commission (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20), it was practised only in one way, its subjects believers, its mode immersion, by apostles and evangelists (Acts viii. 12, 38; x. 47; xvi. 33), and is the Divinely-appointed symbol of a cardinal truth of the faith (Rom. vi. 4-6). Its importance cannot be minimised, nor its mode or subjects altered, without perverting the whole of that which God has given in His Word concerning it.

G. H. B., LANARKSHIRE.—The happiest and healthiest atmosphere in which to keep young believers, is one of godly Christian intercourse, in which the Word of God and prayer take a principal part. The old time helpful fireside gatherings for prayer, informal meetings for Bible study, and simple bringing together of neighbours to hear the Gospel in somebody's kitchen, were the "colleges" in which some of the best Gospellers and teachers of a past generation "graduated." Godly householders should lay themselves out for this sort of help, and invite young believers as Aquilla and Priscilla did Apollos, to expound to them the way of God more perfectly (Acts xviii. 22, 25). This would be infinitely more profitable for them spiritually, than the frivolous singing and light religious talk which commonly fill up what are called "social" evenings, now so common.

F. H., ONTARIO.—There is need for much godly care in receiving one who has been in almost all kinds of denominations, and whose record is, that he must be pre-eminent in whatsoever circle he moves. You are perfectly justified in taking the necessary time to ascertain if true repentance and restoration of soul has been wrought, and to set before the applicant the truth which governs the behaviour of saints in God's assembly. Do not relax your care in guarding the gates of God's dwelling-place, because of the cry of "narrowness," in which some are always ready to join. God will bless the free, gracious, and wise use of His Word, to lead on intelligently those whose desire is to follow in His ways, and to winnow out those who would only be like Dan, "adders in the path."

Answers to Special Questions.

QUESTION I.—What is the "sin unto death" mentioned in 1 John v. 16?

ANSWER A.—In Matthew xii. 31, it was the blasphemy of ascribing the miracles of the Lord to

Beelzebub. In Acts v. 3, 5, it was lying to the Holy Spirit, and in 1 Cor. xi. 30, it was the profanation of the Lord's Supper. Here, it seems to be the denial of the Godhead of the Son.

J. S.

ANSWER B.—Moses, at the waters of Meribah, by speaking unadvisedly with his lips (Psa. cvi. 33), committed a sin unto death, for which there was no forgiveness, and concerning which, when he prayed that the penalty might be cancelled, the Lord answered, "Speak no more unto Me of this matter" (Deut. iii. 26). A "sin unto death," in this day of grace, is not, so far as we have seen in Scripture, any specified sin to the exclusion of others, but may, as in the case of Moses, be because of the responsible position occupied by the one who commits it.

W. M.

ANSWER C.—This question had been exercising a few believers here some time ago, and we sought help regarding it from several esteemed brethren. The answer given by Dr. Neatby especially commended itself to us, and in order that others may benefit by it, we send it on. It is as follows: "We do not pray for an erring brother as much as we ought. We should as a rule pray for the forgiveness of a brother who has been overtaken by sin. We may pray the prayer of faith. But there are cases in which it is not the will of God to 'forgive' in this sense. It is not any particular sin that is 'unto death,' i.e., such as fraud, uncleanness, or murder; but sins may be committed having a character, or being of such a nature as the sin of Ananias, which tend to death, and are visited by the death of the body (compare 1 Cor. xi. 30). I say it is not the will of God to forgive a particular sin. I speak not of His grace, but of His government. The 'spirit is saved in the day of the Lord Jesus,' but the body dies. Such was doubtless the case with Ananias, if he were a child of God."

R. S.

ANSWER D.—These words indicate that there is such a character of evil (without specifying it) as can only be dealt with by God in a governmental way, by visiting the person with death. Where God is thus acting, it would be lack of communion with Him, to pray that such persons should live. We therefore bow to God, instead of interceding. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira would appear to be cases in point. In 1 Cor. xi. 30, we read, 'For this cause (see context) many are weak and sickly among you, and 'many sleep.'" This was a sin unto death, and in "many" cases.

N. L. W.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The section of the epistle in

which this passage occurs, deals with the subject of eternal life, in present possession and enjoyment in the believer. Confidence in God, exercised in prayer for things according to His will, follows. One walking in the Spirit—who begets all true prayer (Rom. viii. 26, 27)—will not ask or desire that which it is not the will of God to give, either for himself or others. If a brother chastised of God because of sin, is prayed for thus, life and healing will be given, if the will of God be so. But while God in grace always meets the humbled saint, and forgives, cleanses, and restores him (1 John i. 9), He may not in government stay the effects, or remove the sickness which is "unto death," yet the spirit will be "saved" (1 Cor. v. 5). Some such sins awaken in healthy saints compassion, leading to intercession for the fallen brother, and prayer for his restoration and recovery. Others, because of their nature and aggravation, cause horror and holy indignation at the dishonour done to the Lord's Name thereby, with little desire for prayer. The apostle does not forbid such to be prayed for, but he does not command it. Spirit-led souls, exercised before God in dealing with such cases know, from restraint in prayer and lack of confidence toward God concerning them, the difference between them and others, and bowing to the Divine will acquiesce therein (Lev. x. 3; 2 Sam. xii. 16-20).

Questions Requiring Answers.

II.—Did the Lord Jesus personally partake of the bread and wine of the Supper, when it was instituted by Him?

III.—Who are the "spirits in prison" (1 Pet. iii. 19), and when and by whom, were they "preached" to?

IV.—Can a Christian guided by the Word of God become a Freemason? Can one be regarded as fitted to oversee and teach in the Christian Assembly, who is a member of this craft?

V.—Are there two circles of church fellowship authorised in the Scripture; one permanent, composed of those who have been "received" (Rom. xvi. 1, 2) and "added" (Acts ii. 21) to the local assembly, and another of "casual" visitors who are either brought by friends, or come as they would to any of the denominations? If so, where are they described and wherein do they differ?

VI.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE:

ITS TYPES AND SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS.
BY THE EDITOR.

THE four Books of Kings which, as the titles in our Bibles tell, include the First and Second Books of Samuel, have as their leading subject the Kingdom, or Rule in its various forms among the people of God. First, we have traced for us by the finger of the Spirit, the successive steps which led the people of Israel to desire and ask for a king; the kind of king they chose, and the character of his rule; his trial, breakdown, rejection by God, and final overthrow on Gilboa. Then we get a picture of God's chosen king, his contrast with the man of the people's choice, his training, character, service while yet unknown or rejected by the people, whom he had been anointed to rule over, his persecution by the rejected but still reigning king, and at last his gradual elevation to the throne, first of Judah, then of all Israel. Such is the history of the First Book of Samuel in the letter, in its relation to Saul and David, and the kingdom as seen in Israel. Typically, it sets before us in vivid and telling language, the varied forms of rule which may be found among the people of God, in the kingdom as it now exists (Acts xx. 25; xxviii. 31), and especially of rule and government in what professes to be God's Church, set in the world as Israel was amongst the nations with Himself in the midst, to bear witness to His Name, and be His lightbearer in a world where He is unknown. In Saul, we have the people's man, or that form of rule which, created by human choice,

is often allowed or given as a token of Divine displeasure—as Saul was given by God in judgment (Hosea xiii. 11)—bringing the chosen people into servitude and bondage (1 Sam. xiii. 7), stripping them of their fairest and best (chap. viii. 11, 16), yet working no deliverance from the oppression of their enemies (chap. xvii. 1-11) without, and within killing God's priests (chap. xxii. 17, 18), rejecting the Word of God's prophet (chap. xv. 26, 34), and persecuting or seeking to destroy His King, the anointed of the Lord, the ruler whom He had chosen (chap. xix. 10; xx. 31). In David, the man after God's own heart (Acts xiii. 22), the youngest of Jesse's sons, trained in the wilderness in lowly life (Psa. lxxviii. 70-72), considered by his brethren of little account (chap. xvi. 11), unknown to those in high places (chap. xvii. 55), yet by his gifts and deeds marked out as the true deliverer and leader (2 Sam. v. 2). He is acknowledged by those who are in the mind of God as the true Ruler (chap. xxii. 1, 2; xxiii. 17), yet for a time rejected, with only a handful around him, while that form of rule which had rejected the Word of the Lord and has been rejected of Him (chap. xv. 26) is in power, but in due time is owned and honoured as Israel's rightful king (2 Sam. v. 3). The First Book of Samuel thus traces the origin, character, and actings of both these forms of rule, their relation one to another, and closes with the story of the fall of Saul and his house on Gilboa, with David's pathetic lament over them. For while those who have been cruelly wronged by such can only regard

their false position and doings as antagonistic to God, yet toward the men themselves they bear no enmity nor will they allow a hand to be lifted to smite them, or hasten their end (1 Sam. xxiv. 6), nor sympathise with any who would by such means gain them their rightful place (2 Sam. i. 14, 15), or hasten the day of the Lord's deliverance, knowing that He will do all this in His own due time.

The Second Book of Samuel gives a view of the kingdom under David. Here also come out the various forms of strength and weakness of the true king, the victories and failures of the right man in the right place, but not always in the right condition, all of which will yield under the Spirit's guidance to the opened ear and the enlightened eye of the man of God, who humbly seeks therein to learn what rule according to God is, what forms of weakness and failure it is especially susceptible to fall under, and what mixed and alien principles may—like some of David's allies and helpers—become identified with it. All this is here told out in type and history by the Spirit, and is of inestimable value to those who seek in this day of confusion, to be men having "understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chron. xiii. 32).

DAVID AND SOLOMON, TYPES OF CHRIST.

In David we have a foreshadowing type of Jesus in His humiliation and lowly path of rejection here. In Solomon, of Christ in resurrection glory in heaven. In themselves they were failing men, as their personal history shows, but in so far as they—in common with Adam,

Moses, Joshua, and others—in certain aspects of their character and acts of their service, were by the Spirit enabled to foreshadow Christ, in these only are they to be regarded as typical; while their personal history, as a whole, has its contrasts as well as its comparisons to God's beloved Son and perfect Servant, whom no single type can fully in all His excellencies and offices set forth. Thus Moses, in his faithful service as Deliverer, Leader, and Ruler (Acts vii. 23-28; 1 Cor. x. 2; Heb. iii. 1-4) is set before us as a type, while for his failure in "speaking unadvisedly" (Psa. cvi. 33) at Meribah, he was judged as a saint and servant, and stands as a witness to God's Divine chastisement (Heb. x. 30; xii. 5, 6), so little heeded in our day. DAVID, whose name means "Beloved," was Jehovah's chosen king, a figure of Him who is David's Son and Lord, type and antitype so fully answering that the name of one is sometimes used for the other (see Jer. xxx. 9; Ezek. xxxiv. 23). Of lowly birth, trained in the lone wilderness, in secret the slayer of the lion, and in public the conqueror of Goliath, yet for a time denied his rightful throne.

In SOLOMON, whose name means "Peaceable," we see in type Christ in resurrection. Having made peace by the blood of His cross, and established in righteousness the foundations of God's throne, He is His people's peace (Eph. ii. 14). David being a "man of war" (1 Chron. xxviii. 3), and one who in his subjugation of Jehovah's foes had "shed blood abundantly" (1 Chron. xxii. 8), was not permitted to build the house of

the Lord, but his son Solomon, who was to be a "man of rest," in whose days Israel was to dwell in "peace and quietness" (1 Chron. xxii. 9), with "neither adversary nor evil occurrent" (1 Kings v. 4), whose throne is said to be "the throne of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxix. 23), he was to be the builder of the temple. And thus it is that redemption having been accomplished at the Cross, the righteousness of God declared (Rom. iii. 25), Christ raised for our justification (Rom. iv. 25), and seated at the right hand of God, the Comforter has come down, and a temple is being raised throughout this age of grace, built of living stones, which continuously groweth in virtue of the Divine workmanship "unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. ii. 21). Such is the Divine and *dispensational* aspect of the truth. *Locally*, wherever the Gospel is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (1 Pet. i. 12) sinners are by the power of the Gospel saved (1 Thess. i. 5), to individually become "imitators" of the Lord and His apostles (ver 6, R.V.), and under the power of the Word taught, received, and obeyed (1 Thess. ii. 13, 14), collectively to become imitators of God's Assemblies in constitution, fellowship, worship, and government, and thus in earthly and local aspect form God's temple now (1 Cor. iii. 16), His present habitation "in the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). *Experimentally* this order is beautifully set forth in Acts ix. 31, R.V., where it is written, "So the Church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had PEACE, being edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the

Holy Ghost was multiplied." Internal peace—"The Lord of peace Himself" giving "peace in all ways" (2 Thess. iii. 16); His rule recognised and owned in a walk in His "fear;" every channel free and clean for the indwelling Comforter to minister through, "as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 11), is still His way, His only way, for the inward upbuilding and the outward development and multiplication according to God of the church below.

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WHERE ABIDING FRUIT IS FOUND.

IT is not in assemblies where the most elaborate arrangements for preachers and "special campaigns" are made, and where Gospel work is carried on by spasmodic efforts, that the fullest measure of abiding fruit in true converts manifesting possession of Divine life in them, by following on to know the Lord is to be found, but in the midst of a godly, praying people, who seek and own the guidance of the Spirit of God in their Gospel work. There the Lord commands the blessing, and there continuous fruit in genuine converts is found, who give joy to those who watch over them in following on to know the Lord, and walking in His ways as they learn them. There are some assemblies increased continuously by the adding of those converted in their midst, who, being led on in the truth, become helpers, workers, and winners of others, while others, notwithstanding their numerous efforts, gain nothing either in spiritual power or numbers, for while many may be brought in, with little care, they disappear just as quickly.

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

IN THE PAST AND THE PRESENT.

BY WILLIAM LINCOLN.

A CHRISTIAN has two distinct positions, one God-wards, the other creationwards. God-wards he is a member of His family and of His church, brought nigh by the blood of Christ. Creationwards, though he now suffers, he soon shall *reign* with Christ. The kingdom and its crowns refer in Scripture to the present struggle of righteousness with evil, and to the ultimate victory of the righteous through the righteous One. Look at

I. The kingdom in its relation to the *past*. Ever since the fall, or at least since the times of Cain and Abel, these two contrary elements have been beheld struggling together. When at length the Holy One presented Himself in the world as King, all that was of God gathered round Him. On His part He was prepared at once to set up His kingdom in righteousness and power, and to make Israel the first nation of the world. But Israel had no heart for such a kingdom as His (Luke xvii. 20), which must first be meekly received by the soul, and then only is it entered (Mark x. 15; Luke x. 9). Therefore His reign was not then inaugurated in earthly power. In grace He accepted His rejection, in order that He might die for sinners, and set up that reign in resurrection on a surer basis—surer, because in grace (Acts ii. 31). But the then race of Israel, rejecting it also in this form when preached by the twelve, with the Holy Ghost sent down from

heaven, God commenced this parenthetic season, during which His almighty grace is attaching to Christ the *heavenly* family, by means of which He will provoke Israel to jealousy. And, like as the time from Sinai to Christ had been a parenthesis of law, so from the time when Israel was temporarily cast off for rejecting Christ until now, is a dispensation of the richest grace. In law, God enquires what man is; in grace, God shows to faith what He Himself is. After which, His dealings with Israel will be resumed, as if from Egypt again (Isa. xi. 11-15).

But the step taken by God towards His kingdom could not be retracted. The kingdom had come down to earth, and could not be recalled. So on earth it is to remain, although its manifestation is delayed. Its Sovereign, Christ, has been received to glory. Now, since it is at present thence administered, it is commonly called in Matthew the reign or "kingdom of heaven." And the parables which this term introduces, mark its varying history during His personal absence; for though He is hidden, His kingdom must progress. The decisive battle between Himself and the usurper, Satan, has already been fought on Calvary. For there, whatever hindrances on the score of righteousness existed to the kingdom being established by God in power, were then utterly removed. Not that the usurper, Satan, was then cast out. A greater or more dangerous mistake than this can scarcely be conceived. On the contrary, nothing brought out to view Satan's power in the world as the Cross of Christ did—when Satan urged men on

to kill Him who alone can bless them. Hence it is that, dating from this very crisis, Satan is now called the prince and the god—the civil and the religious ruler of this age. The Lord Jesus raised from the dead did not follow up His victory, but ascended to His Father, and sent down the Holy Ghost to gather believers to His Name. These are but a “little, little flock.” And still righteousness suffers; yea, since the murder of the King, more than ever, whilst evil is still to the front. But

II. The kingdom at the *present time* exhibits great differences to the struggle between righteousness and wickedness waged in Old Testament times. For now the righteous know that the King has come, and that if He has been slain, yet is He raised again. Now, therefore, they have a Centre, though unseen, round whom they can cluster (1 Pet. ii. 4), as did the wretched round David, in the cave of Adullam. And though He personally is absent, yet the Holy Ghost, acting as His Vicegerent, is actually here. By Him not a few are daily so won over to that rejected Christ, that they covet identification with Him, not only in His glory there, but also in His shame here. Also, the opposition of the usurper is more subtle, though still as successful as before. Then it took the form of the rejection of the true, culminating in the cry, “Away with Him!” Now it is manifested rather by the reception of the false, ending in the worship of Antichrist. Accordingly, his mode of procedure now is to intermix his own tares with God’s wheat—to varnish over unrighteousness, with a

semblance of righteousness, and still to retain Paganism and Apostacy under colour of Scriptural terms and phrases. How far the foe has succeeded, let the condition of Christendom at this day declare. The picture drawn in 2 Tim. iii. of the last days, differs from the view of paganism in Rom. i. only in one awful point; that is, there is now superadded to the fearful list in Rom. i. “the form of godliness.” But all this God has permitted, in order thereby to test *His* people. Those endued with the Spirit and with heavenly light, less and less deceived by the specious forms around them, turn instinctively to the Word of God, and to that which is pure, and holy, and true. But the more such pursue the path of righteousness, the more do they entail upon themselves suffering and scorn.

Such is Christendom, *i.e.*, Christ’s kingdom in mystery. Its administration is traced in Matt. xiii. There, all who make a profession of Christ are regarded as in His kingdom. Hence the kingdom of *heaven* denotes His reign whilst He, the King, is in heaven; but it could be and was the kingdom of *God* as well when He was on earth, or when He shall have returned from heaven, as it is now such during His continuance there. The kingdom of the *Father* (Matt. xiii. 43) looks only to that which is conformed to God. The kingdom of *Christ* is God’s government of this world in Messiah’s hand; but the kingdom of the *Son of Man* shall stretch to the entire creation. Lastly, that phrase, “The kingdom of *God’s dear Son*” (Col. i. 13), contemplates the state in which the church now is.

OUTLINES IN ACTS.

VIII.—A MINISTRY FROM HEAVEN.

NOT only was Paul's Apostleship and mission thus independent of Jerusalem, and of the twelve, but the Gospel which he preached (the nature of which we have before considered), he did not learn either there or from them. He received it not from man, neither was he taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. He goes up, most truly, from Antioch, with Barnabas, to Jerusalem, to confer with the Apostles about circumcision; but before he does so, he withstood some, though they had come from James, and rebuked Peter before them all. And these things were ordered in the provident wisdom of the Spirit; just as our Lord's rebukes of His mother; the Spirit of God, foreseeing the boasts in the flesh which would arise from both these sources, from Mary and from Peter; and thus has given the wayfaring man these tokens of his heavenward path. He circulates the decree upon the question of circumcision, for present peace. But when counselling the Gentile Churches afterwards on one of the subjects which this decree determines, viz., *eating meats offered to idols*, he does so on the ground merely of brotherly love. He never refers to this decree (1 Cor. viii.). He was taught his Gospel entirely by revelation (Gal. i. 12), for at his conversion it had been so promised to him (Acts xxvi. 16). And accordingly it was from the Lord Himself that he received his knowledge of the death, burial, resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 3), and his knowledge also of the last

supper and its meaning (1 Cor. xi. 23); though these things lay within the common acquaintance of those who had companied with the Lord, and he might have received them from them. But no, he must be taught them all by revelation. The Lord appeared to him in those things of which he was to be a minister and witness. The Lord was jealous that Paul should not confer with flesh and blood—should not be a debtor to any but Himself for his Gospel. For as the dispensation was to allow of no confidence in the flesh, neither was Paul's Apostleship. All that might have been gain in the flesh, was to be counted loss. Confidence with those who had seen and heard, eaten and drunk with Jesus, might have been gain: but all this was set aside. Paul would thankfully be refreshed in spirit by the mutual faith of himself and the humblest disciple. Nay, he would have such acknowledged; all such in whose belly the Spirit had opened the river of God for the refreshing of the saints (Rom. i. 12; 1 Cor. xvi. 18). But he could accept no man's person. The previous pillars of the Church could not be used to support his ministry. The Jewish order was gone. Of old, Jehovah, we know, had respect to that order. It was according to the number of the children of Israel, that at the first he divided the nations (Deut. xxxii. 8). Afterwards He divided the land of Canaan according to this number also, that is, among the *twelve* tribes (Josh. xiii., xix.). So David in his day, under the guiding of Jehovah, had respect to the same number, when he settled the ministers of the temple, and the officers of the palace at

Jerusalem (1 Chron. xxiii.-xxvii.). And in like manner, the Lord providing for the healing and teaching of Israel, appointed *twelve* Apostles, still having respect to the Jewish order. And this order of twelve Apostles was preserved, as we have seen, under the hand of Peter afterwards; for he was the guardian of the Jewish order, and pastor of the Jewish Church. But Paul's Apostleship is at once an invasion upon all this. It has no respect whatever to Jewish, earthly, or fleshly order. It interferes with it. It is a writing under the hand of the Spirit of God for the revoking of that order. And this was, as was natural, a great trial to the Jewish Christians. They could not easily understand this undue Apostleship, and we find that he was considerate of them under this trial. And, indeed, those who stand with him in the assertion of the sovereignty of the Spirit, and in the rejection of all fleshly authority, should with him likewise be considerate of the difficulties which many now experience from the Jewish feelings and rules of judgment, in which they have been educated. But still, Paul was an Apostle, let them hear, or let them forbear.

And not only was it a trial to Jewish believers, but there were found evil men moved of Satan, who made their use of this state of things. We find it to have been so at Corinth. In Galatia it was not this. In his epistle to the Churches there, he does not speak of his Apostleship, because it had been slandered among them; but because it was the divine sanction of that Gospel which he had preached, and from which they had

departed. But at Corinth his Apostleship had been questioned, and by what witnesses could he have it approved? Why, by his pureness, his knowledge, his armour of righteousness (2 Cor. vii.). How does he seek to be received? Why, because he had corrupted no man, he had defrauded no man (2 Cor. vii.). How does he vindicate and establish his ministry? Read his proof in such words as these—“Am I not an Apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are ye not my work in the Lord? If I am not an Apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord.” And again, “For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel.” Does he not by all this commit the proof of his Apostleship to the manifest presence of the Spirit with him? His children in the faith were the seal of his office (1 Cor. ix. 2); the epistle that ought to commend it to the acceptance of all men. The signs of an Apostle had been wrought by him (2 Cor. xii. 12). And must it not have been so? What office or ministry could now be warranted without the presence and exercise of the gifts received for men? Could the purpose of the ascension be evaded or annulled? Could fleshly authority and order be allowed in despite of the revelation now given, that the ascended Head was the dispenser and Lord of all those ministries that were for “the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ?”

REALITY : OR, RIGHT FOUNDATIONS.

BY FRANKLIN FERGUSON, NEW ZEALAND.

WE live in a day when you would think that mostly everybody has got a conviction that the main thing is to appear well before your neighbours : that it does not matter a great deal how things are underneath, if only you have a good outside to meet the eye. "Never mind the broken bricks and bad mortar," say they, "plaster the walls over, they will look all right." Such work is not "all right." One day there is a "shake," and the plaster cracks and the walls begin to crumble, and then the deception is plain to anybody's sight. The "plasterer" has been a fool. "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known." Give it time, and it will all come out. Oh, yes ; God may be slow, but He is very sure. There is a day with Him when *inside becomes outside ; when the unseen is seen ; when every man stands before God just as he is and not anything more.* As for foundations, almost any kind of thing seems to do. Great houses are going up on most insecure bottoms. You fairly stand aghast at the builders and question their sanity. Professed Christians are found on every hand whose lives have little at the bottom that is stable, and yet they profess to know that Christ will soon be round to inspect it. Are these Christians insane ? It looks very like it.

An architect, when he goes to examine a building, does not first observe whether it is painted inside or out, nor does he look to see it has an up-to-date front

door, nor whether it has a name on the front gate, nor does he climb up to the chimney-pots. No ; he makes a "bee-line" for the *foundation*. He does not give his certificate that the building is satisfactory until after a careful survey of that most important part.

Depend upon it, the Lord on His inspection day will make straight for the foundation of your life, and will see upon what your life work is based. Many a one's home life has a bad bottom when you can get low enough into it ; perhaps his neighbour does not see it. It is going to be seen ! There is many a "screw" loose in Christian homes, which is the cause of the much sorrow reaped. Look at that man who is so much to the front in the assembly of Christians ! He loves to minister the Word on all occasions, and his prayers are "so fervent." What is he at bottom ? Is there any "substance" in his every-day walk ? Don't judge him by his Sunday oratory ; go to his foundation. See what he is when he rubs shoulders with men on a Monday. In the book of Isaiah, chapter lviii., the prophet is told to "cry aloud and spare not," and to show God's people their transgressions and their sins. We may guess his message was not very sweet to Israel's palate, because, to all appearance, they were in a very fair state. Human nature is quick to resent a wholesale condemnation of one's state of soul. "You are not to judge" is what a great many get behind when a prophet of the Lord starts to "crack the plaster" and chip off the veneer of appearances. But pleasant or unpleasant, the bidding of the Lord must

be done. What was that people doing to whom Isaiah was sent? They sought God daily; they seemed to delight to know His ways as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinances of their God. "Wherefore have we fasted," said they, "and Thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and Thou takest no knowledge?" The answer is, "Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure." The inner life of the soul did not tally with the outward profession. They paid attention to formalities, but their hearts were adrift.

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DO YOU ?

Who of us know [meet,
The heartaches of the restless crowds we
Each day in passing on the busy street—
The woes and heavy cares that on them
press

Forebodings of their inmost soul's distress?

Who of us know? Do you?

Who of us think
Of how hot tears have traced the smiling
cheek, [speak
Of scores we meet, who would not dare to
The pangs they feel—the burdens that
they bear [year?

Each hour that passes through the solemn

Who of us think? Do you?

Who of us strive
To free the slaves in Satan's fetters bound,
The fallen, ruined, dying ones around—
The human wrecks on deadly breakers
tossed— [lost?

By pointing them to Him who saves the

Who of us strive? Do you?

THEY PREACHED: HE WROUGHT.

THE Gospel by Mark, which pre-eminently sets the Lord before us as the Perfect Servant, closes very beautifully and in complete harmony with its character. Risen from the dead, the Lord had given the command to His servants, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi. 15). And the closing word tells how early love and prompt obedience took up that great commission, and what was the accompaniment and the result. "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the Word with signs following" (verse 20). They preached; the Lord wrought! They knew their part, they did it; and the living Lord, who had sent them, did the rest. They had confidence in their message, and delivered it. They counted on the mighty hand of the Lord, and it did not fail them. Now-a-days when embellishments, attractions, and all sorts of frivolous addendums are put alongside the Gospel, when preachers and solo singers are bracketted and advertised together, one would imagine the old sword had lost its edge, or the Lord had cast it off and ceased to own it. But thank God this is not so. The true "Jerusalem blade," as Luther named it, has still its ancient double edge, and only needs to be used in faith by men who know and count upon its Owner doing His part, to see the arm of the Lord as in days of old. It is ours to preach, : it is His to work.

The Bible Annotator.

SCRIPTURE STUDIES.

REDEMPTION IN VARIOUS ASPECTS.

Obtained for us (Heb. ix. 12)—At the Cross.
Sent to us (Psa. cxi. 9)—Through the Gospel.
Known by us (Eph. i. 7)—In the Present.
Perfected in us (Rom. viii. 23)—In the Glory.

SALVATION.

Salvation in Possession (1 Cor. xv. 2).
Salvation in Progress (Rom. v. 10).
Salvation in Prospect (Rom. xiii. 11).

FULL ASSURANCE.

Full Assurance of Faith (Heb. x. 22).
Full Assurance of Understanding (Col. ii. 2).
Full Assurance of Hope (Heb. vi. 11).

THREE CARDINAL TRUTHS.

Repentance: a Change of Mind toward God (Acts xx. 21).
Reconciliation: a New Position before God (Rom. v. 10).
Regeneration: a New Life from God (John v. 1).

Bible Words and their Meanings.

Assembly.—The Greek word "ekklesia," means "an assembly." The Ecclesia in Ancient Greece was the assembly of citizens who had a right to vote. In Acts xix. 39, the word is applied to the civil court called together, and in ver. 41, to a rabble brought together to oppose Paul. As applied to God's assembly, it means (1) the saints in a given town, such as Corinth (1 Cor. i. 2), or (2) those gathering for worship in a given house (1 Col. iv. 15). In the Authorised Version the word "Church"—which has no fixed meaning—was substituted by the order of King James, son of Mary Queen of Scots, who had no great love for the word "congregation," used in the Geneva Bible and frequently on the lips of the Reformers. "Tell it to the assembly" (Matt. xviii. 17), and "The whole assembly come together into one place" (1 Cor. xi. 23), is intelligible, but "church" may mean a building, a denomination, or the clerical profession, and leads to confusion. "Assembly," as uniformly given in Newberry's Bible margin, is more correct.

Bearing Sins.—"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body ON the tree" (1 Pet. ii. 24). This passage has been made by some to read "To the tree," making Christ a sinbearer all His life, and His sufferings during the whole period thereof penal.

There is nothing in Scripture to support this; everything to forbid it. Many who hold it, own the value of His atoning death, and love His Person, yet they are astray from Scripture which alone is to be our guide. The word "bear" is a sacrificial word, and means "to sustain, to undergo." It must not in such connections be separated from the altar on which the sacrifice was laid and there offered up to God. A different word is used to express the Lord's living sympathies with men's griefs and sorrows (Isa. liii. 4; Matt. viii. 17). Our blessed Lord was the Lamb "without blemish," who "knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21). As such, He "offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14), and on the Cross—not before—Jehovah laid on Him "the iniquity of us all," and thus He "bare our sins in His own body ON the tree." As the victim of old was brought up to the altar to be there charged with the offerer's sins (Lev. iv.), and as thus charged slain, so "Christ was once offered to BEAR the sins of many" (Heb. ix. 28). By His death on the Cross He expiated them.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Is the teaching of the enclosed tract according to Scripture? It seems to teach sinlessness, and is being circulated among believers here. The doctrine in the tract which you send us is, the Wesleyan theory of perfection, which may be summed up as follows: Man was "good" before the fall, "bad" after it, and is made "good again" at conversion—in fact, "perfect," for with them it is "a renewal of the whole man." Notwithstanding, he may "fall away," which can happen many times, and as often be "renewed." It is wholly erroneous alike in its theory of what the new birth is, and what are its results. To be "born of God" (John i. 13) is to have a new life communicated (1 John v. 11, 12), a new nature imparted (2 Pet. i. 4), not the old renewed or improved which is impossible (Rom. vii. 18), for in "the flesh no good dwelleth." Instead of being "made good," it "lusteth against" the Spirit (Gal. v. 17), now sealing and indwelling (Eph. i. 13; Gal. iv. 6) the believer. By the Spirit's power and rule, he is "set free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2), but not from the flesh, which is still in him, what it was and ever will be (Rom. vii. 25). "Perfect sanctification" and all such expressions, which imply the eradication of sin, or the remedying, instead of the crucifixion and mortification of the flesh, are unscriptural and

misleading, and never fail in baneful results to those who are led astray by them, to fall as victims to self-conceit and pride of heart.

Answers to Correspondents

ANON.—Your verses are sound and Scriptural, but scarcely suited to our pages.

D. B., WIGTOWNSHIRE.—The beautiful hymn, beginning "The sands of time are sinking," was not written by Samuel Rutherford, as many suppose, but by Mrs. A. R. Cousins, of Melrose (who died in Edinburgh in December last), from some of Rutherford's choice sayings, especially his last words. He preached in "Anwoth by the Solway" for nine years, then was deposed and banished to Aberdeen for two years, because of his clear testimony to the truth which exposes Prelacy. He died in 1661 at St. Andrews, where he is buried.

A. R., CARSHALTON.—The "Individual Communion Cup" movement is one of the latest devices of the devil to obscure the meaning and destroy the character of the Lord's Supper. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1 Cor. x. 16), is the Spirit's own explanation of the simple yet sacred emblems, which cannot be rightly represented in bread cut into fragments, or by a cup for each individual partaker. The world's Churches adopt anything that pleases the people, without concern as to what God's Word has to say, and the further it is from the Divine pattern, the more popular it is likely to become.

J. H., KENT.—Wholesome ministry of the Word, and especially Bible Readings of an informal and social character, where difficulties may be expressed and helped, will do more to lead on those who are seeking to know the Lord's will that they may do it, than anything of a controversial character. We have never known any real or permanent blessing result from such discussions as you propose.

W. J. P.—We rejoice to hear of your deliverance from an unscriptural system of Church polity, which debarred you from having godly fellowship with fellow-believers and with assemblies of saints walking in the truth and seeking to learn more of it. But while rejoicing in your liberty, see that you do not misuse it. The danger in all such emancipations is, to swing like the pendulum to the opposite extreme, and become lax in things concerning which the Lord has spoken and given commandment

in His Word. To be delivered from the bondage of human or traditional religious association is a great mercy, but there are bonds of truth which cannot be disregarded with impunity, and there is Divine order and mutual submission (1 Pet. v. 5) in God's assembly, which godly ones will ever seek to own and lovingly obey (Heb. xiii. 17). May you have grace, not only to reject and depart from the false, but to learn, hold fast, and humbly yield submission to all that God has given to His saints for the obedience of faith in His Word.

Answers to Special Questions.

QUESTION II.—Did the Lord Jesus personally partake of the bread and wine of the Supper, when it was instituted by Him?

ANSWER A.—Where Scripture is silent, we must be silent also. But there was no union with Christ before His death (John xii. 24; John xx. 17), nor any action to suggest it.

N. L. N.

ANSWER B.—In neither of the three Gospels, which give the varied accounts of the institution of the Supper, is it stated that the Lord partook of the elements, nor would it be in keeping with their symbolic character that He should have done so.

J. S.

ANSWER C.—Of the bread the Lord says, "This is My body," and of the cup, "This is My blood" (Matt. xxvi. 26-28). "My body which is given for you"—"My blood which is shed for you" (Luke xxii. 19, 20). It would have been out of keeping with the meaning and object of the institution, therefore, for the Lord to have partaken of it Himself, and there is nothing in Scripture to suggest that He did so.

W. J. M.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—This question may arise out of confusing what is said in the three synoptic Gospels concerning the Passover feast, which immediately preceded the institution of the Lord's Supper, of which the Lord did partake. The record, as given by Matthew and Mark, which may be regarded as the actual order, (while Luke groups events in their moral relation, rather than in sequence of time) tells that "while they were eating," Jesus took a loaf and blessed and brake it, and as He gave it to the disciples said, "Take, eat, this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the new covenant" (Matt. xxvi. 26-28). In 1 Cor. xi. 25, the words—"He took the cup, when He had supped," are properly given

in the R.V.—“ In like manner also the cup after supper,” which does not mean that the Lord “supped” of the wine of the newly-instituted ordinance, but that He had partaken of the previous paschal feast.

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Pastoral Work in Assemblies.

(To the Editor of THE BELIEVER'S MAGAZINE).

As an aged believer, whose privilege it has been for over thirty-five years to gather with saints assembling in the Lord's Name, seeking to own the authority of His Word and the guidance and administration of His Spirit in assembly, as in individual life, I would seek to offer a few simple remarks, for the consideration of your readers, on a subject which has been much impressed upon me of late, namely—The need of godly, pastoral service, and visitation of believers in their homes. There are many earnest young brethren who are willing and able to preach the Gospel, and who do preach with some measure of acceptance and blessing. They are fewer who minister the Word seasonably for the increase and edification of the saints, but how very few who give themselves to the visitation of the saints, doing true shepherd work, as it is described in such passages as Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16; 1 Thess. v. 14; Heb. xiii. 17. There may be many causes for this. The excessive rush of business life takes so much out of those who are in the thick of it, that exhausted in body and soul, they have neither heart nor energy for it. Others find it too irksome, demanding more patience and self-denial than they possess, and as all who have shared it know, it is a service in which there are very many heartbreaks and sorrows, with little of the enthusiasm such as is associated with the evangelist's work. But, notwithstanding, it lies very near the Lord's heart. It was especially spoken of by Him after His resurrection (John xxi. 15-17), and became the subject of special commandment and exhortation through each of His chief apostles, Peter (1 Pet. v. 1-3) and Paul (Acts xx. 28). No amount of teaching can make up for the lack of it, nor does activity in evangelistic work keep in healthy condition the functions which true shepherd work is designed to reach. The scope of the pastor's work is chiefly that of dealing with the personal spiritual condition of the saints, finding out where they are, what the state of their souls and their

circumstances is, and seeking to straighten, to strengthen, and to restore, by patient, tender, yet faithful dealing, what they find by personal intercourse is especially lacking. In the wisdom of God, such work is always in Scripture assigned to local and resident men, in the same assembly, who, by reason of personal knowledge of the individuals, are able to enter into and deal with their condition, in a way a stranger could not. Shepherds are in the flock (Acts xx. 28, R.V.), known to and in touch with each other, and with all the sheep, and when acting together, in a godly way, are marked and well known men, owned and esteemed (1 Thess. v. 12, 13) by all who are in a right condition, but always liable to be misrepresented and maltreated by those who are away from God, and under alien or party influence (2 Cor. x. 2, 10; xii. 15-21).

I have found that the work of visiting believers in their homes, is best accomplished by two brethren going together, overtaking two or at most three families on an evening. By giving notice in the assembly, or privately, beforehand, of the district and the night of such visits, they are prepared for them, and this is necessary, else their object may be frustrated. If at all possible, get the whole household together; take up the Word of God, and occupy the time in definite and reasonable spiritual conversation, getting as close to individuals and their condition as possible. The old time “catechising” may neither be admissible nor desirable, but it had its value, and has its lessons to those who seek to get into close touch with souls and their state, and to help them. General conversation, religious gossip, or reference to persons and especially to their failings, should never be encouraged or allowed. Young people in non-Christian homes, domestic servants in worldly houses, are not so easily reached; yet even in such cases, when wisely approached, it is wonderful what has resulted in blessing, by means of such visits. Many cases of coldness and backsliding have been reached and recovered, and roots of bitterness in their early stages dealt with and dug up, too, before they had defiled others, by means of godly pastoral work. May the Great Shepherd raise up in these last and difficult days, in which Satan's snares are thickly laid and his devices many, those who will feed and shepherd the blood-bought flock, from love to its Owner, waiting for their honours and rewards (and how grand they will be, 1 Pet. v. 4) from the hand of the Chief Shepherd in the day of His appearing.

“THE NEW THEOLOGY.”

AND THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE FAITH.

SOME recent utterances of a Congregationalist minister in London, which have been spread far and wide by the religious and secular press, and for which the appellation of a “New Theology” is claimed, have aroused unusual interest among the people of God. So far as the views themselves are concerned, there is nothing either *new* or *theological* in them. Some are as old as the fourth century, and others are German infidel philosophies and speculations discredited more than a century ago, exhumed and sent forth under new names, with the empty boast that they are newly discovered, “Theology,” the reward of profound scholarship and critical acumen. Such is the enemy’s way and wiles, and by this means he beguiles those who from ignorance of the Word of God, and the devil’s devices, are at the mercy of every “wind of doctrine.” But there are some new elements in this apostacy, which mark a further stage in the progress of Satanic skill, and which here call for some notice.

The infidelity which openly avows itself in Halls of Science and Secularism, we are accustomed to, but here is a professed Christian minister, attached to what claims to be an Evangelical Church, who openly denies every fundamental truth of the Christian faith, and still retains his position and profession evidently without a qualm of conscience. Nor is this all. Leading men of his own and other denominations, who have the reputation of being “sound” and

evangelical, have hastened to express their “strong sympathy” with the leader in this apostacy, whom they describe as their “dear friend,” always “fresh and earnest.” This is characteristic of the false charity of the times, and of their utter indifference to God’s honour and His truth. But such are not the thoughts of God, nor will they be of any who fear His holy Name and love His Sacred Word. That Word declares with no uncertain sound: “If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than ye have received, let him be accursed” (Gal. i. 8); and concerning such as have apostatized from the doctrine of Christ, and are leading on in the path of error, it is equally explicit in its command. “Receive him not into your house, nor bid him God-speed. For he that biddeth him God-speed is PARTAKER of his evil deeds” (2 John 10, 11). By long trifling with the truth, and compromising with error, many have become judicially blinded and their consciences seared; but there are yet to be found in such associations some who fear the Lord and love His Word, who are by this apostacy from the faith, being thrust out of their denominations, unable any longer to be in even nominal association with them. If God over-rule this work of Satan, to open the eyes of His own, to the sin and shame of remaining in association with systems which retain and support those who overthrow the faith, and others who aid and abet them, it will be a mercy indeed. Compromise, where the foundations of the faith are imperilled, is impossible. And no form of repudiation short of separation from them, is of any value.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

THE MATERIALS AND THE PATTERN.

BY THE EDITOR.

DAVID, having been established on the throne of Israel, and at rest from all his enemies, turns his thoughts to the ark of God, which had been brought from its place of long exile to a curtained tent in his own city (2 Sam. vi. 15). Glad as he truly was, to have had the desire of his heart thus fulfilled (Psa. cxxxii. 4-7), he considers it unseemly that he should dwell in a house of cedar, while the ark of God has only a tent as its resting place. David had a heart for God, and a sense of the honour due unto His Name. He could not therefore rest at ease, while the sacred symbol of the Divine presence, the throne of Jehovah in the midst of His people, was not receiving the honour which a heart that loved Him deemed was His due. This is surely a fruit of grace and is ever well pleasing unto God. To make loud profession of our love to the Lord, and remain indifferent to the dishonour of His Name and the neglect of His Word, is hypocrisy. To keep His commandments, is the only real evidence of love to Him (John xiv. 21), to "do" the things which He says is the only true proof that we own His claims as Lord (Luke vi. 46). But a right condition of heart may exist without a true estimate of the Lord's will; the heart may be right while the thoughts are wrong. So it was with David, and Nathan, the prophet of God, only encouraged him on in his course by saying, "Go, do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee" (2 Sam.

vii. 3). Good men often err in this direction, acting without commandment from the Lord, undertaking and carrying forward schemes, which however much they may commend themselves to Davids and Nathans—men who have true hearts for God and are in many things His faithful messengers,—have been planned without any intimation of the Divine will, which is now revealed in full in the written Word, the hearty acknowledgment of which is the only true test of spirituality and obedience (1 Cor. xiv. 37). To add one jot or tittle to the perfect Word of God, to act in the things of God apart from a Divine commandment, or to diminish one word of that which God has written, is evil (Prov. xxx. 4-6; Deut. iv. 2). The Holy Scriptures, in their integrity and perfection "furnish completely" the man of God, unto every good work (2 Tim. iii. 17, R.V.). May they ever be our counsellors and guide. But the Lord is ever near to correct and instruct those who, although not in His counsel, are willing to learn. That night the word of the Lord came to Nathan, and through him to David, declaring the Divine purpose. And while for reasons which He graciously gives to the man who has a heart for his honour, he does not permit him to be the builder of the house for His Name, the Lord accepts his earnest desire and pledges His word that in Solomon, his son, that desire shall have fulfilment, and that in him also, his line shall be continued and his throne established for ever. The manner in which David accepts the decree, and bows to the Divine will, is very beautiful, and tells how fully his

heart was set, not upon his own glory—as alas! oftentimes our zeal for God when tested is found to be—but on the honour of the Lord. He goes in to sit before the Lord as an adoring worshipper, fully acquiescing in the Divine purpose, asking nothing, save its fulfilment, seeing and owning his own littleness, exalting the Lord's greatness and speaking of His people's position, privileges, and glory. Had there been selfish motives in David's heart, or a desire to be accounted great in the eyes of men as the builder of the temple, other thoughts would have been thus revealed, for nothing so quickly unmasks vain pretensions to devotedness and a zeal for God, than to hear of another being chosen to execute that, to which selfwill appoints, apart from the Divine call.

DAVID'S PREPARATIONS FOR THE TEMPLE.

As the Tabernacle in the wilderness was constructed from materials which were the freewill offerings of the Lord's redeemed people, given by those whose hearts stirred them up and whose spirit made them willing (Exod. xxxv. 21), so the more magnificent and costly temple in the land was built of materials which were the gifts of David and the covenant people. No alien's gold or gift was allowed to mingle with the willing offerings of the Lord's redeemed, who "offered willingly to the Lord," giving Him back of His own which they acknowledged had come to them from His hand (1 Chron. xxix. 9-14). David himself in his "trouble" (affliction, or low estate, R.V.) (1 Chron. xxii. 14) prepared abundantly with all his MIGHT, for the house of God gold and

silver, brass and iron, timber and stone in great abundance, the gold and silver alone amounting in English money to £889,500,000 sterling! And after that, because he had "set his AFFECTION to the house of the Lord" (1 Chron. xxix. 3), he gave of his "own proper good," casting in his own private wealth, over and above the emptying of the national exchequer, giving his costliest and best, refined silver and gold of Ophir, impoverishing himself because of his love for the habitation of his God. Surely this may remind us of Him, who though He was rich yet for our sakes became poor (2 Cor. viii. 9), who in order to obtain the object upon which His heart was set, parted with "all that He had" (Matt. xiii. 46), in order to obtain it. It is worthy of notice, that in recording the munificent gifts of the king, the princes, and the rulers, the Spirit of God not only mentions the "talents" but also the "drams" (1 Chron. xxix. 7), the little as well as the great. And we may rest assured that in the day of His judgment seat, the Lord, "the righteous Judge" (2 Tim. iv. 9), who of old sat over against the treasury, and estimated the value of the widow's mite, as "more:" than the abundance of the rich (Mark xii. 43, 44), will not fail to acknowledge the "cup of cold water" given in His Name, and reward the lowliest act of service rendered for His honour and His truth on the earth, all the more if unnamed and unnoticed among men.

THE PATTERN OF THE TEMPLE.

Although Solomon was the wisest of men (1 Kings iv. 31), and all Israel's recognised that "the wisdom of God"

was in him (1 Kings iii. 28), he was not left to his own ingenuity and skill in building the house of the Lord. A perfect pattern of the entire structure, from the place of the mercyseat in the holiest of all, to the porch and the courts and their chambers, was given by the Spirit to David (1 Chron. xxviii. 11-12), and he by the hand of the Lord upon him, was made to understand all the works of that pattern in writing, so that the place of Jehovah's dwelling might be wholly according to his mind. This was committed by David to Solomon; nothing was to be altered or added to it. And He who thus planned, provided all manner of skilled workmen to be wholly at the king's commandment (ver. 21) for the carrying out of the Divine pattern. So it had been in the days of the tabernacle in the desert. The pattern of it was shown to Moses in the Mount, the materials and measurements were described in the instructions, and the Spirit filled and fitted the chosen workmen to give effect thereto. Jehovah's jealous care of His own plan being emphasised in the repeated injunction that all should be made "after the pattern" seen in the mount (Exod. xxv. 40). In this age of heavenly and spiritual things, when God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but in a house composed of "living stones" (1 Pet. ii. 5), builded together "for a habitation of God in the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22), the Divine care to have His plan carried into effect has not been less than in tabernacle and temple times. To Paul, God's wise master builder (1 Cor. iii. 10), a pattern of the Church, as God's temple

on earth (1 Cor. iii. 16), in its spiritual constitution, its fellowship, its worship, its ministry, its rule, and its ordinances was given by the Lord from heaven, to be delivered to (1 Cor. xi. 2), and observed by the saints throughout the entire period of the Church's earthly course. There is not the slightest hint given, that any part of this Divine pattern was to be annulled or altered, or adapted to meet the demands of progress as the years go by. It is part of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3) of the truth in which they are to "continue" (2 Tim. iii. 14). As the Word of God, it comes "unto" the church—not "out from" it, as if it were the legislator (1 Cor. xiv. 36)—to be owned and obeyed, and in the way of humble, unhesitating obedience comes the Divine power and blessing. The All-wise God has planned with perfect, unerring skill and wisdom, what He knows to be best fitted for the maintenance of its spiritual life, its godly edification, its continuous fruitfulness, and its effectual testimony. The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, who indwells it as Bond of unity, Power of worship, Administrator and Guide in service, is there to uphold the honour of Christ as Head and Lord, and to maintain the authority of the Truth which gives Him His rightful place. The enjoyment of the Spirit's ministry through those whom the Lord sets as His chosen channels, must ever be in the way of conformity to the pattern which He has given, and barrenness ever the result of turning from it to construct churches and legislate for their supply and control according to human wisdom and device.

JERUSALEM AND BABYLON.

SYMBOLS OF THE TRUE CHURCH AND THE FALSE.

BY DR. J. NORMAN CASE.

HOW many of the 'great events of history are connected with its chief cities! In the ancient world, Babylon and Jerusalem were the most prominent of these. In the Sacred Scriptures these cities are used in a symbolic sense; the one stands on the opposite and antagonist of the other. Babylon stands for lawlessness, superstition, idolatry, and all that in things religious, is contrary to God. Jerusalem represents Divine revelation and rule, subjection, obedience, spiritual worship, and all that in these things, is according to God and His will.

This, however, is to speak of Jerusalem *ideally*, what she was in the Divine purpose. But alas! for fallen man, she did not continue faithful to God or His truth. In reference to the literal city, one of Israel's prophets exclaimed: "How is the faithful city become an harlot!" Her people had turned from the true and living God to worship and serve idols. In the last six chapters of the Revelation, striking and detailed contrasts are drawn between these two symbolic cities, and that which each represented is fully manifested.

Babylon, the shameless, dissolute harlot city, the mistress and ruler of earth's kings, stands opposed to the New Jerusalem, the faithful and holy city, the Bride of the Lamb. So far, the characteristics and corruptions of Babylon the Great have been most fully manifested in Romanism, but not there only, and the

the near future will probably show rapid developments on these lines, in an easygoing Protestantism, little dreamt of by many.

THE NEW JERUSALEM is a symbol of the true Church, every member of which has been foreknown and chosen by God the Father, redeemed and cleansed by the blood of Christ, the Son, and regenerated and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In both cases the symbol is double: a city and a woman. As the Bride, the Church is viewed in a peculiarly near and dear relationship to Christ. As a city she is represented as holding a special and important relation to Israel and the nations. We will briefly notice some of the characteristics of the Church as a City.

1. It is *Conspicuous*.—"A city that is set on a hill," said the Lord, "cannot be hid" (Matt. v. 14). This prominent position has been allotted to the church. While in the world she is not of it. "As unknown and yet well known" is the Lord's purpose for His people as a whole, as well as for individuals among them. A city "set on a hill" catches the eye from a long distance, especially when well lighted up, on a dark night. Such was to be the testimony of the Church as founded by Christ, and left in the world to be His witness and lightbearer there (Rev. i. 20). Individually and collectively, believers are called to let their light so shine before men, that they may see their good works and glorify their Father who is in heaven.

2. It is *Free*.—"The Jerusalem which is above," writes the apostle, "is free, which is our mother" (Gal. iv. 21-26, R.V.). The Church is free; freedom is

written on her charter, on the ground of which she has great and inalienable privileges. The earthly Jerusalem, under the law, was, as it were, the child of a bond-woman, and as a consequence was in bondage with her children. The heavenly Jerusalem, under grace, is herself free, and becomes the mother, not of slaves, but of free children. At our conversion we received "not the spirit of bondage" (Rom. viii. 15), but the Spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6, 7). So that we are no longer bond servants, but sons, free citizens, indeed, of no mean city!

3. It is *Heavenly*.—Concerning all in new covenant relationship it is said: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem," &c. (Heb. xii. 22-24). In origin, construction, and destiny, this city is heavenly. Its Architect and Maker is God. Already it is viewed as being in heaven; its citizens are partakers of a heavenly calling; and while yet on earth are expected to exhibit heavenly characteristics. And all belonging thereto rejoice as they remember the word, "Your names are written in heaven" (Luke x. 20).

4. It is *Holy*.—The seer in vision beheld "The holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God" (Rev. xxi. 10, R.V.). This is her peculiar glory. And in this she stands in striking contrast to that system which is described as "Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth" (Ch. xvii. 51). Those thus described are "saints" (Rom. i. 7) or *holy ones*, by their calling,

Such they ought to be in their conduct (Eph. v. 3). Oh, that this may be apprehended by all upon whom Christ's holy Name has been called! That such may speedily separate themselves from those corrupt and Christ-dishonouring religious systems, whether as represented by the mother or her daughters, and manifest by a holy walk and life, that they belong to that holy city.

5. It shall *Endure* forever.—The very figure of a city, points to that which is intended to endure. Just as it calls for wisdom, skill, and vast resources in its designer. After the thousand years are finished, when the present heavens and earth shall have played their part and passed away, then, in all its pristine freshness, perfect symmetry and ravishing beauty, this city of God, the New Jerusalem, shall appear as a monument through eternal ages of God's wisdom, power, and grace.

6. A means of *Beatifying and Blessing* others.—In her shall abide "the glory of God," the Shechinah-light, the glory ever associated with Jehovah's immediate and special presence. The city itself shall be as a great *luminary*, illumining and beatifying all that it shines upon. As it is written: "Her light was like unto a stone most precious, as it were a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Rev. xxi. 11). With a light far above the brightness and beauty of sunlight shall this city shine forth; but she will be a *luminary* only. Like the moon, in this respect, hers will be reflected light. As it is written: "The city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of

God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (ch. xxi. 23).

7. This city is *God's eternal dwelling-place*.—As of old the tabernacle, and later the temple, was the centre and glory of the social and religious life of Israel, so in the new heaven and earth, the New Jerusalem, shall be the centre of blessing of every redeemed family and race of men, for Jehovah will dwell there. The voice from the throne cried, "Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall tabernacle with them, and they shall be His people and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God," &c. (ch. xxi. 1-5, R.V.).

8. *A Bride* as well as a City.—Apostate Christendom is viewed as a woman as well as a city. And so also is the true church. The two figures merge into each other, so that the same people in one clause of a verse are viewed as a city, and in the next as a Bride, which reminds us that God is speaking to us of heavenly and eternal realities, under earthly and temporal figures. The reality will go beyond man's fullest conception of the figure. Her chief glory will be, that the presence of God will be there for ever. For while God and the Lamb become the temple of the city, the city becomes the abode of the Triune God—Father, Son, and Spirit. Then shall be fully, consciously, and eternally fulfilled the word of our Lord: "In in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in Me; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me" (John xvii. 21). Praise for ever be to His Name!

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

II.—AS IT WILL BE IN THE FUTURE.

BY WILLIAM LINCOLN.

"THE kingdom of God's dear Son" (Col. i.) contemplates the state in which the church now is, whilst evil is in the saints, even though they are reconciled by His blood.

iii. The kingdom in the *future*—in the Millennium. When the Lord first returns and raises all the dead saints, and changes all His living ones, catching them away to be for ever with Him, the kingdom will still be carried on here; for then His earthly people will come once more into notice before Him, and the heart of a remnant of them will be touched by His Spirit. The gathering of the heavenly wheat into the barn is one thing, but the separating of the bad from the good at His appearing is quite another. Four stages in the sifting process are brought before us in the parables of the tares and wheat. First, the tares are gathered into bundles, a process which is now going on—witness the increasingly large armies of Christendom. Secondly, the gathering of the wheat into the barn—which is what we are waiting for. Thirdly, at the appearing of Christ with His heavenly saints, the casting of the tares into the fire; and lastly, the righteous shining out as the sun, in their Father's kingdom. Now we, as the heavenly ones—the sunbeams, placed there previous to our outshining here—have nothing to do with dates. There are for the earthly people, and particularly that great one of the seventieth week of Daniel, of which so much is made in the Revelation. As long

as we are here, even if we were here two thousand years more, this week of twice 1260 days cannot *begin*. Probably this will be the space of time between our rapture to be with Christ, and our appearing in glory with Him.

Now, when the Lord returns, the first effect of His appearing will be, that all wickedness will flee from His presence, and righteousness will come to the front and flourish. At present, righteousness is much hidden, and is pushed into corners. But then all the righteous will rejoice, because He will at length set up His reign of righteousness in power. As for us, His church, His advent is not to put us into a right position, but to manifest and gladden us. But His appearing will expose all the wrong principles even of His own saints, and our reward in His kingdom will be according to our identification with Him in His rejection. By the eye of faith, even now the crown is seen resting on the cross. It was when His kingdom and cause appeared at their lowest ebb, that one, taught of God to read aright the inscription over that cross, gladdened then the heart of Jesus, by His reference onward to the time when the Lord should come in His kingdom (Luke xxiii. 43). Thus faith knows that He is King. All the members of His church will be crowned and enthroned (Rev. i. 6, and iv. and v.); for in principle, at the very least, they are all upon His side, however they may have been beguiled as to practice. But the variations in the crown, whether of life, of righteousness, or of glory, that is, the hue of the crown, will at once exhibit the measure of His

approbation, and the degree of faithfulness, or of unfaithfulness, in our service. The importance of this view is enhanced by the statement, that these rewards of His are "eternal" (1 Pet. v. 4). For His kingdom is an eternal one (2 Pet. i. 11). For the objects of His reign are first to put things right, that is, to order all things according to God, and then to consolidate everything (Rev. xxii. 11).

Thus the heavens shall yet reign, and His heavenly ones administer His will. The angels—God's ministers in the old creation—will be superseded by those brought nearer to God than themselves, and made one with Christ—the Stone cut out without hands. Whatever is rearranged, is placed on a new, a redemption and resurrection basis. Thus it fares with Israel (Ezek. xxxvii.), and ultimately, at the close of His reign, with the earth itself (2 Pet. iii., and compare Matt. xix., 28). But in this divine rearrangement and final consolidation of all things, God's mode of procedure will be to begin from the very highest, and to work downwards, until not a soul, nor even a single sand upon the seashore, remains unaffected by His power.

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ERROR MADE ATTRACTIVE.—The devil is especially busy at the present time in setting forth fundamental error, subversive of the vitals of the Christian faith, in attractive forms, dished up in carefully chosen words, and garnished with fragmentary portions of truth to deceive the unwary. It does not suit the enemy's purpose to spread error unattractively.

OUTLINES IN ACTS.

PART IX.—CHRIST THE CHURCH'S HEAD.

WHEN the Lord ascended, on his way up, he was a conqueror in triumph, leading captivity captive. But when He reached His heavenly seat, He became a crowned priest,* and sent down coronation gifts to His Church, by the ministry of which He is either forming or strengthening the union between Himself and the members here, and their union among themselves. These ministries thus act like the joints and bands in the human body. And all other ministries the Apostle sets aside as "rudiments of the world," fitted to those who are alive in the world, but most unsuited to those who are—as the Church is—dead and risen with Christ (see Eph. iv. 16; Col. ii. 19-23).

We are therefore not true to the ascension of our Head, if we do not look for His ascension gifts in those who minister in His Name. They constitute the handwriting of the Lord in the Church's genealogies. The Jews were careful to put from the priesthood those whose genealogy could not be proved. They refused to register them (Ezra ii. 62; Neh. vii. 63). And this, too, in a day when all was feebleness in Israel. No

*The "glory and honour" that form our Lord's present crown were typified by Aaron's garments, which were said to be to him for "glory and beauty" (Ex. xxviii. 2). And the very same words are used in the Septuagint, for "glory and beauty," as our translators have rendered, "glory and honour," in Heb. ii. 7; so that the Lord's present crown is a *priest's* crown or mitre, and not a *king's*. He has not put on His royal crown yet.

cloudy pillar had led them on their way home from Babylon—no arm of the Lord had gloriously made a passage for them through the deserts—no rain of angel's food from heaven, nor ark of the covenant was with them. All this, and more than this, was gone. But did they plead their feebleness, and do nothing? Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah do what they can. They cannot recover everything, but they do what they can. And among other services, they read the genealogies, and do not allow the holy things to be eaten by unproved claimants of the priesthood. And ours, dear brethren, is a day of feebleness like theirs. Much of the former strength and beauty is gone, and we cannot recover everything. But it is not therefore to be a day of allowed evil; nor are we, in the spirit of slumber, to fold the arms, and say, "There is no hope." We should do what we could, and among other services, we can study the genealogies, when any one seeks their register: and thus they run, "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre" (1 Tim. iii.).

Thus run the genealogies of the bishops of the flock of God; thus has the Spirit of the ascended Head of the Church written in His Word.

J. G. B.

By the truth we are sanctified, and then practice gradually becomes easier, and in the end it forms in us habits, and habits form character, and character is eternal (Rev. xxii. 11).—*Wm. Lincoln.*

The Bible Annotator.

GEMS FOR BIBLE READINGS.

A TRIPLET OF "HATHS."

In Colossians I. True of all Believers.

"Who hath DELIVERED us" (ver. 13).

"Who hath TRANSLATED us" (ver. 13).

"Who hath MADE US MEET" (ver. 12).

THREE DIVINE REALITIES.

Christ's Blood shed for us (Matt. xxvi. 28)—Atonement.

The Spirit shed on us (Titus iii. 6)—Regeneration.

God's Love shed abroad in us (Rom. v. 5)—Communion.

THE WORK OF GOD IN THE BELIEVER.

Inaugurated at Conversion (Phil. i. 6).

Progresses through Life (Phil. ii. 12, 13).

Completed at Christ's Coming (Phil. iii. 32).

WHAT TO "GLORY" IN.

In the Cross (Gal. vi. 14).

In the Lord (2 Cor. x. 17).

In Tribulations (Rom. v. 3).

In Infirmities (2 Cor. xii. 9).

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Texts with Disputed Meanings.

Matthew xix. 28.—"The Regeneration" here, has reference to the new and manifest change on things terrestrial, which will come into existence during the millennium, under the peaceful reign of the Lord Jesus (see Isa. xi. 1-9; xxxvi. 1-10). It is also spoken of by Peter as "the Restitution of all things" (Acts iii. 21). It has no reference to the "conversion of all mankind," or to universal salvation, as some have asserted.

Hebrews v. 1.—The teaching of this verse is that "every high priest taken from among men"—that is of Aaron's order—was appointed to offer "sacrifices for sins." The High Priesthood of the Son of God is a contrast to this, for it is based upon His perfect sacrifice, which has "put away sin" (Heb. ix. 26), so that there is no "more offering for sin" (Heb. x. 18).

Hebrews vii. 8.—Melchisedec was undoubtedly a real and historic person, as truly as other typical men whose names appear in the Book of Genesis. He was not the "Son of God," but made like unto Him, in so far as the Spirit records his appearance and action in Gen. xiv. 18-20. The silence of

Scripture respecting his ancestors, birth, death, lapse of office, and successor—all of which were so strongly marked in the Aaronic line of priesthood—constitutes him a type of Christ who, after "the order of Melchisedec, abideth a priest continually."

Mark iii. 28-30.—The sin of blasphemy or "railing against the Holy Spirit" is clearly defined in this passage. It is comparable in character to the blasphemy against the Son of God, which attributed His works of power to affinity with the prince of demons. It surely may be committed in this day of the personal presence of the Paraclete upon earth, whose ministry (John xvi. 8, 9) of conviction is by many so deliberately and persistently rejected, until conscience becoming seared (1 Tim. iv. 22) through giving heed to "doctrines of demons," is "past feeling" (Eph. v. 19), and a resolved and deliberate hostility to God, His holiness, and His justice definitely manifested. And all this against light, especially against the light of the Gospel of Christ, which is God's final message to men in this dispensation of the Spirit (see 1 Pet. i. 12; Heb. k. 29). The awful and mysterious passage is not designed to hinder sin-burdened souls from appropriating that salvation which Christ has procured for sinners even "the chief" (1 Tim. i. 15), but to warn those who turn their backs on the Saviour, to whom the Spirit bears witness (John xv. 26), that there is no other way of forgiveness here, or hereafter.

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The Young Believer's Question Box.

What is "the error of Balaam" (Jude 11)? Covetousness, particularly that form of it which deals in religion as a profession because of its gain. To preach or teach for money, comes perilously near to "following the way of Balaam" (2 Pet. ii. 15).

Is the term, "the church which is His body" (Eph. i. 22, 23) only applicable to saints on earth, or does it include those who have fallen asleep? The closing words of Ephesians i., "the fulness of Him that filleth all in all," would surely include all the saints of the present dispensation, while 1 Cor. xii. 27, has only in view saints in mortal bodies on earth, capable of exercising ministries toward fellow-members of the one body, and is necessarily limited to time and earth. We should seek to distinguish between such passages in which the "body" is used as an illustration, and others in which the great fact of the vital union of Christ and His members is in view.

What is the difference between Eternal Life and Immortality? Eternal Life is the present possession of all believers ((John iii. 15; 1 John v. 13). All men—believers and unbelievers—exist; yet only the former have eternal life. The latter do not have it now (John vi. 53; 1 John v. 12), they never shall (John iii. 36); yet they will exist for ever, the wrath of God abiding in them (Rev. xxi. 8). "Immortality"—a word which is only applied to the body—will be given to all believers living in mortal bodies, and "Incorruptibility" to all who have died (see 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53), at the Lord's coming.

Answers to Correspondents.

"INQUIRER."—George Whitefield died at Newburyport, U.S.A., on Lord's day evening, September 30th, 1770.

A. L., MONMOUTH.—The doctrine of the tract you send, is a crude statement of "Quakerism," evidently written by some one who has fallen out of rank in his former association (1) because they would not give "the inward light" a place above the written Word, and (2) because they would not allow women to "prophesy" in the Church. The following extract is characteristic: "It is Immanuel! God with us! God IN us! It is the Spirit of Truth! The Word nigh us! The Holy Ghost! The Spirit of Christ! Verily to be found in EVERY heart, in ALL nations, among all peoples; everywhere—BAD as well as good, except they be reprobates." This is worthy of "The New Theology." The "immanence of God" is here taught with a vengeance. There is no need for redemption or regeneration, if "Immanuel, God with us," is already "in EVERY heart—BAD as well as good." If this is "Quaker Faith," as he calls it, there is surely some need for "the Written Word" being brought in occasionally to test it by, and see how they do.

J. R., MANCHESTER.—No Christian servant ought to be under such a yoke as necessitates disobeying Eph. vi. 5, 6, and going "on strike" at the call of a ring of Socialists or other ungodly men. The difficulties of a path of separation from such "combines" will increase, alike to employers and employed, as the last great struggle advances, but the promise of Prov. iii. 6 is of abiding value, and will be proved all-sufficient in every trial of faith by those who seek to act upon it.

D. B., AYRSHIRE.—Lack of funds to efficiently carry on Gospel work, may arise from lack of interest on the part of believers, and is often due to the lack of that healthful teaching in their midst which produces and maintains it. But there may be other causes, and we think one of them is, that children of God who read their Bibles and desire to be controlled in their responsibilities by what they find there, do not regard some of the present day methods of raising and disbursing funds for evangelistic work to be according to the principles of the Word of God at all. Neither begging circulars, subscription lists, nor detailed descriptions of the personal requirements of servants of Christ, have they found there. Nor have they seen any Divine authority for stated salaries, preachers paid so much money for so long preaching, nor evangelists located and practically controlled in their service by those who engage and are understood to finance them. Such departures from the principles of the Word, and the earlier practices of Assemblies gathered unto the Lord's Name, may appear trifling, but we do not believe that God so regards them, and there are still both individual believers and assemblies who, for that very reason, do not feel themselves called up to help on by their fellowship what they regard as a serious withdrawal from the Divine principles of the Word which ought to be ever our guide.

Answers to Special Questions.

QUESTION III.—Who are the "spirits in prison" (1 Pet. iii. 19), and when and by whom were they "preached" to?

ANSWER A.—The two current interpretations of this passage are (1) that it was the Lord, by His Spirit through Noah, who preached to the antediluvians, without effect, they now being "in prison" awaiting the final judgment (Rev. xx. 11); (2) that the Lord, between His Death and Resurrection, went in spirit to the departed spirits of the antediluvians—some say to all the then departed—and offered them first, the salvation He had procured by His death. The latter has no support from any other Scripture, and a doctrine of so far-reaching import cannot be built on a mere allusion.

J. M.

ANSWER B.—"The spirits" here referred to, are held by some to be those fallen "sons of God" non-human beings (Gen. vi. 2, 4), whose rebellion was in times before the flood. To them in their prison the Lord proclaimed His triumph (see Col.

ii. 15), and the hopelessness of all Satan's efforts to hinder or mar the great work of man's salvation.

W. J.

ANSWER C.—Noah preached by the Spirit of Christ before the flood, to those who were on earth in his day, but who were "in prison" when Peter wrote his epistle. We read in Gen. vi. 3, that Jehovah's Spirit was only to strive with man 120 years. Those who disobeyed are now "in prison."

N. L. N.

ANSWER D.—Romanists find their doctrine of purgatory in this passage, with 1 Pet. iv. 6; Restitutionists, the final restoration of all; and advocates of "The Wider Hope," another and fuller offer of salvation in the spirit world beyond. But there is nothing whatever in the passage to warrant such doctrines. The preacher was Noah (see 2 Pet. ii. 5);—who as others of his time had the spirit of Christ (1 Pet. i. 11), those preached to the godless antediluvians (Luke xvii. 27); the time, when once the long-suffering of God waited while the ark was a preparing;" the result, "they were all destroyed" (Luke xvii. 29) in regard to their bodies, while their "spirits" are now in prison, awaiting resurrection and judgment.

J. S.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The above answers express the varied views commonly held on this unique passage of the Sacred Word, which is, and ever has been, a subject of controversy among expositors and theologians. Answers C and D express what we believe to be its meaning. Against the view that the Lord in His disembodied spirit went and preached to departed spirits in Hades, who, during their earthly life, had been disobedient, and that we may from this infer that death does not for unbelievers of the present time end probation or close the door against a hope of future salvation, we would submit the following to the consideration of our readers:—(1) That the Lord, in His disembodied state, entered Hades, Acts ii. 26, 27 tells. (2) That Hades, which signifies "covered," and represents the Old Testament Hebrew word "Sheol" was, prior to the death of Christ, composed of two separate compartments, in one of which the departed spirits of the righteous were, in the other those of the wicked dead, with a gulf fixed between them (see Luke xvi. 23-26). (3) The Lord entered the former, and as some infer from Eph. iv. 9, led with Him from Hades to Paradise the spirits of the ransomed dead of former ages (compare Luke xxiii. 43; 2 Cor. xii. 4), where now the spirits of all who die in faith are welcomed by Him (Acts vii. 59;

2 Cor. v. 8, R.V.), to await resurrection and reunion with spiritual bodies (1 Cor. xv. 44) at His coming. (4) No hint is given that any change has been or will be effected on the wicked, until Death gives up their bodies, and Hades their souls, to be reunited for the judgment of the Great White Throne (Rev. xx. 11). (5) Neither to the lost antediluvians, nor to any others, who have heard and rejected God's message, and the testimony of His Word (Luke xvi. 31) is there held forth a hope of salvation, or of evangelisation, or purification from sin, in the disembodied or eternal state. (6) The proclamation of the Gospel of God's grace to men is final, and the destiny of those who receive and reject it, is fixed in this life (Mark xvi. 16; John iii. 36). (7) At death the believer, whose judgment is past (John v. 24), goes to be "with Christ" to await His glory; the unbeliever to Hades, there in conscious misery (Luke xvi. 23) to await his final judgment and eternal doom in the lake of fire. Any interpretation of this passage, which goes against the tenor of Scripture, and necessitates the creation of a doctrine which has no other support in the Word, must therefore be rejected.

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Questions Requiring Answers.

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Help in the answering of these questions will be welcomed. The answers should be brief and suggestive, leading TO the Word of God, which is the final appeal and supreme authority in Divine things. While avoiding dogmatic statements on matters concerning which there is no direct "commandment of the Lord," those who know the truth and are "fully assured" (2 Tim. ii. 14) of having it from God, should state it plainly and wisely. There are many honest inquirers who greatly value help ministered in this way, and we have numerous grateful testimonies to timely aid given in testing seasons and perplexing paths, received through these brief answers.

IV.—Can a Christian guided by the Word of God become a Freemason? Can one be regarded as fitted to oversee and teach in the Christian Assembly, who is a member of this craft?

V.—Are there two circles of church fellowship authorised in the Scripture; one permanent, composed of those who have been "received" (Rom xvi. 1, 2) and "added" (Acts ii. 21) to the local assembly, and another of "casual" visitors who are either brought by friends, or come as they would to any of the denominations? If so, where are they described and wherein do they differ?

VI.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF OUR LORD.

SUBSTANCE OF AN ADDRESS AT BELIEVER'S MEETINGS, BRISTOL, SUBSEQUENTLY ENLARGED.

BY G. FRED. BERGIN.

BELOVED in the Lord: there is an awful solemnity about life in these present days, as we think of how the truth of God is travestied, and how the most solemn subjects are treated as questions to be discussed in the daily newspapers. When I was a young man, such questions would have been relegated to theological magazines, but now the papers are open to treat of things which are utterly beyond discussion. There is nothing that will enable us to firmly stand against such a state of things but the blessed Word of God. We do not need anything new, what we do need is, what the Apostle Paul said was needed by the elders at Ephesus: speaking of the evil days coming, and the things that would happen. He said, "*And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the Word of His grace.*" God and the Word of His grace are more than sufficient for all times, and for all the evils that shall surely arise, and the heart really established in grace, and resting on the testimony of that Word, will not be disturbed by these things.

When the subject was arranged which we are to consider to-night, my heart was very much drawn out to speak on *the birth of our Lord into this world.* This subject is not often ministered upon in our meetings, perhaps because of the very delicacy of it. But in these times, when the enemy so vauntingly shouts his disbelief of the whole matter, we must calmly face such things.

It has been contemptuously said that this subject is only mentioned in two

Gospels, that Paul does not mention it. Now, I want to show, especially to any young believers, how this subject occupies Scripture from beginning to end. Turn with me to seven passages.

First.—(Gen. iii.)—Perhaps you know that "Genesis" is a Greek word, meaning *beginning*, and in this book of Genesis we have the beginning of everything that is found afterwards in the Bible. Though we may not have eyes to discern all, yet we can discern a great deal. In chap. iii. 15, after the terrible fall of Eve first, then Adam, the Lord says to the serpent, "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*" That one sentence contains one of the mightiest truths in God's Word. The enmity has existed, and will exist. Her Seed came into the world, and His heel was bruised by Satan, and by that very bruising, viz., Calvary's Cross, He secured the fulfilment of the bruising of the serpent's head. Shortly, God will bruise Satan under our feet, when we shall be associated with that blessed One in resurrection glory. "*Her Seed,*" it does not say Adam's seed. Here we have wrapped up in a nutshell, the whole of that marvellous doctrine of the Virgin birth of our Lord, in this first of the beginnings. It is very striking how the Lord differentiates between her *Seed*, and her son that she shall beget—Cain. God looked forward through the ages to the fulness of time. These words were spoken 4000 years before the fulfilment of the events thus dimly outlined.

Second.—Turn now to Isaiah vii., and you get the seed developing into a great tree. This book was written about 740

years B.C., half-way between the time those words in Genesis were written by Moses and the time that Christ came. Just think of it; eight hundred years of silence on God's part concerning this momentous subject had rolled round and again He speaks, and He chooses a time when the house of David was "wearying" Him. King Ahaz is on the throne, of whom it is said in 2 Kings xvi., "*He did not that which was right in the sight of Jehovah his God, like David his father. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel.*" Then is recorded his visit to Damascus where he sees a heathen altar, and he "*sent to Urijah, the priest, the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it. . . . And Urijah, the priest, built an altar according to all that King Ahaz had sent from Damascus.*" On this occasion God chooses Isaiah to be his mouthpiece and gives a sign to his backsliding people, "*The Lord Himself shall give you a sign: Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*" Oh, what a mine of truth there is in this midway Scripture—midway between the first planting of the seed, and the full development of the tree.

Third.—(Jeremiah xxxi. 22).—After a hundred and thirty years of silence, again Jehovah speaks on this momentous subject. This time He employs Jeremiah the prophet as His mouthpiece, who, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, utters this remarkable message: "*The Lord has created a new thing in the earth: A woman shall compass a man.*" In the Hebrew Scriptures there are several distinct words translated by our English word *man*: two are of frequent use: neither of these is used in this place, but a word is chosen

that means "a strong man, or a mighty one." It is used again in that remarkable utterance of Jehovah through Zechariah, chap. xiii. 7, "*Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow.*" Further, notice the statement: "*Jehovah has created a new thing in the earth*"—which is, a woman was about to encompass Jehovah's fellow. Observe the circumstances that called forth this remarkable utterance, the virgin of Israel is addressed, "*O thou backsliding daughter.*"

Fourth.—Turn now to the Gospel records for the fulfilment of this thrice predicted wonder. Six hundred years of silence about this on God's part had taken place, when no longer a human voice or pen, but an angel, is the mouthpiece of God (read Luke i. 26-38). Mark the words of the angel to a virgin (verse 31): "*Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name Jesus,*" and when Mary tells out her pure-minded astonishment, the angel unfolds how Jehovah will create the new thing which He had predicted six hundred years before by Jeremiah (verse 35): "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee: therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*" Thus not by ordinary generation, but by the power of the Most High overshadowing her, this woman encompassed a Mighty One. "*With God nothing shall be impossible.*" Further, mark His Name, JESUS, which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Joshua—meaning "The salvation of Jehovah."

Fifth.—(Read Matt. i. 18-25.). This is later in point of time than the event recorded by Luke: "*Before they came*

together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." When this fact became known to Joseph, he, "*being a just man,*" supposing she had sinned, "*was minded to put her away privily.*" Then a heavenly message reaches him. Again an angel is the mouthpiece of Jehovah, "*Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He it is that shall save His people from their sins.*" Thus we have two distinct revelations concerning the coming to pass of the *new thing in the earth*. First, Mary has revealed to her that she is to be—*without marriage*—the Mother of the long promised Seed, who shall bruise the serpent's head, and of whose kingdom there shall be no end. Second, Joseph has revealed to him that the one to whom he was engaged, needs not be put away as a sinful woman: nay, rather, that in her is being fulfilled by the operation of the Holy Ghost the prophecy of Isaiah, that a *Virgin* shall bring forth a son, whose name shall be called Immanuel, which means—God with us.

Sixth.—Let us now look at the testimony to this wondrous truth by the Holy Ghost through the apostle Paul (Galatians iv. 4): "*In the fulness of time, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman.*" Notwithstanding the fact that this form of expression is found referring to ordinary generation—(see Job xiv. 1)—"*Man that is born of woman,*" yet remembering that it is not Paul's usual way of writing—(see Rom. i. 3)—"*born of the seed of David,*" and that the prediction of God given in Eden, in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah, was well known to him; that he was cognizant of the marvellous fulfilment of them as

recorded in the Gospels, it can scarcely be denied with fairness of exposition, that we have here a *designed* allusion to the Virgin birth of our blessed Lord.

Seventh.—Finally, turn to 1 Timothy ii. 15, which, according to the Revised Version, reads, "*Notwithstanding she shall be saved through the childbearing.*"* I have no doubt from a careful examination of both the Greek text and of the context, that the rendering given in the text of the Revised Version is the real meaning. The word spoken in Eden to the woman carried with it the promise of safe delivery in child birth, and is common to the whole human race without any condition of godliness. Failure in it not infrequently comes to godly folk: and to suppose that this is the sequel to the solemn and deep truth about the Fall, is indeed a barren thought. But the sublime thought of salvation through the promised Seed, yea further, that the grace of God would then give to the woman who was the one to bring sin into the world, apart from

* For those who may question the accuracy of this rendering of 1 Timothy ii. 15, I here subjoin the thoughtful and scholarly words of the late Bishop Elli ott in his commentary on the Pastoral epistles, written about 1856. This writer was eminent for his scholarship of New Testament Greek, and as such was chosen as chairman of the New Testament Revision Committee. Those who know his writings, know the painstaking reverent way he deals with the Word of God.

"*Dia res teknogonias* 'by means of the child-bearing. Setting aside all untenable or doubtful interpretations of *dia* and *teknogonias*, we have two explanations: (a) 'by child-bearing'; by fulfilling her proper destiny, and acquiescing in all the conditions of woman's life; (b) 'by the child-bearing,' i.e. by the relation in which woman stood to the Messiah, in consequence of the primal prophecy that 'her seed (not man's) should bruise the serpent's head' (Gen. iii. 15), 'the peculiar function of her sex (from its relation to her Saviour) shall be the medium of her salvation. This latter interpretation when we consider its extreme appropriateness, and the high probability that the Apostle, in speaking of woman's transgression, would not fail to specify the sustaining prophecy which even preceded her sentence. When we add to this the satisfactory meaning which *dia* thus bears—the uncircumscribed reference of *sothesetai*—the force of the article (passed over by most expositors)—and, lastly, observe the coldness and jejune-ness of (a), it seems difficult to avoid deciding in favour of (b)."

the man, to be the one, apart from the man, to bring the Saviour into the world; this is a truth worthy of the subject, and of the Holy Spirit who inspired it.

Here is a seven-fold testimony running right through Scripture to this solemn and blessed doctrine of how "*The Word became flesh.*" God predicted it in the Garden of Eden; Isaiah enlarges upon it; Jeremiah prophecies a new thing is to happen; two of the four Gospels record the fulfilment of this wondrous event, and the Apostle Paul refers to it in both of these Scriptures.

And so adoringly we worship the Man who is Jehovah's Fellow; adoringly we admire the wisdom of God in bringing to pass His marvellous prediction, without letting His beloved Son, who was "*holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,*" be involved with those He came to save. God arranged from eternity that He should be born without the taint of Adam's sin "*That holy thing*" becomes the One who is to bruise the head of the serpent by His death on the Cross; He becomes a Saviour for the woman who brought sin into the world, and a Saviour for you and me, in whom we can rejoice.

⓪ beloved, listen not to those who question these things; these things are not to be questioned. This precious truth is emphasized from Genesis onward, that He was-born of the Virgin Mary.

Very many of the difficulties which are connected with the Word of God, arise, not from the Scriptures themselves, but in meanings which have been read into them.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS AT MOTHERWELL CONFERENCE.
BY W. H. HUNTER, MANCHESTER.

Read John x. 39 to John x. 19.

THE words form some of the most brilliant and most glorious of the jewels in the treasury of God. The double asseveration by which each of the little parables was introduced—Amen! Amen!—(that is to say, the witness and the assent of the Son of Man and of the Spirit of God, who was in and with Him, to the voice which they had heard from the throne) marks their special importance, their exceptional solemnity. But the power and the glory of the words are enhanced by their setting, for they are set in the fine gold of the Kingdom of God, and apart from that setting we miss some of their lustre and of their more solemn importance. The setting of the parables is that of the declaring of divine judgment, not judgment in the sense of condemnation, but rather in the sense of decree; of decree authoritative, official, and conclusive; the decree of the eternal sovereignty, the sovereignty essential to God's own nature, God's own plans, and God's own position. Ever and again as the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ declared that decree in the olden day, and still declares the decree to-day, so that we are reminded of the 3rd of Hebrews, in which the words spoken to the men of olden time are transferred to ourselves, to whom it is still said, "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." The words are not addressed to the outside world, they are still spoken to the Lord's people. Pharaoh hardened his heart against God, against His Word, and not once or twice, until at last God spoke

from His throne in judgment and in sovereignty and hardened the heart of that ancient monarch, so that for him there was no hope. That is the principle which the Lord Jesus laid down in the first words which we read. If we say, "We see;" there is danger before us; or if we declare that we do not see or that we cannot see, there being all the time a determination deep down in our hearts not to see; we are in peril lest the decree fall upon us, and things which have been revealed be hidden from our eyes. The grave words in which John ix. closes introduce the parable by which John x. is opened. The parable is of no slight importance to-day. There is hardly any part of the New Testament which we need so continually to refer to, for in the parable three marks are given whereby we may know the sheep of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first and perhaps the most important is that the sheep *hear His voice*; the second is that they *recognise His voice*, they know it; and the third is that they give effect to their hearing and recognition, for they *follow Him*. These are the three marks which the Shepherd left, that thereby the sheep might be distinguished, and that through them we might try ourselves and see whether we are in the faith or not.

The matter is one of an intensely personal and experimental character throughout. The hearing is in a man's own inner being, he can tell the tale—

"All on a wild March morning I heard the Saviour call,
Just as the moon was setting and the dark came over all;
The trees began to whisper as the winds began to roll,
All on a wild March morning I heard Him speak to my
soul."

but he can share it with no other, nor can he confide to another the way in which the secret of the Lord was declared to him, and

in which he came to "know" the voice of Him who spake; yet it is imperative that we should recognise as well as hear, lest like unto the child Samuel we should hear the voice of the Lord, and say with assurance that He had called us.

The Shepherd entered into the fold for the purpose of leading out His own sheep. He called them, they heard, they recognised, they responded. He put Himself at their head, and led them out so far as they were willing to go. Some of them apparently were somewhat unwilling to be led out; they were moderate men, as we would say, men who objected to extremes, who were contented with a middle position, and who, therefore, were in sharp contrast to the great man through whom we have received the parable under our consideration. John was a man of extremes if ever there was one, and if any one doubts this proposition, let him turn to the first epistle which we have from John's hand. In that epistle all things are at the extreme; they are either "of God" or "of the devil;" either righteousness or lawlessness; either light or darkness; either of grace or it is sin; there is no middle ground, no twilight, no tint of grey. Some of the moderate people in that day were hardly willing to be led out, and for them there was and is a gracious word, for it is written, "He put them out." Oh, that He would deal with His sheep in that way with us to-day. The next parable is of a different character, and varied in its symbolism. He who, in the first parable, entered in through the door, in the second became the door. "I am *the door of the sheep*," the one and only door, and if any one enter in through that door "He shall be saved." But more than that, "He shall

go in, and he shall go out." So the Lord's words ran, their force being unfortunately destroyed in translation. When the Lord Jesus spoke of *first* going in and *afterwards* going out, He seems to have in mind the way in which Israel was led in the time of their great deliverance. When God came down to effect that deliverance, when the cry of the bitter bondage in Egypt moved Him from His place on the throne, and He descended to make himself known to Moses as their deliverer, he showed them first a *way out*, what we yet speak of as an *exodus*, and afterwards he spoke of a *way in*, both to His presence and to His inheritance. He showed them a *way out* of Egypt, and a *way in* to the Land of Canaan, and He showed them a *way out* from their place of servitude and oppression, and from the helplessness of their bondage, under which they neither had name, nor freedom, nor nationality, He showed them a *way in* unto the glorious liberty of a people who had God in their midst in the tabernacle of witness; and the way out which He showed them was exactly the same as the way in which He made known to them. Out of Egypt He led them by blood and by water, and into the Holy Place He made a way by blood and by water. In this day of the New Covenant the order is reversed. First, the way *in* is revealed. "He shall go in," in unto the presence of the Most High, where the glory of God shines in the face of Christ Jesus, and where we may learn what place Christ has in the purposes of God, and what value God sets upon His person and His work; and afterwards a *way out*, for from the Holiest of all, God sends His people back to the earth, wherein they dwell as strangers,

and from which He would have them "go out" from all on earth which does not answer to that which they learn in the chamber of the presence, where the Lord sits at the right hand of the Majesty. May we seek to hear, to recognise the voice of the Shepherd, and to follow Him both in going in and going out, until faith gives place to sight, and the day of God shall dawn upon our souls.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

THE TEMPLE SITE. BY THE EDITOR.

THE Divine purpose having been revealed regarding the house to be built for Jehovah's Name, and the whole plan thereof committed unto David, an enemy appears on the scene, full of malignant design, his object being to wreck the whole scheme and thwart the Divine purpose, if he can. We are left in no doubt as to who this adversary is, for his name has been disclosed. "Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel" (1 Chron. xxi. 1.). He, who of old, had entered the garden and by his subtilty deceived the woman (Gen. iii. 1.), is here permitted access to David to test him, whether his heart is true to God and the Divine glory his only aim, or whether self love and pride of heart have been allowed to mingle with the great devotion he has shown toward the house which he was so eager to build for the Lord's honour. Thus man is ever tested, and sooner or later manifests what is in him. Only One, and He the perfect man, in whom the prince of this world had nothing (John xiv. 30.), stood the test and came out of it a Victor, setting the honour of His God high above all else, and

rendering absolute unswerving obedience to His Word, under every form of temptation (Matt. iv. 1-11.).

David's order, given to Joab and the rulers of Israel, to number his people and bring the result to him, was to satisfy the pride of his heart; it was as he said, "that I may know it." It was not that he might reckon the number of Jehovah's ransomed people, but that he might know and have satisfaction to himself in the census of his subjects and the strength of his army. Joab, although a man of the world, and in no sense after God's own heart as David was, was yet able to see the error into which his master had fallen in this thing, which he described as a "cause of trespass to Israel" (1 Chron. xxi. 3). The failures of a true believer, when he departs in heart from the living God and falls under the power of Satan's temptations, are often of such a nature as to shock the world and make the ungodly stand aghast. And so the king's word was "abominable to Joab" (1 Chron. xxi. 6), for he possibly knew it would bring evil both upon himself and his kingdom.

It was an ancient statute in Israel, that when the people were numbered, every one who passed among them that were numbered and enrolled as of Israel, was to give a half shekel of silver as a "ransom for his soul" that there be no plague among them. (Exod. xxx. 11-16.). This told of the need of atonement, and of the claim of Jehovah first to be met and honoured, before any such reckoning could take place. But David ignored or set aside all this. There was no recognition of God, no acknowledged need of ransom, the reckoning was wholly a matter of David's designing and for David's own glory, and God was left out of it altogether. Such is

ever Satan's way. His aim is to get God dishonoured, God's claims disallowed, God's Word denied; if he can succeed in this, his point is gained. And, if he can get a saint of God, one who in ordinary times is a man after God's own heart, whose delight is to fulfil His will (Acts xiii. 22.), he scores a double victory. He never employs a Joab, if he can get a David to do his work, and there are many things the devil does by means of fallen saints, that he never could do through unsaved sinners who are wholly in his own grasp. Joab began but never finished the numbering of the people (1 Chron. xxvii. 24.), nor was the result ever recorded in the annals of the kingdom. Judgment followed, swift and awful judgment. Both the nature of the offence and the hand by which it was perpetrated have to be considered, before any reply against God, regarding His severity in the punishment of sin. Sin is never seen in its true character, save in relation to God, in the courts of His righteousness and in the sanctuary of His holiness. There, in the full light of His revealed character, man lays his hand on his mouth, condemned and consciously guilty, or if he speaks it is to confess "Behold I am vile" (Job xl. 4). According to man's reckoning, David's sin, as recorded in 2 Sam. xii., and confessed in Psa. li., would be far more heinous and deserving of judgment than his numbering of the people for his own glory, but not so in the reckoning of heaven. The former, indeed, brought personal chastisement upon David and his house which was never wholly removed, but here, because Jehovah's honour and prerogatives had been assailed, the avenging sword goes forth upon all Israel. David awakened to see the evil he had wrought,

humbles himself before God, saying, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done" (2 Sam. xxiv. 10), and the prophet was sent to offer him the choice of three forms of punishment, bidding David choose the rod wherewith he and his people were to be smitten. In deep contrition for his sin, yet confiding in mercy he had so often proved, he said, "Let us fall into the hand of the Lord;" asking that the stroke might fall upon him, and that the people may go free. But there was only One, who could bear the judgment of His people and die for His sheep (John x. 11.), and He had no sin of His own to account for. With David it was otherwise, and as the people were identified with him in his sin, and evidently shared in the pride which led to it, they also must "bear the rod." Pestilence sweeps the land, and in three days seventy thousand of the people die. Here we learn the Divine sovereignty and the "severity of God" (Rom. xi. 22.), against sin, wilfully and deliberately committed, instigated by Satan and aimed at the dishonour of Jehovah's Name. Even then, as David owns, "His mercies are great." and in such a scene "mercy rejoices against judgment" (Jas. iii. 17.). When the angel reached Jerusalem, in which the evil had begun, and was stretching forth his hand for its destruction Divine mercy interposed with the word, "It is enough: stay now thine hand" (ver. 16.). Clothed with sackcloth, not in secret, but in presence of the elders of Israel whom he had led astray, David falling on his face before the Lord, confesses his sin, and accepts the righteous judgment of heaven against it. Thus justifying God (Luke vii. 29.), which on the sinner's part is ever the first step

toward being justified by Him (see Luke xviii. 18., with Rom. iii. 19-24.). Then Araunah (or Ornan) the Jebusite King — who had probably reigned in Jerusalem before David took it, and was now his loyal subject — who with his sons was threshing wheat on a ridge, outside the fortress, fled and hid themselves at the sight of the angel, but David, whom the Lord had now forgiven, in obedience to the Divine command, went forward to the threshing floor and purchased it at its full legal value of fifty shekels of silver—the ransom price of one hundred men (Exod. xxx. 13), with the oxen for burnt offerings, the threshing instruments for wood to burn on the altar, and the wheat for meat offerings to the Lord. And there, in the place where judgment had been stayed by the hand of mercy, he offered sacrifices to the Lord on the altar he had built, and the Lord answered by fire from heaven accepting the offering, and in it the offerer who became thus identified with it. And as thus accepted he hears the voice which had already commanded the sword to stay its course, bid the angel now sheath that sword and cease to smite. Thus through the work of the Cross, the one perfect sacrifice of Christ, has Divine justice been for ever satisfied, judgment has passed for the believing sinner, and he who was once amenable to God's wrath is now "accepted in the Beloved" (Eph. i. 6) according to the full value of His perfect sacrifice and in the spotless beauty of His peerless person. And this favoured spot became the place of the altar (1 Chron. xxii. 1) "for all Israel." For the adjoining "place," or field, he gave to Araunah six hundred shekels of gold, and this became the site

of the temple and its courts. It stood on the place where judgment was stayed, where atonement was made and accepted, where Divine justice was satisfied, and where sinful man, convicted yet confiding in Christ is saved, and set before his God as an accepted worshipper. In virtue of the Cross, and on the foundation acquired by means of it, a temple of living stones is being raised throughout this age, witness to the riches of God's *grace*, and in virtue of the same and to the honour of the Lamb who was once slain, *glory* will yet flood the whole scene, all bearing witness to the value and virtues of His wondrous Cross.

ALLIANCE WITH THE WORLD.

IT is written concerning God's ancient people, whom He had separated from all people on the face of the earth (Exod. xxxiii. 16), to be a special people unto Himself (Deut. vii. 6), and a witness for His Name among the nations, "They have mingled among the heathen and learned their works" (Psa. cvi. 35). Thus it was that their testimony failed and their place in separation to God was lost. Much of the worldliness, love of style, and extravagance in dress, found among those who profess to be the Lord's, is caused by their unhallowed union with the world. Christians who mingle with the unconverted "learn their works," just as God's people of old, who made friendship with the nations around them, learned their evil ways, and ultimately worshipped their gods. It is simply impossible for the children of God to make friends with the world, without going down to its level. The world cannot rise to enjoy the things of God, so, in order to have anything in

common, the believer must go down to the level of the worldling. In associations partly composed of the children of God, and partly of the world, the danger is equally great, if not greater. The fallen saints who are there, themselves leavened with the evils in which they have for long mingled, have no power to testify against them, but they can drag spiritual saints down to their level. Like Lot in Sodom, they have lost all power to deliver themselves, or others. Yet the presence of a few such backsliders in a worldly association, is often given as an excuse for other believers having fellowship with it. But what a miserable subterfuge is this? Did Lot's presence in Sodom make it anything but an unclean place? Did the fact that an old prophet dwelt at Bethel, who knew Jehovah's Name, make it other than a "House of idols?" Certainly not. Yet the presence of such believers in unclean places, is often given as a reason why God's people, separated by His call unto Himself, should go in and out, and have free intercourse with such associations, because some of their brethren are there. If this were true, Abraham ought to have dwelt in Sodom, seeing his kinsman Lot was there: Elijah the Tishbite's abode, and sphere of witness, ought not to have been at the brook, or in the wilderness, but in Ahab's court, seeing Obadiah, "a man who feared the Lord," was found there. But these are not the thoughts of God, nor are they the principles of His Word. To rescue others from a dangerous position we must be clear of it ourselves, and the necessary spiritual condition for becoming a channel of blessing to our fellows is only possible, when we are walking with God in the path of obedience ourselves.

The Bible Annotator.

BRIEF BIBLE STUDIES.

A THREEFOLD GLORY OF CHRIST.

In Psalms xxii., xxiii., xxiv.

- A Worm (Psa. xxii. 6)—Suffering in Weakness.
 A Shepherd (Psa. xxiii. 1)—Guiding in Faithfulness.
 A King (Psa. xxiv. 7)—Reigning in Righteousness.

THREEFOLD DELIVERANCE (2 Cor. i. 10).

- Who *hath* delivered (Psa. lxxvi. 12; 1 Thes. i. 10)—Past.
 Known to all believers in Christ.
 Who *doth* deliver (2 Pet. ii. 9; 2 Tim. iv. 18) - Present.
 Who *shall* yet deliver (Rom. vii. 24; viii. 21)—Future.

THREE WORDS OF CHEER.

- "Fear not" (Isa. xli. 1)—The Word of Pardon.
 "Fret not" (Psa. xxxvii. 1)—The Word of Peace.
 "Faint not" (2 Cor. iv. 16)—The Word of Power.

A THREEFOLD VICTORY, IN Christ for all His people.

- Victory over Sin (Rom. iv. 14)—By Grace.
 Victory over Satan (1 John ii. 14)—By the Word.
 Victory over the World (1 John v. 4)—By Faith.

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Notes on Revised Readings.

Romans x. 9.—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord." He who having all authority (Matth. xxviii. 18) and authority over all (John xvii. 3), is owner and ruler (1 Cor. xii. 3) as well as Saviour.

2 Cor. ii. 14.—"Always leadeth us in triumph in Christ." It is not as the A.V. seems to teach, that Paul triumphed; but that he was conquered and led on as a captive in the triumph of Christ (see Col. ii. 15).

Ephesians iv. 21.—"Truth as it is in Jesus." The R.V. gives it—"Even as truth is in Jesus." The only case in which the Lord's Name is so given. It points to His life on earth as the perfect pattern of the truth He teaches, and which effectually working in His people saves, and conforms them to Him.

1 Tim. vi. 10.—"The love of money is a root of all evil." Not "the root of all evil" as in A.V. It has such a power of evil, but not the entire monopoly of it.

1 John v. 18.—"The whole world lieth in the Evil One." As believers are "in Christ" (John xvii. 14; Eph. i. 3) in mysterious union, Himself their energising power of life and action, so, "in" the Evil One, its god (2 Cor. iv. 4) and prince (John xii. 31) under his authority (Col. i. 13), and energised by His power the world now is (Eph. ii. 3).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Do the words of 1 Tim. iv. 1, refer to some of the new forms of wickedness which are now appearing in the world? More likely to new defections from the truth and apostasy from the faith, in what professes to be the church. "Doctrines of demons" are not often open infidel assaults on the truth, but crafty corruptions of it (2 Cor. ii. 17), through which those who give heed to them are, like Eve when she listened to the tempter, "thoroughly deceived" (1 Tim. ii. 14). How needful it is therefore to hear and heed the word—"Cease my son to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge" (Prov. xix. 28).

Answers to Correspondents.

"YOUNG BELIEVER"—We strongly advise you to keep clear of those who have, and find pleasure in speaking of their doubts regarding the authority and purity of Holy Scripture. It is not in such an atmosphere that spiritual health and happiness increase.

A. G. BRECON.—The words of John xv. 6, do not apply to salvation, or the "final perseverance of saints," as you name it. It is the fruitlessness of the Christian, not his destiny, that is under consideration. Branches severed from the vine, because of their unfruitfulness—unlike those of other trees—are unfit for anything (see Ezekiel xv. 1-4).

J. M'K.—The tendency of our time is, to forsake the simple lines of Scripture, in the way of obtaining money to carry on what is called "the Lord's work," and to return to some of the many forms of solicitation or "begging" practised in the world's religion. Of course there are any number of human reasonings can be trumped up in its defence, as everybody has heard often enough, but the bald fact remains, and cannot be so easily got rid of, that faith in God excludes "making a poor mouth," or in some other indirect way, appealing to man for his support. If the latter is adopted, then let it be honestly avowed, and called by its right name. Can you imagine the man who writes, "We trust in the living God" (1 Tim. iv. 10), getting Philemon or Gaius—who, perhaps, knew more of his personal necessities than most—to send out an "appeal" on his behalf among the churches? If saints need teaching regarding their responsibilities toward the Lord's work and his servants, let them have it from the Word in all plainness, but do not adopt the religious world's way, as if God's had failed. In days gone by, when there was all round ministry on this, and kindred subjects, there was no lack of money for the Lord's work, but now, notwithstanding much talk about love and enlargement of heart, it does not seem to reach the contents of the purse.

A. L. M., BELFAST.—We believe that Spiritualism, in all its grades and forms, is from beneath, that Satan is its originator, and demons, personating departed spirits, its actors. To trifle with it, to go a single step along the road leading to it, is dangerous in the extreme for any child of God.

"DOUBTER."—There are several books which might help you, notably "Grace and Truth" by the late Dr. W. P. Mackay, and "The Gospel and its Ministry" by Sir Robert Anderson. Best of all, "The Epistle to the Romans," in which the Gospel in all its fulness is expounded in the words of the Holy Spirit, the entrance of which ever give light.

J. N. M'C., TYNESIDE.—It is not good for a young believer to be occupied with "Questions that gender strifes," or with the errors of Christadelphians and others who have "erred from the faith." They do not edify, but usually lead to wrangling and debate, which wither spiritual life. Leave all such errors and those who hold them, to such as have experience and ability to grapple with them, if this be necessary. You and others who are "newly come to the faith" are safest reposing in the "green pastures" (Psa. xxiii. 2) of the Word, "which is able to hold you up" (Acts xx. 32).

A. J. H., GLASGOW.—The divisions you describe in assemblies, and especially the indifference with which they are regarded by some, and the high-handed manner in which others are supporting them and those who are responsible for making them, is all very sad; but you may be sure that God, in His high heaven, is not an uninterested observer of such matters. They may occur in the world's religious systems and be allowed to pass unjudged, but if those who claim to be God's people and profess to go by His Word wilfully set aside its plainest injunctions, God will sooner or later have something to say to them. Does it ever occur to you, that many of the troubles through which companies of believers are permitted to pass, and much of the lack of power and blessing in their midst, is due to the fact, that God has a controversy with them, owing to the lax and lethargic way in which they regard many innovations and departures from His Word in their midst? Philistines may put God's ark on a new cart, and get off, but when David, who had the Book of God and ought to have known better, followed their example (compare 1 Sam. vi. 7-12 with 1 Chron. xiii. 1-10), swift and awful judgment followed. So must it ever be. To confess the Lord's hallowed Name as Centre and Bond of gathering (Matt. xviii. 20), to own

His Word as authority and final appeal (1 Cor. xiv. 36, 37) in the church, is high, very high ground to take. But if only flippantly uttered by the lips, while its sacred and solemn responsibilities are ignored, God will shew His displeasure sooner or later, in such a manner as cannot be ignored. He will vindicate His dishonoured Name. Such lines of truth are little heard of, and apt to be forgotten, but they are in the Book of God (1 Pet. iv. 17; Heb. x. 30), and He who walketh as Judge in the midst of the churches, will make it manifest that He is not unobservant of evils there (Rev. ii. 23).

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Answers to Special Questions.

IV.—Can a Christian guided by the Word of God become a Freemason? Can one be regarded as fitted to oversee and teach in the Christian Assembly, who is a member of this craft?

ANSWER A.—Freemasonry is a secret brotherhood, in which men of all religions, and men of none, are eligible. It has a religious formula, but of such a nature that those who deny and reject the fundamentals of the Gospel may subscribe it. The associations of the craft, its drunken carousals and companionships, all forbid a child of God from having any share in it. 2 Cor. vi. 14-15, Eph. v. 11 would prevent those subject to the Word from joining it.

J. S.

ANSWER B.—The writer became exercised soon after his conversion through reading the Word as to his position as a Freemason in association with men of all creeds, and some of no profession at all, who were all to be regarded and addressed as brethren. In the light of the Word he saw that it was an unhallowed association, an unequal yoke, and a false position for one whom God had severed from the world by the Cross of Christ (Gal. vi. 20), and sent back into it to shine as a light for Him, not by mixing with the ungodly but by witnessing to them (Phil. ii. 16). He shortly after resigned, and has never had any desire to return.

T. D.

ANSWER C.—One of the confessed objects of Freemasonry is to "embrace all parties, all sects, in order to unite all its disciples in a common brotherhood." And in furtherance of this we are told—"All Masons therefore, whether Christians, Jews, Mohammedans...we are to acknowledge as brethren, and though we take different roads, we are not to be angry with each other on that account. We mean all to travel to the same place; we know that the end of our journey is the same, and we all affectionately hope to meet in the Lodge of perfect happiness." According to this, there is no recognition of the Cross, no need of conversion, nor any room for it,

if "Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans" are all on the way to heaven by different roads. In keeping with this, one of their hymns tells us—

"Thus from rank to rank ascending,
Mounts the Mason's path of love ;
Bright its earthly courts, unending
In the glorious Lodge above."

"Masonry" is one of the world rulers of the darkness of this age (Eph. vi. 12), against which believers have to contend, clothed with the whole panoply of God. They cannot do by entering into a covenant with them. The answer to the question is therefore a decided negative.

J. L.

ANSWER D.—One newly converted would require to be borne with, and taught the unscriptural and evil character of being in a brotherhood and secret association with unbelievers, seeking his deliverance. But if a believer, who professed at one time to see the evil of such associations, and to be separate from them, goes back and willfully identifies with the ungodly in such a fraternal bond as Freemasonry, he should surely come under the discipline of 2 Thess. iii. 6, 14, 15. If a leader, he may require open rebuke (1 Tim. v. 20) in order that others may fear, and not be led astray, in following his evil example. No one in such a path can be recognised as fitted to shepherd or to teach among God's saints. W. J. M.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Trade considerations, and the benefits to be derived from such unholy alliances, it is to be feared have much to do with professed children of God dropping into such circles. One of the answers given, wisely makes a distinction between a believer, who, in unconverted days, had become a Freemason, and one who deliberately in self-will goes and allows himself to be installed, going through all the secret and initiatory rites and orgies which are necessary thereto. One must either be a lifeless professor, or if a believer, a backslider in heart and way, before he can reach such a pass as to enter a brotherhood and covenant to be a secret disciple of an antichristian system which denies man's sin, ignores Christ's atonement, and teaches that Infidels, Mohammedans, and Christians alike go to heaven. In any case he proves himself utterly unfit to be either a leader or a teacher of others in spiritual things.

Notes by the Way.

Special Efforts in tract distribution and house-to-house visitation begin in earnest with the Springtime, and afford healthful and happy employment for thousands of the Lord's people, who think they have no call for more public work. By this means alone may multitudes be reached, to whom no word regarding eternal things ever comes, but who are part of that "so loved" (John

iii. 16) world to "all" of which (Mark xv. 15) the Gospel messenger has been commissioned to "go." There are doubtless large and needy fields within easy distance of almost every assembly of believers, and it would be a "means of grace" to not a few, who do not "get in the people" to their meeting places, to "go out" into these "regions beyond" with the Gospel.

Foundations of the Faith.—The present agitation regarding what has been called a "New Theology," gives good opportunity to preach and teach and circulate in printed form, the great Fundamental Truths of the Gospel and the Faith. The public mind is more or less awakened, and this ought to be taken full advantage of, by those who have and love the Truth, in spreading it abroad. Discussion and argument are of little use, but a clear-ring testimony to the unmoved and unmoveable foundation truths of the Word of God, is of untold value at the present time. We do not remember a time when these truths were listened to with such a reverent and absorbing interest by large companies of the children of God of all "persuasions," as they are at present. Special meetings for this purpose, in suitable halls, well announced, would by God's blessing be a means of untold help in the present crisis to many of God's people, whose acknowledged teachers have no light to give them.

Pamphlets on Church subjects come in successive issues by post, and are, we believe, being sent to many. Most of them are of one strain—evidently written by those who at one time were rigid in exclusiveness, but who, from various causes, have broken loose from it, and are now advocating the opposite extreme, coupled with some strange ideas about baptism and its meaning. In so far as these lead their readers to "prove all things" by submitting their teachings to the test of the Word of God, all well; yet we cannot help thinking there is considerable danger in such a onesided presentation of things, and rather undue haste in pushing it so strongly upon others.

Questions Requiring Answers.

V.—Are there two circles of church fellowship authorised in the Scripture; one permanent, composed of those who have been "received" (Rom. xvi. 1, 2) and "added" (Acts ii. 21) to the local assembly, and another of "casual" visitors who are either brought by friends, or come as they would to any of the denominations? If so, where are they described and wherein do they differ?

VI.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

THE GOSPEL SPIRIT.

[T was a chief part of the ministry of the apostles and their co-labourers toward the churches which they had been the means of planting, to maintain in them a true Gospel spirit, and to earnestly seek its restoration wherever it failed. To "preach the Gospel in regions beyond" (2 Cor. x. 16), to be holding forth the Word of Life (Phil. ii. 16), to be "echoing" forth the message they had received (1 Thess. i. 8), was one of the chief objects for which the early churches were set in the earth for God. Not only for the "communion of saints," and the edification and comfort of those within, but as lightbearers (Rev. i. 20, R.V.) in which the light of life had been kindled, "to give light" (Matt. v. 15) to others. Each company of saints gathered together in the fellowship of the Spirit (Phil. ii. 1) was intended to be a Gospel lighthouse to the ungodly around. Like the famous Eddystone Lighthouse, whose motto inscribed upon it is, "To give light and to save life," so God's assemblies are set among the sons of men to spread abroad "the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 4), and by all means "to save some" (1 Cor. ix. 22). But do they? In early days they did. Not only evangelists, who went forth as pioneers to places where Christ was not named (Rom. xv. 20), but whole assemblies of saints, are described as "sounding forth" (1 Thess. i. 9), and "striving together" (1 Phil. i. 27) in the fellowship of making known the Gospel. Not that all were public preachers, but all were yoke-

fellows and helpers in the work of making it known. When an assembly ceases to have a vigorous, healthy, and united Gospel testimony, in which all the saints in their sphere and measure heartily and happily share, it is shorn of its glory, and soon becomes a decrepit and decaying concern, either wasting away and eventually falling to pieces, or what is perhaps more common, it is filled up with light materials and empty professors, the result of spasmodic efforts and got up 'Revivals,' which have to do duty for genuine Gospel work according to God, and in the power of the Spirit. What a change has come over the face of things in this respect during the past quarter of a century! How the fine gold has become dim! The Gospel spirit that so characterised the palmy days of old, when companies of believers, severed from the world and gathered to Christ, stood forth before the ungodly, unitedly testifying the Gospel in a freshness and power which was felt, and in spite of organised and crafty opposition, were mightily used to break down and bring many to the Lord, has in most cases sadly declined, and something wholly different in tone and result has come in its place. Those who do not see this must be blind indeed.

A true Gospel spirit is ever found associated with and the result of a holy, humble walk with God on the part of the saints, a prayerful spirit, a godly separation from the world in all its forms, a healthy ministry of the Word in all its aspects, for the maintainance of spiritual health and a clean path, and a decided and determined stand against all innova-

tions and imports from the religious world, which hinder and quench the Spirit, dishonour the Word of the Lord, and drive God out from His place in the work of the Gospel. The Gospel spirit cannot live long in the midst of dissension, nor does it find its element where preachers are, by mechanical arrangement, hired to do the work which ought to be shared by all the saints.

Where the Gospel spirit exists in an Assembly, there will be no need for preachers being "fixed" months ahead, to come in weekly order, like "supply" in churches without a minister. Where such a line of things is tolerated or endured, the Gospel spirit has died out, or is, you may be sure, in an expiring state. How could it be otherwise? The Eternal Spirit, co-equal with the Father and the Son, under whose administration and by whose sovereign power all true Gospel work is carried on throughout this age, will not be the servant of human device, nor operate through channels of man's invention. He uses vessels of His own choice, and our wisdom is to let Him do so, and fall in with His arrangements (see Acts xvi. 7).

After all such innovations (borrowed from Babylon), have been tried and found wanting, the old message without embellishment, and the old godly methods which leave room for God to do his own work by His own instruments, will hold their place and be used as of old by those who seek to do God's work in God's own way. Let God's saints abide by these, and go forth in His strength, ringing out the old Gospel message.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

THE GREAT FOUNDATION PLATFORM.

HAVING secured the threshing floor on Moriah as a place for the altar of Jehovah, and the surrounding land as a site for the temple and its courts, and having prepared with all his "might," and had the joy of seeing his people offer willingly to the Lord for the building of His house (1 Chron. xxix. 2, 9), David having fulfilled his course and "served his own generation by the will of God" (Acts xiii. 36), "died in a good old age, full of days, riches, and honour," and "Solomon, his son, reigned in his stead" (1 Chron. xxix. 28). To him was committed the "charge" to build "an house for the sanctuary," and likewise the pattern of the entire structure in all its details, for all its vessels, and all its services, with the promise that the Lord God would be with him, and not forsake him, providing all needed helpers, and giving a willing and obedient people under authority, ready to execute the will of the Lord, as entrusted to and administered by His chosen servant, until he had finished all the work (1 Chron. xxvii. 20, 21). Such is the way of the Lord. When His supreme authority is owned in all that pertains to His worship and His work, His commandments obeyed and fully taught, then His faithful promise, "Lo, I am with you all the days" (Matt. xxviii. 18-20, R.V.), can be honestly claimed, and His presence and help counted on to give effect to all that He has commanded. But to set aside His authority for that of men, or to do His work in selfwill, giving little heed

to that which He has commanded, either as to what He wishes to be done, or the means by which it is to be accomplished, yet claiming His presence, is sacrilege. The promised presence and Divine help of the Lord, with the "all grace" and "all things" which "always" are to "abound" toward the saints and servants of God so that they may have "all sufficiency" and never lack, is in order that they may "abound in every good work" (2 Cor. ix. 9), not to squander them on their own conceits or to carry out their own designs. For these "good works" are not all and sundry philanthropies of man's devising, but "good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them" (Eph. ii. 10). And He has recorded them—as the plan of the temple was given to Solomon "in writing" (1 Chron. xxviii. 19)—in the pages of His holy Word, in which all that the man of God needs that he may be "furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Tim. iii. 17) is found, apart from creeds, confessions, and church standards, devised and enforced by the will of man. Let all who serve the Lord in any sphere connected with the building of His heavenly temple, whether as Gospellers, hewing and fetching the stones which are to compose His "spiritual house" (1 Pet. ii. 9), His "holy temple" (Eph. ii. 21), or teachers bringing in that which is designed for its growth and edification (1 Cor. iii. 11-13), see to it that they bring nothing in that will defile or destroy the temple of the Lord, and thus incur the withering threat of being "destroyed" (the word is the same, see 1 Cor. iii. 17,

R.v.), not in salvation, but in service, in being left a dishonoured vessel (2 Tim. ii. 20) in which God has no pleasure (Hos. viii. 8)—although it may be, held in high honour in the esteem of men—and in respect of reward in the day of the judgment seat (2 Cor. v. 10; Col. iii. 25) disapproved (1 Cor. ix. 27). These are solemn truths, although they have little place even among true believers in our selfwilled and utilitarian times. But God's work must be done in God's way in order to have His sanction and abiding blessing, no matter what "results" may seem to say to the contrary. One thing is absolutely certain, God would never give commandments in this Word telling how His work is to be done, and then "help" His servants to ignore or break them, and bless them in so doing.

On the second day of the second month in the fourth year of his reign, Solomon, we are told (2 Chron. iii. 1), began to build the house of "the Lord at Jerusalem" in Mount Moriah, where centuries before Abraham had offered up his son Isaac (Gen. xxii.), and received him back from the dead "in a figure" (Heb. xi. 19). Here also the judgment of God on account of sin was stayed. Thus, in the place of sacrifice, substitution, and resurrection, of judgment stayed and worship accepted, was the foundations laid of the temple magnificent, Jehovah's dwelling place, the place where He recorded His Name, and which He filled with His glory. And the answer to the type is, that the church, composed of living stones, of sinners saved by grace, is built on Christ, Christ Divine, Incarnate, Sacrificed, and

Risen—"the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi. 16), as Peter confessed Him, and in answer to which confession our Divine Lord gave the revelation, never before uttered on earth, "Upon this Rock, I will build My Church; and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it" (ver. 18). Thus has God secured unto Himself, against the possibility of Satan's overthrow, a sure foundation, laid in purpose in the eternal past (1 Pet. i. 20), in accomplished *fact* at the death and resurrection of Christ (1 Pet. ii. 4, 8), and in personal *experience* when the truth is revealed to the soul by Divine grace and power (Matt. xvi. 17). Thus the convicted yet confiding soul is led to repose upon, to place its reliance in the Lord Jesus, and becomes a living stone, of the same life and nature as the Rock (1 Pet. ii. 4, 5). And there is no other resting place for the soul, for the Word of the Lord declares "Other foundation can no man lay than that *is laid*—Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 9-11). Christ in His person and work, Christ as revealed in the Word, Christ as made known to the soul by the Spirit, the Christ of God, He and He only is faith's individual foundation for salvation, the Rock foundation of the Church of the entire dispensation of which Christ Himself is Builder, and the foundation of each local and particular assembly, as He is the Cause and Bond of its existence and fellowship (see Matt. xviii. 20; Eph. ii. 22).

THE GREAT FOUNDATION STONES.

In order to raise the craggy slope of Moriah to the level of the threshing floor on its summit, a foundation platform of

majestic structure was at the commandment of Jehovah built. It is concerning this that we read in 1 Kings v. 17, "And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the FOUNDATION of the house." And again, "And the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits" (1 Kings vii. 10)—stones about sixteen feet and twenty feet in length, a piece of solid masonry measuring about fifteen hundred feet in length and ten hundred feet in breadth, to a depth of from sixty to one hundred and twenty feet; the vast stones so closely knit, without cement, that the fine blade of a penknife it is said can scarcely be inserted in the joints. Firm and immovable they stand there to-day, although siege after siege and desolation after desolation of the city and the temple, have left no stone of the edifices which once stood in stately form upon them, unoverthrown, as the Lord declared (Matt. xxiv. 2). Great shafts, which have been recently sunk by the *Palestine Exploration Committee*, disclose this foundation in all its strength and fulness, after the lapse of ages, intact, with the red vermilion marks of Solomon's builders still upon the massive stones, which thus bear silent witness to the truth and the judgment of God. On the centre of this area, in which once the altar of Jehovah stood, from which sweet savour offerings ascended to heaven, now stands the Mosque of Omar, or "Dome of the Rock," the headquarters in Jerusalem of Mahomet the False Prophet. The platform area, filled with oratories and

mosques, carpeted with grass and growing cypresses, is named Haram-esh-Sherref, or "Noble Sanctuary;" the whole of which is in the hands of the Turk, and devoted to the idolatry of Islam.

That unshaken and immovable foundation, which men can neither alter nor destroy, is a foreshadowing type of the great foundation truths of our most holy faith—the faith "once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3, R.V.). Of this alone can it be said "the foundation of God standeth sure" (2 Tim. ii. 19). Like the wise man who "digged deep," and laid the foundation of his house upon a rock (Luke vi. 49), so God has made His foundations for ever secure to Himself and all His saints, by laying them upon His own immutable purpose, in Christ Jesus, His Son (Eph. iii. 11). Nothing less would stand, for in Jah-Jehovah alone is found "the Rock of Ages" (Isa. xxvi. 4, R.V. margin).

These "great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones," are typical of the fundamental truths of Scripture. "Great" because all connected with the purpose and glory of God. "Costly" because brought into being in virtue of the atoning death of Christ, and "hewed" because inspired and recorded by the Eternal Spirit. *Meritoriously*, the Church is built upon the Person and work of Christ, as set forth to faith in the Word. *Doctrinally*, it is founded on the truths connected with that glorious Person and that perfect Work. *Ministerially*, it is built on the "foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph. ii. 20), who have no successors, but whose writings have ministered to the

church all through the ages. To deny or reject the proper Godhead or Perfect Manhood of the Son, to ignore or fritter away His vicarious and atoning death for sin, to impugn the Personality or work of the Holy Spirit, is to give up God's foundation, and to become an apostate. Every doctrine, every truth, centres and harmonises in the Person of the Lord Jesus, and as the massive stones of old were embedded and fitly joined together, so "the Scripture cannot be broken" (John x. 35), and he who would remove or disturb one stone of the sacred whole, abandons God's Christianity and builds on the sand.

MAN'S ETERNAL DESTINY.

EVERY form of words employed in the Gospels to describe the "everness" of the Divine nature and the blessedness of the righteous, is employed to describe the "everness" of the punishment of the wicked. The last two are generally found in the same context, each the complement of the other. The same terms are used by Paul in his Epistles for the same purposes. In the Revelation, the form used to describe "everness" is the strongest of all. Whatever terms are used in the Old Testament to describe the first two, are used also to describe the third. These words are used everywhere, without qualification of any kind, and again and again. There is no hint in any of these contexts of a "larger hope," and no suspicion seems to be felt by the writers, that their message dishonours God, or shocks the consciences of men.

THE INCARNATION AND DEITY OF THE LORD JESUS.

AN ADDRESS AT BRISTOL CONFERENCE.
BY W. H. BENNET.

READ John i. 1-4, 10-18, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him," or "*told Him out.*" That, I take to be, the explanation of this beautiful title of the Lord, the WORD, the One who *reveals* the Father, who *tells Him out.* Of this blessed One it is said in the opening verse, "In the beginning was the Word." In Gen. i. we have the beginning of creation; here we have a beginning that goes beyond any creation, the beginning of His way, which is from eternity. The first sentence declares the *essential* being, and therefore the *eternal* being, of that blessed One, who is here called the *Word.* "And the Word was *with* God." There we have the distinctness of the Word from the Father, whilst the next sentence declares His essential Godhead—"And the Word was GOD." Mark the three statements: the essential being of the Word—"In the beginning was the Word;" then His distinctness from God the Father—"And the Word was WITH God;" then His own essential Godhead—"And the Word was GOD." The next verse tells us that that distinctness from, and that being with, were as eternal as His own being—"The same was *in the beginning* with God."

Now we come to verse 14, "And the Word became flesh" (R.V.). In Gal. iv. we read, "God *sent forth* HIS SON." I was asked the other day, "Is it an error

to say that He was not the Son of God before He was born into the world?" My answer was, "It touches the foundation of everything." How? If there had been no Son, could you have the simplest, yet the most profound statement that came from the lips of the Lord in John iii. 16, "For God so loved the world, that He *gave His only begotten Son?*" We must hold that great truth, dear friends, as the foundation of everything. The title "*Son of God*" is the highest title He can bear. It seems to me like the one fount from which all other titles spring. All other titles tell out the fulness that is contained in this one. "God *sent forth* His Son"—from heaven, from Himself, into this world—"born of a woman." That is how He came. Some time back, men were discussing in the newspapers what they were pleased to call "The question of the Virgin birth of our Lord?" Oh, I thought, what a desecration of heavenly things! And let *us* beware, for the very fact that these things are discussed among men, as though they were things that could be questioned, has its effect upon the children of God, if we are not very careful and very watchful. The answer to this question for us is the answer that the messenger from God's holy presence gave to Mary, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called *the Son of God*" (Luke i. 35). That which He was from everlasting in His own essential and eternal glory, He was to be known as when on earth—"The Son of God."

Thus the Word "became flesh." In the expression, "God *sent* His Son," we have the infinite grace of the blessed God told out; in this word we have the equal grace of the Son of God. "Christ Jesus *came* into the world" in the fulness of His own grace and love.

These, dear friends, are truths to be pondered in the sanctuary of God. We can't learn the truths of God as we would learn a lesson in geography; we can't sit down and learn them and say we know them. In a sense we do know them, blessed be God! but if we would be proof against the subtleties of these days, we must ever be *learning* them, and so *meditating* upon them in the spirit of worship, that they become, as it were, part of our very being.

"The Word *became* flesh and *dwelt* among us"—what a marvellous statement! "And we beheld His glory." The world saw not His glory; to the men of the world He was "without form or comeliness," there was no outward majesty, nothing which men call great or glorious. But to the men of faith, to those who were taught by God's Spirit, to those to whom God's Spirit revealed Him, He was the Christ, the Son of God, and they could say, "We beheld His glory; the glory as of the only begotten from the Father." That means a glory such as no one else could manifest; the glory that declared Him to be the only begotten from the Father.

Let me remind you of that beautiful word of the Apostle, "In Him *dwelleth* all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. xi. 9), and let me remark that the

Apostle uses a stronger and clearer word there than he uses in Rom. i., where he speaks of creation bearing witness to "His eternal power and Godhead." Creation bears witness to the eternal power and divinity of God, but it does not reveal Himself. In the Christ of God there is all the fulness of the GODHEAD, there is no attribute of God that is not His.

"In Him *dwelleth*." Does anyone say "That is true *now*, but was not when He was here on earth?" Let me remind you of another word, "Jesus Christ, *the same* yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." I know that refers to the fact that He abides with us when guides are taken from us; but it also declares His unchangeableness: He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Why not "to-morrow" instead of "for ever?" Between yesterday and to-day *night* intervenes, and so between this yesterday and to-day, He had had the dark night of the Cross, but it had made no difference in Him; and there is no "to-morrow," because He will never have another night. Therefore, what He is *now* He was *yesterday*, when here below among men—the surroundings differ, but He Himself is essentially "THE SAME," and will be "for ever."

It is a great thing to read the Gospels in the light of God's presence, to meditate upon those wonderful records of His beloved Son, and to trace His ways on earth; but as we do so, let us never forget that we have before us One who from the time of His birth into this world was both God and Man. "The Word became

flesh." The word "flesh" here, I need not tell you, is used simply for man, and not in any sense in which it is used of the flesh *in us*, when we speak of sinful flesh. He became Man, being "born of a woman." And the Apostle John emphasises the reality of His *Manhood* as well as of His *Godhead*, in both his Gospel and his Epistles, for there were those who denied that He was really Man. *We* have to do more with those who deny His essential and eternal Godhead. But the great thing to remember is, that always, at all times, and in all circumstances, He was and is both God and Man. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given" (Isa. ix. 6). Mark the beautiful words, a child *born*, a son *given*! "And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." The child born is the mighty God, the everlasting Father (the Father of the everlasting age), and the Prince of Peace. Again we read of one to be born at Bethlehem, "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." And to quote again from the prophets, we have this word, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, against the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." So that at the very moment when He was smitten by the sword of justice to atone for our sins, at that very moment Jehovah owned His as *His Fellow, His Equal*.

Therefore, as we go through the Gospels, let us remember that we always have before us One who is both God and Man. The weary One sitting by the well, is able to satisfy the deepest longing of the

thirsty sinner. The One whose head rested upon a pillow in the vessel, and who was sleeping a sleep brought on by weariness, is able to rise from that pillow and speak peace to the heart of the disciples, and peace to the winds and the waves. We might take up many illustrations in the Gospels, but I only just touch on them. Let us seek to trace them out for ourselves, and thus learn the testimony of the Holy Scriptures to Him as the glorious Son of God, the Word of God, who thus became flesh, who was born of a woman.

And then think of Him as the Revealer of the Father, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, *He hath declared Him.*" He it is who tells out THE FATHER, who tells out GOD, He is Himself the Revelation of God. If we want to know what God is, we must meditate on these Gospels which reveal Christ, and when we read of the grace and tenderness and thoughtfulness of Christ, we shall be right in saying, "All this tells me what *God* is; that God who is my Father and who has made me His child." Is not that a very blessed exercise for our souls? Let us accustom ourselves to this, and we shall have very little ear, very little heart for what men call "The New Theology;" we shall say, "Let me have Christ, let me have the blessed Son of God in His fulness and His grace; let me mark His ways here below; let me think of Him as the Holy One, who, because He was the Holy One, essentially holy, entirely free from everything that pertains to Adam's race through the Fall,

could offer Himself up as a sacrifice to atone for our sins, to put away our guilt to bring us to God." Let us dwell upon this, and then, dear friends, we shall be worshippers in God's presence. The subtleties and errors of the day will have no charm for us, but we shall rather seek to be on our guard against having to do with them, lest we be defiled.

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS, No. III. — "CHRIST, THE IMAGE OF THE INVISIBLE GOD," by W. Hoste, Brighton, will appear in next month's issue.

SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION.

IT is not uncommon in certain circles, to hear the writings of "the Fathers"—that is, the immediate successors of the Apostles—quoted, as if they possessed the same authority as the inspired Scriptures. We must earnestly resist such a thought. Whatever value may attach to the writings of such men as Ignatius, Polycarp, Clement, &c., they must never be regarded as inspired, or having any claim to authority over the people of God. As one has said—"Scripture stands alone, in majestic isolation, pre-eminent in instruction, and separated by unapproachable excellence from everything written by the apostolic fathers: so that those who follow close to the apostles have left us writings, which are more for our warning than edification." In principle, the latest theory or tradition, or device of man's invention, accepted as authority in Divine things, and used to render void the commandments of the Lord, is the same, and may be more seductive, if it comes with the halo of some great or good

man's name connected with it. When the people of God set aside the inspired Word as their *only* rule of faith, or put the traditions of men alongside of it, they virtually say, that man's words are of equal authority with God's, and very soon the climax of rejecting God's Word for man's tradition is reached. Let God's people be on their guard against this evil, and cleave to the bare Word as it stands, without adding to, or taking from it.

HOME LONGINGS.

HOME of light and glory,
 My lone heart sighs for thee,
 Thy gleaming, golden pathways
 Of bliss, I long to see.
 This world to me is dreary,
 With sin it is opprest;
 My spirit, worn and weary,
 Pants still for home and rest.

And sometimes, 'mid the shadows,
 That darken over me,
 FAITH bears me to that country,
 Where I shall one day be.
 Its starry thrones of glory,
 Its crowns of life and light,
 All radiant with His presence,
 Greet my enraptured sight.

Like some lone bird in exile,
 That upward cannot fly,
 That longs for the fair woodland,
 The breeze and summer sky;
 So, in my inmost yearning,
 My soul's deep sympathy,
 I groan with earnest longing,
 For Home, for Rest, for Thee.

The Bible Annotator.

OUTLINES OF GOSPEL SUBJECTS.

A WORK "FOR" US, AND "IN" US.

The Work of Christ for us (John xvii. 4)—Perfect.

The Work of the Spirit in us (Phil. i. 6)—Progressive

TWO GREAT "HOURS."

(John v. 23-29).

The Hour of Life-giving (ver. 25)—Present.

The Hour of Judgment (ver. 28)—Future.

All must meet the Lord as Life-giver or Judge.

LIVING WATER.

For us as a Gift (John iv. 10, with Rev. xxii. 17).

In us as a Well (John iv. 14, with John x. 10).

From us in Rivers (John vii. 38, with Gal. iii. 5).

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE READINGS.

A THREEFOLD CORD.

In Ephesians, chapter i.

Chosen by God (ver. 4)—The Eternal Purpose.

Redeemed by Christ (ver. 7)—The Procuring Cause.

Sealed by the Spirit (ver. 13)—The Preserving Power.

CHRIST'S WORK FOR US.

Christ our Passover (1 Cor. v. 7)—Sacrificed for us.

Christ our Advocate (1 John ii. 1)—Living for us.

Christ our Hope (1 Tim. i. 1)—Coming for us.

TWOFOLD CLEANSING.

Cleansing by Blood (1 John i. 7)—Justification.

Cleansing by Water (Eph. v. 26)—Sanctification.

FOUR ASPECTS OF LIFE.

Sinners (Rom. v. 19; 1 Tim. i. 15)—By Nature and Practice.

Saints (Rom. i. 7; Eph. v. 3)—By Call and Conduct.

Sons (1 John iii. 1; Gal. iv. 5)—By Birth and Privilege.

Servants (Acts xxvii. 23; John xii. 26)—By Purchase and Dominion.

Texts with Disputed Meanings.

Romans ii. 14.—"For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law," &c. This verse, as it stands in the A.V.—and without any essential difference in the R.V.—implies, that Gentiles "by nature"—that is, apart from redemption by the blood of Christ and renewal by the Holy Spirit—can do "the things contained in the law." This is contrary to the universal testimony of Scripture. If it were true, even in the limited degree, that most expositors admit it only can be, it would establish the doctrine

that men by their natural powers can do "the things of the law," and become "a law unto themselves, in that they shew the work of the law written on their hearts" (R.V.). Dr. Handley Moule, in his "Notes on Romans," commenting on this verse, says, "Such a clause as that of ver. 14, 'when they do by nature the things of the law,' is certainly not to be pressed in such a context as this, to be an assertion that pagan morality ever actually satisfies the holy tests of the eternal Judge." Yet this is what the verse is made to teach, and by its translation and punctuation does teach, leading to the deeper error, that man by nature is not so corrupt as to be incapable of any good, as Scripture plainly declares he is (Rom. iii. 12). "The erroneous notion," says a Bible student of half a century ago, "that unconverted Gentiles are here described, is strengthened by the manner in which the 14th verse is translated and punctuated in our English version. A proper punctuation makes its meaning clear. It ought to be as follows—'For when the Gentiles who have not the law by nature, do the things of the law'—that is, those from among the Gentiles who by faith had been brought to Christ, had the righteousness of the law 'fulfilled' in them (Rom. viii. 3), and were observing its precepts which unconverted Jews who boasted in it did not, yet because they were not of Abraham's seed, to whom the law was given, they were despised and accounted accursed." The change of a "comma" sometimes alters the entire meaning of a passage, and in this case the change suggested, seems to be the key to the right interpretation of this much disputed verse.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Was the name "Jesus," as given in Col. iv. 11, that of a believer? Evidently of one who before his conversion was of "the circumcision," not a Pagan, but a Jew. He, with Aristarchus and Marcus, were "co-workers" and a "comfort" to Paul in Rome, at a time when many Jewish believers had forsaken and opposed him. God does not fail to record such little incidents, nor will the Lord forget to reward them in the day of His judgment-seat.

Should a Christian engage in speculative business with borrowed capital, or without any at all? If "speculative business" means gambling in shares and stocks, or becoming associated with companies who do so, a conscientious application of Col. iii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 31, would surely prevent any child

of God obedient to the Word, from being a sharer in what, as is well known, generally uses very shady means of increasing "dividends." To embark in business without capital can only be by misrepresentation, as no honest seller would give goods to a man who honestly told them he was penniless. If the capital belongs to another, it is usually a case of "heads I win, tails you lose," as many who have foolishly "set up" young men with more brag than brains, know to their cost. More dishonour to God, and dishonesty toward men is thus wrought, by persons professing godliness, than in any other way. A little more healthy, conscience-exercising ministry of God's Word bearing on such matter of fact affairs, might "cleanse the camp" from this mean, but fashionable form of roguery.

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Answers to Correspondents.

"NEMO."—The papers you refer to appeared in *The British Herald* for 1870, edited by the late William Reid. They were, we believe, by the late J. Denham Smith, and have been exceedingly helpful to many.

J. R. M.—You will find much to aid you on the subject you are studying, in Sir Robert Anderson's book, "The Coming Prince." By all means get and read it.

A. M. B., DUNDEE.—"Powers of the age to come" (Heb. vi. 5, R.V.), refer to the miraculous gifts and operations of the Spirit manifested at Pentecost, which were a pledge and a prelude of the more extensive manifestations in the millennial age (com. Isa. xxxii. 15; Joel ii. 28; with Acts ii. 17, 18).

A. L., SOUTHPORT.—The words "I stand in doubt of you" (Gal. iv. 20), or, as they are more correctly rendered in the R.V., "I am perplexed about you," are not used to raise doubt in regard to their conversion. That evidently had been clear and manifest, as the words, "ye did run well" (chap. v. 7) testify. But the churches of Galatia—not certain individuals in them merely—had been "bewitched" (chap. iii. 1) and seduced into unfaithful compromise by Judiazing teachers. They had virtually surrendered the Gospel of the grace of God, and the truths in which the apostle had instructed them, for a yoke of bondage—a condition of things the principle of which is not unknown in our own day, in which churches planted and watered by means of a Spirit empowered ministry of the truth

of God, have been laid waste by worldly-minded men, who neither know the truth which separates from the world and gathers to Christ, nor have any sympathy with those who teach it, albeit they prey upon the results of their labours, as the apostle says these seducers of the Galatians did. In considering their condition he was "perplexed" in determining how best to meet their case. But he had "confidence" in them, that they would recover from the evil effects of their back-set, and that those who had troubled them, would be judged by the Lord (chap. v. 10, 11) in due time.

W. M., CO. ANTRIM.—The words of John xiv. 26, xvi. 13, have reference to the Holy Spirit, who had not yet personally as the Comforter "come" to "abide" on earth as the Lord here says He would, throughout the present age. In one sense the Spirit is Omnipresent (Psa. cxxxix. 7), as He is Omniscient (1 Cor. ii. 10), but there is a real as well as a dispensational sense, in which the Spirit is on earth and not in heaven, and in the same sense the Father and the Son are not on earth, but in heaven.

S. M., KENT.—You are perfectly right in separating yourself from a ministry in which the credibility of the Scriptures as the Word of God is assailed, and equally so in refusing to express your fellowship with those who deny the proper deity of the Son of God and the value of His atoning death by partaking of the Lord's Supper with them. What is to be your next step you may safely leave to God. His injunction is, "Cease to do evil. Learn to do well" (Isa. i. 16, 17). If you have honestly sought to please God in taking the first step, He will teach you from His Word, the path in which He would have you walk, and lead you into the fellowship of such as are seeking humbly to walk in His truth, apart from corrupters and deniers of the faith once delivered to the saints. A young believer in a day of great perplexity had sent to him by an aged servant of Christ the following words of counsel, "You have your God and your Bible: keep close in with both, and you will not go far astray."

J. M. C., GLASGOW.—The Word of God and not the conduct of men is the rule by which you must walk if you would please God. Great and good men have often gone astray and led others into the ditch after them. One thing is perfectly certain, that is, the Word of God can never bring a believer out from the sects, and then lead him back into them, for any purpose whatever. Your friend who champions such a course, must either have been wrong in coming out, or he is in going back.

Brief Memorials of Mr. George Adam, OF STRANRAER.

We deeply regret having to announce the home-call of our beloved friend and brother in the Lord, and our esteemed fellow-helper and contributor to these pages, Mr. George Adam, which took place at his home, Valpariso Villas, Stranraer, Wigtownshire, after a brief illness, terminating in pleuropneumonia, on March 28th, aged 78 years. He was buried on Tuesday, 2nd April, in Stranraer Cemetery, a goodly representation of Christians from all the Wigtownshire Assemblies being present. Brief services were conducted in the home, in the Sun Street Hall, and at the grave, by William Stephen, Paisley, an old friend of the deceased. His widow, who for over forty years has been his close companion and helper, is left to mourn his loss, and will, we trust, be lovingly remembered by all, especially by those who so long enjoyed and profited by her husband's ministry.

George Adam was the child of godly parents, and was brought up in an atmosphere where the Lord was feared and His Word held in high esteem, as many have frequently heard him testify in his public ministry. He was brought to the Lord in early life, and we have often heard him speak with veneration of the godly home life and deep reverence for the Word of God that existed at that time, among the old Scotch Independents, in association with whom his early days of Christian life were spent.

When the mighty work of grace, which swept across the north-east of Scotland in 1870-2 began, he was living at Kennethmont, Aberdeenshire, and was brought into immediate contact with the work in the villages of Old Rayne, Oyne, Insch, and Rhynie, which was carried on during these eventful years, under the ministry of Donald Ross, Donald Munro, and others associated with them, who were mightily used of God in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and in leading many of God's people into the fuller light and liberty of the Gospel. The home of Mr. and Mrs. Adam, at Kirkhill, was a resting place and sanatorium for many worn out and wearied workers, and an ever open door where hospitality was lovingly shewn to all the children of God, during those memorable times of revival and restoration, in which, under the guidance of

the Spirit of God, through diligent study of the written Word, many long-lost truths were recovered and received, to be obeyed and proclaimed far and wide. Assemblies of believers, in full separation from the world's ecclesiastical systems, gathered simply in the Name of the Lord, with His Word alone as their creed, sprang up all over the country, several in the district, and one in Mr. Adam's home, where for years a number of the children of God met for worship and the remembrance of the Lord's death on the first day of the week, preaching the Gospel in farmhouses and cottages in the evenings in the country around.

In 1876, Mr. Adam gave up his business of a country merchant at Kennethmont, and removed to Edinburgh, devoting his whole time to ministry of the Word and shepherding of the Lord's flock, visiting the homes of believers and seeking to give godly counsel in cases of difficulty in assemblies. After a few years, he removed to Prestwick, Ayrshire, and spent most of his time in visiting smaller assemblies in the county, where his visits were welcome and his help appreciated. His later years were spent in Stranraer, helping Wigtownshire assemblies, occasionally giving help in Conferences and gatherings of servants of Christ, such as are held in Leominster, Lurgan, and other centres, as his strength permitted. His ministry was generally of a searching and a practical character, and his writings were very helpful to many. He will be missed, especially by small assemblies among which he believed his chief service lay. Thus one after another of those who have "ministered to the Lord" and "fed the flock of God" are being removed from earthly toil, to rest with Christ, and few of the same kind are being raised up to fill the empty places. This surely has a voice and a message to the people of God. It may be that "the Chief Shepherd" Himself is very near, and that His speedy advent will bring "all the flock so scattered here" to the land where under-shepherds will be needed no longer, "where the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall be their Shepherd, and shall guide them unto fountains of waters of life" (Rev. v. ii. 17, R.V.). May we so serve as to be able to say, "Even so. Come, Lord Jesus."

THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST.

REVISED NOTES OF AN ADDRESS AT BELFAST
CONFERENCE, BY W. HOSTE, OF BRIGHTON.

READ Col. i. 14-19.—This is one of the familiar fields of Scripture. Familiarity, even of Scripture, may have its dangers. Let us not be as men, who merely traverse a field by some well-beaten track, but rather like those who dig beneath its surface for hid treasure. We have in this passage, a singularly full presentation of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is good ever to have before us the greatness and glories of His Person. First, because the adequacy and value of a work depends on the competency and worth of the worker. These verses give us a portrait of a great and wondrous Person framed in crimson—the crimson of His blood. This blood is said in verse 14 to bring us redemption—the forgiveness of sins, and in verse 20, to be the ground of our peace and of our reconciliation with God. The important question then arises, Whose blood is it? The passage we are about to consider assures us that the One who shed it is “Mighty to save.” The assurance of this fact not only gives rest to the conscience, it also presents a worthy object to the heart. The Colossians were turning aside “to philosophy and vain deceit,” as, alas! so many are doing in our day. How did the apostle meet the need? By presenting to them the Person of Christ to attract and satisfy their hearts. There is also a third reason why the Spirit of God delights in exalting the Person of the Lord, and it is the most important of

all reasons, that He may be glorified, and that God may be glorified in Him. The Satanic promise to man in Eden was, “Ye shall be as gods,” and to-day we hear voices of “sinister resemblance,” which make us feel that the time may not be far distant, when Satan’s man shall arise, “who shalt exalt himself above all that is called God, shewing himself that he is God.” But the purpose of God concerning Christ is “That in all things *He* shall have the pre-eminence,” and that purpose shall stand.

I believe we have in this passage a ninefold testimony to the pre-eminence of that Blessed Person, whom we know as the Lord Jesus Christ. Some people seem hardly happy, unless they can find the number seven in Scripture; but there are other numbers besides seven, important as that number is. Why, for instance, is the fruit of the Spirit ninefold? Why have we nine characteristics of the blessed man in Matt. v. ? and only nine recorded appearances on earth of our risen Lord? I think the key may be found in 1 Cor. xii. 7-10, where we have a ninefold manifestation of the Spirit given to men to profit withal. The number nine would thus seem to stand for perfection or fulness of manifestation. So here, we have a ninefold or perfect manifestation of the pre-eminency of Christ, dividing itself into three groups of three divisions each, of which the first looks back to a past eternity, the second to our Lord’s earthly ministry, and the third to His resurrection glories. We have then

I. A testimony to our Lord’s pre-

eminence as the ONLY BEGOTTEN SON. (a) As *Creator* (v. 16), (b) as “*before all things*” (v. 17), (c) as the *Preserver* of all (v. 17).

II. A testimony to His pre-eminence as the INCARNATE ONE. (a) As the *image* of God (v. 15), (b) as the *First-born of every creature* (v. 15), (c) as the reservoir of all *fullness* (v. 19).

III. A testimony to His pre-eminence as the RISEN ONE. (a) As the *First-born from the dead* (v. 18), (b) as the *Head of the Church* (v. 18), (a) as *Heir of all things* (v. 16).

I. Let us then first consider Him as the ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD. (a) As *Creator*. Verse 16 tells us, “By Him were all things created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible,” including the highest spiritual intelligences of the universe. Cherubim, Seraphim, the Archangel, yea, Satan himself, as well as material worlds and systems. “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” This takes us back to the “beginning” of Gen. i. 1. It is true we have the Triune Elohim mentioned as Creator in this verse, and yet we know from other Scriptures that it was the Son who was the executive of the Trinity in creation, as we read in Heb. i. 2, “By whom also He made the worlds.” In Proverbs viii. 30 (R.V.), there is a remarkable change from the A.V., which bears out what has been said. Wisdom is speaking. “When He prepared the heavens, I was there . . . when He gave the sea His decree . . . then I was with Him (not as one brought up with Him, but) as a Master Workman.” And Zech. xii.

tells us that the One, who was pierced by Israel, to their present loss and future sorrow (v. 10) was the very one who, in verse 1, is said to have “stretched forth the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth, and formed the spirit of man within him.” Had there never been redemption to accomplish He could ever have rightly claimed the homage of the universe as Creator. Thus it is noteworthy that in Rev. iv. 11, glory and honour are ascribed to the One who “created all things,” before He is worshipped as Redeemer in the following chapter.

(b) The second claim of our Lord to pre-eminence as the ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD is based on the fact of His *pre-existence*. “He is before all things” (v. 17). He is the Eternal One. This takes us back further than “the beginning” of Gen. i. 1, to that shoreless eternity of John i. 1, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.” If, as we have seen, Wisdom could say in Prov. viii., “When He prepared the heavens I was there,” He could also say, “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, *before His works of old.*” He is thus independent of and outside of Creation, in contradiction to that bastard Pantheism of to-day, with its vain talk about the “Immanence of God,” which seeks to confound Creator and Creation, really robbing us of a Personal God. This fundamental truth of the pre-existence of the Son is borne witness to with clearness in many Scriptures, and notably in the

Gospel of John. The Forerunner, taught of God, could say of Him who, according to the flesh was his younger cousin, "He is preferred before me, for *He was before me*" (John i. 30). The Lord could speak (and who else could possibly have done so?) of ascending to that place *where He was before* (chap. vi. 62), and could testify to His enemies "*Before Abraham was, I AM*" (chap. viii. 58). And when in His sacerdotal prayer He asked to be glorified as Son of Man, He could ask no greater glory than that which He had had with the Father as Son of God "*before the world was.*" In Col. i., the Spirit of God takes us back further still, and testifies saying, "He is before all things."

(c) The third point of our Lord's pre-eminence as the only begotten Son, consists in His being the SUSTAINER OF ALL THINGS. "By Him all things (not only exist but) consist" (v. 17), or as we have read in Heb. i. 3, "He is upholding all things by the Word of His power." Men, if they dare not deny God altogether, would gladly put Him as far away, or as far back as possible. But we believe in creation, not in evolution; in a sustaining God, not in blind laws working automatically and independently of the present will of the Creator. A man was asked one day what kind of a Christian he was. He replied, "I belong to the *Dependents.*" "I suppose you mean the *Independents.*" said the other. "No, I am just a dependent on God all the time," and so is this universe, and so are we all, though we may not as intelligently or as practically recognise it as this Christian did. Yet this is our true relation

toward God, and He would have us take it more simply.

"Worlds on worlds are hanging on His hand,
Life and death are waiting His command:
Yet His tender bosom makes thee room."

We have thus seen the pre-eminence of our Lord, as having created all things, as having preceded all things, and as preserving all things.

(To be continued.)

GOD HONOURS HIS WORD.

IT is not eloquent preaching, or attempts at oratory, that God uses in the *awakening of sinners*: He always *owns* and honours His Word. Wherever the Word is wisely spoken, by one in a right spiritual condition, it will not fail to be God's message to those who hear it. In days gone by, our meetings were characterised by a full and free use of "Thus saith the Lord." The Book of God was much in evidence, and abundance of "chapter and verse" was given. The rustling of leaves was heard all over the place, as link after link of the chain was formed, which caused the hearers to feel that the words were not man's, but in very truth the "Word of God" (1 Thess. ii. 12), working effectually in all that believe. There was power in the ministry because it was of God, and God was honouring His Word. The tendency is to go back to the religious world's way of searching in the Bible for a "text," sometimes a verse or a line, wrenched out of its context, perverted in its meaning, and used as a peg to hang a superabundance of human reasonings which carry conviction to none.

SALT AND LIGHT.

BY DR. J. NORMAN CASE.

“**Y**E are the salt of the earth” (Matt. v. 13). So our Lord designated the band of lowly, unlettered men, who gathered to Him at the opening of His ministry. And to the end of the age, this is an important function of His people. In the Scriptures, salt stands as the emblem of purity, sincerity, and conserving truth. It has just the opposite significance of leaven, for the latter uniformly denotes evil—either moral (I Cor. v. 8) or doctrinal (Gal. v. 9). Of old, with two* exceptions, leaven was vigorously excluded from all the offerings; but of all such offerings, salt was an essential ingredient (Ex. xxiii. 18; Lev. ii. 11; Mark ix. 49). A little thought will shew the aptness of this figure as used by the Lord of His people.

I. *Salt preserves from Corruption.*—This, in fact, is known by most of the peoples of the world, and salt is universally used for that purpose. Hence, we here learn that God’s church was intended to be a great preserving element among men, preventing the mass of humanity from being wholly corrupted. It was the dearth of righteous men which issued in the moral corruption which compelled God to destroy the world by a flood (Gen. vi. 5, 11). However much Lot personally was out of the path of obedience in settling in Sodom, it is evident that ten righteous men, living there, would have staved off the impending judgment (Gen.

xviii. 32). Individual communities and nations, little apprehend how much they are indebted to the few godly ones living in their midst. Coming judgment has often been averted by the correction of evils; and usually this has been brought about by the higher moral ideals of Christianity diffusing themselves through a city or nation. This, again, being a direct result of the lives and testimony of consistent Christians, or at least to those who owe their moral standard and impulse to the Gospel. Moreover, when “the salt of the earth” is wholly removed, or has lost its savour, then shall come, as a direct consequence, the manifestation of him who will be the personification of evil, the embodiment of Satan, the Lawless One (2 Thess. ii. 4-8).

2. *Salt is useful for Seasoning*, and that both for the food of men (Job vi. 6) and cattle (Isa. xxx. 24, R.V. mar.). Salt, as we have seen, was an integral ingredient in sacrifices offered to the Lord, and that not only in the meat-offerings but also with animal sacrifices (Ezek. xliii. 24). The world is only tolerable to God, because of His people who are in it. Hence Messiah says, “As for the saints that are in the earth, *they are the excellent in whom is all my delight*” (Psa. xvi. 3, R.V.). Among men of the world, the name “saint,” as used of living persons, usually calls forth a smile or a sneer; yet such are earth’s true aristocracy, rendering the whole mass in a measure tolerable to God and habitable to man. And, as we have seen, the withdrawal of the true Church will mean the removal of that which, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, has long

*See Lev. v. 13, 23, 27. Typically, these Scriptures point to the fact, that in the Church and in the individual, evil remains to the end.

successfully hindered the full manifestation of evil.

That the salt known to our Lord and His disciples, under certain circumstances, could lose its season, I think is evident. The author of "The Land and the Book," tells us, that he has often seen such salt. He gives an instance of a merchant who had stored a lot of salt in houses in a certain village. "These houses," he writes, "had merely earthen floors, and the salt next the ground became entirely spoiled. I saw large quantities of it literally thrown into the street to be trodden under feet of men and beasts." So much as to salt literally. The spiritual teaching contained in these words of our Lord is most solemn and searching. Albeit the meaning is not so much to individual Christians as it is to the professing Church at large. It does not contemplate a true child of God losing grace, or "falling away" from his position in Christ. But it is a solemn warning to that which before men *corporately* bears the Name of Christ, or what is conveniently termed "Christendom." The words correspond to the teaching of Rom. xi. 19-22. All too many Churches have lost their savour, have not continued in God's goodness, and have been set aside; and so with pure Gospel testimony in certain countries. And Christendom as a whole has become high-minded and corrupt; it takes the place of being the salt of the earth, but it is fast losing its savour; coming to the stage when it will be cast out into the road and trodden under foot of men (Rev. iii. 16). This will follow the coming of the Lord, when

all true believers have been severed from the mass of false professors, and the latter will be given over to judgment. May saints collectively more and more aim to have "salt in themselves," and have peace one with another (Mark ix. 50); while, as individuals, we see that our speech be "always with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. iv. 6).

3. *The Light of the World.*—In this passage only, this exalted title is applied to men. Of the Lord Himself it is true absolutely (John viii. 12, &c.); to His people it is only applicable in a secondary and derivative sense. He is as the sun; they are as moon and stars (Phil. ii. 15 Gk.), merely reflecting the light derived from Him. Another saying of our Lord, it seems to me, gives us the reason why He styled the disciples "The light of the world." "As long as I am in the world," He declared, "I am the light of the world" (John ix. 5). He was about personally to leave the world. Should there henceforth, then, be spiritually no light in the world? Nay, verily, that should not be. The Lord would leave His people behind, men who themselves were "light in the Lord," and they, by their lives and preaching, would diffuse His light on all around, and through them He would continue to be "The Light of the world."

The usual figure of Christians as lights is that of a lamp (Matt. v. 15; Mark iv. 21). Of the great Forerunner of Christ it was said, "He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light" (John i. 8). But of Him, with grateful appreciation, the Lord said, "He was a

burning and a shining lamp" (John v. 35, R.V.). And the same is true of local churches as of individuals (Rev. i. 12, &c.). A lamp, whether of gold or clay, is only of use as it is originally supplied and lighted from a source outside itself. It also calls for frequent attention and fresh supplies. How aptly all this applies to Christians and to churches? "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. iv. 6). Through the Gospel, we who once were darkness have become "light in the Lord" (Eph. v. 8). It has come about through our union with Christ. He is the Source and Author of light, and through our relationship with Him we become *children of light* (John xii. 36; 1 Thess. v. 3).

But Christians cannot go on shining of themselves. They need the constant service of their High Priest (Exod. xxx. 7, 8), and fresh supplies of the Spirit of Christ (Phil. i. 19). Lacking these, the light soon becomes dim and unpleasant, and threatens to go out. Oh, that individual Christians, local assemblies, and the whole church on earth, might rise to the dignity and responsibility of his high calling, and prove in very truth, the light of the world! Through what remains of the long, weary night of our Lord's absence, let us seek grace to shine as lights in the world, holding forth, to all around, the word of life (Phil. ii. 15, 16). For soon, like stars in the morning, all such lights will fade away, in the full light of the manifested glory of Christ.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

FIVE TEMPLES OF SCRIPTURE.

At this point we may suitably turn aside for a moment to consider together and in succession, the five temples which Scripture brings before us.

The *First*, is Solomon's Temple on Moriah, connected with Israel in the land, under the peaceful rule of David's son—a type of Christ and His Church in heavenly union now, and of the redeemed hereafter in resurrection and heavenly glory. Because of Israel's sin, this magnificent building was overthrown by the Chaldeans, whom the Lord allowed to come against it in judgment, owing to His people having defiled it by idolatry. Its walls were razed, the house was burned with fire, and its holy vessels carried away to Babylon (2 Chron. xxxvi. 18).

The *Second* Temple was built by the Returned Remnant, as recorded in Ezra, chap. ii. At the close of seventy years of captivity in Babylon, during which there had been no united worship, nor any testimony to Jehovah's Name (Psa. cxxxvii. 1-7)—although individuals were faithful to God (Dan. i. 8; iii. 18)—a feeble remnant returned to Jerusalem to set up His altar, restore His worship, and build His house. It was small compared with the first temple in its glory, it had no shekinah, no manifest greatness, and instead of peace as at Solomon's time, it was built amid the combined opposition of their enemies, who, by strength and craft, sought to hinder the work at every stage. Nor were the people themselves

what their fathers were in Solomon's time. Ten tribes were wholly scattered, and the greater part of the remaining two, preferred the ease of Babylon to the labours and conflicts of Jerusalem. *Among those who had returned, there was much weakness and lack of heart, which required the searching ministry of God's prophets to set right* (Ezra iv. 24; v. 1, with Haggai i. 1-6). Some who had not seen the first temple in its beauty, were glad, and sang praise to God when the foundation was laid, while others wept at the remembrance of the departed glory (Ezra iii. 10-13). They made no pretension to raise the original structure, no boast was made of the glory of the kingdom, but they used what they had, and put it together on the former site, according to the ancient pattern, and Jehovah blessed them and cheered them in their labour, with promises of present grace and power in the Spirit (Zech. iv. 6, 7), and of coming glory (Hag. ii. 6, 7). The answer to this is with us at the present time. The palmy days of the Pentecostal Church, which stood separate from the world and at unity within itself (Acts ii. 44-47; iv. 32, 33), full of the Spirit's power, is no longer to be seen on this earth. Departure from God, disobedience to His Word, and affinity with the world have long since caused its glory to depart, and its light to be put out. The world has invaded the Church, and the Church has been carried captive into the world. For ages it was governed by earthly rulers, and the Lord and His Word were ignored for the traditions of men, with no liberty for Christians to worship

God unitedly as His Word commands, or keep His ordinances as He appointed them. But in Divine mercy the captor's power has been broken, and in most of the lands of Christendom there is now liberty for believers to assemble in the Lord's Name (Matt. xviii. 20), and to worship Him in Spirit and in truth (John iv. 24). There is no restoration of Pentecostal glory, and there must be no boast of possessing what we have not, but the Word of God remains, to which we are commended (Acts xx. 32), and which is to be the guide of God's people all the days (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20) while obedience thereto in Church association and testimony, as well as individual life, is the test of true spirituality (1 Cor. xiv. 37).

The *Third Temple* was built by *Herod the Great*, probably on the site of the former two, and retaining part of their original structure, yet not according to a Divine pattern, but designed by his own imagination, of great size and beauty, taking forty-six years to build. This was the temple which stood in the days of our Lord, in the exterior courts of which He preached and taught, but never entered its inner courts as a worshipper. In the early chapters of Acts, the disciples are seen once and again going "up to the temple" (Acts iii. 1; iv. 1; v. 20), by Divine command, to pray and to preach, until the last links with Israel, according to the flesh, were broken, and a new and spiritual dispensation fully inaugurated, in which God has no material temple. He dwells in living saints individually (1 Cor. vi. 19; 2 Cor. vi. 16), and collectively His people are His temple (1 Cor. iii. 16). The

Lord told His disciples that this temple would be destroyed (Matt. xxiv. 1, 2), which it was by the Romans under Titus in A.D. 70.

The *Fourth* Temple is in the future (Dan. ix. 26; xii. 11; 2 Thess. ii. 1-8). It will be built by the earthly people, and will have the Name of God put upon it (Rev. xi. 1, 2). It will be defiled by Antichrist setting up his image in it, and demanding Divine worship (Matt. xxiv. 15), which some will refuse to give and be slain, others fleeing to places of hiding. The return of the Son of Man to earth in judgment brings this to an end.

The *Fifth* is the *Millennial Temple*, fully described in Ezekiel, chaps. xl-xlviii. It will be the centre of restored Israel's worship (Micah iv. 1), a house of prayer for all nations (Isa. lxvi. 23; lvii. 7). It will be an earthly reflection of heavenly glory, its sacrifices will be commemorative, and its worship symbolic. In the New Jerusalem there will be no temple (Rev. xxi. 22).

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH DISCIPLINE.-I.

THE CHURCH, GOD'S DWELLING-PLACE.

—The Christian Assembly, as set forth in the First Epistle to the Corinthians is said to be God's holy temple (1 Cor. iii. 16). In the First Epistle to Timothy it is called the "House of God, the Church of the living God" (1 Tim. iii. 15), and holiness becometh God's house for ever (Psa. xciii. 5). Viewed in this aspect the Church is a sphere of present judgment (1 Pet. v. 17), for sin must not be allowed or evil tolerated, or connived at where a

holy God has His habitation (Eph. ii. 21).

DOCTRINAL AND MORAL EVIL.—Departures from the faith and the introduction of fundamental errors in doctrine (Gal. i. 9; v. 10-12; 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; Rev. 14, 15, 20), and such immoralities in practice as are described in 1 Cor. v. 1, 10-11, bring Divine judgment on the offenders, and on this account the assembly is called upon to unitedly act in expelling such from its midst.

INTERNAL DISCIPLINE.—Varied forms of internal discipline upon those walking or acting disorderly, while still in the fellowship of the assembly, are mentioned in the Word. (1.) One walking "disorderly" (2 Thess. iii. 6, 11), or out of rank as the term implies, taking his own way and doing his own will, without considering what effect his ways may have upon others, is to be "withdrawn" from, causing him to feel such isolation as may cause him to be "ashamed" of his course, and return to the way of truth and godliness. (2.) Rebuke, or open reproof (1 Tim. v. 20), for such sin or departure from the truth which, though not calling for excommunication, is a cause of stumbling to others (see Gal. ii. 14). (3.) One may be disapproved as a servant (see Acts xv. 36-38), or disqualified as an overseer (1 Tim. iii. 1-5), yet be a saint in the assembly's fellowship. Great care should be exercised by others not to mar such internal discipline, and thus cause its effects to fail, by sympathising with the subject of it, or in any way acting so as to confirm him in his wrongdoing.

A TESTING TIME.—When there is need

for godly discipline on an offender, or an outbreak of such evil in a company of God's people, as calls for united action, it is always a testing time, and ought to be a season of heartsearching, humiliation, and confession by all (1 Cor. v. 2). The dishonour done to the Lord's Name, the cause of stumbling given to young believers, and the evil effects upon the unconverted around, should all be felt and mourned with a common shame. Neither personal feelings, earthly relationships, nor party sympathy should be allowed at such a time to hinder from giving effect to the Word of the Lord. The Name of the Lord, and the honour due to it, with a spirit of humble subjection to His Word, should be paramount, and there should be much patient waiting upon God that all may be of one mind, and thus act together in doing His will.

THREE ASSEMBLY ACTS.—The reception of believers to the fellowship of the assembly (Acts ix. 26-28; Rom. xvi. 2), the excision of one guilty of such sin as the Scripture marks out for putting away (1 Cor. v. 13), and the rehabilitation or such as are repentant and restored to God (2 Cor. ii. 6-8; vii. 8-12), are all united acts of the assembly—not of the overseers only, or of any part, but of the whole assembly—and all should feel the responsibility laid upon them by God, in sharing the burden of these acts. Neither majorities nor predominating influences are to be recognised in God's assembly, but oneness of mind of the whole sought as enjoined (1 Cor. i. 10; Rom. xv. 5, 6; Phil. ii. 1, 2) in all things.

WHERE RESPONSIBILITY BEGINS.—The

mutual care of one another, as members of the one body (1 Cor. xii. 5), which is due to all saints, becomes a special responsibility among those who are together in the Lord in a local assembly, where there is godly liberty and opportunity to exercise that love and care which Scripture enjoins upon each and all (Heb. xii. 15; 1 Thess. v. 14; John xii. 14, 15; 1 Pet. v. 5). This is too often left to official or ministerial service, with the result that cases of halting, backsliding, and sin, are frequently unknown to all save a few, until they have gone beyond individual remedy. Scriptural and healthy ministry has as its object the fitting of all the saints for their varied services (Eph. iv. 12, R.V.), so that the whole may be maintained in spiritual health and godly increase. This neglected, many evils manifest themselves, with little ability or exercise to deal with them.

FIRST STEPS.—The early steps in seeking to gain an offending brother are detailed in Matt. xviii. 15-16. When these fail, the assembly is to be told, presumably through its recognised guides, who take the oversight (Heb. xiii. 7, 17; Acts xx. 28), and its judgment is to be given in the matter. If this also is neglected, the defaulter defying all efforts to heal the breach, preferring to retain his sin, and to act in selfwill and perversity, making communion in the truth impossible, he is for the present to be regarded as one of the world. No specific sin is here named as in 1 Cor. v. 11, but determined self-will and insubjection.

J. R.

(To be Continued.)

The Bible Annotator.

OUTLINES OF GOSPEL SUBJECTS.

TWO FIRST QUESTIONS.

Where art thou? (Gen. iii. 1-9)—First in the Old Testament.

Where is He? (Matt. ii. 2)—First in New Testament.

1. God seeking lost sinners. 2. Sinners seeking the promised Saviour.

THREE JEHOVAH TITLES.

Jehovah-Tsidkenu—"Our Righteousness" (Jer. xxiii. 6).

Jehovah-Shalom—"Our Peace" (Judges vi. 24).

Jehovah Nissi—"Our Banner" (Exod. xvii. 15).

This is the order in which Faith apprehends Christ.

CHRIST OUR LIFE.

Life in Him (John i. 3)—The Source.

Life from Him (John x. 28)—The Supply.

Christ who is our Life (Col. iii. 4)—The Security.

We live by Him (John vi. 57)—The Sustenance.

We live unto Him (2 Cor. v. 15)—The Object.

GOD REVEALED IN GRACE.

In Psalm ciii.

As Redeemer (ver. 4)—To the Slaves.

As Healer (ver. 4)—To the Sick.

As Satisfier (ver. 5)—To the Empty.

As Father (ver. 13)—To His Children.

As Ruler (ver. 19)—To His Subjects.

Notes on Revised Readings.

2 Cor. v. 21.—"Him who knew no sin, He made to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." The correspondence between the sinless Christ made sin, and the sinful believer becoming righteousness, is more clearly brought out in R.V. There are, however, points of contrast which must not be overlooked. The word which is translated "made" does not mean that the blessed Lord actually became sin. This He never could be, but was ever and always the Holy One of God, even when He hung as the appointed Sin-bearer of His people on the Cross. The word is elsewhere rendered "*appointed*" (Heb. iii. 2), "*made* Him a liar" (1 John v. 10), where the meaning is evident. The word "*ginomai*" translated "*become*" is different, and implies that the believer becomes actually God's righteousness in virtue of his union with Christ risen. The same word is used in the following passages, "The Word *became* flesh"

(John i. 14); "*become* the first fruits" (1 Cor. xv. 20).

Gal. iii. 13.—"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." Our Lord did become essentially a curse, and suffered the hiding of the face of God, the full penalty of sin being actually borne by Him.

Rom. x. 9.—"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord." Not simply "Jesus"; a Socinian or Unitarian could do this, while yet denying to Him His proper Deity, as God the Son. To confess "Jesus Christ as Lord," is to own Him as JEHOVAH, and to acknowledge Him in the place of honour and supreme authority to which God has exalted Him (Phil. ii. 9, 10) R.V. This marks a true work of the Spirit in a sinner's soul (see John xvi. 8; 1 Cor. xii. 3, R.V.).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

When we read—"Being seen of them forty days" (Acts i. 3), may we infer that the Lord was continuously with His disciples during that period? There are fifteen recorded manifestations of the Lord—all to His own—between his resurrection and ascension, and as Greek scholars have pointed out, the use of the genitive here strengthens the thought that these manifestations of the Lord to His own were occasional. The world did not see Him at all.

Who are the "elect" mentioned in Rom. xi. 5? Those from among Israel, the favoured people, who had believed on the Lord Jesus, and been incorporated with believing Gentiles in the "one body" the Church (see Eph. ii. 15). In verse i., Paul classes himself as one of these.

Answers to Correspondents.

YOUNG PREACHER.—There is no need to wait for a "call," or for some one to find you a "sphere of service." If you have a heart for the Gospel, a godly life to commend it, and even a little measure of gift to make it known, take your Bible and go out to some village, or into some lane where they never hear it, and begin. If you have a like-minded companion as fellow-worker, so much the better.

J. S., BARROW.—There is nothing gained in arguing with Socialists or others who preach "another Gospel" on the streets. You only help them to gather a congregation to hear their doctrines,

and this is just what they want. Preach Christ, and all the Dagon will fall before Him.

E. A., FAVERSHAM.—The "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. v.-vii.) was spoken by the Lord to His disciples, in view of the establishment of the promised earthly kingdom, unfolding its principles and giving such precepts as the subjects of that kingdom were called to maintain. While the spirit of these precepts are applicable to all times, they had a special and literal application to the special circumstances of that period. Such precepts as those of chap. v. 39-42, are not literally observed by anybody in our time. No more than the literal precepts given to those who proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom (Luke ix. 3), which the Lord Himself superseded by giving others (see Luke xxii. 35, 36).

J. S., GLASGOW.—Letters of commendation should certainly be given to believers going to places where they are unknown, and in order to be of any value should be signed by those shepherding the flock who are regarded as able to discern. Individuals—especially such as are not of good report, or of godly walk, or cliques acting out of touch with the assembly, giving such letters, should be marked as disorderly and, if need be, other assemblies warned against their efforts to thus form a party and cause division.

E. B., SURREY.—The innovations you mention—which are quietly being introduced into Gospel work hitherto conducted on simple, godly lines—are just what the devil may be expected to introduce to obscure the simplicity of the Gospel of God, and hinder the operation of the Spirit in making it effectual in man's salvation. "Wisdom of words," rather than spiritual power, is what characterises the "up-to-date" preacher, and of course he must have his soloist and other attractions to "draw" the crowd. It is an old story, and the thing you are seeking to withstand, is exactly what crept in, in the church's early days. Writing of the second century Mosheim says:—"The Christian system had hitherto retained its original simplicity, but this was, however, soon effaced by the subtleties of HUMAN wisdom." Then he adds, "In this century, many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the Christian worship, the most of which solely tended to gratify the outward senses of the multitude." And when once the thin end of the wedge is allowed to get in, it is only a matter of time till all the rest follows. So, beware! and watch!

Answers to Special Questions.

What are the characteristics of an assembly of believers, which may be regarded as answering to a "Church of God" (1 Cor. i. 2), as described in the Word?

ANSWER A.—First, that all have received "Christ Jesus the Lord," and are seeking, so "to walk in Him" (Col. ii. 2). Second, that they are gathered unto His Name (Matt. xviii. 20), and that His Word is the only authority in their midst (1 Cor. xiv. 36, 37).

A. S.

ANSWER B.—The characteristics of all God's assemblies, whether composed of few or many, are, that the authority of Christ as "Son over God's own house" (Heb. iii. 6, R.V.) is recognised and owned in everything; that the guidance of the Spirit in worship and ministry (1 Cor. xii. 4-9) is allowed, and no barrier or human arrangement brought in to hinder it, and that the truth, especially that of Christ's person and work, is held and proclaimed (1 Tim. iii. 15, 16).

W. J. M.

ANSWER C.—The difference between God's assembly and a sect, lies in this, that the one is formed according to the pattern given in the Word (1 Thess. ii. 14), and the aim of those who compose it is, to give effect to the will of God in all that He has commanded. A sect or denomination, even if composed of born again persons, is an organisation formed by men, with certain select and distinctive doctrines or practices which separate it from others, and is more or less under the governing authority of men. It may be the State, the Archbishop, the President, or the Presbytery, but no matter which, an intervening party, with powers to make and enforce rules, other than those given in the Scripture, exists, and in so far as it is owned, renders the Headship of Christ as Source of all supply to His members for their edification (Eph. iv. 9-13) and increase, in great measure void.

J. M.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Some say that "Church of God" is inapplicable to any company of believers in this day of division and failure. They seem to forget that "sons of God" (1 John iii. 2), which believers individually claim and rejoice in, is even higher, and brings with it very great responsibilities (see Eph. v. 2; Phil. ii. 15). Yet the position and privileges are accepted and confessed, while grace is sought to live and act worthy of them. No Scripturally taught believer will drop the title, or deny his right to use it, even though deeply conscious of failure in the walk that becomes it. So with the

term "Church of God" (see 1 Cor. i. 2; 1 Tim. iii. 13). In several of the places where it is used, there was manifest failure among those to whom it is applied, yet in correcting their errors and recovering them from their low spiritual condition, the apostle never suggests that they should relinquish the title given them by God as His Church, but labours to bring their conduct and testimony up to a standard worthy of it. Ecclesiastical pretensions of any sort whatever, especially such as nourish pride of church position, as if it were something earned by separation from fellow-believers, ill befit the present hour of weakness and division among those who ought to be together in the Lord, facing a common foe thundering at their gates. The path of faith and obedience, when trod in humble submission to God, requires no such boast. Where God's acknowledged presence and blessing are owned and felt, they prove a true attraction to all who are spiritual, commending the position and drawing others toward it; while high pretensions of scriptural order and elective claims to special titles, without either a godly savour or a clean testimony, are both nauseous and repulsive. The other extreme is, to surrender everything, aim at nothing, sit down among what is called "the church in ruins," and allow everything to take its course, as if no responsibility remained to hold fast the truth and "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3), which with God is ever the same, no matter who or to what extent men and churches may have departed from it.

Baptism, in Relation to the Assembly.

To the Editor of "The Believer's Magazine."

"I am glad to see in your last month's issue, a word of caution in regard to the neglect or abandonment of the truth of Christian Baptism, in connection with the present movement to bring about union among assemblies professedly gathering in the Lord's Name. No union can be according to God, that makes any part of God's Word of none effect. We have been told that baptism is not the ground of Church fellowship, or the door of admission into the assembly. Granted; but this does not mean that it has no place at all, or that an assembly of believers as such, have no responsibility regarding it, or that each individual is free to hold and teach either God's truth, or any corruption of or tradition about it, that he pleases. I know by experience what this means, and how it ends, and would warn my fellow-believers against it. As a theory it may seem

plausible, to say that what God has said in His Word about baptism is only an individual matter, that Christians holding and practicing believers' immersion, household or infant sprinkling, and others no baptism at all, may all 'dwell together in unity,' never, of course, mentioning the subject. But I know by experience that it is not so, and that whatever ostensible reasons were given for some notorious and disastrous divisions, differences on baptism, kept in abeyance by compromise for long, at length burst forth, and were the real cause of all the trouble. If it were a question of one coming into an assembly who had not known the truth, but willing to learn it—and even then it should be put before him, and its place and importance made fully known—he might be regarded as 'weak in the faith' (Rom. xiv. 1), and taught, but for one denying or ignoring baptism, or any other truth of God's Word, to be a leader or teacher in the assembly, is not according to God, and can only lead to worse disorder and division. I know an assembly in which such a teacher is, and when an intimation of the baptism of several young believers was recently made in that assembly, he protested and walked out. What the result of such an example would be, you may guess. It is well to look at the whole matter honestly and squarely, in the light of God's Word, and understand the assembly's relation to it. To ignore or smother it, to bring about an outward form of unity, while there is no oneness of mind, is to build on the crest of a smouldering volcano, which, when it becomes 'active,' will only bring greater disaster and more dishonour to God.—Yours, in the 'one faith.'

"VERITAS."

Questions Requiring Answers.

VI.—Are there two circles of church fellowship authorised in the Scripture; one permanent, composed of those who have been "received" (Rom. xvi. 1, 2) and "added" (Acts ii. 21) to the local assembly, and another of "casual" visitors who are either brought by friends, or come as they would to any of the denominations? If so, where are they described and wherein do they differ?

VII.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

VIII.—How does Scripture teach an assembly of believers to deal with one whose ministry is unprofitable?

A TIME OF CRISIS.

RECENT assaults upon the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, have not been without their blessing to the children of God. There has been a great revival of interest in the Word of God, and especially in all that concerns the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus. Truths seldom heard in public ministry, have been set forth with wonderful freshness and power. The Divine glory of our adorable Lord has been brought forth from the sacred Word, and so ministered to the hearts of His people, that many have "glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion" (Mark ii. 12). There has been a return to the rockfast foundations of the faith, to examine them in the searching light of recent criticisms and sceptical assaults, and they have been found secure and unshaken as ever. Not a single shaft from the enemy has grazed any one of them. Eternal and unchangeable as the God who laid them, are the firm foundations upon which our faith reposes. The wild waves of human reason and infidel speculation have dashed themselves in their fury against the solid rock, only to be broken into foam, and sink like others before them into oblivion. In times like these, "thoughts out of many hearts" are "revealed" (Luke ii. 35, R.V.). True lovers of the Lord, who had scarcely known each other, have been brought together around the Royal Standard. Voices seldom heard, have been raised in confession of the Lord's honoured Name, and in defence of the Word of God. Timid ones have been emboldened to own

on whose side they stand, and halting ones to make a definite choice between Christ and Belial. The storm has cleared the atmosphere, and we see more clearly where things stand. Some, alas! from whom had been expected better things, have manifested themselves as "enemies of the Cross of Christ" (Phil. iii. 18), and others who "love the praise of men more than the praise of God" (John xii. 43), and who set a higher value on human friendship than upon the Lord's honour, have virtually taken sides with the enemy, by remaining in the camp with those who blaspheme His Name and deny His Word. Many true children of God, who have been more or less associated with churches and associations in which those who deny the Lord and disown His Word, are held in honour, or have access to spread their blasphemies, have had their eyes opened to see the hopelessness of their position, and how utterly impossible it is to alter or better the condition of things where they are. After deep exercise of soul before God, and under the power of His Word, some have been compelled to sever their connection with men who openly deny the faith they have pledged themselves to teach, and with systems which give them place and shelter, without rebuke. It is a time of crisis. God is shaking and sifting, and the end is not yet. Much that is cherished and stands at present unquestioned, may, as the Lord brings His light to shine upon it, and His fan to test its quality, be found wanting, and the call of God may come to some, "Arise ye, and depart: for this is not your rest; because it is polluted" (Micah ii. 10).

CHRIST, THE IMAGE OF GOD.

REVISED NOTES OF AN ADDRESS AT BELFAST.

BY WM. HOSTE, B.A., BRIGHTON.

WE now come to the second great phase of manifestation, in which we view our Lord in INCARNATION.

(a) He is pre-eminent in Incarnation because "He is the image of the invisible God" (v. 15). We must distinguish carefully between the appearances of Jehovah in the Old Testament and the unique and unalterable condition assumed by our Lord in Incarnation. We must also distinguish between the sense in which Adam was made "in the image of God," and that in which the Lord Jesus was "the image of the invisible God." Never in his state of innocence could Adam have said as with propriety, our Lord did, "He that beholdeth Me, beholdeth Him that sent Me" (John xii. 45, R.V.); or "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9). When Eve saw Adam before the fall, she saw one in moral semblance to God, and capable of enjoying communion with His Maker, and of growing in likeness to Him—but only a man. But Jesus was "the image of the Invisible God." Now an image is not a shadow. The two things are distinguished in Heb. x. i. "The law having a *shadow* of good things to come, and not the very *image*." Its sacrifices, its sanctuary, and its priesthood were but shadows. The Romish priesthood, which is an attempt at a literal reproduction of certain features of the Jewish pattern, is a mere counterfeit of a shadow, and the Anglican priest is a mere copy of a counterfeit. And what are we to say of the "minister," who, while

professing to teach the priesthood of all believers, really usurps their priesthood, but that he commits an act, without suspecting it, which, under the law, was punishable with death (Num. iii. 10; iv. 15). Now a shadow differs from an image in that it bears witness to an objective reality, whereas an image, in Scriptural language, is I believe, the thing itself MADE VISIBLE. Thus, vapour may be said to be the image of steam. It is the invisible made visible. God forbade Israel to make "any image" of Himself, for what could any man-made image of the Invisible God be, but a miserable caricature? What were the idols of the nation? Mere blind, dumb, deaf, helpless blocks, though they had eyes, mouths, ears, hands, and feet (Psa. cxv. 4-5). On the other hand the Spirit of God represents Jehovah as seeing, hearing, speaking, handling, though he had no corresponding members nor similitude (Exod. iii. 7, 8). In the Lord Jesus Christ, we have not a shadow of God, but "the very *image*." In His looks of compassion, in His ever-open ear, in His hands stretched forth to bless, in His feet ever bent on errands of mercy, and above all, in that blessed form nailed to the Cross of Calvary, we see the heart of God toward needy, sinful man. It is the purpose of God, for which all things work together, that the people of God should be conformed to the image of Christ; but it remains true that to Him will ever belong the pre-eminence of having been down here in all His ways and words and works—"the image of the invisible God."

(b) In incarnation too he was "the FIRST-BORN of every creature" (ver. 15). This expression has been explained to mean, that He was the first-born *before* every creature; but I submit that this will not hold true, because as the Eternal One, He was the only begotten, not the first-born Son. Coming as the expression does directly after the one we have just considered, I think it is plain that we must connect it with His presence on this earth, as the Incarnate One. Not that He became, as is now said, the first-born of humanity, in the sense of taking humanity into union with Himself by incarnation. Every truly spiritual mind must instinctively recoil from such deadly error. Even as far as His people were concerned, had He not died and risen again, He must ever have continued to abide "alone." 1 Chron. v. 1, may throw light on this subject, by way of illustration. Reuben, Israel's first-born, lost his birthright through his sin, but it did not descend to Simeon or Levi or even to Judah, from whom sprang the royal family of Israel. It remained in abeyance for many years, until it was eventually bestowed on Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. xlviii. 5). Adam, too, lost his birthright through his transgression, and no one was found who could claim the first-born's place, till He came, "whose right it was." Jesus took the first-born's place, not only because he was the best and holiest, but because of what He was in Himself, for what other place could the Creator have in becoming flesh and tabernacling among His creatures, than the first place? And this the "for," connecting verses 15 and 56, shows.

(c) The third point on which rests the preminence of our Lord (and let us not forget that all these claims are cumulative) is, that "it pleased all the Fulness to dwell in Him" (ver. 19), not "it pleased the *Father*," as in A.V., but the Godhead. We hear much to-day of an "emptied" Christ, self-emptied if you will, but emptied for all that. I do not know what others feel, but I need a full Christ, not an empty Christ, and I believe it pleased God to give us just such an One. I am convinced that the Authorised Version of Phil. ii, 7, "He made Himself of no reputation," agrees with the context better than the Revised Version—"He emptied Himself," for it was not of all that He was as God, that He consented to be deprived, but of His position or relation of equality with God. I would suggest that "He effaced Himself" better conveys the thought of the passage, than "He emptied Himself." He ever and always was a Divine Person. In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Deity bodily, but He held it in abeyance, in subserviance to His Father, as the servant of Jehovah. John knew no empty Christ. "We beheld His glory, "he says," the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). His moral glory was only visible to anointed eyes, but to such it was seen in fulness. In taking on Him the "form of a servant," He so truly became the dependent and obedient One, that, though knowing all things, having all things, able to do all things, He only judged as He heard, only used what God provided for Him, only did what His Father gave Him to do

Now we come to the THIRD cord, with its threefold manifestation of our Lord's pre-eminence in RESURRECTION, and I must be very brief on these three last points.

(a) "He is the *beginning—the First-born from the dead.*" As the only begotten Son of God, there always was and always must be an infinite distance between Him and the highest of His creatures. As the first-born of every creature, we have seen, He must have ever remained "alone." but as the First-born from the dead, He is "the first fruits," the beginning of a New Creation. As such, He has entered a sphere, where death can no longer have dominion over Him. He was the first to snap the chains of death, and to come forth Victor from the grave, and in so doing he becomes "the First-born of many brethren," all destined to become conformed to His image and to share His glory.

(b) Secondly He is *the Head of the Church.*" Here we may even learn from the dark-minded Romanist. How much they make of their false earthly head! His word is law; his will all good Catholics must obey. We should make more of Him, who is our divinely-given Head. Much has been said about meeting on "the ground of the one body." I think what is more Scriptural and more important is to meet in obedience to the one Head. He must be the centre of every true unity. The only way to keep the "unity of the Spirit" is to "hold the Head"—not merely the truth of it—important as that is—but the Head Himself as the Source of all supply and

authority in the church, which is His body. the Lord Jesus Christ.

(c) Lastly, the Lord is pre-eminent as the "Heir of all things." All things were "created by Him and for Him." He is the God-appointed Saviour, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25). He is the God-appointed "High Priest," for "Christ glorified not Himself to be made High Priest" (Heb. v.), but He that said unto Him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee" (Heb. v. 5). He is the God-appointed Heir—for Him hath He appointed Heir of all things (Heb. i. 3). Satan and Adam, in positions of responsibility, failed; but the stability of the universe is henceforth assured. For the "Heir of all things" is the Man of Calvary—the Divine Creator and Sustainer of all things.

DELIGHTING IN GOD.

I THINK of thee, my God, by night,
 And talk of Thee by day,
 Thy love, my treasure and delight,
 Thy truth, my strength and stay.
 The day is dark, the night is long,
 Unblest with thoughts of thee;
 And dull to me the sweetest song,
 Unless its theme Thou be.
 Like pleasant thoughts of those we love,
 Which are of self a part,
 Which neither day nor night remove
 Out of the loving heart:
 So all day long, and all the night,
 Lord, let Thy presence be
 My joy, my breath, my shade, my light,
 My soul's delight in Thee.

DISCIPLESHIP.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS GIVEN IN ABERDEEN.

BY J. HIXON IRVING.

READ Luke xiv. 25-35. At the time the Lord Jesus uttered the words we have just read, He was on His way to Jerusalem to the last passover feast, and as He went, the passover pilgrims followed Him till, as we find from ver. 25, multitudes thronged Him. Most of them had been so impressed with His teaching and miracles, that they had professed to be His disciples, but the Lord knew what was in man, and how many of the great crowd that followed Him, had become His true disciples, and how many were only nominal. So He took His fan in His hand, and began to sift what was on the floor, separating the "wheat" of true disciples from the "chaff" of nominal followers, and this fact explains the heart-searching character of the Lord's ministry.

There are two great qualifications for true discipleship. The first is, an inward principle that becomes operative in the life, namely, the principle of Love: that lacking, there can be no true discipleship whatever. In ver. 26, the Lord shews that if a man loves his father or his mother more than the Lord Himself, he cannot be a follower of the Lord. Yea, further, He goes down to the root principle of self love running through the human family, and puts it like this—If a man loves his natural life more than the Lord, he cannot be His disciple. Active hatred to any one is not of course here or elsewhere taught by the Lord, but He takes up natural relationships to show, that relatives if

allowed to stand above Himself in the heart, would be fatal to discipleship. Supreme love to the Lord is the first essential to becoming a true disciple of His.

In ver. 27, we see an outward principle, which is also essential to discipleship, spoken of. The Lord very graciously shows that difficulties and trials will be in the path of the disciple, and He knew perfectly well that many in the crowd would be like chaff before the wind when the first blast of trial came. Coupled, therefore, with the inward principle of love, there must be the outward manifestation of endurance, which will deal with difficulties, and thus enable the disciple to follow on to know the Lord more perfectly.

This principle is illustrated by three simple parables. Two of them He used for the first time, the third for the third time.

The Tower builder, is the disciple or would-be disciple of Christ; the building of the tower is discipleship itself; and failure to build the tower after having commenced, is a breakdown in discipleship. A tower builder, before he begins, counts whether he has money and strength to finish the work. It is well for us from time to time to take stock and to see whether we are making progress in discipleship, and using our resources to the best advantage. Tower building signifies the building of Christian character—a prayerful, intelligent, spiritual, cultured Christian character. The building must go on continuously, for the danger is, that we break down. In almost every place one visits, somebody is being

pointed out who "once ran well," but something has "hindered." It is difficult to tell the full injury done by one who thus breaks down in his testimony.

The second parable is a very good illustration of discipleship, but like many parables it must not be pressed in all its details. The gist of the parable is in ver. 31, while 32 is simply added by way of explanation, and is a detail not to be pressed in connection with the parable proper. There are two kings and there are two armies, and there is possible conflict in view. The first king represents a disciple of Christ, and the second king undoubtedly stands for Satan—though conventional commentators say it is God; but this makes confusion in the parable. The ten thousand is at the disposal of the first king: that is, all the natural, spiritual, and moral resources that belong to a true disciple of Christ. The twenty thousand of the second king represent all the forces of Satan focussed against the believer in Christ. Satan has more skill, more subtilty, more intellectual power, and greater strength than the believer. None of us is a match for Satan, and if we go to war with our own forces, the result will be sure and certain defeat. We *have* to meet Satan, but we can only do so successfully in Christ. He takes up the conflict, and we are perfectly safe when sheltered by Him and by Him only. Let us not under-estimate the spiritual forces that are against us, and we shall then no doubt pursue our discipleship with some measure of success.

In the third parable—that of Salt—we have discipleship in connection with its

power. It is a microscopic parable, and was used by the Lord three times, no doubt for the purpose of impressing its solemn teaching upon the people. Salt represents the disciple, and the permanency of the salt represents true discipleship. The effect of salt upon substances, jik fish, flesh, or fowl, is preservation from corruption. If the salt loses its pungency or savour, it is of no practical use whatever. Place a believer who is in constant communion with God in a hamlet or village, and he will keep the scene from corruption. Let such an one go into certain company, and see how cleverly the cards, the whisky bottle, the "smutty" talk, and the blasphemer's language disappear. The one in touch with Christ, makes his presence felt wherever he goes—bless God for that. If all the disciples of Christ were taken out of the British Isles to-day, what a sad scene of putrefaction they would present before this time next year. God make His people terribly pungent, by keeping them in contact with Himself day by day.

We understand this parable better, when we remember that Palestinian salt was not like the salt of the British Isles. It had a mixture of lime and grit, and when the salt was exposed to sun, wind, or rain, the saline melted away and left nothing behind but lime grit, which was fit only to be blended with ashes for the making of footpaths. What the Lord meant in the parable was this—if we expose ourselves to the blasts of Satan unshielded by Him, and to the power and ways and fashion of the world, out of fellowship with God, all the pungency of our discipleship will be

lost, and we will have no power to deal with the corruption around us.

There are four great features which may be applied as tests of true discipleship.

The first is, a leaning entirely upon Christ for present and eternal salvation. That trust is to be a prolonged one. The safest believer is the one that trusts Christ now, at this present moment, as absolutely and intelligently as at the first. Salvation is not merely from the judgment of the great white throne, but from the power of sin, the world and Satan.

The second is, to sit down at Christ's feet, and to take in His teaching. For lack of this there are thousands of Christians to-day, whose testimony is useless; they have taken men for their teachers rather than Christ, and the creeds of men rather than divine realities.

The third is, to drink in the spirit of Christ—seeking to assimilate the spirit of Christ—to get at the very heart of Christ. The Lord sternly rebuked the two sons of Zebedee because they had not been drinking in of the spirit of Christ, who came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. We need to drink in His loving, holy, tender, gracious spirit day by day, and thus increasingly make it manifest we are His disciples.

The fourth is to "follow His steps." The Lord Jesus Christ's example has been left us in the wondrous Gospels; they show us how to walk hand in hand with Him, till we see Him face to face. God give each one of us that holy ambition to be out and out disciples of Christ, for His Name's sake. This we shall be, if we trust Him, learn of Him, and follow Him.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

VARIOUS BUILDINGS AND THEIR USES.

FOUR special and typical buildings came into existence during the peaceful years of Solomon's reign.

FIRST—*The Temple of Jehovah* on Mount Moriah (2 Chron. iv. 1), for the name of the Lord (2 Chron. ii. 1) and His worship, which took seven years in building (1 Kings vi. 38).

SECOND—*The House of His Kingdom* (2 Chron. ii. 1; 1 Kings ix. 10) on Mount Zion, which took thirteen years in building, the place of Rule, pointing to the present place of authority of the Lord Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 18; Col. i. 13), and His future glorious reign as Israel and the nations' King (Isa. xxiv. 23; Mic. iv. 2).

THIRD—*The House of the Forest of Lebanon* (1 Kings vii. 2), in which were stored the golden shields (1 Kings x. 17) and vessels (2 Chron. ix. 20), which were the witnesses of his wealth and glory, an earthly representation of the glory of Christ, such as will be seen in the latter day, when, as a priest, He shall sit upon His throne, bearing the glory (Zech. vi. 13), and dispensing justice and equity to all (Psa. lxxii. 1-8).

FOURTH—*The House of Pharaoh's Daughter* (1 Kings vii. 8; iii. 1, with 2 Chron. viii. 11), Solomon's Gentile bride, typical of Christ's glory among the Gentiles in the day of His kingdom (Isa. xi. 10; lxii. 12, 19). The latter three, which are all figures of earthly glory, were apparently connected (2 Chron. ix. 15-21), whereas the temple of Jehovah stood

apart on its rockfast foundation, to which Solomon had an "ascent" by which he went up (2 Chron. ix. 4), a figure of resurrection and heavenly glory.

SOLOMON'S WORKMEN.

To accomplish the great work of providing the materials and fitting them together according to the Divine pattern, skilled and willing workmen, for the building of the house of the Lord, were required. Any kind of labourers would not do, nor were the true workmen to be found in the way of the nations. The Lord's work must be done by the Lord's called and chosen servants, and they must do it according to His Word. Solomon raised a levy of 30,000 men out of Israel (1 Kings v. 14). These were sent in three courses of 10,000, to the far-off field of labour in Lebanon. One month they wrought there, and two months they remained at home, shewing that God would never have His servants neglect their household and parental responsibilities, not even for His work in near or distant lands. Few things have caused greater dishonour to the Lord's Name, than fathers, professing godliness, neglecting to bring up their families "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. iv. 4), to rule their own households according to God (1 Tim. iii. 5, 12), and to provide for those dependent upon them in a way worthy of Him (1 Tim. v. 8), while ostensibly engaged in what they call, 'the Lord's work.' We may be assured that the God who has laid a first responsibility upon Christian husbands and fathers toward their households, will never send any on such service as will habitually

render it impossible for them to keep His Word, in fulfilling these obligations. Wonderfully does He watch over all that belongs to His people, when they are engaged in His worship and service at His express command (Exod. xxxiv. 24), and faithfully does He provide for those who, at His bidding, leave their homes and kindred for His Gospel's sake (Mark x. 29), yet would He remind even such, that home and kindred have their claims, and that rest (Mark vi. 30) as well as labour, is needed by all who share in His honourable and glorious work (Psa. cxi. 3).

A notable feature in the work was the employment of an election from the Gentiles, who became fellow-workers with the men of Israel in this unique service. Hiram, King of Tyre, "ever a lover of David" (1 Kings v. 1), at Solomon's command, willingly sends skilled men of his kingdom, to be with Solomon's servants in hewing cedar and fir trees in Lebanon for the house of the Lord. One especially named and remarkably gifted, was the son of a "woman of Dan," whose father was "a man of Tyre" (2 Chron. ii. 12), a man who, in ordinary circumstances, would have been excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, was a co-worker with the servants of David and Solomon in the choicest spheres of temple service (2 Chron. ii. 14). In this we have a foreshadowing of the time now present, in which, under the rule of the true Solomon, "Jesus Christ, the seed of David raised from the dead," according to Paul's Gospel (2 Tim. ii. 8), a "new man," called out from Jew and Gentile, is being formed (Eph. ii. 15), to become "one

body," in which natural and national distinctions cease to be reckoned. It was in service for the formation of the church thus viewed, that Peter, the apostle of the circumcision, and Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, were called to their varied ministries, and in recognition of the one work in which they were engaged, they gave to each other the "right hand of fellowship" (Gal. ii. 9), regarding each other—not as leaders of rival parties—but as brethren beloved and fellow-labourers (1 Cor. ix. 5; 2 Pet. iii. 17), Paul, and Timothy—whose father was a Greek (Acts xvi; 1)—laboured as son and father in the Gospel (Phil. ii. 22). Thus the character and pattern of such service as is well pleasing to God is set before us for this age, in which the church as God's temple is being called into existence and builded (Eph. ii. 20, 21; 1 Cor. iii. 10). The diversity of labour and the holy order in which it is to be carried on, which is according to God, are well illustrated by the division of the vast army of 153,600 workers of the strangers that were in Israel, into 80,000 hewers, 70,000 bearers of burdens, with 3,600 overseers (2 Chron. ii. 17, 18). All had their place and sphere, even as now the Lord has given "to every man his work" (Mark xiii. 34). And there were those who had rule and oversight among them, so that no anarchy or lawlessness might hinder the work being done in a way worthy of God, who then and now desires that "all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40)—not by man's arrangement, but by His own Divine commandment.

TWO FALSE RELIGIONS.

WE have two kinds of religion running in powerful streams around us; a Cross without a Christ, and a Christ without a Cross.

In the first case the mere emblem is cherished and portrayed in every variety of form, whilst the living Christ, who died, is not trusted. The emblems of His flesh and blood, it may be, revered: His flesh and blood in reality not eaten and drunk. Outward adornments of holy things carefully and elaborately wrought. Vestments, and buildings, and altars, studied with deep interest, formed after patterns recovered out of bygone days of darkness and idolatry; whilst the true priests washed in the precious blood of the Lamb are almost unknown. The building of "living stones" in union with the living stone, is disregarded; and the tree of the curse, and He who hung on it, are in reality despised.

In the latter, a Christ without a Cross. A widespread taint of Socinianism pervades vast numbers of the religious publications of the day. Christ is presented as an *Example* to the unbeliever, instead of being exalted as a Saviour through the blood of His Cross. Mankind is supposed to have been raised in the scale of existence by the Son of God having become man. A kind of regeneration of the human race is preached through "the Word having been made flesh," and the sinner is directed to cultivate his own better thoughts.

What is all this, but trampling under foot the blood of Christ?—H. W. SOLTAU.

The Bible Annotator.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE STUDY.

TRUE HOLINESS.

Its Pattern is in Christ (Acts iv. 27 ; Heb. vii. 26).
 Its Standard is in the Word (2 Pet. ii. 21 ; Col. i. 22).
 Its Power is of the Spirit (Rom. i. 4 ; 1 Cor. vi. 19).

THREE KINDS OF STEWARDS.

A Good Steward (1 Pet. iv. 10)—Dispensing.
 A Wise Steward (Luke xii. 42)—Discriminating.
 An Unjust Steward (Luke xvi. 1)—Wasting.

FORBIDDEN MIXTURES.

Law and Grace (Acts xv. 1-24 ; Gal. iii. 2 ; v. 4).
 Truth and Tradition (Mark vi. 8-13 ; 2 Tim. iv. 3).
 Saints and Sinners (2 Cor. vi. 14 ; 2 Tim. ii. 21).

THE PEOPLE OF GOD :

As described in the Word, are—

A Chosen People (Deut. vii. 6 ; Pet. ii. 9).
 A Redeemed People (Exod. xv. 13 ; Eph. i. 7).
 A Peculiar People (Deut. xiv. 2 ; Titus ii. 14).
 A Holy People (Deut. vii. 6 ; 1 Pet. i. 15).
 A Happy People (Deut. xxxiii. 29 ; John xv. 11).

Notes on Bible Texts.

Eph. vi. 12.—The “Wicked Spirits,” with whom the believer now “wrestles,” are not in hell, or on earth, as some ignorantly say, but “in heavenly places,” the present sphere of the believer’s blessing (see chap. i. 3 ; ii. 7).

1 Cor. xii. 13.—“For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one body” (R.V.). The element in which the many members are baptised is the “one Spirit,” and thus is formed the “one body” (Eph. iv. 4). The Baptiser is the Risen Lord, as John testified of Him (John i. 33). He is first the Taker away of sin, and then the Baptiser in the Holy Spirit (Matt. iii. 11 R.V.). This was fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts ii.) to Jews ; in Acts vii. 17, to Samaritans ; in Acts x. 44, to Gentiles ; and in Acts xix. 6, to John’s disciples, representing the various classes, out from which is being called the “ecclesia,” the Church, constituted one body, by baptism in the one Spirit. There is no such thing taught in Scripture as repeated baptisms of the Spirit in individual Christian experience, but there may be repeated fillings for testimony and service (Acts ii. 4 ; iv. 8 ; xiii. 32).

Phil. i. 23.—“For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” Although it would be “gain” to

the apostle to die, yet to live in the flesh, serving the Lord and helping the saints, was to be fruit of his labour, literally “worth his while,” then he knew not which he would choose, whether his own or others’ gain. His desire was to “depart.” The word is “analuo,” and means to undo a connection, to untie a cable, to weigh an anchor, and thus like a ship unmoored to “depart” to the other shore. Such is death to the Christian. And thus it was to the apostle when the appointed season of his “analysis,” his “departure,” was “upon him” (2 Tim. iv. 6). There is no thought here of the “returning” of the Lord. “Soul-sleepers” and Annihilationists interpret “analuo” to mean “a third thing,” different from living or dying, to avoid the necessity of admitting the survival of the spirit after death and before resurrection, spoken of in the Word as being “with Christ, which is very far better.!”

The Young Believer's Question Box.

When it was said to Saul by Samuel, speaking from the spirit world, “To-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me” (1 Sam. xxviii. 19), are we to infer that Saul was a saved man, and that his soul went to the same hereafter as Samuel’s? The words “with me” simply mean, in the death state, or, as the Old Testament defines it, in “Sheol,” which means “the unseen.” We are informed in the Word that this “Sheol” was composed of two compartments, “the lowest Sheol” (Psa. lxxxvi. 13), where the wrath of God is said to burn (Deut. xxxii. 22), being the abode of the disembodied spirits of the wicked. There is nothing in this passage to give any light on the question of Saul’s relation to God, or concerning his destiny. Such Scriptures as 1 Sam. xvi. 14 ; xxviii. 16, with the general tenor of Saul’s life, his enmity to God, and to David, with his utter disregard for God’s truth, mark him an unregenerate man.

When Peter speaks of his “decease” (2 Pet. i. 15), are we to infer that death is the Christian’s proper hope? No. The fact that he received a special revelation from the Lord about it, proves, that death was not the hope of believers generally at that time. They waited for the “Son from heaven” (1 Thess. i. 10), and were “looking for that blessed hope” (Titus ii. 13), of the Lord’s return. Although death may intervene, none can say it MUST, and faith ever reckons that “WE” may be among those “who are alive and remain” (1 Thess. iv. 17) at the Lord’s coming.

Answers to Correspondents.

"VERITAS."—The subject of your paper, being of local importance, is not for general edification. We cannot, therefore, insert it in these pages.

E. B., NEW YORK.—The best book that we know on the subject is Wm. Trotter's "Plain Papers on Prophetic Subjects." It is well worth your perusal.

A. J., QUEENSLAND.—Be very sure the "professing Christian" who wishes to enter into a co-partnership with you in business, is a "born again" man, with a clear and clean testimony. It is wonderful how easily one is satisfied with a thin veneer of Christian profession, when there is a prospect of success in business. But moneymaking is not everything, as the unhappy lives of many who have put God and the principles of His Word out of court, in their haste to be rich, sadly testify. Our advice is: let some honest, clear visioned, spiritual Christian, have your prospective partner through his hands, to test the depth of his Christian profession, before you become "yoked" in business with him.

J. R., NEW ZEALAND.—"Voting for Prohibition," or any other "good cause" that brings the children of God into common suit with the ungodly, and diverts their attention from the one great business of preaching Christ to the world, while maintaining their strangership in it, is always a snare, and generally only the thin end of the wedge, to dabbling in municipal and political warfare, as many know to their cost spiritually. The lack of wholesome, healthy teaching on this and kindred subjects—once so common, now so rare in general ministry—is one cause of the degeneracy you mourn over, and if those "in power" who ought to be ensamples to the flock are "chief in the trespass," it makes the evil more difficult to deal with. Our God always blesses faithful and wise testimony to His truth, even when things are far gone, but it always costs those who bear it something in the way of opposition and abuse.

G. S., SALFORD.—The happiest way to lead on and encourage young preachers is, for those of more experience, who are in the habit of occupying the platform to have them alongside of them, and give them opportunity of taking part, according to the measure of their ability. Cottage and outdoor meetings are excellent for leading out young preachers, who have a measure of gift, and grace to use it, and where there are young men coming on as helpers, they should be encouraged in a godly way to share in these. Where this is done, there is

less tendency to running here and there, and no lack of active and acceptable Gospellers.

Answers to Special Questions.

Are there two circles of church fellowship authorised in the Scripture; one permanent, composed of those who have been "received" (Rom. xvi. 1, 2) and "added" (Acts ii. 21) to the local assembly, and another of "casual" visitors, who are either brought by friends, or come as they would to any of the denominations? If so, where are they described and wherein do they differ?

ANSWER A.—There is only one circle of Christian fellowship known in Scripture (1 Cor. i. 9). This is elsewhere described as including "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." In a day of confusion and discord, all assumption must be eschewed, nevertheless 2 Tim. ii. 19-25 and 2 John 11, remain.

N. L. N.

ANSWER B.—Acts ii. 47, is referred to in the question. Regarding those added, it is clear that it was the Lord—not the assembly—who added the three thousand. What the disciples had to do was simply to recognise this, and welcome them. Such a thing as reception of believers to the fellowship of an assembly, I cannot find in the Scriptures.

D. C.

ANSWER C.—Much of the confusion that exists regarding the subject of reception is due to the fact, that the Church, as the body of Christ, formed and maintained by baptism in the Spirit (1 Cor. xiv. 13), and the local assembly as it exists in any given place (see Col. iv. 16, 17), are regarded by many as one and the same, or as some put it, that the one is but a "local expression" of the other. Now, as all will surely acknowledge, none can bring members into the Church in the former aspect, but the Lord Himself; while in the local assembly those who are already there, receive or welcome newcomers, whether as saints (Acts ix. 26, 27) or servants (Acts xviii. 27). There is nothing in the Word to indicate that those so received, were welcomed to anything less than to share all the privileges and responsibilities of the assembly, and there to remain.

W. J. M.

ANSWER D.—"Receiving to the Lord's table"—although often heard in ministry and read in print, is not a Scriptural expression, nor does it express a Scriptural practice. When one was received into the company of the saints, it was to be "one of" (Col. iv. 12) them, and to be "with them coming

in and going out" (Acts ix. 28). If one had to be "put away" because of sin, it was not "from the Lord's table" only, but as the Word commands, "put away from among yourselves" (1 Cor. v. 13). So that whatever he was received to share, that he was deprived of by excommunication. No second circle, or any less than this is hinted at in the Word.

G. S.

ANSWER E.—Young and uninstructed believers seeking to be associated with an assembly gathered in accordance with the Scripture pattern, may very feebly apprehend all that is involved in their application. While not making their lack of knowledge any reason for refusing to welcome them, they should surely be shown from the Word, in a simple way, such as they can understand, what the reception implies; not membership as in a denomination, but a mutual share of all that God has given His people collectively to enjoy with one another, and to be to one another as thus associated. If they wander, either from lack of knowledge or want of will, pastoral care and wise instruction may be exercised, and if need be, should they become wilful and unruly, warning may be given them as Scripture directs (1 Thess. v. 14). The idea of an outer circle of "casual visitors," who are brought by friends to patronise their "place of worship," is something entirely foreign to God's Word, and like many other religious practices, has been copied from the world's way.

J. D.

ANSWER E.—Exercised believers, who are seeking to please the Lord and to follow all the light they have, will be willing that they be brought into the midst of God's people, whose fellowship they are seeking, in a godly way, and those to whom they come, will, if in a right spiritual condition, be glad to welcome them, however little they know of the truth, if they are satisfied that "God hath received" them (Rom. xiv. 3). There is a place for those "weak in the faith" (Rom. xiv. 1), who need "support" (1 Thess. v. 14), as well as for the "strong," who can give it, in God's assembly. But where wilfulness, rather than weakness, is manifested, and a determination to go where they please and be subject to none, it must be clearly shewn that such self-will and lawlessness, is not the spirit which God enjoins on those who are to be "subject one to another" (1 Pet. v. 5), or in which that "fellowship of the Spirit" (Phil. ii. 1), to which he exhorts, is to be enjoyed. If one is brought into an assembly under the impression that there is no order, no rule, but each at liberty to do what is

"right in his own eyes," or to go wherever he has a mind, it is impossible that anything approximating to fellowship as described in the Word can be known, or that any godly and united testimony can be given under such conditions, to the truths they profess to own.

A. M.

ANSWER F.—"Casual visitors" are most frequently those brought by Christians with whom they are staying, and purely as a matter of convenience, or because it is the habit of those who visit, to worship with those whose guests they are. If they are truly exercised as to following any light they may have from the Word, it will be manifest when they are at home as well as when they are absent. It is no kindness to such persons to bring them as casual visitors to God's assembly, for as has been expressed by some again and again, they feel anything but comfortable, and go away in some cases to ridicule the whole thing. Besides, it is dishonour to the Lord's Name and a reproach upon His way, to make the assembly in which He, the Holy One is "in the midst," a sphere for exhibiting worldly courtesies, often it is to be feared to some who are only lifeless religious professors. S. E. M.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The above are selected from a large number of answers sent to the above question, shewing that there is a widespread interest in the subject. We have been obliged to use the scissors freely, cutting down nearly all, to enable us to give as many aspects as possible. That they do not agree is evident, but there is something to consider and "prove" by the Word in them all. Some are so deeply impressed with the importance of their own view, that they think there can be no other; others use epithets unnecessarily strong in describing those who differ from them, and a few—only a few, we are glad to say—think the subject should not be discussed at all. Why not? Those who "do the truth," surely need not fear coming under the searchlight of the Word. Next month (God willing) we will give the remaining answers, with a brief review of the whole.

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Questions Requiring Answers.

VII.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

VIII.—How does Scripture teach an assembly of believers to deal with one whose ministry is unprofitable?

THE SON OF GOD.

BY DR. J. A. OWLES.

THERE is only one passage in the Old Testament in which the words "Son of God" occur. This is in Daniel iii. 25, a portion of that prophesy written in Aramaic, or Chaldee. In the Revised Version we have the rendering "a son of the gods," which cannot be disputed on classical grounds, but the same translators use the word "gods" in chap. iv. 8, preceded by "holy," so that it is not so much scholarship as spiritual discernment that is needed. Few children of God doubt, that it was the second person in the Trinity who, before His Incarnation, was with His servants "in the midst of the fire;" a literal fulfilment to them of Isaiah xliii. 2, "When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Thus they by faith "quenched the power of fire" (Heb. xi. 34, R.V.). It was doubtless the same Person, whether in human or angelic form, who appeared to Jacob (Gen. xxxii. 24), to Joshua (Josh. v. 13-14), to Manoah and his wife (Judges xiii.), and to Abraham (Gen. xviii), for He was always the Word of God.

In the New Testament the Sonship of our Lord may be divided into three parts. (1) Before He came into the world. (2) When here on the earth. (3) After His resurrection. A reverent and careful consideration of certain differences in these, helps to prevent confusion, and also to remove some difficulties that most students of Scripture experience.

I. Before He came into the world.

In John v. 18—the Gospel in which His Divinity or Deity is especially prominent—the Jews understood Him to call God "His *own* Father, making Himself equal with God" (R.V.). And in Rom. viii. 3, R.V., we read of God sending "His *own* Son in the likeness of sinful flesh," a proof not only of His pre-existence, but of His unique relationship. Lower down in the same chapter at ver. 32, we have "He that spared not His *own* Son." The little word "*own*" is never applied to others, who are now, but were not always children and sons of God. Nor should we speak of God as "our *own* Father," however happy we may be in His presence.

Another word which is distinctive is, "the Only Begotten." It is used in the Greek, of the son of the widow of Nain (Luke vii. 12), of the daughter of Jairus (Luke viii. 42), of the son who was a demoniac (Luke ix. 38), and of Isaac (Heb. xi. 17), but it usually refers to our Lord, as He was before He became flesh (John i. 14-18, R.V.), the love gift of God to a guilty world (John iii. 16, 18, and 1 John iv. 9). There is a sense in which He must be ever the *only* begotten One, notwithstanding the grace through which "many sons" are being brought to glory (Heb. ii. 10). Although we do not find the words "Eternal Son" in Scripture, we have in Melchisedec a remarkable type of our Lord in that character. Some have taught that Melchisedec was the Lord Himself, but the words, "made *like* unto the Son of God" (Heb. vii. 3), and that He was "after the similitude of Melchisedec" (v. 15) forbid that opinion.

although the points of similarity are wonderful and the words, "it is witnessed that he liveth" (v. 8), require much consideration. The descriptions in Heb. vii. 3, "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning or days nor end of life," apply to Melchisedec, for he suddenly appears upon the scene in Gen. xiv. 18, with no antecedents, no genealogy, or parentage, and with the title, "King of Salem," and "priest of God Most High" (R.V.). Such words are not true of our Lord as *Man*, for He had a mother; He began His days on earth in the manger at Bethlehem, and He died upon the Cross of Calvary. They refer, therefore, to Him as the Eternal One, in eternity past as well as future, with neither a beginning nor an end. Melchisedec here, thus typifies one greater than Abraham, greater than David, greater even than angels (Heb. i. 4), for they all were created by Him. In John xvii. 5, our Lord says to His Father, "The glory which I had with Thee *before the world was*;" sometimes called pre-mundane glory, and in Prov. viii. 22, &c., we have Wisdom personified speaking thus: "The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was *set up* (Heb., appointed) from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the beginning of the dust of the world. When He

established the *heavens* I was there: when He set a circle upon the face of the deep; when He made firm the skies above; when the fountains of the deep became strong: when He gave to the sea its bound, that the waters should not transgress His commandments: when He marked out the foundations of the earth. Then I was by Him as a Master Workman, and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him; &c. (R.V.). This rejerence to our Lord as Messiah, as well as Creator, helps us to grasp the stupendous fact that when He "offered *Himself* without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14), that wondrous sacrifice would effect reconciliation not only for men, but for the upper and the lower creation (Col. i. 19, 20). There He will be owned as Lord (Phil. ii. 10, 11), even including "things under the earth" though these do not share in the reconciliation. Much might be added to this part of our subject; but I must pass on to consider our Lord as Son of God in another aspect.

2. When He was here on earth. In Matt. i. 20, an angel said to Joseph concerning Mary, "that which is conceived (Gr., begotten) in her is of the Holy Ghost," and in Luke i. 35, the angel said unto her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that which is to be born, shall be called holy, the Son of God" (R.V.). In our Lord's human person, therefore, in addition to what He ever had been, and still continued to be, as essentially God, there was Manhood; a combination of what was divine as well as what was

human, probably typified in the gold of the ephod, which was beaten into thin plates, and cut into wires worked into the blue, and into the purple, and into the scarlet, and into the fine linen, the work of the cunning workman (Exod. xxxix. 3). It would thus permeate and be inseparable from each part of the whole; a mystery, indeed, beyond the comprehension of the carnal, even if of a scientific mind, but simple to the child who has faith. Phil. ii. 6, &c., teaches us that our Lord was *originally* (Gr.) in the *form* of God—a word that does not mean outward shape, as Gal. iv. 19 proves, where the verb is used to express Paul's travail in birth, that Christ might be *formed* in Galatian believers, that is His moral character or image seen. We have then an indirect proof of our Lord's Divinity in the fact that He took what He had not before, the *form* of a servant (bond servant), and though He asserted His Deity when occasion required it, He more frequently acted as the humble and obedient One. There is therefore no contradiction in His saying at one time "the Father is greater than I" (John xiv. 28), and at another "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30); or in recognising Him simultaneously as the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, "who fainteth not, neither is weary" (Isa. xl. 28), and yet the Man who "being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the well" (John iv. 6). John the Baptist said of Him, "He that cometh *after* me is become *before* me." In Greek, there is another word, first in regard of me (John i. 15, R.V.), and

though the Jews said truly, "Thou art not yet fifty years old," He as the truth, replied, "Before Abraham was (or was born, Greek) I AM" (John viii. 57, 58). Even the *body* prepared for Him (Heb. x. 5) "in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3) did not "see corruption" (Acts ii. 31), though in that Eastern clime it lay long enough in the sepulchre for decomposition to set in, but this could not be with God's "Holy One." We have a touching scene in Matt. ii. 10, 11, where the "wise men," guided by the star, saw "the young child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshipped (not *her* but) HIM; and opening their treasures they offered unto HIM gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Who is this child, and what the meaning of these offerings? The gold is a symbol here as elsewhere of Deity, the frankincense was a sweet perfume *all* for the Lord (Lev. ii. 2), the sweet savour of His spotless life, and the myrrh is a chief ingredient in the holy anointing oil (Exod. xxx. 20-33, &c.), also a part of the perfume of His garments (Psa. xlv. 8). It with wine was offered at the Cross, but He received it not, yet it was in the mixture of spices which Nicodemus brought to embalm His precious body (Mark xv. 23). When twelve years old, He speaks of being in "His Father's business," yet acted as became His years, not teaching, though He was the wisdom of God, but "hearing" doctors or teachers and "asking them questions." No wonder *all* that heard, were amazed at His "understanding and answers" (Luke ii. 41-49).

(To be continued.)

THE APPEARING AND DISAPPEARING OF THE LORD.

(A Brief Word upon 1 John v. 6.)

BY J. HIXON IRVING.

“THIS is He that came by (through) water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by (in) water only but by (in) water and blood.”

It is well known that the principal subject of the 1st Epistle by John is the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God. The word “manifested,” which means to “stand out in the light,” is one of the key-words of the Epistle. It is met with at the commencement of it.” For the life was *manifested*, and we have seen it, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was *manifested* unto us” (Ch. i. 2).

Manifestation is not the same as Incarnation, though in current religious thought they are often confused. That there could be no manifestation of the Lord in the sense of this Epistle without incarnation: the Word becoming flesh, is obvious. Though the former did not take place until thirty years after the latter, for “Jesus began to be about thirty years of age” at the time of His manifestation to Israel as the Messiah.

His manifestation commenced at the time when He began to be “heard,” “seen,” “looked upon,” and “handled” by His disciples and others.

The moral reasons for His manifestation are stated in the Epistle first—to take away sins (ch. iii. 5); second, to destroy the works of the devil (ch. iii; 8); and

third, to manifest the love of God to men (ch. iv. 9).

The manner of the beginning and ending of that manifestation is given in terse language in ch. v. 6.

The word “came” is evidently equivalent to “was manifested.” He was manifested in a twofold way; first, through “water,” and second, through “blood.” Literally “through *the* water and through *the* blood.”

Are these things symbolic or are they literal? A mystic school of interpreters say the former; but the latter is more than likely. “Water” stands for water here, and for nothing else. It is not symbolic of the Word of promise and prophecy which concerned His coming; though He came in fulfilment of that Word. This “water” points to some well-defined event, some well known circumstance in His life, which stands immediately connected with His revelation to men as the Son of God. Could this refer to His birth? We think not; nay, we are sure it could not. It is a fitting question to ask—By what agent, or by what instrument, was the Lord manifested to Israel? The true answer to which is—By John as the agent, and his baptism as the instrument. He (the Baptist) was the agent through whom, and his baptism the instrument through which, the Lord was introduced to Israel as its Messiah. For until His baptism by John in Jordan, He had not been known to the nation as “the Christ.”

We are not forgetting the fact, that He was known as such to godly ones such as Simon and Anna in His childhood; but

they were individuals, and few in number. He was not made known to the nation at large, until He came through "water."

John was the "porter" who let the Lord in "through the door into the sheepfold," that He might reach and save the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (John x.). The Lord passed through the "water" in full view of men, for this "thing was not done in a corner," and He remained afterwards under their gaze for over three years.

It should be borne in mind that John gave as the object of his mission this revelation of the Lord to the nation:—

"That He might be made *manifest* to Israel, am I therefore come baptising with (in) water" (John i. 31).

It is worthy of observation that John the Baptist was the first to use the word "manifested," a word which was afterwards to be so often connected with the Lord by the other John. It may be settled then as a fact that the words—"this is He that came through water"—point to the Lord's baptism by John in Jordan, through which baptism He was introduced to the nation of Israel as the Son of God.

Certainly there is no other historical event in His life which could correspond to "water" but the one referred to. His baptism by John in Jordan was a shadow of a more solemn baptism which He should pass under in fulfilment of His Father's will; a baptism under which He would cry: "Save Me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters,

where the floods overflow Me" (Psa. lxi. 1, 2).

THE BLOOD.

The question may now be asked—"If the 'water' refers to the Lord's baptism, what then is meant by the 'blood?'" With all reverence we say it: Surely something more than that He came by fulfilling the types connected with the bloody sacrifices under the law of Moses. "Blood" in this passage stands for more than "the blood of bulls and of goats;" it refers to "His own blood" which was shed on the "tree." His death was an undoubted fulfilment of each divinely appointed typical sacrifice; yet, more than that is here meant. Some may be ready to ask the question: But how could He be said to "come" through blood?

The answer is, If "came" stands for His manifestation to men, it simply means that this manifestation closed with His death; and that He came *in* through "water" and went *out* through "blood." This is evidently the mind of the Spirit on the matter.

The baptiser, as a rule, knows more about the meaning of baptism than do the baptised; but in the Lord's case it was the opposite of this, for He knew more about the meaning of His baptism than did John who immersed Him. When the waters of Jordan closed over Him, He knew that they were the sign and foreshadowing of a more solemn baptism, even that one in blood, which He would soon pass beneath.

It was to the latter He pointed in the words to His disciples: "I have a baptism

to be baptised with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished" (Luke xii. 40).

It was on the Cross then that He underwent the second baptism, when He entered into conflict with the powers of darkness, and bore the insults of hate-mad men, and endured the judgment of God against sin. Oh! that we might more often have this before the mind, and upon the heart!

"Draw near, O world, and mark Him well;
Behold the drops of blood that tell
How sore His conflict with the foe:
And hark! how from that noble heart,
Sigh after sigh doth slowly start
From depths of yet untafhomed' woe.

Alas! my Saviour, who could dare
Bid Thee such bitter anguish bear,
What evil heart can treat Thee thus?
For Thou art good, hast wronged none,
As we and ours too oft have done;
Thou hast not sinned, dear Lord, like us.

I and my sins that number more
Than yonder sands upon the shore,
Have brought to pass this agony;
'Tis I have caused the floods of woe
That now Thy dying soul o'erflow,
And those sad hearts that watch by Thee."

The Lord "came" then through two baptisms, one in "water" and the other in "blood," the first of which was the shadow, and the last was the substance.

He began His ministry through the one, and ended it with the other. The first was the door of entrance upon His work, and the second was the door of exit from it. He appeared to the sight of men through the former, and disappeared from it through the latter.

Though He tarried on earth forty days after His resurrection ere He ascended on high; yet the world never saw Him

during that time. The last sight His enemies had of Him was, when He hung upon the Cross. When His body was taken down from it He passed out of their sight—passed into a life in resurrection—into Heaven—into the presence of God—passed in to take up another stage of His work, in "bringing many sons unto glory."

To repeat then, though at some risk of being tedious, the teaching of 1 John v. 6 is, that He came out through "the water" and He went back by "*the* blood." Now His people with longing eyes wait to see their Lord, and be for ever with Him. Often under the stress and trials of life, they in heart cry: "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

NOTE.

The definite article is used before each noun showing they are not general but particular. It will also be observed that in the passage, 1 John v. 6, as quoted, that two different prepositions are used, viz., "through" and "in." This fact is concealed in A.V., and this may in measure account for some of the confusion of thought which exists in many minds regarding the true meaning of the verse. The preposition "through" points to the instrumental means of His manifestation, "water" and "blood." While the preposition "in" indicates the elemental means of the same. "Water" was the element of His appearing to men, and "blood" the element of His disappearing beyond the reach of their sight.

—o—

"God is Love" and "God is Faithful,"
So in "perfect peace" I rest.

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH DISCIPLINE--II.

DISCIPLINE has as its object the correction and blessing of its subjects (Heb. xii. 5-10.). In giving effect to that aspect of it for which the assembly is responsible, this should ever be kept in view, and not merely to get rid of one who has become a trouble or a reproach.

BINDING AND LOOSING.—To the local assembly gathered in the Lord's Name, with Himself in the midst (Matt. xviii. 20), has been committed the responsibility of carrying out the Lord's discipline upon one who has gone astray, and who refuses all remedial measures, individual and collective, for his recovery and restoration. The words of Matthew xviii. 18, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be, having been bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be, having been loosed in heaven" (see Young's Translation, which is undoubtedly the proper rendering), fully shew that it is not the church's acts which are ratified in heaven, as the A.V. rendering seems to teach, but that what God has already "bound" or "loosed" in heaven, is to be carried into effect by His people upon earth. *Binding* refers to the act of excision; *loosing* to restoration. The assembly is not legislative, only administrative. The Church has no authority beyond carrying out the will of the Lord, and to us of this time that will is recorded in full in His Word. He tells us there, who are to be "put away," how, and by whom (1 Cor. v. 9-13).

GUILT PROVED.—The proof of guilt must be so full and clear, that the

consciences of all will be convinced of the justice of the discipline. One witness is insufficient (see Deut. xix. 15; xvii. 6; Matt. xviii. 16; 1 Tim. v. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 1); he might be false, and the innocent have to suffer. The Divine principle must in all cases be the rule, no matter how credible a single, unsupported testimony may be. The assembly must wait upon God, until the evil is fully manifested, or the accused cleared of suspicion, and all of one mind. Divine discipline is impossible in a divided assembly, one part taking the side of the accused, the other against him. If evidence of guilt is lacking, no assembly action can be taken. There is no Scripture authority for asking one accused to "sit back;" this would be virtually to exclude him, without having proof of his guilt.

WITHDRAWAL.—If a believer absents himself from the assembly through coldness of heart or indifference, he is a subject for shepherd care, and ought to be visited, and, if possible, restored (see 1 Thess. v. 15; Ezek. xxxiv. 16). It would be entirely wrong to regard or treat him as one put away. But if the one who has thus withdrawn, has been guilty of any sin that warrants excommunication, then his withdrawal in order to escape Scriptural discipline does not relieve the assembly from the responsibility of "putting away" (1 Cor. v. 13), or declaring that the guilty person is no longer in their fellowship.

EXCOMMUNICATION.—After all efforts have failed, to gain and recover the sinning one from evil doctrine, or ungodly practices into which he has fallen, and in which he continues, there is only one

course remains for the assembly, that is, to put away from among themselves "that wicked person" (1 Cor. v. 13). They have not to decide whether or not he is a true believer, but to deal with him as one who for the present is no longer to be regarded as a "brother," or fit for the fellowship of the Christian assembly. Such a solemn excision should be the united act of the whole assembly when "gathered together" in the Name of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. v. 4), having His authority; not the action of the overseers or of part of the assembly, but of the whole. And where this is done according to God and with His commandment (Matt. xviii. 18), it ought to be recognised by all other assemblies. Woe be to those who would seek to make it void! They will assuredly be judged of the Lord.

SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.—The words "no not to eat" (1 Cor. v. 11.), or "not even to eat," prohibit social intercourse, as well as Christian fellowship with one put away. While shewing the ordinary courtesies of life, which we owe to our fellowmen, it is of the utmost importance that nothing should be done or said to nullify the discipline of the assembly, and thus to hinder the divinely appointed remedy for his restoration. There is no such thing in Scripture as receiving to or putting away from "the Lord's Table," as is sometimes said. The word says "put away from among yourselves," that is absolutely, in all spiritual relations.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE.—There are many children of God all around, who although they have never been in any Scripturally gathered assembly, are yet

personally godly, and walking in all the truth they know. Such are in a totally different position from one thus Scripture-ally put away. With such believers one may enjoy much individual spiritual fellowship, and seek to help them on in the ways of the Lord, without endorsing their church position. Such intercourse is entirely forbidden with one who has been "put away."

THE OBJECT OF DISCIPLINE.—All godly discipline—even the final act of excommunication—has as its object the humiliation and restoration, first to God and then to the assembly, of the sinning one. He is put where God may judge and deal with him (see 1 Cor. v. 13), but a watchful eye should ever be kept, and the faintest sign of restoration to God, and return to spiritual health welcomed. It has been often remarked, how few comparatively of those who are "put away" for holding and teaching evil doctrine are ever restored, either to God and the faith, or to His people, while many who fall under the power of sin and are disciplined as God has commanded, are humbled and restored to walk more softly and watchfully than before. This may teach us how serious a matter it is to fall under the power or error, and it may also warn us not to make void godly discipline upon such, by sympathising with them, and thus confirming them in their errors, as many, alas! have been by means of a false charity, which has more respect for man's pride than God's truth. To receive, or sympathise with one thus dealt with, is to incur Divine judgment.

(To be Continued.)

THE PURPOSED HEART.

GOD'S witnesses in the world, in all ages, have been marked by a purposed heart. They have differed in gifts, and in the sphere and character of their testimony, but they have all had this in common—a definite aim, and purpose of heart. They set a mark before them, and made it the one business of their life to attain to it. Others might swerve to and fro, but with them there was the steady step, the clear course, the straight unwinding path. They were men of fixed, resolute purpose; men who had one aim in life, one object for which they lived and spent themselves, and by the grace of God they gained that on which their heart was set. This is often seen in men living for the world. It is the acknowledged principle by which men attain to earthly wealth, and fame, and greatness. By having a fixed purpose before them, and bending every energy of mind and body to gain it, men succeed to earthly prosperity. We believe the same principle applies in the Kingdom of God. A saint who, by the grace of God, has a purposed heart to live for Him, to serve Him, to honour Him, to seek the glory of His Lord above all else, cost what it may; to obey the commandments of His God, and to own the Supreme Authority of His Word over every department of his life, will have strength given him from on high to fulfil his purpose. The apostle Paul was such a man. The words: "This *one* thing I do" (Phil. iii. 13); "Thou has fully known my doctrine, manner of life, *purpose*" (2 Tim. iv. 10), reveal what

spirit he was of, and tell the secret of his unswerving faithfulness to God and to the truth, amid friends and foes alike. Daniel, in the court of Babylon—undefiled, faithful, and true to God, amid ever-changing scenes of prosperity, adversity, temptation, and trial, was one who, in his early days, "*purposed* in his heart that he would not defile himself" (Dan. i. 8), and he was preserved even unto old age, God's honoured and faithful witness. Never was there a time when the purposed heart was more needed among God's people than now. Our lot is cast in strange and testing times. God's truth is openly denied by many, and religiously frittered away by more, under the plea of charity and catholicity of spirit. To be pleasant, to stand in high esteem in the church, is reckoned of great account. To please God, to hold tenaciously to His Word, not relaxing one jot or tittle, is counted bigotry and narrowness. Those who have this purpose of heart may be called to suffer as their fathers did, although not after the same fashion. Their purpose of heart to hold fast and obey the truth of God will be tested. It may not be by the rack, the prison, or the stake, but by the contempt and sneer of the world, or, what is more painful to bear, the cold suspicions and hard words of brethren in Christ, who have chosen another, and more popular path. But the end will recompense all. May God Himself help His saints with patience to wait for it, and go on with purposed heart, seeking only to honour and to please their Lord, who says, "Behold I come quickly; and My reward is with Me" (Rev. xxii. 12).

The Bible Annotator.

GOSPEL OUTLINES.

THE THRONE AND THE ALTAR.

(Isa. vi. 1-8).

Light from the Throne (ver. 1)—Conviction and Confession.

Live Coal from the Altar (ver. 6)—Cleansing and Conversion.

The sinner must first know the Light of the Throne, before he will appreciate the Grace of the Altar.

GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Declared at the Cross (Rom. iii. 26 ; Psa. lxxxv. 10).

Revealed in the Gospel (Rom. i. 17 ; iii. 21).

Imputed to Believers (Rom. iv. 6 ; Heb. xi. 4).

Rejected by Legalists (Rom. x. 3 ; Luke xviii. 9).

"THE LOST."

Blinded by Satan (2 Cor. iv. 3).

Sought for by Christ (Luke xix. 10).

Found for Salvation (Luke xv. 6).

Consigned to Perdition (John xvii. 12).

GOD'S SALVATION.

A Great Salvation (Heb. ii. 3).

A Present Salvation (2 Cor. vi. 2).

A Known Salvation (Luke i. 77).

An Eternal Salvation (Heb. v. 9).

Notes on Contested Texts.

Romans ix. 12, R.V.—"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." The word "hated" here, as also in Luke xiv. 26 ; Matt. vi. 24, does not mean that there was on God's part, or ought to be on ours, animosity, but that there was rejection of a rival claim. It is relative rather than absolute. Esau was repudiated as heir, and Jacob was chosen.

Psalms xxx. 5.—"His anger endureth but a moment, in His favour is life." These words are sometimes used by those who deny the punishment of the wicked under the abiding "wrath" of God (John iii. 36). But the words are part of an exhortation to God's *saints*, and their discipline under His hand. They have nothing whatever to say regarding the judgment of *SINNERS*.

2 Pet. ii. 4.—"The angels that sinned," who are reserved in chains awaiting judgment, are not to be confounded with "the devil and his angels" (Matt. xxv. 41), who now oppose the saints, and will yet make "war in heaven" (Rev. xii. 7). The former are evidently the same as those described

in Jude 7, who "kept not their own principality," and who for some overt act of rebellion, against God, were hurled into hell (*Tartarus*) there to await their final judgment in the great day.

Isaiah xii. 16.—"I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth : for the spirit would fail before Me, and the souls which I have made." This is claimed by both Annihilationists and Restitutionists as favouring their doctrine, namely, that God will either put out of existence, or finally save the lost. The passage has nothing to do with either, or with the final state of mankind at all. As its context clearly tells, it is a promise of covenant mercy to Israel, which, although temporarily judged because of transgression, will, according to the Divine purpose yet be visited and dealt with as a people in Sovereign mercy.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Is Revelation xxi. a literal description of heaven ? It is figurative and symbolic. As the apostle tells us in 1 Cor. xiii. 12 (mar.), "Now we see in an enigma." Heavenly and eternal things can only be set forth by figures, otherwise it would be impossible to utter them (2 Cor. xii. 4). The descriptions given of heavenly bliss and glory are therefore such as we in our present condition may in measure apprehend, but which in their fulness and reality, await the time when we shall "know fully even as we are already 'known fully' to God" (see R.V., margin).

Is the Gospel as preached by Mormons or "Latter Day Saints," of Faith, Repentance, Baptism, and Laying on of hands for salvation, remission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, according to God's Word ? No: it is "another Gospel"—a counterfeit of "the Gospel of God concerning His Son" (Rom. i. 2). The entire Mormon theology is utterly erroneous. God, they say, was a man ; man will one day be a God ; Joseph Smith's "revelations" are of the same value as the Bible, and the whole is a tissue of frauds and falsehoods. We are issuing a penny booklet this month, entitled "The Mormons and their Doctrines"—of which we will send you a copy—which may warn you to keep clear of the "net" which the "preaching elders" from Utah subtly spread to catch the simple and unwary.

Answers to Correspondents.

BIBLE STUDENT.—"THE NUMERICAL BIBLE" is the most reliable help of the kind you ask for, that

we know. It is now issued in Six Volumes at 10s each. Each is complete in itself.

J. L., BRISTOL.—The "day of the Lord" is never applied in Scripture to the coming of the Lord for His saints, or in connection with their being received up into glory. The expression is used frequently in connection with judgment on the ungodly (1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10). It cannot begin, or be present, until the saints have been "gathered unto Christ" at His coming (2 Thess. ii. 1-2). The words "at hand" in ver. 2 are rightly given in R.V., "now present."

G. S., LANARKSHIRE.—You cannot force the pace of fellow-believers in the assembly where you are, and you must not exercise lordship over them. If some are slow to act in restoring one to your fellowship who has been justly put away, you are quite right in keeping their responsibility toward such before them, but until full confidence is restored, you must wait. It will do you good, and test the measure of your patience. Some never know how little of it they possess, until such a demand is made up on it.

W. M., DUNDEE.—Sentimental preaching, accompanied by strenuous efforts to work up "interest," when there is an utter lack of Divine power with the preaching, is the chief cause of "so many professing conversion, who do not stand." There is scarcely any "cross" involved in saying you are converted nowadays. Once it meant being tabooed by the religious world, accounted "off your head" by the worldly wise, but now it is decent, in some cases "fashionable" to be "converted," so long as you keep on good terms with the world, and do not say or do anything to offend. Work, which is of the Spirit of God and endures, is characterised by sound and searching preaching of the Word, deep conviction of sin, thorough and manifest conversion, usually accompanied by virulent opposition from the devil through some of his agents. When these are awaiting, yet numbers "profess," your wisdom is to be cautious in accrediting such as "converts." Test them well before baptising and adding them to the assembly, and do not be moved by the exasperations of those who are either void of spiritual discernment, or who, in order to record and advertise converts, would, without the slightest care, bring in empty, flippant professors to God's assembly. We have no doubt this is the devil's aim, and there is too much ground for fear that he often succeeds, as the low spiritual condition of those where such lines are followed, give ample

witness. A sound, solid Gospel work, conducted on simple Scriptural methods, by godly workers, depending on the Holy Spirit's power, and leaving room for its exercise, to make the Word effectual unto salvation, is what God has used, and still uses to effect His purposes of grace in the salvation of sinners. Clever man, with all his boasted skill and "organising" ability, can never improve on God's own plan for the efficient accomplishment of His work.

Questions Requiring Answers.

Help in the answering of these questions will be welcomed. The answers should be brief and suggestive, leading TO the Word of God, which is the final appeal and supreme authority in Divine things. While avoiding dogmatic statements on matters concerning which there is no direct "commandment of the Lord," those who know the truth and are "fully assured" (2 Tim. ii. 14) of having it from God, should state it plainly and wisely. There are many honest inquirers who greatly value help ministered in this way, and we have numerous grateful testimonies to timely aid given in testing seasons and perplexing paths, received through these brief answers.

VII.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

VIII.—How does Scripture teach an assembly of believers to deal with one whose ministry is unprofitable?

IX.—By whom should letters of commendation be given? By those taking oversight in the assembly, or by any individual who chooses to give them?

X.—What wine was used at the first institution of the Lord's Supper, and what ought to be used now? Is what is named "Unfermented Wine," "Grape Juice," &c., the proper "fruit of the vine," and such as may be used in the cup; and would an assembly be justified in changing it at the desire or demand of a few of its number, who are strong advocates of total abstinence?

XI.—Should the Gospel meeting held in the hall, owned or used by an assembly, be regarded as that assembly's united Gospel testimony, or may one or more, who are in the habit of preaching or providing preachers, have a free hand to use it, and bring others as they think fit, without consulting overseeing and other brethren? This is a difficulty, and a cause of trouble in many places.

A Brief Review

OF ANSWERS ON "CHURCH FELLOWSHIP."

THE answers given by various correspondents last month, with others, which limitations of space prevent us from inserting, even in part, tell of much diversity of mind and practice in this matter. Some are so wide of the mark, that they need not be considered. The remainder may be grouped under the following four heads:—

1. That the only Church Fellowship is that of the "one body," of which all who believe are already members, that there is no reception other than that of recognition of one as a Christian, and that this gives a right to "break bread," casually or constantly, as may be desired.

2. That believers as such, are to meet according to Acts ii. 44, and all ought so to do; that any who are known to be Christians may be brought and introduced to break bread at any time without question as to their denominational connexion and doctrine, or why they for the occasion abandon what they presumably believe to be right, or whether they intend to return to and abide in it. In such meetings there are virtually two circles: those who are regarded as "in fellowship," subjects of pastoral care, who would be visited if absent, and disciplined if sinning; the other, as simply occasionally breaking bread only.

3. That a "Church of God" is a distinct and definite local circle, composed of those who are known to be children of God, sound in faith and walking in truth, gathered in the Name of the Lord Jesus (Matt. xviii. 20), owning His authority as Head and Lord. Those who desire to "join" themselves (Acts ix. 26) to such a company, are upon competent testimony added to its fellowship, to share its privileges and responsibilities, to be subjects of pastoral care and godly rule, and as such to "continue steadfastly" (Acts ii. 12).

4. That only such as are in a federated circle of meetings, which recognise no other outside their own borders are "Churches of God," that the local assembly is not an integer, but part of a larger system, in which the act of any company is binding upon all, and that none are to be received inside this circle, until fellowship with all other assemblies of believers is repudiated, and separation from them avowed.

On (1) it is sufficient to say, that into the church thus viewed, all believers are brought once for all by the work of God (see 1 Cor. xii. 13, r.v.), there to remain. This does not require the action or consent of the believer, not even his knowledge, for many who are truly born of God, live and die in ignorance of their high calling and privileges as "members of Christ." Man has no part, no responsibility regarding it. Those who found a church polity on "the ground of the one body," and others who meet "simply as believers," forget or ignore the fact, that Scripture speaks not only of "the Church," but of "Churches." Churches of God (1 Cor. xi. 16), "Churches of the saints" (1 Cor. xiv. 33). These are local. Thus, we read of gathering "the church together" (Acts xiv. 27), assembling

"with the church" (Acts xi. 26), writing "to the church" (3 John 9). In this aspect, it is capable of united action in worship, service, testimony, and the three assembly acts of RECEPTION of those who seek to join themselves to it (see Acts ix. 26), EXCISION of any who become subjects of its discipline (1 Cor. v. 12, 13), and RESTORATION of such when repentant, to its fellowship (2 Cor. ii. 6-9), are to be the united act of the whole assembly. The receiving, putting away, and restoration are not to "the Church which is His body"—none but Rome claim power to add to or exclude from it—but the local assembly. This, in regard to Excommunication and Restoration is generally admitted. Yet some who claim the right to "put away," say "there is no Scripture for reception into an assembly." Strange inconsistency! If they do not receive into it, how can they put away from it? There is no such thing in Scripture as "receiving to the Lord's table," or putting away from it; nor is there any hint that one should be received to an act such as breaking bread or preaching, who is not and does not wish to be in and of the assembly. Those who so act, add to the Word, and invent a human device, which in God's things is lawlessness. The opposite extreme is manifest in (4), where, under the plea of "outpurging" themselves from evil, and safeguarding themselves against being "linked" through intermediate channels with "looseness," a sectarian position has been reached, excluding all who do not pledge themselves to separate from all who do not accept it. This has proved its character, by endless secessions and divisions, each claiming to be in the "right position," and unchurching all who differ from them. The position claimed in (2), of the individual's right to bring any whom he considers a Christian, does away with the place and work of those whom God raises up and fits to do oversight work in the assembly. It assumes that all have equal discernment, (for if one claims the right to introduce on his own responsibility, he cannot deny it to another, although only a babe), and it creates an anomaly of one breaking bread who is not in the assembly, of which Scripture knows nothing. Acts ii.—a record of early power and unity—is not to be isolated from other Scriptures such as Rom. xvi. 17; 2 Tim. ii. 19-22, which bear especially on the departures and corruptions of the last days of Christendom. Nor is one who by choice continues in, or goes and comes with a sect, or that in which evil doctrine is tolerated, and those who hold it retained, to be regarded as "free" from its contamination, until he separates himself from it. In (3), we have, so far as it goes, an expression of the truth regarding the local assembly. There is a place therein for the weak (1 Thess. v. 14), and for those who know little of the mind of God; but are willing to learn, and to be taught the way of the Lord more perfectly (Acts xviii. 26), but in God's assembly man's will and way, with liberty to do what he likes, or exercise lordship over others, must have no place. For there is "one Lord" there to be owned, and "one faith" which for all time is to be "kept" and earnestly contended for by the saints.

THE DOUBLE GRIP.

REAL PREPARATION FOR GOSPEL WORK.

AN aged and honoured servant of Christ, who had been much used in winning souls to Christ in a certain town, was leaving for another sphere of service. To a younger and less experienced evangelist, who was to follow up the work thus begun, the aged soul-winner gave the following counsel, "If you are to be of any use for God here, you must first of all be right with God yourself, then get a grip of God on behalf of the people, and after that, get a grip of the people for God by means of His Word spoken in the Holy Ghost." That pithy, practical advice, was not forgotten by the young preacher. It is just as applicable to-day, and to assemblies of believers as to individual labourers. Many are looking forward to a season of earnest indoor Gospel work, and making arrangements to bring sinners under sound of the preached Word, and to have "the old, old story" sounded forth to the thousands of perishing ones all around. Very good and very necessary. But we are fully convinced that the aged soul-winner's counsel puts the matter in its true light, and in its true order, and that apart from the double "grip" and what precedes it, the getting "right with God" ourselves, all labour and preaching will fail in results. You will notice that the first stage concerns the preacher's *own condition*. He must be right with God. This means much more than being converted, or gifted. It means right in soul, right in spiritual condition, a vessel "sanctified, meet for the Master's use"

(2 Tim. ii. 22), a clean and holy man, in touch with God, and standing in His counsel. This is of far greater importance than brilliancy of gift, or ability to draw a crowd, in an evangelist. If the preacher is not personally godly, on terms of intimacy with God, living holily and unblameably (1 Thess. ii. 10), he cannot be a channel of blessing to others. The same in principle is true of an assembly of believers. If unjudged sin is in its midst, if unredressed wrongs are lying at its doors, then it is utterly useless to go forth in special efforts in the Gospel, and expect God to bless them. Achan must first be searched out, and dealt with, or God will have a controversy with Israel (Josh. vii. 1). The most befitting start in all such service is a call to heartsearching, self-judgment, and confession before God. Those who have no interest in such a beginning, clearly bewray their condition. Nor need others be discouraged by their attitude. Let those who have a heart, begin with themselves and with God. Once right there, to "lay hold on God on behalf of the people" is easy. Prayer is "effectual" under such conditions, it is truly a laying hold on God, and bringing God into the scene, not an array of empty words, but a real, conscious dealing with God, which always brings the blessing. Then when the time comes to preach, how easy to speak the Word, and how quickly the people are laid hold on by it, and brought into the presence of God. There is no need to "get up interest," it is there; God has created it, and all who are spiritual know it, and rejoice in what God Himself has wrought.

THE SON OF GOD.

SECOND PAPER. DR. J. A. OWLES.

THE Lord's subjection to Jewish custom, which did not permit public ministry until thirty years, is very beautiful, and instructive. Our Lord was not a "boy preacher." Very little is known of His life preparatory for His active service, though we read of His "being subject" unto His parents, and advancing "in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke ii. 51, 52). When about thirty years of age (Luke iii. 23) He began to teach, having been baptised in water and anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power (Acts x. 38). The circumstances following His baptism further attest His perfections as the Son—for "the heaven was opened" to gaze at Him, "the Holy Ghost descended in bodily form, as a dove, resting as never before, and abiding upon Him" (John i. 33), and "a voice came out of heaven, Thou art my beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased" (Luke iii. 22, R.V.). It is important to observe here, that in addition to having been conceived or begotten and being indwelt by the Holy Ghost, our Lord was also anointed with power for service, and for mighty works, which He wrought by the Spirit of God. In Isaiah xi. 2, we have the formation of His *character* described, "The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." In Isaiah lxi. 1, we have His *service* foretold: "The Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to

the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," and although not yet, "the day of vengeance of our God" (com. Luke iv. 17-20). His precious life of pleasing God—and revealing Him to men—the twofold object of Sonship here, reached a climax on the Mount of Transfiguration, and apparently it might have had a fitting conclusion there, where His inherent essential glory was *seen* (Luke ix. 32; 2 Pet. i. 16), and His moral glory again attested with a voice "out of the cloud," saying, "This is My Son, My chosen: hear ye Him" (Luke ix. 35, R.V.). But for our sakes He came down and pursued His pathway of humiliation, descending into the deeper depths of Gethsemane and Calvary. There, still as the Son He said "*Father*, into Thy hands I commend My spirit, and having said this He gave up the ghost" (Luke xxiii. 46). As Son of God He differed from Adam, who, though he possessed the breath of never-ending existence and was made in the image of God, had no *Divine* nature, or eternal life. He differed from natural man whose "every imagination of the thoughts of the heart are only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5), whilst He always did the things that pleased the Father" (John viii. 29—an infinite moral distance being marked between Him and all mankind. And He differed from us as Christians, in that we have ever to say humbly with Paul, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18); whilst of Him it is written, "He knew no sin" (2 Cor. v. 21).

Three times after His resurrection the words of Psalm ii. 7, "Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee," are quoted in the New Testament, and on each occasion with a different purpose. In Acts xiii. 32-37, they are associated with His resurrection in contrast to David, who "saw corruption." In Heb. i. 5, they prove His superiority to angels, having "inherited a more excellent name than they," and in Heb. v. 5, 6, they are connected with His High Priesthood, God having set aside the tribe of Levi and reverted to His original purpose in choosing the firstborn (Num. iii. 12; see also Heb. iv. 14 and vii. 28). His people also are "firstborn ones" from their new birth and union with Him (Heb. xii. 23), where the word is in the plural. As the Risen One who appeared to His disciples in Luke xxiv. 39, we find He is not only *spirit*, as God is (John iv. 24, margin, R.V.), but He has a material frame, "flesh and bones," which can be *handled*, and after His ascension, Stephen saw Him with his natural eyes as the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vi. 56). Thus we may, and should distinguish between His omnipresence as God, His being with us by the Holy Spirit (John xiv. 16-18) from His *location* in heaven now as man. The words "*Myself*" and "*Himself*" mean a distinct personality outside of us. Thus, in John xiv. 3, He says, "I will receive you unto *Myself*, that where I am there ye may be *also*;" and in 1 Thess. iv. 16, we read "the Lord *Himself* shall descend from heaven." This will be no spiritual apparition, but a personal return in a body of glory, so that

we shall "see Him as He is" and be in bodies "like Him" (1 John iii. 2). It is written in Col. ii. 9, "In Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead *bodily*," by which we understand His Personality, for whilst the same fulness dwells doubtless in the Father and in the Holy Spirit, it is not *incorporated* in them in the same way. In Rom. i. 4, He is declared (or determined, Greek) the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by "the resurrection of the *dead*" (R.V.), and the word *dead* is in the plural, thus including more than His own resurrection. He proved His resurrection power at the grave of Lazarus, and when He died Himself the "tombs were opened, and *many* bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised; and coming forth out of the tombs after His resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared unto many" (Matt. xxvii. 52, 53, R.V.). Now this *pomer* (dunamis) characterises Him as the Risen One, and differs from His voluntary weakness in Gethsemane when an angel from heaven strengthened Him" (Luke xxii. 43, R.V.),* and from His being "crucified through weakness" (2 Cor. xiii. 4).

Again, after His resurrection, He said, "All *authority* hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth," so that He rules throughout the range of the entire creation. All that was His as Creator being now His as Man. Then in John xvii. 22, He speaks "of the glory which Thou hast *given Me*," which His people shall have, differing from that which is essential and

*NOTE.—Alford writes of these words: They are contained in the greater number of MS. and in the *earliest* Versions.

cannot be conferred, or reflected, but which we shall *behold* (John xvii. 24). Another exclusive authority is His in John v. 27, for whilst the Father judges no man (v. 22), "He hath given all judgment unto the Son; that all may honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." He is "to *execute* judgment because He is the (or, A) Son of man" (ver. 27). One way in which His present *equality* with the Father is taught indirectly is, by the reverse order being observed when both are alluded to. Thus, in Thess. iii. 11, we read, "Now may our God and Father Himself AND our Lord Jesus direct our way unto you." And in 2 Thess. ii. 16, "Now our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, AND God our Father, which loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and stablish them in every good word and work." There will be a change when "the *end* cometh." When He shall deliver up the Kingdom to God even (or and) the Father; when He shall have abolished all rule, and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For He put all things in subjection under His feet. But when He saith, all things are put in subjection, it is evident that He is excepted who did subject all things unto Him. And when all these things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all" (1 Cor. xv. 24-28). The mediatorial purposes of God will then be fulfilled, and God—the Triune God of

Gen. i. 1—three persons as the Hebrew plural must mean, yet One God, will be "all in all." May the Son of God—who is the theme of these pages—and "whom no one knoweth save the Father," give to every reader "an understanding, that we may know Him" (1 John v. 20), and increase that knowledge until we shall "KNOW, even as also we have been known" (1 Cor. xiii. 12, R.V.).

THOUGHTS ON CHURCH DISCIPLINE--III.

THE EFFECT OF DISCIPLINE.—When it becomes necessary for an assembly to deal in godly discipline with one of its number, especially in giving effect to the Lord's judgment in his or her excision for sin, it ought to be carried out in such a manner as will cause deep searching of heart to all others. Nothing can exceed the solemnity of one who has hitherto been regarded as a saint of God, and as such a sharer in the fellowship of the Christian assembly, being deprived of this place, and for the present put into the position of one who is "of the world." When of old, a stone in which the plague of leprosy was found, was removed from its place in the house and cast "into an unclean place without the city" (Lev. xiv. 40), the whole of that house in which the stone had been, was to be "Scraped WITHIN, round about" (ver. 41), and all that was scraped off cast forth into an unclean place. So when godly excommunication takes place, it should be accompanied by the searching action of God's Word (Heb. iv. 12) upon all in that assembly, leading to self-judgment and confession (1 Cor. xi. 31), for seldom does

one sin alone, or continue in association with others, without leaving some traces of his evil ways upon them. A hurried "reading away" of one, with a bare mention of the sin for which it is done, produces no such effect, and only causes others to think lightly of sin, and of the assembly's solemn act of judgment upon it.

THE RECOGNITION OF AN ASSEMBLY'S DISCIPLINE.—As a rule, when things are in godly order, and saints in subjection to the Lord and to one another, the discipline of one assembly will be regarded as valid, and acknowledged by others, not because they have been fully informed of its details, or that they are bound to regard it as infallible, but because they have confidence that the same Divine authority and subjection to the Word which has necessitated such discipline in one assembly would do the same in another. It would be a breach of all confidence and godly subjection, to knowingly receive one who has been righteously put away. Even if some have doubt regarding the case, they ought to first approach the leaders of the assembly which they think has erred, or acted in haste, or with undue severity, and not to set aside their act, lest in so doing, they not only harden the offender in his sin, but cause a breach, possibly a division, and find at last that they have been fighting against God. If an assembly err—as like an individual it is liable to do—it may be reached, and efforts made to convince and cause it to reconsider its acts, but there is no Scripture warrant to disown or "cut it off," because of an error in judgment or a mistake in discipline.

If such a condition, however, has been reached, that a righteous man is thus made to suffer, and those inflicting the injury refuse all remonstrance, or to hear the counsel of representative men from other assemblies, and like the wilful man of Matt. xviii. 17, prefer their own will to the godly fellowship of saints and assemblies, then they must be left alone for the Lord to deal with and manifest their condition, which He will not fail in some way to do, and that in such a manner as, "all the churches shall know" (Rev. ii. 23).

RESTORATION.—"Them that are without God judgeth" (1 Cor. vi. 12). There the one put away must be left, until the effect of Divine discipline is manifested, which it will be, either in causing him to throw off the mask if only a false professor, or with all restraint removed in manifesting his continuance in the sin, which he refused to judge himself for; or in a godly sorrow, working repentance (2 Cor. vii. 10), leading to confession and restoration of soul to God, which will be manifested in a desire for restoration to the fellowship of the saints. Here, spiritual discernment and shepherd care must have their exercise. It is not the work of all, particularly not of the young and the inexperienced in an assembly, to deal with such matters. Nor ought the restoration of one so dealt with, to be unduly hastened, until the confidence of all has been gained. Then it ought not to be delayed, but as God has forgiven and restored, so ought his brethren to forgive, by unitedly receiving him back to the assembly's fellowship, to which those who

have dealt with him, and know his state, can with confidence commend him, and then individually each ought to comfort and help him (2 Cor. ii. 6).

FELLOWSHIP AND SERVICE.—Although sufficient confidence may have been regained among the Lord's people, who had shared the sorrow and borne the shame of the sinning one's fall, to receive him back to the assembly as one restored in soul to God, and cleansed from the evil under the power of which he had fallen, it may not be that he is yet spiritually fit for any public service in which he had formerly shared, either in ministry among the saints or toward the world, or that such service would for the present be acceptable or expedient. A lowly spirit and a humble walk would be most befitting, and more likely to inspire fuller confidence and lead on to opportunity for acceptable help, than any undue haste in offering or forcing it, where confidence is lacking.

UNJUDGED EVIL.—Sin unjudged in the midst of an assembly, whether in doctrine or morals, is likened to leaven (Gal. v. 9; 1 Cor. v. 6, 7), which, if not purged out, but allowed to remain, works secretly, until it permeates the whole of that or those among which it is (Matt. xiii. 33). The result of such evil retained is, that the whole spiritual and moral tone is lowered, the Spirit is quenched, and very soon departures from the ways of the Lord are lightly esteemed, which in former times of spiritual health would have been quickly discerned and dealt with. Evil doctrine, eating like a gangrene, infects others (2 Tim. ii. 17), and by and by a condition is reached when the truth ceases to be

listened to, or those who seek to minister it endured. Only one path remains for those who fear God, and desire to keep themselves free from defilement by and complicity with such evil, wilfully retained in their midst, that is, to purge themselves out from it and those who retain it (2 Tim. ii. 21). Such a step should not be rashly taken, nor because of any personal grievance, or until every effort has failed, and the counsel of others sought has been refused, or rendered inoperative by opposition from within, but once it becomes necessary, and the Word of the Lord makes withdrawal from such a duty, then let it be done definitely and the reasons given, so that others may know them. Such a step would not be "division contrary to the doctrine" (Rom. xvi. 17), such as others are to avoid the causers of, but godly separation from that which by disowning the authority of the Lord, rendering His Word inoperative, and retaining fundamental error or evildoers in its midst, has forfeited all title for the present to be regarded as God's assembly.

The Father's Love.

"Keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 21).

NO earthly mother, whose first-born
Lies nestling on her knee,
Bends o'er her babe so yearningly
As yearns my God o'er me.

He leads me on through mercies more
Than sands that gird the sea,
There's not a moment wings its flight,
But bears love-gifts for me.

He ne'er repents His grace, though I
His patience hourly test;
But singing in His heart's deep joy,
He in His love doth rest.

THE COURTS OF THE TEMPLE.

THE various Courts of the Temple are referred to incidentally in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, in connection with the structure, and they are frequently mentioned in the subsequent history; but it is in the Book of Ezekiel, chapters xl., xlii., that we get their full description. As all the measurements and descriptions of the Temple there given, coincide with those of Kings and Chronicles, we infer that the Courts of Solomon's Temple were identical with those in Ezekiel. We are expressly told that they were formed according to a Divine pattern which David had revealed to Him "by the Spirit, of the COURTS of the house of the Lord and of the chambers round about" (I Chron. xxviii. 12). These Courts were FOUR in number.

First, there was the OUTER or GREAT COURT, a paved and elevated enclosure of 500 cubits square, having a surrounding wall of hewn stone, with three entrance gates, each having an outer and inner porch, and reached by a flight of seven steps. This was the court of the people. To it all Israel—save those prohibited by commandment of the Lord because of ceremonial or other uncleanness, had access by the appointed way.

Second—The COURT of the PRIESTS (2 Chron. iv. 9), was within the Outer Court, a square of 300 cubits. This was the place of priestly worship and Levite service, and was only accessible to such.

Third—The COURT of the ALTAR (Ezek. xl. 47). A square of 100 cubits, in front of the house, where those priests who

were in active attendance upon the altar, had their place and sphere of service.

Fourth—The SEPARATE PLACE, on which the Temple stood—the immediate dwelling place of Jehovah, and His Throne, sanctified by His presence and His glory. The latter two together formed the INNER Court, and are so spoken of.

Other courts and gates were evidently added by later kings (2 Chron. xx. 5; xxvii. 3), but these—like much else, which men have added to that which is connected with the Name and worship of God—had no place in the Spirit-given pattern, else they would have been built at the proper time. Had they been omitted by wilful negligence, then Jehovah would never have sanctioned such a work, by filling the house with His glory (2 Chron. vii. 2), for He only approves by His presence that which is according to His revealed will.

From these courts and their services, much that is precious and good for edification may be gathered by the devout student of Scripture typology. We can only indicate a few of the leading points of interest here. The "courts of the Lord" are often mentioned in the Psalms, and "longed for" by the soul of the devout Israelite (Psa. lxxxiv. 2). Thither he brought his thankofferings (Psa. xcvi. 8), and there he paid his vows (Psa. cxvi. 19). To the man whose heart was true to God, one day in these courts was better than a thousand (Psa. lxxxvi. 10) elsewhere. There the goodly fellowship of brethren dwelling together in unity was enjoyed (Psa. cxxxiii. 1), and there the tribes assembled together at the Divine

commandment, in the chosen place where Jehovah had placed His Name (Deut. xii. 11) to the testimony of Israel (Psa. cxxii. 4), to rejoice before the Lord, and to give thanks unto His Name.

THE OUTER COURT.

The OUTER COURT is the type of that first and uttermost circle of privilege and blessing upon which the believer experimentally enters at his conversion. Positionally, and by the call of God, he at the time of his new birth, enters the circle of all privileges that belong to the believer in Christ, but the order in which he enters upon the enjoyment of them is here set forth, and is from without to within. By nature man is a sinner afar off, and his first experience after he has been brought nigh through the blood of the Cross (Eph. i. 13), and born of the Spirit is, that he knows himself as one of "the people of God" (1 Pet. ii. 10). His privileges as a priest and Levite, able to draw near and share in the worship and service of his God in the inner court and sanctuary, he does not yet apprehend, but only knows himself as one of the Israel of God, "a people SAVED by the Lord" (Deut. xxxiii. 29), not of the world (John xvii. 14), but rescued out of it (Gal. i. 4), and severed from it by the Cross of Christ (Gal. vi. 20); redeemed to become a part of that people who are "for God's own possession" (Titus ii. 14, R.V.).

Beyond this Outer Court, there was a boundary wall of five hundred reeds on all sides, "to make a SEPARATION between the sanctuary and the profane (or common) place" (Ezek. xlii. 20), so that "the whole

limit thereof round about shall be most holy" (chap. xliii. 12).

The people of God are a SEPARATED people. The very first lesson to the approaching Israelite was, that separation UNTO God (Lev. xx. 26; 1 Pet. i. 16) and FROM the nations (Num. xviii. 9) was his proper calling, and that while there was a place within that wall and these courts for all the chosen people, in their normal, clean condition, there was none for the uncircumcised (Deut. xxiii. 3), nor was there any league or intermarriage to be made with them (Deut. vii. 3-5). The court was an elevated place, the entrance to it was by means of three gates, on the east, north, and south, and the ascent to these was by a flight of seven steps leading to each gate.

The people of God are an EXALTED people. Severed from the world below, they are called with a heavenly calling, raised up with Christ (Eph. ii. 6), to share in things above (Col. iii. 1). Here and now, they are made meet, they have competency, to share the inheritance of the saints in light (Col. i. 12). In the porches of the gates of this court, there were "little chambers" or lodges, three on either side of the porches (Ezek. xl. 6). These were probably places of repose and instruction, for those entering in.

The people of God are an INSTRUCTED people. Salvation is unto discipleship, and disciples are to be taught "all things" whatsoever the Lord has commanded (Matt. xxviii. 18-19), and thus to "stand perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. iv. 12). Some seem content to know that they are just inside the door,

and sayerd (John x. 9), while others immediately rush into service untaught and unfurnished, whereas the way of the Lord with His people is, first to put them in possession of salvation by His grace, then to teach, or discipline them by that same grace, to live "soberly, righteously and godly," purifying them unto Himself a people "zealous of good works" (Titus ii. 11-14). There were piazzas, or covered walks, called "arches" (ver. 16, 25), on either side of the gates, extending north and south in the walls. These were for intercourse, places in which the people might walk and talk together.

The people of God are a COMMUNING people. Brought into fellowship with God in the light, they have fellowship one with another (1 John i. 3, 7), and in order to the enjoyment of this, they must walk in truth (2 John 3), in love (Eph. v. 2), and in the fellowship of the Spirit (Phil. ii. 1). Whatever suspends communion with God, breaks or hinders it with His people. "Attached chambers" in the four corners of this court were evidently for the use of those who came up to worship Jehovah, where they fed on the peace offerings and were satisfied with the "fatness of His house" (Psa. lxxiii. 5).--J. R.

JEREMIAH'S TESTIMONY.

I HAVE been sensible, lately, how much the spirit of Jeremiah suits these times. He lived in the daily observance of evil. Iniquity was abounding in the scene around him, though it was called by God's Name, and was indeed His place on the earth. The house of prayer had become "a den of thieves," though it

still cried "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." He knew that the judgment of God was awaiting it all; and he looked for happy days which lay in the distance beyond the present corruption and the approaching judgment.

Over all this corruption, Jeremiah MOURNED; against it all he TESTIFIED; and like his Master, he was hated for his testimony (John vii. 7). He was, however, full of faith and hope, and in the strength of that (anticipating the future) he laid out his money in the purchase of Hanameel's field (Jer. xxxii.). All this was beautiful. The present sorrow over the corruption of the daughter of his people: faith's certainty of the coming judgment, and hope's prospect of closing, crowning glory. This is a pattern for our spirit. And I observe another feature of power in the prophet. He was not to be seduced from the conclusions of faith, by occasional fair and promising appearances (see chap. xxxvii.). The Chaldean army had broken up their camp under the walls of Jerusalem, because of the arrival of the Egyptian allies. The circumstances flattered the Jewish people with hopes, but Jeremiah left the city, because he would still hold to the conclusions of faith, that Jerusalem was doomed of God in righteous judgment.

All this is a fine exhibition of a soul walking in the light of God, not merely through darkness, but through darkness which seemed to be light. We may covet these elements of the Christian character. Some of us, if one may speak, are but *half* Jeremiahs. We can *talk* of Christ, but can we SUFFER for Him?—J. G. B.

The Bible Annotator.

THEMES FOR BIBLE STUDY.

SPIRITUAL UNANIMITY.

- One Accord in Prayer (Acts i. 14; iv. 24).
 One Accord in Fellowship (Acts ii. 46; v. 12).
 One Accord in Counsel (Acts xv. 25).
 The order of the above is significant.

LIFE AND FOOD.

- Eating to obtain Life (John vi. 53).
 Eating to sustain Life (John vi. 56).

CHRISTIAN POSITION IN THE EPISTLES.

- In ROMANS the believer is seen as Justified.
 In CORINTHIANS " " Sanctified.
 In EPHESIANS " " Exalted.
 In COLOSSIANS " " Filled.
 In THESSALONIANS " " Glorified.

New Testament Words with Varied Meanings.

Many English words found in the New Testament have different shades of significance in the Greek, which often greatly affect the meaning of the passages in which they occur. Of these, the following may be noted and the places where they are found.

CHILD.

Teknon.—A descendant, one born, a child. Used by God in speaking OF His children. John i. 12; i John iii. 1, 2.

Teknion.—A little, or dear child. A term of affection. Used in speaking TO believers by the Father and the Son. John xiii. 33; i John ii. 1, 12, 27.

Brephos.—An infant, 2 Tim. iii. 15; i Pet. ii. 2, a babe not grown.

Paidion.—A young child. Used of those in the early stage of spiritual life. i John ii. 10, 18, &c.

CROWNS.

Stephanos.—The Victor's Crown, a chaplet or wreath conferred as a reward. Used in i Cor. ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 8; i Pet. v. 4; Jas. i. 12, &c., of the Christian's reward for service.

Diadema.—The Kingly Crown, the diadem or Fillet, worn by the Sovereign. Used of Christ's Kingly Crown (Rev. xix. 12), and of Antichrist's badge of usurped sovereignty (Rev. xiii. 1).

WORLD.

Kosmos.—The world, well ordered and arranged. Used in Matt. iv. 8; John iii. 16; i John ii. 16, &c.

Aion.—An Age, or period—the world in connexion

with duration and state. Used in Matt. xii. 32; Rom. xii. 2; Gal. i. 4; 2 Tim. iv. 10.

Notes on Misinterpreted Texts.

1 Cor. iv. 5.—"Then shall every man have praise of God." "Then" denotes the time. It is when "the Lord shall come." Some were evidently prejudging and already awarding the measure of "praise" to be given by the Lord to their favourite teachers.

Matthew xxv. 32.—"Before Him shall be gathered all nations"—not all MEN. It is not a general judgment. No saint of the present time will be there. None of "the dead" (Rev. xx. 4) are there. It is a judgment of living Gentile nations, by the Lord, on His Millennial Throne of Glory, set upon Zion (Psa. ii. 6), and the issue is based on their treatment of Christ's brethren according to the flesh (Rom. ix. 1), the Jews, when in their trouble, in the time of Antichrist's persecution.

Psalms viii. 4-8.—"What is man (Heb. Enosh—frail, mortal man), or the son of man (Heb. Adam—strong man), that Thou visitest Him?" These words have primary reference to the dominion with which Adam in innocence was invested, but which he lost in his fall. The words are thrice quoted in the New Testament (1 Cor. xv. 23-27; Eph. i. 22; Heb. ii. 6-8), and in each case refer to Christ, in His present and future place of Headship and dominion, as the "Second Man" and "last Adam."

Romans viii. 9.—"They that are in the flesh cannot please God." "The flesh" is an expression used in Scripture (1) of man's corporeal existence, his body. This is its meaning in Col. ii. 1; Phil. i. 22. (2) Of the sinner's nature as fallen and ruined as in Rom. vii. 5; John iii. 6, in which, as regards his standing, the believer no longer is (Rom. viii. 9), but the flesh remains in him, and unless walking in the Spirit, he may fulfil its lusts (Gal. v. 17; i Pet. ii. 11).

Answers to Correspondents.

INQUIRER, LONDON.—From the Pontificate of Gregory the Great, about 590, till the Reformation of the 16th century, may be regarded as the Papal period—the Dark Ages, when the so-called Church ruled the world, and persecuted Christ's true witnesses.

W. J., BRADFORD.—You will find the subject on

which you seek help from the Word, fully treated by the late Mr Alfred J. Holiday, in his little book, "Churches of the Saints," which, if you have not seen, you should procure, and compare with Scripture.

J. E. N., CHESHIRE.—The distinction between "clergy" and "laity" began in the second century, and as Bingham—one of the highest authorities regarding Episcopal order—tells us, was based upon the Jewish priest, the Levite, and the people. And although in theory the common priesthood of all believers was held, "the Fathers" he informs us "formed the Church" according to "the Jewish system"—as if Christianity were an outgrowth of Judaism, whereas, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, it is a contrast to it.

B. M. W., BRISTOL.—There is nothing in common between the words, "He that WAVERETH is like a WAVE of the sea," except their sound. The R.V. rendering disposes of both, and is, "He that doubteth, is like the surge of the sea," which gives you the true thought of the passage.

J. W. M., LANDPORT.—In the absence of full knowledge of the case you mention, it is impossible to say whether that form of discipline spoken of in 2 Thess. iii. 6, is applicable to it, or whether it comes under Matt. xviii. 17. You will have noticed that the former applies to a brother who is still within the assembly, but is walking "out of rank;" the other is a much more aggravated case of perversity, and so defies all remonstrance, that for the present he forfeits all title to be regarded as a brother, and is to be treated "as a heathen man and a publican." The one is internal discipline; the other, rejection by and expulsion from the Christian assembly.

R. E. M., DORSET.—If one possessed of means, with a heart for the Gospel, is led to devote part of that which is his "own" (see Acts v. 4) to the purpose you name, who will dare to say he should not? We agree with you in seeing the danger of so communicating supplies, either stately, like a weekly salary, or through the same channel, as the "treasurer" of a mission. The Lord's servant is thus withdrawn practically from trusting the Lord for the supply of his need, to look to man, and—unconsciously it may be—to more or less become man's servant. This has been sadly seen in not a few cases, where it was hoped subjection to God's principles would have prevented such a course, but it is truly wonderful when the test is applied how feeble a grasp God's truth has on some who

have testified to it most decidedly, especially when self-interest is involved. A happier way would be for the brother, either personally or in association with the assembly in which he is, to communicate with the servants in whose labours he is so deeply interested, and that in such a manner and at such times as will prevent all tendency toward the position of employer and employee being reached.

J. M., GLASGOW.—Your complaint that people cannot be got into your hall in any number to hear the Gospel, apart from some attraction, such as solo singers, music, &c., is a sorrowful confession of your low spiritual condition, and of how far you have drifted from the place of separation to God, which you once at least professed to occupy, and which some in years gone by did maintain and prove the blessing of, in the place to which you say people cannot now be got. It is no good blaming "the people;" they were always what they now are, children of the devil and under his "power" (Acts xxvi. 18). But in other days there was another POWER of attraction, of which the religious world knows nothing, and which it is to be feared those preachers who need their "soloists" know little more. An assembly of believers abiding in the place of separation, to which God and His Word calls them, walking in the truth, and in godliness, will always have in them the power of drawing sinners by means of the Gospel, and saints by means of the Truth they proclaim, and this in spite of all human prejudice and opposition. What I would suggest as the most likely help toward a "restoration," which you say many are feeling the need of, is, let all who are willing meet for humiliation, confession, and prayer, searching your ways individually, and as an assembly, before the Lord, and examining the ways and means in which you are carrying on the Lord's work in the light of His written Word. God only blesses what He approves, and He has given in His Word what that is. Whatever you find to be contrary to that Word, put it away, be done with it, and stand firm as a rock against it, no matter who does it, or what apparent results come therefrom. "Results" do not sanction what is not of God, and as you may know, when some of these "results" are winnowed of their chaff, little remains? It is a hopeful sign that some are very unsatisfied with the present condition of things, especially regarding the way in which the Gospel work of assemblies is carried on, but it is not enough to groan over departed freshness and power. The causes have to be searched out,

departed from, then kept out, and a return to God, His Word, and His ways, humbly but firmly made, no matter who object, or who oppose.

Answers to Special Questions.

VII.—Do the words in 2 Tim. i. 14, "All they which are in Asia, be turned away from me," imply, that the whole of the Asiatic assemblies had rejected Paul and his ministry?

ANSWER A.—Would it not rather be, that those referred to were Asiatic Christians, who, when in Rome, "turned away" from the apostle, who was a prisoner at the time? J. S.

ANSWER B.—The verse tells that Christians in Asia had turned their backs on Paul, but the messages to the seven churches (Rev. ii., iii.) sent at least 20 years later show, that there were faithful saints, and at least one assembly (Rev. iii. 8) in the "Asia" of which Paul wrote, holding fast the Lord's Word and not denying His Name.

H. D.

ANSWER C.—Very soon after the apostle's departure from the scene of his labours in Asia Minor, there arose, as he had forewarned the Ephesian elders at Miletus (Acts xx. 17, 29, 30), men teaching perverse doctrines and leading away the disciples after themselves. This, of course, meant "turning away" from Paul's doctrine and from Paul himself. "Phygelus and Hermogenes" were probably leaders in some of the Asiatic churches and had become chief in this movement. If men who had heard the Word direct from the apostle, could thus be turned into bypaths, and lead others after them, need we wonder if many in our own time are?

E. H.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Proconsular "Asia," was a district of the country usually called "Asia Minor," of which Ephesus was the chief city. Here Paul had laboured for three years (Acts xx. 31), and from thence as a centre "ALL they which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord" (Acts xix. 10, R.V.). In the same region many churches were formed. Timothy was left there (1 Tim. i. 14), and the condition foretold by Paul in Acts xx. 29, 30, had developed. The apostle was a prisoner in Rome, and soon to be a martyr. His last letter to his son in the faith, left to witness for God in the midst of such a condition, abounds in counsel and warning. He reminds Timothy of what he already knew. "This thou knowest, that all that are in Asia turned

away from me"—Alford gives "repudiated me." That this had not been done by "all" the saints "in Asia," is clear from the following verse. But, with this bright exception, of Onesiphorus, all the rest, who HAD BEEN in Rome during Paul's imprisonment, and were now back in Asia, had "repudiated" him, and were therefore not to be trusted by Timothy. To "turn away" from, or "repudiate" the man to whom instrumentally they owed their salvation, and to become party leaders in drawing away the disciples after themselves and from the truth he taught, was heartless work, but when men have self-exaltation as their object, nothing is too mean for them. There are such men in all times, who reach the positions they covet, not because of spiritual fitness or by self-denying labour, but Absalom-like, they nurse the whims of discontented and lawless souls, secretly speaking evil of those whose influence they most dread as hindering their projects, until like that unprincipled rebel, they gain their coveted prize, which after all is not glorious, nor does their course generally end any better than his.

Questions Requiring Answers.

IX.—By whom should letters of commendation be given? By those taking oversight in the assembly, or by any individual who chooses to give them?

X.—What wine was used at the first institution of the Lord's Supper, and what ought to be used now? Is what is named "Unfermented Wine," "Grape Juice," &c., the proper "fruit of the vine," and such as may be used in the cup; and would an assembly be justified in changing it at the desire or demand of a few of its number, who are strong advocates of total abstinence?

XI.—Should the Gospel meeting held in the hall, owned or used by an assembly, be regarded as that assembly's united Gospel testimony, or may one or more, who are in the habit of preaching or providing preachers, have a free hand to use it, and bring others as they think fit, without consulting overseeing and other brethren? This is a difficulty, and a cause of trouble in many places.

XII.—To whom does the term "evangelist" apply? Is it to all who are called and gifted by God to preach the Gospel, or only to such as have given up their daily employment and adopted "preaching" as a profession?

BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS:

HOW TO REACH MEN WITH THE GOSPEL.

IT was recently stated by a prominent minister of the Church of England, that of the six and a half millions who populate London, only about eighteen per cent. go anywhere to hear the Word. The other five millions go nowhere. And this appalling condition is not limited to the great metropolis; it is more or less true of every town and village and hamlet in this favoured land. Utter indifference to God and things eternal, has settled like a pall upon the multitude. Theatres and places of amusement multiply, and are filled on every hand, while places opened ostensibly for the preaching of the Word are half empty. The causes of this need not be discussed here, the fact remains. It cannot surely be ignored by any in whom the love of God abides, and in whom His Spirit dwells. Toward these unreached and perishing millions, the individual Christian and the Christian assembly have a solemn responsibility. There is a Gospel for each and all of these, and for all mankind. It has been provided by God at an infinite cost. It has been procured by the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus. It is to be proclaimed to every creature under heaven. The will of God is, that all may hear the message, and His intention is that "all men" should be "saved and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4). But they *must* hear it. The question is asked in Romans x. 14, "How shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? and how

shall they hear without a preacher?" The Gospel is to be carried to the people; the preacher is to go to where they are and declare it to them. In the record given in the Acts, we learn how this was done, and with what wonderful results. Publicly to crowds, on the streets, in places of concourse (Acts iii. 11), in the market (Acts xvii. 7); to smaller companies by the river side (Acts xvi. 4), in a school (Acts xix. 9), in a lodging (Acts xxviii. 23); to individuals, on a chariot (Acts viii. 26), in a prison (Acts xvi. 28), before a judgment seat (Acts xxvi. 2), everywhere and always, in season, out of season, individual Christians and churches of the saints spread abroad the Gospel message, going forth after sinners, as the shepherd sought the wandering sheep "until" he found it (Luke xv. 4). Times have changed, so have means and methods. Now there are fixed places, mostly costly and attractive edifices, set apart for preaching, in which cultured and duly appointed preachers are expected at stated hours to preach, with many accompaniments and attractions to please the public taste and ear. Even where the Gospel is proclaimed in simplicity, apart from other attractions, there is very much of the conventional "Service," with its regular "congregation," mostly professed believers, or self-satisfied sinners saturated with the Gospel and least likely ever to be converted, while the great world outside the four walls, who never enter, pass on in successive generations unevangelised to an undone eternity. Spasmodic and "special" efforts hardly reach the fringe of the perishing multitude, for while a few

at such times may be got "in," and saved, the bulk remain without, and ever will, so far as these sacred and fixed places are concerned. They will never heed the competitive calls and invitations—Come to us. If God's Gospel is ever to reach them, it must GO TO THEM. Waiting until they "come" to us, praying that they may be "brought in" to our meeting place, expecting that the power of God is to operate within the sphere that we have limited ourselves to, is one of the chief hindrances to sinners hearing the Gospel, and perhaps the most potent cause of barrenness, lack of conversions, and decline in effective and aggressive Gospel work among believers who are separated from the world's religion, and seeking to be guided by the Word of God in their worship and service. If the building in which such Christians meet for worship and edification, is an accessible and otherwise suitable place in which to preach the Gospel to the world, then certainly let it be so used, and a continuous and living testimony in the Gospel go forth therefrom. Such meetings are of great value, especially to seeking and anxious souls, who can be best dealt with in such sympathetic surroundings. And there are some whose gift and grace are especially fitted to deal with such, and to lead them to Christ and the knowledge of salvation. But if the people either from prejudice, or indifference, or any other cause, do not and will not go there, then the Gospel must go to them. They must not be allowed to perish, because they will not "come to us." Individual servants of Christ, to whom the Lord has

committed His Gospel as a stewardship (1 Cor. ix. 7), must seek other ways of fulfilling their trust (1 Thess. ii. 4), and get to the people with God's message. It is the feet of those who carry the Gospel to sinners "on the mountains," *where they are*, that God calls "beautiful" (Rom. x. 15), not feet that fix themselves on carpeted platforms, beyond which they will not move, although "nobody comes in" to hear. There is ample scope for all who have a heart for Christ, and some ability to declare the Gospel message. Kitchen meetings are easily managed, and generally attended by mothers and such as can go nowhere else. Empty shops can be generally rented for a small sum and easily fitted up, where half a dozen young Gospellers would find a splendid sphere in which to exercise and develop their gifts and energies, the entire cost of which might be easily met by self-denial of a few luxuries and unnecessary personal appendages in dress or adornment. In country places, farm kitchens and barns can be had for the asking, and a class reached with the Gospel who greatly need it. Public halls, theatres, and such places as the ungodly frequent, might be rented by assemblies for their Sunday evening Gospel efforts at times, and numbers thus brought under the Gospel's joyful sound, for whose souls no man cares. Feet made "beautiful" to God, by being worn and wearied bearing His message to sinners who never hear it, are held in high honour in heaven, and those who go forth with the Gospel to sinners in "regions beyond," whether in the next village or in distant lands, will have "a full reward."

THE CHRIST OF GOD.

I.—HIS ETERNAL CONDITION.

Read Phil. ii. 5-15.

BY W. HOSTE, BRIGHTON.

THE occasion of this deeply important passage, was incipient failure among the saints at Philippi. We owe many precious portions of the Word of God to a similar cause. Take, for example, the Epistle to the Corinthians. Should we, humanly speaking, have had the eleventh chapter but for their disorders, the thirteenth but for their dissensions, or the fifteenth but for the denials by some among them of the Resurrection? This does not, of course, minimise the guilt of failure, but rather magnifies the grace and wisdom of the Lord, in causing even the failures of His people to work together for the eventual blessing of the whole church.

The condition of the Philippian saints was on the whole, such as to bring joy to the apostle. The "ifs" of the first verse, "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love," do not imply the contrary. The apostle *had* experienced consolation among them, but there was "a little cloud like a man's hand" which concerned him. They were not all of one mind (e.g., chap. iv. 2). Hence the exhortation, "Fulfil ye my joy that ye be like minded" (Gk., "that ye mind the same thing.") In the third chapter, where it is a question of blessed though imperfect Christian attainment, the apostle cites his own example, "Be ye followers together of me," Here, where he would present to them the perfect Christian standard, he can only point to

the Perfect One. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (ver 4). "Only by pride cometh contention" (Prov. xiii. 10). To live in harmony, we must be minded as He was minded. Thus Christ is presented in His person and work, as the true corrective for their failure. Those who have fallen victims to "The New Apostacy," have done so because their condition was analogous to that described in the Gospel as "empty, swept, and garnished"—empty of the truth, prepared for "the lie." Our only preservative is to have Christ dwelling in our "hearts by faith" (Eph. iii. 17), and His Word "dwelling in us richly" (Col. iii. 16). We need not even study the blasphemous conceits of the day, we should rather avoid them. Like the pilot, who claimed no profound acquaintance with the rocks and reefs, but only with the navigable channel, we need only know the truth of God to avoid the errors of the times. To use our Lord's own simile: Those who know the shepherd's voice will flee from the voice of strangers (John x. 5). The voice of the Good Shepherd is connected in the minds of the sheep with *feeding*; that of the strange shepherds with *fleeing*.

We have here the Lord presented to us in His Person and Work in three aspects.

1. As regards *His Eternal Condition*: "Being in the form of God."

2. As regards *His Determinate Counsel*: "He thought it not robbery to be equal with God."

3. As regards the carrying out of this determinate counsel, which involved (A) a threefold action on His part—(a) His

Renunciation.” “He made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.” (b) His *Incarnation.* “He was made in the likeness of men.” (c) His *Humiliation.* “Being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (B) A threefold result on God’s part—(a) His *Exaltation* : “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him.” (b) His *Designation* as Lord, “and hath given Him a Name which is above every name.” (c) His *Recognition* and *Acclamation* by heavenly, earthly, and infernal beings. (C) A threefold *Responsibility* on our part—(a) As to *Life* : “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (b) As to *Walk* : “Do all things without murmurings and disputings.” (c) As to *Testimony* : “Holding forth the Word of Life.”

I. Let us first consider THE ETERNAL CONDITION of our Lord, as described in the words—“Being in the form of God.” In this one pregnant sentence, the Spirit marks the greatness of the Person of Christ, and the height of glory from which He stooped. It is important to seize the exact meaning of the word “form” (Gr., *morphē*) in this and the following verse. The word has various meanings in English. It often means simply—“shape”—(e.g., Ezek. x. 88. “There appeared in the cherubim the form of a man’s hand under the wings.”) But when we say that a substance exists in the form of gas, we mean that this is the usual condition in which it is found, or in other words, is its ordinary “mode” of existence. It is this latter sense that the word is used in

both places in this passage. “Being in the form of God” does not mean that our Lord, before His incarnation, was in the shape of God, for God is a spirit, and has neither shape nor similitude. Nor does it imply, as some erroneously teach, that He had then any visible form, but that His eternal mode of existence was that of God, and in that, from Eternity He had subsisted (for that is the meaning of the strong word translated “being”), only as the Son of God, of the same substance as the Father, nothing lower, nothing else than a Divine Person. As has been well said, “He who was in the form of God, could only be God.”* How far we are and must ever be, from fully apprehending what is involved in “being God”—eternal self-existence and self-sufficiency, in exhaustible sources of wisdom, knowledge and power—infinite perfection of glories and excellencies, and how much more else! And yet it was the One who “was God” (John i. 1), who “became flesh and dwelt among us” (John i. 14). Let us remember that if He who was and is in “the form of God” (though not now exclusively so) “became in the likeness of man,” we are and ever will be only in the form of man. Though all believers do become “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. i. 3), having been “begotten of His own will by the word of truth,” there will always be an infinite disparity between the Deity and the highest of His creatures; their glorious privilege ever being to worship Him; His rightful due to receive their worship.

II. Now follow the words so poorly

* Bengel, Gnomon of N.T. (in loco).

rendered in the Authorised Version—"thought it not robbery to be equal with God." This sentence is ambiguous as it stands. It might mean that our Lord, before His incarnation, refrained from grasping at something He did not possess, namely, equality with God. But we have just seen that He was "in the form of God," therefore equal with God, so that this interpretation cannot stand. Others, again, interpret the phrase to mean that our Lord did not consider it robbery to be what He really was, namely, equal with God; but this makes of the phrase a merely confirmatory statement of the truth of the words "being in the form of God." The word "but" given in the following verse shows that the sentence we are considering is not confirmatory of what precedes, but preparatory to what follows. Alford's translation bears this out, and gives, I believe, the true sense. "He deemed not His equality with God a matter for grasping," or in other words, a thing to be held tenaciously. The leading thought of the word translated "a matter for grasping" (*harpagmon*) is not "snatching from another," but "snatching for oneself." The words before us then mean, that our Lord determined not to insist on being, as had always been His undisputed right, *only* in equality with God. When did this become His determinate counsel? We are not told. We might answer the question, did we know when the Book referred to in Psalm xl. was written: "Lo I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of Me, to do Thy will, O God." Doubtless it was one of

the eternal counsels of God, that this should be. The Lord, on His part, would not stand on His Divine dignity and rights though He had such in infinite measure. We have no rights to speak of, and the man who stands on his dignity has very little standing ground. But are there many who willingly forego their rights, and leave their dignity in the hands of Him "who judgeth righteously?" Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

(To be Continued.)

THE VALLEY FULL OF DITCHES.

Read 2 Kings, chapter iii.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY ALEXANDER STEWART.

THE King of Israel, the King of Judah, and the King of Edom confederated together to go against Moab in battle. It was an alliance that never should have existed. As they went on their way, they found no water for the host, or for the cattle. In their distress they sought counsel from Elisha the prophet of the Lord, and Elisha replied to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the prophets of thy father and to the prophets of thy mother. Were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, the King of Israel, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee." It is good to be courteous to all, but it is needful to be plain with the ungodly, and to let them know that there are things in which we, as believers, can have no part with them. It is good for the young Christian at the

very start of his course, to take his stand with God and His Word, and to say as the old hymn has it—

“My old companions fare ye well,
I will not go with you to hell,
I mean with Jesus Christ to dwell,
Let me go. Let me go.”

You will find the blessedness of making a clean cut with the ungodly, when you have confessed Jesus Christ as your Lord, no matter what may rise up against you. The prophet Elisha said, “As the Lord of hosts liveth before whom I stand.” Here was the secret of his boldness in the presence of the king of Israel. If you are standing before God, consciously in His presence, then there is no man whose face you need to fear. Let us habitually walk before God, not before men, seeking to please Him. If you try to walk before your brethren in Christ, rather than before the Lord, you will find that you have not your sorrows to seek. There is no greater honour than to stand before God. We read of one who says of himself, “I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of the Lord” (Luke i. 19). If you can be as he was, you do not need to fear the face of any man.

Then Elisha said, “Now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him.” Why did he need a minstrel? The Word of the Lord was with Elisha, but he could not utter it because of the restraint upon him in that company. Have we not felt such a restraint upon us in the presence of those whose minds we knew to be averse to the truth? The prophet felt it, and what he

felt that he needed at that time was not the Word of the Lord, but something to help it out. When the minstrel played utterance was given, and the prophet spake the Word of the Lord. It is a good work to be a helper of the Lord's servants in enabling them to give utterance to the truth of God freely. Often a man's spirit is more than what he says, and a few words spoken by a spiritual man will be used in blessing more than the finest utterances of a gifted preacher, who is not living and speaking in the Spirit of God. There are some who never take part in ministry who lift you into the presence of God by their prayers. The prophetic message was “Thus saith the Lord. Make this valley full of ditches” (ver. 16). It would not be considered complimentary to this, or any other hall where God's Word is spoken, to call it a “ditch,” yet it is what every preaching place should be. A ditch or trench is a receptacle for water, and the deeper you make it, the more you will get into it. Its principal value is its emptiness. God always fills the empty vessel. As Mary sang—“He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away” (Luke i. 53), so it always is. It is our weakness, not our strength, that God can use. Thus it is that the apostle says, “When I am weak, then am I strong” (2 Cor. xiii. 10). When there is emptiness, there is room for God to work. The prophet Elisha's word, “Make this valley full of ditches,” put their faith to the test.

There are three kinds of Christians to be found among God's people: those who have no faith, those of little faith, and

those who have great faith. What does the man of "no faith" do in the making of the ditch? He stands aside and does nothing. There are always men to be found, who never put their hand to the work of the Lord, but stand by and see others doing it. You have read the parable of the talents, and remember it was the man who had the one talent who hid it in the earth. What are you doing for the Lord who has saved you? Do you say "I am not gifted, I cannot take any part." Then you are the man who buries his one talent, the man who has "no faith." The man of "little faith" will get hold of a pick or spade and begin to do a little, but he soon gets tired or discouraged, and gives it up. The man of "great faith" gets hold of his pick and shovel, and falls to work with all his might, to make as deep a ditch as he is able, for he knows that the supply of water will be according to the capacity of his ditch. It cannot be more than full.

Let us see how the answer comes. "Thus saith the Lord; ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain, yet that valley shall be filled with water." The rain does not come in the ordinary way, but the water will come as surely as God has said it. God is sovereign, He does His own work, and sends His people supplies just as it pleases Him, but He never fails. We see the spiritual counterpart of this continually in the work to which He has called us. "And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that behold there came water by the way of Moab, and the whole country was filled with water" (ver. 20). It was

when the "sucking lamb" was offered as a burnt offering in the days of Samuel, that the Lord thundered and discomfited the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 10), and here it is when the "meat offering" is offered that the water comes. When the lamb is put on the altar, the power of God is made known. When the meat offering is offered, the water spreads along the valley and fills all the ditches, each according to its capacity. The Son of God must be crucified and glorified before the Spirit comes down in power (John vii. 37-39). How are we to be filled? The Lord says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." Just as at the first, when we came to drink and lived, so now, "if any man thirst," let him come.

"O Christ He is the Fountain,
The deep sweet well of love."

Do you thirst? God has said, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground" (Isa. xlv. 3). Then that man will become a channel of blessing to others; the living water will flow out from him. There will be no lack of results in blessing to others in due time, but the drinking comes first. When a man comes thirsty to a river, and bows down to drink, he is not looking over his shoulder to see results, he is drinking. So you are to come right up and drink, then results in blessing to others will by God's grace, be accomplished through you.

Christ All-Sufficient.

However deep the need may be,
'Tis Christ supplies enough for me;
Grace is sufficient all day long,
For when I'm weak, THEN am I strong.

SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

THE GATES, SINGERS, AND PORTERS.

THE North Gate is especially distinguished by its chambers on either side being used for the slaying and washing of the sacrifices which were to be offered on Jehovah's altar. For this, eight tables of stone were provided, four without and four within, two on either side (Ezek. xl. 35-43). Thus the pathway of the assembling worshippers was through sacrifice and shed blood, and in view of the victims whose death gave them title to enter there. How significant is this type in the light of the words of Heb. x. 19-22, which describes the believing sinner's present way of approach to his God, by "a new and living way"—literally "a newly slain and living way"—the death and resurrection of Christ, of which the shed blood and divided flesh of the Levitical offerings were the foreshadowing types! How needful it is for those who draw near to God, to ever remember that the ground of their approach is found in His one great sacrifice, and to have Himself as the newly slain Lamb ever before God in all the perfection of His person and work for them, filling the vision of the soul. The inwards and legs of the burnt offering washed in water, pointed onward to Him who offered Himself "without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14), and who throughout the entire course of His path below was the Lamb without spot, who contracted no outward defilement from the world around, and whose every inward thought and desire was clean and perfect before God. Near to this inner gate we are told

were the "chambers of the singers in the inner court." Near to the place of sacrifice with "their prospect toward the south"—abiding in sunshine and warmth—these singers of the house of God had their dwelling place. Such must ever be the abode of those who would sing Jehovah's praise. Abiding near the Cross, and keeping ourselves in the sunshine of the love of God (Jude 21) are the right conditions for acceptable worship and continual praise. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising Thee" (Psa. lxxxiv. 4). And as of old we read, "When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also" (2 Chron. xxix. 27), so now when faith fixes her eye on "the wondrous Cross," and views afresh the great ascending offering, offered once for all as a sweet savour unto God, and for ever accepted and abiding in all its excellency before them on our behalf, and for our acceptance there, "the song of the Lord," the believing heart's true adoration bursts forth spontaneously, and goes up to heaven in acceptable worship and thanksgiving. How different is all this from the world's religion, where talented sinners, unregenerate and Christless, are hired and paid to lead in what professes to be the worship of God! And what shall be said of those who are the true children of God, following such a lead, and being mixed up in such unholy associations? Surely the "depths of Satan" are there?

Divine order, as well as spiritual condition, characterise the worship and service of God. This is seen in the instruc-

tions given concerning the way of entrance and of exit from the courts of the Lord's house. The way of entrance was to be followed by a straight and onward course (see Ezek. xlvi. 9), there was to be no turning aside or going back. Such trivial matters of Divine order may seem of little account, and by many are so regarded in the worship and service of God, but they are not so in the estimation of heaven. The prophet who records them was charged to "mark well," to behold with his eyes, and to hear with his ears all that was said to him concerning all the ordinances, and to "mark well the entering in of the house, with every going forth of the sanctuary" (Ezek. xlv. 3). And whatsoever the Lord commands, love delights to perform, remembering ever that "to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. xv. 22).

There were porters in charge of all the gates (1 Chron. xxiii. 5; 2 Chron. xxvi. 6). Their charge was to wait "at every gate" (1 Chron. xxxv. 15), to open and to close it, and to prevent the unclean from entering there (2 Chron. xxiii. 19). Such service, however humble, is still required in the church of God. To watch (Mark xiii. 34; Acts xx. 27), and guard the entrance to the house of God, will ever be a necessity, for it is, as it has been, the enemy's work to introduce corrupting doctrines (2 Pet. ii. 1), false materials (1 Cor. iii. 12), and evil men (2 Tim. iv. 13), into God's holy temple (1 Cor. iii. 16), and among His people. And how well he has succeeded, "while men slept" (Matt. xiii. 25), the present condition of that which bears Christ's Name too fully shews.

However thankless such a service may be here, it will have its reward in the day of Christ, who properly estimates its value. Even as the names of those who were porters and gatekeepers in Tabernacle days, are recorded in the annals of the kingdom, and honourable mention made of those who did that work faithfully (see 1 Chron. ix. 19-23), while many who did greater things, but not in God's way, are only named to signify the Divine displeasure in their work. Thus shall it be in the day of judgment seat, where the Lord will recompense those who thus serve Him now. It was concerning such menial work that the Psalmist, standing in God's counsel and reckoning things in His light, sang, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psa. lxxxiv. 10).

OPPONENTS OF THE TRUTH.

NO one to-day—no more than in the past—will be allowed to teach separating truth without encountering opposition from those among us who "love the praise of men, rather than the praise of God;" men who it is to be feared are skilled in expediency and temporising rather than in teaching the "right ways of the Lord." It is a sad fact that not a few of such have *crept into power* in many weak assemblies, without possessing the slightest spiritual qualification for leadership, and are often bitter opponents of those who would "take the precious from the vile."—From "*Echoes of Evangelistic Work in Essex.*" J. Hixon Irving.

The Bible Annotator.

OUTLINES OF GOSPEL SUBJECTS.

TWO SEEKERS.

The Sinner seeking the Saviour (Luke xix. 2).
The Saviour seeking the Sinner (Luke xix. 10).

A CONTRAST.

Whitewashed (Matt. xxiii. 27)—The Hypocrite.
Washed White (Rev. vii. 14)—The Believing Sinner.

A DIVINE RANSOM.

A Ransom Found (Job xxiii. 24)—By God.
A Ransom Given (Matt. xx. 28)—By Christ.
A Ransom Proclaimed (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6)—In the Gospel.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE STUDY.

THREEFOLD CRUCIFIXION.

Christ crucified for me (Gal. iii. 1, with Luke xxiii. 33).
The Flesh crucified in me (Gal. v. 24, with Rom. vi. 6).
The World crucified to me (Gal. vi. 14, with Col. ii. 20).

THE WORK OF CHRIST.

The Atonement of Christ (Heb. ix.)—On the Cross.
The Advocacy of Christ (1 John ii. 1)—In Heaven.
The Advent of Christ (1 John iii. 2)—To the Air.

COUNTERTRUTHS.

Clean (John xv. 3). Being cleansed (2 Cor. vii. 1).
Sanctified (1 Cor. vi. 9). Being sanctified (Jno. xvii. 17).

Kept (1 Pet. i. 5) Keep yourselves (Jude 21).

The Young Believer's Question Box.

Is there Scripture warrant for the saying "sudden death is sudden glory" often heard in preaching and seen in print? There are no such words in Scripture, nor are they warranted from what the Word of God teaches. When a believer dies, he departs to be "with Christ" (Phil. i. 23), he is absent from the body and "at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 6). But this "unclothed" (2 Cor. v. 4), or disembodied state, is never called "glory;" the word is always connected with the resurrection condition, which will be entered upon by the "dead in Christ"—and by the living who are to be changed in a moment—at the Lord's coming. Then, and not till then, shall the Christian be "glorified together" (Rom. viii. 17) with his Lord. It is dangerous to coin phrases and pass them into currency, which misrepresent the truth, and put a weapon for its assault into the hands of those who seek to overthrow it.

Answers to Correspondents.

STUDENT.—Any good Concordance will give you the help you seek. We recommend "Young's Analytical" as the best.

T. R., FIFE.—A Bible reading is perhaps the most helpful form of aid in the Scriptures, but it needs to be guided by those who have knowledge of the Word and wisdom, else it easily degenerates into religious debate, which is not for edification.

A. S., STIRLING.—Wild statements, made by men who have no standing as teachers of the truth, and who never ought to be allowed to occupy public platforms at such gatherings as you describe, need not be allowed to gather the minds of young believers who have the misfortune to hear them. A plain repudiation of such vagaries by responsible brethren in the assembly, with a statement of the truth, as set forth in the Word, and "most surely believed among us" (Luke i. 1), will, as a rule, recover and reassure any whose minds have been disturbed. But a serious question remains: Why should men who make it their special business to assail the distinctive truths which believers separated from the various sects and gathered in the Lord's Name believe and practise, be recognised, or received as teachers amongst those so gathered, and who is responsible for their being invited in such a capacity?

A. G., LANARKSHIRE.—The singing of a hymn, or any other interpolation, between the passing of the bread and the cup, in the remembrance of the Lord's death, must be regarded as a departure from the pattern given in the Word, and ought to be so pointed out. No supposed "leading of the Spirit;" can be acknowledged which sets aside the written Word. If the offender acts in ignorance, gentle remonstrance with instruction will do all that is necessary to prevent its recurrence, but if continued in wilful perversity, sharper measures, even unto open rebuke, may be required.

E. A., ESSEX.—Your letter is very cheering, and your account of the spiritual progress of the young believers, since they began to unitedly study the Word together, on a week night, is a testimony to the blessing which always attends such an exercise. May there soon be found such helpful gatherings in every place where young converts are found.

S. M., HERTS.—We cannot give you any personal counsel on the subject of your letter; it would be impossible to do so without knowing all the circumstances of the case. One thing we do advise, and

this we are sure is in the way of blessing to your own soul: "In ALL thy ways acknowledge Him and He SHALL direct thy paths" (Prov. iii. 6). Take God into your confidence; lay the whole matter before Him, and leave it there. Seek to bring yourself to this, that you will be equally ready to go either way that He shall choose. When this condition is reached, very often a rift is made in the cloud, and light arises in obscurity (Isa. lviii. 10), as many who have "Rolled their way upon the Lord" (Psa. xxxvii. 5, R.V., margin) can thankfully testify.

Answers to Special Questions.

VIII.—How does Scripture teach an assembly of believers to deal with one whose ministry is unprofitable?

ANSWER A.—I Cor. xiv. gives Divine principles for the exercise of such ministry as is for edification. If one without gift or message, persists in speaking to no profit, those who rule (Heb. xiii. 17) would be primarily responsible to cause it to cease. Too often such men are allowed to run things to ruin, before they are checked. J. M.

ANSWER B.—"Whose mouths must be stopped" (Titus i. 11) is a principle applicable to all kinds of false and unprofitable ministry. Godly rule exists for the suppression of what is not to edification, and such rule should be "with diligence" (Rom. xii. 8). To have weight, it should be united, and whatever is said to the one requiring rebuke, should be the voice of all (Acts xv. 25, R.V.). He will be a bold man, who persists in forcing his ministry upon a people who do not want it. W. L.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—"Apt to teach" (1 Tim. iii. 3), does not mean "able to talk," but skilled in teaching, having gift, grace, and matter to communicate. "Liberty of ministry"—a phrase more used than explained, does not mean that anyone is at liberty to speak, but that no human restriction exists, to prevent those whom God has called and fitted, to do so. Those who hear, are the best judges of the quality of a man's ministry, and if they tell him it is unprofitable or undesirable, his wisdom is, not to force it further upon them. Human remedies, such as appointing a president, electing a chairman, and restricting ministry to a choice circle, while they may prevent others from taking part, do not insure edification, and they usually exclude much that saints need, and which God would send them.

IX.—By whom should letters of commendation be given? By those taking oversight in the

assembly, or by any individual who chooses to give them?

ANSWER A.—True shepherds who "know" the sheep (John x. 14), and labouring amongst them are "known" (1 Thess. v. 12), are surely those who should give letters of commendation. As a rule, such are known by name to some in the assembly to which the one commended goes, which gives the necessary confidence in receiving. This might not otherwise be so, if names unknown or of questionable repute, appeared on the commendation.

W. J. M.

ANSWER B.—The value of a letter of commendation depends on the character of the assembly from which it comes, and whether the names attached to it truly represent that assembly. This would not be so, if individuals, not in the full confidence of the saints, or it may be part of a clique working in opposition to those guiding them, were at liberty to give commendations at their pleasure. Like much else which concerns the fellowship and welfare of an assembly, such letters should be signed by two or more, who are recognised as guides (Heb. xiii. 17) in the assembly. J. L.

ANSWER C.—That such a question is not without cause, was proved in this distant part of Canada, a short time ago, when one who had emigrated from the old country came here, bearing a letter of commendation, signed by two whose names were quite unknown to us. Assuming they represented the assembly, we received the bearer, but soon found that he had a very unsatisfactory testimony, and had been a subject of discipline. Those who gave the letter were partizans, and without the knowledge of any, had commended this disorderly person, who has been a dishonour to the Lord ever since. It should be made known in each assembly, that those requiring letters of commendation, may have them from overseeing brethren. R. M.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Letters of commendation are generally accepted as giving the necessary confidence in welcoming one, either as a visitor or permanently, to the assembly's fellowship, who is personally unknown. Believing that the same care has been used in receiving such, as they themselves would exercise, they welcome on the strength of that assembly's commendation, as expressed by the signatures who represent it. If one comes from where no such care exists, but where all who profess to be Christians are at liberty to come and go as they please, a letter of commendation from such a company would not have the same value, and might

not impart the necessary confidence to receive its bearer, apart from a personal interview. In view of the retrograde course of some, and the utter indifference in receiving of others, assemblies desiring to walk in the old paths, need more than ever to exercise godly care in receiving strangers. And those who give letters of commendation might be more explicit than they sometimes are, in giving such information regarding their bearers—not necessarily for public announcement—as will enable those who oversee in the assembly to give special care where this is needed, and to welcome to, and encourage in such service as the bearer is qualified to share.

A Few Considerations for Elder Brethren.

To the Editor of "The Believer's Magazine."

As an old believer, who has had some forty years' experience of the privileges and responsibilities of the fellowship of saints, as gathered only in the Name of the Lord Jesus, I may be permitted to make a few simple remarks for the consideration of fellow-believers, especially for such as are seeking to serve and shepherd the flock which is amongst them. I am sure that many who love the Lord and His people, increasingly feel the responsibility of such a service, and the difficulties of rendering it, as the years go by.

I believe it would be for real help and blessing, if those who desire to continue in the old paths of separation to God, and remain outside the world's denominations, especially such brethren as minister to and oversee in assemblies, could come together more frequently than they do in local and informal gatherings at stated times, to mutually help each other, and seek the Lord together. There are Conferences and gatherings for ministry in abundance, and there are stated monthly or quarterly meetings of those who are active in some assemblies, but these do not meet the need, or give opportunity for expressing difficulties and imparting such counsel as many younger helpers feel the need at the present time. There must be freedom from contention, and liberty to speak the Word as needed, without restriction, if the desired end is to be gained. This is impossible where opposing forces and controversialists use up most of the time.

There are many strange and unheard of doctrines insidiously introduced among smaller assemblies, by

those who have no wish for their more public discussion, by pamphlets sent through the post, and by individual visitors who are in sympathy with them. Among these may be mentioned the following:—(1) That there is no assembly fellowship, or any local church circle, other than that of the body of Christ, in which all saints are already included, consequently there is no need for examination, proposal, or reception. (2) That Christian Baptism is to be entirely divorced from assembly relations, and held as a purely individual thing, and that "divergent views of baptism" are not to "be regarded as essential to fellowship." (3) That divisions may be multiplied as there is necessity for them, and any leaving the assembly for unworthy reasons, or because they could not have their way, and forming themselves into a new meeting, may be recognised visited, and helped on, by local or visiting brethren who sympathise with them, and that such are to be regarded as having done no wrong, and welcomed amongst those from whom the others went forth, thus fostering and minimising the evil of division. (4) The advantage taken by those who have in some places formed themselves into a new association, who although reduced to impotency by their many schisms, are able to point out the above named and other departures, and find in them cause for influencing some who are stumbled by them, to secede and join themselves to their companies. These and other such matters call for joint consideration, and need the help of such as have knowledge of the truth, else when difficulty arises, a wrong course, often ending in division, is apt to be pursued, or in the other extreme nothing is done at all to counteract the evil. It is after much prayerful consideration, and with a feeling of their importance that I humbly commend to the consideration of my brethren in Christ these matters, which have caused much exercise of heart to me. Ever in Christ: His, and yours to serve.

A. M.

Questions Requiring Answers.

X.—What wine was used at the first institution of the Lord's Supper, and what ought to be used now? Is what is named "Unfermented Wine," "Grape Juice," &c., the proper "fruit of the vine," and such as may be used in the cup; and would an assembly be justified in changing it at the desire or demand of a few of its number, who are strong advocates of total abstinence?

FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL :

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL GOD'S PEOPLE.

IT was stated at the annual gathering of a large assembly of believers, that although their numbers had increased considerably during the year, the sum contributed by them for the spread of the Gospel was less than when they were half the number. When some heard that appalling statement, they thought "some one had blundered," but as details were set forth, it became evident that the blunder consisted in the fact, that those *who once had given with a liberal hand*, had, in consideration of their increased numbers—or more likely because of their contracted hearts—given less, and that few of the newcomers had given anything more than the proverbial "copper," which is notorious in all church plate collections. In fact, they had never been taught the Lord's way concerning giving, for such matter of fact and commonplace teaching had fallen into disuse, in that "advanced" assembly.

When the apostle wrote to the Philippian saints, he was able to thank God for their "fellowship in the furtherance of the Gospel, from the first day" (Phil. i. 5, R.V.), that memorable day in which Lydia, newly converted, invited the preachers to her house (Acts xvi. 15) to abide there. The grace thus begun in the individual was continued in "the church" (chap. iv. 15), for they not only ministered to the servants of Christ, when they were present with them, but when in other places, they "once and again" sent unto their necessities. Thus, they had fellow-

ship in the "furtherance of the Gospel." There is ample scope for such fellowship in our day, not only in sending gifts to labourers in foreign lands, but in providing sustenance and "sinews of war" for those who seek to storm the forts of darkness, and proclaim the Gospel message to the godless millions who never hear it in the homeland. There are earnest and willing preachers, who would gladly give their strength and their energy to "evangelise the masses" in our great cities, and to reach forth to towns and villages in which no plain and pointed Gospel is ever heard. *But they need the wherewithal to do it.* Halls have to be rented, lodgings taken, railway fares paid, and much else that costs money, if such work is to be carried on successfully. Business and working men, however willing, may not have the means to enable them to do all they desire and see the need of. Why should not the assembly of believers of which they form a part, or who know and value their ministry, provide the money necessary for such work? There is no need for any "beating about the bush" in the matter. Certainly there should be no appeals, no begging, but a plain statement made that a door is opened of the Lord in such and such a place, and that the Lord's servant or servants have gone forth in His Name to "occupy" it for Him. The whole truth concerning giving, and "fellowship in the furtherance of the Gospel," needs to be set before saints in such simplicity and definiteness, as John iii. 16 is to sinners. Then leave it for God to do the rest, which He will not fail to do. If there is a

lack of genuine fellowship in such matters, it is largely due to the fact, that there is scarcely any teaching given to young believers, or in assemblies regarding such things. As of old, it is still the Lord's "doctrine" (Acts ii. 42) that produces or increases the "fellowship," and the liberality, as surely as the "breaking of bread" and the "prayers," expresses it. Christians fed on what the veteran Gospel pioneer, Donald Ross, called "soft food" are seldom characterised by that particular form of "love" which puts the hand deep into the pocket. Theoretic teaching which never touches the conscience, but pleases and makes God's people well satisfied with themselves, although their sap and energy has gone, is chiefly responsible for the lethargy and utter indifference that exists in many places at the present hour, in carrying God's Gospel to sinners, and in supplying "the sinews of war" for real aggressive work.

God-honoured evangelists, who leave "the ninety and nine" in well ordered halls, and go forth single-handed to preach Christ, where there is no assembly of saints and few to help them, should be especially remembered and "brought on their way" (Acts xv. 3) by those who know and have confidence in them, and all who are entrusted with silver and gold, should use with unstinted hand the high privilege which God confers upon them, of "investing" it in helping on such work. There are many of God's people barren in soul and troubled in circumstances, weighted with unnecessary cares, and racked with burdens which they have no call and no cause to bear, simply because they are

not using for God and in spreading His Gospel and His truth among men, the money of which they are His stewards. There would be fewer law-suits over the heritages of heaven-welcomed pilgrims, who failed to grasp the privilege of laying up "treasure in heaven" to await them there, by using during their lifetime a larger measure of their means for spreading God's Gospel upon earth—if the simple, clear and definite principles set forth in God's Word in regard to money were observed. There would be fewer "prodigals" wasting recklessly and for their ruin, wealth which foolish parents hoarded, to relieve them of the honourable exercise of earning their bread in the sweat of their brow, if God's Word had been heard in regard to the use of the money which such Christians own. The days are going by; the night, dark with impending judgment, is coming apace. Whatever is to be done, needs to be done quickly. May the Lord arouse and empower His saints and servants in this the hour of His abundant mercy to sinners, to go forth bearing God's precious, conquering and soul-winning Gospel, with a renewed holy energy and godly zeal.

Such is the privilege and responsibility of all the people of God.

J.R.

GOSPEL STEWARDSHIP.

NOT to angels hath he trusted
 This great message from above;
 Not to angels hands committed
 This His ambassage of Love.
 But to saved and rescued sinners
 (All themselves by grace forgiven)
 God entrusts His choicest treasure—
 Richest ministry of heaven.

GODLY CARE AND RESTORATION.

BY T. D. W. MUIR, DETROIT, U.S.A.

IT was Cain who asked the question: "Am I my brother's keeper?" And it is the spirit of Cain that too often leads the people of God to ignore their responsibilities one towards the other.

The Scriptures are full of practical exhortation, intended to impress on our hearts that one of the responsibilities of our being members of the one body, of which Christ is Head, is, that we are to "have the same care one for another," that one member bestows upon another in our physical bodies. If sickness or suffering invade any part of our body, how swiftly the hand ministers to the relief, or perchance the healing of that part!

That which is true regarding our responsibility to the members of the "one body," wherever we find them, is more practically illustrated in the care we should show toward those associated locally with us in assembly fellowship. When a child of God is received into the fellowship of an assembly of God in any place, he is brought into a circle where love, care, help, instruction, and godly discipline are in exercise. Our practical interest in such should not cease with their introduction into the meeting. Rather, shall we not say, are they now in the place where we can the more manifestly seek their welfare?

CARE ONE FOR THE OTHER.

We are to "*love* one another" (Rom. xiii. 8, etc.); to "*bear with* one another" (Rom. xv. 1); to "*admonish* one another" (Rom. xv. 14); to "*pray* for one another"

(Jas. v. 16); to "*comfort* and *edify* one another" (1 Thess. v. 11). And the further exhortation is given to "warn the unruly, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak," and to be "patient to all" (1 Thess. v. 14). These and such like Scriptures, present the responsibility of all the saints, according to their measure, and sphere. On elders, certainly, more than on those younger, but on each, a measure of responsibility rests to "care one for the other."

When an assembly of God is first gathered together in a Scriptural way, and all are fresh and happy in soul, there may appear little reason for such care or discipline. But the wiles and snares of Satan, and the activities of the flesh, as well as the allurements of the world, are all against true godliness, and soon the need arises for the exercise of grace, patience, wisdom, and godly discipline. Blessed be God, we have a "Guide Book"—the Word of God—in which God has anticipated every difficulty. We have also an Interpreter of the Book—the Holy Spirit of God. And if the honour of God, and our Lord Jesus Christ is alone before the heart, we may count on Him to come in to our help, and for the discomfiture of the enemy.

THE "OVERTAKEN" ONE.

Satan, like a crafty general, knows well the weak points of those he would ensnare. And often the weakest point in one's armour is considered by that one the most invulnerable. How often has one boasted of strength in some direction, only to be ensnared, and to ignominiously fail in that very thing!

When one is "overtaken," and caught in some snare of the devil—it may be pride, worldliness, foolishness (by which the Spirit of God is grieved), or even some more grievous sin. What is to be done? Of such it can be said, it is not their *habit*—they do not continue in it.

THE WORD IS CLEAR AND SIMPLE.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. vi. 1, R.V.).

How beautifully simple this is! An accident occurs to my left hand. How quickly my uninjured right hand goes to the rescue of the wounded member! How sympathetically it binds up the wound! How tenderly it removes that which would hinder the healing! Such is the meaning of this word, "restore." The object here, as in all God's ways with His erring ones, is restoration. It is the heart of the Great Shepherd going out after His wayward sheep, and calling His people into fellowship with Himself, in finding it.

"YE WHICH ARE SPIRITUAL."

Such is to be the condition of soul of those who would go after the sinning one. It is not "any one" who will do for this work! "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord," is the expression of a great principle of God's Word all the way through. A man who was *clean* was to gather the ashes of the red heifer, and a man who was *clean* was to sprinkle the water of separation upon the defiled one (Num. xix. 9, 18).

Scripture defines for us the term

"spiritual," as applied to individuals, thus: "If any man think himself to be a prophet or SPIRITUAL, let him acknowledge that the things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. xiv. 37). That is, one of the marks of a spiritual man is not only an outward correctness of life, or sanctity of demeanour—which is the popular interpretation of the term—but an acknowledgment of and subjection to the Word of God, leading to obedience to "the commandments of the Lord." If not subject to God's Word myself, how can I lead an erring one back into submission to it?

This subjection of heart and life to the Word of God, however, results in a walk that is its own commendation to the consciences of the saints, and gives weight to the effort at restoration. There is no need of "official appointment" here. A heart subject to God's Word, and filled with love and godly care for fellow-saints, needs nothing of man to make the one who possesses it a vessel meet for the Master's use. Hence, it is mine—it is yours, if walking in fellowship with God, to seek the spiritual welfare of fellow-saints, subject, as we are ourselves, to the wiles and assaults of the Devil, and the allurements of this present evil world. But we note also that this service is to be

"IN THE SPIRIT OF MEEKNESS."

How often our efforts in this matter—sincere and well-meaning though they be—are thwarted by the *manner* in which we go about it. When we seek to bind up a bruised or wounded member of our own body, how careful, how tender we are! And when we would heal the backslidings

of those who have a claim on our care, how consistent with the character of the One whom we would serve in the person of His saints, that our service should be rendered "in the spirit of meekness"—that true humility of spirit should be seen in us.

In Gal. v. 23, "meekness" is said to be part of the "fruit of the Spirit," and is, as we find in Matt. xi. 29, learned only in companionship with the Lord Jesus, whose yoke He bids us wear. Thus if we have Him for our companion, if we drink in of His spirit, we shall follow His example in this service.

He is engaged in this work now in heaven, and the Scripture has but laid upon us the blessed privilege of acting in fellowship with Himself in it.

AIDS IN BUSINESS LIFE.

THE world's standard of integrity is not the Christian's rule; he is to be guided in all things by the principles of the Word of God (2 Tim. iii. 16) and the example of the Lord Jesus (1 Pet. ii. 21).

To act according to God, and in obedience to His Word, may for the time being involve loss, but in the end it will be found to be the true way of success (Josh. i. 8; Psa. i. 3).

The path of the Christian business man is beset with temptation to dishonour God, to act unworthy of the Name of the Lord, and to vitiate his own testimony as a believer. The prayer of Psa. cxix. 117, the precept of Prov. iii. 6, and the promise of Matt. vi. 32, 33, are all his, for daily use and remembrance.

It is the Christian's privilege to take all his matters to the Lord in prayer, the small as well as the great (Phil. iv. 6). Anything he cannot take to God and consult Him about, must be wrong.

Speculation of a questionable character, which may involve himself or others in loss, and dishonour the worthy Name by which he is called (James ii. 7), ought never to be shared or patronised by the Christian.

The love of money, an unhealthy haste to extend business, acquire property, and become rich, accompanied by extravagance in style, worldliness in dress, and living beyond their means, have blasted many a promising life, and ruined many a bright testimony. "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim. vi. 10, R.V.).

The "Golden Rule" of Christianity, as laid down by the Lord Jesus, is abiding in its application, to all who belong to Him, and ought to guide them in all their relations with their fellows. It is this: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke vi. 31).

Quickly made "fortunes" are generally acquired at the expense of a good conscience, and by "tricks in trade," unworthy of a Christian. They never give much satisfaction to their owners, are usually as quickly lost as made, or if hoarded, become a curse to them and theirs. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Gen. iii. 19), was God's arrangement for fallen Adam and his posterity, and in spite of all the efforts of man to get rid of it, and live "by his wits," it will surely stand.

THE CHRIST OF GOD.

II.—RENUNCIATION AND INCARNATION.

W. HOSTE, BRIGHTON.

THE determinate counsel of our Lord, to which we have referred, involved three things for Him. First,

(a) RENUNCIATION. He "made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant." The rendering of the Authorised Version, in my judgment, suits the context and facts of the case better than the literal translation of the R.V. The change was rather one of relation than of prerogative. He was ever a Divine Person, but He renounced His right of being ONLY in the form of God, by taking upon Him the "form of a servant." This does not mean that in taking the latter, He ceased to be in the former. He did not empty Himself of His Divine prerogatives. These were part of Himself. It is true He left the glory which He had with the Father before the world was; but He was full of moral glory. Blind teachers, with their baseless theories of the "Kenosis,"* would make Him "altogether such an one as themselves," or even lower. But of which of them could it be said, "Now are we sure that Thou knowest all things" (John xvi. 30), or which of them possesses the Divine prerogative, not only of "knowing all men," but of even knowing what is "in man" (John ii. 24, 25; Jer. xvii. 10). He had the Divine consciousness of His own inerrancy and infallibility. What more characterises the true people of God in every age, than a humble sense of imperfection or unworthiness, or what

*Substantive from the Greek verb, literally translated, "He emptied himself."

was more inculcated by the teaching of our Lord? Yet He Himself never recalls a word, regrets an action, nor acknowledges a failure. Such phrases as "I wish, I had, or had not," "Had I known, I would not," are entirely absent from His utterances. Then again, as has been well remarked, a whole group of phrases, common in the everyday speech of all peoples, must be sought for in vain in the records of our Lord's sayings—such expressions as "I think," "I believe," "I suppose," "I hope." On the contrary His speech was ever characterised by certainty, and to His enemies He could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" Speaking of His relation to His Father, He says, "I do always those things which please Him." Nevertheless, so complete was His self-effacement, that though He was "the Power of God," He could "do nothing of Himself" (John v. 19); though He was "the Wisdom of God," His doctrine was not His own, but His that sent Him (John vii. 16); though He was the "Word become flesh," He would only speak the Father's Words. He entirely disclaimed all initiative and originality, and was content ever to be the "Servant of Jehovah." Again, let it be noted, that the expression, "took upon Him the form of a servant," does not mean that He became a servant in appearance only, but that in addition to being in the form of God, He really and truly became the bondslave of Jehovah. It is very interesting to notice the difference between the word translated bond-slave—*doulos*—and that often rendered minister—*diakinos*. Both words occur in the first

verse of our Epistle. Paul entitles himself and Timothy "the bond-slaves of Jesus Christ," and he addresses among others the "deacons" or ministering brethren in the church at Philippi. A deacon (from a word meaning "to pursue"*) is a man viewed in relation to some particular service to which He is called and for which He is fitted. Paul, for instance, calls himself and Apollos "deacons" (Greek) by whom the Corinthians had believed (2 Cor. iii. 5). In Romans xv. 8, the Lord Jesus is spoken of as "the deacon (Gk.) of the circumcision to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," and Timothy, who, in a footnote in some Bibles is erroneously entitled "*The first Bishop of the Ephesians,*" but who, was clearly an *episcopos*, is told by Paul that if he "put the brethren in remembrance of these things, he will be a good *deacon* (Gk.) of Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. iv. 6). I only quote these three examples out of many to show, that it is quite unscriptural to describe a deacon as an "inferior office-bearer in the church," or even to apply the name only or even primarily, to one who administers the funds of a church, though a deacon might be one who did so. The brother who takes a Gospel Service, gives a Bible lecture, writes a needed book, or distributes money to the poor, is a deacon in reference to his particular service. To be a *doulos* or bondslave, is a much deeper thing. Here the man is viewed more in relation to his master, than to the service rendered. He is the personal property of his owner. Whether his Master gives him work to do or not, makes no difference. He is not

his own; he must keep himself free for his Master's use. His work is never done. By night or day he is the *doulos*—the bondservant—of his Master. The Lord Jesus was ever the *diakonos* of man. "He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. xx. 28), but He was never man's bondslave. He was ever in deed and in truth the bondslave of His God, and such, too, we are called to be. Alas, how slow we are to rise to all that the name implies. Nor let us forget the Divine precept, "Ye are bought with a price," become not "bond-servants of men" (1 Cor. vii. 23).

(b) The second consequence of our Lord's determinate counsel was His INCARNATION, "*He became in the likeness of men.*" These words mark the special condition in which our Divine Lord was to carry out His allotted service as the bond-servant of Jehovah. "The likeness of men." He might conceivably have come down to the level of the archangel and have served God in the majesty of a Michael. This would have been "a self-effacement" for Him who was in the form of God; but "He took not up angels, but He took up the seed of Abraham" (Heb. ii. 16), and so it behoved Him to be "made like unto His brethren," and become partaker of flesh and blood. He, the Divine Person, who had from Eternity been only in the form of God, now took to Himself a perfect human nature, and he became, not in appearance only, but in reality, MAN, with a real human body (Heb. x. 5), soul (John xii. 27), and spirit (Luke xxiii. 46). One Person, with two distinct and perfect natures, the divine and the human—

*See Trench on the Synonyms of the New Testament.

never to be divided. In addition to His sovereign Divine will, which He necessarily held in abeyance "in taking the form of a bond-slave," he had a human will, which, though perfect, was never the ultimate cause of action with Him, but was always subject to that of His Father. In the garden of Gethsemane we see His own holy human nature shrinking from contact with sin, and from the consequent abandonment by a Holy God, which the Cross would involve. This is expressed in the words, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me." And yet never was His will more subject than at that moment, for He adds, "Nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done." All this shows that, while we cannot too jealously hold and assert the essential deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must no less firmly hold the fundamental truth of His true and spotless humanity.

GOD IN EVERYTHING.

OH! for the peace of a perfect trust,
My loving God, in Thee;
Unwavering faith, that never doubts,
Thou choosest best for me.

Best, though my plans be all upset;
Best, though the way be rough;
Best, though my earthly store be scant;
In Thee I have enough.

Best, though my health and strength be gone,
Though weary days be mine,
Shut out from much that others have;
Not my will, Lord, but Thine!

And even though disappointments come,
They too are best for me,
To wean me from this changing world,
And lead me nearer Thee.

Oh! for the peace of a perfect trust
That looks away from all;
That sees Thy hand in everything,
In great events or small.

THE GOSPEL'S HIGHEST OBJECT.

IN this day of religious and philanthropic activity, it is well for the Christian, the servant of the Lord, to be continually reminding himself, that the good of man, the blessing of his fellows, is not the first or highest object of Christian service. Even in the preaching of God's Gospel among men, there is to be a higher aim than getting sinners saved, and miserable men made happy. To glorify God, to exalt Christ Jesus the Lord, is the first and chief aim of the Gospel. It was thus the angel spoke, who appeared from the court of heaven to announce to the watchful shepherds on the plain of Bethlehem, that lone night, the tidings of a Saviour born in the village near: "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." God's glory first: man's blessing next. The life and service of the Lord on earth was after this manner. "I have glorified Thee on the earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John xvii. 4). And when in death He offered Himself, it was as "a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour to God" (Eph. v. 2). His sacrifice, His atonement, was Godward. His object was to give to God what sin and sinners had deprived Him of, not simply to secure the salvation of men. The tendency of the times is, to think of the death of Christ as solely for the benefit of man, and to leave out God and His part in it altogether. The same applies to the Gospel. It is regarded as a message of mercy and forgiveness to men, and this it truly is, but it is infinitely more. It is "The Gospel of the glory of the blessed God" (Rom. i. 11, R.V.) Its object is to exalt Christ Jesus the Lord, to proclaim His authority, and

makes disciples" for Him (Matt. xxvii. 19); to bring those who believe the message to Him, to henceforth own Him as their Lord, and yield obedience to all His claims and commandments. To see this as the purpose of God; will save the Lord's servant from many a snare, into which others fall, who put the "good" of man above the honour of God; who, in order to "get the people" and "reach the masses," lay aside the apostolic pattern, and change in large measure the Divine message, to make it pleasant and palatable to the ungodly, adopting means to attract and keep the people, which are of the flesh, and of the world. To make God's glory, and the honour of Christ Jesus the Lord, the "chief end" of all service and testimony, is what the servant of Christ is called to do, and in so doing, he is sure to have the approval of his God, and to secure for men the fullest measure of blessing. Let all who preach God's Gospel keep this in full view, and make it their aim to please Him who has sent them forth, never turning aside to "humanitarian" devices, all of which, whatever their pretensions, are opposed to the Gospel and its object, and an insult to the Divine wisdom that provided it.

Self Discovered: Christ Exalted.

"I find that I never go to Christ for anything, until I find the want of it, so that the more wants I have, the more I make use of Him; for which reason I am not afraid to discover what is in myself, be it what it will, because it does not drive me from Christ, but leads me to Him. By this means self is kept down, and Christ is exalted."—*W. Romaine.*

MAN'S INDEPENDENCE.

THERE is but one will in heaven, Angels never consult their own will, or plan their own pathway. "They do His commandments hearkening to the voice of His Word." One will regulates all, with neither jar or discord.

I suspect the first discord caused in heaven was, by Satan having a will of his own, a counter will. And this discord he introduced into the world, by tempting our first parents to have and to exercise a will of their own, instead of carrying out the will of Him who said—"Thou shalt not."

It is the independent will of man, which fills the world with discord, and peoples the bottomless pit with miserable souls.

God has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. He willeth not the death of the sinner. "He is not willing that any should perish." How comes it then that the broad road is thronged from age to age? Because man has a will of his own. He is not willing to come to Christ.

What is conversion? What is salvation? What is eternal life? Letting God have His will with us. That is it.

Why are all in heaven so eternally serene, happy, and blessed? Because there is a throne set in heaven and One sitting upon it. The starry heavens move on in unbroken harmony: "Not one faileth." This world, it would seem, is the only province in the universe, in which God's will is not fulfilled—the only part of the vast machinery which is out of gear. Man has a will of his own.

T. NEWBERRY.

The Bible Annotator.

SUBJECTS FOR BIBLE STUDY.

DIVINE REVELATIONS.

God's Righteousness (Rom. i. 17)—In the Gospel.
 God's Son (Matt. xvi. 17)—By the Father.
 The Church (Eph. iii. 3)—In the Word.
 The Glory (Rom. viii. 18)—At Christ's Coming.

The word "Revelation" means the unveiling, or uncovering of that which was hidden.

"IN THE SPIRIT."

Live in the Spirit (Gal. v. 25).
 Walk in the Spirit (Gal. v. 25).
 Pray in the Spirit (Eph. vi. 18).
 Worship in the Spirit (Phil. iii. 3).
 Love in the Spirit (Col. i. 8).

GRACE.

Saved by Grace (Eph. ii. 9).
 Standing in Grace (Rom. v. 2).
 Disciplined in Grace (Titus ii. 12).
 Growing in Grace (2 Pet. iii. 18).

OUTLINES OF GOSPEL SUBJECTS.

THREE QUESTIONS ON "SALVATION."

The Need of Salvation (Luke xiii. 23, 24).
 The Way of Salvation (Acts xvi. 30, 31).
 The Neglect of Salvation (Heb. ii. 3).

THREE INVITATIONS.

"Come unto Me" (Matt. xi. 28)—Salvation.
 "Come ye after Me" (Mark i. 17)—Discipleship.
 "Come with Me" (Song iv. 8)—Communion.

DIVINE LOVE.

MANIFESTED in the sending of Christ (1 John iv. 9).
 COMMENDED in the Cross of Christ (Rom. v. 8).
 PERCEIVED in the surrender of Christ (1 John iii. 16).
 DESPISED in the rejection of Christ (2 Thess. ii. 10).

Bible Words and Phrases.

Propitiation (1 John ii. 2; iv. 10). In both these passages it refers to Christ, who is the Propitiation. Another word is used in Rom. iii. 25; Heb. ix. 5, which might be rendered "Mercy-seat." Christ Himself is the Propitiatory or Mercy-seat, the one meeting place between God and man. The Propitiation which He made is "for the whole world," and in virtue thereof there is a Gospel to preach to "every creature" (Mark xvi. 15).

Atonement.—The Old Testament word "caphar" means "to atone, to cover." Expiation, or covering

by sacrifice, is its meaning. It is rendered "pitch" in Gen. vi. 14, where it is used of that which covered the gopher wood of the ark, to preserve those within it from the waters of judgment. "Ransom" in Exod. xxx. 12, and the atonement money was paid to protect the numbered people. "Satisfaction" in Num. xxxv. 21, where no ransom, no atonement, was to release a murderer from the death penalty. It only occurs once in the New Testament (Rom. v. 11), and there it ought to be Reconciliation (see margin). It means At-one-ment, and refers to that which Christ gave to God for man, when He offered up Himself as a sacrifice.

Reconciliation (2 Cor. v. 19; Rom. v. 10).—Reconciliation is a result of Atonement, and was effected at the Cross. The word to sinners now is "Be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20). God did not need to be reconciled, as if He had been alienated from man, as certain hymns and theological expressions imply. But sin had "separated" God and the creature, and it had to be "put away;" This was accomplished by Christ's death. The way is now open; and the believing sinner receiving the reconciliation (Rom. v. 11), is reconciled (2 Cor. v. 10). Things—as well as persons—in heaven and on earth (Col. i. 20)—not in hell, will, in virtue of the same work, yet be reconciled (Col. i. 20).

Substitution.—The word is not found in Scripture, but the doctrine abounds in both Old and New Testaments. Passages, such as 2 Cor. v. 20, and 1 Pet. ii. 24, where substitution and the bearing of sins are in view, are limited in their application to believers. Propitiation is for the world. Substitution is for the saints.

The Young Believer's Question Box.

At a recent Conference it was publicly stated, that one holding and teaching infant sprinkling to be baptism, is perfectly eligible for fellowship in the Assembly, and may there be recognised as a teacher and guide to others. Is this according to God? It is not. Among those who regard "baptism" as a mere "form" or "ordinance," about which God has said nothing in particular, and which in consequence is not to be regarded as "vital" or "essential," but to be placed in the same category as "meats and drinks" (Rom. xiv. 1-3), concerning the use of which every man is at liberty to make his choice, it is easy to see how wholly different views may for a time co-exist among those who are found together in outward church association.

But compromise is not "fellowship," which means the mutual sharing, or having and enjoying together the truth as well as the grace of God. Of this, there can be little, under such conditions of compromise. And, sooner or later, such a compact must burst, and the cleavage which it covered will manifest itself, as has been seen over and over again. Forbearance, accompanied with instruction, would surely be called for toward one who does not see the truth of baptism or any other, while willing to learn, but to put such a person, or to recognise him if he puts himself into the place of a teacher, would be to put God's order of things upside down, and to court certain division and disaster. It is all very well to say he holds, but will not disseminate this, or any other error, but experience teaches that it is otherwise. We have no authority to relegate Christian Baptism—or any other truth—into the place of "non-essentials," or to give license to men to disown or corrupt it. Where there exists a difference regarding it, let those affected meet together before the Lord with an open Bible, seeking the teaching of the Spirit, all willing to let go their preconceived opinions, and God will give them one mind, for the Spirit of God will never teach saints who submit themselves to the Word, to maintain conflicting views of any truth which God has therein revealed. Nor do we believe it possible that any who are willing to learn, will take the greater part of a lifetime to "see" the simple and only mode and meaning of baptism as taught in the Word of God.

Answers to Correspondents.

VERITAS.—Bagster's English and Greek Inter-linear Testament, is the most likely book to meet your requirement.

STUDENT.—The best way to shake off the nervousness you feel when speaking a word in the Gospel, is to go on and keep at it. Few escape the experience you relate, when they first begin. A kitchen meeting or a quiet street corner in some village, with a true yoke-fellow, is better for a beginner than "the platform," in a large hall, with a hyper-critical congregation of people most of whom believe themselves to be "saints," of all classes the most difficult to reach.

H. B., LANCASHIRE.—A simple Bible Reading in your home, giving an opportunity for young believers to express their difficulties, is one of the best modes of helping such as you describe. You

do not require to go into any questionable association to reach them. Where there is "corn in the crib," hungry souls will come. We know of such informal gatherings being carried on with real help and blessing to many.

W. F., GOVAN.—There is nothing in the Word to warrant the theory that only watching saints will be "caught up" when the Lord comes. That there will be different spiritual conditions existing among those who are "alive and remain," such passages as 1 John ii. 28; 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20; iii. 13, tell; and that present faithfulness or unfaithfulness will have their corresponding gain or loss at the judgment seat, other Scriptures such as 1 Cor. iii. 14, 15; 2 John 8; Rev. iii. 11, 12, clearly establish, but there is no hint of any who "are Christ's at His coming," being left behind. Many who have been accredited as "good Christians" very likely will be, because Christ never knew them (Matt. vii. 23), not because they failed to watch (see 1 Thess. v. 10, R.V.), but because they were not born again.

Answers to Special Questions.

X.—What wine was used at the first institution of the Lord's Supper, and what ought to be used now? Is what is named "Unfermented Wine," "Grape Juice," &c., the proper "fruit of the vine," and such as may be used in the cup; and would an assembly be justified in changing it at the desire or demand of a few of its number, who are strong advocates of total abstinence?

ANSWER A.—There is no certain information as to what was in the cup at the institution of the Lord's Supper, other than what the words "this fruit of the vine" (Matt. xxvi. 29) impart. It has been asserted that "the pure blood of the grape" is an unfermented liquid and does not intoxicate. The only place where this expression occurs is Deut. xxxii. 14, which the R.V. renders "of the blood of the grape thou drankest wine," and Isa. xxvii. 3, has it "a vineyard of red wine." "Grape Juice" is therefore wine. There is no such thing as "unfermented wine." The fruit of the vine ferments immediately it is squeezed from the grape. J.S.

ANSWER B.—In 1 Cor. xi. 21, the apostle reproves the saints at Corinth thus—"one is hungry, and another is drunken." The root of the latter word means "strong drink," and is translated "drunkenness" in Luke xxi. 24; Rom. xiii. 13; Gal. v. 21, &c. Manifestly therefore, the wine used in Corinth

at the Lord's Supper had intoxicating power.

DR. J. A. O.

ANSWER C.—If the wrong wine was being used at Corinth, "a vile intoxicating article," a "thing of the devil," as some say, it is remarkable that the apostle, in reproving them for their abuses, does not ask them to change it for "Grape Juice," as some who are now agitating assemblies over this question do, and will press their point to a division. A proper understanding of the meaning of "the cup," will surely save any from a misuse of it, and it is entirely in this direction that the apostle's teaching leads.

W. J. M.

ANSWER D.—The most frequent word in the New Testament used for wine is "Oinos." It was this that the Lord made at the marriage in Cana (John ii. 9), that Paul advised Timothy to use (2 Tim. v. 23), that when put into old leathern bottles would break them, in the process of fermentation (Matt. ix. 17), and that the Ephesians are told not to be "drunk" with (Eph. v. 18). Surely this is enough to show what it was, and that what the Lord made and used (Matt. xi. 19), cannot of itself be "vile" or "of the devil," although men may abuse it, as they do, when "given to much wine" (1 Tim. iii. 8). It surely raises a question as to the perfect knowledge or wisdom of our adorable Lord, for any to say that what He used in the institution of the Lord's Supper, is dangerous or wrong for His people to use now.

J. B.

ANSWER E.—This question may be regarded by some as irrelevant, but in view of the fact that some when visiting assemblies where what they deem improper wine is used, pass the cup, and others refrain from going, it is necessary that it be examined in the light of God's Word. Divisions have been caused by pressing this subject, and it is well known that some have so magnified it, that "Unfermented Wine" has become their rallying cry and bond of union. To advertise in the public papers an open "Communion" for all who approve of a certain kind of wine, irrespective of spiritual, doctrinal, or moral condition, is to turn the table of the Lord into a solemn burlesque. And it is well to remember that this, which is advocated on the ground that wine as generally used is placing temptation in the way of converted drunkards, and the "Individual Communion" cup being introduced for fear of contagion, are only the fully developed results of man's reasonings being brought into God's things.

J. M.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The above represent only a small selection from the many—in some cases wholly irrelevant discussions—which have been sent us on this subject. It comes up periodically, usually as a result of certain agitators having access to assemblies, commonly composed of inexperienced and untaught believers, who are unable to meet their reasonings and sophistries, and so become troubled by them. We have seldom found that those who agitate such questions, are characterised by the same degree of carefulness, lest they place a stumbling-block before "the weak," who are in danger of being led into evil associations by their example in associating with systems which drink the fermented cup of Babylon's corrupt teachings. Thus like the Pharisees of old, they "strain out the gnat" from the cup, "and swallow the camel" (Matt. xxiii. 24), "hump and all," by winking at the greater evils of the systems they fraternise with, and help to perpetuate.

The main argument is, that, wine as generally used in the cup at the Lord's Supper, is a temptation to those who, before their conversion, were addicted to strong drink. Our answer to this is, that the Lord knows that better than we do, yet He used it. We have never known of a case where one fell under the power of strong drink, which could be clearly traced to what was partaken of at the Supper of the Lord, although we believe some have given such an excuse for their fall. There is no need to use what one correspondent calls "the fiery, alcoholic wines of commerce." The pure and simple wines, such as claret and others, which are freely used in all wine growing lands as a common drink, which arouse no alcoholic cravings, are easily bought at very little cost, and are truly the "fruit of the vine," well representing the great truth symbolised in the "cup of blessing which we bless." Any change in this or aught else, which affects the fellowship and well-being of an assembly, should only be made with the approval of all, and not at the call of a clique or faction.

Questions Requiring Answers.

XI.—Should the Gospel meeting held in the hall, owned or used by an assembly, be regarded as that assembly's united Gospel testimony, or may one or more, who are in the habit of preaching or providing preachers, have a free hand to use it, and bring others as they think fit, without consulting overseeing and other brethren? This is a difficulty, and a cause of trouble in many places.

STRONG FOR THE BATTLE.

AN OLD YEAR MEDITATION ON JOSHUA
XIV. 6-15.

IN the wars of the Lord, as recorded in the Book of Joshua—that great record of Faith's victories in olden time, when the host of the Lord had crossed the Jordan to "possess their possessions" (Obad. 17)—there is no grander testimony borne to the faithfulness of Jehovah, than the glowing confession of the aged Caleb, on that day when he stood before Joshua in Gilgal, demanding the hill of Hebron as his possession, according to the promise made to him in Kadesh, forty-five years before. After reminding Joshua of that dark day when they had stood alone for God in the midst of the unbelieving host, who refused to go up and possess the goodly land (Num. xiv. 30, 37), and of the Divine promise to keep them alive to enter it because they had wholly followed the Lord, the aged warrior triumphantly confessed in the midst of his brethren of Judah who stood around, "And now behold, the Lord hath kept me alive AS HE SAID, these forty and five years." Yes, God had said it, and it was done. Others might drop off one by one along the wilderness way, but as surely as "HE SAID," Caleb must yet live to enter the land of His possession. Nor was he a "retired veteran," living on the memories of the past, and "fighting his battles o'er again," as too many of the Lord's warriors do in words, who no longer draw the sword. He was able to add, as he stood in the dew of his youth that day, at the age of fourscore and five, "As yet, I am as

strong this day, as I was in the day that Moses sent me, as my strength was then, even so is my strength now for war" (Josh. xiv. 11). Praise be to God for such a confession. It is truly refreshing and inspiring, for the God of Caleb is the God of His people still. True, He may not prove His faithfulness in granting continuation of physical strength to all in such measure, but to those who trust His Name and cleave to His Word, God yet preserves the dew of spiritual youth, so that in a green old age they are still bringing forth fruit (Psa. xcii. 14), "strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. ii. 1, R.V.), "strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might" (Eph. vi. 10, R.V.), clad in the panoply of God, "men of might and men of war, fit for the battle" (1 Chron. xii. 8), as was the aged warrior who stood in Gilgal. And counting on the God on whom He had leaned, and whose faithfulness he had proved throughout a long life, he drives from Hebron—which means "fellowship"—his inheritance, the race of giants, who had frightened the whole host forty-five years before (see Josh. xiv. 12, 13; xv. 13, 14). Thus with "garments fresh and foot unwearied," some still hold on their way, in the heavenly warfare, desiring to end well and to "finish their course with joy" (Acts xx. 24), which "God is able" to give them strength to do, even should it be with no one standing with them but the Lord Himself (2 Tim. iv. 7, 16, 17), there to see the victor's crown "laid up" to garland their brow, in the coming day of manifestation and rich reward. J. R.

THE FORSAKEN CHRIST: THE UNFORSAKEN SAINT.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS BY H. B. THOMPSON.

Read Mark xv. 34; Heb. xiii. 5, 6; 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17; Heb. x. 25.

IN the first of these four passages we are brought face to face with the fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the Light, entered the darkness of death, in order to bring us into His own marvellous light. From that darkness He cried, "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" From a past eternity till that moment, there never had been anything at all between the Father and the Son; there never shall be anything again for an eternity to come. We do well to get back again and again to the Cross; it is there our hearts are made impressionable to the truth. Love to God and to His people, and compassion for a guilty world, brought the Son of God to that Cross. The youngest believer can answer that question from the Cross, and say, "It was because my sins were there laid upon Him by God." The accumulated load of our guilt, as known to God, was there made to meet on Him, and He discharged that liability which none but Himself could expiate. Blessed be His Name!

In the 13th chapter of Hebrews, the apostle writes to a number who from amongst the earthly Israel, had confessed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, on account of which they were suffering persecution in no ordinary manner; but they took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing that in heaven they had a better

and an enduring substance. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus was probably due to the prayers of the saints of God, for they had been taught to "pray for those who despitely use them," and no doubt instant and earnest prayer was made for Saul the persecutor. And when, converted, that dear man was himself thrust into the innermost cell of the prison at Philippi and illegally and unfairly treated, his back bleeding and his clothing torn. What do we find him doing? Consulting with Silas as to the solicitor they would employ? No! they were *praying* for those who were despitely using *them*, and praising God for being allowed to suffer shame for the Name of Jesus. God used that to the awakening of the jailer and to the salvation of himself and his household.

"Let your manner of life be without covetousness." We have to pray increasingly, "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness" (Psa. cxix. 36). These are the words of a man who dealt with himself and with sin in the light of Holy Scripture, thereby learning more and more of his own innate corruption, and of the covetousness lurking in his heart. We should remember that there is not a sin that has ever been committed on the earth, the seeds of which are not in our hearts, and if they have not sprung up, it is because God in His mercy has prevented such. This knowledge will keep us watchful and prayerful—seeking grace from God to keep the flesh in the place of powerlessness.

There are two Greek words in the New

Testament rendered "covetousness." The one here, means "love of silver." If that tendency were not in our hearts, there would be no meaning in the warning given. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver" (Eccl. v. 10), he must have gold, and with gold he is not satisfied, for "none but Christ can satisfy." As Augustine has said, "The Lord has made us for Himself, and our heart never findeth rest, until it finds rest in Him." We know experimentally the truth of the words—"He satisfieth the longing soul." The other word rendered "covetousness" is literally "I will have more." There is a cry about declining spirituality in assemblies of believers. May it not be due to the fact, that many of God's people are vieing with the world in its mad race for wealth and position? The antidote for this is, to enter more fully, through the ungrieved ministry of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, into the unsearchable riches of Christ, remembering that "Himself hath said, I will never, never leave thee; no, never, never forsake thee" (Greek). Our sins were laid once to the account of our blessed Surety and He put them away. Now He is able to turn round and utter that assuring word to us, His people. We sing—

"The soul that upon Me hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I cannot desert to its foes,
That soul, though all hell should endeavour to shake,
I'll never—no, never—no, never forsake."

"Therefore we may always boldly say, The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me." "Helper" literally means "one who runs to the aid of another, when he hears that one's cry

for help." We have an example of it in the history of Jehoshaphat. It requires a steady hand to carry a full cup, and at the height of that king's prosperity, we read that he "went down" to Ahab, with the result that he was inveigled into an unholy alliance with that wicked man. And as always happens, when the path of separation is left, trouble overtook poor Jehoshaphat. In his extremity he uttered a cry to God (2 Chron. xkiii. 31), who at once heard and helped him, by moving the heart of the Syrian captains to depart from him. The Lord in the hour of need proved a helper indeed to His wayward servant, and Jehoshaphat got out of the battle a humbled, repentant and restored man, as evidenced by his seeking to bring the people back to God (2 Chron. xix. 4). Do we say of any backslider that he has sinned too deeply to be forgiven? We might have so reasoned about Jehoshaphat. He went into that alliance with his eyes open, and did what he ought not to have done, and that therefore there was no escape from him from suffering the consequence of his sin. But such was not the way of his gracious God. When the cry for help came from the repentant heart of His child, who no doubt had confessed his sin, God delivered him. What a blessing a restored saint may be! (compare Psa. li. 13; Hosea xiv. 1-6; and Luke xxii. 32).

The Second Epistle to Timothy is a very touching one. It contains the last words of Inspiration which the apostle ever wrote. He was in a dungeon at Rome; he had been brought before Cæsar's tribuna lfor the last time. He

was about to leave this scene, but a glorious prospect lay before him: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." He had asked Timothy to bring his cloak, the books and the parchments. Apparently that was all this faithful and aged servant of Christ—the best of Masters—possessed at the close of a devoted life. The apostle says, "All forsook me." The same had happened to his Lord. Four years prior to this, he had desired that he might know "the fellowship of His sufferings" (Phil. iii. 10). The answer now is given. What are *we* praying for? And are *we* prepared for the answer to our petitions? For example, we sometimes sing, "Make me a broken and empty vessel," but are we prepared for the answer? In expiatory suffering Christ stood alone, but as witnesses for the truth we can have fellowship in His sufferings. Paul was human, although a spiritual man. Spirituality does not eliminate the feelings of humanity from the believer's heart. He knew what it was to be encouraged and what it was to be cast down. "God who comforteth those who are cast down comforted us." The believers in Rome hearing of Paul's approach to the city, came out to meet him as far as Appii Forum, and the sight of their faces made him thank God and "take courage" (Acts xxviii. 15). About that time he wrote the persecuted Hebrew saints that the Lord would "never leave them nor forsake them," and now he is afforded an opportunity of being tested by his own teaching. He stands before Nero, and if on looking around that judgment hall he

could have seen the face of one fellow-believer, what encouragement it would have inspired! But none came forward to identify themselves in that scene with the Lord's prisoner. What a golden opportunity the saints missed! The apostle prays "that it may not be laid to their charge." But the Lord was true to His promise. He did not fail: He did not forsake Him. He triumphantly says, "Notwithstanding THE LORD STOOD WITH ME." He is faithful that promised.

In Heb. x. the Lord shows what He has done for His people before asking them to do anything for him. Then we have this exhortation, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." This expression "assembling together" occurs in the New Testament only twice: here and in 2 Thess. ii. 1. In the former it speaks of our gathering together unto the Lord Jesus here; in the latter, of our gathering together unto Him in the air, from which gathering not one of His redeemed shall be absent. While the exhortation embraces attendance at other meetings, it has special reference to our coming together to remember the Lord Jesus on the first day of the week, and there is something very far wrong, if any persistently forsake that assembling, where, as nowhere else, we can enter into the awfulness of His having been forsaken for us upon the Cross. It is significant that in Heb. iii. 12, we have an exhortation as to the necessity for a daily admonition "lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God." If there is no *heart departure* from God, there is little likeli-

hood of *personal departure* from the assembly of God. Does one complain there is little love in the meeting, as an excuse for not being there? I do not go there on the ground of receiving love, but because the Lord Jesus loves me and commands me to be there, and I esteem it a privilege more than words can express to obey His Word. If we truly love the Lord Jesus, our love will be manifest in keeping His Word (John xiv. 23), and in not forsaking the assembling of ourselves thus together.

HOW THE LORD RESTORES HIS OWN.

T. D. W. MUIR, DETROIT.

IN John xiii., we have the Lord Jesus giving a practical illustration of how He cleanses and restores His people. Here He is alone with His disciples, eating the passover supper—the last one at which He presided before He suffered. According to the custom, they had doubtless bathed themselves ere they came to the feast, but, in coming, their feet had contracted defilement—unconsciously it may be—through contact with the earth. And if they are to have fellowship with Him, these feet *must* be washed—and shall we not add, *He* must wash them.

During supper (see R.V.) and in the full knowledge of who He was, where He came from, and where He was going, the Lord Jesus laid aside His garments, and girded Himself for service with a towel. Taking a basin of water, He knelt down at the feet of His disciples and began to wash their feet—wiping them with the towel wherewith He was girded. Peter amazed, and probably shocked at the

condescension of the Lord, exclaimed, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" The answer of the Lord is significant, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." That the Lord was about to wash his feet as He had already washed the feet of others of the disciples, Peter of course knew, but, what the *significance* of that act was, Peter did not then know. Hence he replies, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." To which the Lord gives answer, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." Peter, alarmed at this prospect, goes then to the opposite extreme, and says: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." He would be washed all over again. This, however, was not needful, as the Lord intimates: "He that is bathed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit" (v. 10, R.V.).

The Lord, having risen from His service, says to them, "Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call Me Master and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am. If I then your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, *ye also ought to wash one another's feet.*" Surely in this He has left us an example, that we should follow His steps, as He has left them on record, in this simple yet marvellous action of His. Note then the way of the Lord.

He loved His own, hence with jealous eye He noted their condition.

He desired that their walk and ways might be clean before Him.

He was not indifferent to the apparent slight defilements contracted by the way.

He humbled Himself that He might serve them and cleanse their feet.

His was no commanding attitude.

He was the girded servant of God, and of His people.

He got lower down than they were, as He sought to wash them; He did not stand on a pedestal of self-exaltation.

Having washed their feet, He *wiped* them with the towel wherewith He was girded. God would *comfort* as well as *cleanse* the defiled one.

Thus did our blessed Master give His disciples an object lesson of what He would have them—and us—do, one for another. With the same loving watchfulness, which He bears towards His people, He would have them care one for the other. And, at the first indications of that which would mar fellowship with Him, He would have them to be swift to render this lowly service of love one to another—ever in the spirit of meekness, and by applying the water of the Word of God (Eph. v. 26), seek to wash one another's feet. And, if this service were more frequently and considerately rendered in the fear of God, what grievous backslidings might be nipped in the bud, and what sorrow, aye, and dishonour often spared the people of God. May the Lord teach us more of His blest ways in this matter.

OUR VIGIL.

"Come quickly, blessed Saviour, Come"

With longing heart we cry to Thee.

Long have we hoped that Thy return

Would bid the night of darkness flee;

Death's shadows still are o'er the vale

Where Thy beloved ones watch and weep,

And till the Morn's first blush we hail,

Untiring vigil would we keep."

THE CHRIST OF GOD.

III.—EXALTATION AND RECOGNITION.

THE third thing involved in our Lord's determination not to insist on equality with God, was his HUMILIATION. "Being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The word here translated "fashion" (*schema*) refers to the outward semblance of things, in contrast with the word for "form" (*morphe*), which we have seen stands for their essential "inwardness." The verbs formed from these two words are an interesting study, and fully bear out the above distinction. Thus, in Rom. xii. 2, the Christian is exhorted not to put on the outward semblance of a worldling (this is the verb compounded with *schema*), but to be transformed (here the *morphe* verb is used) by the renewing of his mind. In 2 Cor. xi. 14, where Satan is said to be "transformed into an angel of light," the translation is unfortunate, for it is the superficial word (*schema*) in the original, his resemblance to an angel of light being of course only on the surface. But when in Mark ix. 2, we read that "our Lord was transfigured before them," it is the word denoting deep essential change. Why then is the superficial word "*fashion* as a man" (*schema*) used here? It might seem to call in question the reality of our Lord's humanity, but it does not. What it implies is, that to the world around, He seemed a simple man, and nothing more. Religious art depicts Him as a shining demigod (indeed, the conventional head-covering of even an apostle is a halo);

but no ray of divine glory shone from that Face more marred than any man's. To the world he was the son of Joseph and Mary, the carpenter of Nazareth, or at best the prophet of Galilee. When in 1697, Peter the Great worked for his country's benefit in the garb of a simple shipwright on the quay of Amsterdam, he was still known to be the Czar, and his condescension was doubtless appreciated even at the time. It is not difficult to take a low place, if all present know we might claim the highest; indeed, it is possible to be proud of our humility and

"The pride the devil likes the best to see,
Is the pride that apes humility."

But who could have thought that the babe in the manger of Bethlehem was "the child" foretold by Isaiah, whose name should be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;" yet the wise men taught of God "worshipped Him." To the bustling crowds of temple worshippers, the infant in Simeon's arms would simply be one more "child of forty days" (Lev. xii. 4); to the aged saint he was "the Lord's Christ," the "salvation that He had prepared." So through His earthly ministry. He was weary, hungry, thirsty, and tried. He moved among men, yea, among publicans and sinners, "in fashion as a man." He neither patronised men, nor sought their suffrages. He was the meek and lowly One. But His humiliation went further. "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It has been well said in contrast to this, that "Adam was disobedient unto death." His death was

the fruit of his disobedience, but our Lord, in obedience to the Father's commandment, "laid down His life that He might take it again." His body was a real human body, as we have seen, and capable of death, as He proved at the Cross; but a premature death during His ministry or in the garden of Gethsemane was a moral impossibility. The teaching that asserts the contrary, is as derogatory to the Person of Christ, as it is contrary to the Word of God. The hand of His would-be murderers was always evaded by divine prescience (*e.g.*, Matt. ii. 13) or stayed by divine power (*e.g.*, Luke iv. 30; John viii. 59). The fact is, death had no claim on Him. His body was not liable to dissolution, in the sense of being subject to it. Yet it was in order to die that He took part of flesh and blood, and though He knew full well what "the cup contained," "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." It is not, I believe, the cross viewed here as the place of atonement (though, of course, it was that, or else where should we be?), but rather as the perfect expression of entire obedience to the will of God. It was "the mind that was in Christ Jesus" which led Him to this complete submission, and in this sense we are called to be "minded as He was minded." It now remains to consider, and that with extreme brevity, the remaining points of this fundamental theme.

We have seen that the carrying out of the Divine purpose entailed for our Lord the threefold result of Renunciation, Incarnation, and Humiliation. We will now note, the threefold reward He received

from God, resulting from His humiliation.

His Exaltation.—"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him." Truly He is the One whom the Father delighteth to honour. He has raised Him from the dead and given Him glory, in the highest place that heaven affords, even on the Father's throne. As Son of Man He has entered into that glory already enjoyed as Son of God, before the world began. He that "humbled Himself," has been "exalted," in contrast with that awful being "who sealed up the sum—full of wisdom and perfect in beauty," and whose heart was lifted up, because of that very beauty, and whose lurid course of rebellion and of self-exaltation will only end in the lake of fire, as the most abject of God's creatures—for ever abased, as the result of his self-exaltation. But we see the self-abased Jesus, of Calvary, now "crowned with glory and honour."

His Designation.—"And hath given Him a Name which is above every name." "God hath made this same Jesus . . . both Lord and Christ" (Acts ii. 36). Many, if asked what this name is that is above every name, would answer—Jesus. But surely this is not so. The name Jesus—a common enough name in Jewish families—was given by the angel before His conception, carrying with it truly a special and blessed meaning in His case, for "He shall save His people from their sins." The same root occurs in the names, Joshua and Hosea of the Old Testament, and in Colossians iv. 11, we read of a converted Jew among the saints in Colosse who bore the name of Jesus,

and was surnamed "The Just." The name Jesus, is indeed as "ointment poured forth" to the affection of the redeemed, but that name was given before His incarnation, whereas the name referred to here, was added to His other names after His Cross and Humiliation. What is the name then that is above every name, but the name of "Lord." And this is borne out by verse 11—"That every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is *Lord*." It would be well if all remembered this, and if young believers especially had it inculcated into them to speak not of "Jesus," but with the deepest reverence of "The Lord Jesus." Dead kings lose their titles. We speak of William the Conqueror, Henry VIII., but as loyal subjects of the king, we say King Edward or simply "the King." No subject would dare to drop the title when in the presence of a living sovereign. It is to be feared that those who speak habitually of "Jesus," or "Jesus of Nazareth," and address Him, before whom "the seraphim veil their faces," as their "elder brother," have as yet a very defective view of His majesty, if indeed they have ever known Him as their Lord. There are a few passages in the epistles where, in order to emphasise that the One spoken of, is the same who in humble guise, walked this earth, the name Jesus appears alone—*e.g.*, Hebrews ii. 9, "We see Jesus," or Hebrews xii. 2, "Looking unto Jesus," but in the vast majority of cases, the Name that is above every name is prefixed, so that the third result may follow.

His Recognition and Acclamation.—

“That at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” If in the church of Colosse one had spoken of Jesus—some might have thought the brother of that name was referred to—but all would recognise the reference if “The *Lord* Jesus” was mentioned. All heaven has recognised Him as Lord. On earth some *do* confess His Name and acknowledge His claims. One day the whole universe, including the fallen angels and rebellious man, *will* both bow the knee and acknowledge the Lordship of Christ. Thank God for everyone who even now confesses that He is worthy, to the glory of God the Father.

What is intended to be the practical result of all this? That “the same mind” should be in us, “which was also in Christ Jesus,” leading to the fulfilment of a threefold responsibility on our part.

As to **LIFE**—“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” Such a work casting us afresh upon the grace of Him who “worketh in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

As to **WALK**—“Do all things without murmurings and disputings.” It was only when the disciples dropped out of line and fell behind their Master, that they disputed in the way, who should be the greatest. In His immediate presence, they would not have done so for very shame (Mark ix. 33, 34).

As to **TESTIMONY**—“In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of Life.” May it be so with all who own the Lord’s Name.

NEARING THE JOURNEY'S END.

BRIGHT with renewed life and energy were the closing days of Israel’s long pilgrimage, as they reached the end of the wilderness and came within sight of the land of their inheritance. Healing, followed by a movement “toward the sunrising,” then fresh springs opened in the wilderness, accompanied by a song (Numb. xxi. 7-18), all speak of the revival and renewal of life and energy. They could not blot out or recover the past, but by means of these revivings, they had “a little strength” (Rev. iii. 8), imparted to them, so that they were enabled in some measure to bear a last testimony to the nations, ere they left them for ever.

And thus it is with the pilgrim host of God of our own day. We to, are nearing the end of the wilderness, and the goodly land upon which faith’s eye has been set for long, is coming brightly into view. God is healing and restoring those of his people who come to Him in honest confession of their state, and turning their faces “toward the sunrising” of their Lord’s return, bringing their hearts back to the long lost hope and its purifying power (1 John iii. 3). The well, re-opened by use of the pilgrim staff, may well remind us that true revival and spiritual refreshing come not by gigantic efforts, or elaborate preparations, but in clearing out the rubbish which has filled up the channels through which the power of the Spirit flows in spiritual ministry. May it be so now among the people of God. Then

“One last word of solemn warning, to the world below,
One loud shout that all may hear us, hail Him ere we go.”

The Bible Annotator.

SUBJECTS FOR BRIEF BIBLE STUDIES.

BLOOD AND WATER. (John xix. 34).

Blood to Atone (Lev. xvii. 11; Rom. iii. 25).

Water to Cleanse (Num. xix. 18; John xiii. 10).

SAVED, AND BEING SAVED.

We are Saved (Acts xvi. 31; 2 Tim. i. 9).

By Christ's Finished Work on the Cross.

We are being Saved daily (Rom. v. 10; Heb. vii. 25).

By His Unfinished Work on the Throne.

FAITH IN ACTIVITY.

The Walk of Faith (2 Cor. v. 6)—Our Path.

The Work of Faith (1 Thess. i. 3)—Our Service.

The Fight of Faith (1 Tim. vi. 12)—Our Warfare.

THREE KINDS OF HEARTS.

A True Heart (Heb. x. 22)—Draws near to God.

A Purposed Heart (Acts xi. 23)—Cleaves to the Lord.

An Evil Heart (Heb. iii. 12)—Departs from God.

Misinterpreted Texts.

2 Cor. xii. 16.—"Being crafty, I caught you with guile." This passage is sometimes quoted to vindicate a species of pious fraud, in other words a deviation from that simplicity and uprightness which ought to characterise the people and service of God. "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." "Craft" is always an evidence of weakness, and a work of the carnal mind. When, therefore, we deem any species of craft necessary to promote the interests of God's kingdom, we err. It is always unworthy of, and unacceptable to God. The apostle in this passage, as in some others, introduces an objection for the purpose of repelling it. This is clear from the context. His argument is this: You will say, "He would not himself receive any thing from us; he was too cunning for that; but he sent others to get it for him." This the apostle flatly denies, asserting that Titus, and the brother he had sent with him, acted exactly in the same manner as himself (ver. 17, 18). The passage is perfectly consistent with other declarations in the same Epistle: "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to youward" (2 Cor. i. 12). And again, "We have renounced the

hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness" (chap. iv. 2). "Craft" of all kinds is to be excluded from the service of God.

Matthew xiii. 30.—"Let both grow together until the harvest." These words are often quoted as if they meant that evil and good, saved and unsaved, may be found together in church association. But the field in which the wheat and tares were to "grow together" until "the time of harvest," when angelic reapers shall sever them, is not the church but "the world" (ver. 38), as the Lord Himself tells us; and to root out the ungodly from it could only be by death. Other Scriptures clearly teach, that evil men and false professors are to be excluded from the churches of God (1 Cor. v. 11-13; Rom. xvi. 17), or separated from if retained there (2 Cor. vi. 14-17; 2 Tim. iii. 5).

Answers to Correspondents.

J. M. G., DUBLIN.—The "Companion to the Englishman's Bible" by Newberry, and Trench's "Synonyms of the New Testament" will help you in searching out the meaning of Biblical words. Perhaps some of our readers can suggest other such works.

A. O., LIVERPOOL.—You will find a very helpful paper on the subject of "Overseers and their Work," by the late A. J. Holiday, in Vol. v., page 119, of "The Believer's Magazine." It deals fully with the difficulty you seek help in.

E. G., WOOLWICH.—The paper you name is the organ of a sect whose headquarters is Allegheny, Pa., U.S.A. There is not a truth of the faith, that is not distorted, travestied, or leavened with error in "The Watchtower" publications. The proper Deity and atoning death of the Lord, the personality of the Spirit, and the punishment of the wicked are all there set at nought, or replaced by counterfeits. Your wisdom in regard to these books is, to "let them alone," as blind leaders of the blind.

A. H. N., WILLESDEN.—No spiritual profit can be gained by the adoption of games and pastimes in connection with work for God. The Y.M.C.A. and other such associations are a witness to this, where secular and athletic exercises have in most cases overrun spiritual and evangelistic work, rendering the latter of little effect.

G. A. S., GLASGOW.—The perversion of Christian Baptism, which is a symbolic ordinance, necessarily obscures the truth which it is meant to represent,

and this truth is fundamental (see Rom. vi. 3-6 ; Col. ii. 12). To replace it by the counterfeit of infant sprinkling, or the baptism of unconverted households of believing parents, is to supplant the truth of God by man's tradition, which is doing its deadly work of deceiving thousands by making them proud of their position, and hiding from them their true state as sinners. Some are taught that they have been made "children of God and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven," as the Anglican Church has it, in their baptism. Others, that it has "signified and sealed their ingrafting into Christ," without being born again, as the Presbyterian Catechism has it. The late J. N. Darby, F. W. Grant, and some other Exclusive writers teach, that by baptism unconverted households are "brought into the great house," or "The Kingdom of Heaven." Walter Scott says that "it puts one into Christ's company outwardly" and "admits one into the professing body on earth, where privileges are to be enjoyed." If those who teach such doctrine believe it—and we know many Anglican and Presbyterian ministers do not, although they say they do at their ordination—how can they honestly preach to those of whom they thus speak, when they grow up, "Ye must be born again." Those who make little of believer's baptism, and magnify the graces and virtues of those who tenaciously hold to and teach its counterfeit, may have a rude awakening, when they see in the light of the Judgment throne, the awful and eternal issues of such a deception. Our safety is to hold firmly to what God has given, to yield it the place His Word claims for it, and never to lower the standard of truth to accommodate those who reject or ignore it, or who, blinded by prejudice or tradition, "do not see," what the babe in Christ in earliest love, finding easily in the Word, hastens to obey.

Wine Used at the Lord's Supper.

Additional correspondence and replies on this question have come from many, for which we cannot possibly find space in these columns. General discussion of "The Wine Question," was not our object (as some seem to infer), in inserting the query, but rather to give opportunity for help on a matter which is evidently causing trouble in some assemblies. Whether "yayin" in Hebrew, and "oinos" in Greek, are generic terms, and include both the "natural, unfermented juice of the grape," and the "alcoholic wine which intoxicates;"

whether the prohibition of leaven at the passover, excluded the fermented "fruit of the vine" at the original institution of the Lord's Supper; whether we can procure exactly the same bread and wine as was used in apostolic times, however interesting in themselves, are all outwith the scope of our inquiry. Controversies of such a character, and undue occupation with points on which there is no direct commandment of the Lord, or Scripture precedent, regarding the symbols, or the mode of partaking of them, tend to detract from the dignity and spiritual character of the great memorial feast, and to occupy the mind with minor details, concerning which there is no legislation, rather than with the central truth, which on that unique occasion should be the theme of holy meditation and heart occupation to all. We are satisfied that a plain loaf of bread as we use it, placed whole on the table, and a cup containing "the fruit of the vine" in the simplest and purest form in which it can be obtained, well represent the great truths intended to be thus symbolised, and are in common use at the present time among assemblies of believers seeking to gather in the simplicity of the Scriptural pattern. Controversies raised on points of no Scriptural importance, peculiar views on minor details, pressed, until parties are formed around them, and schisms ensue; churches rent and scattered, causing inquiring believers to stumble and the world to sneer and scoff, have often been the sad results of the undue magnification of such matters by carnal and strong-willed men, who will carry their point ruthlessly, and regardless of what the consequences may be.

Questions Requiring Answers.

The following questions, which are only a few out of the many which we have by us awaiting space, will be carried forward into the coming year. We invite help in the answering of them, from those who have knowledge of the Word and experience in the work of God. Many grateful letters tell of timely aid received through these answers, and we desire to continue them, looking to the Lord for wisdom to be given to all who shall help in this service.

I.—Should the Gospel meeting held in the hall, owned or used by an assembly, be regarded as that assembly's united Gospel testimony, or may one or more, who are in the habit of preaching or providing preachers, have a free hand to use it, and bring others as they think fit, without consulting overseeing and other brethren? This is a difficulty, and a cause of trouble in many places.

II.—Who, or what, is the Withholder spoken of in 2 Thess ii. 6 ?

III.—Is it according to Scripture, for an assembly of believers to invite evangelists and teachers to come into their midst, or should such servants of the Lord intimate their desire to go there ?

IV.—Is there an interval in the experience of believers now, between being born again and receiving the seal of the Holy Spirit ?

V.—Should those not in the fellowship of the assembly, but who may be present in the hall during the Lord's Day morning gathering, be asked to retire, before assembly acts, such as reception, restoration, or putting away, be engaged in ?

VI.—Who should distribute the assembly's bounty ? Are those who have charge of the funds at liberty to do so on their own responsibility, or should overseers, or the assembly be consulted ?

EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF "THE BELIEVER'S MAGAZINE."

IN closing the present year's issue of "The Believer's Magazine," we desire to convey our thanks to all who have co-operated with us in producing and distributing it throughout the Seventeen Years of its existence. We are pleased to report a considerable increase of subscribers during the present year, and to have numerous testimonies from readers in all parts of the world of spiritual help and edification, with light on perplexities in their path, received through its pages. We hope (if the Lord will) to continue it for the coming year as hitherto, giving forth in its pages "ALL GOD'S TRUTH FOR ALL GOD'S PEOPLE," in words easy to be understood, keeping back nothing that is good for the use of edifying. The closing year has witnessed an unprecedented apostacy from the Truth among some in high places in Christendom, and revealed an appalling condition of indifference among many regarding the Great Fundamental Truths of the Faith, of whom better things were expected. Among some, who meantime are professedly sound on these, there is a disposition to belittle other parts of God's revealed will, and to widen forbearance toward those who reject or refuse to give such truths their ordered place, in individual and assembly life and testimony. Truths won at great cost by godly men of time past, are quietly ignored and seldom heard in public ministry. Young believers are not taught them, with the result, that a generation is rising, who can scarcely give a reason for being where they are, in separation from worldly and sectarian religious systems to gather unto the Name of the Lord alone. We shall continue to give such Truths a place in these pages, without magnifying their importance beyond its measure, along with Healthy Exposition of Scripture, and practical Ministry of the Word, bearing on personal godliness and daily Christian life. We hope to insert, among others, the following papers :—

Divine Dispensations and their Teachings. From Eden to Calvary. By the Editor.

Scripture Chronology and History. Studies in the Lives of Patriarchs and Men of God of Olden Time. By Ellis Barraclough.

A Presentation Coloured Plate, to Frame or Fix on Wall, illustrating the above Subjects, size 15 by 20, for use in Personal Bible Study, Family Readings, Assembly Scripture Readings, Bible Classes, and Addresses, will be given to all Subscribers for 1908, FREE, with the January issue of the Believers' Magazine. Kindly mention this to fellow-saints, especially to young Christians.

The Second Birth and New Nature. By G. F. Trench
Pure Religion. By Dr. J. Norman Case, of China.

Godly Care and Divine Order. By T. D. W. Muir, Detroit. Helpful Papers on Assembly Matters.

The Seven Churches. Rev. ii. iii. By W. J. M'Clure, New Zealand.

Baptism in its Relation to Church Fellowship.

Rule and Discipline. By Donald Munro, Toronto. Needed Truths for the Present Time.

Types of the Temple, continued, and **Contested Truths of the Bible,** A Series of Bible Readings given in Albany Hall, Glasgow, on Election, Repentance, Separation, &c. By John Ritchie.

Reported Addresses, by H. B. Thompson, W. H. Hunter, J. Hixon Irving, and other well-known ministers of the Word.

Papers held over from present year on Vital and Helpful Subjects, Bible Annotations, Misquoted Texts Re-read, Correspondence, Questions Answered and Reports of the Lord's Work and Workers, will appear each month.

To all who have introduced to the Assembly and kept the MAGAZINE before fellow-saints, we tender our best thanks, and shall be pleased to send a further supply of Specimen Copies, for this purpose, to any desiring to help at the close of present year.