

THE STUDENT
OF SCRIPTURE
1925-26.

BY THE GRACE OF GOD

Vol. xxiii. No. 1. January, 1925. Free.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"His ways past finding out." Rom. 11. 33.

"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies." Ps. 25. 10.

"Shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee." Ex. 33. 13.

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION.

THE continual privilege of pleasing God is very precious. "Publicity" is not the glory of a saint. An open door before men is not the aim in view. The will of the Father is the joy of a child of God, the glory of His Name is beyond all. To realize something of HIS way, and to know HIM, to walk with HIM, and to please HIM,—how infinitely does this excel earth's highest honours and glories. And yet, are we sufficiently concerned when we leave this object, and become side-tracked? Are we bowed down before Him as we should be? The stress on repentance among believers is very precious. May it be our realization in the Spirit.

The Tribulation, Distinguished from The Wrath of God.

MANY dear children of God seem to misunderstand the great tribulation. Their affection for the Coming of Christ is refreshing. We would only intensify this, but, as truth sanctifies, is it not important that we should view everything in the light of the sanctuary? The Holy Spirit Himself distinguishes this tribulation from the AFTER-tribulation and judgment on them who cause it (2 Thess. 1. 6). The great tribulation is the time of Satan's wrath (Rev. 12. 12), and the Holy Spirit, when speaking of believers, never links it with God's wrath, but expressly keeps back the words "wrath" and "indignation" in the book of Revelation till the sixth seal, and the seventh trumpet. It is viewed as a pruning time of blessing for saints, and definitely associated

with a **heavenly** people even more than with Israel. Daniel 7 emphasizes the saints of the **high places**, and Daniel 8 the **stars**; Rev. 12 shows a woman with a **heavenly** position. There is **NO Scripture** which removes the heavenly people from the tribulation, **NO promise** of separation from this, but clear testimony, on the other hand, that there will be a receiving in the air afterwards,* and that the time of promised **rest** is the **revelation** of the Lord Jesus (2 Thess. 1. 7).

To many, this comes as a **surprise**. They have pointed to 1 Thess. 5. 9 ("God hath not appointed us to **wrath**") and read Rev. 3. 10 ("I also will keep thee from **the hour of temptation**"), and have assumed, without the slightest Scriptural evidence, that the great tribulation, the wrath, and the hour are identical.† The Holy Spirit has **NOT** identified them. He has used **different** words and shown contrasts in **character**. Saints **WILL** be kept **from** the hour, but the great tribulation is **NOT** placed in "the Day of the Lord"; on the contrary, in **man's** day (Acts 2. 20 with Matt. 24. 29, 30). The **Scripture** is clear. To assume the raising up of saints in man's day **before** the day of the Lord, or **before** the last day, would contradict the testimony of the Lord. Is not this a grievous peril? The writer would speak openly. He has not avoided literature upon this subject, and is not unmindful of the earnestness of its writers. He praises God for their concern that believing hearts should say "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." But this does not justify error. Years ago, he, too, wrote from their standpoint. It is not from lack of love that he now speaks plainly. Surely those who know these pages will feel there is **SOME** affection for saved ones who differ, though we long that love may ever **GROW**. But one thing spoils the literature which urges the Coming of Christ **before** the tribulation. It contains many helpful and striking thoughts, but **no** direct **Scripture evidence** on this point. Earnest men, who **CAN** bring Scripture easily for **other** parts of their belief, unconsciously change their mode of writing, and make general assertions, or rest on "parallels" which the Holy Spirit does not give, or plead "inferences" which **they** draw quite apart from **His testimony**. Rightly concerned that none should say, "My Lord delayeth His coming," they have confused this with the simple confidence of a believer as to Rev. 20. 4, and as to the principle of Luke 19. 11. He Who warned against the **unholy** words of delay, **ALSO** told Peter he would become **OLD** and die (John 21. 18). Did **HE** rob the Early Church of that blessed Hope? The issue is momentous. Again I ask,—Did **HE** rob the Early Church of that

* The coming to Israel's remnant is to the earth, as Zech. 12 shows: quite a contrast with Matt. 24. 31.

† May we lay stress on this tendency to repeat the attractive words of others, without **Scripture proof**? When almost all infidels refer to Gen. 4, and **MIS-**quote it, we lament the parrot-like use of arguments against God's words. How much more saddening is the attitude of **believers**, if they quote others without seeking more definitely to know their Lord's exact words.

blessed Hope, by **these words**? If not, knowledge of intervening events need NOT hinder a spiritually-minded saved one, though **everything** will hinder one who is not spiritually humble. **Godly condition affects everything.**

To return:—1 Thess. 5. 9 is definite, but the tribulation is NOT said to be God's wrath. Only when it finishes have we the vials of **wrath**. It is the **devil's** wrath (Rev. 12. 12), but that is vastly different. If we rightly see the great tribulation in Rev. 6. 11, how is it we do NOT find the wrath of God till 6. 12-17, i.e., till the very events which are said in Matt. 24. 29 to be "**after**" the tribulation? The majority of believers will acknowledge the same tribulation in Daniel 7. 21, 8. 10, and Rev. 13. 7. But in **none** of these passages have we the wrath of God. The Divine stress on the fact is so remarkably **repeated**, and the evidence is added that when the saints of whom Rev. 15. 2, 3 speaks are in heaven there IS wrath ("in them is filled up the wrath of God," 1). The saints **there** have a victory "**over the beast.**"

If then, the usual interpretation, that the tribulation cannot come while the Lord's people of this dispensation are on earth "**because it is wrath,**" is based on a MISunderstanding of HIS words, should it not be put aside, with confession of error, and of misrepresenting other servants of His? And what shall we say as to other arguments? Rev. 3. 10 has force only if we **assume** "the hour of temptation" is the tribulation, but just the **opposite** force when we see that the Holy Spirit in Scripture **distinguishes** them,† and, therefore, this promise **rather** implies the deliverance is NOT earlier. And what about 2 Thess. 2. 7? If the expression "until He be taken out of the way" would be rightly and reverently applicable to the Holy Spirit, may be questioned. But what shall we say to the fact that there is NO stress on the word "He" (not any Greek that would **imply** a capital h, or a Divine Person); NO word for "taken," NO word for "way," but, on the contrary, a "**becoming out of the midst,**" on the part of the lawless one,—apparently from the ephah of lawlessness in mystery, seen in Zech. 5! Beloved friends, let us test everything by Scripture, and so will our hearts beat in response to His precious promises. He says "I come **QUICKLY.**" We long to see Him, "Amen, come, Lord Jesus" is the joy of the heart, and He delights to hear the words of love. A true view of truth will not hinder love, and never, NEVER, NEVER will His humbled people say, "My Lord delayed His Coming." The hope is wondrously bright, the hope is gloriously near! "Come, Lord Jesus."

"I have tuned many harps, but possess none," may describe your life, and mine, if we only preach, and do not enjoy CHRIST.

† Leaflets gladly sent.

ON BEING UNWELL.

THE Holy Spirit seems to distinguish between positive diseases (Ex. 15. 26) and "strengthlessness"; and to indicate that believers may rather anticipate the latter than the former (2 Cor. 12. 10, 1 Tim. 5. 23), if they walk with God. Thus, if they should not be among those who are alive and remain till the Coming of the Lord, should they not, if faithful to Him, usually die under persecution or through the failure and wearing out of the body of humiliation? On the other hand the child of God who seems to have "infirmities" must remember 1 Cor. 11. 30, and **avoid all boasting**, in heart and mind, against another child of God,* who is seeking to glorify God by patience amid some organic disease, which may have been the condition when called by grace, though God can at once remove. It is important for them and for us not to limit God: He can heal in a moment, OR gradually,—OR He can wisely withhold. IF one can find a command to have faith for every illness and infirmity to be removed, we must plead this. But if we have not, our faith in the Lord's power must not be diminished, while, at the same time, our faith in His words must be confined to these words, and our confidence in His wisdom in permitting trial must be buoyant. Nor must our great aim be health, nor must we look to human scheming: our aim and means must be HIS.

It is not naturally pleasant to feel unwell. I do not mean an imitation, or almost playing at this, in order to receive extra kindness. Such an attitude is so dishonourable, and should be checked even in a child. But when a believer is really unwell, there is pain and strain. Moreover, though anxiety is rightly judged, one desires to ask, "What is God teaching?" Sometimes we cannot say exactly the cause, and thereby He may increase the humbling heart-exercise. Sometimes we can SEE acts of carelessness or pride as the reason, but at other times we may "wonder," or rather wait on God, and have several helpful hints as to failures which may have contributed to the loving chastisement. Or there may be His special stress on preventing evil, as with Paul, "Lest I should be exalted" (2 Cor. 12. 7). Often He wraps up many lessons in one event, and keeps us in uncertainty that we may meditate more helpfully. This exercise of heart, provided it is not "put on," and not carried to a morbid extreme of despondency instead of humility, is spiritual medicine, and how infinitely better than fleshly running to well-advertised remedies. The great object, let it be repeated, should never be to feel well, but to learn God's lessons and to please Him. Nothing is by chance: He could have hindered the trial. Do we thank Him for NOT hindering?

* Looking down on others is deadly (Phil. 2. 3). These suffering saints may be doing more than we are, and their love may be brighter: the Lord may be specially refining some outstanding jewels: though if such think so of themselves, there is no lustre for Him.

The fellowship in prayer of others is emphasized in James 5. 15, 16. It is worthy of prayerful notice that the added statement "And the prayer of faith" prevents the thought that the absence of elders hinders the responsibility of prayer. A precious privilege. Observe 'tis NOT the oil, NOR the prayer of the elders, but the prayer of FAITH.

There is a danger in looking at "things" from the natural standpoint. "I shall not be up for four days." Wait one moment: the Lord can work suddenly. Natural joy sinks with the natural strain, but faith must look upward. Ability to resist depression and giving way seems very strong before we are ill: we need great grace, then, to look only to the Lord and hope against hope, if He seems to suggest something beyond natural strength as our privilege. Wondrously with love's simple, prayerful effort He will often give more power, if we, by grace, are kept even from inward boasting of OUR determination. If we flatter ourselves others will admire our zeal, we grieve the Holy Spirit.

Among other solemn lessons, weakness teaches us that the opportunities for service may soon be past, and the Judgment Seat of Christ becomes more real. Are we filling up each day for Him? Moreover, we remember the frail thread of an unsaved life. Many think that in illness they will turn to God. Have we not found a frequent blunting of sensibility? If we had not sought Him before, should we have sought Him when feeling so burdened with collapse? It is not easy to "concentrate" amid pain. The hope of human repentance at such a time is a dangerous delusion. There are many eleventh-hour NON-conversions. We do not limit grace, but we would limit presumption.

When one is "getting better" perils remain, and increase. The thought of liking to be asked, "How are you?" may be harmful, and the persuading oneself that unnecessary dainties are permissible. Do not think, beloved readers, that we doubt our Lord's tender love. He knows when we need more than bread and water, and when Elijah was overwrought He sent food instead of scolding. But we want to be prayerfully on our guard, as appetite returns, though one delights in the LOVE which gives "fruit"—materially and spiritually—to others, and would not check this so long as spiritual needs are first, and the expenses of spreading His gospel simplify the meal-table at ALL times.

On restoration we must be prayerfully grateful to return as the Samaritan (Luke 17. 16), and to render again for the benefit (2 Chron. 32. 25). It is so easy to forget without any wish so to do. Nor should we be unmindful of the opportunities temporarily withheld, and we should "redeem" them, earnestly, without delay (Eph. 5. 16), ever recollecting Ps. 127. 1, and that our "activity" is nothing, unless in the Spirit. The lessons learnt through being unwell should not be lightly put aside (Heb. 12. 5), but we should expect grace to avoid the mistakes which our Heavenly Father has shown us, that we may not need the same loving chastening for the same sins. Thus shall we bring Him glory.

UNREALITY.

It is so easy to live in a world of "unreality," largely encouraged through selfishness. We say to the unsaved "How can you hear the story of Calvary and the work of Christ, and be unmoved?" But the more amazing thing is that WE, who have long tasted His love, and experienced its power—His power—should be so unaffected by the record of grace. The constraining love of Christ needs to be more on our heart, and love to souls should be more experienced.

We have often read of the days under Antichrist, and have felt surprise; it may be, that men can dare to persist in rebellion until they fight against the Lord's city, and are laid low by Himself. "These shall make war with the Lamb" (Rev. 17. 14). It seems incredible. But let us remember, in past history, the calf made in view of the glories of Sinai. Likewise is it as to the rejection of Christ, though He came and spoke words and did works as none other (John 15. 22-24). We little realize the depth of sin. Nor can we forget that to-day events have happened to convulse the world, but the young man seeks his football and picture palace, as if nothing were the matter.

And what about ourselves, for OUR eyes have been unveiled? We have seen beauty in Christ, yet we are lukewarm. Remarkable famines come: we go on with our ordinary work unmoved. Children of God in other lands pass through torture. We do not SEE it, and thus a passing prayer is our only interest (contrast Heb. 13. 3). New republics are formed, and doors are thrown open, but we often have no deep concern for souls. Preparations for war, nominally, at least, to prevent it, remind of man's ingenuity in evil and vain attempts to control earth, but we hardly notice these, and, it may be, we become unspiritual by a mental knowledge of them, or tend to a forgetfulness of spiritual fellowship through undue time in collecting facts, or constant misuse of "newspapers." Everything is hurrying to the end, ten times faster, perhaps, than formerly, and more, yet everything is treated in an unreal way. But, on the contrary, everything should lead us to our Heavenly Father, to seek grace to live soberly for Him in these perilous times, and to cry more fervently, in the Holy Spirit, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The one who is growing quickly in grace will not be "touchy": and the one who is "touchy" is not growing quickly in grace. "Touchiness" is one of the "dead flies," or rather flies of death, i.e., deadly flies, which wastes so much time in fear of giving offence, and in trying to put right on the part of others, and in evil surmisings and despondency on the part of the one who is "touchy." Beyond all, it is SIN against God. Call it not a little thing. Be grateful enough to Him never to be "touchy."

"GO, CALL THY HUSBAND."

THE Lord Jesus would cause conviction of sin. This is still important. Not only so, He would present an entire contrast with the serpent, who sought to flatter, and to ensnare Eve away from her husband. The river of life is before us here, beyond that of Genesis 2, and thus the way of access and worship is seen in John 4. 21-23 to remind of the contrasted driving out of Gen. 3. 24.* The woman had possessed five husbands, but Luke 16. 28 and John 5. 2 also suggest these under law, and the five books of Moses. Thus we can reach Luke 16: 18: cf. "He whom thou now hast is not thy husband." She had put aside law wrongfully. There is only one way of escape from law (Rom. 7. 4). Thus the sin of the Samaritans (who claimed the five books), and of the Jews alike, was manifested. And the way of salvation by Christ shone, and still shines out. "The Gift of God" (John 4. 10) is here. How wondrous is the fulness of Scripture, and the link of passages will often help, and warm our hearts. The stress on the beginning of Scripture silently intervenes against Higher Criticism. And the glory of the way of salvation is ever revealed: all truth is deeply practical, and we need to realize this with joyful obedience.

* John 3 likewise shows a contrast with death coming into the world: "Except a man be born from above." It is remarkable how many allusions to Genesis are found in after Scriptures.

Regularity is good, but let it be in that which is good. Regularity of fear is not of God. We may have noticed that sometimes neuralgia recurs at the same time every day, and other trials the same day every week for a considerable period. These may be real infirmities, or may be through "fear." In like manner, fear of depression may produce it on certain fixed occasions every day or week, and depression is a sin (Phil. 4. 4); though any delivered from it DARE NOT boast that they are more godly. Their temptations may be of another kind, and they themselves may be too "light," and not serious with a deep sense of sin. Expectation of depression tends to produce it automatically. In like manner we may become "used" to anticipating "regular" failure in some things, i.e., sleepiness when we want to feed on the words of grace and truth, and thus may receive our expectation, and come to the conclusion it is a physical result of our hard work, whereas it may be the crystallizing of fear and expectation. How important therefore, is the love of the Lord with the mind (Luke 10. 27) and the renewing of the mind (Rom. 12. 2) that we may have the victories of humble faith, not only over fears and evil expectations, but over their bitter fruits.

God calls for reality: the conscious hypocrite is not the only one, though HIS sin is twofold.

A business man was to call. One wished, with a measure of prayerful desire, that there might be something for the Lord. The value of "time" at once came up. He lightly enquired, because already knowing the answer, as to a theatre, and, saying there was a wonderful play, and added, "They were all dead, in the middle of it, and did not know it." The Lord had given an opportunity, and He enabled to emphasize that sinners are all **spiritually** dead, and do not know it, and that this is not in a play, but the testimony of God's wonderful book. O that some sinners may realize this, and that we who know the facts may be awakened to love's earnestness, in the living and proclaiming of Christ. Men are all dead, and they do not know it:—and we often "act" as though this were a mere "play" to US, and not a reality! We do not impress the world with our real concern: we are too much like IT, and too little like Christ.

"If the Lord will," Gatherings to the Glory of God for city men and others, Tuesdays, 6.30, 2, Minories, Aldgate (side door, 2nd floor), preceded by teatime conversation unto the Lord (Mal. 3. 16), or Greek and Hebrew, from 5. Christian brethren are earnestly encouraged to come straight from business, and to come expectantly. Personal prayerful preparation is important. Any are invited to propose topics for consideration.

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING JANUARY :—

6th.—The Life and Times of Abraham.

1. "I Took Your Father Abraham" (Jos. 24. 2, 3).
2. "Because Thou Hast Obeyed My Voice": "The Friend of God" (Gen. 22. 18, Heb. 11. 8, Jas. 2. 23, Isa. 41. 8, John 15. 14).
3. Genesis 14, and God's Testimony Against the Critics.
4. "Blessed with Believing Abraham" (Gal. 3. 9).

13th.—Between Malachi and Matthew.

1. The Silence of God and Its Meaning (Ps. 50. 3, 21).
2. Writings :—(a) The Septuagint. (b) The Apocrypha Contrasted with Scripture.
3. God's Prophecy and the Outworking (Dan. 11).
4. Antiochus Epiphanes, the Maccabees and the Feast of Dedication (John 10. 22).
5. "When the Fulness of Time was Come," and God's Amazing Love.

20th.—Question Evening. (Questions welcome to help God's people, if possible, a week before.)

27th.—The Divine Attributes, and the Atonement of Christ.

1. The Nature of God, and the Atonement.
2. Mercy and Truth Together (Prov. 16. 6). (With Thoughts on Sovereignty, Rom. 11. 15.)
3. Foreknowledge and Wisdom (1 Pet. 1. 20, Acts 2. 23).
4. Holiness (Ex. 34. 7).
5. Longsuffering (Gal. 4. 4, 5, Jas. 5. 6, Ps. 110. 1).
6. Theories of Men Beclouding the Truth.
7. Praise that Befits the Redeemed (Rev. 5. 9).

Correspondence from any who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to obey His will, ever welcome. Also from any enquiring the way of His Salvation. Further literature and particulars of meetings gladly sent. And all, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4. 11). Meeting Room, 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7.

Telephone : Maryland 2196.

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Edited by Percy W. Heward.

“Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf.”
2 Cor. 1. 11.

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION.

BY the grace of God we can again prepare something in His Name. But except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it. In like manner we must comfort with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God (2 Cor. 1. 4). If we work it is because He worketh in us (Phil. 2. 12, 13, and boasting is shut out. David found in his heart to pray the precious prayer of 2 Samuel 7 (27). And thus we are responsibly privileged to work on the line of God's working. “Let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself” (2 Sam. 5. 24): grace never leads to laziness: the Holy Spirit never encourages slothfulness (Rom. 8. 26).

It is with a desire to emphasize the balance of truth, namely: God's grace, and His people's privilege of loyal obedience, that these pages are sent forth. If there is walking with God there is power in prayer, and the words of 2 Cor. 1. 11, above are an invitation to prayer addressed to those who would follow their living Lord, even though this means loss and pain and separation, in the simplicity of faith. “Let us go forth therefore UNTO HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach: for here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come” (Heb. 13. 13, 14).

CEASING NOT.

BY the grace of God we would continue (Acts 26. 22, 2 Tim. 3. 14). Irregularity is not His will. We would press toward the mark. It is delightful to see the bold “ceasing not” of Acts 5. 42. There were dangers and difficulties, but the Lord was, and is, faithful. The testimony brought against Stephen contained an element of truth, he would not cease (Acts 6. 13). Here was

a man of godly persistency. Are we like minded? How often we have felt enthusiastic to-day, and cold to-morrow. We have gone forward for a few hours and then have shrunk back, through fear or laziness, for a few days. A meeting has aroused us, but our zeal has been too fitful; we have depended on emotion, and have expected revival irregularly (contrast Isa. 57. 15) and have not continued in the power of the Holy Spirit. The energy of the flesh IS often spasmodic—a walk with God is constant. Paul's faithful witness at Ephesus (Acts 20. 31) is a helpful model (1 Cor. 11. 1). Surely we should not weary in well doing (Gal. 6. 9). The Tree of Life has fruit every month, our Father gives daily bread, and the oil in Zech. 4, flows continuously. "In summer and in winter shall it be" (Zech. 14. 8) must be the characteristic of waters that come out of the sanctuary (Ezek. 47. 12). If we depend on circumstances we shall always vary, but if we depend on Him now different will it be. God is faithful.

A very solemn contrast faces us in Acts 13. 10. The heart of man is full of evil, and fully set to do evil. Surely we need to be contrasts. But who is sufficient for these things? Two verses in the epistles may be added to set forth once more the path of receiving strength. In Eph. 1. 16, the apostle does not cease giving thanks, and in Col. 1. 9, does not cease praying. The throne of grace is available (Heb. 4. 16). The door is not closed. We may resort continually (Ps. 71. 3).

How great are the privileges and possibilities and powers of those redeemed by the blood of Christ, and seeking by grace to live more and more up to their spiritual income.

COLD OR HOT. Rev. 3. 15.

THE application to believers is deeply important. One who is cold will be startled and awakened. Hence better be cold than compromise dulled. But there is also an application to the unsaved.

God alone knows the heart, and often the recognition of Him as Creator is helpful, in the sphere of Providence, and brings, as to Nineveh, earthly blessings. We thank God for all national and natural acknowledgment of His hand. But, on the other hand, if two men are brought up in professed Christianity, and one still bears Christ's Name professedly, yet lives for "commerce," and denies all the principles of Christ, and dishonours Him thus:—is this veneer of nominal Christianity better than the open negation of the Lord's claims by the one who, disappointed with Christendom, becomes agnostic? Both are wrong, but the Pharisee is no better than the open "rationalist" (as he is misnamed). Nor is the Lord's hand shortened as to either: let us not regard the former as more "likely," but pray, in the strength of the living God, for both, and seek to live before them in the joyful reality, which is so much needed in these dark days.

**“These ought ye to have done
and
Not to leave the other undone.”**

Luke 11. 42.

LACK of balance and proportion will ever hinder spiritually. Some dear children of God “specialize” in a way which hinders. They know far more about **assembly** arrangements than about the **workshop** life for Christ, or far more about **prophecy** than about **holiness** in details. We need ever to pray against this peril. Satan is always attacking **mansoul** after salvation, and, while we seek to bring further forces to protect **one** gate, he causes a diversion and lays siege at **another**. May we grow up unto Christ in **all** things (Eph. 4. 15), and seek to use the shield of faith, in the power of the Spirit, to quench **all** the fiery darts of the evil one. **Disproportion is distortion**. Some have a bent in one direction, some in another: O for grace to discern our temperament. Some naturally prefer a prayer meeting to witness, and others are full of “work,” yet do not pause to pray and prepare enough. Some are strict about kneeling in prayer, and other arrangements for godly order, yet they do not always show first love growing exceedingly. **The angel at Ephesus illustrates disproportion**. To the extent we **cannot** bear those who are evil, we should **grow** in love. This is needful. The Lord Jesus did not say tithing was unnecessary for Israel: **He did not set aside one of God’s laws**. The principle of Matthew 5. 19 is forgotten by many to-day, “Whosoever therefore shall break one of **these least commandments**, and shall teach men so, he shall be called **the least** in the Kingdom of the heavens.” Some have thought that baptism and similar commands can be dealt with carelessly, as “not necessary to salvation,” and that it does not matter “**how** we break bread” “provided” our hearts want to please the Lord. Some would ignore ministry as appointed by the Lord, saying that believing women have often been a blessing in **UNappointed** preaching,—unmindful that the water flowed as freely from the **wrongly** smitten rock **because of the rock**, not on account of the method. But because “to obey is better than sacrifice” there is **no** reason for **disobedient** sacrifice. How can anything be better than sacrifice, if **obedience** is broken as well? The Lord Jesus said, “If ye **LOVE ME**, keep **MY commandments**.” Therefore **any omission** implies lack of the very love urged, but mere “routine exactness” **without love** is **not** the obedience He has marked out. This is **the Lord’s gracious stress**. **He does not plead for the omission of little things, but their sanctification**, as parts of one whole of a loving life unto Himself in the Spirit.

A deaf man may know much about the **theory** of music. Is it so with our **praise**?

A Solemn Question addressed to a Romanist.

DEAR FRIEND,

It is with Christian concern that I would write, for the glory of the Name of the Lord Jesus, and conscious I have no merit of my own, and no right to throw stones at another. As a poor guilty sinner was I saved, and the Christian life knows nothing of bitterness or bare argument.

You tell me that there is a grave danger in "private judgment" and I earnestly agree. It is my wish, by grace, to avoid this. Such an answer may surprise you. And since the Lord has, in mercy, caused me to want to please Him, I must doubt myself, and long to have His teaching, His authority, His control, however He is lovingly pleased to grant it.

But I cannot see your remedy is a real one. Permit me to say, I fear it only beclouds the great issue. You tell me you have been brought to a resting place, but, before you were brought to it you were on shifting sand. Now is it not plain that, from your standpoint, dear friend, you were at that time **outside** what you regard as the church? Hence at a moment when you were outside and swayed by what you now feel to be "private judgment," you accepted "the church." Even if since being brought in, you have renounced this attitude, your first action was, you confess **from outside**. Now my question is deeply earnest, and I ask you, in view of the precious work of the Lord Jesus, and of eternity:—If the first action before you were taken into your present position was on a wrong basis, may not the fruit and result be wrong also? If you could not tell what to do till brought in, how were you brought rightly in? Did you choose by private judgment, or not? If by the former, you deny yourself the arrangements you now claim to be of God. If, on the other hand, you say "By the work of the Holy Spirit," then you acknowledge that He works **outside** that which seems to you the only church, and enables a man to decide one of the most momentous matters of all, **apart from being in the church, and apart from "private judgment."** If the Holy Spirit is able so to do, (and who can deny His power?), is he not able to continue doing so? **Not** that one guided by Him will **boast**. Hence this is the very position, which by grace, I would very humbly seek to take, as one redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. **I doubt my judgment**, but I do not doubt God's infallible words. You say "How have I received those words except by the church?" I answer that the **postman** does not make the letter precious, and, further, Judaism is not right because of preserving the Hebrew Scriptures intact, under God's providence. And, moreover, if you say I cannot know they are God's words except by the church, I ask again, earnestly, "How can you know what is the church?" If you reply "By the Church," your thought is in a circle, but if, on the other hand, "By the Holy Spirit,"—cannot He

also witness as to Scripture, and enable to test a company, of men by the **unchanging** words recorded? Indeed what should we definitely know about a "church" except thereby? 'Tis in Scripture the Holy Spirit has been pleased to give the true marks of the church, and I want to apply them **all**.

Ah, dear friend, the Spirit still works and directs poor guilty sinners to the one Sacrifice of Christ, and then makes Ps. 25. 9, precious, in the enjoyment of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3. 15, 16). Thus shall we avoid **private** judgment and the opinions of others in increasing measure, though ever **humbled**. Do you know Christ and the Scriptures thus, dear friend?

Permit this loving plainness, that God in all things may be glorified, and with earnest wishes.

Yours sincerely in "Christ Jesus,"
One redeemed by precious blood, and ever wishing
to hear His voice (John 10. 27).

"RESTORE SUCH AN ONE."

THE object of discipline is not EXclusion, but **God's glory** through INclusion. "Thou hast **gained** thy brother":—He belongs to thee! If one is overtaken in a fault, there is a disjoining,—and his loss is the loss of ALL. The nine pieces of silver are incomplete without the tenth. We **cannot** ignore our brethren to the glory of God.

But how can there be the setting of the dislocated limb? How can there be restoration to the **glory of God**? Is the physical work hard and the spiritual easy? Nay, to set a limb needs much care, to restore a saint necessitates true spirituality. A spiritual work cannot be done unspiritually. Hence the Scripture lays stress on the right persons, AND the right condition, BOTH as to others and as to themselves:—a threefold thought.

(a) Ye which are **spiritual**,—

(b) In the **spirit** of meekness (to others),—

(c) Considering **thysself**, lest thou also be tempted.

Failure as to ANY of these things will bring dishonour to the Lord's Name, and will hinder in the delicate work of restoration. If there is a background of unspirituality the dislocation may be made much worse. If there is the spirit of pride it is not possible to please God. Hezekiah was a humble man, but when God showed him what was in his heart, there was a sad unveiling. In like manner, Job, a godly man beyond others, failed, and Moses spoke unadvisedly. Therefore "**consider** thysself": in similar circumstances thou mightest have failed more. Say to thy heart, "Remember past privileges, and, if thou hast been kept, the glory is not thine: thou little knowest how weak thou art, and how strong temptation is." Thus will the brother seeking to restore another go **girded with a towel**,—the towel of the lowly servant. If we have a "mannerism" that provokes sin, we are responsible for the sin. How needful to **WALK** with God. Nothing can take the place of this.

Responsibility to REJECT.

“**W**HEN the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, ‘Sirs, why do ye these things?’” Acts 14. 14, 15.

A striking contrast is found in Acts 12. 22,23, “The people gave a shout, The voice of (a) god and not of a man: and immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory.” On the other hand, a precious parallel stands out in Acts 10. 26. “But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up: I myself also am a man” (cf. Rev. 19. 10). Thus we learn the responsibility to reject.

An important application is met in Matt. 23. 8, 10, “Be not ye called Rabbi . . . neither be ye called Masters (Leaders).” Religious titles are to be definitely set aside. ’Tis not only, “Do not call yourself by this name,” go a step further “Reject it.”* If only dear children of God had followed this out by refusing the conferring of a Doctorate of Divinity! If only they were willing to deny the title “Reverend!” Shall not our hearts be awakened in these seemingly “little things?” And the refusal must be practical: it may involve giving up a position:—“Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (Heb. 11. 24).

“It does not matter what I am called,” say some. It does: you and I are responsible unless we seek to hinder. Doubtless there are many other applications: Here, for instance, is a child of God who is partly willing to be flattered. He does not exactly seek it, but it has a measure of semi-conscious joy in it. Rather “restrain” (Acts 14. 18). Ps. 115. 1 should be a power in daily life.

These passages have a reflex bearing on the unassailable Deity of the Lord Jesus. In the light of Acts 12. 22, 23, His continual and unvaried acceptance of worship and His emphasis on His own title in the very context, where a title is refused to all His people, mark Him out as distinct, not only in degree but in kind—“He is thy Lord, and worship thou Him.” There is no *via media*. The acceptance and encouragement of worship were either idolatry, OR the withholding of them is robbery from God. Even His honourable character cannot be maintained unless our loyal hearts say with Thomas “My Lord and my God” (John 20. 28).

* Politely, yet firmly: as when they said, “Men, why do ye these things?” Sorrowfully not self-righteously: compare “They rent their clothes.” Leaflets on “The Use of Titles” readily sent.

DIFFICULTIES.

DIFFICULTIES are NOT in proportion to our failure: God may permit special trials to a Job or a Paul. But neither are they in proportion to our godliness. We must not assume if we have special problems that we are thereby marked out as peculiarly spiritual. Many believers lightly, and almost pre-

sumptuously, use the words "a thorn in the flesh."* We must be careful also regarding the word "cross." The privilege of rejection for Christ is seen in bearing a cross: how unwisely many speak of a little burden, which may be their own making, through unwise mannerisms, as their cross. "Difficulties" are precious, if rightly used to bring us more to the Lord Himself. But there is no necessary blessing therein: Asa wandered from the Lord when physical trials overtook him. Many a child of God has seemed less earnest after an illness, and restoration. Difficulties are to make us feel our limitations, when we have realized our Father's wisdom, and thus with this twofold consciousness we are to SEEK for the lessons, and meanwhile in everything to give thanks. Till we give thanks for trials we are not learning much of their fulness of wondrous messages (Rom. 5. 3; 2 Cor. 12. 10). It is FAR easier to want to get out from them, but this is never to be the primary aim. James 1. 2-4 shows quite a different aspect. The Lord indeed makes a way out, but it is not a way round, nor a leaping out (1 Cor. 10. 13). If we wish to be too quick, we shall lose the Lord's impress of blessing. Probably many have been healed, in answer to prayer, because they failed to realize the richer blessing of grace sufficient to be willing to go on in the path of suffering (2 Cor. 12. 8, 9). The Lord did NOT say He WOULD not, in any case, take away Paul's thorn, but rather showed him the privilege of being willing not to demand this. If we are not strong enough to BEAR, the Lord may grant us an easier path, but difficulties are a real honour in the light of 1 Pet. 1. 7, and 2 Cor. 1. 4-7 would show much fruit in being able thereby to help others.

* It is true that Satan's oppressive work appears to be linked with all illness (Acts 10. 38), but all is in God's gracious permission. And His object for His people is illustrated in 2 Cor. 12. 7. We must not assume WE have special "abundance," as Paul, and are therefore tried beyond others.

The Desire to be "Different from others," and the Desire to be Like Christ.

MOTIVE means so much. Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, could say "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. 1. 21). Temperaments are very different; one man shrinks, another likes to be notorious, and will gladly receive rejection for its own sake. But this is a very poor thing unless we are reproached "for the name of Christ" (1 Pet. 4. 14). There is no value in rejection otherwise. Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt (Heb. 11. 26). Why are you and I willing to go without the camp (Heb. 13. 13)? Is it unto Him, or is it not? Self can form a sect called unsectarian, and only as the love of Christ constrains is there any true blessedness. Many in outward forms of Christendom may know Him as much, and more than those who have much of the shell of separation,

with little of its true **motive and motive power**. God emphasizes reality and we need to be prayerfully concerned to serve in the Holy Spirit. The sweetness of Mark 10. 29 is "For My sake, and the Gospel's."

Spirituality is not a matter of words, appearances or forms. Nor is it confined to certain activities, and days of the week. It concerns the smallest things, and a manifestation of fellowship with God in these. Alas, how easy it is for us to forget the privilege of pleasing our Heavenly Father in details. An all-round life in communion with Him is well-pleasing: but anything else, however seemingly successful, is a failure.

"If the Lord will," Gatherings to the Glory of God for city men and others, Tuesdays, 6.30, 2, Minories, Aldgate (side door, 2nd floor), preceded by teatime conversation unto the Lord (Mal. 3. 16), or Greek and Hebrew, from 5. Christian brethren are earnestly encouraged to come straight from business, and to come expectantly. Personal prayerful preparation is important. Any are invited to propose topics for consideration.

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING FEBRUARY.

3rd.—The Truth in Love (Eph. 4. 15) and Love in the Truth (3 John 1).

1. Christian "Foursquareness" and Growing up into Christ "in All Things."
2. The Truth without Love. Also notes on Rev. 2. 1-7.
3. Mistaken Love and Indulgence.
4. The Lord's Balanced Dealings with His Own People.

10th.—The Scriptures and Moral Character.

1. The Holy Spirit's Teaching as to Every Day Holiness, Respect for the Aged, Politeness, Honesty, etc. (The Book of Proverbs).
2. The Believer's Manner (1 Pet. 3. 8, Tit. 2. 10).
3. The Unsaved and Courtesy, Thoughtfulness, etc. (Acts 28. 2).
4. The Training of Children for the Lord (Eph. 6. 4).

17th.—Question Evening. (Questions welcome to help God's people, if possible, a week before).

24th.—The Parables of the Lord Jesus, with Reference to Himself.

1. His Deity, and Uniqueness (e.g. Matt. 21. 37, 38).
 2. His Atonement (Matt. 13. 44-46, Luke 10. 33,34, John 12. 24).
 3. His Ownership of His People ("My Sheep," His Servants).
 4. Devotion to Him (Luke 7. 42, 12. 36), and Dependence on Him (John 15. 5).
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Correspondence from any who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to obey His will, ever welcome. Also from any enquiring the way of His Salvation. Further literature and particulars of meetings gladly sent. And all, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4. 11). Meeting Room, 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7.

Telephone : Maryland 2196.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil." Jer. 29. 11.

A WORD OF INTRODUCTION.

HOW precious are God's thoughts to us (Ps. 139. 17). Can we say we REJOICE in them? Can we say we remember HIM? There is a deep need to-day for more MEMORY of Him. Oh that there may be more delight in the LORD, in what HE is, in HIS purposes, in HIS works, in all that is HIS. It is so easy to drift and take the world's standpoint in some measure, and to become more interested in a blessing than the glory of God; But the exaltation of HIS Name should be the object of His blood-bought people, and we trust that, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, such will ever be the object of this magazine. Better that it should discontinue than that it should dishonour our Lord, or put Him second. Our Heavenly Father ever thinks of us; shall we not think upon His Name?—(Mal. 3. 16).

BELIEVERS AND WIRELESS.*

“O Lord how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches” (Ps. 104 24). Thus the believer feels with regard to the partial skill of man to “harness” the powers of nature, but he cannot enter into all men's discoveries as spiritually beneficial. Far otherwise. He sees science used to spread slaughter, and the stress on the “air” to-day makes him remember who is the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2. 2). There are perils, too, in the borderlands of science, and he calls to mind the relationship of psychical research and spiritism. Shall we not pray for scientists more definitely?

But some will reply, “Wireless is harmless.” If it were, this would not be sufficient warrant for a believer's identification. “All things are lawful” you say;—the verse adds, “But all things edify not” (1 Cor. 10. 23). 'Tis not enough to abstain from manifest

*The Lord enabling, to be reprinted for prayerful distribution.

harm: the positive command is "Do all to the glory of God." In like manner, we would not only keep back idle words: we wish to have speech always with grace that it may minister grace (Eph. 4. 29, Col. 4. 6). A positive blessing must be sought.

If we prayerfully read the Scriptures we find that the Lord of glory did not suggest the position of an "up-to-date" successful man. He Who owned all laid aside His glory, and journeyed about in a primitive way, and called His disciples to a pilgrim life. This is not popular, but is it His will?

Furthermore, let us ask ourselves—"Why do I seek wireless?" It is well to examine our own motives, though we cannot know or judge those of others. If we find any unwillingness to be unlike others, or outside the fashion, in clothes or anything else, there is a symptom of spiritual disease, and Christ is not first.

Again, how mixed is the wireless programme. Does it befit those not of the world? And shall we help, or cause to stumble little ones in Christ, if we install this new discovery? Will they think us more attached to the Lord, or will they use our actions to shelter themselves in a little broadness? It is most serious to cause a little one to stumble (Luke 17. 2)

Again, there are many who urge the advantage in spreading the gospel, but

- (a) Can we enter into the mixture on the Lord's Day? Are most of the "sermons" pure gospel?
- (b) Do we feel happy, as to the Lord's Day work entailed?
- (c) Is this convenient staying at home in accord with Christian principles?
- (d) Is it possible that evil is being done that good may come, and is such our Lord's Will? Rom. 3. 8.

We have not spoken of the right use of time and money, though these also come before the humble believer. He knows how easy it is to put a hobby in the place of devotion. Nor do we ponder the craving for something new, but probably enough has been said to cause loving caution, and more than caution. Separation is a privilege, if unto the Lord. And may not a word in closing from Romans 14 help the thoughtful child of God?—"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." He that doubteth should never hurry forward or silence conscientious concern. A tender heart is guided in judgment (Ps. 25. 9, 10), though the world may think it foolish and think us foolish too. His approval is more than compensation. The Spirit of God leads us to seek this approval.

"ONE ANOTHER."

A remarkable word, which belongs to the new covenant, since it implies a new unity, brought about by grace! The law said, "Thou shalt love." Far from putting love in the background, law emphasized love in both its first and second commands, and on these hang all the law and the prophets (Matt. 22. 36-40). But the new commandment adds the word "one another" (John 13. 34). It is a plural without any singular: empty it of part, you empty it

of all. The precept of Christ contains a gracious contrast with Matt. 24. 10.

And "love" is not a bare expression: it is a costly emotion and a root from which much rich and plentiful fruit ever springs. God so loved that He gave, and love must give. Many mistake the happiness, (which arises in self from "liking" this or that), for true love. Love is to concern the one loved as well as the one loving. To limit "love" to the glad feeling of affection in the one who says "I love" is to miss the Holy Spirit's instruction. Love is happy, but happiness is not all.

Therefore, in accord with the fulness of Scripture, the word is explained by various commands and exhortations. Let us notice these. In the very chapter where Christ repeated "Love one another" (John 13. 34, 35, cf. 15. 12, 17), He said:—

"Ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (verse 14). In the epistle to the Romans we read,

"In honour preferring one another,"

"Be of the same mind one toward another,"

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another,"

"Things wherewith one may edify another,"

"Like minded one toward another,"

"Receive ye one another,"

"Able also to admonish one another,"

"Salute one another."

(12. 10, 16, 13. 8, 14. 19, 15. 5, 7, 14, 16. 16). All these acts of obedience express the joy of 12. 5, "Every one members one of another," and we have the Divine negative in 14. 13 (cf. Gal. 5. 15; 26, Col. 3. 9, Jas. 4. 11, 5. 9). Other epistles have the same message, e.g. 1 Cor. 11. 33, 12. 25, 16. 20, 2 Cor. 13. 12, Gal. 5. 13, 6. 2, Eph. 4. 2, 32, 5. 21, Col. 3. 13, 1 Thess. 3. 12, 4. 9, 18, Heb. 10. 24, Jas. 5. 16, 1 Pet. 1. 22, 4. 9, 5. 5, 14, 1 John 3. 11, 23, 4. 7, 11, 12, 2 John 5.

Particularly just now would we remind ourselves, as well as our brethren, of several precious appointments:—

"By love serve one another,"

"Bear ye one another's burdens,"

"With all lowliness . . . forbearing one another,"

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God,"

"Pray one for another."

These exhortations refresh our hearts, and show we must not love in word or tongue, but in deed and in truth (1 John 3. 8). And not only do they urge that love will act (even as faith in Heb. 11), and that a man who has friends must show himself friendly (Prov. 18. 24), but they also suggest that multitudinous activities are not enough: they must be wrapped up in love or they are in vain. If we bear one another's burdens only as a deed of duty, without love, what is the profit? If the music of "one another" is not felt in our prayers for our brethren, where is the blessing? 1 Cor. 13. 1-3 shows that outward charity may be loveless, and the Holy Spirit calls redeemed ones to do everything in remembrance of union with Christ. Thus the whole life has a new meaning. Shall it not be so in our daily walk with God?

How Shall we Describe Sin ?

“By the Law is the Knowledge of Sin.”

Rom. 3. 20.

IT is easy and natural to use euphemisms, and at the same time to brand **certain** iniquities as peculiarly wicked. Thus the Pharisees emphasized that some were “sinners,” as if to minimise their **own** guilt. Scripture takes an entirely different standpoint: all are fallen, “That which is highly esteemed among men is **abomination** in the sight of God” (Luke 16. 15). Do you reply—“Stern language?” It is **Christ’s** language. Again, “They are all gone out of the way . . . their throat is an open sepulchre” (Rom. 3. 12, 13). “We ourselves also were sometimes foolish . . . **living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another**” (Tit. 3. 3). But are there **no** exceptions? is not this assertion too sweeping? No, it is an assertion from **God’s standpoint**. ’Tis a forgetfulness of God’s standpoint which makes sin excusable, and leads to worldly **fraternizing**, and, on the other hand, to theories of **perfectionism**. Errors come in like a flood whenever **God’s standpoint** is lowered. Call sin by its real name. “The tongue is a fire, a world of **iniquity**” (Jas. 3. 6). “They that are in the flesh **cannot** please God” (Rom. 8. 8). “The friendship of the world is **enmity** with God” (Jas. 4. 4). But do we not read, “The barbarous people showed us no little kindness” (Acts 28. 2), and are we not told of the **goodliness** and piety of the flesh in Isa. 40. 6? Undoubtedly; and from the standpoint of **providence** and nature, there are many diversities, and we thank God for these **reliefs**. But, from the standpoint of **His inflexible law** there is no encouragement in **man**. If a man does not love his neighbour **as himself** with spontaneous fulness of love, there is a **vacuum**, and this is working **ill** to the neighbour; it is thus the **opposite** of love, and the man stands convicted of that which would lead another to death. This criminal neglect is thus viewed as hatred and murder, however **small** it may seem to us. If any man be without the motive of glorifying God in all, how can he be doing another no harm? There is a **great** harm, if this aim and motive is, not **all-comprehensive**.

It was this solemnizing view of sin which affected the teaching of the apostle (or rather, accompanied the teaching of the Holy Spirit through Paul), as to **holiness**. Each sin, however small, he owned as a captivity (Rom. 7. 23). The fact that self chooses does not make it **free** will; rather the fact that self chooses is the **reverse** of liberty. The only **liberty** is the will of God (John 8. 31-36). Sin in itself is essentially mortal and deadly (Jas. 1. 15): the **size** of the sin is **not** the primary thought. Anything that is of “me” and not subject to the will of God (Rom. 7. 18), is a rising up of the **judged self**, and hateful indeed. Every falling short is evil (Rom. 7. 19). The thought of **warring** in Rom. 7. 23 implies the same **conflict** as in Rom. 6. 13 (lit. “weapons”), and sets forth a spiritual alertness and determination

in the experience of the watchful believer, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

The sleepy Christian does not see the **beginnings** of evil in this manner. He does not know of the rebellion till the impatient word escapes the lips, but the saint walking with God perceives and judges the lack of communion with Him in the heart which **makes this iniquity possible**, and such perception is true growth in grace and Scriptural holiness. "By the law is the **Knowledge of Sin**" (Rom. 7. 7), and carelessness as to this may be a comfortable sleep (cf. Rom. 7. 8), but it is not **godliness**. Victory over the flesh is not gained by ignoring it. The flesh will conclude a truce, and attack less, if some of its wishes can be allowed, and many have mistaken this for victory. But a truce is **not** overcoming. Surely we see that the strain is too great for us, but "Greater is He That is in you than he that is in the world" (1. John 4. 4); and "Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15. 57), "If ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the law, (a) but the works of the flesh are manifest . . . (b) but the fruit of the Spirit is love." Mark this twofold effect—(a) the unveiling of the true character of the works of the flesh. They are **NOT** manifest unless we are led. And (b) unless we are led, where is the fruit of the Spirit? Beloved friends, let us take **GOD'S STANDPOINT**.

The Testimony of the Gospel.

MANY misuse truth to lull themselves to sleep. They ask, "Why does God not cause me to seek and do that which is right? But passages like Jonah 3 are given us to show what man **should** and **can** do. Rather than please a Christ-despising soul by mere wordy argument, we can often earnestly reply. "Till you do what you can do in repentance, we will not discuss what you **cannot** do. You are **accountable**, and God will judge you **according to your works**, and it is unfair to raise your objection **while** you persist in refusing to do what you can." Secondly, the man who knows anything of himself, and life's brevity, has no right glibly to call himself an **honest seeker**, **WHILE** he is not concerned **day and night** to find deliverance from the failures he himself sees. These thoughts are **negative**, but important to **stop** waste of time in vain jangling. Yet they should be uttered tenderly, and the **positive testimony** must be ever **primary**,—**CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED**, whether men hear or forbear. The natural man **loves to argue**, and feeds his evil pride on argument. The humble gospel witness holds forth the Word of life on Christ's authority (Matt. 28. 18), i.e., the Lord Jesus claims souls for whom He had travail of soul. We must not be side-tracked to "reasonings" **apart** from the testimony of God (contrast "reasoning **out** of the Scriptures"). "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but **WE PREACH CHRIST CRUCIFIED.**"

The End of Romans 11.

WONDERFUL, wonderful indeed, is the grace of God. **How** great is the sum of His thoughts (Ps. 40. 5, 139. 17), and who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord (Ps. 106. 2), Who alone doeth wondrous things? Gratitude befits every redeemed one, and, when we realize something of His ways, thanksgiving should overflow. Romans 11 beautifully sets forth—everything in Scripture is beautiful—the **plan of grace**. 'Tis not haphazard. Nothing can thwart God. His counsel shall stand. The setting aside of Israel is not a setting aside of the elect of Israel, hence it does not mean the failure of God's plan. On the contrary the Lord's grace is as manifest to individuals of Israel as ever it was,* and further the Divine arrangement leads now to the calling of the **fulness** of the Gentiles (25), and leads **up** to the fulness of Israel also in the future (12), and thus the **ground** of blessing—free mercy (31, 32) shines out evidently. There are not two ways of salvation. 'Tis mercy upon all—i.e. the all who are contemplated in the context. The stress is on the word "mercy" to explain the "all" or, in other words, there is not mercy to some and merit in others, but mercy to ALL.

Then the words of praise break forth, they **must** sound in all their delightful freshness and unchangeable joy. **God has a purpose**: He is **not** disappointed. Christ seemed weak when men took Him (2 Cor. 13. 4), but this apparent "weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. 1. 25), and thus the greater problem of all, the death of the Lord of glory, is the basis and keystone of salvation, and, in like manner, the **apparent** failure as to Israel is overruled to bring richest blessings, that henceforth God's people may trust Him when things seem against them, and **couple** with their praise the **presenting** of their bodies as a living sacrifice, in holy nonconformity with this age (Rom. 12. 1, 2).

The traveller stands on the mountain top, and beholds how the tiniest detail of surface turns the course of the rivulet. The **smallest** circumstance may change the course, and seem to decide whether the stream flows north or south, east or west, into seas **hundreds** of miles apart. But **behind** and above the trivialities is One Who appoints. Unless I see God's hand **behind** that boulder of rock, I am in utter confusion. The prosperity and problems of millions may depend, as it were, on the merest trifle—before men. So in the watershed of our lives. Often the smaller things are weightier than the larger, and the odd word spoken, the odd moment used for the Lord, the tract lovingly given, the seemingly tiny sin conquered—may effect the course of the after life. Never despise the **details**, but seek grace to see **God's** hand, and to trust Him in all.

*Rom. 11. 1 clearly sets forth the individual nature of eternal election, and distinguishes it from national and dispensational election to temporary privileges.

ELECTION AND REGENERATION.

ELECTING grace disqualifies none, hinders none, rejects none. Man is dead in sin and needs a new creation. Do we acknowledge this? If so, election cannot obstruct one. But for election, how many would be saved? Where is the sinner who turned to God in his own natural power?—If any reply, “No, but by the help of God:”—what do they really mean? Do they imply that there is a co-operation between God and the dead sinner, to produce a living work? Do they suggest that a certain amount of help is given, equally to all, and that they themselves believed just because God gave some help? Does not this ascribe some credit to oneself, and honour the unsaved man?

I have been blessed by the thought that a new creation (2 Cor. 5. 17) implies the setting aside of our natural life in the flesh. In baptism there is the typical burying. But the one who still thinks that he believed before he was born again assumes that the great work of all, which secures salvation, is produced by one not yet born again. But if such an one can thus work naturally does he need spiritual quickening at all? And, further, by grace we now judge ourselves as sinners apart from the new birth, but how can we condemn the one who produced faith with a view to the new birth? How can we condemn the part-cause of the decisive action that has brought us to eternal blessing? Ah, beloved friends there is only one answer. The faith of God's elect is itself part of a gracious salvation (Eph. 2. 8, Phil. 1. 29), and we believe because born again, though in our experience we enjoy the life from above, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, after conscious, humble faith. From God's standpoint grace is first, that praise may overflow. Let it be so—in daily life.

A LITTLE TALK ON CONSCIENCE.

IT is deeply important to have a tender heart (2 Chron. 34. 27), and any attempt to stifle part of its witness is most unwise—and sinful. A fear of grieving God is precious: it is true love. The privilege of a believer to know himself (1 Cor. 2. 11), and to search his ways, and test his motives, is very real. Any attempt to reason oneself “aside,” and to persuade oneself to do that which is “doubtful” (Rom. 14. 23), does not come from the Lord. The Holy Spirit lays a great stress on conscience, or that which we “know with” ourselves, as the term implies. The parallel word “conscious” illustrates this.* We do well to ponder the good conscience of 1 Tim. 1. 5, 19, Heb. 13. 18, 1 Pet. 3. 16, 21. and the pure conscience of 1 Tim. 3. 9, 2 Tim. 1. 3: see Heb. 9. 14, and the conscience void of offence of Acts 24. 16: yet we dare not boast (1 Cor. 4. 4).

We must remember that conscience is not perfect. It may be weak and defiled (1 Cor. 8. 7). The testimony of 1 Tim. 4. 2 and Tit. 1. 15 is solemnizing. Men can possess a seared conscience through deliberate stepping forward in evil. But this is not the

aspect in 1 Cor. 8. 7, 12. The weak conscience belongs to one who wants to please God. Conscience is not a Divine arbitrator even then.

Let us at once apply important lessons, "Whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16. 2.) leads up to Acts 26. 9, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." It is important to be saved, and gladly in submission to the law of God (Rom. 8. 7). An instructed conscience is needful. The words of God, not conscience, must be the touch-stone. If conscience is bowed before the Lord, and guided by His Spirit of truth it is well, and then we can see failures before others see them, and, in the Holy Spirit's power, have victory. But this must be our continual prayerful expectation. Conscience alone fails.

Some have "conscientiously" linked themselves with societies which are not on the Lord's lines, and others have "conscientiously" used unscriptural methods in gospel testimony. All this impresses upon us the need for a walk with God, and a continual separation from whatever grieves Him, that we may come to know what is His good and acceptable and perfect will (Rom. 12. 1, 2).

*1 Cor. 8. 7 gives this thought of "consciousness."

"If the Lord will," Gatherings to the Glory of God for city men and others Tuesdays, 6.30, 2, Minories, Aldgate (side door, 2nd floor), preceded by teatime conversation unto the Lord (Mal. 3. 16), or Greek and Hebrew, from 5. Christian brethren are earnestly encouraged to come straight from business, and to come expectantly. Personal prayerful preparation is important. Any are invited to propose topics for consideration.

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING MARCH :—

3rd.—Romans 7.

1. Romans 6 and 8 Linked.
2. Present Tenses and the Personal Note.
3. Difficulties (e.g. Verses 8, 14, 24, 25).
4. Contrasts, e.g. 1 Kings 21. 25, Perfectionism, etc.
5. A Deep Sense of Sin—a Great Need to-day (Isa. 6).

10th.—The Book of Psalms.

1. The Importance and Privilege of Praise (50, 23).
2. Christ in the Psalms.
3. The Five Books (1-41, 42-72, 73-89, 90-106, 107-150).
4. Temple services and the Present Dispensation. With Thoughts on Col. 3. 16.
5. Prophecies and Judgments : "As for God, His Way is Perfect."

17th.—Question Evening. (Questions welcome to help God's people, if possible, a week before.)

24th.—"The Marriage Supper of the Lamb" Rev. 19. 9.

1. Christ as the Bridegroom (John 3. 29).
2. "The Day of the Gladness of His Heart" (Song 3. 11).
3. Types and Prophecies (e.g. Gen. 2, Gen. 24, Parables).
4. Present Godliness in Separation from the Harlot of Rev. 17.
5. The Lord's Supper in View of His Coming.

Correspondence from any who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to obey His will, ever welcome. Also from any enquiring the way of His Salvation. Further literature and particulars of meetings gladly sent. And all, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4. 11). Meeting Room, 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7.

Telephone : Maryland 2196.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"His ways past finding out." Rom. 11. 33.

"All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep His covenant and His testimonies." Ps. 25. 10.

"Shew me now Thy way, that I may know Thee." Ex. 33. 13.

A Word of Introduction.

THE CONTINUAL privilege of pleasing God is very precious. "PUBLICITY" is not the glory of a saint. An open door BEFORE MEN is not the aim in view. The will of the Father is the joy of a child of God, the glory of HIS NAME is beyond all. To realize something of HIS way, and to know HIM, to walk with HIM and to please HIM,—how infinitely does this excel earth's highest honours and glories. And yet, are we sufficiently concerned when we leave this object, and become sidetracked? Are we bowed down before Him as we should be? The stress on repentance among believers is very precious. May it be our realization in the Spirit.

INSPIRATION IN ITS FULNESS.

"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3. 16). "The words of the Lord are pure words" (Ps. 12, 6). We would take a firm stand as to such statements, for surely, whatever may be said, it is evident that anything short of verbal inspiration of the original Scriptures would be imperfect inspiration, and would effectually prevent reliance upon any word. But such reliance is found again and again in the internal quotations of Scripture. Hence, if we refuse this fulness, we make the reasoning of the writers of Scripture unfounded, and criticize, though it may be unconsciously, their very truthfulness. As we

would accept, by grace, the Divine doctrine that dead sinners are quickened, so we unhesitatingly acknowledge *His work* in giving the words of truth. This is the real issue.—Do we recognize the completeness of *the work of God* in inspiration and salvation alike? Many who limit the sovereign work of the Spirit of God in one, naturally limit it in the other.

But so many who speak earnestly of inspiration seem to *set aside its value unconsciously*. This is, alas, the fact when we disobey His will. But not only thus. For example, a magazine emphasizing inspiration is before us, yet reads thus, "Paul, especially in Romans and Ephesians; shows at times an almost classic perfection; yet this is due to intellect and passion rather than to studied effort." The writer evidently intends that God used His servant's cultivated mind and enthusiasm, but the language is likely to be mistaken, and *the exclusion by silence* of the Holy Spirit is an error against which we would earnestly, though affectionately, protest. We cannot be too clear as to this. Another booklet reads thus, "But so truly human are the inspired writings that in the same epistle we find the apostle correcting a statement that he had made two verses before as to the number of Corinthians he had baptized." This seems to be quite an error. The critic may well think that those who emphasize inspiration avoid the real issue, under such circumstances. Undoubtedly the inspiration was of *the writings* and not of *the writers at all times*, hence their "*not knowing*," and its inspired record, may encourage us to realize more the fullness of grace (1 John 3. 2), but this is quite different. "We know not" is by no means a *mistake*, and thus the latter part of 1 Cor. 1. 16 is clear. The apostle did not keep a register of those he baptized.

Hence there is no difficulty in Paul's *non-remembrance*. Probably he *did* forget the household of Stephanas, but the Holy Spirit, on such occasions, has marvellously preserved from misstatement. The border-line of a mistake, without ever falling over the precipice, is one striking evidence of verbal inspiration. *And this is necessary*, OR the Scripture's claim to be *authoritative* must go. If one error be acknowledged, through unwise failure to notice the exact words, a thousand errors seem quite as likely. A remarkable illustration is found in Psalm 6. 5: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave (Sheol) who shall give thee thanks?" Careful perusal of similar passages with Rev. 20. 13 will make clear that "death" is named as to the *body*, "Sheol" as to the *soul*. Before life and incorruption were brought to light, through the gospel (2 Tim. 1. 10) the psalmist *might* have thought of unconsciousness in Sheol, but the Holy Spirit *prevents* such words. The *second* clause in the verse is a *question*, not a negative as the first. Thus later revelation is *not* wrongly anticipated, *nor* is it opposed. So in 1 Cor. 1. 14-16. There is a reason for "of you." Stephanas is

not said to be the firstfruits of *Corinth*, nor is he before us as such in *Acts 18*, but the firstfruits of the *district* of Achaia (1 Cor. 16. 15). Let us recognize God's *exact* words. More prayer and care will bring us more spiritual refreshment, and our humbled, grateful hearts will say again, "How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" (Ps. 119. 103). For let us ever remember that mere mental knowledge is *not* enough. We desire to be led by the Holy Spirit, and to *feed* on the words of truth, that we may glorify our Heavenly Father in a consistent Christian life of loving obedience.

**In the Name of the Lord Jesus
AND
In the Spirit of our God.**

1 Cor. 6. 11.

BY the grace of God there are those who can humbly, yet confidently, say that they have passed *out of death into life* (John 5. 24). Such a *miraculous* change has precious fruit, and it is right to expect *much* from a Christian—indwelt by *the Spirit of God* Himself. This needs love's firm emphasis. "They are only young believers, you must not expect too much from them," is a *dangerous* way of speaking. Often older ones thus excuse *themselves*: such language hardly speaks of real love to the Lord.

When there was the *altar*, there was the *laver*: where there is atonement, there is cleansing. So 1 Cor. 6. 11 declares "Ye are *sanctified*," as well as "Ye are *justified*." The *Name* of the Lord Jesus is called upon you, and thus you are accepted—manifestly accepted. But the work is ALSO "in the Spirit of our God" that there may be present and continued victory over past habits, and that which we broadly call "Temperament." "Such *were* some of you." NOT "Such *are* some of you." The theory that one may be saved, and yet bring forth *no fruit* is Scripturally denied. There is no hint in John 15 of any fruit-bearing branch becoming fruitless: the *good* ground in Matt. 13 at least brings forth *some* fruit—"thirtyfold." "Then shall *every* man have *praise* of God" (1 Cor. 4. 5): *all* at the Judgment Seat of Christ will have some evidences of grace. Do not lower the standard of godliness. "Such *were* some of you." "God be thanked, that ye *were* the servants of sin" (Rom. 6. 17). NOT "ye *are*." If any one is in Christ, there is a *new creation*" (2 Cor. 5. 17). Let us emphasize that the work in the Name of the Lord Jesus which redeemed ones have experienced is *also* in the Spirit of our God, Who has come to dwell (Gal. 4. 6). Herein is power for holiness—in daily life. The background details are the fullest test.

The Weather Which God Has Sent, and The Weather Misused.

IT is a joy for a child of God to know, amid all, that by the time anything reaches him, it is a messenger from his Father. Thus Paul viewed even the thorn in the flesh. Hence we should praise God for the weather, however trying or changeable it may be. Just a word on several ways in which it is easy to sin in connexion with the weather. Those who love the Lord surely want to please Him in details!

First, delay in rising because it is cold, and careless staying away from Scriptural gatherings must be judged before Him.

Secondly, let us avoid many expressions as "bad weather," and others which are yet more manifestly against His will.

Thirdly, we should not think too much of the weather, and our feelings, so that we lose fellowship with Him, and have an under-current of complaint.

Fourthly, it is important not to talk a great deal about the weather: we do not wish to waste words, but to speak to God's glory.

Fifthly, "trying" weather is not being sanctified in our experience unless we remember lovingly, sympathetically, and prayerfully, those who are unwell.

May everything be used in our daily life unto the praise of Him Whose Name we bear. A blood-bought one has great privileges, to be enjoyed in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Witness is in little things.

"BOUGHT WITH A PRICE."

1 Cor. 6. 20 ; 7.23.

THANKS be unto God for this, and the price was priceless—"the precious blood of Christ." Who can value this enough? "Bought with a price," here is my security: the Lord will not lose His purchase. "Bought with a price," here is my privilege: He bought me because He loved me, and to make me His as a willing follower. "Bought with a price," here is the casting out of my pride: I *needed* buying. The work was not self's work. "Bought with a price," here is the answer to the "independence" of the flesh, I *am* not my own (1 Cor. 6. 19).

"Bought with a price," here is a call to grateful devotedness: "Paul a bondservant of Jesus Christ," and I may be one too. "Bought with a price," here is my contrast with the world: I do not belong to it, and the evil one has no rights against me. "Bought with a price," here is my glory. Royal jewels are esteemed, kingly appointments are welcomed: can I ever be ashamed of my more-than-royal Master? O to love Him more.

Translation unto the Lord's Glory.*

IT is a solemn privilege to translate the Scriptures, and thus to seek, humbly, and prayerfully, to represent *His will* to those who are without this precious written testimony. (How we should miss it!)

At the outset we need to remember the need for close fellowship with the Lord. By this I do not only mean prayer about translation-work in *general* and guidance as to *special* passages, but the deeper, continued *communion and harmony* with the Lord Himself—to become *used to looking* at things from His standpoint. Thus we need to be *led* by the Spirit in daily details. This is not a *jerking* emotion, but a glad willingness for our Father's will.

As to "helps," I need hardly say that prayerful use of the *original* Hebrew and Greek is primary, and if a dear man in foreign lands does not know these, (God has used many such), he may be able to receive help or revision from one who has this advantage, and who also seeks to walk with God. Even one unacquainted with the new language to be used may advise—especially if the *proposed* translation of any verse be literally rendered into his own tongue.

But let everything be with prayer and thanksgiving, and in deep humility. "The meek will He guide in judgment" is a current "exceeding great and precious promise," and the Holy Spirit indwells, and one may pray fervently for the sake of the Lord's own, that they may not be misled. To plead *His Name and glory* is a powerful privilege.

COLD, AND THE COLD.

(a) If it is *very* cold and I am well, I seek to be *more* active to counteract the surroundings. Thus let it be spiritually. Love's activity is well-pleasing to the Lord. Love does not build on theories, but delights in personal *fellowship* and spiritual *obedience*.

(b) If it is cold, and I am cold, and *do not bestir myself*, the trouble increases. So is it often in the Christian life: thus *complaint* sets in.

(c) But it may be, I have *a cold*. This is a step *beyond being cold*, it implies a condition that has become *permanent*. So is it with many in the daily walk. Then I find it hard to get warm, even if circumstances become helpful. "I have an inward cold" says one: is it thus with any of us spiritually? If so, let us confess our sins without delay. An inworking of grace, and not merely helpful environment, is needed. Isaiah 57. 15 tells of reviving.

* Notes in reply to a letter.

(d) Beyond having a cold, I may, physically, lose vital energy. "They covered (David) with clothes, but he gat no heat" (1 Kings 1. 1). It is not possible for eternal life to die, but a child of God may become a spiritual invalid. Neglect of the words of heavenly food, and of prayerful communion, and of love's prompt obedience, may be the cause. "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord," beloved friends.

(e) Thus *the* cold around does *not* hurt us, unless we yield to it, or are physically weak. So is it *spiritually*. Do not be afraid of circumstances, do not fear trials (1 Cor. 10. 13), but fear a condition of *coldness*. "The love of many shall wax *cold*." Your need, and mine, is nearness to the flame of the Lord's love (Song 8. 6), and the enjoyed inworking of the Holy Spirit. Earthly food is measured by men in accord with calories—*heating* power is thus before us. Even so is it with our *heavenly* food, and our Heavenly Father never stints His children, or puts them on short rations (Ps. 119. 103, Jer. 15. 16).

"The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh."

James, 5. 8.

HE is coming. I do not look merely for "it" but for Him. No "it" could save me, and no "it" can fill my heart's longings. "To wait for His Son from heaven," "We look for the Saviour" (1 Thess. 1. 10, Phil. 3. 20). Not only is He a PERSON, not only is His Coming PERSONAL, but He is One Whom I now know as "Lord." He has a right to me, and I expect to see my Lord. His names and titles of dignity awaken both love and obedience, in the Spirit. Ah, obedience *is* love; they are not distinct. His Coming "has drawn near," for *that* is the meaning of the word used. And so I am to "live . . . looking for that blessed Hope" (Tit. 2. 12, 13). I must not say,—I do not want to say, "My Lord delayeth His Coming." "Behold I come quickly," "Surely I come quickly," this is His *repeated* word of *love*. He is coming, and I love to expect Him in my life time. Let me not settle down in earthly affairs, and live as if this were my rest. Nay, He is coming. This is revealed for the stablishing of the heart as James 5. 8 shows. Discouragements are met with the thought "He is coming." Trials seem lighter when we remember He is coming. It is a privilege to bear, to lose, to have rejection on His account, for He is coming, and coming SOON. The Holy Spirit never, never, NEVER takes our mind off the Coming of Christ. "The Spirit, and the Bride say, Come." Beloved friends, is "that blessed Hope" our hope in business life and in home details, or only when we sing hymns at the meeting room? Let our hearts be real, and let us ever join in the last prayer of Scripture, "Come, Lord Jesus."

“The Smallest Matters.”

1 Cor. 6. 2.

IT is *easy* to take a wrong perspective. The things of earth are *near* and seem large. But the Holy Spirit regards them all as the “smallest” matters. To lose and suffer for Christ in this world—how little this matters (1 Cor. 6. 7). Our *light* affliction is but *for a moment* (2 Cor. 4. 18). If we have the spoiling of our goods, can we not take it *joyfully*?—Heb. 10. 34. Our *true* inheritance is *in heaven*. No moth nor rust can corrupt there (Matt. 6. 19, contrast Jas. 5. 2). Well may Col. 3. 1, 2 sound in our ears to-day. “The *smallest* matters,”—but we fret and fume over them, and want “this” or “that,” and are too cowardly to be quite *UNlike* the world. “*Lust*” is not indulged, but “*desires*” are those of self. *Outward* evils are judged, but *natural* tendencies are approved. “Large” sins are condemned, but actions which are not considered sins by most are condoned, and a believer is not expected to be *full* of love to Christ. *Not expected!* Alas, we lower our true peace every day we lower the standard of every day holiness. And the zeal of God’s house does not consume us. We are *unlike* Christ.

The privileges of pleasing God are real *in the workshop and kitchen* as well as on the platform. “I want to go *into* Christian work” says one. You *ought to be in it already* if you are saved. “None of us liveth to himself.” But there is no room for boasting. “When ye shall have done all those things which are *commanded* you, say, We are *unprofitable* servants” (Luke 17. 10). The *greatest* opportunities now are but stepping stones to wondrous service “in that Day.” “He that is faithful in THAT WHICH IS LEAST IS faithful also in much.” But the *converse* is solemnly true, “And he that is unjust *in the least* is unjust also in much” (Luke 16. 10). Hence the solemn *question* of Luke 16. 11. I will not *write* it: *will you* not turn to the Scripture and *ponder it* in the light of the Judgment Seat of Christ?

The new creation has a rule of life (Gal. 6. 15, 16). Salvation from law does *not* make us lawless. If we are not under the law, because of mercy, we are *not* saved to be disobedient. Why is it we tell a child to keep to the pavement, and do not give the same instruction to an adult? Is it in order that the adult may be careless? Nay! And God’s *removal* of ceremonial guide posts is not to make us forgetful of Him. And there are other principles which are *not removed*. Why do we tell a child not to put his finger in the fire, and do not speak thus to one grown up? Is it because the principle has *gone*, or because the principle has been transferred from *outside* to *inside*? Is not this the glory of the new covenant as Jer. 31. 33 shows?

"IF THE LORD WILL,"

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SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING APRIL, 1925:--

7th.—John 6.

1. Christ's Miracles of Food: and, The Rejection of a Request for Further Meals.
2. The Father's Will, Gift, and Drawing.
3. "The Last Day"
4. The Bread of Life: Verse 53 with Regard to Ritualism.
5. Mournful at a Hard Saying. Note 1 Cor. 1. 22, 23.

14th.—Acts 2, and A New Dispensation.

1. "The Day of Pentecost Fulfilled," and a "New Meal Offering (Lev. 23. 16). The Work of the Holy Spirit.
2. "I WILL Build My Church" (Matt. 16. 18; Heb. 2. 12-14).
3. Thoughts on Gal. 2 (Gospel of the Uncircumcision, etc).
4. Is There (as Some Maintain) A Break of Dispensation before the "Prison Epistles?" Notes on Acts 28. 29, 30, 31, on The Gospel of the Grace of God, and the Gospel of the Kingdom.

21st.—Question Evening.

(Questions welcome to help God's people, if possible, a week before).

28th.—Numbers 19, Heb. 9. 12-14.

1. Eternal Redemption and A Purged Conscience.
2. If a Believer Sins—The Advocacy of Christ, the Blood, and the Water.
3. Consciousness of Sin, and a Tender Conscience.
4. Sins in Relation to the Judgment Seat of Christ.

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels: and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3. 17.

A Word of Introduction.

BY the grace of God we can again tell of HIS LOVE, AND HIS WILL. It is a privilege so to do anything for Him. And let "service" be the TRUE description, i.e. "THE LORD'S work" as well as FOR Him,—even OF Him, and IN Him (1 Cor. 15. 58). This is possible: this is appointed. How blessed to look at things from GOD'S STANDPOINT, and simply to desire to please HIM. And why is this possible? Human strength is not the motive power. "Of THINE OWN have we given Thee." Because of grace we can servc. Because God spared not His own Son, He will freely with Him give all things, and thus the redeemed can labour, with devotion to their Lord, in the Holy Spirit, until they soon see Him Who intercedes for them—see Him face to face! How blessed the foundation, the path, and the goal. And all is real. An every-day life unto the Lord should be full of HIS JOY.

A MEMORY FOR CHRIST.

"BRINGING iniquity to remembrance" (Num. 5. 15, Ezek 21. 23, 29. 16) is an expression of Scripture to awaken solemn thoughts. "A remembrance again of sins every year" is the Holy Spirit's description of the day of atonement with its sacrifices among Israel. The glorious contrast, in the finished work of Christ is,— "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8. 12, 10. 17), for "by one offering He hath

perfected for ever them that are being sanctified" (Heb. 10. 14). When the work of Christ is applied to Israel, "the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none" (Jer. 50. 20). God means exactly what He says when He declares, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions" (Isa. 44. 22). The *completeness* of salvation shines out in the words, "Thou wilt cast *all* their sins into the depths of the sea" (Mic. 7. 19). There are no half-measures in the finished work of Christ. Reader, is this redemption *your* foundation and *your* joy?

Thus we reach the contrasted aspect. Do we *remember* enough the precious deliverance whereby our sins are, from the standpoint of law, * *remembered no more*? Our beloved Lord evidently intended much beyond the usual thought when He said, "This do *with a view to My remembrance*." We hear the expressions, "They gather to remember the Lord," and "Remembering the Lord *in* the breaking of bread," and none would diminish the privilege of remembering Him *then*, whenever the Lord's own way has been opened, for a *Scriptural* assembly, in answer to fervent prayer, to do "THIS" *Scripturally*. But this thought is *too limited*. As the food I eat is not only, or primarily, for *immediate* joy, but for *subsequent* life, so is it spiritually. God has appointed *one typical meal*, only one. It pictures Christ, no one else. 'Tis not, "Christ *and . . . !*" And thus *all* our strength depends on Him. He is to be the *Remembered One* of the whole week. "*With a view to MY REMEMBRANCE*." How often He is forgotten. Herein is the root of so much *daily-life* failure (Jer. 2. 32). Psalm 30. 4 shows the effect of holy remembrance, and Malachi 3. 16 comes to mind. We want a memory for Christ *when* temptation comes. How can we dishonour Him? We want a memory for Christ *when* business advantages try to rob us of time for Him. How can we neglect Him, Who gave *Himself* for us? We want a memory for Christ *when* depression would settle upon us. How can we forget Him, Who *ever* liveth to make intercession, and Who will *soon* come again to receive us unto Himself? Stirred up minds *with godly remembrance* will be blest indeed in the common round and trivial task. "Ye have forgotten" is God's own explanation of so much failure. It is impossible to continue in self's way *while* remembering Christ and His finished work. The Holy Spirit leads thereby to victory, and a fresh experience of *daily* power. A memory for Christ is a holy privilege, at all times, and not only one day a week. Let us seek this to-day, and for ever.

You are waiting for something remarkable. Do that which God enables to-day, in His love and strength, and it will be remarkable. Estimate things not from man's standpoint, but from His.

* Not from the standpoint of personal humiliation (1 Tim. 1. 13-16), nor of gracious chastisement (2 Sam. 12. 14).

“If They Were All One Member, Where Were The Body?” 1 Cor. 12. 19.

WHAT confusion there would be if every one chose for himself! The body has *one* life and object, believers have one life and *should* have one doctrine and aim, but harmonious *diversities of service*. These are not contradictions. To misuse this verse to allow of different opinions and denominations is a serious *sin*. The thought of a body is perfect *harmony*, with absence of *envious* interference. No part of the body should do that which *hinders* or *obstructs* another part. Different beliefs are *contraries*: different acts of service unto the Lord are complementaries.* But this thought of loving co-operation, through “joints and bands” (Col. 2. 19), does not mean that we are guided of the Lord individually, apart from the help of one another. Eph. 4. 11, 12 would witness against this error. And the whole figure of the body encourages us to see that some believers have an appointed influence as to others. Some “joints of the supply” (Eph. 4. 16) are the *means* of instruction to others, though the Lord *alone* is exalted, and the feeblest member is *necessary*. Thus are we drawn from schism, and every pendulum-swing of despondency and self-decision, to enjoy His loving will in communion with Himself.

“Is It Therefore Not of the Body?”†

1 Cor., 12. 15, 16.

THE foot may “say,” the ear may “say,” but the *words* do not alter *facts*. *The Lord* has appointed. He has *placed* each one. Cf. John 15. 16 lit; Eph. 4. 16. It is a privilege to delight in *His* will. How often we undervalue *His* arrangement, and wish to do something else. We wish to be something different from that which He has marked out. But this is a mistake (1 Cor. 12. 18, John 15. 16). Cleanness is pleasing Him, not publicity.

The foot may “say”—“I am not the hand.” *But let the foot walk*. While the foot is *talking* about itself, there is more than a danger. We often omit privileges by semi-complaining. We are leaving our sphere of privilege, to discuss some one else’s.

“I am not.” It is well to be humble, but not well perpetually to speak of this. If we continually remark we do not know *this* and

* A note in passing, lest any misread this word: *earnestly* would the writer warn himself and others against affable complimenting: it is painful to read of the exaltation of MAN, and semi-flatteries of to-day: it is WELL to encourage and to testify, e.g. 2 Cor. 8. 23, 3 John 12, but let us be prayerful and careful. God hates words that transgress (Prov. 27. 14).

† Or, “It is not therefore not of the body”: the same thought in large measure. The Holy Spirit uses wondrous words, hence difficulty of full translation.

cannot do *that*, and so forth, we attract attention to ourselves. But we are not bidden to draw the minds of others to our emptiness any more than to our supposed fulness, but, contrariwise, to the Lord, Who is willing to use *clean* emptiness, and to fill His people with His fulness. The Holy Spirit shows that self should be kept in the background, even self's *negatives*, and "*cannot's*." Christ is to be exalted !

A Wrong Method, & Its Apparent Success.

**“That Your Faith should NOT STAND
IN THE WISDOM OF MEN, but in the
Power of God.”** **1 Cor. 2. 5.**

THE Testimony of the Holy Spirit through Paul is plain. There is a faith which stands in “the wisdom of men.” It accepts God's teaching, and is accurate *doctrinally*. But it is not a *living* faith from above. The apostle was quite conscious that he *could* win success by changed methods, and those methods *not manifest evil!* His speech and preaching, if with persuasive words of man's wisdom, would have brought many to own Christ, but he *denied* himself this “opportunity.” The mesmeric power of a personality, the enthusiasm of a meeting, the forcible flow of language of “a gifted speaker” may win many to-day, and the preacher may be unconscious of the real result. “Converts” will profess Christ's Name earnestly, *but . . . !* This is the key to much of the ruin around. Seemingly successful missions are held, those who pass through enquiry rooms are counted and registered, but if the results claimed were permanent, London would be a different city. Many a man finds himself the only child of God in office or factory. Numbers *have* professed Christ, but . . . ! Wrong methods are used, and the *humbling* testimony of the cross of Christ is neutralized (1 Cor. 1. 17). Men accept, with human affection, the attractive aspects of the gospel, yet know nothing of the *other parts* of the *same* gospel, which only appeal to a soul in whom God is working. *Faith* is found, but it is not spiritual. The hearer is not a conscious hypocrite by any means. He thinks he believes : he accepts the teaching set forth, but the rejected gospel of the rejected Lord is adulterated, and the *true* meaning of salvation from oneself hidden. The “goodliness” of the *flesh* (Isa. 40. 6) likes *part* of the gospel : that *part* is preached, that *part* is believed, and the preacher and hearer are *satisfied*, but there is no building for eternity. Ah, beloved friends, shall we share in this deluding attraction, or humbly raise a testimony, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, for the still despised gospel of the *grace* of God, with its accompaniment of simple, unworldly discipleship ?

“AND THERE WAS A GREAT CRY IN EGYPT.” Ex. 12. 30.*

HOW different was the shout of Joshua 6. 20 when Jericho's walls crumbled, and the shout of Ezra 3. 11 when the temple foundations were laid. *Why* was there a great cry in Egypt? *You* know the reason. *I* know the reason. One word answers—D-E-A-T-H. A solemn word,—D-E-A-T-H. We become *too used to death*. We have seen placards of thousands killed in battle. Hospitals and funerals and cemeteries are before our eyes. But *what* is D-E-A-T-H? It is *not* natural, or rather it *was* not natural. It has come into this world,—through SIN. “There was not a house in Egypt where there was not one dead.” The result of sin.

Someone was dead in each house. But the Lord paused over the houses of the children of Israel, and delivered them by the death of another, not by their own righteousness. The wondrous words of Exodus 12. 27 were given to help *faith* BEFORE the deliverance. God kept His word, and He is the Same God of grace to-day. But there was *none other* shelter.

Earlier in the history, “He that feared the Word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses.” *Then* there was a *temporary* blessing to many, but *now* there was no such escape. The *only* shelter was the blood. The *only* blood was the blood of the Passover. The *only* Passover was the one which God had appointed. And so is it to-day.

Soon there will be another great cry. The wrath of God will fall. There will be *more than one dead* in each house. The judgment of God never misses its mark. But, in wondrous love, He waits now to save sinners (Isa. 30. 18), and, as He is the Same He still saves by precious blood. He did *not* seek the blood of animals *for the sake of their blood* (Ps. 50. 13). There must be a *greater reason*, and it is this:—S-I-N has brought D-E-A-T-H, and we all need the DEATH of Another, even of a Righteous One, of Whom the Hebrew Scriptures themselves plainly say, “*HE BARE THE SIN OF MANY*” (Isaiah 53. 12). Here is the key to Exodus 34. 5-7:—
Bearing OR visiting iniquity. It MUST be one or the other. Ah, dear reader, which is it for you?

IF you look to *yourself*—ען עקר.‡

IF you look to *God's Messiah, God's Provided Passover*, you will rejoice in His great salvation, and be brought out to understand the precious Hebrew words ען עקר.§ The Lord grant it may be so, for some of Israel, EVEN TO-DAY.

* Reprinted as a leaflet, for prayerful circulation among Israel.

‡ Visiting iniquity.

§ Bearing iniquity.

“HE THREATENED NOT.”

1 Pet 2. 23.

IT is comparatively easy for some of us to keep from *striking* those who attack. And victory over bitter *words* is often gained. But *a little threatening* comes in, e.g. “If you do that, I shall have to see a policeman,” or “I think I must speak to your employer about you”: “If you do that again, then I don’t know what I shall do to you”: “You had better be careful, or : . . .” “*When He suffered, He threatened not*” provides a wonderful contrast with the attitude which underlies many of these expressions.* Such love, patience, meekness, tenderness. Oh how wondrous to be among the called of Jesus Christ, and privileged to represent Him. Yes, that is our privilege. It is not a burden, not a mere duty, but a joyous privilege.

I do not mean that we are not to *warn*. “Thou shalt hear the word at My mouth, and *warn* them from Me” (Ezek. 33. 7). It is unkind *not* to warn. Children should be lovingly reproved (note 1 Kings 1. 6). The unsaved should be lovingly told of surely coming judgments. But we must not have the *spirit* of threatening, we must not suggest earthly punishments, of an un-dispensational character, or that we *wish* anything unkindly. A parent cannot rightly correct a child while angry. *We must ever love*. “Judgment” is not committed to our charge. The precious words ring in our ears, “Give place unto (*the*) wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine; I *will* repay, saith the Lord” (Rom. 12. 19). It is for us not to resist, but to be patient and long-suffering *unto* the Coming of the Lord (Jas. 5. 6-8). Shall we not take this our privilege of representing Him in Whom we have received free and unmerited grace?

“THEY HAVE RECEIVED.”

John 17. 8.

THE Lord Jesus was speaking of *His words*, and declared that His beloved people had received them even as they received *Him* (John 1. 12). Here we have a deeply important test. “Modernism” has *no room* for this *unqualified* and *unrestricted acceptance of Christ’s word*, even as there was no room for Him in the inn. But those who have no room for His words, and who do not “know surely” His glory, find *no room* in the company that owns His Name. They are *not reckoned* among the people of John 17. Here is the Lord’s line of cleavage. Ah,

* Many of them, moreover, are untrue. A parent will often threaten a child without any thought of carrying out. An *untrue* deterrent is, indeed, the reverse of true rebuke, and very grievous to God.

beloved friends, emphasize His words. All the criticisms of to-day levelled against Him, and His Words, should *pain* our hearts. And it is not enough to be controversially "sound." "Let *my heart* be sound in Thy statutes ; that I be not ashamed" (Psalm 119. 80). The words of the Lord Jesus still ring out, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of *Me and of My Words* in this adulterous and sinful generation ; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8. 38), "If a man love *Me*, he will keep *My Words*" (John 14. 23).

"Or Who Hath Been His Counsellor?"

Rom. 11. 34.

THE plan of God is not human, it is *superhuman* throughout. It glorifies *Him* in its majesty. The grandeur of the Divine dispensations, harmonized among seeming contrasts, must remind of the wonders of nature. *God is over both.*

"Who hath been His counsellor?" We did not ask for salvation. Free grace shines out. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift. From covenant election to eternal glory everything is of Him and honours *Him*, and if our life fails to realize this we are robbing *Him*. The praise of saved ones should overflow in the Holy Spirit.

Yet vain *man* would be wise, and *men* would believe a theory of his own as to salvation. This theory puts freewill on the throne. God is owned as doing *much, very much*, but the critical *decision* is held to rest with *man*, and a *man's* choice is viewed as the *final* factor. Faith is humanized, and the sinner is regarded as securing the "offered" salvation *before* he is born from above. The devil did not ask the Lord Jesus to worship him a thousand times, nor were a hundred acts of defiance suggested in Eden. 'Tis not the *size* of a sin, but the *principle* of *self on the throne* against which we would war. We may talk of grace and atonement, but if *spiritual* faith is a *natural* product, or a *compound* of grace and the sinner's effort, grace is no more grace. "Works" have come in wrongly, as root instead of fruit, and free-will is on the throne. *But no saved one will dare to think or speak thus when humbly on his knees, and the "theology" which vanishes in the sanctuary may well be set aside.* Let us not criticize the majesty of grace. Worship is God's will, and how definitely it differs from replying against Him! Love to Him is a sanctuary-love.

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5th.—The Greatness of God.

1. In Nature, Job 38.
2. In Grace, Eph. 2. 4, Deut. 9. 26.
3. In Judgment, Ps. 90. 11.
4. His Condescension, and His People's Right Attitude.
5. Our Need *To-day*, Jer. 32. 19, 27.

12th.—Growing Up Into Christ In All Things, Eph. 4. 15.

1. Love *and* Light;—Love in the Truth (2 John).
2. Doctrine *and* Practice.
3. The Personal *and* the Collective.
4. "Onesidedness," and the Holy Spirit's Enabling of Victory.
5. A Plea for the Lord's "Whatsoever," John 15. 14.

19th.—Question Evening.

(Questions welcome to help God's people, if possible, a week before).

26th.—Revelation 7.

1. The *First* View of a Heavenly Multitude, and Heavenly Patriotism
2. The Glory of the Lord Jesus as the *Lamb*.
3. "*One* of the Elders."
4. Thoughts on the Lord's Dealings with Israel (1—8).
5. Occupation in Glory (12, 15, 17).

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found." Isa. 55. 6.

"I sought Him, but I found Him not." Song 3. 1.

"Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." Jer. 29. 13.

A Word of Introduction.

IT is a privilege to realize that God has saved His people FOR HIMSELF. They are set apart for Him. The unsaved soul brought to salvation is granted the joy of a personal relation to the Lord, and the experience of it. And the work of growth in grace is seeking HIM and HIS will. How often we forget this IN ITS FULNESS. We cannot GROW IN GRACE apart from Him. We cannot have spiritual profit if we are occupied with our work or ourselves, or even with a mental knowledge of the truth. There must be spiritual fellowship with the Lord Himself. That believers may encourage one another in His path, and in whole heartedness, are these pages sent forth. Thus will there be a concern for souls, and, embracing all, a concern for God's glory.

SERVANT or SON.

MOSESES was graciously appointed as a servant (Heb. 3. 5). Christ is marked out as Son, and abideth ever as Possessor, —it is *His* house (Heb. 3. 6). How precious this illustrates John 8. 35 : though *there* we have the contrasted "servant" (the servant of sin, 34).

Further, our hearts call to mind Romans 8. 15 (bondage, bondservice), and Heb. 2. 10, *with* 2. 15. Gal. 4. 1-6, helps our hearts and minds. In the light of all these verses, Mal. 3. 17 has

its message of grace. He, Who *alone* had a right to glory, came *not* to be spared, because He *would* die for sinners (Rom. 8. 32). And our sonship by His death does not remove service ; it gives a *different* aspect, as Phil. 2. 22 reminds us,—and how precious that aspect (so John 15. 15—leading up to the *fuller* service of verse 20). Prov. 17. 2 presents another solemn contrast. Christ was the Glorious One, without *defect*, THROUGHOUT. Indeed, Phil. 2, which we have already noticed, prepares for verse 22 in verses 6, 7. Thus we have acceptance in Him ; not as in Prov. 29. 21, according to the arrangements of men.

We have spoken of the old-time saints, as receiving the Spirit of servitude, and have referred to God's beloved servant Moses (Jos. 1. 1, 2). But Matt. 16. 18 with Heb. 2. 15, and 12. 23 would remind us that they are *now* brought to the same privilege that we have "in Christ," as to their *spirits*, and the "fulness," beyond the "earnest," in the redemption of the body, will be *ours* and *theirs* (Heb. 11. 40), when our beloved Lord comes back. How can we hold back from saying, "Praise be unto Him!" How draw back from the devoted love and service of *sonship* in the Spirit?

"BECAUSE YE ARE SONS."

GALATIANS 4. 6 sets forth a glorious position of privilege, and the *nature* of the indwelling and work of the Holy Spirit. The believer is not only quickened by the Spirit. *After quickening* "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." The *two* languages here used show the true privileges of Jewish and Gentile believers *together*, one in Christ. *Assurance* of salvation, and prayer according to assurance, and its privileges, will glorify God.* He has not appointed a groping in the dark.

"Because ye are sons": the words ring out with their precious comfort, and encouragement. There is no mere "may be." "Ye are sons." God's present tenses are perfect, and believers should possess their possessions, and the cry "Abba Father" involves a fulness of blessing. May we not enter into the Holy Spirit's "because" *much more*? "Because" we are "sons," should we not read our Father's will prayerfully? "Because" we are "sons," should we not delight in His purpose? "Because" we are "sons," should we not love one another? "Because" we are "sons," should we not manifest a family likeness, and show the holy *dignity* of those saved by the precious blood of Christ? "Because" we are "sons," should we not look, with bright hope, for our Lord's Coming?

* The path of disobedience *mars* assurance. The right enjoyment is conditional on walking in the light (1 John 1, 7, 3. 14).

The Circulation of the Scriptures.

THE *spread* of God's truth is very precious. John 20. 31 shows *His* use of the written words. But we must not think that this is all. If we pass on the Scriptures, yet *omit* to hear God's voice ourselves, and *omit* obedience, what is the fruit in our own lives? Do we not rather *dishonour* His Name? Again, are we sufficiently *prayerful* as to translators and translations? It is sad to mislead any: we thank God for His many overrulings, but *more prayer* is needed. Nor would we be occupied with His use of the written testimony and forget His loving stress on men of God equipped to witness (Rom. 10. 15, 2 Tim. 2. 1),—with a godly *walk*, "feet" that are "beautiful" in daily life. If we send out Bibles, and help to pay for "Higher Critical Missionaries," how do we stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ? We do not neglect work because part of it does not have any fruit (Eccl. 11. 6, Isa. 49. 4, Matt. 13. 4-7), but it is our privilege to *follow up* the distribution *with prayer*, in the Holy Spirit. Indeed, *every* action should be linked with many other actions, that the *whole* life may be unto the Lord, and thus will He be glorified.

Again let us be spiritually concerned for much prayerful Bible study. Many are enthusiastic that *others* should have the Scriptures, while *they* themselves have not regularly read through the whole, nor even sought so to do. Nor do they resolutely seek daily food therefrom, morning by morning. Oh for spiritual reality!

"At That Day shall a Man Look to His Maker." Isa. 17. 7.

HERE we have a holy contrast with Isaiah 22. 11. The characteristic of "that Day" will be *knowing* and acknowledging the Lord (Jer. 31. 34). And, beloved friends, if we are His, we should anticipate this attitude to-day. *Everything* is to lead us to the Lord. Every circumstance, *whether pleasant or unpleasant*, is to remind of Him. Trials call us to take stock—spiritually. If we hesitate, we misuse them. The message of Lam. 3. 40, 41 still needs loving emphasis. How different the attitude of Israel in the saddening words, "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones: the sycomores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars" (Isa. 9. 10, *cf.* Amos 4. 6, 8, 9, 10; 11). Happy is the man whom the Lord chasteneth (Ps. 94. 12), and who humbly learns the lessons aright, asking as to everything, whether joyous or grievous, "What is my Father's loving lesson for me?"

“Ye Desire *AGAIN* to be in Bondage.”

Gal. 4. 9.

THERE are *two* words which are rendered “again” in this one verse. We cannot translate “again, again.” Rather should we remember that one of them literally means “from above” (as in John 3. 3), and thus “Ye desire again to be in servitude *from above.*” The servitude of old-time saints was appointed (Gal. 4. 2, Heb. 2. 15). But redeemed ones now “have not received the Spirit of servitude *again* to fear” (Rom. 8. 15). Hence the Galatians wished to put themselves *back* to another dispensation. “Days and months, and times, and years” belonged to the period before Christ. But if believers should wish to re-establish Jewish feasts to-day, they would sin against God. That which is not God’s purpose *now* has become “according to the commandments and doctrines of men” (Col. 2. 22 with 16). To re-instate the seventh day, to arrange a Jewish-Christian assembly, to erect elaborate buildings for worship, to ordain an earthly priesthood, to introduce musical instruments in worship, to approve of Christians taking part in warfare, to enter into vows and oaths—all these things are *undispensational*, and thus *against* the mind of God. Some of His people see this as to some matters, but hesitate in others. And when we pray for an all-round *realization* of His will, in the Spirit, how we need to pray for victory over the subtle contrast-error ; for some have the swing of the pendulum, and deny the commands and privileges connected with baptism, deny the Lord’s Supper and the Lord’s Day, which are graciously given from above, and fitted for a people viewed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

“I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion.”

“He shall Come unto Us as the Rain.”

Hos. 5. 14 ; 6. 3.*

A VAST difference, but the glory of the Lord shines out in *both* attitudes. He tears, AND He heals : He smites AND He binds up, He scatters AND He gathers (Hos. 6. 1, Deut. 32. 39, Jer. 31. 10). The *grace* of God is ever on a *background* of righteousness, as well as the *basis* of righteousness. Thus He Himself causes the sinner to *feel* heart-broken, and then heals the broken in heart. The man going down to Jericho is first wounded and stripped : 'tis then the Good Samaritan arrives, and is welcome. John the Baptist’s ministry led to the unveiling of grace.

This Divine doctrine is attacked by a human theory. *Salvation by emotion* is the belief of many, and as pleasurable emotions are

* Mark contrasted order in Micah 6. 7, 8, concerning Israel’s future.

more popular than painful, the gospel is adulterated and preached amusingly. Men profess Christ's Name without any *deep* work. The rocky ground hearer is commoner than we realize. How different is the gospel of the *grace* of God. The Lord Jesus came to call *sinners*, came to seek and save the *lost*. The HUNGRY are *filled* with good things, the *thirsty* are welcomed to the waters, "He that hath no money" receives the gift, and the *wicked* are bidden to forsake their way. The *poor, maimed, halt, blind* are the ones brought in (Luke 14. 21). There is often *no room* for a deep work to-day. Many *profess* salvation who have never been *lost*, IN THEIR EXPERIENCE. The ninety and nine "just persons" are not repelled. "I have always liked good things" is the belief of many: they "*glide*" into *profession* and think it is *salvation*, but the words of Luke 6. 49 have a clarion warning,— "without a foundation." How blessed to know *grace reigning through righteousness*, and to see the *need* for the death of Christ. Yes, the necessity for that death! The Holy Spirit thus glorifies Him. A shallow conception of sin is not only ruinous as to deep experience, and concern, in the Holy Spirit, for holiness, and for hatred of sin, after conversion, but it also tends to the setting aside of *God's* doctrine that His Beloved Son bore *wrath* for the guilty. Thus *all* error has many fruits, and the whole building of the truth is weakened:—*the leaven works*. May our Heavenly Father enable a return to the glorious gospel in belief and experience alike! Thus shall we please Him, and walk in the Spirit.

DEVICES OF THE ENEMY.

SOMETIMES we are caused, in the Lord's mercy, to realize the subtle aim of Satan in that he uses *little things*, threads and shoe latches, which are *not* wrong in themselves, to "*bind*" us. *How* is this possible? He may encourage our wish for them. The wish becomes strong. We feel the danger, we dread lest we should be brought under the authority of *anything* (1 Cor. 6. 12), since Christ alone is our Master, and yet all the time the thought comes up, "But this is not wrong," and, it may be, there is the *added* thought "You can use it, and the fruit of it, for the Lord." It is amazing how much power is wrapped up in *tiny things*, which are right at the right time, and wrong at the wrong time, and *wrong as soon as they become our masters*. Even some food, or sleep, or tiny comfort, which we do not "*wish*" to omit, for the Lord's sake, may become a real chain. We may know it is *not* a luxury but usually appropriate, in our Father's gift of daily bread and all needs, yet on some special occasion *it may come between us and the Lord's will*. The object of Satan is *not* merely that we should "eat," but that we should be "bound."

The meal or kind of food, or whatever it may be, is only his lever to keep us from willingness, and gladness, to give up for the Lord. And this is only *one example* among many. "Desires" *bind*, and Satan longs to make children of God bound by *their feelings and wishes*, instead of being bound by the love and will of their one Lord. *This* is the true freedom, and well befits those who are redeemed by His precious blood, that they may simply please Him.

"Except the Father Which hath sent Me draw him."

"Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father."

"Except it were given unto him of My Father."

John 6. 44, 45, 65.

THE Lord Jesus Christ did not please and flatter *men*. Whereas His "*wide*" invitations were for the heavy laden, He showed, truthfully and solemnly, the sad condition of those who "argued," or who had any confidence in the flesh. He came *not* to call the righteous; and to the contentious He said, "Ye *have* not," "Ye *will* not come," "Ye *receive* not," "How *can* ye believe?"—John 5. 38, 40, 42, 43, 44. The *same* attitude is found in John 9 and 10, "Your sin remaineth" (9. 41), "Ye believe *not* because ye are *not* of My sheep" (10. 26). The *separating* words of 9. 39 still sound forth, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which *see not* might see, and that they which *see* might be made blind." The sun *hardens* the clay, while it *melts* the wax.

It is a mercy to realize that "many" out of all nations are still being brought down to be the "hungry" who are *filled* with good things (Luke 1. 53), and the broken hearted *whom He binds up*, and will *not* despise. Hence the stress on *drawing, hearing, learning, giving*. Grace shines out, as in Luke 14. 21, 23. The holy *anger* of verse 21 does not lead to an empty house. Nay, grace *reigns*, and the house is *filled*. And whereas the boasting sinner hurries proudly on his own way, the gospel *appeals* to the one who feels himself utterly unworthy of anything, and *thinks* himself *too* bad for law or grace. *Utter* need is a glorious plea. Hence grace brings joy to the *needy*, and any other mode of preaching the gospel *flatters* those who set aside God's plan, and repels the very ones in whom God is working. A *cheap* gospel would terrify a truly troubled sinner, but the *free* gospel is an abomination to an untroubled sinner. Thus God uses His grace to reach the lost.

Christ did not come to seek to save, but to seek *and* to save.

IRREGULARITY AND HABIT.

IS not irregularity, beloved fellow believers, often the thief of time belonging to the Lord? If by grace, we obtain victory, Satan will at once seek to make habit an idol, and to instil pride on account of victory, and next, as a reaction, will urge pleading for irregularity as soon as we begin to see the sin. An action which "costs" much, in our daily experience is precious: it helps our character for Him. But lo, we discover a gradual change. There is *no longer* a difficulty in doing it. That against which the flesh fought has become now a "usual victory," and *the flesh no longer fights against it*. We found a struggle in rising early, it may be, but the battle may now be largely past, and we see that there is *no longer* reward, for the action is *no longer* faith but merely mechanical routine; and, not only so, but pride has come in to suggest "You will have great reward for this." We *used* to speak of Christ in much weakness, after much physical strain: the dread may have gone, we can open our lips much more readily, but with the habit we have lost the sanctifying power of His humbling. We find speaking "easy"; let us beware!

An appointed action we once feared becomes "liked," and to like the will of God is *well*. But there is *another* "liking," a counterfeit, and the flesh, foiled in *hindering*, would now, as Sanballat, *awaken a "like"* that there may be no glory to God in the *conflict*, and that *natural love may take the place of spiritual*. Satan has changing methods *but one object*: he would take away glory from God. May we rejoice in a contrast, to the praise of His Name. Thus, beloved friends, shall we press forward with our Lord's Coming in view.*

* The above thoughts on the complex subtlety of sin not only show how vain are self-praise, and flatteries of others, but also how impossible it would be for any but the Lord Himself to appoint rewards and losses.

Religion is useful for this world, but powerless before God's throne of judgment. It is a restraining influence, but the gospel is a quickening message.

Inspiration is not only a word: *a believer who believes* God's truth should live accordingly *to-day*, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The inspiration of Scripture affects everything, even to the home, office and workshop.

"If the Lord will," Holiday Meetings unto His praise, Monday, June 1st, 3 & 6, Meeting Room, 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, E.7. An earnest invitation to His own dear people. Also on Sat: 6. 45. Further particulars gladly sent. PRAYER VALUED,

"IF THE LORD WILL,"

MEETING for YOUNG MEN and OLDER ONES too,
 WHO BELIEVE THE WORDS OF GOD,
John Pearce Restaurant, 2, MINORIES, ALDGATE, E.C.,
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EVERY TUESDAY 6. 30.

(Closing about 7. 40).

Tea-time Conversation Concerning
 the LORD, and Help in Greek and
 Hebrew, &c., 5. 15—6. 30.

Questions are Gladly Received.
 Subjects are Prayerfully Chosen to
 Help in Needs and Difficulties of
 Those Whom the Lord Brings.

The Loving Interest of Those
 Who Value the Will of God
 is Earnestly Welcomed.

Percy W. Heward,
 61, Upton Lane,
 Forest Gate, E.7.
 Telephone : MARYLAND 2196.

Further Leaflets and Particulars Gladly Sent

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING JUNE, 1925:—

2nd.—The Kingdom of Heaven.

1. The Holy Spirit's Use of the Word.
2. The Heavenly Character of this Kingdom, with Notes on
 Matt. 5, John 18. 36.
3. The *Beginning* of the Kingdom : When ?
4. "The Violent Take it by Force" (Matt. 11. 12, see Luke 16. 16).
5. Contrasts, e. g. Dan. 4. 17.
6. An Exhortation as to the Daily Walk.

9th.—"A Sound Mind."

1. God's Use of the Mind, (Phil. 4. 6, 7, Luke 10. 27).
2. Satan's Attempt to Misuse It (2 Cor. 2. 11, 11. 3).
3. Godly Balance, and Separation from Onesidedness (Eph. 4. 14).
4. The Believer and "Reasoning," "Anxiety," "Obstinacy,"
 "Hysteria," etc.

16th.—Question Evening.

(Questions welcome to help God's people, if possible, a
 week before).

23rd.—Joshua.

1. The Lord's Calling and Preparation (Deut. 31. 7, 14, Jos. 1. 1-9).
2. The Division of the Land.
3. A Veteran's Testimony (Jos. 23 and 24).
4. The Book of Joshua, Its Fulness, Application and Dispensational
 Parallel (Acts).

30th.—Faith.

1. True Faith and its Prepositions, (Into, on, etc.).
2. Spiritual Faith and Knowledge (1 John 4. 16).
3. Faith's Activity (Gal. 5. 6, Heb. 11).
4. Natural Faith (Jas. 2. 19), Unbelief and Prèsumption.
5. Faith and Human Means : with Thoughts as to the Body,
 Food, Medicine, and Healing.

Correspondence from any who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to
 obey His will, ever welcome. Also from any enquiring the way of His
 Salvation. Further literature and particulars of meetings gladly sent.
 And all, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ."

61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7. Phone : MARYLAND 2196.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

The Lord Jesus said: "The Spirit of the Truth . . . will guide . . . will shew you things to come . . . He shall glorify Me."
John 16. 13, 14.

A Word of Introduction.

THE privilege to send forth in our Lord's Name is again ours. If the work be HIS, not only FOR Him (1 Cor. 15. 58), it is well. The desire of a humble believer's heart must be Christ's glory. Self-glory is vain (Gal. 5. 26, Phil. 2. 3). If we are NOT glorifying Christ we are dishonouring Him. Let us be more concerned as to the exaltation of His Name. These days are perilous. It is so easy to be like the world, or, at least, to BECOME a LITTLE like the world, imperceptibly. But God is gracious and MIGHTY, and, if we are "a NEW creation" in Christ Jesus, what manner of persons we ought to be TO-DAY. Those who can call God "Father" should show their family-likeness TO HIMSELF, NOT to the world that lieth in the wicked one (1 John 5. 19, John 8. 44). Eph. 5. 1 is definite, is it not, beloved friends?

The Humiliation of the Lord Jesus.

HOW wondrous that He, Who was over all, God blessed for ever (Rom. 9. 5), should love poor guilty sinners in such a way that He became a Man and died for them. Phil. 2 emphasizes such love. It begins, as John 1, with His "being."* Observe that His first recorded positive act here is "He made Himself of no reputation," or "He emptied Himself" i.e. of glory (verse 3 shows this, by contrast). This He was able to do, being essentially full of glory; and, when he emptied Himself, He remained Himself. Next we read of His manhood as John 1. 14 follows John 1. 1,

* A different word is used, but likewise *emphatic*. This use of two emphatic words is remarkable, See also Heb. 1. 3, and John 8. 58, Rev. 1. 18.

and Heb. 2 *succeeds* Heb. 1. "Having taken a Bondservant's form." Thus He *was* not essentially a Servant (Rev. 19. 10 illustrates, in the light of Heb. 1. 6): all created beings *are* servants. He took this *form*, "having become in the likeness of men." Observe that He came "in the *flesh*" (1 John 4. 2), but He was only in the *likeness* of *sinful* flesh (Rom. 8. 3). He was "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." But He *became* truly a Man (1 Tim. 2. 5), hence, "In fashion having been *found* (a legal term), as a Man, He humbled Himself" — a further humbling. A *man* should be humble: contrast Adam and Antichrist. "As" has several meanings: other Scriptures make clear that it suggests here, "since a Man," and is parallel with Hebrews 2. 14. Incarnation was with a view to *death* (i.e. substitution): He took a *body* THAT He might be capable of *dying* for sinners. "Having become *obedient until death*": His whole life was obedience, He did *ever* the will of the Father, and those things that PLEASED Him. There was no gap in His life, and thus we behold the death of the cross: *such* rejection, AND "He bare the sin of many." How wondrous an echo of Ex. 34—"The Lord, the Lord God . . . *bearing* iniquity." The same striking order. The height of glory, the depth of judgment; and redeemed ones can say "It was for me." Surely the sanctifying power of realized truth is tremendous. The Holy Spirit glorifies Christ, and those who glorify Christ *cannot* be broad or worldly.

"My Times are in Thy Hand." Ps. 31. 15.

THOUGHTS ON ANSWERS TO PRAYER.

GOD may keep us waiting for an answer to prayer. Why? Not because He is like the unjust Judge. Far otherwise. Yet He may lovingly cause us to "Ask . . . SEEK . . . KNOCK." The "delay" is not a delay: it is in love. Our faith will be exercised by use, and thus our capacity to receive will be enlarged, and we shall be able to use the blessing when it arrives: whereas, if it had come earlier, we might have suffered from spritual indigestion, and **lost through our very gain**. If I give a man money which he cannot use aright, I damage him. Hence the Lord grants preparation for many of His trustees, lest the "open door" without the equipment should only mean further loss at the judgment seat of Christ, through a measure of unintentional "squandering." Let us praise our Heavenly Father for His **time and manner**, as to everything which reaches us. If we try and secure earlier, and obtain our requests, it may be with much leanness of soul. How great our loss will then be. "Waiting" is a real help to spiritual capacity, if we are not irritated. Not that we should be content as to the need for delay. Lack of capacity is often our most definite call to humiliation. Why is it we are so unequal to receive much that our Father waits to bestow?

Does our Heavenly Father Show His Displeasure at Once?

NO, not always, and it is deeply important that we should not argue from effect to seeming cause, else we shall often defend errors. He Who has not recorded definite dealing with Abraham after the failure of Gen. 20. 2,* He Who caused the water to come from the wrongly smitten rock in Numbers 20, He Who blessed Israel with a signal victory after the failure of Joshua 9. 14 (See 10. 14), He Who did not discard Paul when he pressed on against the Holy Spirit's leading at that time to Jerusalem (Acts 21. 4), is the Same to-day, and our faith is thereby tested. The world misrepresents this (Eccl. 8. 11, Jer. 44. 17), but we would not. It shows God's oft-forgotten sovereignty, and that we must not argue from effect to seeming cause as we think, but have Divine principles before we act, and then act in faith as Abraham in Genesis 22, whatever be the consequences.

It is worthy of notice that the Kingdom was not rent from Solomon during his lifetime. Further, Manasseh's sins did not bring desolation to Jerusalem immediately. Nor can we forget the lingering of the Shekinah glory as to Jerusalem. God may act quickly, but sometimes He gives a "yet forty days." When Asa planned for himself it seemed that Baasha's schemes were defeated (2 Chron. 16. 1-6), but the Lord's succeeding words are deeply suggestive. Israel drew their inferences through judgment according to appearances (Jer. 44. 17). Asaph in Psalm 73, shows the peril of this, and the need for going into the Sanctuary. May this be our privilege, that God in all things may be glorified.

The believer who wishes to please God needs much prayerfulness that Satan's MANIFOLD methods may not be successful. He has MANY devices (2 Cor. 2. 11), and thus, for example, attacks one with a temptation entirely contrasted with the temptation laid as a trap for another. One believer is invited to despondency, a second to pride, a third to something else. But the Lord's own protection is applied, via obedient fellowship with Himself. *If the tempter cannot draw us easily to wrong actions, he will aim at wrong motives for right actions, or a wrong mode of doing them. For instance, if we are, by grace, firm against compromise, he will try and introduce lack of love, in the "manner."* Let us seek grace, that there may be threefold victory, as to matter, motive, and manner alike, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

* Many would interpret verse 7 to excuse, whereas it was the greatest reproof to a man of God.

“In the Lord put I my trust: how say ye to my soul, Flee as a bird to your mountain?”

Ps. 11. 1.

(*Meditations Written during the World-War*).

THE privilege of some tract-service unto the Lord during last evening's solemn events would seem a background for the following thoughts, which I would earnestly desire to be in the mind and will of the Lord.

1. The *simplicity* of this *labour* of love—from house to house—is continually impressed.*

2. One feels so dependent on God. When aeroplanes can be heard overhead, and shrapnel is seen bursting so near, and the thunder of guns is incessant, the believer feels cast on Him. Each step is a problem—for prayer—much more *conscious* prayer than usual. Shall I go along *this* street OR *that*? Shall I omit these houses, or work straight through? Humble conversation with the Lord, and asking Him to bless *this* tract and *that* tract, as each is put through the letter box, becomes far more “natural” than usual. But why should it not be so *always*, and why should we not ask at all times as to each action, and realize that a single wrong step may bring danger—and dishonour Him? We are “safe” in the Lord's hands: there is none other safety.

3. It is a mercy that circumstances like those of last night tend to dispel any *natural* interest in this labour of love. Tuesday was, in this respect, easier, but perhaps more dangerous spiritually: the physical danger was not so real. How good of the Lord to prevent the more intense problem first. But Satan is busy at all times, and the flesh would seek to be proud afterwards of having done this work. Oh that we may labour with a view to God's glory, and not with a mere sense of duty, certainly not with any bravado, or to record our remarkable experiences. *Beware of the flesh.*

4. I am still more convinced of the preciousness of the Lord's appointment of at least “two and two.” Quiet prayer *together* is possible in the deserted streets. One by himself may have a far greater strain, though sympathy with the lonely sentry is not unblest (the parallel is, in measure, real). The Lord uses the voice of a brother to *strengthen*.

* Moreover, it is beautiful to enter into some parallel with the Lord's way of physical comforting to emphasize spiritual needs. Down many streets—especially poorer ones, where many doors can be more quickly reached,—numbers stand in the passage. They hear the tract coming through the door. They speak. One desires grace to answer calmly and earnestly that it is the gospel of grace, and, passing on with a tender, yet firm, “good night,” experiences the blessedness of having dispensed a measure of quieting influence, and thus done a work of love, to mind and body *without* slackening *spiritual* effort. Rather has one helped a care for the soul, and a willingness to put the things of God first in so labouring. Oh for gracious words of power, in the Holy Spirit. (A leaflet issued at the time, “In All Thy Ways,” gladly sent).

5. Sympathy has already been mentioned. But I would repeat this thought. The terrors of war come home to the exercised heart. I know that in the rush of conflict many lose a consciousness of danger, and in tract labour among goodly numbers, near a "refuge," this may be, in part, put aside, but, when there are none around, one feels sympathy for those in the *continual* strain, and gratitude for God's protecting care. He is more Real.

6. Again, I would urge the humbling principle of Deut. 20. 8. Fearfulness hinders others. Verses 5-7 of the same chapter seem definitely implied by contrast in Luke 14. 18-20. The thought before me is this. Do not hurry forth unless made willing to trust God, and personally thankful for *His* guidance, however it has reached your heart.

7. The thought of "protection" in emergencies may be suggested. I would remind beloved brethren of the danger of fleshly wisdom, yet the Lord can *use* or dispense with "means." Let me illustrate this. If the guns are manifestly to the south, He may emphasize at times the south side of a street, yet I think more than one has experienced, without any bravado, a definite temporary call to a very exposed place. If the heart sinks for a "moment"—He knoweth the frame, though we would not defend this sinking—He may provide an "opportunity" for a little season among some sheltered in an earthly building, and then, reviving the heart, enable His child to go forth, still *abiding* in *the* Strong Tower of *His* provision. If one is not quiet in the Lord, it is not wise to go hurriedly forward. This "simplicity" is *not* approved (Prov. 22. 3, 27. 12). But if we are in the Lord's will we have the true Hiding Place.

"OF ONE MIND." Phil. 2. 2.

"MURMURINGS and disputings" are essentially wrong, and unhealthy, among children of God (Phil. 2. 14). The remedy is *not* "agreeing to differ," but appointed oneness in the truth—"of one mind." The apostle was sore grieved that Euodias and Syntyche were not of the same mind (Phil. 4. 2). And the verse before us is even *more emphatic* than our English rendering. Literally, "minding *the one thing*." "The" is forceful, and we have a parallel with Phil. 3. 14. The "*mind*" must be in *harmony* with the Lord.* When Martha was "occupied" with many things, she criticized Mary, and the better part. We need to mind "*the one thing*." Self must be in the background, the Kingdom of God must be sought first (Matt. 6. 33). The Lord must be Central. Beloved friends, is this so? Or are our wishes, homes, business arrangements primary? Here is the *root*

* This verb is prominent in Philippians 1. 7; 2. 2, 5; 3. 15, 19; 4. 2, 10 (more than once in some verses). Note also Phil. 4. 6, 7.

of a *disappointed* Christian life ("I wonder I do not grow in grace," says one), and of "bad feeling" and divisions among those who bear Christ's Name. *Unity apart from judged sin is perilous.* The "one thing" must be the Lord's thing: not merely any "one thing." How important it is to grow up into Christ in all things, and to enjoy Him as the Centre of our changed life. Thus will our heavenly Father be glorified.

The blood of Christ might have been poured out in vain,—according to the doctrines of many. If salvation is contingent on the dead sinner's will, who will believe? There is more than uncertainty: there is injustice, unless there is substitution. Thanks be unto God, there *is* substitution: it is the blood of the covenant.

"As" (Eph. 4. 32,—5. 3).

"**A**S God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"—forgive. Here is the *reason* for *such* mutual Christian love. And what prevailing force is found in such an argument as Matt. 18. 32, 33 indicates. Every part of truth applies to *daily* life: all doctrine is practical when used by the Holy Spirit. *Immediately* we read, "Become, *therefore*, imitators of God *as* dear (beloved) children." The way in which *children* are affected by their parents is, moreover, remarkably brought out. The unconscious influence of "*what we are*" is remarkable. This command implies, "Imitate God in gracious forgiving." If, for example, we lose our temper, we dishonour *Him*, and disgrace *the family*. *We act out of character.* "*As* beloved children" is a heart-searching word. And another wondrous spur to love—the cause of our love—is found in the unchanging words, "*As* Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us." If we are *unlike* Christ, do we rightly claim to possess Him as our life on resurrection ground? Do we make *manifest* that He possesses us? The might to love, the motive for love, the meaning of love, the meditations that increase love, the mode of love, and the measure toward which our love should reach are all indicated by the Holy Spirit in this precious "*as*." Verse 3 continues, unveiling selfishness—the reverse of love. And there is a plea for separation in the next "*as*"—"as becometh saints." If we are "called saints," how can we be *unsaintly*? This is not mere rhetoric. Saints are to live holily: they should not act in an *unbecoming* way. Grace is a mighty power, and the Holy Spirit is an indwelling *Person*. Therefore, *what manner of persons ought we to be!* Spirituality is not a matter of bare words: there must be real fruit.

PHARAOH'S HEART.

THE hardening of Pharaoh's heart is often misunderstood. We would be humbly willing to know in part, and admire the sovereignty of God. But the *remarkable* fact is mercy. Rom. 9. 15 is clear as to this. There is no thought that any who receive salvation have any entitling claim to it. Far otherwise. *They*, without exception, receive it as undiluted mercy. Then there can be no *objection* if it is withheld. Thus Rom. 9 also asserts that God's attitude to the vessels of wrath is one of *enduring* "with longsuffering." He *endures*:—there is a real *endurance* by our gracious God. This word illustrates His attitude most strikingly.

Many have spoken of election as if it turned back anxious claimants. Far otherwise. If we accept *all* that is urged as to gospel proclamation and God's varied workings in nature and providence—*all* that is urged by those dear children of God who do not yet see election—the result will be *not one soul saved* (Luke 14. 24). In other words, they omit all the power of the gospel. Their fear of hindering the display of His love *leaves heaven empty*. It is on this account that election is so manifestly precious. God's grace has arranged beyond the earnest thoughts of those who concede some share, (however small), to man, and, in accord with election, secured the salvation of a great number whom no man can number. Thus election does not infringe on justice, for its power *comes in*, (though the *purpose* is from eternity), when everything else is proved ineffectual, and when justice can *only* condemn. Thus free grace *is free*, and not only cheap, and Christ *shall see* of the travail of His soul, and the words of John 6. 37 come true, to the praise of the glory of God's grace.

"TRIALS," did you say? "Trials," as if they hindered praise? Did Paul and Silas complain at midnight in Philippi's inner prison with feet in the stocks? Did not God send His earthquake of deliverance in answer to *praise*? You want to see quickly the "man of Macedonia" whom you can help: but it may be you do not want the path to meet him. You would like John's opportunity, without John's desert, and camel's hair. "Trials"—what are they? The Lord has promised to be *with* His people *when* they pass through the waters (Isa. 43. 1). Would you wish to pass some other way, and *miss Him*?

In salvation, God does not improve, He creates: He does not help, but saves: He does not sell, but give. Selling, offering, compromising are all worthless, but a free gospel is the ground of the eternal security of the redeemed.

"THE COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NIGH."

Jas. 5. 8.

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Further Leaflets and Particulars Gladly Sent

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING JULY, 1925:—**7th.—Some Types of Scripture.**

1. The *Prayerful* Study of the Types.
2. The Exaltation of the Lord Jesus (John 5. 46, Heb. 10. 20).
3. Types of God's People (Gal 4. 28).
4. Types of Antichrist (e.g. Gen. 10, Est. 9. 7-10).
5. How may we Know a Real Type?

14th.—Faults, Restoration and Fault-Finding.

1. "We Offend"; "If we *Confess* our Sins."
2. "Overlooking" (Lev. 19. 17, Acts 15. 37, 38).
3. Restoring (Gal. 6. 1, note Matt. 18. 15, John 13. 14).
4. Fault-finding and Talkativeness (Lev. 19. 16).
5. The Faultless One, and His Finished Work.

21st.—Question Evening.(Questions to help God's people welcome, if possible, a
week before).**28th.—Liberty.**

1. "The Children (Sons) Free" (Matt. 17. 26, John 8. 36, Gal. 5. 1).
2. "The Perfect Law of Liberty" (Jas. 2. 12, Rom. 8. 2).
3. Libertinism (Jude 4).
4. Freedom in a Meeting, etc., The *Leading* of the Holy Spirit.

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"By mercy and truth iniquity is purged (made atonement for): and by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil."

Prov. 16. 6.

A Word of Introduction.

HOW wondrously mercy and truth are MET TOGETHER in the finished work of Christ. GRACE reigns through RIGHTEOUSNESS (Rom. 5. 21). Our hearts worship. Sin is blotted out, and removed, and eternal life is freely bestowed. Does not every believing reader rejoice exceedingly? And is it not precious to see that the gospel is thus unveiled in the book of Proverbs as well as in the later Scriptures? All the words of truth exalt the finished work of Christ. Thus there is a call to HOLINESS. The fear of the Lord, the true filial fear of Ps. 110. 10 and Prov. 1. 7, follows, and we hate evil, as taught by the Holy Spirit. Only as we realize grace can we hate evil to God's glory. A FEAR OF GRIEVING GOD IS DEEPLY IMPORTANT. This is not bondage, but the absence thereof is self's bondage.

BRIEF NOTES ON RIGHTEOUSNESS.

CONSCIOUS that no words of ours can express the fulness of God's truth, and of the imperfection of God's people, we desire to set forth, with a view to His glory, and our own edification, and help to oneness of mind among believers, that which seems so graciously revealed in Scripture regarding Righteousness.

Though we were unrighteous by nature and practice (Tit. 3. 5), we rejoice to own the grace of God, and that Christ is the Lord our Righteousness (Jer. 23. 6, 1 Cor. 1. 30), and we have become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21). Moreover, we read that the righteousness out from God (Phil. 3. 9, cf. Isa. 54. 17) is upon

faith, and that it is imputed or reckoned (Rom. 4. 11) to one who is viewed, in himself, as ungodly (Rom. 4. 5), and thus altogether without personal merit. Thus it is not a reward to us (Rom. 4. 4): only One was worthy to be declared righteous (cf. Ps. 24. 5), nor does righteousness come to us in any sense by law. But the fact it is imputed shows that it is not only an attribute of God, or His governmental justice, but that which can be rightly, as well as graciously, given to His people.

Hence, in accord with God's unchanging truthfulness,—we believe that our adorable Lord came to do all the Father's will (Heb. 10. 7, John 6. 38, 8. 29), and that nothing of His perfect obedience unto death (Phil. 2. 8) can be taken away from the one work of which He spoke in John 17. 4, and of which the Holy Spirit speaks in Rom. 5. 19 (cf. 8. 4 δικαιομα), and we cannot limit these words to a part of His meritorious work without hindering the full force of the Divine words. We accept Isa. 53. 11 in its plain meaning—“The Righteous One, My Servant, shall cause a righteousness for many, and* He shall bear their iniquities,” and see in Ps. 24. 5, the Father's acknowledgment of this obedience in the blessing,—righteousness and life (Ps. 133. 3),—so that Christ was raised because of our justifying.† Here is a work on which resurrection was resting, so that the prophecy of Lev. 18. 5 (Heb:) does not remain unfulfilled, but, omitting the “if” of man's addition, reveals the One Who though over all God blessed for ever became under law (Gal. 4. 4, 5) “the Man” Christ Jesus §. We see in Rom. 8. 3 a reference to Christ's twofold one work: He came in the likeness of sinful flesh (His life), and “for sin” (His death). Thus we have the background for verse 4, (so Rom. 10. 6 and 7). Hence as we are “in Christ Jesus” on resurrection ground, and have Him as our Life, and eternal life because in Him, we confess that all the merits, honoured in His exaltation as the One Who became Man, are Scripturally set forth as ours. The types corroborate this, for the coat of skin which was first perfect on the animal was via death the robe for Adam and Eve, and the skin of the burnt offering is especially mentioned ||. Hence we rejoice that what the law could not do, God has done in grace, so that Christ's work, MADE under the law (Gal. 4. 4), has been MADE AVAILABLE by His death (cf. in manifold aspects John 12. 24, Rom. 7. 4) without which there could be no righteousness, no remission, no blessing,—and MADE OURS in His resurrection, and our living union with Him on resurrection ground. “Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift.”

* “For” alters the Hebrew and hides God's teaching, unconsciously.

† The same word “because of” comes in both clauses.

§ “Which the Man will do, and live in them.”

|| Notice Isa. 61. 10, and the *one* seamless robe of John 19. 23, 24; as well as the garments,—picturing blessings accompanying salvation. Isa. 24. 21 may almost read, “The Lord is well-pleased for His Righteousness: He will magnify law, and will make a glorious robe” (This is imputed).

PAUL'S ATTITUDE TOWARD FELIX AND FESTUS.

THE Holy Spirit reproves speaking evil of dignities (2 Pet. 2. 10); and even as a right attitude to a froward master is enjoined (1 Pet. 2. 18), so *evil* dignities are specially put before us (*cf.* Jude 9, a most remarkable passage: this will have a bearing on the action of saints in the days of Antichrist). We are *not* primarily occupied with the *nature* of the one bearing office, (though we may thank God for mercy to us in this connexion), but with the *fact* that he bears office. Any thought otherwise questions God's wisdom and providence (Rom. 13. 1-4, Dan. 4. 17). "As for God, *His* way is perfect," and "The powers that be are ordained of God." Hence the Assyrian was the rod of *His* anger (Isa. 10. 5), and Nebuchadnezzar *His* servant (Jer. 27. 6). We look beyond the *man*, and see God's wisdom. "The times and seasons" are in *His* authority, and even to Antichrist there is a "Hitherto shalt thou come." The wrath of man must praise God (Ps. 76. 10): even the locusts from the pit must be subject to Him (Rev. 9).

Hence the believer is not a revolutionary. He should live a "quiet" life, in separation from the world's politics (John 18. 36, 1 Tim. 2. 2), and neither seek nor accept a share in government. The sphere of grace, into which he is brought, is quite different, and far higher.

Therefore the believer looks for the kingdom of Christ, and, meanwhile, should render to all their *dues* (Rom. 13. 7). He is in *debt*, if He speaks rudely of authorities. God's servant Paul presents us a helpful example in Acts 24. His words, as in 26. 3, set forth *courtesy* and whatever he could say *truthfully* as to the one before whom he stood. Of Felix he could not say anything very commendatory, hence he confined himself to "Thou hast been of many years a judge," and made this the background for the *courteous* expression, "I do the more *cheerfully* answer"—and the unaffected, unhypocritical *cheerfulness* again shows the *delight* of God's people in His providential arrangements. The whole address is a contrast with the fulsome flattery of Tertullus in verses 2-4.

It is noteworthy that in 26. 2 the title "King Agrippa" is given: the word "king" is first as a *title*, not second as a *description* (so verses 19 and 27). Many children of God fail to see the importance of this, and the Scriptural use of civil titles and absence of *all* spiritual ones among believers: e.g. "Paul an apostle," *not* "the apostle Paul."* But we pass on to notice the

* Leaflets on this far-reaching subject gladly sent. Many denominational errors, from Anglicanism to the Salvation Army, are lovingly dealt with by this Scriptural principle, which our Lord sets forth in Matt. 23. 8-10.

words to Festus. When the governor interrupts rudely, Paul does not retort, *nor* does he flatter. He still employs a term of respect, but NOT one indicating character (as the English rendering might suggest to some). Thus the child of God is guided as to "Your Honour," and similar terms, and would *retain* such language before a Judge Jeffrey of bygone history. But he should not Scripturally say, "Father *in* God" to a religious official. If we are willing to take the Scriptures *simply* in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, we shall find guidance for every circumstance of daily life, and if our speech is *alway* with grace we shall know how to answer even a Festus (Col. 4. 6), and to adorn the doctrine of God by avoiding that answering again which is not in the Spirit (Tit. 2. 12).

CAUSE OR EFFECT.

IF there is apparent need, unto God's glory, for much caution, or holy and loving sternness, in dealing with any, whether children or professing believers, and the results are not encouraging, two entirely contrasted thoughts rise in different minds. Some infer from the failure that the action was quite wrong : others that the after-tendency shows the sad condition, and thus approves the firmness manifested. In other words, many will say, "The wandering into deeper sin **has been brought about by severity,**" and many will reply, "The wandering is, rather, a proof that the sin was deeply rooted, and that those who would have excused it were slow to perceive its true character." If any use the after-effects to justify themselves and to exalt themselves, this is sinful. There are, moreover, those who think of both possibilities and are brought to unhappy lack of certainty in everything. What is the right attitude? First, we should beware of the sin of arguing from results, in this and other connexions. Secondly, every possible interpretation, while we leave the full knowledge of all in God's hands, should humble our hearts before Him. We should search ourselves and ask, "Did I quickly seek God's guidance and please Him?" Thirdly, it is well to remember that there are more than two "possibilities." "Whether of these two" is a human limitation : perhaps both contemplated methods are wrong, or perhaps the right method may be more often damaged by an unspiritual manner than we have ever realized. We need to walk in the Spirit. One may also mention the grave harm when parents differ, and, when, for instance, a father's opposition to sin is weakened, in its power, by a mother's indulgence, or *vice versa*. Likewise, when a child of God is under spiritual discipline, it is so easy for some, in selfish kindness, to try and **relieve the strain,** and encourage a real, but unhealthy, believer in the path away from God. Unintentional cruelty is commoner than we think. Oh for grace to be more conscious of, and subject to, the Lord, and His holy will.

“The Exceeding Riches of His Grace.”

Eph. 2. 7.

WE often act as if we were bankrupts, whereas we are more than millionaires. We treat the Lord's bounty in an **unreal** way. We little realize the **fulness** of Christ, from which we have received, and keep on receiving. The riches of His grace must bury our pride and our unbelief **together**. We **had** nothing, but **have** everything. God has **given** all to those who gave nought—who were nought—who did nought. The riches of His grace:—as wondrous as undeserved, and as undeserved as wondrous. The wealth of a believer is immense. Let us not complain, whatever trials may come. God has given, and gives, all in love ; nothing is unlovely in **His Will**. To grumble is foolish, and worse than foolish. It involves speaking against Him. Just as a man is reprov'd in James 4 if he judges his brother, so if a child of God speaks against circumstances, he speaks against the **One Who grants them**:—and what is our light affliction in view of the glory ? Moreover, 2 Cor. 4. 17, 18 must be enjoyed more, beloved friends. Not only so, if we have Christ, we **have everything**. When we remember what we **deserved**, and that the Lord of Glory died for us, and that He, Who upholds all things, has joined us to Himself by His finished work of atonement, we can **only** worship and praise. Our hearts adore our Heavenly Father, and cry out praisefully, “The exceeding riches of His grace !”

THE GRACE OF GOD.

THE grace of God is not merely an expression. There is **more than music** in the word “grace.” God's tender mercies are over **all His works**, but they do not save. He opens His hands and satisfies the desire of every living thing, but providence is not deliverance from judgment. The heavens declare the glory of God, but I need **atonement** as well. To Israel were committed the oracles of God, and the law is good if a man use it lawfully, but “by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Ah, we have not mentioned all. Grace reigns (Rom. 5. 21), and there is a wondrous certainty in “grace.” Thus the words ring out, “By grace ; to the end that the promise might be **sure**” (Rom. 4. 16). We were **without strength** (Rom. 5. 6), the law is weak through the flesh (Rom. 8. 3), but the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1. 16). If there were anything spiritually good in a man, he would respond to God's general goodness (Rom. 2. 4), but how many examples of the very next verse are before us. Yet grace is not defeated. Each redeemed one can say “By the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor. 15. 10). There is **mighty power** in grace. “By grace are ye saved,” not made savable (Eph. 2. 5, 8).

“The Judgment Seat of Christ.”

Rom. 14. 10, 2 Cor. 5. 10.

A REALITY for each child of God. Every work will be brought into judgment. The principle of Rev. 22. 12 has **no exceptions**. This is of the most momentous importance. And when the Lord Jesus judges, there will be righteousness. The judgment seat of Christ is quite as exact as the Great White Throne.* If there is judgment at all, there must be consistency. Favouritism before a judgment seat would be dishonest. The Lord will not call disobedience obedience, nor overlook an emptiness. There must be a holy strictness, and, if works are burnt up, there **must** be a real loss (1 Cor. 3. 15), and if there has been sowing into the flesh, there **must** be a reaping of corruption (Gal. 6. 8). An unfelt loss is not “suffering loss.” Nevertheless the losses are of a different character from those of the ungodly. Matt. 16. 26, and Mark 8. 36 refer to loss in connexion with the soul, and Luke 9. 25 as to oneself. 1 Cor. 3. 15 uses the same verb, but without these additions. “He himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” The same limitation is implied by James 2. 12, “Judged by the law of liberty” (freedom, Rom. 8. 2). There is no wrath, no condemnation, but the loss is real and serious. And if we love our Lord much, we shall feel this intensely. Are not believers often taught to be too careless about the Judgment Seat of Christ? Assured glory is not to make us regardless of the solemn alternatives. The weight of glory is precious, but to “reap corruption” can hardly mean “the joy of the Lord.” And do we not value His joy enough to be concerned as to this? The believer who puts aside the thought of the Judgment Seat of Christ is losing much of Divine teaching. The Coming of Christ is rich with glory, but, let it be repeated, things that are bad will not be called good (2 Cor. 5. 10). If this Scriptural instruction is applied by the Spirit of God, it will not produce melancholy, but it will tend to prevent the misuse of prayer, and “lightness” as to sin. The love of Christ attracts His people to rejoice in His joy (Matt. 25. 21, 23). Let us live for Him with happy expectancy, and seek His reproof now, that we may have His approving then.

You want to do something great: let a little thing be done in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and it is great: even a cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple shall in no wise lose its reward.

* The word “*Bema*” is found in Matt. 27. 19. Acts 12. 21; 25. 6, etc. The root signifies “a place to walk” (see Acts 7. 5), and thus Rev. 2 and 3 give the most remarkable illustration of Christ’s judging—“Who walketh in the midst” (2. 1). Thus we realize that now there are *anticipations* of that Day.

“Where is the Lamb?”
“Behold the Lamb of God”

Gen. 22. 7, John 1. 29.

THE link of Scripture with Scripture is ever wonderful. The question of Gen. 22. 7 is answered in verse 8, “God will provide for Himself the Lamb.” Abraham was a prophet (Gen. 20. 7). “A ram” did not fulfil this prophecy, and after “a ram” was offered the future is still used: “In the mount of the Lord it (He) shall be seen” (14). God keeps His word, and so, in the fulness of time Christ came.

John the Baptist was privileged to point Him out. The unnamed disciple who heard John had apparently a brother, even as Andrew (John 1. 40, 41 “first”); and this accords with the apostolic writer’s mode of referring to himself (19. 26). If this be so, we see the power of a few words, at a crisis, in the after-life of a child of God, for the name “Lamb” is continually before us in Revelation. (Cf. Acts 9. 4, “Me,” and Paul’s stress in the Epistles on being “in Christ.”) Inspiration not only used a man’s native tongue, but his experiences, yet withal perfectly and verbally.

The Lord Jesus is the Lamb of God, contrasted with the lambs which men gave (cf. Lev. 17. 11, as to atonement: “The blood,” “I have given”). He is not only viewed as gentle, “holy, harmless, undefiled” (Heb. 7. 26) but as the True Passover (1 Cor. 5. 7), the One Who died. John emphasized this, and heaven emphasizes it (Rev. 5. 6, 8, 12, 13 etc.). There is no way to heaven except by the blood. And, moreover, we see the beautiful contrast with Israel’s passover. Christ died for sinners of all nations. Hence the reference to the world (cf. John 3. 14-16). How precious to know Him, and deliverance from sins, and acceptance in the Beloved. Happy are they who have beheld the Lamb of God, and now have the privilege of pointing others to Him.

You are expecting something that will be a large opening for Christian work, and are you losing a hundred openings in the meanwhile. You want to go into Christian work, and to “devote your time to it,” but did not your Lord die that you might be unto Him to day? Do not postpone your privileges, beloved fellow believer.

It is so difficult to do suddenly that which we do not practise. If we learn a language to read we shall find it hard to speak. May it not be that we lose power of spiritual meditation through neglecting it, and does not the Lord’s gracious personal fellowship become neglected, oftentimes, on this account?

"THE COMING OF THE LORD DRAWETH NIGH."

Jas. 5. 8.

"IF THE LORD WILL,"

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Telephone : MARYLAND 2196.

Further Leaflets and Particulars Gladly Sent

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING AUGUST, 1925.—**4th.—Pain.**

1. God's Purposes in Suffering (Job 33. 19, Jas. 5. 11, John 11. 4, Ps. 119. 67, 71, 75).
2. The Pain We Cause Ourselves.
3. The Pain of the Ungodly (Rev. 16. 10, 11, Rev. 21. 4).
4. The Blessedness of the Redeemed.

11th.—Some Precious Omissions of Scripture.

1. "Not Knowing" (Dan. 12. 8-13, 1 Pet. 1. 10, 11, 1 John 3. 2).
2. The Day of Christ's Birth, and Similar Omissions.
3. *Unrecorded* "Motives," and "Tones" with which Certain Words were Said.
4. The Incomplete Knowledge of the Inspired Writers *Never* Allowed to Cause an Incorrect Statement. Illustrations (e.g. Ps. 6. 5).
5. Omitted Words* e.g. "Apostles" in Acts 2. 14, Gen. 1. 16, Ps. 22. 31 Matt. 16. 17.

18th.—Question Evening.

(Questions to help God's people welcome, if possible, a week before).

25th.—The Book of Ezekiel.

1. The Privileges and Problems of Service (1. 12, 2. 6 etc.).
2. Abominations and Stumblingblocks.
3. God's Faithfulness and the Future of Israel (e.g. 40—48).
4. Links with the Book of Revelation e.g. 47. 12.

* Contrast omissions in our translation e.g. "The Man" Deut. 8. 3.

Correspondence from any who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and desire to obey His will, ever welcome. Also from any enquiring the way of His Salvation. Further literature and particulars of meetings gladly sent, And all, "that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ,"
61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7. Phone : MARYLAND 2196.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"If we confess our sins, He is Faithful and Just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 1. 9.

A Word of Introduction.

THESE pages are sent forth humbly, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, that His blood-bought people may be encouraged to please Him more, and that souls may be saved. The glory of the writer is NOTHING: the glory of the reader is NOTHING: the glory of Christ is EVERYTHING. "Popular words" are unbecoming those who are HIS, in a world where He was crucified. All drawing unto HIM will be drawing unto HIS will and to "one another" along the path of His will, and in the light of His coming. This is our object, to the glory of God, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Does the standpoint of wishing to please Him awaken an echo in your heart, dear reader? We own our insufficiency, but His sufficiency; and long to please HIM MORE.

The Holy Spirit's Guidance in the Epistles As to the Immediate Future.

With Thoughts on Prophetic Instruction Implied.

"IF the Lord will" is to be, as it were, the very watermark of a believer's life (Jas. 4. 15), and an enjoyment. We are neither to *boast* (Prov. 27. 1), nor to be *anxious* for to-morrow (Matt. 6. 34). Blessed, indeed, is the experience to which a child of God is graciously called. God is interested in *all* our concerns: nothing is too small a detail for Him (Phil. 4. 6, 7).

Those who are saved by grace, and who acknowledge their Father's complete wisdom in the Scriptures, humbly expect the Holy Spirit's guidance thereby. Nor do they expect in vain. And how contrasted is their life to be from that of the would-be money-gainer in James 4. 15. We can afford to lose in this world if we *have Christ* : it is doubtful *if we can afford to "gain."*

Plans are right *when* made in dependence on God, and prayerfully (1 Cor. 16. 5, 8, 2 Tim. 4. 13, 21). We should seek Him *first* and we must always be willing to have *His* changing of our expectation (2 Cor. 1. 15, 16). This is well (1 Kings 8. 18, 19). Yet we must not be "changeable" (2 Cor. 1. 17). A child of God should be most *reliable* : he is to be "slow to speak" even in this connexion (Jas. 1. 19). Many make "promises" glibly with no thought of fulfilment : not a few fail to "think," and to weigh all that is involved. They speak first, and *then* ask counsel of the Lord. This is a peril. God graciously suggests a contrast.

We find no dogged *determination* of the flesh (2 Cor. 1. 17 1 Thess. 2. 18) and no scheming to please the flesh, encouraged in the epistles. There are many godly arrangements, for God is not the author of confusion, but there is nothing to encourage settling down. Numbers 9 has its parallels. The guiding of Israel by the cloud was to teach willingness for God's will.

We read of "making request" as to a journey to Rome in Rom. 1. 10, and an uncomplaining readiness to be hindered by the Lord's loving will is seen in verse 13. In chapter 15. 24 the apostle has become convinced the Lord will permit a journey to Spain, but exactly *when*, he knows not. The Lord's arrangement as to Jerusalem is before us in the next verses. And since these are inspired statements, we may begin to see the bearing on *prophetic truth*. There is *no occurrence*, nor even illustration, of the *recent* expression, "If the Lord tarry." There is no suggestion, "The Lord may come first," and yet the Lord's Coming is *more to the front* than in the lives of most who thus speak to-day ! Is this an *unusual* and unintended contrast with present language, or consistently maintained throughout the *inspired* letters ? If "consistently," there must be some deep lesson. We dare not say, Paul did not love his Lord's Appearing. Is it possible that in the 20th century we have *spoken* more of the nearness of His Coming, instead of *getting ready* for Him ? Is it not conceivable that Satan would thus *divert* our minds from love's appointed *preparation*, which takes certain time, but which does not put events before *Himself* ; rather it *avoids leaving out* the very events which rightly lead to *Himself*. If I speak of the coming of a friend whom I love, with glowing words, but *go about* saying that He may come at any moment, instead of *going* to meet him at the appointed station, I do not honour him. . May it not be, beloved fellow-believers, that we all have illustrated this failure ? It is unintentional, but a grave mistake.

If the apostle *ought* to have expected his Lord's arrival at any

moment, was it right for him to *omit* language similar to "If the Lord tarry?" When some lovingly point out that Peter was to become *old* before his Lord came, and to die, and that other prophecies of Christ, such as those of *widespread preaching* (Acts 1. 8), indicated He had appointed arrangements before His coming back, and when they add, "Can you give me a verse which tells of His Coming *before* the tribulation?"—the answer is sometimes given to the effect that it is not a matter of a verse only, but the general "feeling" of Scripture. But what if there is *not only* the absence of one verse, but also the *consistent witness* of Scripture for the heart-affecting nearness of Christ's Coming as *distinguished* from a mistaken idea of *imminence*, which may hinder the path of *truly getting ready!* Further, though an uninspired speaker may say "I *will* do this or that," would an *inspired* writer have been *Scriptural* in declaring his journey to Spain if the Lord's Coming were possible at any moment? 'Tis only an *evil* servant who can use this, with perverted logic; to forget the Coming of Christ. *Spiritual* hope is neither bound, nor bounded, by *natural* reasoning. 1 Cor. 16. 5 is remarkable as to Paul's plan; and 16. 8 is decisive: likewise verse 12. Again we notice that these are definite inspired statements, with prophecies, of intervening events in the lives of those who lived looking for that blessed Hope. Even verses like 2 Cor. 10. 11, Eph. 6. 21, Col. 4. 8, 2 Tim. 4. 13, 21, Tit. 3. 12, Phm. 22 are not without a bearing. They are not only the expectations of a godly man, but the written testimony of one inspired. Nor can they be explained away: *other* verses might be fulfilled at Christ's Coming, or contain an "if" (e.g. Heb. 13. 23), but these passages cannot have this interpretation. Paul was definitely staying at Ephesus *till Pentecost*. This was an inspired *prophecy* even though personal. Any criticism invalidates *inspiration*. To suggest that intervening events rob saints of the blessed Hope to-day is to imply that the Holy Spirit hindered dear children of God then. But no humble believer will thus dishonour Him.

It may be said the Lord's inspired servants did not know everything. Nor do we suggest they had this knowledge. But these declarations are not only records of their thoughts, they are integral parts of inspired letters, and as much the testimony of the Holy Spirit as "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout."

But our Heavenly Father has *never* put the Hope more than a usual lifetime ahead. The longest period mark was, it may be suggested, given by our beloved Lord in the word "generation," which Heb. 3 defines as 40 years. And strikingly the destruction of Jerusalem came in that period. Thus unless any, as Peter in John 21. (2 Pet. 1. 14) or Paul at the end of his life (2 Tim. 4. 6); were specially instructed, there would be the normal waiting for the Lord's Return (John 21. 23), and so it should be. Death

is not our hope. And now all events prophesied are *far far less than 40 years*. We do not mean that we know the year. If events, known to Him, took a longer time, the Lord would not break His words, but there is no *recorded* or *prophesied* length that approaches such a period. Our hearts are thus *further* stimulated to cry "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." And the precious enigmatical prophecies contained in Hos. 6. 2 and 2 Pet. 3. 8, with Heb. 4. 9 (margin), were so worded that they could not be known till, instead of delaying, they *emphasize the nearness*. Signs, too, are as sign posts and incentives, yet we would not be occupied with them. It is our privilege to look for Him, and, as we love His Appearing, shall we not lay aside the still remaining "weights" of earthly customs and earthly gain? Thus shall we find joy of detachment from this world, because of attachment to our soon Coming Lord.

**"The Children of Ephraim, being armed,
and carrying bows, turned back in the
day of battle." Ps. 78. 9.**

THIS lesson is of deepest importance. The history of Israel again and again shows that the decisive factor is the will of God (2 Chron. 25. 8). Circumstances will not afford a guarantee. We may prepare, and yet all be in vain (Ps. 127. 1, 2). "In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow . . . the harvest shall be a heap" (Isa. 17. 11). God speaks to us through this. We look to things too much. Men of the world have partly quoted the Old Testament, with its appropriate judicial execution when God had one nation, and then they have argued for believers' participation in warfare, whereas such are now "strangers and pilgrims," and found in every nation. The analogy of man is utterly out of place, but "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Moreover, when men handle Scripture in this way, they turn a further sword against themselves. The Lord rejected 32,000 and 10,000 and used 300 in the days of Gideon. What army is recruited thus? 'Tis not numbers, 'tis not human might: we need the Spirit of God for whatever we are called to do. Our "bows" in everything are vain without the Lord. Natural abilities and suitabilities, clever plans and schemes, falter: we need the Lord, not "it." We would trust in Him, not "it." Oh that this may be so in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. Thus will there be a true victory, not otherwise. Thus will our Heavenly Father be exalted.

The unveiling of grace is to lead to praise. A praiseless life is a joyless one, and fails to glorify God (Ps. 50. 23). It is well to praise much—to praise more.

JUDGMENT and the DEITY of CHRIST.

GOD [beholds and knows all things. We see but parts of His ways: He sees every one, and every action, word and thought (Ps. 139. 1-5). His very knowledge is too wonderful for us to understand (Ps. 139. 6): so far do we fall short. If even the fact is beyond our comprehension, surely the possession of such knowledge is infinitely beyond our knowledge. But such knowledge is essential for perfect judgment according to works (Rev. 22. 12). Therefore the Deity of the Lord Jesus is illustrated by the fact that He is said to be the Judge (John 5. 22, see also Ps. 50. 6).*

When we remember that every action is affected by numberless other actions, and that true judgment will take into consideration every advantage, opportunity, and circumstance (Rom. 2. 12), the myriads of details, concerning each of the untold millions of deeds of one life, are overpowering. Thus a graduated judgment, "according to works," becomes one of the most remarkable unveilings of the Deity of our beloved Lord.

The inherent defect of men may be strikingly brought before us in 1 Cor. 6. 1. Primarily the thought is that believers are distinguished from officials of the present evil age, and should never take positions of this character, or even vote. But there seems to be also the thought of man's incapacity to carry out judgment, through ignorance of conditions and motives. Believers, relying on the Lord, were to deal with certain things among themselves, but this judgment is contrasted with that of our adorable Lord (1 Cor. 4. 5), and thus exalts His glory once more. We have already seen that 1 Cor. 6. 2 does not set up the saints apart from Christ. He is ever exalted in distinction, even when they are united to and linked with Him. This is remarkable in every context. The Tabernacle shows the honour of the redeemed, for instance by "the cherubim of glory." But they are quite dependent on the mercy seat. Parables likewise set forth the blessings of believers, but they are "wheat" and "servants," and so forth, He is the Owner of treasure, and pearl, and field, and servants, and all. Christ is ever exalted.

The necessary "inequalities" of the present age are made a background to emphasize "that Day." 2 Thess. 1. 5 gives the intensest example. But Eccl. 4. 1, and similar passages, must have a bearing. The future revelation of held-back wrath, (Rom. 12. 19, mark the words "I will repay") is brought before believers, that they may wait patiently (1 Pet. 2. 23, 4. 19), and, as in this very passage, the Deity of the Judge is fundamental. Nor does John 5. 27 modify this conclusion. As with atonement, so with judgment. Atonement by one less than God is impossible: it would make God's love

* The language of 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3 does not invalidate this. That redeemed ones will share their Lord's glory is clear, but He emphasized how His eyes are as a flame of fire (Rev. 2. 18) and He searches the reins and the heart. Nothing like to this is implied by 1 Cor. 6. Note Rev. 22. 12, and Rev. 2 and 3 with the repeated statement "I know Thy works," and Jer. 17. 10.

secondary ; but the Saviour must also be Man, to bear the penalty. Hence Godhead and Manhood are together, and so is it in the unveiling of that righteous judgment of which we should earnestly warn sinners to day.

“I AM AS THOU.”

2 Kings 3. 7.

SAD indeed are these words of Jehoshaphat, and the more so after 1 Kings 22. 48, 49. The Lord is very tender and patient, but we so often draw back. Why is it ? Are we ashamed ? Are we afraid ? Are we lacking in courage ? Why do we mingle with those who know Him not ? Our mind travels to 2 Chron. 19. 2. We little realize how we grieve God. And the effect upon our families is far greater than we think. Look at the result in Jehoshaphat's son, beloved friends. Many a believer has compromised with the world a little, and his children have sinned more, and not only in one form of compromise. Many a Christian has sought “a good position” for members of his family, and has arranged a worldly education to this end,—only to find bitter results. We are often afraid to be unlike the world, afraid to be rejected with Christ. We say we value spiritual things very much, but do we show this in the power of the Holy Spirit ? Better lose all things of earth, than dishonour our Lord, or train our children for a “standing” in the world where HE took a village position of humble work (Mark 6. 3),—the world which crucified HIM.

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

THE PROMISE that Christ will come is very real (Jas. 5. 8). But many do not feel the effect of this in their lives though they acknowledge it in word, and particularly in hymns. It is well to ask ourselves some questions—“How much money have I willingly “lost” (if I may call it “lost”) because of a fixed faith that my Lord is soon coming ?” Again, “Have I been willing to suffer because I know that He will appear, and that I need not, (yea, must not), stand up for my rights here and now.” Again, “How many cares have been removed, trials weakened, difficulties met, because the precious promise has become as truly a factor of my daily joy as the statement that He died for my sins,—as definitely a part of my daily life as my necessary food ?” Oh that this may be our happy experience to the praise of the glory of His grace ! If we are enabled to look at the things of earth from God's standpoint, and to value Christ so much that we do not think of our giving up, but of His giving up, our hearts will know the power of this prayer, in the Holy Spirit, “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

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Further Leaflets and Particulars Gladly Sent

SUGGESTED SUBJECTS DURING SEPT: 1925:—

1st.—Death.

1. The Meaning of the Words used by the Holy Spirit.
2. "In the Day that Thou Eatest Thereof."
3. "Dead while She Liveth."
4. The Death of Christ, and "Ye Died."
5. A Believer's Death. Phil. 1. 21, 1 Cor. 15. 54, 55.
6. The Second Death. Rev. 20. 14.

8th.—Some Well-Known Words of Scripture.

1. 1 Cor. 1. 30.
2. Atonement.
3. Adoption.

15th.—Question Evening.

(Questions to help God's people welcome, if possible, a
week before).

22nd.—Adam.

1. God's Creative Work Contrasted with Evolution.
2. Adam—Unfallen.
3. The Fall.
4. Adam—Fallen.
5. Types and Shadows. Rom. 5. 14.

29th.—Noah, His Work and His Times.

1. The Message of Gen. 5.
2. "The Days of Noah" and "The Longsuffering of God."
3. Lessons from the Ark, and Its Types of Christ.
4. God's Covenant and Commandments and Noah's After-History.

GAIUS and DEMETRIUS. DEMETRIUS and DEMAS.

WE do not *know* that the Gaius of Rom. 16. 23 is the same as the one of 3 John 1. But the Holy Spirit seems to lead the hearts of believers to ponder this when He thus records the same name, and the character-descriptions are similar,—and precious. Nor is it remarkable to see God's grace in *sustaining* a faithful man in faithfulness year after year. The thought of *continuance* in love's care for the saints is *refreshing*. Surely Paul's host, and the host of the whole church* would enter into 3 John 8.

Is it possible that Demetrius was the one of whom Acts 19. 24 speaks? Why *not*? Again the Holy Spirit seems to suggest prayerful co-study of the passages. Wherein lies the difficulty? The self-seeking man of Acts 19 appears such a contrast with the one who took nothing of the Gentiles (3 John 7). "No small gain," "our wealth"—present an *opposite*. But is not this a lesson which we need, quite as much as the lesson on *continuance*? Grace can not only change the future, but *the character to-day*. This needs loving emphasis, for "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5. 17). So often believers *almost apologize* for the bad temper that remains after professing Christ's precious Name, as if character and temperament were permanently to be *manifested* as the same. Is the Lord's hand shortened at all?

But what shall we say of Demas? He *seemed* encouraging in Col. 4. 14, and in Phm. 24, but his goal has filled many with concern, and solemnly has it been called "a destiny of doubt." This is the *third* lesson: we have beheld continuance and change: here we have a heart-rending change. How it speaks to our hearts, that we may not wax cold, but that we may "*love*" our Lord's Appearing (2 Tim. 4. 8) and not—gradually and imperceptibly—this present age (2 Tim. 4. 10). Satan's snares are *insidious*, and we need to remember the Holy Spirit's warning in 1 John 2. 15 and to fear the *beginnings* of world-likeness. Backsliding "begins" before it is noticed: 'tis not a momentary step. A disease has its germinating period: we cannot discern, unless we *walk* with God. Gradual spiritual declension is Satan's lever. The continual reviving of Isaiah 57. 15 is our need, beloved fellow-Christians.

* Evidently all the believers in Corinth met in one building, and that one associated with a house and a home, *not* an ecclesiastical building. Scripture knows nothing of cathedrals, spires, stained-glass windows, and renovations—of architecture. The *spiritual* building is forgotten amid these innovations.

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Vol. xxiii. No. 10.

Oct: 1925. Free.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." 1 John. 3. 8.

A Word of Introduction.

BY the grace of God, we desire to honour HIM month by month. If these pages contain any other object, if they misrepresent His precious gospel of grace, if they in any wise glorify man, ALL IS VAIN. GOD is to be honoured.

The manifestation of the Lord Jesus is a wondrous FACT. He, the Son of God, in love, took the place of sinners; through DEATH, He put aside the work of Satan for all who are brought out of the authority of darkness (Heb. 2. 14, Col. 1. 13, 1 John 5. 19). What manner of persons should His redeemed people be. The works of the devil are not to be tolerated in their lives. Salvation from sin's doom is a powerful argument that sin may not have dominion over us to-day. Children of God should be manifest in holy devotedness TO their Lord, and holy separation FROM the world.

"BECAUSE OF YOUR UNBELIEF."

Matt. 17. 20; 15. 28.

"Great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

THE Lord lovingly refers to living faith. He does not fail to commend (Matt. 8. 10). Faith, in its fulness, (a) exalts Him, (b) denies self, (c) has acquaintance with His will and Word. Sometimes He deigns to honour a measure of faith, even though the acquaintance with much of His will may be very incomplete at the same time (2 Chron. 30. 18, 19). But it is deeply

important that we should seek to know exactly what He desires, and it is more possible than we often realize (Ps. 25. 9). Peter received power to walk on the water when his Lord spoke, but we are not told that the disciple asked first if it was the Lord's will. We have much encouragement in His love, when we want to please Him, though we falter, but we long to falter less. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly": but possibly we are not yet spiritually "enlarged" (2 Cor. 6. 13), to receive some of His good things. Hence faith may receive blessings up to a point, when it might have received many more (2 Kings 4. 6, note 13. 19). God honours faith in Himself generally, but the more it is specifically in Himself and in His Word, the more capacity will there be to receive that which is more manifestly to His glory. The writer once found a difficulty in the statement of 1 Cor. 7 that one did well, and another did better. It seemed to suggest that two things might be the will of God, and thus make God's will uncertain, and obscure the nature of sin, affecting every alternative from His will. But surely the Holy Spirit's point is clear, and applicable to hundreds of other circumstances. If I act beyond my faith, it is not well. Hence, though it is better to have power to do more for the Lord; it is well, when one has less power, to act on what one has, not on what someone else has.* This is a part of doctrine which will be misused, unless we are spiritual. But an exercised believer will not say, "I cannot give up this or that, because I have not X's faith," but rather be humbled to give up more, via growth in faith. The humbled child of God will long and seek for more faith. And lack of faith can never make actions against God's words permissible. To excuse sin, and continuance (for instance), in a sinful position, or a trade union, because one has not faith to separate from the unsaved, is to misuse God's tenderness. But one believer may be able to "risk" more physically for his Lord than another; and you or I might be as those out of their depth, if seeking to imitate such swimmers till we had first learned to swim more. Hence, the spiritual inference is, "Learn to practice faith more." Faith grows by use, and the Lord delights in it. Faith is obediently earnest to know His revealed will. If I seek His blessing, and expect it, He may honour my expectation, to encourage me to trust Him more. But if I had found out first that His Name would be more glorified by my trials, I might have asked rather for His will, and endured the strain, instead of receiving the deliverance that encouraged. He is the Encouragement, not only it. One grown up can bear more than a child: so is it spiritually. Any unbelief in Himself is a real hindrance, but our lack of knowledge of His will hinders too. God is worthy of trust. His Words are worthy of trust. May we trust Him, and them much more.

* In matters of *arrangement*. But the possession of less faith can *never* justify disobedience, nor weaken the Lord's COMMANDS.

"BE YE RECONCILED TO GOD."

2 Cor. 5. 20.

A MISREAD VERSE.

PRAYERFUL Bible Study will often bring God's beloved people to a new realization of His truth, and often He graciously humbles, as well as encourages, thereby. These words were *not* addressed to the unsaved, but to His children, and to His children generally.* We call to mind a natural tendency whereby we associate words concerning "repentance" with *unbelievers*, though they are frequently "usward" (2 Pet. 3. 9).† So is it with Gal. 6. 7, 8,§ and children of God to-day need the *same* exhortations. We find, within and around, a tendency to complain (Phil. 2. 14), to be dissatisfied, to say unguarded words. But if we walk with God, we shall not only be negatively *resigned* to trials, but thank our Heavenly Father for these. A *positive* joy in His will is precious. Otherwise we are *out of harmony* with Him, and *need*, like the dear Corinthians, to "be *reconciled* to God."

The 21st verse shows that a deeper sense of the finished work of Christ will lead to *godly restfulness*. Any irritation against the Lord's way implies that we think we "deserved" something, and indicates that we are *outside* the sanctuary (Ps. 73. 17). *Having been reconciled*, by the gracious work of God, we should never utter, or feel, one unkind or impatient word. If trials abound, what are they? Everything has a *new* meaning in Christ (2 Cor. 5. 17, 18). This aspect of the words, "Be ye reconciled to God," is of deep importance. A believer *can* be out of harmony with the Lord, but *should* not be. His will should be our will. The cruel words of some at Corinth and their surmisings and whisperings (2 Cor. 10. 10, 12. 16, 20), were because of a lack of the condition and experience of reconciliation with God. The "narrowness" which shuts out truth, and God's loving reproofs (2 Cor. 6. 12), while it made room for the world (2 Cor. 6. 14), is still commonly manifest. The apostle pleaded for the enjoyment of a new creation, in separation from the world.

The precious blood of Christ has dealt with His people's sins for eternity. Can we not trust Him to deal with to-day's trials?

* Often a misapplication to the unsaved has exalted man's free will, and man's *imagined* work, and "doing of his part" in salvation. The gospel is *FREE* to the *worthless* and *strength'ess*. Men *cannot* make their *peace* with God.

† Or "you-ward," a similar thought.

§ Not *personal* corruption destroying eternal life: but the *reaping* of this as a *possession*, by the one who has eternal life. Either the burning of works, or the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," if the fruit "remains" (John 15. 16). This is *reaping* eternal life.

“He Wist Not That The Lord was Departed from Him”

Judg. 16. 20.

THE whole character of Samson is heart-searching. His great strength was capable of so much, but . . . ! “The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times,” but . . . ! “He judged Israel . . . twenty years” (Judg. 15. 20), but “in the days of the Philistines.” He never delivered the people (contrast Judg. 15. 13, 14, 16. 23, 24 with 3. 10, 7. 14, etc). He could not help in a **united** testimony: his **personal** work is seen (e.g. 15. 16); that is all (observe verse 11). **How different** was the way in which Samuel led the people unto the Lord (1 Sam. 7. 5, 6). Samson could not guide others fully, for he could not rule “his own spirit.” With all his zeal, he was inconstant (Judg. 15. 17, 18). With all his strength, he was weak. The wisest man (Neh. 13. 26) and the strongest man **failed**,—in the same way. Hence he played, and dallied, with temptation (Judg. 16.6-20). **Gradually** his answers to Delilah came nearer to the fact, and at last he was over the precipice, and the Lord, Who **remembered** His own appointment in chapter 13. 7, “departed” from him. May it not be that we, in various degrees, have a similar tendency? God is very patient, but if we tamper and mingle with some form of evil, will there not be bitter fruit? May it not be that we are partly unconscious of our real losses already? Of Ephraim it was said, “Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not” (Hos. 7. 9). And Ephraim is not alone in this condition. May the Lord, indeed, use these words to awaken some of His dear people. There are **many other forms** of fellowship with the world beside Samson’s, and, though we are clear as to his sin, we have no room for boasting. Backsliding is not a dramatic crisis. It is often an imperceptible gliding away from the Lord.

“That Love His Appearing.”

2 Tim. 4. 8.

THE Coming of the Lord means more than words can express. How glorious the change will be. And beyond deliverance from weakness and death, there will be deliverance from sin, and we shall see **Him** Whom our soul loveth. There is a Scriptural stress on affection. The **head-knowledge** of the truth may be followed by apostasy (Heb. 10. 26, 2 Pet. 2. 20): it is **far different** with “the **love** of the truth” (2 Thess. 2. 10). When, by grace, we have the love of the truth in the Spirit, there is a precious permanence. So is it with loving Christ’s Appearing. The “study” of prophetic books and of chronology, etc., is **vain in itself**: we need to walk with God, and to delight in the prospect of soon seeing the Lord Jesus. **Loving His Appearing** is the delightful attitude put before us, and all else is incomplete. Oh that this may be so in our present daily walk.

The Holy Spirit's Guidance in Rev. 2 & 3 As to the Immediate Future.

An Appendix to Thoughts on Prophetic Instruction Implied.
(In September Issue).

IN accord with prayerful consideration of the Holy Spirit's *prophecies* in the epistles regarding certain service by God's people, *before* the soon Coming of their Lord, we may also emphasize how He *introduced* the present dispensation:—"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1. 8, notice too, at the end of this book, 28. 28). This entirely accords with Luke 19. 11-13: any human aspect may hinder "occupation" for Him. And if we acknowledge that the seven epistles of Rev. 2 and 3 are our Lord's own testimony to the angels of *assemblies then found in Asia* (and does not every other interpretation give a loophole to altering the plain testimony of Scripture?), what will the inference be? Observe how the Coming of the Lord is made subsequent to opportunity for repentance (Rev. 2. 5, 16, *cf.* 2 Pet. 3. 9*): and tribulation is prophesied in Rev. 2. 10: a definite time-mark is here given.† The *brevity* of the trial is not the point: some beloved children of God have maintained that *any known* intervening event would hinder true watchfulness. The Lord Jesus Christ has decided otherwise. Shall we not accept *His ruling*? We cannot, we would not, do anything else. There is no thought of "If the Lord tarry." The *nearness* of the Lord's Coming is emphasized, but *never* apart from the opportunity for *true preparation*. And the Lord will return to a repentant, and revived, people. Are we not encouraged to lay stress on His Coming, and to "love His Appearing," by laying stress on His *appointed* path thither?

We cannot *know* the will of God unless we *do* it. Religion may lead to much "outwardness," but we cannot *do* God's will unless we spiritually love, and walk with Him. We cannot *walk* with Him unless we are *alive*. Thus everything comes back to the possession of *salvation*, and *quickenings*, through the finished work of Christ.

The majesty of God's forbearance awakens the praise of His people: men despise Him, yet He waits patiently.

* *Cf.* Leaflet, "Two Portions of Truth United."

† We should remember Acts 14. 22, and 1 Thess.-3. 3, 4. Such knowledge of events was *never* regarded as a denial of His nearness.

Further Literature on Prophetic Subjects, and on the precious teaching of Tit. 2. 13, gladly sent to any concerned. Enquiries as to Typewritten Notes also welcome to God's glory.

“They shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not.” Ex. 30. 21.

A WONDROUS Divine statement. God ever brings before us real dangers (e.g. Ex. 12. 15, 19; Num. 18. 7). In Lev. 16. 2 we read the solemn, yet withal encouraging words, given “after the death of the two sons of Aaron,”—“*that he die NOT.*” Our minds are directed to Deut. 18. 16, and Num. 18. 3.* The people and priests alike *needed* to realize the *holiness* of God. He protected them in His love, —yet only *in His own way*. Thus is it with respect to the *antitypical* Sacrifice of Christ.

And as Israel, typically, redeemed by passover blood, needed the unleavened bread, and if they ate leavened bread they would have been *cut off*, so is it here. The priests were *once* dedicated, but water was *necessary* after the blood, that they might not *die*. Justification ever leads to sanctification. The saved soul must seek holiness (Heb. 12. 14). *Excused sin hardly suggests living union with Christ*. The deep importance of this cannot be over-estimated by children of God to-day. We find a parallel in John 13. 8-10, Heb. 12. 14. There is nothing against the eternal security of the redeemed in God's use of appointed *means* to maintain this, any more than in His use of food to keep us alive as long as He pleases. Truth operates thus:—a believer realizes holy *warnings* as a test: “Am I in Christ Jesus? Does my life show this?” Thus is he kept from that obstinacy and *continuance* in sin, which are inseparable from eternal judgment; whereas the unhumiliated, and *by no means tender*, heart of an unsaved professor may be thus *detected*. Satan's attempt to confuse the issue only makes us praise God the more for His overruling. And we should seek grace not to be on the edge of the precipice, even though the Lord keeps His own from falling over.

The grace of God does *not* mean that God helps those who help themselves. *Nor* is it only His bountiful providence, glorious though that is. Grace is sovereign, and mighty, and *free*, in the bonds of the covenant of *everlasting* love.

The Judgment Seat of Christ is not a display of sovereignty, though its basis is *sovereign grace*. There will be as much righteousness as at the Great White Throne, but *no wrath penalty* at the Judgment Seat of Christ for His people. Yet, to suffer loss is serious.

* Also Lev. 8. 35; 10. 7, 9; 16. 13; Num. 4. 15, 19, 20; 18. 22, 32; 35. 12. A remarkable repetition.

“SHOULDEST NOT THOU ALSO?”

Matt. 18. 33.

THE love of Christ constraineth us. The words of the Holy Spirit in Eph. 4. 32 ring out, “Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” This exhortation means so much. We all understand it as a general principle, but it is very different when A is unkind, and B speaks rudely, and C seems “so difficult to get on with.” But the Divine statute was made for such circumstances, and God is unchanged, and “He giveth more grace.” We are apt to overlook that the servant who owed a hundred pence was a real debtor to the other. The forgiven servant had something very real against him, YET compassion was to be shown. It is so easy to be gracious to those who are gracious, and to say what we would do. But how shall we treat the froward? The Lord makes no exceptions. We are not to have friendship with wandering ones (2 Thess. 3. 14), but any unkindness, or any bitterness of words or thoughts, is, indeed, sinful. “Shouldest not thou also?” sounds forth with its humbling words. Consider “thyself,” and what tenderness the Lord has ever shown toward thee; and still shows, beloved fellow believer. A child of God will never be impatient while he remembers his Lord’s death aright, and the patience he himself has received, and receives to-day. Irritation is lack of humility. A hasty word is an index of an unhumiliated heart. The Judgment Seat of Christ is real.

SATAN’S SUBTLETY.

SATAN’S “beguiling” is emphasized in 2 Cor. 11. 3. It is easier to be deceived than most realize. Many, many children of God think they are pleasing God, when, through lack of a closer walk with Him, they are being deceived.

Satan, moreover, introduces side issues, and causes those who hinder to “insinuate themselves.” Very remarkably, the Greek preposition *παρά* (aside), is prefixed to four different words, which come together in the Greek Concordance, to emphasize this method. Three of them only occur once. Thus unusual words are employed to emphasize this danger. In 2 Pet. 2. 1 we read of those who will bring in “aside” heresies, or self-choosings of destruction. In Gal. 2. 4 we have false brethren, brought, or led, in “aside,” who came in “aside,” a twofold stress. And Jude 4 warns of certain who slipped in “aside.” The Lord grant discernment, that Satan’s insinuations may be detected.*

* We may also notice the stress on “all manner of working” (*πανουργια*) in 2 Cor. 11. 3, Eph. 4. 14. Satan will vary his tactics, because of his one object. And the *deceitfulness* of sin appeals to the human heart, whereas there might, and would be, a fear of open iniquity. Hence the co-working with Satan in Jas. 1. 22.

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1. God's *Own* Testimony (2 Tim. 3. 16), and His *Own* Use of Scripture (Verbal Quotations, etc.).
2. The Uncertainty and Unreliability of *All* Else (Parallels).
3. How Verbal Inspiration Deals with *History*, and the Lord's Use of the *Personal* Characteristics of Writers (Parallels and Contrasts).
4. The Inference of Love and Obedience (Ps. 119. 97).

13th.—The Judgment Seat of Christ.

1. 2 Cor. 5. 10 and What it Means to Us—to Him.
2. "Every Man," "Every Work" (Matt. 25. 21, 23, Rev. 22. 12, Eccl. 12. 14).
3. "Loss" and "Reward" (1 Cor. 3. 15) Thoughts on *Misuse* of A Complete Salvation by the Precious Blood.
4. Forgotten Aspects, and their Power as Applied by the Holy Spirit.

20th.—Question Evening.

(Questions to help God's people welcome, if possible, a week before).

27th.—Our Beloved Lord at the Climax of His Earthly Life.

1. The Last—and First—Supper.
2. In Gethsemane.
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Vol. xxiii. No. 11. Nov: 1925. Free.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"To this man will I look, to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word." Isa. 66. 2.

A Word of Introduction.

A GAIN would we send forth, enabled by the Lord, these pages to glorify HIS NAME. His love is wonderful, and yet we "forget" so often. His daily interest is so real; and if TO-DAY is not too small for Him, ETERNITY is not too large.

The precious verse of Scripture above reminds us that our Heavenly Father does not look for greatness, nor toward grand buildings; but for humility. An elaborate vessel may be UNCLEAN: an earthen vessel may be CLEAN; and God is willing to use this. Spiritual simplicity, and holy reverence for Himself:—THESE HE SEEKS, not human brilliance. "A contrite spirit" is a choice treasure (cf. 1 Pet. 3. 4), and true trembling is the effect of lowly LOVE. We are not too weak for Him, but often we trust in ourselves and our strength, so that He lays us aside (Judg. 7. 2).

THE SUPER-MAN—THE BEAST. THE ANTI-CLIMAX OF EVOLUTION.

"ALL the world wondered after the *beast*" (Rev. 13. 3). That is the goal of civilization. "They worshipped the *beast*" (verse 4). Man *delights* to worship, but *not* to worship God aright. Satan seeks worship (Matt. 4. 9), and will obtain it for himself and for the emperor whom he will glorify. These things are not dreams. God has forewarned. Fellowship with the world is a *deadly peril*. (Jas. 4. 4). The world looks for a

super-man. The world longs for a *super-man*. He will be its hero and darling. Homage will be rendered ostentatiously. And that "man" (Rev. 13. 18) is "the man of *sin*" (2 Thess. 2. 3*), —"the *lawless* one" (2 Thess. 2. 8). Behold, God calls the world's expected ruler—*the beast*! Yea, not once, nor twice, but over *thirty* times in Revelation God Himself emphasizes this description. Christ is the Contrast. He Who was God laid aside His glory, and became Man, a perfect Man. But men *would not* have the One Who came in His Father's Name. Another will come in his own name, and they will vainly think themselves honoured when they honour him—the wild beast.

"Whosoever *progresseth*, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God" (2 John 9 lit:). Thus the Holy Spirit condemns "development" and "progressive thought." The commanded antithesis is found in 2 Tim. 3. 14, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, knowing of Whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child (babe) thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." The Scriptures are often set aside to-day. Acknowledged as a "classic," the Bible is dethroned from its *authority*. But some are, by grace, still sufficiently *ahead* of "the times" to *own God's truthfulness*. Human thought does not like to be restrained, but God *will* arise. The "heir of all the ages' gain" has a boasted wealth of questionable value, but his boasting is only for a while. Human reasoning is *not* God-ward, for "the mind of the flesh is not *subject* to the law of God" (Rom. 8. 7). "The world by wisdom knew not God" (1 Cor. 1. 21), and it is the same *to-day*. The trend of "modern thought" is *independence of God*. The goal is—not God, but a *beast*. Alas, men glory in their *shame* (Phil. 3. 19). They unwittingly degrade themselves, to honour the beast, and a *wild* beast too. "*Professing* themselves to be wise" (Rom. 1. 22), they still become more and more foolish. Such is *man*.

It is unpopular to be outside the customs of the world. And its "decrees" of fashion for *thinking* are as relentless as for *clothing*. But if the Son of God has made us free, we are free indeed. And shall we not stand fast in this freedom? Thus from the standpoint of the secret of His tabernacle we can behold multitudes in the broad road, and hear "the strife of tongues." God has anticipated errors, and answered in advance. Colossians and 1 John evidently dealt with all Gnosticism before it was fully developed. God foreknew. Objections of all kinds are incidentally met. Some may seem small, but for example, Acts 20. 6 mentions in passing "after the days of unleavened bread," to prevent the thought of a *yearly* observance, which has been mistakenly urged by some. God saw every error, and has provided us with *His* instruction.

* A remarkable contrast with Isa. 53. 3. Observe Christ's weeping over a sinful city.

The expressions "After its kind" in Gen. 1. 24, and the stress on the word "create" as to man (Gen. 1. 27), and on a spoken *word* instead of a "springing up," or becoming, in Heb. 11. 3, plainly indicate God's antagonism to evolution:—so is it here. The path of *man* is actually toward the *beast*. Herein is God's definite reply to evolution, and a designed contrast with "God created man in *His own image*." True, man has lost this image through sin (Gen. 5. 3), and only believers are so characterized now (Eph. 4. 24, Jas. 3. 9). But the impertinent wickedness of man to deny this original likeness, and to ignore the terrible *fall* of humanity, and, contrariwise, assume a progress instead, is a direct giving of the lie to God. It is *an appalling iniquity* when God says, "*In Our Image*," to say, "*From the image of an ape*." But 'tis only the path of ancient idolatry renewed. "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and *creeping things*" (Rom. 1. 23). Mark the gradation,—ever downwards. "God gave them up." The words of Romans 1 sound out. They changed the truth of God into a *lie* (verse 25), and shall believe the *lie* (2 Thess. 2. 11). The consummation is near. The glory of man shall soon be—the *beast*. Behold, God's reply to evolution, and God's gracious warning to any exercised, even to His blood-bought people, redeemed by the blood of the *Lamb*. Oh that some in nature's darkness may be drawn to Christ, and oh that His saved ones may walk worthily of Him, with a heavenly hope. The world has no room for a believer (John 15. 19), and the believer has no room for the world (1 John 2. 15).

BLOOD AND WATER. WATER AND BLOOD.

John 19. 34, 1 John 5. 6.

A VAST difference: the *order* of all words used by the Holy Spirit is deeply important. The Lord Jesus came *through* water and blood (1 John 5. 6). Gnosticism dared to teach that Christ was an "emanation" who came on Jesus after His baptism (thus travestying Matt. 3. 16),* and blasphemously asserted that this power left Him before His death. Such an idea would have made atonement *impossible*, for salvation by one less than God would take glory from *Him*. *The devil hates the Deity of Christ, and hates Atonement*. Gnosticism is not extinct: parts of it are revived in Christian Science and Russellism. Clearly the Epistle testifies to the *unity* of Christ's Person throughout: "*not*

* 1 John alludes to this: "The *Spirit* is the witnessing One," the Spirit came upon Christ.

in the water only, *but* in the water, and in the blood." Hence the stress, "Jesus is the Christ" (verse 1).

But the order is quite *different* in John 19. 34. *There* we behold the same teaching as in the tabernacle, viz., the *Altar* BEFORE the *Laver*. So is it in Lev. 14. 7, 8. We cannot reach the water of the cleansing Word except by the blood. The unsaved know not the purifying of the blood. In like manner, the blood is *before* the unleavened bread (typifying holiness), in Exodus 12. This is *God's order*. Any apparent typical exception has some wondrous lessons.* Thus in John 13. 10, the disciple, once "bathed, needeth not save to wash his feet." Regeneration is once, and primary: cleansing is continual. The word is as pure water. Do we realize its power thus?

"THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD."

And What It Should Mean in
Our *Daily* Walk with Him.

GOD has not given to Himself various names without a purpose. Not one is meaningless. It is delightful to realize the *value of the full inspiration of Scripture* for our *daily need*. If we cannot rest on *one* word of the original Scripture, we may err in resting on *any* word, and reach a goal in resting on *no* word. But, thanks be unto God, there is no "If." Faith has a foundation. The Holy Spirit ever exalts Christ and the Scriptures.

Spiritual belief is meant to influence all our life. If I rightly call Christ my *Saviour*, I am drawn to have no more legal conscience of sins (Heb. 10. 2) before God's holy Throne of Judgment. If I call Him "Teacher and Lord," there is a precious "ought" of obedience (John 13. 13, 14). Every word has a practical bearing: nothing is mere rhetoric.

And, beloved friends, Christ actually came to reveal the Fatherhood of God to *His* people. *Not* the universal fatherhood (see Eph. 2. 3). *That* would make regeneration unnecessary and the death of Christ unrighteous (John 3. 3). We behold the limited Fatherhood of God to those who are "a new creation in Christ Jesus." This means so much. Eternal life is *in His Son* (1 John 5. 11, 12, John 8. 35, 36). Apart from a *vital* relationship to Christ, how can we understand the meaning of the word

* Lev. 8. 6, Aaron typifies Christ: hence *first* clothed before the blood (7), and anointed ALONE (12). The washing of the priests reminds of the baptism of Christ's disciples before His finished work. Their clothing is not till *after* His anointing, which suggests fulfilled righteousness (Matt. 3. 15, 17). Thus the order in Lev. 8, with verse 14 *afterwards*, and Aaron's own sin confessed, seems designed to hint at once, *both* the complete Lord Jesus, and the *incomplete pictures* of Him, and the failure of a covenant depending in any part on man (Heb. 7. 19; 10. 1).

"Father" ? But if we *have* been saved, we have received "the Spirit Which is of God : that we might *know* the things which are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. 2. 12). This is wonderful, but it is real.

God has been pleased to reveal the Lord Jesus (Matt. 16. 17), and now, in the *indwelling* Spirit, redeemed ones are encouraged and enabled to cry "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8. 15). And He lays stress on our present realization, and our enjoyment, of this relationship (Gal. 4. 6). It is His purpose that blood-bought ones should *know*. There is no mere fiction. We are *born* children. "Adoption," as a legal *substitute for birth*, is NOT the Scriptural meaning of the word used.* We are NOT *adopted* children of God, but *born*.

"Father." How much this name means even to a child in a family. How much it means to *God's* people. It is a name of grandeur, but also of nearness. It emphasizes authority, but likewise love. It shows distinctness, but not distance. It sets forth a contrast, but implies a true accessibility. It indicates chastisement, but there is *nothing* penal, *nothing* that excludes love, or makes love secondary. There is a sweet majesty in the name, "Father." Have we experienced it ?

It is precious to notice what thoughts God links with this word. "If I be a Father, where is *Mine honour*?" (Mal. 1. 6). Again, "Be ye therefore *imitators* of God, as *dear children*" (Eph. 5. 1). "As a son *with* a father, he hath *served* with me in the gospel" (Phil. 2. 22). Evidently much is expected from a child in a godly home : much love, respect, intimacy and "likeness." † The father's standpoint is the child's, or should be. There should be no divided interest. And when we think of our Heavenly Father, how much this means. And the words of Mal. 3. 17 are almost startling :—"I will spare them, as a *man spareth his own son that serveth him*." Plainly these show the normal attitude, and God's love to us. But the great Exception stands out, in language meant to remind of Malachi, an Exception because of atonement, and thus a *contrast* with the sphere of the family, being joined with *legal judgment and wrath*. "He That spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things ?" (Rom. 8. 32). It is wonderful,—wonderful. None other word will suit. Grace is surprising beyond surprises, and yet it is exactly *in accord* with the *infinite love* of God. Saved ones can only *praise Him*.

The Concordance will show what a *frequent* emphasis there is upon the Fatherhood of God in the Scriptures written to guide believers *to-day*. John 17. 26 is clear, and we call to mind the

* *υιοθεσια* means "Placing as Sons." A leaflet gladly sent.

† Of deep importance as to Scriptural training in these "perilous times" (see 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2).

principle of Ex. 6. 3. Our Father has given a dispensational *stress*. The prayer of Matt. 6. 9 illustrates. Israel had a type (Deut. 32. 6, *cf.* Jude 5), but we the Antitype. And the typical references are few. Are we surprised that Satan has sought to bring in theories of a universal fatherhood, and a brotherhood of man? *

"My Father *and* your Father,"—these words contain a wondrous lesson and sequence (John 20. 17). And the plural "our" urges love's realization of the *brotherhood of those born again*, which is a corollary, with far-reaching effects as to *separation* from the world, and the enjoyment of the words "Love one another." Trade unionism, freemasonry, benefit societies, and other arrangements of men are the counterfeit of God's family arrangements. † The testimony of Heb. 2. 11 (*cf.* 11. 16) must not be overlooked, though we should not *call* Christ our Elder Brother. The disciples never addressed Him as Jesus, though the multitudes spoke of Him thus (contrast Matt. 21. 3 and 11). The Fatherhood of God encourages simple faith and expectation, as Matt. 7. 9-11 would ever make clear. And it meets the difficulty of some as to forgiveness. Legal forgiveness has been dealt with, but our Father's forgiveness may be rightly sought (Matt. 6. 12). The debt of Matt. 18. 34, involving chastisement, is *quite* different from the *forgiven* debt of verse 24, never to be *unforgiven*. The saved one is not put back into wrath (thanks be unto God), but He may lose his Father's approval, and this involves heavy loss. 1 Cor. 5. 5 illustrates. In less extreme cases there may be a very dark cloud. Sin cannot be excused in the "*home*." The precious unveiling of God as Father also gives a confidence as to the *future* (1 Pet. 1. 17). He will not disappoint.

But let us approach one theme which was specially on the heart in writing to God's glory on this topic. Our Father does not want His children's activity apart from their *personal love to Himself*. It has often been suggested that if you, dear parent, had a child who was very earnest, but so busy in doing something for you, that he never had any time for *you*, there would be a felt incompleteness in his love. You would miss something. Moreover, the tendency would grow for the son to be occupied with his work, and with doing it in his own way, rather than your will; and thus he would find his joy in *it*, more than in your companionship and wishes. The *home* is not to be made a *workshop*. God has not built a mere factory for us. *Our* Father, Who seeks worshippers, (since He is infinitely above His children), seeks also to *abide with them* (John 14. 23). Do we not also seek for

* Booklets gladly sent to any truly concerned before God to keep to the language He has used.

† Possibly the failure of Christians to *show* their birthright, and brotherly love, has enabled these movements to point to the *fallure* of nominal Christianity.

this? He does not desire our zeal without knowledge of His purpose. Our best is poor indeed, in itself; He has no need of "it." If we think so much of "it," we are far away from His standpoint. The true attitude of service has been seen in Phil. 2. 22, "A son *with* a father." Thus even in labour for Him we should know what nearness means. We are all prone to one-sidedness, and Satan would ever lead to this. The Holy Spirit has emphasized growing up in *all* things. The Lord Jesus went about *doing* good, but He illustrated the right attitude to the Father. The Gospel of John is full of this. "The Son can do nothing from (*apo*) Himself but what He seeth the Father do" (John 5. 19*). "The Father . . . will show Him" (5. 20), "I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father Which hath sent Me" (5. 30, 6. 38), "I honour My Father" (8. 49), "As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father" (10. 15), "Many good works have I showed you from My Father" (10. 32), "The Father Which sent Me, He gave Me a commandment, what I should speak" (12. 49). It will be observed how Christ links this thought with the name "*Father*." And in the epistles there is an emphasis on this repeated name, in connexion with gratitude for grace (e.g. Col. 1. 2, 3, 12, 3. 17). Gratitude usually implies an expression of thanks, and here seems to show a *speaking* with the Father. This is of deepest importance. The Holy Spirit does not only lead to speaking of God as Father, but to the words of address, "Abba, Father." Thus we have *asking* the Father in Matt. 8. 11, John 14. 13. Indeed the parallel with an earthly father, (though the spiritual relationship far excels), is pressed in Matt. 7. Children are not to be *distant*, nor to feel as if distant. The life of a child of God is to be transfigured, and to be brought into entire contrast with the life of an unsaved one. Too often the *names* God has taken in grace are clearer in our *theology* than our *experience*. We can argue with those who deny the sonship of believers, but do we enjoy that sonship as we should? The Holy Spirit indwells to lead to this. God is *not* the Far Away Unknown of Zulu tradition, nor the Inaccessible Being of Confucian secularism. He is not the All Pervading Impersonal One, without feelings, of Hinduism. He is the Father of *His children*. Mohammedanism has resisted the Sonship of Christ, and thus in its ninety nine names of God, it is not surprising that this is no room for the word, "Father." We turn from all these religions to rejoice in Christ's unveiling of the *Father*, and, having been brought out of the sphere of judgment by precious blood, desire henceforth to experience more fully the *home* relationship. Thus shall we honour the Father in the intimacy that His love has made possible; and this personal note will bring Him glory in a witness which must be manifest (Heb. 11. 6).

* Independence would have frustrated perfect service, and thus denied Deity. There is no denial of Deity here, but emphasis on *perfection* in every sphere He entered.

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4. Attitude in Prayer (Including 1 Cor. 11. 1-16, 1 Tim. 2. 8).
5. "The Prayers" of Acts 2. 42, and the Responsibilities of This Service.
6. The Omitted "Amen" (1 Cor. 14. 16).
7. Prayerlessness.

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"The people of God . . . Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Pet. 2. 10, 11.

A Word of Introduction.

BY the grace of God, and ever thankfully, we would send forth a testimony, concerning HIS grace and truth, HIS love and will, HIS purpose and glory. Our hearts desire to exalt Him. A ruined race is the saddening background. To be in Christ is to be outside the wicked one (1 John 5. 19). If we are redeemed, it is that we may live for Christ: believers should be a marked people, DEVOTED to Him, GRIEVED at grieving the Holy Spirit, tender to "one another," contrasted with men of this age, affected in their home and business life, as well as when they sing a hymn, by "that Blessed Hope." To glorify the Name of the Lord from this standpoint, we would humbly, yet earnestly, circulate these pages,—conscious that completeness is in Him alone, but grateful to do anything unto Him, Who has "wrought all our works for us" (Isa. 26. 12).

FREEDOM.

MEN strangely love the word "freedom." God, too, reveals a freedom, but one that is more than in name. The free-thinker is a slave-thinker. "*Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*" (John 8. 34). Many dare to maintain a subjective view of "truth," and make themselves *its standard*. This is deadly. They almost say, "If I do not see anything to be sin, it is not sin to me." Such an attitude defies God's testimony in Lev. 5. 17-19:—"Though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and

shall bear his iniquity . . . he hath certainly trespassed against the Lord." Many more make "freedom" subjective. A child will define it as, "when you can do as you like."

The Holy Spirit has answered this dangerous deceit. The apostle regarded agreement with the law of sin in his members as a captivity (Rom. 7. 23), and *freedom* as the opposite (Rom. 8. 2). James 4. 1 speaks of the "pleasures that war" in the members, and speaks very solemnly. *Pleasure is not freedom*. If freedom were "subjective," the madman has his theory of it, and madness is in the sinner's heart (Eccl. 9. 3). A *baby's* freedom would lead to cutting itself with a knife, which a wise parent lovingly withholds. Temporary "freedom," which brings to pain, is *not* real freedom. Men promise "liberty," but are themselves the servants of corruption (2 Pet. 2. 19). Temporarily satisfied craving is not freedom, as the drunkard makes evident. Alexander the Great illustrates the failure of humanity's caricature of freedom. Unless the "I," who "likes," is a truly free "I," the freedom is a misnomer. But there is a real freedom: "*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*" (John 8. 36).

Look at the forest, and behold the lion, its king. He slays and eats. Can you bind him? A little child *shall* lead such beasts of prey in the future (Isa. 11. 6). What a *degradation*, you say, from roaming unrestrained! Nay, the reverse. "The creation itself also shall be delivered from *the bondage of corruption*" (Rom. 8. 21). *That* is God's testimony. The lion's present so-called "freedom" is part of the curse (Rom. 8. 20 with Gen. 1. 28). The glory of the unconquered beasts is not glory. The *independence* of the human will (Rom. 8. 7) is not in any honour. Far otherwise. "O Lord, truly I am *Thy servant* . . . Thou hast loosed my bonds" (Ps. 116. 16). And what will be the change for the animal world from "the bondage?" Let Rom. 8. 21 give the Holy Spirit's answer—"Into the freedom linked with *the glory of the children of God*." When the children of God are glorified, there will be a *glorious freedom* for the lion, i. e. a return to *God's* original appointment for it. *That* is freedom. Nothing else. Thus we come back to the primary, but forgotten, lesson that Divine words are, and should be, used from *God's* holy standpoint.* Beloved friends, we need *God's* standpoint more,—we need it *to-day*. We are often carried along by public opinion, and need humbly to retrace our steps. "The Coming of the Lord draweth nigh." There will be a new *perspective* before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Shall we not anticipate it now?

The writer recollects with joy that the Lord crystallized certain thoughts, already blessed, and brought them into a precious *arrangement*, when He showed that the "*freedom*" of

* A leaflet illustrating this, as to words which concern judgment and eternal punishment, will be gladly sent.

the animal world is "the *bondage* of corruption." So many dear children of God have adopted the world's language.—They do not want to be "bound." They are unwilling to give up all the world's fashions and pleasures, for fear lest they seem to yield to the guidance of a fellow-believer, who humbly thinks he sees peril, and unkindness to others, in the half-way advances. (We say we have been *crucified* to the world). Again, others do not want to give up that which tries another's conscience. As some of old, they ask "Why is my liberty judged of *another* man's conscience?"—1 Cor. 10. 29. But it all seems so small in the light of *Calvary*, and of Christian love. The Holy Spirit has settled *all* these objections. And when the heart realizes that the personal "choice" (however spiritual be the language it employs, as recorded in 1 Cor. 10. 30), is *self-will*, the true freedom of harmony with the Lord's will dawns upon the repentant and lowly heart. Thus the privilege of loving, and the privileges of love, become clear, in the Holy Spirit's quiet working. And freedom from the wish of self's freedom becomes the holy devotedness unto the Lord which is sought day by day. Nor will the Lord disappoint faith, beloved readers,—faith in Himself for this.

"BROKEN."

THERE are many circumstances in our life which we cannot fully explain at once, but we grieve the Holy Spirit if we do not seek to find something of God's choice lesson for us. Everything, whether "encouraging" or "discouraging," as men say, has a message from our Father, if we are His children.

A broken article costs money to replace, and may cost time also, and neither is our own. Surely God has a purpose. Satan may bring troubles to Job, and a messenger of Satan may be Paul's thorn in the flesh. But nothing comes apart from our Father's permission. We want to spend every penny for Him, and then we have a breakage that loses a shilling. Is it "nothing" to us? Possibly this in itself is God's lesson. We have become imperceptibly careless about little things, and have wasted many sixpences. Again, the breakage resulted from—what? Why were we in a certain place at a certain time? It may be we hardly know. That in itself may be the very lesson, or part of it. I.e., we have become too prayerless about details of daily life. We have omitted walking with God. Again we may seek some "omission" of godly service earlier in the day. Yet we were not "concerned" about this. We misused the Lord's time, and so He caused us to lose "our time." Thus He graciously reminded us, to draw us to Himself.

Some "breakages" are soon "put right," e.g., a broken pen. Others give a lasting effect, (e.g., a broken limb), with a tendency to

remorse. Both remind us of the yet more terrible loss from which there is no escape. "And lose his own soul." Shall we not learn this lesson, and be more earnest as to the unsaved ?

Another spiritual help may be found in the way in which God often hinders a complete breakage. One tiny step beyond, and the damage might have been far greater, and the expense of time and money far heavier, and yet we often forget to give thanks.

A moment's slip—a breakage—may take an hour to repair, and far longer. How solemn is the lesson as to the far-reaching effects of very temporary sins. And the principle of judgment comes before us. The solemnity of life is manifest.

Again,—for there are many lessons,—how irritated we become unless taught by grace. Sometimes God grants a breakage of a tiny article to show us how unable we are to bear a heavy loss without irritation. Grumbling and remorse are the reverse of true searching of our ways. I am not pleading for indifference. Far otherwise. But occupation with a loss, when it takes our mind off pleasing Him afterwards, is perilous. Truly confessed sin is not to fill the vision subsequently. But we should ever walk tenderly, and thank God for the trial, though humbly mourning the condition that needs such precious, but painful, lessons.

"HE EMPTIED HIMSELF."

Is This A True Rendering of Phil. 2. 7 ?

WHEN beloved children of God object to any translation, and urge that a word had another meaning from usage, we should not be off-hand toward them. There is too much off-handedness among those who bear His Name. Not that we plead for natural affability, or the sinful theory that all are right. But love honours those whose concern is to honour Christ.

The word used is from the root "empty," but wicked statements have been made by Higher Critics, as to our beloved Lord, and to suggest He failed on earth. The so-called "Kenosis" theory should pain us (contrast Matt. 11. 27). A word in passing as to the NEED for pain regarding errors. Not only so, we NEED more reverence in all our language. The glory of Jesus Christ our Lord is so wondrous. The glib familiarity which speaks to Him as "Jesus," without any title, and which sings of His name and work, to a light and giddy tune, are signs of the times.

But this translation seems to honour Him by exactly representing what the Holy Spirit says. Any variation of meaning from derivation must have the Holy Spirit's own evidence, else we

- (1) Undermine belief in absolute inspiration.
- (2) Appear to be afraid of the term used, and thus to encourage others in error.

(3) **Seem** to be dishonest in our handling of the truth. These mistakes we would, by grace, humbly seek to avoid.

Observe that the Holy Spirit lays stress on the word "empty" in the context three times ("empty glory," 3, "not with a view to that which is empty did I run, nor with a view to that which is empty did I labour"). This fact usually indicates that the derivational meaning is emphasized. Moreover, the context explains "He emptied Himself, having taken a SERVANT'S form." He was not essentially a Servant. He took this form. He was essentially "in the form of God." The emptying was, therefore, of certain glory. Verse 3 implies this. Believers should not seek empty glory, for He Who had real majesty emptied Himself of this. He emptied Himself, but never ceased to be Himself. He was the Emptier as well as the Lowly One. So in Heb. 9. 14, He was the Offerer as well as the One Offered. His Deity is primary: His Humanity is secondary. And if He laid aside glory, He ever had a fulness of grace and truth (John 1. 14), and this was glory, though natural men saw no majesty (Isa. 53. 3). "We beheld His glory." The badgers' skins were outside, but the holy glory was inside. And if we have felt our need of a Saviour, we understand why He emptied Himself, and the reason for His after-words, "Why hast thou forsaken Me?" The heart-broken sinner, caused to become a humbled saint, is the reverse of a "Higher Critic." Pride flourishes far off from Calvary. A precious Saviour attracts His people's love and devotion, and reverence, and the Holy Spirit ever glorifies Christ (John 16. 14).

"The Third Part of the Sun was Smitten." Thoughts on Human "Ne-Science."

MANY speak frivolously of Genesis 1, and of God's arrangement as to light and the sun. Previous human errors as to the nature of light might have called forth a little modesty, but repeated mistakes have not humbled men, alas, and the words are illustrated, "They were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush" (Jer. 6. 15). Not only so, the child of God brings great dishonour to his Lord whenever he seems confused, and alarmed by questions. There is *no reason for alarm*. To attempt to square the circle of Divine revelation with present-day science, in everything, will only make *oneself* out of date on a near "tomorrow." While so-called "street scientists" persist in the theory which demands that circumstances when they were *not* present *must* have been the same as when they are present, they are out of court. Their "inferences" are from *partly* understood data, or they assume that all *must* have been, in some way, without miracle, intervention, or Divine suddenness. But logically

they thus deny the *very existence* of the things which they now see as existing. *How* did they come about? To explain *all* on their hypothesis is impossible,—quite impossible. To be *sure* as to anything distant in time, apart from revelation, is impossible. The theory of *uniformity and regularity* of man's conception of these principles, has received a rude shock. Non-miraculous scientists *must* be WITHOUT a *beginning or foundation*, and WITH many missing links. The greatest possession of man is a wealth of "missing links." How different the quiet simplicity of a child of God. "*By faith we understand.*" Faith is *super-reasonable*: *all* else is *unreasonable*.

And let the Scriptures speak for themselves. God does *not* use the same word for "light" Gen. 1. 3 and 1. 16. The sun is to *rule* the day, but *what* was there to hinder an "unruled" day before? The Mighty Power That could cause the sun (and the sun does exist) could also have arranged light, and a "day," and all else. And, beyond this, *He* is a Personal Power, Who has arranged salvation, even of *guilty sinners, though they have set Him at nought*. None can understand creation except they have experienced it, in the *new creation*—except they know *Him* Who is Salvation.

The words from Rev. 8. 12 which head these meditations are deeply instructive. "The day *shone not* for a third part of it" is the Holy Spirit's comment. Not "the day was $\frac{2}{3}$ as bright." Thus the smiting was of *sunlight*, not $\frac{1}{3}$ of the *material sun*. So we speak of the "*sun rising*." This gives the key to various Scriptures.

Alas, men first fix their own meaning on a word, and *then* attack Scripture, and call it unseen life. In another way those who teach annihilation *fix their own meaning first*. Beloved friends, if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, let us read Scripture from His standpoint, and let the Bible be *its own dictionary*. A reverent willingness to be *taught by God* is a precious treasure. Blood-redeemed ones take a humble standpoint, and the Holy Spirit never led a man to criticize, but to be criticized by, His inspired Words (*cf.* Heb. 4. 12).

Prophecy.

NO Scripture can be brought forward to level this to ordinary teaching. The Holy Spirit distinguishes definitely between the prophet and teacher (1 Cor. 12. 28, Eph. 4. 11) He urges moreover, godly training to teach (2 Tim. 2. 2), and that a long knowledge of the Lord should equip for this (Heb. 5. 12), but never speaks thus of prophecy. Probably many dear children of God have drawn a wrong inference from 1 Cor. 14. 3. Because-

prophecy is to edification we cannot say that whatever is to edification is prophecy ; any more than adopt the universalistic argument that because the flock of God's pasture are men, therefore men are His flock. 1 Cor. 14. 4 itself answers this. None would turn round the other sentence and say, He that edifieth himself speaketh in an unknown tongue.

Our Father is not limited, He is sovereign ; but He has a reason for emphasizing "the *foundation* of apostles and prophets" in Eph. 2. 20, for referring to *wrongly* claimed prophecy in the last view of past Christian assemblies (Rev. 2. 20, *cf.* verse 2), and for omitting reference to prophecy in the varied precious unveilings of *revival* in the last days. We would not add to His Words.

" THAT ONE."

THIS emphatic "Name" for our beloved Lord Jesus occurs six times in the first epistle of John alone. "As THAT ONE walked" (2. 6), "THAT ONE is Pure" (3. 3), "THAT ONE was manifested" (3. 5), "THAT ONE is Righteous" (3. 7), "THAT ONE laid down His Soul (Lev. 17. 11) for us" (3. 16), "As THAT ONE is, so are we in this world" (4. 17). A wondrous thought. HE is the Glorious and *Contrasted* One, the One to be exalted and honoured. Yet His people are "made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5. 21). We cannot emphasize HIM too much, and yet believers are members of HIM. It is all so wonderful. Yet though we have this precious union, we are reminded that the child of God must *be purified*, but Christ is Pure. So is it throughout. And all Scripture bears the same testimony, that He may be honoured more. Spirituality has never failed to declare the merit and glory of Christ, and, that which is derogatory to HIM, in His Deity and Perfections, is *not* spirituality, however it may profess to speak well of His Name.

By Faith.

These all died in faith (Heb. 11. 13), and this meant something to them: the promises were so real and precious, and yet these were not permitted to have the "material" realization. Yet this very fact strengthened faith. And they lived before they died. "By faith he sojourned." Let us not reserve faith for a death-bed. We must "walk by faith" to-day. "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2. 20). If we live by faith, we shall be prepared to die in faith, if this is the will of God, or enabled by faith to be ready for the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“They Hated Me Without A Cause.”

John 15. 25.

“Being Justified Freely by His Grace.”

Rom. 3. 24.

THE same word is found in these two passages, to emphasize that which is *apart from constraint*. Man's *gift* to Christ was hatred! Such is man. The *spontaneous* action of those in a fallen race is rebellion. “Circumstances” may help or hinder its *manifestation*, but *it is there within the heart*. The words of Jer. 17. 9 come to mind. Man's condition is hopeless,—apart from grace.

But where sin abounded, *grace* overflowed. And God's *Gift* is marvellous (John 3. 16, 2 Cor. 9. 15). Let a “wicked” one be brought down to own himself *nothing but wickedness*, yet this dire ruin is *nothing against grace*. The sinner's plea is that the Saviour died for those who had *nothing but guilt*. The very words that seem to shut out all hope, indicate the ground of faith. The *realized* death-sentence on sinners becomes the very path of hope, for it was through the holy severity of a death-sentence that the Holy One of God was *able to die*, and thus to bring eternal life. “Justified freely”—here is the reply to Job's question (9. 2). Man *cannot* answer God (Rom. 3. 19). “If He will contend with him, he cannot answer Him one (thing) of a thousand.” But “One Man among a thousand” has been *found* (Eccl. 7. 28), of Whom it is true, “It was exacted and He Himself answered” (one literal rendering of Isa. 53. 7), and thus God “justifieth the ungodly” (Rom. 4. 5)—freely. And grace reigns through righteousness (Rom. 1. 21), for Christ *is* “the Lord our Righteousness” (Jer. 23. 6).

“If the Lord Will” :—

Meetings for Believing men at **2, Minories, Aldgate, E.C.**, every **Tues.** at **6. 30** (preceded by opportunities for prayerful conversation, Greek and Hebrew, to the glory of God). During December and January we would leave the usual arrangement of various subjects, and in view of the solemn trend of the times, seek to know more of the eight parables of Matt. 13. The Lord Jesus has laid special stress on the understanding of these things (Mark 4. 11). Matt. 13. 35 should be noticed prayerfully. It is fitting that the Mustard Seed and Leaven precede the sad feast of “Christmas,” with its departure from the Lord's plan (Literature gladly sent).

- 1st. The Sower, the Sowing, and the Seed.
- 8th. The Tares of the Field.
- 15th. The Mustard Seed and Tree.
- 22nd. The Woman and the Leaven.
- 29th. The Treasure Hid, Found, Hid, and Secured.

Further particulars gladly given. It is a joy to know that exercised children of God at a distance are pondering these subjects to His glory, in a path of separation, and willingness to be *misunderstood, for Christ's own sake*. Meeting Room, 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E. 7.

Telephone Maryland 2196.

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Thus saith the High and Lofty One That inhabiteth eternity, Whose Name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Isa. 57. 15.

A Word of Introduction.

HOW precious is God's love. How wondrously He condescends. Grace is a reality. We need to be exercised as to His stress on the background life. Publicity is not THE test, nor the chief one. "Revival" is not a matter merely of meetings. Isaiah 57. 15 speaks of A CONTINUOUS REVIVING. As soon as we begin to DEPEND on CRISES, and sudden emotions, on human methods and large meetings, there is something wrong. We are not to WAIT FOR "a revival mission." God is, so graciously and tenderly, the Reviver of His people to-day, even in the workshop and kitchen, and the life that pleases Him is not by JERKS,—but Enoch WALKED with God. In 1 Cor. 13 love is NOT seen in the display of verses 1-3, BUT in the humble unassertiveness, and graciousness of verses 4-7. LITTLE THINGS in the Holy Spirit are needed fruit, and blood-bought ones should thus show the new creation.

"LIKE UNTO LEAVEN, WHICH A WOMAN TOOK." Matt. 13. 33.

THE Holy Spirit does not use symbols indifferently and haphazardly, nor dare we separate earlier and later Scriptures. How often did the Lord Jesus refer to the Hebrew words of truth. His testimony to Scripture is invariable, and answers every critic—even as to Mosaic authorship, Messianic psalms, the historical character of Jonah, and the prophetic authority of

Daniel. He *thrice* emphasized the very book which critics have profanely regarded as a forgery, when He met their prince in the wilderness. Thus, too, in Matt. 13. 33 we have striking allusions to Zech. 5.*

Moreover, in view of Romanism's attitude as to *Mary*†, (which she would have rejected), and in view of the self-sought position of a woman in such systems as Theosophy, Christian Science, and Seventh Dayism, there is much food for thought here.

God at the outset gave to the woman an honoured position of fellowship and dependence (Gen. 2. 23, 1 Cor. 11. 3, 1 Tim. 2. 13).§ When believing women take this position, they are truly exalted (Matt. 26. 6-13, Luke 10. 38-42), but any *usurping* of authority is actually disgrace (Isa. 3. 12), and we should not glory in our shame.

The *principle* of 1 Tim. 2. 12 applies to Christ and the Church. We remember, moreover, the relationship of the typical sun and moon, "the lesser light." The contrast of Manoah's wife in Judg. 13. 6, 10 with Eve, who acted independently, and assertively, (mark the ominous words, "Unto her husband *with her*" in Gen. 3. 6), cannot be easily overestimated.|| The unhindered prayers and harmony of 1 Pet. 3. 7, with the *true* relationship of verses 5 and 6, must help any who simply want to please God.

But as in the *fourth* letter of Rev. 2 "that woman Jezebel" asserted herself, (*cf.* exactly the type in 1 Kings 21. 7, 8), so in the *fourth* parable of Matthew 13, *the woman takes the leaven*. She is in authority. Parables often describe according to *profession*, as the *foolish virgins*, the *ninety-nine sheep*, the *elder son*, the *wicked servant*. And thus we have the professing "kingdom of the heavens" like unto leaven. A solemn departure. A new kingdom inaugurated by a woman—evidently the harlot of Rev. 17. 'Tis *usurping Christ's position*. He sows, but she takes a *parasite* plant. And *He* is to be in the midst (Heb. 2. 12), but she substitutes herself (Zech. 5. 7). The ephah is the counterfeit of the ark of the Lord—within we find wickedness, instead of the types of Christ: upon it, a weight of lead, *not* the pure gold of God's mercy-seat-throne: accompanying it,

* Leaflet on related subjects gladly sent.

† Leaflets: "Hail Thou That Art Highly Favoured," and "Christ or Mary," on application.

§ A very striking thought is wrapped up in God's reference to Eve and to animals. *They* were not helps,—meet for him. One admires an animal's faithfulness, but the "petting" of a dog may become almost idolatry, and a denial of God's arrangement. Moreover, if a believing wife draws her husband from more devotedness to the Lord, and wishes a little more of the world, how serious is this sin. She is *not* to leave him to go "alone" (Gen. 2. 10) in the Lord's path. Nothing but conscience before God can allow of denial of this principle.

|| See, too, the *distinct mode* of answer of Zacharias and Elizabeth in Luke 1. 60, 63, though they fully agreed. Their godliness thus shines out.

the *women* with stork's wings, not the cherubim*; and its *house* in Babylon, *not* Jerusalem. *The woman substitutes herself.* Romanism boldly says, "The church": God says, "Wickedness" (Zech. 5. 8), "the mystery of lawlessness" (*ἀνομία* is feminine 2 Thess. 2. 7).

Everything becomes clearer in the light of the preparatory parable. The mustard seed, *whenever* (*ὅταν*, class description) it is fully *grown*, tends to leap over the boundary between herb and tree ("after its kind" Gen. 1. 12), and is thus a blemish in nature, even as thorns, *appointed* to remind of the curse. The kingdom Christ planted has leapt over a Divinely fixed boundary, and changed itself to a *world*-kingdom—the birds of the air show this, in the light of Ezek. 31. 6, Dan. 4. 14. A glance at Rev. 17. 2 shows the *two* aspects of the two parables together.

Remarkably, even in the memorial of the Lord's Supper, Christendom has *either* made the "mass," or *altered* the Lord's simple "This do" of unleavened symbols. In other words, where Christ *gave*, and said, "Take, eat," the *woman* has dared to "*give*" something else, and thus the giving and *eating* of Gen. 3. 6 are unconsciously paralleled:‡

Hence the change in the mustard *tree* leads up to the woman's *new* kingdom, hidden at first, corrupting the fine flour of *truth*, yet not attacking all *at once*. Ah, beloved friends, if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, let us emphasize Himself in the midst, and *dread* the leaven, *dread* any usurping of *His rights*.

CRISIS OR CONTINUANCE? THOUGHTS ON DISPROPORTION.

GOD'S precious use of *various* means of blessing we cheerfully and thankfully own. The principle of Heb. 1. 1 ever applies. He has "sundry times and divers manners," and we read of the "variegated" grace of God. But we need to be careful lest we become onesided. Thanks be unto Him for the *crisis* of a new birth. That cannot be a growth. But, *after* that, the spiritual life should not depend on "crisis" any more than the physical. This *looking for "something unusual"* becomes unhealthy. Emotion is "worked up," and hundreds of opportunities are lost, *while* waiting for "*something great*." A large meeting takes the place of personal communion with God. "Revival" becomes linked with special efforts instead of with *daily experience* of the Lord. "Thus saith the High and Lofty One . . . I

* God describes angels as *men*; art depicts them as *women*, and shows its origin and relation to Babylon.

‡ We repeat, "Quite unwittingly by many," and the Lord accepts their golden love, though mixed, alas, with the dross of tradition which He hates. Further leaflets gladly sent.

dwell with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa. 57. 15). *That is daily revival.* There is nothing dramatic about it, but, how precious, beyond words.

Is there not a danger in craving for "power" as to great works, while the privilege of *growth*, and of doing *all* things in the Name of the Lord Jesus, is almost forgotten? The stress on *crises* overshadows the Holy Spirit's stress on "growth."

Undoubtedly if we have wandered, there *is* a need for a crisis. We must be brought back to the place where we were at the first (Gen. 13. 4), and we *all* require such blessing; but we should not build on these experiences as normal, and make godly continuance secondary. There is nothing to be said against holy crises, but much to be said against occupation with *seeking them beforehand*, and virtually putting off revival till a special event is reached. The delay excuses sin. The *non-expectation* of reviving amid the trivial round of daily life is *the sad result*. Idolatry is the worship of that which is *seen*, and the tendency to be swayed by outward appearances, and large meetings, may hinder *a life for God*.

Remember, beloved friends, how much of the earthly walk of the Lord of Glory was evidently in the background. The details were all lovely before the Father. His public ministry from the time when He was about 30 years of age, as to the flesh, was the short part,—far shorter. Is not this a lesson for us?

We are often *affected* by surroundings, and mass movements are then easy. But, let it be repeated, we need reviving in the workshop, the home and the kitchen. "He wakeneth *morning by morning*" (Isa. 50. 4). This is, as it were, an anointing with fresh oil. Daily the manna was granted: yesterday's manna bred worms and stank: to-morrow's could not be obtained in advance. "Daily shall He be praised."

When the disciples asked, "Lord, *add* to us faith," as if it were a mass weight given on special occasions, He spoke of a seed of faith and *growth*. Not a *crisis-addition*, but a continual growth, is to be emphasized. The one who depends on crises will naturally look to some man or men, and will drift into an "up and down" life. As one who takes *stimulants* and looks to these instead of *food*, such a believer will lack spiritual regularity. *We need food*. The parallel just mentioned is of deep importance. God delights to use ordinary things: Naaman wanted a display, but the Lord used that which was not dramatic. And the Lord was not in wind or earthquake or fire, but in the still small voice of 1 Kings 17. 12. He draws us to see the holiness of tiny duties unto Him. The same principle affects "crises." If we have gone down to Egypt, we *must* be brought back remarkably. *Gradual return from backsliding* is not to be encouraged, but the regarding of crises as *normal* undoes the message of 2 Pet. 3. 18, and almost makes children of God *anticipate* a departure

from which they will be startlingly awakened. May He graciously bring us to the balance of truth, that He may be exalted.

Let us notice too, with sorrow, the wrong position which many apparently believing women take, and seek to bring before them their true dignity, in direct and glad contrast with the theories of the twentieth century, *as well as* its demoralizing fashions. 1 Cor. 11 sends forth its precious message and shows a path in which the Lord will protect His people from evil angels (1 Cor. 11. 10), who are seeking to corrupt. Our true glory is to honour the will of our Lord, and the Holy Spirit does not lead otherwise. Often have God's dear people sorrowed over the "leavening." Let them not forget the added reference to Eve's sin and Jezebel's method, "*which a woman took.*" The *initiative* belongs to the Lord Jesus. It is for His people to follow *His* will, and to delight in the simplicity of love. The present tendency of children to aim at authority (Isa. 3. 4, 12) is another sign of the times. And, in home and Christian gathering alike, we need a holy contrast and a holy protest, if, redeemed by the blood of Christ, we own none other lordship, but thankfully obey, and look for Him Whose Name alone we bear.

GOD'S TESTIMONY, OR FEELINGS.

"I VERILY thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26. 9). Such words show plainly, and *painfully*, how impossible it is to depend on the feelings of an unregenerate man. 'Tis not a question of sinning *wilfully* and daringly against conviction. The words "I ought" are amazing. The theory that man always knows right and wrong, and that conscience is the voice of God, and infallible, is Divinely judged. We rejoice to own God's *frequent* warnings within, but over-statement involves a denial of man's *fallen* condition. Let there be *two* witnesses in this matter from the *one* Scripture. The Lord Jesus said, "Whosoever killeth you will *think that he doeth God service*" (John 16. 2). And the foolish virgins in Matt. 25. 11, 12 are *surprised* that they are unknown. Myriads *think* they are saved, and they are *not* (Luke 13. 25-27).

After salvation, the believer is wondrously privileged. He has a new life that he may walk in newness of life, and the Holy Spirit Himself indwells. But He does not force Himself upon us. He does not "drag" but "lead" (Rom. 8. 14), and, if this is not sought, He does not depart, but He is grieved (Eph. 4. 30). The grieving of the Spirit of God by the misuse of human feelings is deeply solemn.

And the believer may err seriously even as to *feelings which seem right*. The Spirit of God blows on the *goodliness* of the

flesh (Isa. 40. 6-8). Thus the flesh *has* goodness: it is *not* always ugly. And Satan is transformed into an angel of *light* (2 Cor. 11. 14, 15). So in Matt 16. 22, Peter showed apparent kindness (margin), but the Lord Jesus unmasked Satan's *working in the feelings* (23, cf. Luke 22. 49, 50). The natural things of "*man*" (Matt. 16. 23) are Satan's opportunity. In like manner, many to-day are urged to spare themselves, and take certain unnecessary and unapproved "*comforts*" (observe the *order* of words in Ex. 18. 23 *God second: we must seek God first*).

David, prompted by earnest feelings, wished to build a house for God, and Nathan, moved by similar feelings, urged this (2 Sam. 7. 2, 3). The Lord made clear that *His will* alone was decisive (2 Sam. 7. 4, 5). We must wait for His counsel (Psalm 106. 13). Hence 'tis not a question of evil surmisings and "*ugly*" feelings alone, but of those which seem most encouraging. How *natural* for the healed leper of Mark 1. 44, 45, and the once blind men of Matt. 9. 30, 31 to make known the Lord's mighty works. But natural and reasonable feelings are allowed no authority: "*As for God, His way is perfect.*"

The hurried action of Acts 1. 15 ("*stood up in the midst*": contrast, "*Sit,*" Luke 24. 49 lit :) is *not* recorded as an evidence of self consciously exalted. The wish was good, but *feelings* must ever be subject to the Lord's mind and will. It is here that children of God need most care. "*Wrong wishes*" are quickly detected, but when the desire is God's glory, it is so *easy* to do His work in our way and time. The result may be that an Uzza *touches* the ark, which is being brought up *wrongly*, amid *many* desires to please God, on a *new* cart. We dare not say that the many "*new carts*" of modern missions are *all and always intentionally* evil. Thanks be unto God for all *love* to Him: He *only* can separate dross from gold. We do not speak of those who attack the Scriptures and so forth, but of many who seem earnestly thinking they serve their Lord. Yet *His revealed will* must guide our path, if we are to glorify Him aright—nothing else.

If we, as it were, bring spices on the resurrection morning, we waste our Lord's money. "*Reverent*" feelings may erect grand buildings, but they are dispensationally *out of date*. The feelings do not make the will of God to change, nor do they make up for the departure from *His* plan.

We cannot suggest that those who agreed with the complaint of Judas had his motives (Matt. 26. 8), they were "*carried away*" as Barnabas. Nor is there any evidence that Martha was unlovingly serving. She evidently acted by feelings, and wished to please the Lord in her way. So was it with Paul in Acts 21. 4 (see verse 13). And apparently many have gone, unsent, to parts of Christian work with earnest feelings all the while. The devices of Satan already unveiled in Matt. 16. are again before us in 2 Cor. 2. 11. The swing of the pendulum from carelessness to severity is marked (verse 10). So subtle is Satan. Much

intentional holiness has been urged in language that denies, for instance, Romans 7, much devotion *amid* errors as to baptism and the Lord's Supper, and much looking for Christ's return *together with* grievous misinterpretation of prophecy.

Hence the *humble* believer must be very gracious, and beware of sweeping assertions. Personally responsible for all truth he is brought to see, he must not partake in anything against his Lord's will. This is *true* love to his brethren, that there may be mutual stirring up, in view of the Judgment Seat of Christ. But whenever *motives* are judged, is it not evil? We little know our own danger of being misled by earnest feelings. *They* are precious whenever subject to God's words, but deadly if placed in control. The Lord alone has that right, and *His words* are given for our sure guidance. The Holy Spirit applies these words, and harnesses the godly feelings of the redeemed to them. It is this unconscious pride, linked with independence, which must be judged, in order that we may please the Lord as He hath appointed. Unconscious pride, that our own feelings are right, is none the less pride.

"THE CURSE OF SICKNESS."

THUS a dear young man, evidently desiring to emphasize God's true power to heal, described sickness, when in conversation with me. As many beloved children of God seem misled in this matter, a few thoughts may help to His glory. And let there be no hasty decision, only prayerful willingness for *God's will*.

We cannot overlook the fact that many who bear Christ's precious Name, and who are disappointed by the worldly barrenness of Christendom, look for something else, and movements connected prominently with "healing" seem, at first, to meet their felt need. They may be willing to own the gross egotism of *some* of the literature, characterizing a "revival" by a man's name, but they find contrasts, and physical results, and are thus encouraged, feeling they have a parallel with God's work of old. Frequently a hurried, unkind, and off-hand generalizing of the *whole* work, by those who oppose, only leads to more disappointment with the spirit and manner of such, and thus a more open heart for the movement attacked. We little know how easily *one* harsh and unjust word may drive many from the Lord's will.

It is important to realize what the Holy Spirit has definitely said, and what He has not *said*, but what we *think* He has implied. In other words, we must not put *our* inferences on a level with God's statements. *We* may be in error. For example, "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." But if we infer from this that it is *wrong* for a believer to die, because it is wrong for him to sin, we mistake God's teaching. And if it is not wrong for believers to die, why *must* it be wrong for them to be ill? Observe that the Holy Spirit *ever* blames for

sin, and shows confession to God on this account, but *never* blames for illness in the same general way, nor urges *confession of the sin of sickness*.

But it may be said, "No, yet in James 5 a believer is to confess the sin which has led to the illness." For the present we will not pause over the word "if." The Lord's lesson is clear in 1 Cor. 11. 30. Yet this is a *definite point of contrast* with the theory that health alone can glorify God. The illness is not sin, *but linked with chastisement for sin*. The objection that God can use other means is beside the mark. We know He *can*, but acknowledge humbly whatever He *does*. It is for Him to choose. The further objection that illness is not sanctifying is equally beside the mark. Chastisement of any and every kind is *not sanctifying in itself*; 'tis when we are "exercised thereby" (Heb. 12. 11). If illness is because of sin, is it permitted to God's people *in love, or not?* If in love, it is *not a curse*. But it may be said, "We should own the sin, and at once lose the illness." Never would the writer say one word against the precious first injunction. We long that not only beloved readers, but we ourselves also, may be quicker to confess our sins, and to see a Father's hand in *all* circumstances. Every shortcoming should grieve us (1 Chron. 4. 10). But does the dear friend, who objects, imply that a time will come in *this* life when we shall not *need* refining, when there will be no dross to need fire? The Holy Spirit teaches otherwise in 1 Pet. 1. 7 and Heb. 12. 7, and the Lord Jesus bids all His disciples to confess sin. It is here that one serious pitfall lies: the standard of *holiness* is lowered.*

("If the Lord will," to be continued, next month).

* Let our godliest moments be more godly, *yet* we fall short of Christ.

"If the Lord Will":—

Meetings for Believing men at **2, Minories, Aldgate, E.C.**, every **Tues. at 6, 30** (preceded by opportunities for prayerful conversation, Greek and Hebrew, to the glory of God). During December and January it seems God's will to leave various subjects, and in view of the solemn trend of the times, to seek to know more of the eight parables of Matt. 13. The Lord Jesus has laid special stress on the understanding of these things (Mark 4. 11). Matt. 13. 35 should be noticed prayerfully. We hope to ponder this month:—

The One Pearl, Purchased at Great Cost.

The Drag Net, and the Solemn Severance.

The Scribe Taught for the Kingdom of the Heavens.

A Question Evening may be possible. We do desire that our Father may be honoured in the bringing together of more exercised men, who long to be men of God, and whose business is in, or near, this great city. Surely there must be many such who would value this intercourse, and humiliation before Him. Further particulars gladly given. It is a joy also to know that exercised children of God at a distance are pondering these subjects to His glory, in a path of separation, and willingness **EVEN TO BE MISUNDERSTOOD, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.**

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4. 30.

A Word of Introduction.

BY the grace of God we would again send forth these pages. Truth does not amuse, but thereby He encourages His people. And this is our desire, that He may be glorified. How definite is the contrast between an ear for truth and itching ears (2 Tim. 4. 3).

Our Heavenly Father has been pleased to reveal something of His great and eternal love. But who can tell ALL that this means? The INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit is wondrous. May there be more consciousness of dependence. The Holy Spirit leads; He does not drag. We are not COMPELLED to be obedient and spiritual. It is possible, and sadly possible, to grieve the Holy Spirit, We are not told that He will then cease to indwell. But how painful to think, "I have grieved the Spirit of God." That we alike may have a TENDER CONSCIENCE as to this are these pages humbly sent forth. May many a redeemed one be helped thereby to know and please his Lord more. So will He be glorified, as we look for "That Blessed Hope." To talk of the Coming of the Lord without love's obedience is, indeed, disappointing. Oh that we may be revived to-day, and every day (Isa. 57. 15).

"THE CURSE OF SICKNESS."

(Continued from last Issue).

Moreover, the error seems to suggest "So much failure, so much illness." But Psalm 73 reminds us that God is not always using *proportion* in this life. Herein is a test of faith, and very important it is. Some believers have a "needs be" for *extra trials*, because they desire their faith's testing to bring Him more

glory in that Day (1 Pet. 1. 6, 7). Thus a Job and a Paul experienced particular visitations of Satan, in their flesh, and Timothy, uniquely unselfish (Phil. 2. 20), had "often infirmities" (1 Tim. 5. 23), whereas many miracles of healing seem linked with the *unsaved* or those *unknown, not with God's faithful servants. They fill up afflictions in their flesh, they spend and are spent, death worketh in them.* Such words are momentous.

And, observe, that these passages fully acknowledge *Satan's* hand in physical trouble. An extreme case is 1 Cor. 5. 5; but Paul was the reverse of "that wicked person," yet to prevent pride, *because of its seed within*, the messenger of Satan was permitted. And Satan apparently has "might" connected with death (Heb. 2. 14*): hence a possible explanation of his opposition when thwarted, it would seem, as to corrupting the body of Moses (Jude 9). The woman of Luke 13. 16, bound by Satan, was not exceptional. The Lord Jesus went about healing "all that were oppressed of the devil." †

Nor is there a refusal to Paul in 2 Cor. 12 as to Moses in Deut. 3. What if he *could* have asked, and, it may be, have received his request (Ps. 106. 15)? In any case, he *chose*, by grace, to glory, and "take pleasure, in infirmities." *These could not have been sinful.*

'Tis the same as with persecution. The Lord may use a Nero, but 'tis *the Lord Who uses*, and with Whom we are concerned. His people see *His* hand, and praise Him. And persecution may be at once a reward for faithfulness in measure, and a chastening to purify from some failures. To deny God's power in using the wrath of men to praise Him is to limit Him. A Nebuchadnezzar must be *His* servant, and an Assyrian become the rod of *His* anger. The humble believer, therefore, is able to say, "I know that God can heal at once, or otherwise: my *aim* is neither to get well, nor to remain ill, but to thank Him, and learn His will, and desire, as soon as He has used the trial, to be free. *I dare not depend on usual methods and men*, nor run blindly after drugs (2 Chron. 16. 12). The illness is a reminder that I am still in this tabernacle, and groan, § and that the redemption of the body is future. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus"—and, meanwhile, may I hear the rod, and become more like to Him Whose Name I bear."

Yes, "the redemption of the body" is *future*. Any beloved friends who claim healing now are quite right when they say that deliverance from all illness *is* in the atonement, but they hardly have the Holy Spirit's warrant for adding, "The application should be now!" || This would virtually *deny* "this body of our

* Note, too, Rev. 9. 1-5.

† Cf. Matt. 4. 23: all without distinction, not all without exception.

§ Not "complain": true humbling implied.

|| The quotation from Isaiah 53. in Matt. 8. 17 does not use the sacrificial word (as Heb. 9. 28, see too John 1. 29), nor refer to the death of the Lord Jesus in Isa. 53. 11, but primarily His wondrous life of strain. He *felt*; as Mark 5. 30 graphically shows: this is often overlooked.

humiliation." Indeed, the writer was told that we ought to have a perfect body. Thus taught not God's servant Paul. I am aware responsible teachers would deny this thought of perfection; but the inference seems logical, and dangerous,—even on the line of 2 Tim. 2. 18, albeit unconsciously. Never would we doubt, nor undervalue, the Lord's gracious enabling to the body. When believers act just like the world for healing, there is something wrong. But willingness to suffer is not unimportant. It may be said, "Willingness for the effects of the fall, and for the attacks of Satan?" The reply is, "Yes." Not willingness for the *actions* that are sinful results of the fall, but willingness to bear. Any who teach otherwise forget that we are limited in every way through the fall. Not only is the animal world changed, and the vegetable world without its full fruitfulness, but our minds are weakened. Shall we complain? The Holy Spirit uses tenses with perfect accuracy in Romans 7 and 8, and the body is *now* indwelt by the Spirit, but 'tis "*shall* quicken," or *make alive*, your mortal bodies. *When* the quickening takes place, the body is no longer mortal. 2 Cor. 4. 11, 12 would link with Rom. 8. 10, to show the present condition.

Surely this weakness of the body of humiliation (Phil. 3. 20), is not a curse. It would seem that some of God's most searching chastisements are by the body. The live coal on the lips may suggest much.

But the point is raised that God's own Name is "The Lord That healeth thee." It is observable, at the outset, that this Name is associated with Israel, and their earthly blessings as in Lev. 26 and Deut. 28. We are apt to overlook the healing of soul-diseases (Ps. 103. 3) and the present *spiritual* parallels with Israel's earthly possessions (Mark 10. 30). Yet we may go further. We do not deny the Lord's power to heal; praise be unto Him. But the unconscious pride which determines that health is a right, soon exalts oneself, and despises others, who may be glorifying God in the fires. There are many things we cannot judge before the time when the Lord comes. It is well to be spiritually sensitive, but to speak little that commends ourselves is often wise. And now, as to the "going further" just mentioned, God speaks in Ex. 15. 26 of special diseases on the Egyptians (*cf.* Deut. 7. 15). It may be that many have generalized. The Holy Spirit uses *various* words for the sicknesses Christ healed, and it is observable that *νοσος* (*nosos* "sickness") is not in the epistles, nor *μαλακια*,* but *ἀσθενεια* (*asthenia*, "infirmity") is emphasized. From this root we have instructive statements in 2 Cor. 11. 30, 12. 5, 9, 10, Gal. 4. 13, Phil. 2. 26, 27, 1 Tim. 5. 23, 2 Tim. 4. 20, Jas. 5. 14, 15. May it be that the Holy Spirit instructs us as to our Father's usual mode of chastening, and that we may expect He will *often* preserve from certain organic diseases, and grant infirmity, the weakness of our

* Only in Matt. 4. 23, 9. 35, 10. 1.

failing body?*" Is it not possible that He will often preserve from epidemics, and illustrate Psalm 91. 6, as His people pray? The definite use of boils, leprosy, and other forms of disease suggests that God's *sovereignty* has many lessons. We offer this suggestion, though longing that no believers may look down on a beloved brother who appears to be unhealed of an organic disease. When God grants hints, we must *not* assert laws without exceptions.

Many point to apparently real cases of healing as unanswerable arguments. *For the present*, we are willing to acknowledge they may *all* be real. Beloved friends may have all they desire in this matter, *yet something more is needed*. We are not reduced to questioning the genuineness of the mighty works. The Holy Spirit has shown miracles in *two* contexts. *The test is not miracle but truth*. "Wonders" will be connected with "the lie" (2 Thess. 2. 9). God *can* limit, as with Pharaoh's magicians, but it is not for us to say *where* He will limit. It is remarkable that prophecies of the *last days* do not refer to *such* miracles among God's people, though they plentifully make clear a reviving. But miracles, real miracles, sufficiently skilful to aim at seducing the *elect* (Matt. 24. 24) *are* prophesied. Nor can all *easily* detect Satan's methods. The demon said, "The Holy One of God," and an evil spirit was the first to cry out *orthodoxly* concerning "*the way of salvation*" in Europe (Acts 16. 17). Nor does Satan refuse deceitful acceptance of *much* of truth. He proposed a *compromise* to Christ in the wilderness. Unconsciously believers too may say attractive words (Matt. 16. 22), when Satan is working under the surface (23). Hence we must not test by miracle, but by the truth.

Nor is it *surprising* that Satan should heal. Christian Science and other forms of demonism are *not all trickery*. If the devil has much power in oppressing the body, he can *remove* the oppression. And the heathen temples to a god of healing are remarkable, as well as the *serpent*-symbol anciently linked with medicine. We need to be on our guard.

And so, beloved-fellow believers, do not confuse the sinful results of the fall, and God's loving chastisements. Do not generalize, and say that because sicknesses have been sent in a curse, therefore all are the same. Even ordinary things have a *new* purpose to a child of God. The natural man receives food in providence, the believer from a Father's hand. If there is famine, it does not come on an Elijah with the same meaning as it bears to Israel. Let us keep to Scriptural expressions, and as we find *nothing* to imply the confession of illness as evil, and *no* indication of a partly glorified body now, let us rejoice in our Father's loving use of everything, to bring Himself glory in our devoted lives. May this be our joy, as we look forward for our Lord's Coming, and seek to walk in the Spirit.

* A wide term, however, as Luke 5. 15, 13. 11, John 5. 5 may show.

THE FUTURE KINGDOM, And Its Two Parts Revealed in Scripture.

REVERENCE for every word of the Holy Spirit befits a believer. Our beloved Lord spoke, with wondrous love to Nicodemus, yet seemed to refuse the title of *Teacher*, unless *His Deity also were recognized*. Thus He emphasized the need for a birth *from above*, in order to know Him That is True (1 John 5. 20). This surprised the rabbi of Israel, and he asked, "How can a man be born again when he is old?" The Lord's reply took up the very term, and this (often overlooked) seems a primary thought in the change from "see" to "enter" (John 3. 3, 5). Yet, as the words "create" and "make" are not the same in Genesis 1, surely there must be a *fulness* of teaching here. It is true the Lord does *not* say that a man may see *without* entering, and one dreads any *addition* to His language. To form positives from negatives, and negatives from positives, will not glorify God. A misuse of Mark 16. 16 in this connexion comes to mind, and a current misinterpretation of 1 Cor. 14. 3, as if all speaking to edification were "prophecy." But it is evident the Lord would make His people *thoughtful*, and concerned, by such wording. If *this* had been the inference in Mark 16. 16, to *prevent carelessness as to His will in baptism*, it would have been well. Moreover the very Gospel before us shows a distinction between *seeing* and *entering* (John 20. 5). It is possible to see afar off, though *that* may be a rebuke with *terror* (Isa. 33. 17, 18*), and judgment in John 3 is rather worded as *not to see at all* (verse 36). And it seems clear, that, as by the woman and the three-measures' ephah, the Lord Jesus in Matt. 13. 33 *refers to the earlier Scriptures* (Zech. 5), so is it often. This thought is strengthened, because "water and the Spirit" are before us *together* in Gen. 1. 2, and typically, in Gen. 8. 1, (wind), Ex. 14. 21-31 Ps. 18. 15, 16 ("breath," note also "from above," as John 3. 3). These passages seem to suggest that "birth" here is God's deliverance "out of" the water of *wrath*, with the *quickenings of the Holy Spirit* (Ezek. 37. 9), without which a change of *place*, from the sphere of judgment, would be incomplete:—*cf.* "There was no breath in them" (Ezek. 37. 8). If this stress on the earlier Scriptures be acknowledged, may not the Lord's allusion in John 3. 5 include Deut. 3. 27, † and similar passages? How solemn it is to be disobedient. How blessed it is to be obedient, by grace.

And now a very remarkable illustration of Scripture comes before us. Our heart has been affected by the unveiling that though all "children" are "heirs of God," they are not said to be "joint-heirs with Christ" unless they "suffer with Him."§ To

* See Num. 24. 17. † Num. 20. 24 contains the same verb in the Greek.

§ A leaflet on Rom. 8. 17 gladly sent.

"reign in life by One, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5. 17) must not be confused with the reigning together of 2 Tim. 2. 12. Thus there are *two* parts of the Kingdom. It would seem impossible to the writer to give full value to the words of the Holy Spirit in 1 Cor. 15. 51, 52, 1 Thess. 4. 13-18, if *some* dear children of God will not be caught up. The second death is linked with *Hades* after the millennium (Rev. 20. 14), and Hades is now viewed as a *prison* (Rev. 1. 18), nor are saved ones said to go to Hades when they fall asleep now. They are, it would seem, in heaven,* and "under the altar," (of incense, in the antitypical Holy Place). Surely there are no unready ones among those who have put off *this* tabernacle, *wherein* we groan. There is no suggestion that they *still* grieve, by sin. And *living* saints are to be brought to repentance, and made ready ere Christ comes (Matt. 25. 10). *For this the Lord waits* (2 Pet. 3. 9, longsuffering toward *believers*). Hence "to them that look for Him" does not shut out any persons, but shuts out the *unappointed* time, and spurs on the Lord's redeemed, to *become ready* and encourage others (Rev. 19. 7).† Thus we shall find room for the fulfilment of the Scripture words as to those "called least *in* the Kingdom of the heavens" (Matt. 5. 19), quite distinguished from any *outside* (20); and room for the vessels to dishonour, albeit "*in*" the *future* great house of that Day (2 Tim. 2. 20‡), and (may it not be ?), for any shamed away *in* the *Lord's* presence (1 John 2. 28, the preposition is important, Luke 14. 9 illustrates). This is deeply solemn. "So shall we ever be *with* the Lord" is precious, but this is not all. 1 Thess. 5. 10 implies that those who do *not* "watch"§ now fully, will *live* with Him, if redeemed. Only the flesh will take "advantage" of such grace. Surely none who *love* Him will wish to ask how far they can stretch the tether, and leave Him Who yearns over them. Such an attitude would suggest no real *knowledge of Himself* at all. But the promise of 1 Thess. 5. 10 is *not* reigning on the earth. The meek shall *inherit* and the righteous be recompensed in the *earth* (Prov. 11. 31 Matt. 5. 5) in accord with practical righteousness and works (Rev. 22. 12). Hence the stress on *cities* in Luke 19 and on the *land* for Abraham,|| on honour in Palestine for David, and on thrones among Israel for those who continued with Christ in His temptations amidst the same nation (Luke 22. 28-30). There is an exactness of love in the manner of reward.

To return to Moses. He was not allowed to enter "the good land that was *beyond Jordan*" (Deut. 3. 25). And this has been taken to illustrate entire exclusion from the kingdom. But is

* "Every" in Eph. 3. 5 would not alter this. Note Phil. 1. 23.

† See a leaflet "Two Portions of Truth United."

‡ The *greatness* accounts for the gold and therefore is good: quite contrasted with Christendom now.

§ Present tense—continuance.

|| 'Tis not only "thy Seed," but "unto thee and to thy Seed."

it so? * Apart from the fact that we must not use types as proofs, unless the Holy Spirit shows them to be such, it is often overlooked that Moses was then in part of the land promised in covenant love (Gen. 15. 18), part of the Kingdom, *yet to be possessed* (Ps. 72. 8, Isa. 11. 14). Doubtless, it is suggestive that in the type of resurrection, on the transfiguration mount, he appeared in *glory*, to show how the Lord can grant rewards in that day for the heart-broken *confession* of failure, even though we are chastened sorely now. But the Holy Spirit does not tell us *where* the transfiguration mount was, that we may rather be humbled to realize the nature of exclusion even in that Day. Not from all, but yet from *part*. Not from the inheritance of "the many," but from the spoil for the "strong" (Isa. 53. 12, lit:). The Lord will not be *unrighteous* in giving *beyond* and contrary to works. There must be a real manifestation of real loss, and we need to feel this. † The Lord's perfect love to Moses is clear, but He did not excuse or go back from His Word. §

It would seem, therefore, to the writer that the Lord Jesus *refers* to the exclusion from one part of the Kingdom, by *His* changed word in John 3, in accord with the other Scriptures noticed. Hence he submits the suggestion to beloved ones in Christ, for our true humbling. Not that *we* can change the words, and say that any are born from above, who are not born *out of* the water of wrath. But it would seem that our beloved Lord shows that a deeper sense of wrath, and thus of grace (Luke 7. 47) is the background for faithful service which will involve the waters of tribulation (Ps. 18. 16, 17 includes these), and thus be to His *joy* (Matt. 25, 21, 23, 1 Pet. 1. 7), May this, indeed, be blessed in our heart-experience, while we seek to walk, as pilgrims and strangers, in the Spirit, looking for that blessed Hope.

The Lord's Supper and An Assembly.

THE writer has been impressed, against natural inclination, by seeing that the Holy Spirit links the breaking of bread in 1 Corinthians with a *gathering* of saints, and not with the dear scattered ones in all Achaia. There is *no* suggestion in the

* He is distinguished from those whose carcasses fell in the wilderness (Heb. 3. 17). "*The land of Moab*" is God's description: part of the district appointed or Israel, yet not *then* given to them (Deut. 34. 5, 6). The language in verse 4 is important. The part into which he did not enter was the land of sojourning and pilgrim strain (Heb. 11. 9). Moab was the other portion, not linked with their earthly trials or Israel's warfare.

† The English word "suffer" (physical pain) is not in the original of 1 Cor. 3. 15, but the solemnity to a perfected saint, viewing all from God's standpoint will be far more than we can understand now. Heart-concern not to suffer loss should fill our hearts, out of love to the Lord.

§ Surely Deut. 3. 27, as Rev. 2 and 3, is meant to be an anticipation of the Judgment Seat of Christ, which, as our Father's chastisement now, we must not "make light" (Heb. 12. 5).

Epistle that these broke bread "in every *place*." We dare not add to His words. There *is only one* breaking of the bread contemplated in 1 Corinthians. *Afterwards* there became a church quite near at Cenchræa, and this is refreshing (Rom. 16. 1). But the Lord makes clear in Matthew 18 that 2 or 3 cannot be called an assembly, or act as such. Nor is there anything in His arrangements for the Lord's supper after Pentecost to hint anything contrasted. At first this seems a trial; and it should *remain*, as an *exercise of heart*. But it may also become a *spur* to earnest prayer for the *Lord's* increase, AND a godly corrective of the tendency to want to push forward *one* part of the Lord's will,¹ and omit other parts,—a tendency which leads into still further disproportion and failure.

Moreover, do we not see His loving wisdom in this matter? What a strain would have been put on 2 or 3 believers to *welcome or refuse* any claiming to be "disciples." One realizes the Holy Spirit *could* give to all such a supernatural discernment, but God has not thus promised such gifts, and any who know the precious, but difficult, experiences, linked with following the Lord, must be grateful for the caution, and mutual help before the Lord, which *His* gracious arrangement encouraged and still encourages. If believers are willing for all His will, and, like Abraham, take steps in simple obedience, the Lord will raise up assemblies, and teachers too, after His own heart. But we dare not boast of a false gift, or hurry proudly. The sad hesitancy of some in remaining amid organized error, and of others with natural self-confidence, should make God's beloved people who are exercised, very lowly, that they may not dishonour *His* Name. Wondrous trusteeship—*His* Name.

* Leaflets gladly sent.

"If the Lord Will":—

By the grace of God we would still earnestly invite young men, and older ones, in the City, who are able to reach Minories as near to 6. 30 as possible, to gatherings unto His glory (John Pearce Restaurant, 2, Minories, 2nd floor, side entrance). Our desire is that He may be exalted in the praise and drawing together of His redeemed people (Ps 50. 23, John 14. 15). Further particulars gladly given, also of Greek and Hebrew helps before (or after) the meeting. Suggested subjects during FEBRUARY:—

2nd. Thoughts Suggested by the Present Discontent.

9th. The Work of Satan, as Revealed in Scripture.

16th. Question Evening

(E. g. One dear friend has enquired *re* Wine in John 2).

23rd. Ecclesiastes, with Contrasts.

Further Literature on Prophetic Subjects, and on the precious teaching of Tit. 2. 13, gladly sent to any concerned. Enquiries as to Typewritten Notes also welcome to God's glory.

61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7. Phone: MARYLAND 2196.
(No Messages received on the Lord's Day).

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men." (Eph. 6. 6, 7).

A Word of Introduction.

B*Y the grace of God we would encourage His blood-bought people in the path of HIS WILL. It is a wondrous thing to be REDEEMED. We must not use the word glibly. Those "IN Christ Jesus" are called to please Him. Their HEARTS are to be devoted. Service must not become a drudgery. The characteristic of the sacrifices of old was "BEFORE the Lord" and "UNTO the Lord," and this should be the mark of His people now. It is a privilege to be WITH HIM, even if this means rejection. The joy of the Lord Jesus was the Father's will (Ps. 40. 6-8), and His people are privileged to "follow His steps." Hence these pages are NOT to amuse, NOR to work up a human organization, but SIMPLY to urge the privilege and responsibility of redeemed ones to encourage one another TO WELCOME HIS WILL, and to have HIS WILL AS THEIRS ALSO. THIS is walking with God: THIS is walking in the Spirit. Everything else, however expressive in words, is NOT the love that pleases Him Who gave HIMSELF for altogether unworthy sinners.*

HOW SHALL WE VIEW SUFFERING LOSS, FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THAT DAY?

“WE know not what we shall be”: thanks be unto God, the verse does not end there (1 John 3. 2). We have a blessed prospect. Surely saved ones should rejoice. “Like

Him." Wondrous. "See Him." All by grace. It is a privilege even now to begin to look at much from *God's* standpoint. But if, by grace, we thus do, we *still* need a *chastening* because of sin that *dwelleth* in us, in order that our realization of His standpoint may become more complete. When, however, we reach the glory we shall be perfected, and it will be ours to love with an unhindered love. Marvellous prospect, *in His love*. Hence we shall *hate sin* intensely, at the very moment when we *rejoice* to see the burning up of works, even our own, which have in any way displeased our Lord. Such rejoicing to-day would, and must, have many ACCOMPANIMENTS of *sorrow*, of a kind specially appertaining to our *present* need of chastening. It is *this* change in the future which illustrates how the knowledge of God's wrath will not mar eternal blessedness with Him. It *would* affect this overflowing of delight *to-day*, causing tears of a character which we cannot connect with the glory.

Hence the believer's position, when delivered from this body, (in which he groans, because he does not fully please his Lord), will be one of peculiar privileges, which will alter much. That the *resurrection* standpoint is changed, Luke 20. 36 shows. The believer now may feel burdened awhile when he thinks, though leaving all in God's hands, of the number whom he hardly expects to see again. And this thought would be overwhelming apart from a confidence in God's *perfect* sovereignty.* Undoubtedly such an experience may be used now, by the work of the Holy Spirit, to stir up to spiritual intensity for those still alive. But *such* an experience will not be needed when all laziness will be past. So is it as to all. We need to be careful now lest Satan substitute remorse for repentance, *or*, by a swing of the pendulum, introduce carelessness because the sin is so graciously forgiven, (contrast Paul's attitude even as to sins of unconverted days, 1 Cor. 15. 9, 1 Tim. 1. 13). The suggestion, misinterpreting Matt. 25, that any raised *believer*, *with* a body of glory, and *without* the law of sin and death in his members, will have not one good word to say of his Lord, is strangely without foundation. It quite ignores the Lord's teaching as to false professors in the 99 sheep of Luke 15, called *just* persons, and the "wicked and slothful servant" of Matt. 25. 26. In fact it leaves *no room* for professing Christians. We shall *then* know as we were known, and be for ever *with* the Lord. The losses at the Judgment Seat of Christ *will* be serious (1 Cor. 3. 15), but if, even now, when prayerfully humble, we would *rather* have *our* works burned up than our Lord dishonoured, shall we be less spiritual then? Is the glory less heavenlike than the present, and will the deliverance be followed by outbursts of temper, and liability to temptation? The difference is, that holy horror at sin now, must bring certain feelings which we cannot transplant to glory,

* See a leaflet "Election and Regeneration."

because they will not be *needed*, when there will be *nothing* in us against which to maintain a godly warfare. It is *this* which helps to explain, and is explained by, the references to our gracious God unhindered in His wondrous glory, and yet His intense feeling as recorded in Gen. 6. 6.* Thus our hearts are blessed by entwined "difficulties," and, brought to feel how we see through a glass darkly, our hearts again enter into the inspired words, "We know not what we shall be," while they would cry fervently, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

A Fuller Sense of Holiness.

MANY of God's children do not *take time* to understand *His* words, *nor* are they sufficiently careful about rightly representing "one another." Hasty conclusions and inferences dishonour the Lord. Before me is a pamphlet, with marks of sincerity, which speaks as if sinlessness were attained, yet the writer all the while seems to misunderstand that which he attacks, in a way which would *trouble the heart* of many who make far lower claims. Indeed, they would be humbled because of *their sin*, and yet he honestly seems to think they excuse sin. In a striking little introduction, moreover, he says, "My pamphlet . . . was published in 1898 in a very crude state—many mistakes." The frankness seems genuine: we praise God for this: the heart, it may be, beats true: but a real sense of sin would say, "Herein is a humble confession of sin, in a booklet that claims its absence." We thank God for the confession, and, indeed, many *on their knees* own His truth. "Arguments" often spoil the heart, and becloud the true condition. No lowly believer would say, "My booklet had no mistakes: it could not have been improved." But *that* is sinlessness. The fact is, beloved friends, many still think that those who Scripturally own their shortcomings plead for overt acts of sin, as a hasty temper, and so forth. They imagine that we feel a child of God *must* still sink thus. *Far otherwise*. What is meant is that even our holiest moments fall short of Christ's perfection, and we depend ever on One Who ever lives to intercede for us. Let it ever be emphasized that Romans 7 does not mean a continual falling, *as many think*, but a realization that, before God, the smallest failure *is* a falling, a real captivity. Paul said "Dross," where many imagine they have nothing but gold. One grain of alloy is *captivity*.

Still it is fitting that we should ask ourselves if our *character* has lacked manifest victory, and thus partly led to this sad misunderstanding. Or have we spoken unguardedly and excusingly, and so helped any misconception? We should ever search *our ways*, and, with more confession of sin, seek *more triumph*, in the Holy Spirit.

* A leaflet "God Repented" gladly sent.

THE TESTIMONY OF DEMONS RECORDED IN HOLY SCRIPTURE.

“And demons also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And He rebuking suffered them not to speak : for they knew that He was Christ.” Luke 4. 41.

“I know Thee Who Thou art, the Holy One of God.”
Mark 1. 24.

“And unclean spirits, when they saw Him, fell down before Him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.” Mark 3. 11.

“Jesus, Son of the Most High God.” Mark 5. 7.
cf. Matt. 8. 29, Luke 8. 28.

“These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto us the Way of Salvation.” Acts 16. 17.

“And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye ?” Acts 19. 15.

Observe also the confession that Christ had *power* to appoint judgment :—destruction and tormenting are parallel (Matt. 8. 29, Luke 4. 34). Further, they were unable to enter the swine without His permission, and they *acknowledged* this. “Before an *appointed time*” in Matt. 8. 29 seems a reference to His future glory. “What have we to do with Thee ?” sets forth His contrasted holiness. Yes, “the demons *BELIEVE* and tremble” (Jas. 2. 19).

It appears well, beloved friends, to emphasize these things, for many suggest that miracles, and the confession of Christ prove a work of God. It is clear that the first recorded public testimony in Europe was *demoniacal*. And yet there was a stress on “the way of salvation.”

The method of the evil one to advertise God's truth is noteworthy, *both* in connexion with Christ and the apostle. But on *both* occasions it was refused, definitely refused. The demons were willing to say, “Thou art the Son of God.” Would not this have impressed many ? Would not this have spread the truth ? Would not this have seemed a work of God ? But Christ was not deceived : He is the Truth. And the apostle, indwelt by the Spirit of the Truth, was on his guard. Oh that we may be more and more thus guarded in these days. The glory of God is linked with spiritual discernment.

It is wonderful to be “*in Christ*”; how devoted His people should be. Redemption is a call to holiness, and without holiness how can we show there is a work of grace at all ? Fruit does not make salvation, but proves it.

“Unto Them That are Exercised Thereby”

Heb. 12. 11.

THERE is a deep need to-day that we should know what the Holy Spirit means by being “*exercised*.” And not only should we know what is *meant*, but pass along the holy experience. It has been pointed out that there is no virtue in affliction of *itself*. There is no sanctification in suffering of *itself*. If there is to be the *leading* of the Holy Spirit, there must be *also* those who are *being led*. The very word implies a twofoldness. Is it not so with trials? *We need to be exercised: thus* only is there “the peaceable fruit of righteousness,” beloved friends, to God’s glory.

We are *not* “exercised” when we despise or make light of the chastening of the Lord (Heb. 12. 5). If we, in any way, approach the attitude of Isa. 9. 10 there is *no exercise*. On the other hand, if we faint when rebuked, and sink under the load, filled with natural remorse, there is *no spiritual exercise*. Heb. 12. 5 emphasizes this also. For what is *exercise*? Rather, what is *being exercised*? The word denotes a stripping. It occurs in 1 Tim. 4. 7, and Heb. 5. 14,* and thus has a twofold thought—stripping, AND godly activity. The English term “Gymnastics,” is from this root. How blessed it would be if children of God emphasized *such* gymnastics, instead of imitating the world, in their promotion of human methods to gain adherents. This stripping implies the same thought as 1 Peter 1. 7. We have so much dross (observe also Rev. 3. 18). Let us remember, too, that there may be the melting, and *yet*, after all, the evil not be taken away (*cf.* the thought in Jer. 6. 29). We may go *back* after the illness, to the same failure, and return to engrossing care for business—after the loss. Trials are not enough. We would not escape *them*, but we would learn our Father’s loving lessons, that there may not be merely the *melting*, but the removal of that which is thereby marked out, and able to be removed.

And the thought of holy gymnastics provides the contrast with “fainting.” We must *not only* lie on our face (Josh. 7. 10). There must be holy *activity*. Oh that it may be so.

The tense, moreover, implies an effect. “To those who *have been exercised thereby*.” Patience must have its perfect *work*. Of *what* have we been stripped? *What* have we seen we must gladly give up? The Holy Spirit’s stress on laying aside *every weight* comes helpfully in this connexion (Heb. 12. 1). Our Father speaks by all. May our hearts learn the gracious lesson without delay.

Spirituality is not a matter of emotion, but of growing likeness to Christ.

* A solemn contrast in 2 Pet. 2. 14.

The Doom of Earth's Civilization.

"In One Hour is Thy Judgment Come."

**"In One Hour So Great Riches is Come
to Nought."**

"In One Hour is She Made Desolate."

Rev. 18. 10, 17, 19.

A SOLEMN view of the end of this dispensation is set forth in various *parallel* chapters of Revelation, and elsewhere. The unveiling of the last "hour" is a key to *many* Scripture difficulties.* *Men* are looking for a super-man, and *he will be Antichrist*. And then a brief spell of "prosperity" will be followed by the majestic laying low of earth's vain glories, for the cities of the nations will fall (Rev. 16. 19), and "the Lord of hosts" will "stain the pride of all glory" (Isa. 23. 9). The ephah of Zechariah 5 illustrates *commerce*, and the *merchant-princes* of Isaiah 23. 8 are remarkably before us. This language suggests the *normal tendency* of the last days. The words, "Her *costliness*" ring out in Rev. 18. 19, and we praise God for the contrasted *preciousness* of 1 Pet. 2. 7, and for the city which hath the foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God (Heb. 11. 10). *He will not fail. He does not fail.*

The glories of *men* in general, as the glories of past empires, will *suddenly* be cast down and the Lord *alone* shall be exalted "in that Day." Do not these thoughts, applied by the Holy Spirit, draw our hearts from the *commercial spirit* of this age? The aim of a believer is *not* to get on, but to get understanding (Prov. 4. 7, Jer. 9. 23, 24), and to know Christ (Phil. 3. 10). He does not wish to gain a "position" for his children, thus to expose them more to the snares and attractions of Babylonianism. Many a parent weeps over a worldly family, *after* educating them for that very world, from which he claims to be separated, and aiming at spheres of special temptation, on their going out into that world. We reap what we sow. The whirlpool of "getting on," and of being *like* the world, engulfs many. Are we *afraid* to be separate? Does the blood of Christ mean separation, or not?

"The man of God" is, as 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17 makes plain, the man who is in accord with the Scriptures. How solemn the reminder of 1 Kings 13, where one was "disobedient unto the Word of the Lord" (26). How important to HEAR His voice.

* Leaflets on "The Hour" are still available for earnest *individual* believers, though we have not in hand quantities for distribution.

TWO PORTIONS OF TRUTH UNITED.

- (1). "We shall not all sleep, but *we shall all be changed* in a moment, in the twinkling of the eye, at the last trump" (1 Cor. 15. 51, 52).
- (2). "*Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time*" (Heb. 9. 28).
 "They that were *ready* went in with Him to the marriage" (Matt. 25. 10).

SOME dear children of God have rightly asserted that all believers on earth when Christ returns shall be caught up to meet Him. Others have rightly emphasized the passages which speak of true preparation first (Rev. 19. 7). But each thought only seems to attack the other. Both ARE in accord with the Lord's plan and in full harmony. There is a danger in the suggestion that if any are "in Christ" they are NOW necessarily looking for Him. The substratum of truth in this expression does not prevent the feeling that such an interpretation is hardly honest to Scripture, robbing it of much practical force. The reproving preciousness of truth must never be forgotten.

There can be no difficulty as to those who have "fallen asleep." Free from the failures that marred earthly life, and conscious, in Paradise, of "that Blessed Hope," they are waiting for Christ's glory to be manifested, whatever they once were.* But there is a real difficulty as to living believers. What is the Scriptural solution?—Is it not a reviving from the Lord, which will make all believers wise and ready,—as Matt. 25 shows? 2 Pet. 3. 9 with its emphatic "usward," or "youward," expressly shows that our beloved Lord is waiting for this revival. Hence the two aspects of truth coincide, and the inferences are indeed helpful. But what are these inferences? The joyous longing of the Lord's people toward Him, and their prayerful expectation of His working, among His own, are increased. Practical godliness is thereby helped, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, a wondrous "intervening event" is implied, which does not hinder true watching, but is itself hindered by the theory that there will be no united revival of saved ones, and that we must not aim beyond individual preparedness. This error seems such an attack on "That Blessed Hope," although quite unintentionally. The often "vexed question" as to the "tribulation," which is not wrath,† but in which saints will be graciously separated from those who merely profess Christ, appears to be solved hereby, to God's glory, and there is nothing to hinder the simple acceptance of the Holy Spirit's word "First" in Rev. 20. 4, 5.

* Their *condition* is readiness (Rev. 6. 11, 14. 13); but *reward*, and *loss* are for deeds previously done *in the BODY* (2 Cor. 5. 10) : hence there is perfect righteousness.

† Further Literature on this, and other Scriptural Subjects, (e.g. The Tribulation Distinguished from the Wrath of God, also The Holy Spirit's Guidance in the Epistles as to the Immediate Future), gladly sent.

“We have also more in David than ye.”

2 Sam. 19. 43.

“We have no part in David.”

2 Sam. 20. 1.

WHO would have thought these to be adjoining verses? Yet so it is. The chapter break veils an important sidelight on the changeableness of the human heart. And so is it still. The man who flatters you to-day will turn against you to-morrow. If young men who feel called to preach God's gospel realized this more, it would be well. Let them never attend to the flatterer, and the *unconscious* flatterer is to be included. As the rocky-ground hearer is enthusiastic, and yet, when tribulation arises, is *immediately* caused to stumble, so is it in many an experience. The Lord Jesus did not misinterpret enthusiasm (Luke 9. 43, 44). He knew how much zeal was superficial. When there is the expressiveness, as with Israel in 2 Sam. 19, there is oftentimes the quick sequence; “So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri” (2 Sam. 20. 2). Children often illustrate this. They are enthusiastic for a while. Parents need to check this tendency: it will grow. Happy are those who have stability, and purpose of heart in the ways of the Lord (Acts 11. 23). Of these we have a type in 2 Sam. 20. “The men of Judah clave unto their king from Jordan even to Jerusalem.”

“Therefore will I divide for Him among the many: and with strong ones shall He divide a spoil” (Isa. 53. 12).

What does this mean, beloved readers? Does it not mean what it says? Is there not a twofold dividing, one by God the Father, and the other by the Lord Jesus? Is not the former alone linked with “the many” whose sins He bare, (as the same verse indicates), and the latter limited to those who are *strong*? Cf. Dan. 11. 32. There is *no mention* of a “spoil” in the first dividing. *Every Word of God is purified.* “If children then heirs, heirs of God.” There is no doubt as to this. Then the *next* word is *not* “and,” it is “but.” “**BUT joint. heirs with Christ,** IF so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together.” Thanks be unto God for these realities. Let His redeemed ones seek to live as those who long to reign with their still-rejected Lord (2 Tim. 2. 12, Rev. 3. 21). The reproach of Christ is not changed. The welcome of Heb. 13. 13, 14 is not abrogated.

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"If any one will to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." John 7. 17.

"The meek will He teach His way." Ps. 25. 9.

A Word of Introduction.

B*Y the continually enabling grace of God we would send forth these pages. If any receive blessing, the glory is His. If any are not blest, the fault, is ours or theirs. He never makes a mistake. We long that the pages may have His wheat, and not our chaff. His gold, and not our dross: His mind (1 Cor. 2. 16), and not our opinions. The truth is one whole, and precious. We dare not speak glibly of doctrines: the plural is ALWAYS used for evil. God's doctrine is one. Our desire is that Christ may be exalted. 2 Cor. 4. 4, 6 reminds us, in the light of John 16. 14, that this is the object of the Holy Spirit. The "cheapening" of the gospel may suit man's ears, the humanizing of Christ, by speaking of Him familiarly may be popular, but THE GLORY OF CHRIST shines out in Scripture. There is the majesty of the gospel of the grace of God.*

The Disciples' Prayer.

**"Forgive us our debts, as we also
forgive our debtors."**

Matt. 6. 12.

M*ANY beloved children of God unwittingly confuse parts of His truth. Is it not possible that we all oftentimes repeat the words of others, instead of humbly waiting more on God? Undoubtedly those accepted in the Lord Jesus have been forgiven (1 John 2. 12), and the simple reason is "His Name's sake." "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*

Jesus " (Rom. 8. 1). And many have, therefore, assumed that the words of Matt. 6. 12 cannot apply to saints of the present dispensation. On similar grounds, some have taken away Rev. 7. 14 from His redeemed now, unmindful of the fact that this is the *first view* (in Rev:) of the Lord's people *personally* in heaven.* But our "preconceived notions" must not question God's words. Is it not possible that many have overlooked that their interpretation would undermine the foundation of *grace* altogether, for if words are used here which would suit others, but are too legalistic for us, are there *two ways of salvation*? If ANY are forgiven because of works, grace is made void. This is a dangerous inference, beloved friends.

Most of the difficulty has arisen because of an assumption that the *only gospel* which mentions the *church*, and "the kingdom of the heavens" (preparing for the wording of Eph. 1. 3), is *Jewish*. And so the words "our Father" are unwisely overlooked. 'Tis *our Father's* forgiveness. But *that is not* the legal forgiveness we have received. If it were, there would be a ground for the universal fatherhood of God, since it would assume that Christ took *wrath* to give us our Father's forgiveness. But surely the forgiveness of *the family* was no more substitutionarily borne than the *chastisement of the family*. Christ did not bear *our Father's* chastisement for us: This would be *our loss*.

And, further, those who have raised honest objections would surely not wish to suggest that while they regard iniquity in their heart, the Lord will hear them (Ps. 66. 18). In other words, they themselves acknowledge, in accord with true holiness, that the forgiveness of THE HOME is *as we forgive*. Nor would it be a godly home otherwise. The principle of Matt. 18. 34, 35 applies. There is not the slightest hint there of the giving back of the first forgiven debt (verses 24 and 32). *Another* form of the word is used, i.e., *exactly as in verse 30*. And the Father's chastening is linked with real pain. An extreme case is seen in 1 Cor. 5. 5. Hence the Lord Jesus wondrously draws His people to loving forgiveness of others whenever they pray. 'Tis the same in Mark 11. 25, and we have the emphasis repeated in Luke 11. 4. This loving urgency is for our true welfare. We often rob ourselves and dishonour Him by a wrong attitude, unjudged, in prayer. More love is needed, and not only then, but before and *always*. Love is *never* bitter, nor bad-tempered. * "Till he should pay back all that is *being owed*," PRESENT tense. His brother's real debt to him, *wrongly treated*, has involved him in *a similar debt* before the Father, because he has been unmerciful. And there must be righteousness in the home. "Tormenters" to the unsaved can only bring wrath, because there is no gold, but *fiery* troubles

* The fact that "one of the elders" could speak to John (Rev. 7. 13) seems to show clearly *they* are real individuals, i.e. heavenly beings so named.

* A leaflet gladly sent.

for *saints* are to bring out His gold *in pain*. Hence Matthew 6. 12 reminds us that we have debtors. Others *do* sin against us. They *are* unkind, and selfish, and so forth. But we must *not* feel any unkindness. *We are not to act as judges*. If we were the Lord's executive thus, we should punish, but, in *this* matter, we are bidden to treat them *as we wish to be treated, in the family*. A great contrast with legal authority: thus befitting to the *present* dispensation. The Lord appointed of old that the *Judge* should exact an eye for an eye,* but we are to have no such function. Thus this is *not* Judaism. *Real* "debtors" are to be forgiven, in the Spirit.

And *our sins are* "debts." Grace never excuses. There are "*dues*" in the home. This word is from the root "to owe." Many alas, dislike "ought" in the *family* of God, but a *godly* family delights in His "ought," and *love* transforms the view of it, or rather takes God's view of it, and finds "ought" a blessing and a privilege. "*Bondage*" is when the child is out of harmony with the Father.

The Individuality of the Gospel.

IF I am among the called of Jesus Christ, I am not to view myself merely as an unknown unit in a mighty throng. "The Son of God loved *me* and gave Himself *for me*." There was joy in heaven when *one* sinner repented, and I was brought to know my priceless Saviour. And now, God has not merely put me with a large number, to show indefinite love. A Mephibosheth is called to sit at *the* King's table, nor is he only "as" one of the King's sons. The privilege of Enoch is not a privilege denied to me. Enoch *personally* walked with God. And others, as well as Paul, may say, "*My* God." "We will come unto *him*, and make our abode with *him*" has a rich individual note. Not the note of personal pride. Not the note that *forgets* others. When there is *this* vain thought, *He* reminds of the footsteps of the *flock*. The *bride* is not individual, the *assembly* is not individual. 'Tis not *only*, "when *thou* prayest," but also, "when *ye* pray." If we love Him, we must love one another, and Eph. 5. 25 is as true as Gal. 2. 20. Many dangers beset us if we omit one part of Scripture for another. Disproportion is sin. But the individual love of God is precious, and there should be the response of personal affection in its true intimacy. Reverent nearness is to be cultivated. God is *not* the FAR AWAY UNKNOWN ONE, of Confucianism, nor the ALL-PERVADING IMPERSONAL SOURCE, of Hinduism, nor the one who has *not* the name "Father" among the ninety nine names given Him in Mohammedanism. He is really the Father of His people, and His ears are open to their cry. And He desires us to act in consciousness of His personal interest. As soon as the attributes of God, and His works, become

the centre of thought, rather than *all* in relation to *Himself*, and as soon as the Holy Spirit is almost unconsciously regarded more as an influence than an indwelling Person, we have begun to lose the freshness of communion and power. The Lord has emphasized the personal note in Matt. 28. 20, and again in Rev. 22. 20, as the height of His people's joy.

The Misuse of God's Election.

TRUTH can ever be misused (cf. Jude 4). This is no evidence against truth, but it is a precious call to godly care and Scriptural handling. The Romanist plea that justification by faith leads to licentiousness finds a parallel with some objections glibly raised against other parts of truth. **Blame the flesh that misuses truth, but not the truth.** While we confess that history hardly suggests even so-called Protestant countries have been more licentious than nominal "Catholic" lands, we would be ever on our guard as believers, in Christ, delivered in mercy from lip-profession. Thus, for our heart's joy, as well as that the enemies of the Lord may not blaspheme, we would dread every misuse of His love. So is it with election. History does not indicate that those who have emphasized this, (and it is emphasized in Scripture too),* have been the most careless as to holiness or gospel proclamation, but we would ever "keep ourselves in the love of God," and keep ourselves from idols, conscious that His love does not make us irresponsible, but rather responsive. The sovereignty of grace is mighty to attract toward holiness; the life that has been given, in sovereignty to a dead sinner, † is a life in harmony with God's will. That which is born of the Spirit cannot be against the Spirit. Inasmuch as Satan frequently tempts along the lines of truth and obedience, in order to gain entrance unobserved, where truth is held, let us be prayerfully concerned never to use election against other parts of God's will for ourselves. It is so much more natural to see others' mistake, but is this wise? Love has never flourished without humility, and nearness to the Lord in experience involves the reverse of pride. Repentance is a holy need, and privilege,—a privilege rich with blessing.

First, election is evidently misused if ever it is made to disparage the discipline of chastisement. A man once said to me, "I know I am a child of God, but a disobedient one," or words to that effect. He spoke of "grace," but the Holy Spirit shows that, if there is life, there must be fruit (cf. Tit. 2. 11 with 12). The parallel of the Sower and John 15 † are definite. A "careless backslider" is usually a misnomer. But we, too, need to hear the words "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord" (Heb. 12. 5).

* Birth from above (regeneration) is one of the strongest proofs of election, and when any FULLY acknowledge Eph. 2. 3, 4 much of God's teaching become clear at once.

† Leaflet on application.

Do not make little of His pain-causing love. If we are not ashamed, we are worldlike (Jer. 8. 10). God's teaching is promised to those who are ashamed (Ezek. 43. 11).

Secondly, and this is linked, election is not to make us glib in TALKING OF THE FLESH, when we have sinned. These paragraphs are not addressed to unsaved professors, but the writer would desire to say, with fervency, again and again, that many are not really saved at all, if the perfect words of Christ in Matt. 13. 18. 23, and John 10. 27 stand. "Talkativeness" is often a mark of an unsaved soul: the flesh loves "comfortable" doctrine, and stalks about in pride. Oh for humility and repentance, in our own lives. Let us never, never, NEVER use election to argue lightly that the unchanged flesh in us does the sin; and that we cannot help it. Sin must be judged and hated. Romans 7 is deeply searching. If we know electing grace we should live a life of victory in the Spirit.

Thirdly, election is not to blunt the sound of truth as to THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST (2 Cor. 3. 15). Reaping corruption is a reality (Gal. 6. 8). To be "called least" is a reality (Matt. 5. 19). The apostle served "with fear and trembling." This does not drive out the love of Christ, but witnesses against self-love. It is so easy to forget the many conditional promises. "If we suffer, we shall also reign together (2 Tim. 2. 12). Rom. 8. 17 does not promise joint heirship with Christ to every believer." The Judgment Seat of Christ is a fact to affect our daily walk (Jas. 2. 12). If it were not strict, it would not be just.

Fourthly, the sovereignty of God in grace is not to be misused against godly activity. If one says, "The Lord will save," and does not give time and money to reach the unsaved (Rom. 10. 14) is it not evil? If one says, "The Lord's hand is not shortened," and omits fervent prayer (Rom. 10. 1), is it not evil? If one comforts himself, after losing opportunities for witness, and for "a word in season," that God will not omit His work, is it not evil? As the sovereignty of God, in blessing amid the most unlikely surroundings, (Phil. 1. 18 illustrates), does not warrant our identification, so is it in this matter. The revealed will of God, not His sovereignty, is our rule of life. He can save apart from us, but as our beloved Lord had "need" of an ass delivered from judgment (Ex. 13. 13 is hinted), so has He need of us, and election never puts aside godly obedience, and enthusiasm on the line of His appointment (Matt. 28. 18-20). If I rejoice in His sovereignty, to save, I would own the same sovereignty to command. Thanks be unto Him for the balance of truth.

Unsaved sinners may misuse election. Some may vainly argue, "If I am to be saved, I shall be": a sinful frivolity, and unmindful of the degrees of wrath in hell. Others may infer depression,

* See "Conditional or Unconditional."

but election actually invites the heart-broken. These misrepresentations remind us that election is Scripturally preached to saved ones, and to cavillers. The general testimony of the gospel is Christ's work for sinners as such.

Finally, election is not to be pressed with ONESIDEDNESS. We are not to forget, for example, prophetic and assembly teaching, nor are we to be "proud" that we see God's free grace,—a miserable caricature, beloved friends, of truly seeing it. Nor are we to "look down" on those in error. It may be, that with greater privileges, we err more in many other ways, and the Judgment Seat of Christ will have many surprises. Oh for earnest self-examination and searching of our ways even now, that, led of the Spirit, we may "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 3. 18.

"Anon with Joy Receiveth It."

THESE words, concerning the rocky-ground hearer, are remarkable. The Lord Jesus describes sudden joy in receiving the Word, and shows it is not any evidence at all of good ground. This ground is contrasted with that which bears fruit: it is bad. From Christ's standpoint many emotional conversions are the opposite of a work of God. Here is a key to much of to-day's so-called backsliding. Many have never been really saved.

Nor should believers seek for emotionalism. Naaman expected a dramatic event. God is not bound, but His work is deep and humbling, not theatrical.

The added thought impresses. The ground is not only bad, it is particularly hard. But surely emotion is the reverse of hardness? Not always. When a soul hears of Calvary, and says, "I accept Christ, how happy I am to be saved," there is often a cruel selfishness. Has the Son of God suffered intense agony for you, and will you be occupied with your joy of freedom? Where is repentance that means joy in heaven? Where is broken-heartedness? Plainly Christ has diagnosed the case with His own perfect accuracy. "A joyous conversion" without any breaking down indicates hardness. A callous soul is emotionally occupied with its own comfort: but the Lord healeth the broken in heart,* and saves them for His own glory. Oh that some readers may be thus saved even now. Oh that they may behold the love of Christ on Calvary, and weep in heart, over their sins that were His so great burden and agony! Such sorrow, with repentance, reveals the work of GOD.

* We dare not decide *how much* heart-anguish there should be. Nor can we forget the *different* sin-offerings, and the poverty-stricken offerer; picturing one with a "poor" realization of Christ. But unless there is deep sorrow for sin, and concern for Christ's glory in salvation, one may well doubt if there is God's work at all.

The Forbearance and Grace of God Distinguished.

**“Despisest thou the Riches of His
Goodness and Forbearance and
Longsuffering?”**

“By Grace are ye Saved”

Rom. 2. 4, Eph. 2. 8.

GOD is wonderful, beyond man's understanding. The heavens show His glory (Ps. 19. 1). Every day makes known His might. And not only His might. He is merciful and patient. His tender mercies are over all His works, and He opens His hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing (Ps. 145. 9, 16; 104. 27, 28). The animals seek their food from Him (Ps. 104. 21), even though they are lion-like in their strength. The self-sufficient ravens, as well as the doves, depend on Him (Ps. 147. 9, Luke 12. 24). The sun is His Sun (Matt. 5. 45). The sea is His Sea (Ps. 95. 5). The beasts are His beasts (Ps. 50. 10). He calls all the stars by name (Isa. 40. 26). Thus we see that which men have often called God's providence,—His “providing” for His creatures. And as men have sinned against Him, and still live in sin, His bountiful care is a display of His patience. God is Good, and He waits, He endures (Rom. 9. 22), His judgments are still held back. This is the forbearance of God (*cf.* 1 Pet. 3. 20).

If men really felt this, they would wonder at the longsuffering He shows. They should be ashamed of their misuse of it, for they go on frowardly in the way of their heart (Isa. 57. 17). Solomon wrote thus, “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Eccl. 8. 11). And Psalm 50. 21 says, “These things hast thou done, and I kept silence.”

But there is something beyond forbearance. So many dear children of God have confused this enduring of the vessels of wrath (Rom. 9. 22) with His active sovereign mercy (Rom. 9. 23)* Grace reigns (Rom. 5. 21), and it is by grace we are saved not only spared (Eph. 2. 8).† No one was ever saved by forbearance, through a man's attitude toward God and His clemency will much affect position, and degree of punishment, appointed at God's judgment throne. Romans 2 is very clear as to this. Longsuffering and grace are alike attributes of God (Ex. 34. 6), but the former waits (1 Pet. 3. 20), the latter reveals His might to-day: the

* Contrast “fitted” and “He had afore prepared”: also “endured” is not in 23, and a special word is used to emphasize “power,” and its *future* manifestation is before us in 22. Forbearance does NOT remove wrath.

† Observe Rom. 3. 25. Sins were passed over (*marg.*), or PUT ASIDE, in God's forbearance, when there were TYPICAL sacrifices, but they are PUT AWAY, in omnipotent grace, (for those brought to believe), by the sacrifice of Christ.

former is rather passive, and bears with a man; the latter is, as we have seen, active, and is brought to bear on a man.

In 1 Tim. 1. 16 we see how Christ showed all longsuffering in the case of Paul when a Pharisee, but the apostle emphasizes mercy as to his salvation (verses 13, 16), and the words ring out "The grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant" (14). "By the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15. 10). So is it with other saved souls. The longsuffering of God waits, until when it pleases God to reveal His Son (Gal. 1. 16). Grace tarries not for man (Mic. 5. 7). Thus God quickens the dead in sins, and His claiming might is seen (John 6. 39, 45). Longsuffering never quickens: it awaits response. Well may our hearts say, in the Holy Spirit,—“Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift” (2 Cor. 9. 15), and rejoice “to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted (graced us) in the Beloved” (Eph. 1. 6).

He “Gave Them Leave.”

Mark 5. 13.

AN open door is not always a blessing. There is a tremendous danger in self's choice. The demons received their request, and there was soon a choking of the swine in the sea. The troubled sea is linked with their torment too: evil spirits wish for “dry places” (Matt. 12. 43). Did they not ask to their doom? “He said unto them, Go,” are the ominous words of Matt. 8. 32. Oh, dear friend, if you love the Lord, be not like legion, but let Him choose your inheritance, and humbly ask in the line and limits of His will. He knows what is best. In the context it is remarkable that we also have the sad request of the majority in that district, and it was granted—“They began to pray Him to depart out of their coasts.” The Lord Jesus went away. But the rejected wish belongs to the one delivered man, who “prayed Him that he might be with Him” (Mark 5. 18). But the Lord Himself was leaving, and He gave the man the high honour of home service. Do not complain of a closed door. Do not be merely resigned to it. “In everything give thanks.” The Lord has something better than we anticipate, for faith and obedience in the Spirit. If He closes Asia and Bithynia, He knows all about Macedonia (Acts 16. 6, 7, 10) yes, He knows what He will do. Concerning Israel of old it is written, “He gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul” (Ps. 106. 15). Would you have this soul-leanness? Nay. Then thank Him for disappointments and for the closed doors. His will is better: His will is ever best.

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

" But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you : for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another."
1 Thess. 4. 9.

A Word of Introduction.

THE Holy Spirit moved holy men TO WRITE the Scriptures. And thus we have them in our hands, and before our eyes. And He is willing to apply them still (Rev. 2. 7). Truth is living when He speaks to the living heart. And there is a practical power in the Scriptures. God means His words for every day life. Hence such a verse as the one above. And in the light of Lev. 19. 17 should not believers be more concerned for "one another," till we all come into the unity of the faith? The disregard of differences is lack of love. The overlooking of the sin of human opinions, and of proud exaltation of our own ideas, is lack of love. We all need to be bowed before God, that, instead of "agreeing to differ," we may experience His gracious work, and be drawn to His will and one another. Shall we say "Impossible," and ignore the Holy Spirit's POWER to-day? Shall we desire PERSONAL growth in grace and discernment, and not expect the same collectively? Shall past failure BIND us, or the words of our Lord attract us? His coming is near. His Judgment Seat is real. "And love remembers that He said," Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven : but whosoever shall do and teach, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5. 19). And all to HIS joy (Matt. 25. 21, 23).

SALVATION, and "GOOD MEN OF THIS WORLD."

HERE is a man of kindly disposition and "good moral character," as most say. What does he lack? There is a most serious lack, unless he has been born from above. He lacks the only *good motive* for a right action, and a wrong motive vitiates the whole. The sin of putting fellow creatures in the foreground, and *God* in the background, and of making untrue *God's* testimony as to our sinfulness, is a *real* sin. And love to a fellow-man is *not* truly love if it is unmindful of his eternity. Yet we do not ignore the goodness of the flesh (Isa. 40. 6). It is *not* ugly. It may bring a *lengthening* of tranquillity (Dan. 4: 27), and there are degrees of punishment in hell, *according to works*.^{*} But it is solemn to be in hell at all. *Degrees* of punishment reveal *God's* justice, but the *least* degree is a *weight*,—and all punishment is eternal. The "goodliness" of man, though useful in this world, is too temporary, AND without a true foundation. It is as "the flower of grass." To-day it is, to-morrow it is cast into the *fire*. Nor does it prepare a soul for *the salvation of God*: on the contrary, the Spirit of *God* blows on it, when He is leading a soul to *Christ*: sinners must be heart-broken over their "*best*" (Isa. 40. 7).

Salvation is *not* an evolution, nor based on evolution, but a *new creation* (2 Cor. 5. 17). Man's "worthiest" before man, and his "*best*" in the sphere of *providence*, are nothing in the sphere of *law*. How vain is the idea that some religious characteristics make acceptance of *Christ* easier. There are no "likely cases" among those dead in sins: nor can we assume "impossible" cases, (Matt 19. 26). Let us exalt *the God of all grace*, beloved friends. "It is the Spirit That quickeneth." But it may be said, "Here are two men, one with an attractive character who feels unable mentally to acknowledge *God's* gospel, and another with a continually bad temper, or with a selfish craving for money, yet he owns *Christ*, and has eternal blessing: is it *fair*?" The difficulty stated thus is deeply important: we dare not ignore it. *Lowering of the standard of holiness is a wicked thing*. We should expect *much* from a real child of *God*. But there are two fallacies in the objection, both momentous:—

(1) The *human* centre is exalted, and sin against a fellow man is emphasized, but sin against *God*, making Him to be a liar, is *condoned*. To argue that the man is only mentally opposed is to deny the whole witness of *God* against the heart, and as to the *genesis and inter-relation* of sins.

(2) The unsupported theory is upheld that faith is a mental act, and that the man who says, "I am saved" *is saved*. Scripture

* See a booklet "More Tolerable." Exercised children of *God* are ever welcome to write for literature on subjects before them.

knows nothing of this doctrine of salvation. Many who are regarded as God's children are *not* His at all (Rom. 8. 9). Though we confess that the Lord knoweth them that are His, *discipleship* is the manifest proof, and by *fruits* are we to know the Lord's people (Matt. 7. 20). The *fruitless* ground in Matt. 13 is not good: the lowest return is thirtyfold. This should make the self righteous to become anxious, but the troubled, sensitive believer should *not* fill his heart with fears. Rather should he flee to his mighty Saviour, and, knowing the power of prayer, humbly claim grace, to show more fully that undeserved grace which he has received (Heb. 4. 16).

Hence, if these fallacies are removed, the position is altogether different. The Judge of all the earth *will* do right, and will take into account every condition and circumstance. But all who are *truly* saved have *something* in their life entirely different from, and beyond, that which is of the natural man. We do not deny God's sovereignty, nor its holy mystery, but the suggestion that a *good man is in hell* is only possible when God's definition of goodness is sinfully attacked. That He *graciously* saves the unworthy is true: we acknowledge a problem here, but it is a problem of free *grace* (Matt. 20. 15). Election wrongs none. The *enormity* of sin against God, when it exists with kindness to humanity, is opposed to-day. This seems a special *aim* of the wicked one, to exalt man and lower God: the climax will soon be Antichrist. Humanity has become everything: and, as we have seen, its very glorification *apart* from a true centre, is inhumanity. In the Lord's strength, we would ever humbly emphasize that "there is none good, but One, that is God" (Matt. 19. 17). Thus our beloved Lord set forth His Deity, and those who are made holy by His finished work, may well bow head and heart and worship. A believer cannot understand why such wondrous grace has reached an undeserving one as he is. But he knows that his Redeemer lives, and gratitude causes him to seek to be the means of leading other souls, not to reformation, nor to philosophy, but to Christ.

The Value of An Action.

HOW shall we value anything? The man who lives for this world translates all into pounds, shillings and pence. The student estimates the "knowledge" attained. Yet another has another centre and object, and so forth. But how shall we, if we are children of God, value any work? We think of the words, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts" of Isa. 6. 3 and the striking parallel in Revelation 4. 8. From the standpoint of *information*, what is there in this constantly repeated utterance? Do not *all in heaven* know already the majesty of God's holiness? Nevertheless, wondrous beings, of sinlessness and glory, are thus *occupying time*. *They cease not*. What does it all mean?

On earth we often estimate "value" from the standpoint of correcting errors, and mending breakages. But there are no *such* needs in the presence of God. Is it possible we have all *missed* the true aim in life, and the true attitude? May not the alabaster box of ointment give us another humbling hint? Human reasoning still says "a waste." Why? The standpoint of the glory of the Lord is *not* realized among men. But, actually, that *alone* is *not waste*: ALL else must be wrapped up therein, or ALL is vain. Henceforth let not our view of life be a mere round of activity for the bread that perisheth, nor with the aim of earthly knowledge, nor having the purpose of dealing with "wear and tear," nor even the benefit of our fellow men. Rather let it be, with much joy, the all-precious object of the *glory of God*. Nought else is high enough for those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

Apparent Blessing on Forbidden Proclamation.

Matt. 9. 30, 31.

Mark 1. 44, 45.

IT seemed so natural to these healed men to make known what the Lord had done, just where they pleased. And on other occasions the Lord Himself had approved public testimony. Why not on this? Ah, we must let Him choose, and must not draw our inferences from what He has appointed at another time or to other persons. How helpful is this lesson. We all need to be humbled, and to wait for His counsel.

Apparently there was blessing. Multitudes were impressed. This is deeply important. Again we are not to draw our inferences. His will is good and gladly to be followed. Success does not prove the line of His will. Even "spiritual results" are not evidence.*

I have thought that the Lord may help believing sisters through these passages. At first they wonder at His words concerning silence in 1 Cor. 14, and the inspired limitations of 1 Tim. 2, but is not His will right? Does not He know best? Should we not joyfully acquiesce? And can apparent blessing compensate for pleasing Him, or prove His will is to be changed? No, beloved friends, we would simply please Him Who redeemed us, and lovingly leave results to Himself. Is it not so? There are many other spheres of service beside a platform, and publicity. Many a dear believer has lost thousands of golden opportunities given, while craving for one ungiven. But love happily loves His loving will, and thus He is glorified.

* Many dear children of God seek to argue from effect to cause, when they would honour Him more by working from cause to effect.

“REACTION.”

IT is delightful to *know* that God is ever *worthy* of trust, and it is delightful to *trust* Him simply. Having experienced His power in dealing with our sins, and ruin, can we not look to Him for *daily life*? And not only in general, but for *to-day*? Too often we *expect* failure, and actually take the standpoint of “under the sun.” *Believers have been born from above*, and should walk in the Spirit.

Satan would ever seek to find a weak point, not in our armour, for *that* is the whole armour of God, but in our *use* of it. He often tries to “wear out the saints of the Most High” even now; yet varies these tactics by a *sudden* onslaught from all points, as in Job 1. “We are not ignorant of his *devices*”; but, “Greater is He That is in you than he that is in the world” remains true to-day. The devil often tempts ALONG THE VERY LINES of OBEDIENCE. For example, if one seeks to be *alone* with God, the aim of Satan is to exaggerate this, and spoil Scriptural *fellowship*. If one delights to *talk* with others of the Lord, Satan would diminish *private* prayer, and so forth. That is to say, the tempter often proposes a *disproportion* of something which is right, that those who *hate* manifest sin may be ensnared *unwittingly*. How we need humility, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to detect counterfeit coin, made to look *like* the reality, *as nearly as possible*.

Reaction is a peculiar danger. We find it among men of the world. A heavy mental strain may be followed by a craving for worldly relaxation, and things that would be disapproved at other times may be then excused.* As children of God, we need to guard against this. God has appointed *true reaction*, or “relaxation,” in the *rest* of His gift of sleep, to take a precious example. But we must not allow the *flesh* to decide *what* our recreation should be. After a spiritual meeting, of earnest concern and tension, the enemy would oftentimes aim at a certain “mental relief,” nominally, by some “lightness”: *surely this should rather pain us*. After heavy trials, when we have seen souls hurrying to eternity, and professing believers careless, it is more than easy, unless we are very near the Lord to “relieve” the burden by an “ungirding,” and a semi-indifference. We see in 1 Kings 19. 3, 4 *another* form of re-action, when Elijah went so quickly after blessing, *unbidden* (contrast 1 Kings 17. 3, 9)† to the wilderness. The man of God *fell*, even after such earnest faithfulness, amid the tremendous strain (1 Kings 13. 19). Another beacon is in 1 Sam. 27. 1, *so soon after* the victory of faith in the preceding chapter. Self-confidence *after* blessing is

* The world enlarges this: e.g. “light reading,” and intoxicating drugs, and many schemes banish the half-felt seriousness of life.

† God’s gracious dealing with the case is very suggestive (19. 5-8). Observe, however, the loss (19. 16).

easier than we think. Or we forget to take the physical "over-strain" to the Lord; *and claim protection.*

"Failure" is often used to make us lowly, but encouragement is a sore peril, unless we are *doubly* humble. It is deeply important to *expect* grace with regard to *these varying emergencies.* Even some bearing the Name of the Lord have urged a paper like "Punch," and worldly amusements, for those who may seem "strained" in a life of spending and being spent for Him. 'Tis an outrage on the way of "renewing" which the Holy Spirit has set forth (Rom. 12. 1, 2).

In this connexion we have already noticed God's loving contrasted method,* in His *simple* use of food and sleep with Elijah; and His teaching is clear. He does still use *ordinary* things—"sanctified" (1 Tim. 4. 5). "Reaction" may be brought about through mistaken self-attempts to be very devoted and spiritual, *linked with neglecting* the Lord's gift of sleep (Ps. 127. 2), and the very appointments to eat and drink, to His glory (1 Cor. 10. 31, 32), which we are pondering. The USUAL *tendency*, I grant, is *not* toward under-sleep, *nor* to be careless about His supply of daily food. *Many* dishonour by *over* use, but *some* have grieved the Holy Spirit by undue omission, and have thus, through an unbalancing of godly intentions, brought on a measure of *depression.* The *stress* on love to the Lord is beautiful, and we rejoice in intensity, and giving up even ordinary things at *His* bidding, but if a believer actually does less for his Lord, through *apparent,* but self-determined, "giving up," there is a peril. And *pride of self-disregard* easily enters. Moreover, if one "copies" another, without the stepping stones to his experience, there may be an invitation to failure, through getting out of personal depth, and acting *beyond personal faith.* The remedy is *not* indifference as to these things, *nor* eating and resting, for even one day, just AS the world, but love's earnestness to find out more exactly our Father's will in each bodily "detail," as in all else. We should pray to be humbly earnest, and also to be kept from undue proportion of time in thinking out food†; and so will He bless, and enable more knowledge of His way. Thus will many "reactions" be avoided to His glory. We are all weaker than we think, and, if a writer lovingly seeks to help others, it must *not* be thought he has reached a goal. Rather, conscious of his Lord's power and of his own imperfection, he would pray to illustrate much more the victory to which he would turn the eyes of his brethren of Christ. And if we are exercised ones, we can and should pray for "one another," and each one feels ready to add especially, "And for me also." Pride never flourishes in view of Calvary: we all have had too little of Job 42 and Isaiah 6.

* We dare limit Him.

† It is possible, dear concerned reader, to be self-occupied with an effort to avoid self-occupation, and to *spend more time for reducing time* spent on food, and to *think much* how we can think *less* about it!

But God draws His blood-bought people from *reaction* to Himself. "Jesus Christ the Same yesterday, *and to-day*, and for ever." There is no provision for reaction, nor for the flesh, only for simple faith. Let the words again ring out—they are the words of the Holy Spirit Who glorifies Christ—"AND TO-DAY."

" PARADOXES."

WHEN the Lord Jesus wrought wondrously, the people were often amazed, and, on one occasion, after reading of their fear, and of glory unto God, we find how they talked of the miracle. They said, "We have seen strange things to-day." Transferred into English the word is "paradoxes": and the Holy Spirit's report of their attitude must be with some special lesson for us (2 Tim. 3. 16).^{*} What is the word "paradox?" It has two parts, (*i, a*) beyond, and so, (*b*) contrary to, (*ii*) opinion, or thinking.

Surely the works of God in *grace*, as well as the types of those works, when Christ healed the blind, deaf, palsied, and others, are "beyond thinking."

It is here that the natural man fails. He would drag everything down to his opinion, and make *that* the standard. By so doing, he *convicts* himself, for he varies *from himself*, as well as from others.

By searching we cannot find out God, as Zophar rightly said (Job. 11. 7). God must be revealed (Matt. 11. 25-27). And the things of God are not known to the natural man (1 Cor. 2. 14). When any unwisely boast of their *limitation* to "seeing," they illustrate the very Scripture they denounce (John 14. 17).

Grace is BEYOND nature, and BEYOND "thinking." And even nature is BEYOND "thinking." Man is unable to grasp its immensity (Isa. 40. 12). In every way he falters. But that which is beyond opinion is not thereby made "unreal." The fault is in the thinker and the thinking, and the hearts of those redeemed by blood enter into the words, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11. 33). Thus they bow before Him and worship, and praise Him for those things which "Eye hath *not* seen, nor ear heard, *neither* have entered into† the heart of man" but which He hath revealed (1 Cor. 2. 9, 10),—ah, and they praise Him for all that He is *Himself*. Well may praise fill the life *at all times*.

^{*} The *Scripture*, i. e. what is *written* by God, is inspired, and *profitable*, whoever *spoke* the words. God would not have *written* them unless there was to be a blessing for His people, and His instruction thereby. Moreover, have we not in Luke 5. 26 the word the Holy Spirit chose, to translate men's utterance, which may have been in Aramaic?

† Literally, "Come up on to." God has sent *down* revelation.

“He Attained not unto the Three.”

2 Sam. 23. 19, 23.

THESSE words mean much to a believer, Abishai was the captain of a second trio, but he fell short of the first: and Benaiah was more honourable than the thirty, “but he attained not to the three.” In some respects he may have had special advantages (2 Sam. 8. 15, 1 Kings 2. 35), but he fell short in others.

Our hearts are drawn to ponder the Judgment Seat of Christ. One Greater than David will decide. And how will our service appear then? There will be no rivalry or feeling of envy, but how we long that there may be much to His joy and glory Whose Name we bear. And what are we specially told of the first three? Never would we undervalue their personal prowess **AGAINST GREAT FORCES**. “The Lord wrought a great victory”; for “**THY** pound hath gained ten pounds” must ever be the thought (Ps. 115. 1). But “victory” is not the only thing. **PERSONAL DEVOTION** to David is before us: they break through the Philistines host—to fulfil David’s “peremptory command?” Nay, only a wish, **BUT THAT WAS ENOUGH**. So will it be at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

The Whole Heart.

TURNING unto the Lord should be with the **WHOLE** heart (Jer. 29. 13, Ps. 119. 10). How definite is His reproof in Jer. 3. 10, “Judah hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord.” He hates lying, and self-seeking, mere imitation of others, and outward form or formality. **DEEP** feeling is deeply important. Let us hold back nothing from Him. The whole heart should be devoted. Is there any Scriptural use of the word “whole” more common than this? Surely God’s emphasis is precious. The Holy Spirit never leads to unreality. If we “keep back” part of anything, not only of the price of a field, we are on dangerous ground. (Acts 5. 2, 3). “Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart” (Ps. 119. 2).

If we allow a good excuse to hinder morning Bible study we shall always find one: the only safety is prayerful definiteness that an excuse cannot be good.

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(No Messages received on the Lord’s Day).

For Particulars of Meeting at 2, Minorities (Tues. 6. 30), see “Thoughts from the Word of God.”

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"And the Lord commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof" 1 Chron. 21. 27.
"The people that were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness." Jer. 31. 2.

A Word of Introduction.

B*Y the favour of God we can again send forth these pages "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory." Popular subjects, attractive wording?—Nay, God's testimony is humbly set forth that His blood-bought people may please Him. His honour is all important. Redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, though conscious of our insufficiency, we do desire to live for Him, and to encourage our brethren in Christ to be distinct from the world, to walk in the Spirit, and to live looking for our Coming Lord.*

He Did Not Know WHOM To Thank. An Earnest Word To Serious Agnostics.

T**HIS** is not written for the bold and careless atheist, who loves to pour contempt on that which is dearest to our hearts, and to utter the Name above every name with wounding flippancy. Such a heart attitude is, alas sadly prevalent, but this life is not a mere amusement, and the man who thus makes light of its real mysteries, is *plainly* drugged and deceived and duped, in some way or other, and seems afraid to take *time to think*.

But let us find one who is quiet and serious. He may have been saddened by "Christendom's" appalling hollowness, and, alas, has gone away at a tangent, till he says, "I am an agnostic: I wish to be kind to my fellow men; but much is dark before me: I reject revelation, yet not *a priori*: I do not know." Such should surely not resent our definite and conscientious words whenever we meet them. If we feel that, whether in our hearts

or theirs, *all* such ignorance has a *root* joined to *some* *wrong* *choice*, we dare not pretend to regard agnosticism only as a mental error. Nor should we be faithful if we glossed over it. To hide truth is not love. We would express, and not disguise, our convictions. A *serious* agnostic will, surely, not desire "beating about the bush." Our longing is that, while we speak of Him Whom our soul loveth, some among those who hear may be caused to receive His revelation, within (Matt. 16. 17). This is too real and deep and precious an experience to allow our doubt. And how precious the knowledge of *Him* solves the otherwise insoluble problems of a ruined world. But, in thus speaking plainly, we would not use abruptness, or lightness, or impatience. All pride denies the whole gospel: all off-handedness dishonours Him Who died for us. It is in love we would be plain.

But, for the present, one special thought is in our mind. One of those for whom we write may express gratitude for a measure of health, and for compensations in his own life, (e.g. the removal of one physical burden at the time of another), and so forth. *But he does not know whom to thank.* He may say, "I am thankful," but to whom? Agnosticism reveals its imperfection, even in the sphere of gratitude, because it deprives us of One to thank for so much. We cannot find a human being who gives to us many things. And this *moral* defect is surely a witness to a thoughtful agnostic *against his system.* The loss is too real to be ignored: it condemns the theory which cannot escape from it. The agnostic who wishes to be *grateful* *does not know whom to thank.* A simple thought, but how striking and important. How definitely it affects the whole of life.

Man's very being demands God. It cannot have a full orb without Him. Its moral conditions necessitate God, and Scripture reveals the very One Whom we need, and shows the channel of gratitude: nay more, it reveals a call to gratitude beyond measure, in the unveiling of a work beyond measure. Nature reveals beauty, but grace reveals love to the unlovely. Atonement sets forth mercy and truth met together.

We return a moment to the thought of gratitude. Not only does agnosticism fail to show whom to thank, *It cuts at the root of* thankfulness by naturalizing all. It makes gratitude very limited: Many of our *greatest* advantages cannot be attributed to fellow creatures. They are, therefore, to be received as a matter of course! The moral effect cannot be helpful to any: what will be its effect on a child? Apart from the arguing in a circle* of

* Only by *first assuming* that there is no God behind the growth and activities of nature can these things be brought forward as agnostic evidence. It may be said, "A plant acts as *if* reasoning, *therefore* apparent reasoning does not prove a personal agent," but this argument has *no* weight unless it dares to *assume* the very thing it aims to show, *viz.*, the act of the plant *without any controlling power.* How does the agnostic KNOW this? *Why* should it be thought *a priori impossible* for God to work in a plant?

those who instance the regularity of nature as against God, do they not often urge gratitude for *smaller* things, and ingratitude for *larger*? The whole system *lacks* something, and we would earnestly commend this thought to those who feel serious:—and, beyond it, His own gracious mission in that finished work of the Lord Jesus which has fully met our own need. Humbly we can dare to say that we know HIM in Whom we have believed.

“For *she was saying*, If I may but touch His clothes, I shall be whole.”

“*He was saying*, Who touched My clothes.”

“*His disciples were saying* to Him, Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?” Mark 5. 28, 30, 31.

THE Holy Spirit led Mark to use a certain tense of the *same* verb in these *three* sentences. Surely there is Divine emphasis, and Divine helpfulness. We picture the woman with her treasured “secret,”—her half-expectancy of deliverance *when doctors had quite failed*. “She kept on saying” to herself words of encouragement: she would buoy herself up with the self-cherished and oft repeated hope. And *thus* she came near to the Lord. A critical moment! But there was more than a physical touch, there was *faith*. “Thy *faith* hath made thee whole” (verse 34, *cf.* Jas. 5. 15, *not* the *anointing*, nor the words of the *elders*, but the prayer of *faith*, and *this* both *enlarges and limits* the *prayer*).

The Lord Jesus spoke. He may have repeated similar words *several* times. And He looked around. The whole message gives a revelation of His loving, *personal* interest, and also reminds us that it *cost* Him something to show His constant love. The healing of bodies and taking of infirmities thus, during His life, when He delivered the distressed, must be distinguished from *atonement*: it was His *active work of grace throughout* (see Matt. 8. 17). “*He was saying*”: wondrous words of lovingkindness, to show how He leads to faith’s simple *confession* and strengthening.

The disciples, as frequently, were ignorant of His meaning. The *innerness* of His love long remained mysterious to them. How slowly they learnt *His ways*. They thought of the *natural touch*: He dealt with *faith*. And of what do we think, and to whom are we like to-day? Ah, dear friends, this narrative is to search *our ways*, and to make us value Him, and the quiet power of dependent faith, more and more. The Spirit of God still *speaks* through the written words.

Hearing the Rod.

“ ‘ **E**VEN so, come, Lord Jesus ’—and, meanwhile, may I *hear* the rod, and become more like to Him Whose Name I *bear*.” These words occur in a recent article,* and two beloved friends suggested a misprint, “h” for “b”: i.e. “may I *b*ear the rod.” This has been used of God to lead to further thought, and one admires the fulness of teaching in the *unusual* expression of the Holy Spirit in Micah 6. How much more is wrapped up in the word “hear.” We *bear* many things: but it has well been said that a child of God is not to be *resigned* to trials. He is to glorify God, and rejoice in all,—whatever He sends (2 Cor. 12 9, 10).

But *how* can we *hear* the rod? Does a rod *speak*? Wondrous, indeed, is God’s hint of love. HE speaks through circumstances, and His people are not to be occupied with *them*, but looking unto *Him*. “What has My Father to say to *me*?” And this even as to events that affect thousands, as in Micah 6. We need ears to hear. God’s voice was heard by Elijah *at once* when walking with Him (1 Kings 18. 41 lit: “voice”), but *slowly* when he wandered, at least in its fuller message (19. 11, 12). Have we a quick ear for God speaking in trials? “Sickness” and “loss” will be a burden to us if we look on them otherwise: we may even be tempted to call sickness a curse. Words of complaint will escape from our lips. But if we “hear the rod,” there is no longer a bare circumstance, but a loving Father’s teaching and discipline, exactly suited to our need.

The present-day tendency is to eliminate God. Nature instead of God; laws of nature instead of His control: salvation by “revivalistic” methods instead of by His loving voice (John 5. 25). These things are tendencies of the times. It is true that mere language will not make a man godly. If the trend of to-day is to call the voice of God thunder, whereas, of old, many called thunder the voice of God, we have not thereby proof that most were spiritual. But a *heart*-realization of this attitude is the fruit of salvation. Not with the view of a pantheist; not with the iniquitous exaltation of man to Godhead, but with true gratitude for grace, *we see God in everthing*, or rather His hand in and over everything. There is no mere chance. Satan cannot touch Job without God’s permission, not one hair of the head falls to the ground against His will. Hence the blessedness of *hearing* the rod, and of *peace*;—yet humble searching of our ways.

The same principle applies to *Scripture*. That is not only a book, but it is God’s book, and the Holy Spirit still “saith” what has been “written” (Rev. 2. 1, 7). Hence the need for a quickened ear, eye, and *an attentive ear*.

* “The Curse of Sickness” reprinted from Jan: and Feb: gladly sent. A testimony against the error which calls God’s chastisement, through sickness, a “Curse”

God has wonderful love to His people in *all*. Do not forget this. But God has holy rebukes for His people : they also are part of His love. We must not despise His real *chastening*. Though we hear *Him*, we do not thereby make the rod cease to be one. Grace is gentle, but not indulgent. And the Holy Spirit ever leads to a tender heart. Oh that we may see His Name* (another part of Micah 6. 9), and hear His voice, and be exercised and profited thereby, unto the praise of His glory.

THE LORD JESUS SAID :—

"Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."
John 15. 14.

"Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven."
Matt. 5. 19.

DOES NOT EVERY BELIEVER—

Who, though with godly wishes (which the Lord accepts and honours), **USES LEAVENED BREAD** at the Lord's Supper—

- (a) *Omit* His "*This Do*", in its simplicity ?
- (b) *Open* the door for tradition, since if *one* alteration is allowed, which Christendom has made, why draw the line at *other* ?
- (c) *Shut* out any who have a *tender* conscience for their Lord's exact words ?
- (c) *Persuade* such, (through example), to have a *less* sensitive concern, and to give up this simplicity in the Spirit ?

"Though he wist it not" (Lev. 5. 17), the believer has thus four results, at least, of a "little" action, and all are far-reaching. It was not for murder that Paradise was lost, but for *eating* wrongly. The size of sin before man is not its greatness, but the principle of *altering the words of God*. Love would affectionately emphasize the Lord's "*This do*." Beloved friends, suffer the word of exhortation : your Saviour *died* for you : will you not refuse to change His loving request ?

"Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour and not suffer sin upon him."
Lev. 19. 17.

"If ye know these things, happy are ye, if ye do them."
John 13. 17.

"How knoweth This Man letters, having never learned?" John 7. 15.

"Ye call Me Teacher and Lord : and ye say well, for so I am."
John 13. 13.

"Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me."
John 6. 45.

* God's *signature*, as it were. His autograph is on the canvas, if we have eyes to see : there is no mere happening.

“That Rejoice in My Highness.”

THERE is all too little of *this* attitude to-day. *Man* boasts of *man*, but the believer should own “all flesh is grass”. The fading glory of man should not *attract* a saved soul. A bubble has never *satisfied*. A mirage only deludes and deceives. Man is crushed before the moth. The flower perishes: why should we look to the vanishing glory?

Ah, we turn from *man* to *God*. **HE** is worthy to be praised (Ps. 145. 3). The mark of “that Day” is “The Lord alone shall be exalted” (Isa. 2 11), and those who are “of the day” should realize this more and more, in advance.

We would **REJOICE** in His highness as to **CREATION**. The heavens declare the glory of God (Ps. 19. 1). We would **REJOICE** in His highness as to **SALVATION**. His thoughts are infinitely higher than man's (Isa. 55. 7, 8; let us not narrow the immensity of the natural creation, nor of the *new*, 2 Cor. 5. 17).

Salvation is not only for our joy: it is “to the praise of the glory of **HIS** grace” (Eph. 1. 6; 2. 7). We would **REJOICE** in His highness in **SANCTIFICATION** (Phil. 3. 21, 4. 19). We would **REJOICE** in His **HIGHNESS** as to **COMING GLORIE**:—for His holy wrath is righteous, and the Alleluias of Rev. 19 are right. Never let us degrade the glory of God: never let us belittle **HIM**.

How Christ Answered A Question.

THE lawyer in Luke 10. 25 asked a question. He wanted, or at least became a type of those who want, **fresh information**. The Lord **JESUS** in the mode of His reply, as well as its words, has wondrous lessons. “What has been written?” Observe the tense. It has been written and remains. The same stress on Scripture is learnt from His dealing with Satan in the wilderness, and from Luke 16. 29, 31, “They have Moses and the prophets.” But there are further words, “How readest thou?” The writing was past, the reading is present. It is a responsibility. Possessions may be unused. Compare, “Go ye and learn what that meaneth” (Matt. 9. 13). And for redeemed ones there is reading, but not only reading. That which was written once has been said oft, and is still being said by the Holy Spirit (Rev. 2. 1, 7 etc.). Thus the Holy Spirit ever takes of the things of Christ. This explains His leading as something very different from emotion of the flesh,—and the putting aside of the Scripture. The thought has struck me forcibly that I have not realized as I should the joy of hearing **GOD**'s tone before reading a passage in a meeting. And the principle applies in a hundred ways to daily life, and practical godliness there, not only as to a meeting, beloved friends.

**“Who art thou, that thou shouldst be
afraid of a man that shall die?”**

Isa. 51. 12.

“**TWICE**” means emphasis (Gen. 41. 32) and this verse begins with the repeated “I,” and the first three words are pronouns exalting Him. Surely God delights to direct His people toward Himself. If we realize what He is, *faith* will be a fruit, and, not only so, *sin* will appear more heinous. Everything depends on a right relation to the LORD.

Then we reach the question quoted above. “Thou” is emphatic. “Who art *thou*?” We are reminded that *seeming* and *intended* humility may not be *real*. Unconscious pride is a dangerous power. If our “thou” is so large, with a sense of our nothingness, that we forget the might of God is greater, there is spiritual loss. Moses rightly felt his unworthiness in Ex 3 and 4, but when he persisted, as though God could not use a weak instrument (4: 11-17), he went too far. “Who art thou?” that there should be a *presuming to doubt*. Fear of grieving God is well. But fear of man bringeth a snare. A sense of insufficiency is Divinely approved (1 Cor. 2. 3, 2 Cor. 3. 5), but Satan has a counterfeit. He would make fear eclipse faith. Our unworthiness is to cast us on the Lord. 1 Cor. 2. 3 is not the climax:—“And my speech and my preaching” must follow to God’s glory. The apostle dared not to be silent. So in 2 Cor. 3. 5, “But our sufficiency is of God.”

’Tis the same with our sins. Satan would “occupy” us with them, to bring down to remorse, that we may be crippled from love’s service. God would show us our failures, that we may have godly repentance and victory. He does not show us our sins in isolation. He reveals the precious blood. So is it ever. “Who art *thou*?”—that thou shouldst magnify *thy* weakness. Is it too much for the Lord to use *thee*? Art *thou* strong enough to defeat His love? *It is to doubt Him*. Thus unbelief and presumption join hands, alas.

The true view of man’s weakness affects the whole life. “A man that shall die.” Praise God for our living Lord Jesus. Praise God for the indwelling Holy Spirit. What can a man do to us? Let us seek to apportion the right value to *everything*. “I shall not be well for a week.” How do you *know*? Is anything too hard for the Lord. “I *cannot* learn Scripture.” What authority have you for saying this? Is past experience to exclude God? If you make up your mind you *cannot*, unbelief may come true. **BUT** *do not forget* the Lord (13). We often make our own burdens—“And hast feared continually every day.” “Casting all your care upon Him” is a blessed experience. Forgetfulness of God makes sin easy. Can we be obstinate while truly remembering Him? Can we lose our temper in the light of Calvary?

Can we be filled with anxiety if we walk *with Him*? O that God may become real in our lives, and that we may not exalt the *minus* of "thou" to undo the *more than plus* of His gracious and precious sufficiency. He could not use Gideon's 10,000, "lest"—(Judg. 7. 2): but used 300, "unarmed," as men would say. His "strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12: 9). Why not trust *God obediently*? Sin is the only hindrance. An earthen vessel is no obstacle, an unclean vessel is.

"Now we call the proud happy."

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often
one to another." Mal. 3. 15, 16.

ARE you a "Now" Christian, in this use of the word, or a "Then" Christian? Moses named his son "Gershom, a stranger there" (not here), for he took the standpoint of **that** place toward which he looked. Do we take the standpoint of **that** Day? "Let us who are **OF THE DAY** be sober." We belong to the coming **DAY**, if we are in Christ **JESUS**.

"**NOW** we call the proud happy," when we grumble because we have not what we want **NOW**. If we feel we have any **rights**, and thus murmur over our wrongs, we rob ourselves of peace, and rob **GOD** of glory. "**NOW**" we would praise amid, and because of, trials (Jas. 1. 2). The Lord Jesus did not say in Matthew 5, "Be resigned" or "Rejoice **AFTER**." Far otherwise.

"**THEN** they that feared the Lord." Living like men who knew their God, they could view the present as soon to be past. And those that wait for their Lord can thus endure, as seeing Him Who is Invisible.

Moreover, we have, in the change from "now" to "then," the change from man's talk to the Lord's utterance. "**Then** they that feared the Lord is His description and His record. Thus He marked, and marks, His approval.

And shall not we seek more of the restfulness of those who live in the light of that Day? Shall not we lay aside every weight? He is the Same, He is Real: there is no mirage in His promises. "Then" is a precious word, and may also suggest how quickly each day passes. Thus everything combines to make us say, "Our light affliction which is **but for a moment**," and "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." The Holy Spirit never led a believer to murmur, or envy: He always leads to humble praise.

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(No Messages received on the Lord's Day):

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart ; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Prov. 3. 5, 6.

A Word of Introduction.

THE grace of God is permanent. There is no changeableness in His love. It was, and is, impossible for God to lie. Thus His people have a strong encouragement (Heb. 6. 18). It is with this consciousness that we send forth these pages. Merely "popular," they can never be. If we pleased men, we should not be the servants of Christ (Gal. 1. 10). "Amusing," they cannot become, while souls are hurrying to a solemn eternity. But a peace and joy, richer than earth's transient mirth (Prov. 14. 13, Eccl. 2. 2), may well be emphasized, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. The Way of Life, above to the wise, may be humbly, and gladly, set forth, and the statutes of God become songs to His beloved people, as they enjoy an Abraham-like pilgrim life (Ps. 119. 54), and live looking for that Blessed Hope (Tit. 2. 13).

THE BELIEVER AND GOVERNMENT.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON ROMANS 13.

SOME beloved children of God appear to miss much of their Lord's instruction for everyday life found here. Indeed, we all must own how we miss its *fulness*, but if any further help seems to be received, it is for the sake of fellow-believers. With this desire the following lines are written. May the Lord be pleased to use them, and may the principles of *humility*, and non-assertiveness of self, which *underlie* His arrangements, be ours increasingly.

It is so needful that we should not *modify* Divine statements,

even unintentionally. The position of children of God *outside* a share in earth's government is very definitely set forth. In Rom. 12 we see their privilege *not* to avenge themselves: in Rom. 13, however, we behold judgment Divinely *entrusted* to "the powers that be," i.e. in God's governmental providence. But the sphere of grace, and the kingdom of the heavens is *quite* distinct. If a believer *even exercises a vote* he breaks through this distinction: one may be a Christian, but his act is not a christian act. And complete *non-resistance*, however unpopular, is appointed. But it may be asked, "What if an authority, as that of Rome, commands sin, e. g. worship of an idol?" The thought of many dear children of God is thus expressed, "Circumstances in which rulers overstep their authority, and in which it becomes necessary for servants of God to say, 'We must obey God rather than man,' are not in view in this passage." The *object* of this comment is right,—obedience to the Lord alone. But a few thoughts in this crucial matter may help:—

(1) Do not *all* earthly powers *ever* fall very far short, and likewise "overstep," *again and again*? If a believer is permitted to "withstand" and "resist" on *such* occasions, in what way shall he do this? And *where* is the line to be drawn? If the ruler at any time ceases to be the minister of God to *us*, when he goes "his own way," since *all* governmental powers have totally failed, the lesson of Isa. 10. 5, 6 is set aside. The principle the Holy Spirit puts before us is illustrated, in *another* sphere, by 2 Cor. 12. 7. (Note also 2 Pet. 2. 10, 11 with Jude 9). Undoubtedly the child of God must humbly *omit, and even refuse, to obey* any command against the law of Christ, but this is *not* "resistance." To be *subject* for conscience sake and to *obey*,—are *not* the same. Error in this has led to an *uncertain sound* regarding the Christian's appointed *refusal* to use force, and many young believers have been (mis)led to participate in warfare. They have been told that submission means obedience.

Government IS to be honoured under *any* circumstances.. It remains a part of God's providence, *even if it be that of a Nero*. Though we praise God for many privileges given to conscience in this land, we do not acknowledge authority simply because of these privileges, BUT BECAUSE GOD AUTHORIZES IT. 'Tis the wide question of *His* perfect overruling (Dan. 4. 17, 5. 21). To deny this is sin. "Subjection" is "*arrangement under*." If we make it synonymous with obedience,* we necessarily imply that a believer may sometimes be "insubordinate." The consequence is that God's *wide* command is narrowed, and there will be an unconscious weakening of the stress on verbal inspiration

* ὑποτασσομαι is "to BE arranged UNDER":

ὑπακουω, "to HEAR under": it is ACTIVE.

The *two* attitudes may be *found together*: but this does not identify them. The threefold submission of Tit. 2. 5, 9, 3. 1 is suggestive.

of difficult commands. Moreover, the door will be opened for a measure of *resistance* in certain cases. But this is NEVER entrusted to children of God in the present age. "He doth not resist you" (Jas. 5. 6) is to be their *continual* attitude by grace. The usual word *to obey* is not used of Christian relation to authorities. Every command was to be weighed separately, and *obeyed* if according to the law of Christ. Any other position would be impossible under a government commanding idolatry. The verb in Tit. 3. 1 is not exactly "to obey," but to be persuaded and ruled by rulership: it is *not the usual term for obedience*. It occurs in Acts 27. 21 as well as 5. 29, and is forceful as to the *meeekness* of saints, but the added statement in Tit. 3. 1 ("Every good work") prevents generalizing or indiscriminate carrying out of commands.* Hence the believer *abhors* revolution, *honours* even a persecuting government as God's minister to him, but can only *obey* in accord with the revealed will of God. And the Lord deigns to make His path clear. For instance, the most difficult point, *viz*, taxation is solved (Rom. 13. 7). The believer dare not plead the misuse of money, and claim passive resistance or "part payment!" he must readily pay *all in love to the LORD*. 'Tis an act of service. Ordinary actions are transformed, and made spiritual and precious (*cf.* Col. 3. 24).

(2) Linked with the narrowing of the Divine command, (through the identification of subjection and obedience), we find the suggestion as to verse 3 that "the Divine design of government is again here in *view*, and not the abuse of authority by tyrants." Would not this interpretation, unintentionally, invalidate the whole teaching? "The times of the Gentiles" have been marked by much "abuse." But the believer is ever to *submit*, and to see God's hand in all *Heallows*. But it may be said, "Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same" will not fit in with *any other* interpretation. Rather, will it fit in with the suggestion just quoted? Surely not: truly constituted authority, in its higher examples, has *often* disappointed that which is good. The human heart ever illustrates John 3. 19. Shall we withhold recognition of government unless and until it praises good works? We should be attacking God's providence; and in an impossible predicament. The Holy Spirit's principle is as clear as in Heb. 12. 1-11. If a governor persecutes a saint, it is *because* God sees something in that saint which needs the fire. 'Tis *His* refining, just as when Satan was *permitted* to attack Job. We must look beyond all men and circumstances, to God. Hence, we return to the unlimited interpretation, i.e. as God never excuses sin, He commands *complete* obedience to Himself, and,

* Moreover, the verb to obey is here used *without* any direct object. In Acts, the PERSON to be obeyed is stated. *Not so here*. Thus the *principle* of quiet obedience is shown, but conscience is protected; since the Lord is the decisive Ruler, whenever sin is commanded by a man.

if we rendered this, He would not *unnecessarily* chasten.* Thus an *unlimited* acceptance of the words of Rom. 14. 3, as they stand, would lead to *heart-exercise*, and a conscientious concern before our Father to see His gracious reproof by every circumstance.

(3) This subject has a further bearing. The limiting of Rom. 14. 3 leads to the inference that "the injunctions here laid down in Romans 13 could not apply" under Antichrist. It is said by a reverent writer, "The government of the Man of Sin hereafter will be an entirely different order. It will consist solely of abuse of authority, inasmuch as it will be energized by Satan. This distinction is made clear in 2 Thess. 2, and again in Rev. 13." It would seem that, in the marked *absence* of any Scripture to postpone the tribulation till after the near Coming of our beloved Lord Jesus, this is almost the strongest *inferential* argument. And it should be prayerfully met. Those who earnestly maintain it will surely realize that the testimony of these pages is with a desire for God's glory. It has been said, that 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2 could not apply then. Why not? Let us seek to have Scripture rather than mere feelings. We own the terrible nature of that government. But Rev. 13. 5 rather makes clear that even this is not excepted from God's providential overruling. Its length is most definitely *determined*. And, concerning its climax, the statement is most remarkable, "God hath put in their hearts to *fulfil His will*, and to agree, and to give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled" (Rev. 17. 17).—Any other aspect would be calamitous beyond measure. *If* God's control were to be withdrawn *then*, the unveiling of all His authority would be obscured. As the Assyrian was the rod of His anger (Isa. 10. 5), and Nebuchadnezzar His servant (Jer. 25. 9), *so will it be then*. Indeed the strongest terms are used to show that the seasons are appointed by God,—the 1260 days, the 42 months, and the time, times and a half, are under His definite providential working. Rev. 11. 2 illustrates: the court is *given* to the Gentiles. Do the two passages suggested above (2 Thess. 2 and Rev. 13) contain a word against this? No particular verse is instanced. Rather, on the contrary, Rev. 13 emphasizes the word "given" in *two* relations (verses 5, 7, 14, 15*a*, as well as 2, 4, 15*b*, 16—ten times in all). The Lord does *not* forsake the earth: He does not abrogate His power, throughout the times of the Gentiles. Daniel 2 affords evidence of this till the very end.†

* We know it may be said, "Then the full realization is never reached." So is it with Prov. 16. 7. But is this remarkable? Promises, as well as commands, may be given to show our need (Rom. 3. 20, Gal. 3. 21, Ezek. 18. 31). Many *promises* await a Millennial fulfilment (e g. Eph. 6. 3), but their principles have a *sanctifying* power to-day, and lead to the experience of Phil. 3. 14.

† Matt. 22. 7 is instructive. Some have said that the destruction fo

But it may be said, "How could we pray for Antichrist and Anti-christian governments, as 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2 appoints?" Is not this question based on an omission of the *added* words, "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty"? Here is the *purpose* of the prayer, and of the praying. "The salvation of those in government is *not* mentioned, though in many cases we include the thought that our Father may save such. But, as we know that "*Not many mighty*" are called (1 Cor. 1. 26), the objection, raised above, answers itself. 'Tis prayer for a specific purpose *in our experience*, and the godly *silence* implied by the word "peaceable" (*ἡσυχίος*) will need *as much illustration* in the days of Antichrist as at any time (1 Pet. 2. 23). In full foreknowledge, the Holy Spirit has excluded any words of request for salvation, which would be unsuitable when those who have the unalterable "mark of the beast" are in power. Is not this with a purpose? And the language, "a quiet and peaceable life" does not suggest necessarily a comfortable life. As the second word is "silent" (note in the same chapter verses 11 and 12), so the first denotes *stillness*. The *English* may be misunderstood. The stress on absence of complaining (Isa. 53. 7), and on absence of "a voice in government," is for our admonition. It is rather suggestive that a word from the root "quiet" (the word *itself* is not elsewhere in the New Testament), it is used when Ezra sat *astounded* (9. 3, 4), in the Greek translation. It is *this* quietness we are to seek, not a merely physical "advantage." Nor must the further *added* explanation be overlooked, "in all godliness and solemnity." It is a believer's desire that God may overrule *all* to His glory, in the *godly manner* of His people before the world. Christ's attitude, before those judging Him, affords the example we ever need. Hence both Rom. 13 and 1 Tim. 2 have ever a message for believers, calling to spiritual separation from an earthly status, that the Lord's pilgrims may be **KNOWN** by their heavenliness, while they wait expectantly for Him from heaven.

The Lord Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you, and added, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself." He did not need to make *Himself* ready, but, in wondrous love, He gave Himself to make the place ready by His work: yet beyond this thought of the place, how blessed to realize He does say, "I will come again and receive you unto *Myself*." Ah, it must be so, "He gave *Himself*" for His undeserving people, and will present them **TO HIMSELF**.

Jerusalem was the fulfilment of Christ's prophecy concerning *His* Coming. Nay, the King, *not* the King's Son, acts here. The King's Son *sits* waiting (Ps. 110. 1). *Cf.* the coming of the Lord of the vineyard, *not* His Son, in Matt. 21. 40, 41.

PRIVILEGE AND DUTY.

A PRIVILEGE may be a duty,—a duty of love unto the Lord. And that which has hitherto seemed only a duty may become a privilege. So much depends on a godly standpoint. In ordinary things we fail to realize this. It is my *duty* to sleep, that I may have strength for daily responsibilities. But who speaks of sleep as a duty? Our physical frame calls for it. And our spiritual life calls for many things which are forgotten when we are out of harmony with the Lord's will. A sick man may say, "I must eat a little, though I have no appetite." A healthy man eats to satisfy a need, and the very *taste* of food reminds us that our Father has appointed *joy in duty*. And if we do not enter into the taste, does the food meet the need as well? So is it spiritually. "*O taste* and see that the Lord is Good." Jer. 15. 16 is parallel. Nor would we omit Ps. 119. 103. Bible study and prayer come to mind. They are parts of the Christian life, as eating is of the physical. The believer who has any experience of God's grace, and who is growing therein (2 Pet. 3. 18), cannot go on without such accompaniments. It is out of place to tell him, "You *must* somehow bring yourself to do a little Bible searching." He longs to feed on the words of truth, and *soon* he becomes hungry again, and *values the* real refreshment of whatever God has spoken.

It may be bondage to some to refrain from actions whereby many are caused to stumble, but a joy to others. "I don't want to be in bondage," says one, and flatters himself he is free, whereas the bondage exists *already*, even in self's selfishness, which stubbornly holds out against love to brethren who feel christian grief. Praise be unto God for His grace hitherto, but let us not excuse this sin. What a privilege to change standpoint, and to count as a joy that which was hitherto a weariness (Mal. 1. 13), and why? And how? More love to the Lord makes all the difference. An unhealthy Christian has a circle of two-thirds mere duty and one third privilege: a growing Christian may have two thirds privilege, and still remain occupied with one third "duty." But the standpoint of believers, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, toward which we would prayerfully strive, is the identification of privilege and duty, and the radiant joy of the Lord in *all* His will. Thus Christ lived. "I DELIGHT to do Thy will, O My God." And His people were instructed to count it *all joy* when they found themselves amid divers temptations (Jas. 1. 2). They were to look at *things* from their Lord's standpoint, and with a refreshing realization of His precious will in all things. The *joy* set before them was to be so real, even as that which was before *Him* (Heb. 12. 2, Jas. 1. 3). Do not let us seek to make our trials less by getting rid of them *as we think*, but by transforming them, in the more than golden alchemy of the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5. 13, 14).

NEARNESS.

WHAT is *nearness*? Merely physical nearness is not before us. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall *not* come *nigh* thee" (Ps. 91. 7). Ah, dear reader, what does this mean to us? Let us not regard any danger as near, if the Lord pauses over the door. If the Angel of the Lord encampeth round about, the cause of alarm is distant indeed. God can change circumstances, however close they seem, by *His* intervention. And thus the peril is more than distant. "It shall not come *nigh* thee." And there are other spiritual parallels. Christ was "Separate from sinners," though He walked amidst them. Would not we follow in His steps? And the solemn counterpart is true. A man may be in godly surroundings, and yet ungodly. How this speaks to those who have been brought up in homes where there is a real measure of love to the Lord, and to those who have heard hundreds of gospel addresses. They may remain far off. "Nearness" is not barely physical. The Lord is everywhere, but He is **NIGH** to those who call upon Him in truth (Ps. 145. 18), and the proud He knoweth *afar off* (Ps. 138. 6).

NOT WHAT MEN EXPECT.

GOD'S choice of writers of Scripture is remarkable. An eastern *king* was used to write Ecclesiastes, with 4. 1, and 5. 8, inferentially condemning oppression. We should have thought of Amos, a gatherer of sycomore fruit. In like manner, Paul, with his vast knowledge wrote 1 Cor. 8. 1, under the control of the Holy Spirit. It is natural for one who is uneducated to quote such a verse, without any spiritual feeling. But the Holy Spirit's choice reveals the importance of God's word beyond temperament and circumstances, not only as to inspiration, but as to our daily life. I am afraid of the condition of heart which sees most readily parts of Scripture which apply to some one else.

As a climax, we behold that the Son of God, Who was rich and for our sakes became poor (2 Cor. 8. 9), spoke against earthly settling down in wealth (Luke 6. 24, 18. 24, 25). Remember that He was the Owner of the glory set forth in Rev. 21, with its streets of gold. In man's fallen state, earthly gain is the reverse of gain. The socialist quite misunderstands Christ when profanely claiming Him as such. Matt. 20. 28 and similar verses are quite forgotten, and the meek rejoicing in being oppressed (Matt. 5. 1-12) is as foreign to socialism as to philosophy. But the believer, though conscious of his own shortcomings, sees here a marvellous unfolding of the training now appointed, and of the value of the *coming* reign with his Lord.

“There Hath Not Arisen A Greater Than
John the Baptist.”

“John Did No Miracle ; But All Things
That John Spake of This Man Were True.”

John 10. 41 with Matt. 11. 11.

THESE two verses, prayerfully pondered together, are striking and almost startling. God is not restricted to miracles. Outward signs are not the greatest things. The world craves for display, and thus emotionalism, and modern methods of Christian work find a basis, and would affect even the Lord's dear people. O that the principle underlying 1 Cor. 14. 19 may be taken to heart :—“In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.” How many would really maintain this attitude? How many, not only among those who profess they have the gift of tongues? For in our sphere, beloved friends, the same principle applies. If we have any special privilege that marks “us” out, how often we are tempted to display this a little, or to use it disproportionately. Let love be measured by the “5” rather than “10,000”—for the sake of others. That is love.

And the same principle, laying low the spirit of showing off, is found in 1 Cor. 12. 31, after the references to gifts :—“And yet show I unto you a more excellent way.” May our hearts meditate on these things, and be kept from seeking great things for ourselves (Jer. 45. 5). And this means further instruction as to the value of that which abides, even when “we see not our signs.”

Moreover, we must not unduly be occupied with the absence of certain glories and with the thought of days of ruin. Spiritual blessings are more than we realize, as Mark 10. 30 shows clearly. We have not “lost all” in days of weakness. The Lord is the Same. Read 1 Cor. 13—love is more than outward works of apparent greatness. If John could be so blessed, without working miracles, let us, while humbled at any gracious chastisements, remember the Holy Spirit remains, and love and devotion are to overflow.

“He THAT hath the bride is the Bridegroom : but the friend of the Bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the Bridegroom's voice : this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease.” John 3. 29. 30.

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"AS IT IS WRITTEN." (Luke 3. 4).

"THEREIN WAS FOUND WRITTEN." (Neh. 13. 1).

A Word of Introduction.

[It is delightful to have God's precious promises written, and to see their fulfilment accordingly. "He is Faithful That promised." We would ever in these pages seek to emphasize this to God's glory, and His people's spiritual profit. Let us also remember that the written words are to guide His people's actions, just as in the days of Nehemiah. The Holy Spirit still brings to remembrance, and impresses the written truth. And in spiritual warfare, we cannot fail to call to mind how the Lord Jesus repeated the witness "It is written!" Do we not need the same emphasis? Are not these days in which we are sometimes prone to forget our need, amid our many privileges. And let us recollect that we need food as well as "proof texts." While we deplore mental higher criticism, let us also beware of that which is of the heart, in daily life, when we omit to carry out the words of the Lord. Sound doctrine must be expressed by godly practice. Love loves to obey.]

WHAT is the Gathering of the Tares?

And WHEN Will It BE?

"WE must not gather the tares." Some such remark brought a reply to this effect, "No, I would not kill them." And thus we are face to face with the fact that many who bear Christ's Name have fixed *this* interpretation. *It is taken for granted.* But is it Scriptural? Obviously it is not for

God's people to kill now. The Holy Spirit *refers*, in such a verse as 1 Tim. 5. 19, to Deut. 17. 6, 7, but the *contrasted* discipline of Matt. 18. 16, 17, and 1 Cor. 5. 5 illustrates the *character* of this dispensation. *Here* we have *no* continuing city, *no* earthly rule or jurisdiction, with penalties. The "extreme" is exclusion, and *then* there is the prayerful desire of *restoration* (2 Cor. 2. 7): a death sentence did not allow of this.

But can we explain the gathering of the tares *thus*? Is there another explanation? Some have ventured on a different thought, which seems full of danger. They say, "You cannot have a pure assembly." This might be taken to mean *no* exclusion, which would *contradict* Christ's definite words in Matt. 18, (observe Rev. 2. 14, 15), and condemn the Holy Spirit's stress on assembly-cleansing, through Paul. Scripture *never* contradicts Scripture.* Nor can we say, "The tares were not manifest as such." The servants *recognized* the tares, at least in many cases (Matt. 13. 27), *long* before the harvest. Verse 29 may imply *some* were undistinguished, but others were visible. *Not one* was to be removed. The fundamental error of this misinterpretation is that it forgets, "*the field is the world*": it is *not* a local church. There is no parallel. Can there be the continuance of a local assembly without discipline? See Rev. 2. 14, 15.

But, to return to Matt. 13. This *parable only* occurs in one gospel: let us weigh every word. The Lord Jesus never made a mistake in His language. *Every* word is full of meaning. *The ENEMY*, i.e. Satan, *sowed* TARES. Then the Lord makes evident that the putting in the ground is *NOT* the beginning of physical life.

Accordingly, the "gathering" is *NOT* death, it is *NOT* manifest judgment, but, on the contrary, *followed* by a remaining *on the earth* in "bundles," and *then* a burning. The object is *burning*, but *that* is not said to be reached at once. The harvest is *not* a moment of time, but "the *ending*† of the age." That angels definitely work three and a half years before the climax, in preparing the *heavenly* part of the Kingdom is shown by the Holy Spirit, being clear from Rev. 12 §: may there not be a parallel as to the *earthly* sphere?

If then the gathering of the tares is *not* death, and if it *precedes* judgment, and if *binding* comes in between the gathering and the display of wrath, what is the gathering? And what is the binding? It would be altogether wrong to make light of the

* It is evident that *one* field and one only is before us: *all* the servants are connected therewith. There is no thought of a *local* gathering. Nor do angels gather bundles *thence*.

† Only occurs in Matt. 13. 39, 40, 49, 24. 3, 28. 20, Heb. 9. 26. In the last verse "the ending of the ages" seems to embrace the period (3½ years, Luke 13. 6-9) from the manifestation of John 1. 31 to Christ's death:

§ Observe *not* the Lord and His angels as in Matt. 16. 27, 24. 31. The principle of Ps. 110. 1 must be maintained.

Lord's word "first" in Matt. 13. 30. It can have *two* meanings (a) before the wheat (verse 29 implies this), and (b) before binding.

The objection which may have been raised, that the word "first" is not repeated, seems to ignore that *one* mention by Christ is full of meaning. *He* alone has put every word in the *parable* or likeness: but He has not interpreted every word *seriatim*. So with the command to "bind": that is part of the Lord's own "comparison." If He has not explained here, it may be He has done so elsewhere, but omission of explanation is not contradiction. That would involve a "Higher Critical" standpoint. Evidently something very definite takes place *before* the Day of the Lord, with its *fire*. The gathering is "*out of His Kingdom*." How different is the sending forth of Matt. 24. 31, and *that* is linked with "the sign of *the Son of Man*," and the seeing of *Himself*. There is no hint of this here. He is not manifested.

"His Kingdom" must be a sphere in which He *has* a right, and in which He is at least professedly acknowledged. But 'tis not an *earthly* rule in the present time (John 18. 36). Therefore, inasmuch as "stumbling blocks" and "those that do lawlessness" are *here*, within His Kingdom, it cannot be the *coming* Kingdom; but must it not be *Christendom*, as distinct from heathendom, and as distinct from the view of His true people in their *heavenly* acceptance? 2 Thess. 2. 7 comes to mind. And so we ask—Will *Christendom* exist up to the Day of the Lord? In the light of Rev. 13. 8, 15 it *cannot* thus remain. In the light of Rev. 17. 17 *Christendom*, in its present aspect, ceases before the Lord appears. The beast destroys *Christendom* when he commands, instead of "the *mystery* of lawlessness," the *open* worship of himself the lawless one. Would not this involve the unmasking of the *tares*? Can *lawless* ones be said to remain in Christ's professing Kingdom after this? Are they not *gathered* out at this very time? And does not Antichrist *manifest* this form of iniquity for $3\frac{1}{2}$ years;—exactly the period between the angels' preparatory work in Rev. 12 and the Lord's Coming? The woman of truth is not driven to the wilderness *before*: she is *then* isolated as never before.

But it may be said, "Antichrist makes this *coup d'état*, not the angels." Rev. 13. 5, 7 and 17. 17 give the answer. That which happens is not apart from God's authority. Luke 22. 22 comes to mind, and the *twofold* interpretation of Paul's thorn in the flesh.

This interpretation acknowledges a clear meaning for *each word* of the parable. It explains *why* the growing together is not *allowed* (Matt. 13. 30) after Rev. 12. 12.* It shows the stress on "*the appointed time* of the harvest," and on "I will say," for

* Up till that time, the servants are *not* to attempt to "improve" Christendom. This is deeply important. Many organizations ignore this, and at the same time forget 2 Tim 2. 21, and *Scriptural* gatherings.

the Lord Himself does *not* then come. The word "first" is clear, for the saints are not caught up till the opening of the day of the Lord. But a new phase of the Kingdom of the heavens "then" begins (Matt. 25. 1), apparently, as we have seen, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years before the Day of the Lord, and those who know not the Lord are no longer likened to the *harlot*, but to *foolish virgins*.* The *binding* is with a view to BURNING, and accordingly ALL who bear the mark of the beast will be condemned. 2 Thess. 2. 11 shows this very thought : those who have counterfeited the Lord's people are *bound*, in retribution, with a view to inevitable doom †. "But" the Lord has His wheat : yet Matt. 13. 30 will *not* indicate *when* that is gathered, except that it is *after* the tares. Nor are the angels said to touch the wheat in verse 42. The "then" of 43 fits exactly with other Scriptures, for it prevents any suggestion that the wheat are gathered immediately after the tares. The insertions and omissions of the Holy Spirit are alike parts of inspiration. One thing is certain. When the tares are cast into the fire, "*then* the righteous shall shine." May the Lord's added practical words, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," be graciously used to-day by the Holy Spirit to prevent us from altering the parable to human theories, and also remind us that "correct explanation" is *not enough*. We ever need *an ear* for our Lord, that we may *please* Him. Prophetic study, *without growth in grace*, may become harmful. How blessed it is for the sheep to hear the Shepherd (John 10. 27). May this be our glad experience, in the leading of the Holy Spirit.

(If the Lord will, available as a leaflet).

"I PRAY FOR THEM: I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD."

John 17. 9.

THE Lord uses a special word which seems intended to give a *special view of His prayer*: it is not the same word as in Col. 1. 9, Jas. 1. 5, 6 (we find it in Phil. 4. 3, 1 Thess. 4. 1, 5. 12 : "request"). He was *more than* a suppliant : the personal consciousness of His glory shines out in verse 5. How precious are *His prayers*.

Undoubtedly He always asked within the Father's will. Therefore the stress on those given to Him is forcible (6. 37). There was no claiming apart from a gift in the life of Christ. Thus any stealing, beyond the gift, would rob Him of His glory, and, moreover, involves the inference that He will not see all the travail of His soul. But human logic may force this precious portion of truth to the denial of Luke 19. 41. Whenever election is used to

* Contrasted with those who are characterized by doing lawlessness (Matt. 13. 41).

† Individual : "them" agrees with tares not "bundles."

stifle loving concern for souls, it is altogether misapplied. The majesty of His fulfilled petitions (*cf.* Ps. 20. 5) shines forth in Luke 23. 34. We are expressly told of blessing to one of the five for whom He definitely prayed there, and of a *type* of blessing to each of the others (John 19. 23, 24). The definiteness does not detract from the *principle* of this precious verse (Luke 6. 28). *That* is impressive as well: a believer is to be overflowing with love. *Apart from judicial authority, vengeance is malicious selfishness*, and anger is vengeance in its beginning, beloved friends. Oh for a holy watch over our *feelings*.

But there are further precious thoughts in John 17, to affect our humbled hearts. Verse 9 reads with 11, "I pray for them—keep *them*." The Lord's prayer is not for world-improvement, or for unsaved ones to carry out His precepts, but that His people may live for Him. "I pray *for them*": those involved in precious problems *because* of receiving the Lord's words (Matt. 13. 21). Thus the special aspect here those given to Him and *brought to Him*. Those *already* owning His name are before us, and His intercession is for His needy people amid their strains.

Thus we see the Lord's infinite care for His beloved followers. The world has its worldly troubles, but those given to Christ have their peculiar difficulties. Satan would ever oppose them, and the world hates them. Hence the music of the words, "I pray for them." The believer amid his problems is very conscious of his living Lord's intercession. At least he should be. How unwise we are if we lose this restfulness.

Further, may we not learn from this how we should pray for one another? Various epistles show the same. A child of God has a *prayer-share* in the burdens of his fellow believers (Gal. 6. 2). "And for me," said even an apostle (Eph. 6. 19). And the intensity of Rom. 15. 30, 2 Thess. 3. 1 illustrates a general principle. 2 Cor. 1. 11 is never out of date, "Ye also helping together by prayer for us." We little realize how many are the trials that may beset one delivered out from this evil age. Satan knows just *whom* to attack and *how*. Hence the need for reliance on Christ's intercession (Heb. 7. 25), and the delight of our prayer along the lines of His.

The Divine teaching that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, and that His blood is the blood of the Covenant, removes every suggestion of an indefinite atonement. At the same time it answers dispensational errors. Beloved children of God of various dispensations may have been awhile blessed differently, with different "earnests" of the fulness, but all the redeemed shall be "headed up" in the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1. 10). His vicarious work involves living union with Himself. And the same precious teaching answers our fears, and calls to holiness of walk. Thus are blessings entwined.

“CRITICISM.”

IT is very easy to criticise. It does not require an artist to see a circle is not perfectly drawn. But to see another's error and to avoid error oneself—how different. Pride is easier than we think, and we have need for more and more and more humiliation before God.

The object of criticism must be watched, even though the words are true and helpful. If the aim is nothing beyond criticism itself, it is poor, and worse. Actions should not be with a view to themselves, but to God's glory, and with love because of His glory. Indeed, “criticism” is so often unloving, that one would almost wish to use another word for gracious correction and advice.

The manner of criticism is never unimportant. And manner is not only “what I meant,” but “what I appear to others to mean.” We are more responsible for wrong, (yet natural), inferences from a wrong manner than we realize.

The swing of the pendulum toward what is regarded as non-criticism may become, in spiritual things, the excusing of evil. Love does not omit to warn because of personal imperfection, but a tangible beam should more often be sought, and pulled out of one's own eye first. When criticizing that which seems a badly drawn circle, let us be careful we are not looking through a very defective pane of glass. What if we make the straight appear crooked, or the crooked more crooked, by something of our own. If we examine our own arguments less carefully than our brother's, we draw near to hypocrisy, and grieve the Holy Spirit. As with all things, believers must be in meekness. They must seek, without pride, the unboasted leading of the Spirit, if they would point out mistakes to the glory of God. Let us search our ways more. We cannot be too lowly.

“No Man Can Serve Two Masters.”

A STRIKE, and indeed, any dispute must call God's dear people to prayer, and realisation of the world's unrest. Though such things must needs be, the believer does not view them with indifference. He sees a call to more prayerful concern, more witness while he has opportunity, and more separatedness unto the Lord.

The problem of serving two masters has been illustrated. A contract with an employer *and* a response to a union's demands may be quite different. What shall the man involved do? He holds to one and despises the other. The position of a child of God is simple. He should realize that as a servant of the Lord he must not put himself, or be involved, in a contrary position. Therefore, he does not unite himself with the unions and brotherhoods of men. They are “natural” arrangements, but God has called His people to be supernatural.

It may be that the strictly limited acknowledgment of fault by some in certain trade unions * will make the "worldlike" believer say, "Membership does not now include illegal setting aside of other authority." But *postponement* of resistance does not set aside the principle of agitation; and separation from *partnership* with the unsaved *still* decides the path of a humble Christian. The principles of true love to men, because of love to God, and of meekness, keep him *outside*. One thought however is before us just now, namely the deeply important sidelight on Christ's words as to *two* masters. May our *relation* to Him *include* everything. We must not take upon ourselves anything that obscures this *one* dependence. We cannot have dual interests. He is our Master. "Ye serve the Lord Christ." Appointed daily business is *within* this sphere. HIS will is to wrap up everything for those bought with a price, even His own precious blood.

"INTERPRETATION."

MANY a dear believer has gone partly astray on some interpretation through a quite unintended modification of some word of God. Thus we see why some praying children of God sadly differ. This is serious and solemn. An interpretation which has become fixed in the mind, and in connexion with which we may have apparently received much blessing, † is brought face to face with some verse of Scripture, which almost seems to support it. One word however, represents a difficulty. The unconscious tendency, with us all, is to bring the Scripture to square with the interpretation, instead of being bowed before our Father, and bringing the interpretation to square with the Scripture. Whatever it means, and involves, let us seek grace to avoid this error, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit. If it involves waiting further, if it modifies part of "our interpretation," if it brings us to a measure of silence awhile, on the passage concerned, till we see more fully its true

* For this we thank God, and for *every* acknowledgment of fault, and all recognition of the sanctity of a contract. But we dare not overstate. These things are not the reign of peace: the heart of man is still self-centred.

† We do not always know where the blessing lies. A dear child of God may be much refreshed in pondering the privileges of a Christian home, and its responsibilities, and then erroneously think the blessing is linked with the unfounded addition of a "household baptism" which includes infants. Or he may rejoice in the Scriptural stress on Christian-fellowship, and *then* associate the blessing with a mode of gathering which compels silence in parts of truth, for harmonious working. The Lord does not delay His blessing till we see all the truth, else we should never receive it, but we sometimes link it with the *alloy*, whereas it belongs to the *go'd*, in our *mingled* service.

bearing, let us be humbly willing even for this, willing to acknowledge we do not know. If we are the Lord's disciples, let our hearts be zealous for every word of God. Half the doctrinal difficulties, and more, among children of God, are simply linked with the danger here noted. The force of a passage is often not "felt," because our interpretation is fixed first. But reverence for His truth is deeply precious, and if we seek that His words alone should be exalted, our interpretations, (in some cases), and our mode of expression, (in others), will be changed. Thus God will be glorified, both in the condition of heart willing for this, and in its fruit. So will He deign to teach us more and more unto His own glory.

**“O Lord, our Lord, how Excellent is
Thy Name in all the Earth.”**

Ps. 8. 1, 9.

S*SOME psalms, as 8, 103, 118, begin and end alike. Doubtless all psalms have a wonderful structure. And this arrangement gives a precious emphasis. The eighth psalm is a night one (hence the stress on the moon and stars), but it looks on to the coming Day:—all things will be under Christ's feet (as Heb. 2 shows). The Lord alone is to be exalted in that Day (Isa. 2. 11). "I will be exalted in the earth," is the prophecy of Ps. 46. 10. We call to mind "Jerusalem a praise in the earth" (Isa. 62. 7). It is important that we should notice this stress. The earth is to acknowledge the Lord Jesus. At the present time, His Name is dishonoured in the earth, but it will not be then. The very earth where Christ was rejected is to be marked by His exaltation. "The meek shall inherit the earth" (Ps. 37. 11, Matt. 5. 5). These are not mere dreams.*

It is a wondrous privilege to be IN CHRIST. How definitely God's people should manifest the gratitude of UNWORLDLIKE-NESS, unto His praise.

Faith looks at problems from the Lord's standpoint: unbelief looks at the Lord from problems' standpoint. Faith looks through His love at things: unbelief looks through things, as a distorting glass, at His love.

61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London, E.7. Phone: MARYLAND 2196.

(No Messages received on the Lord's Day).

For Particulars of Meeting at 2, Minorities (Tues. 6. 30), see "Thoughts from the Word of God."

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel."
Hos. 13. 1.

A Word of Introduction.

AGAIN, in God's love, we go forward with the desire to send out messages concerning His will. But we are conscious of our need, and conscious how important it is to be in holy dependence on Him. It is a solemn privilege to tell what He has said. But, whether on a platform, or in print, a solemn responsibility. Ah, it is a responsibility to represent Him in a workshop;—anything for Him is wondrous. Deep, deep humility is needed. Only as we are conscious of the Lord's gracious presence, and of a simple obedient desire to please Him, can we expect to be His lowly instruments.

**"I have given them THY WORD;
and the world hath HATED them."**

John 17. 14,

THE world does not always hate religion. It is religious in its own way. It approves honesty as "policy." It applauds respectability. But there is somewhat which raises opposition, and that is, "Thy Word." "Thy Word is Truth," says 17. The human will does not like the "legalism" of truth, but the freedom of Judges 21. 25. The term "legalism" is often a catchword, to kill an unanswerable argument for the Lord's appointment. "Call it by a bad name. Then many will fear it." This seems the devil's aim. Beloved children of God, shall we give way to this? Surely our hearts refuse? What if tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word (Matt. 13. 21), shall we be offended?

The Word is so searching, and so comprehensive. "I accept it to a certain extent." Nay, we must acknowledge the authority of the whole, with love's simple "must." A grateful "must" is a beautiful "must." "I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me, and they have received them" (John 17. 8). Precious thought. It is enough that we have His words. Faith needs no more. Human reasoning objects in vain. "This is not reasonable," and so forth. There is *nothing* legal when our hearts *love* that which is appointed. *Condition* decides our standpoint. It is not legalistic to breathe. I do not feel myself "bound" to eat, by some *external* law against which I fight. The law is written in my very feelings, and the law of Christ is in the inward parts of *His people* (Jer. 31. 33).

"I have given them *Thy Word*." Mohammedans rightly say that we are a people who, at least, possessed a Divinely given book. They erroneously add that they are the same. But if only we had a spiritual reverence parallel with their "natural" regard for *their* book! Truly the children of this age are often wiser with a view to their generation than the children of light (Luke 16. 8), and often put us to shame. "I have given them *Thy Word*." And our possession is to be our characteristic. How do we value, and act on, this Word? Is there a reality in our spiritual use thereof? It is blessed to possess the Word of the Lord, and to walk in the Spirit accordingly.

SEEING HIM.

THE women beheld how His body was laid (Luke 23. 55). On the first day they came to see the sepulchre (Matt. 28. 1), and saw the stone rolled away (Mark 16. 4, John 20. 1). They saw the place where the Lord lay, once more (Matt. 28. 6), but *Him* they saw not (Luke 24. 24). Happy indeed were the disciples when they could say, "We have seen the Lord" (John 20. 25). Now we see not with earthly eyes, but, by faith, we can endure like Moses, as seeing Him Who is Invisible (Heb. 11. 27). We are bidden to behold, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord (2 Cor. 3. 18). How wonderful is the encouragement. And in the pages of Scripture we see Him (Heb. 2. 9). Are we enabled by grace to behold His glory?—Ps. 63. 2. Do we see His goings (Ps. 68. 24)? Are our minds more occupied with earthly things than with Him? How frequently must we acknowledge that this is so. Even activity for Christ may soon take us off, and keep us off Himself. We find that we value what we do for Him more than Him for Whom we do it. And different parts of service have their value according as "I like" decides. "He was seen of above 500 brethren at once" (1 Cor. 15. 6) is a beautiful reference to the witness of His resurrection, but if He is seen, in the simple enjoyment of faith, that is the witness we are raised up together with Him (Eph. 2. 6).

GOD'S THOUGHTS AGAINST DECEIT.

THE UNIFORM testimony of Scripture against deceit is deeply important. God's dear people readily acknowledge that He is "a God of truth," and they hate and abhor lying (Ps. 119. 163), but they need to APPLY to every part of daily life, and to be very definite in their testimony against the thought that it is justifiable to "tell" a lie in any way, or on certain occasions, e.g., to SAVE A LIFE. This theory is common in the world, and such untruth in war-time is even regarded as heroic, in order to protect those in danger.* But GOD'S PRINCIPLE is inflexible: we dare not do evil that good may come (Rom. 3. 8). It is in these matters that the believer is shut up to the privilege of appearing mad, and of trusting God AGAINST APPEARANCES, and he is open to the charge of unkind neglect as to others, because THE LAW OF HIS GOD must be ever in his heart (Ps. 37. 31, Dan. 6. 5). Business truthfulness, too, is more far-reaching than many realize, and it is a privilege to see God's testimony as to the tongue, for example, in the often forgotten Book of Proverbs. The Holy Spirit applies the teaching so graciously, but so firmly.

In this connection some NARRATIVES of Scripture have an important bearing against deceit. Genesis 20 is solemnizing. Abraham spoke to himself instead of trusting God (11, cf. 1 Sam. 27. 1). The result was a "scheme" with a MODICUM of truth (12), but the INTENTION was deceit. And thus there was evil before God. It is not in accord with Scripture to mention this at once, but by quiet COMPARISON of Scripture with Scripture we learn God's holy disapproval. And the much latter FRUIT of this sin is seen in Isaac's similar lie (Gen. 26. 7), without the MODICUM of apparent truth, even as Esau INTENSIFIED Isaac's craving for food (Gen. 27. 4, 25. 29-34). This contains a solemn warning to parents: children often reproduce the sadder parts of character.

The chapter just before us witnesses against deceit also. Rebekah† and Jacob schemed, with goodly raiment and goatskin. God kept HIS plan,—HIS ever perfect covenant plan,—and the younger one, (as in the families of Adam, Noah, Terah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph), still received the blessing. The deceit did not secure this: the marvel was rather that it did not undo, but, as with Aaron under Sinai (Ex. 32 after 28, and yet ch. 39), the Lord maintained His way and sovereignly, yet righteously, forgave, though there were solemn "howbeit's" (cf. 2 Sam. 12. 10, 14).

When we reach the book of Joshua we find the mingled fruit of Achan's sin and of the self-confidence of Israel (7. 3), in the defeat at Ai. Then God revealed His power to a humbled people (ch. 8). The gift of spoil was, apparently, a reproof, even as the Lord still grants oftentimes a visible blessing, if we are not able to bear Job's

* This is not surprising, for the natural man holds that the end justifies the means, and strategy in war is *intentionally* to deceive the enemy, by *any* and *every* means.

† A witness against a divided home: parents should be of one mind.

strain, or to rejoice in the thorn in the flesh. An ambush was the Lord's appointment. But He could have dealt with the men of Ai without Joshua's added scheme to bring the men out.*. Could He not have made them go forth, as the Syrians heard a sound (2 Kings 7. 6), and then drew their inference? God is not at a loss. But "We will flee before them" was unappointed deceit, and with this intention (Jos. 8. 5, 6). The Lord did not withhold the blessing, any more than when Moses wrongly smote the rock, but He did not justify it, any more than He justified Elisha's USE of a miracle in 2 Kings 6. 18, 19. These things are written for our learning, and it is noteworthy that in 2 Tim. 3. 16 **THREE WORDS OUT OF FOUR** imply a measure of rebuke. We cannot be too humble.

Many have misunderstood the records of Rahab's faith, a little earlier in the same book. We all, alas, **ALLOY** our actions, and it was **NOT FAITH BUT UNBELIEF**, when she said, "The men went out." She had trusted God up till that point: but no one can describe such language as the utterance of faith. Hence the Holy Spirit emphasizes **FAITH**, not alloy, in Hebrews 11, and, when calling attention to works in Jas. 2, expressly mentions **WHAT** the act of faith was, and **LEAVES OUT HER "PLANNING."** Yet it is **EASY** to condemn one just being delivered from heathenism. Let us condemn ourselves. How often have **WE** begun in simple faith, and then mingled "our devices." Well may our Lord say, "If ye have faith, and **DOUBT NOT.**" The great danger is **THE AFTERMATH OF DOUBT.**

Two other women now come before us, Deborah and Jael. We are helped by carefully considering the Holy Spirit's record of Deborah's prophecy. "The Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman" (Jud. 4. 9). The word "sell" surely implies in Scripture the **EVIL** action of those thus obtaining. There is no hint that Deborah spoke prophetically in ch. 5. We see God's references to the result of pride by comparing Judg. 6. 4 with 4. 10, and the stress on **SELF** in the song (verse 7) hardly seems of God. But verses 24-27 are crucial and decisive. The prophetically condemned action is here approved, and deceit is commended. Inferentially this illustrates God's record as a **WARNING**; and thus His holy hatred of untruthfulness. May our hearts be responsive,—and responsive to-day. The practical power of Scripture is very precious.

The danger is ever ours, **ESPECIALLY IN TIMES OF PERIL.** Unbelief is inventive of deceit. David's bright faith is unseen in 1 Sam. 27, and he plans—without seeking from God. Proverbs 3. 5, 6 would contrast. In wondrous love God extricated him, and Ps. 34 contains not only suited praise, but **SELF REPROOF**, when we notice the heading "He changed **HIS TASTE**" (same word in verse 8), **AND THEN READ VERSE 4** in the light of this. A similar lapse is found, alas, in 2 Sam. 15. 34, **IMMEDIATELY** after the prayer of 31,—even as the children of God faltered **AMID** continued prayer in Acts 12. 16. How

* Of the added interpretation with reference to Ps. 69. 25. in Acts 1. 21, excluding Paul. A leaflet, "The Other Apostle" gladly sent.

we need to be kept on our guard.. Doubtless there are MANY other Scriptural warnings, and the disciple who wants to please his Lord will remember Peter—after “WELL-meant” self-confidence. The Lord’s restoration was TENDER (Mark 16. 7, John 21. 17), but sin is never excused. Nor can we forget the humbling record of Gal. 2, and the solemn word, “dissimulation.” Through fear or influence we too, are more easily deceived than we think. “Dissimulation”—“even Barnabas.” How heart-affecting. May we not be carried away, but walk “uprightly toward the truth of the gospel” (verse 14).

Yet even the dear servant of God who detected this sin compromised in Acts 21, as he heard of the thousands who believed, and were zealous for the law. The ominous words sounded forth, “And all may know that . . . thou thyself also walkest orderly, and KEEP-EST THE LAW” (24), “The Jews which were of Asia” evidently knew Paul in his REAL character more than he then knew himself. They could not imagine he had set up a barrier between himself and Trophimus (29). But this MISLEADING attitude, though overruled, brought him to imprisonment. It is impossible to read aright without the preparatory Acts 21. 4. How important to take the Holy Spirit’s negative hints, and not to hurry before the Lord’s time. We are all weaker than we THINK.

And so, beloved friends, we have a fuller realization of God’s will for His people, and an evidence that we must not change His gracious condescension and forgiveness, into a defence of the dross we mix with His gold. He may work although we falter, but do we not long to render holier, ever holier, service unto Him? He is a God of truth, and is willing to step in, if His people trust Him simply. When Moses did not scheme, the Lord divided the waters. When Jehoshaphat did not attempt to work out his devices, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, and His hand is not shortened. Simple faith can look to Him. It is not willing to play at bravado.—“When they persecute you in this city, flee ye unto another.” But there is the quiet dependence on God in flight, not added scheming. These lessons may be needed much, when persecution again breaks over God’s beloved people, but HE WILL NOT FAIL.

GOD WAITS.

NEBUCHADNEZZAR’S casting down did not take place for a whole year (Dan. 4. 29). The warning had been given, yet God waited. But when the king SPAKE, and while the word was in his mouth, the same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar (verses 30, 31, 33). The power of WORDS is thus shown, and we remember the result when Moses spake unadvisedly with his lips. “Every idle word that men shall speak” is noticed. “They shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment” (Matt. 12. 36, 37). We little realize how death and life are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18. 21).

God waits. Nineveh was promised 40 days, but when there was

earthly repentance the city was long spared (Jon. 4. 11). The same principle of God's waiting shines out in the words, "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Gen. 15. 16, cf. Rev. 2. 21). Nor can we forget how the Shekinah glory tarried in departing from Jerusalem. Ezekiel's record is affecting. Thus we ever see the riches of God's goodness and forbearance and longsuffering (Rom. 2. 4) : He endures with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath (Rom. 9. 22). And we would never complain of this infinite patience. God waits, and, MEANWHILE, we can declare His truth. But He does more than wait—He saves out from a ruined world (Mic. 5. 7). In longsuffering He is, as it were, passive—He endures. In sovereign grace (Rom. 5. 21), He takes the initiative (Phil. 1. 6, 1 John 4. 19).

"IMPOSSIBLE."

IN both the Old Testament and the New are we reminded that God is not a man, not bounded by limitations (Job 42. 2, Jer. 32. 27, Matt. 19. 26). It is deeply important to realize that He is subject to no laws, though He may be pleased to appoint usual modes of working. The theory that regularity in nature is less a miracle than an extraordinary act is based on lack of consideration. The idea that certain things are impossible is surely an impossible one,—in a world of such extraordinary "miracles." And thus a believer is graciously drawn away from theories, and doubt and unbelief. He is drawn to the simplicity of faith. It is enough that God lives and He can do whatever He pleases. Faith has a quiet confidence. "The Word of God is not bound."

But the inference from this is not carelessness. Because God can work miracles, I am not called to miss my train and hope He will enable me to reach my destination. We should not set aside the usual workings of God's wisdom. We must not presume on His love. Can we ignore food and sleep with advantage? Surely not. We receive from His hands, and He normally works thereby. Our hearts would not misapply His omnipotence, or seek to use this against His wisdom. All the attributes of God are in precious harmony.

But the sweetness of His infinite power is realized when, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit, we are privileged to pray for any, and our prayers seem unanswered. God is STILL Almighty. We need not lose heart.

Again, the choice unveiling of His grace is felt in little things as well as those which are harder. We feel our insufficiency for various parts of service, and our hearts cry out, "Who am I?" And the Lord answers, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and He IS the Same, and the daily giving of daily strength is more wonderful than we realize, and more needful than a sudden supply of power which would OVERWHELM us. We praise God for a multitude of little things, in His TENDER SUPPLY, to help us at the right moment.

“WHOSE HOUSE ARE WE.”

Heb. 3. 6, 10. 21.

THIS expression is not only a display of the devotion and unity which should ever exist among God's dear people. It definitely sets forth the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is ever exalted. Moses' glory is that of “the one MADE,” contrasted with the Maker (verse 3), and the added testimony, “But He That prepared all things is God”(4), leaves us in no doubt. Incidentally, moreover, we view Moses as part of the one house, in accord with 11. 40 and 12. 23. This is deeply precious. We can understand why Moses esteemed the reproach of CHRIST, and the glory of the Lord Jesus thus continually flashes out. The men who stand out in history, as Abraham, Moses and John the Baptist, have no hesitation in calling attention to ONE, and to His glory. Abraham tells of THE Lamb to come after a typical ram had been offered. Moses speaks of a Prophet to fulfil—everything, that sinners “die not.” And John humbly and firmly says, “HE must increase, but I must decrease.” There is a concurrent witness to the majesty of Christ.

And so we return to the words, “Whose house are we.” “The Son abideth in the house for ever” (John 8. 35), and His people have a fullness of union with Him. If He abides for ever THERE, the house must abide. The loss thereof would be HIS LOSS. Thus He has knit His people's safety and joys with His own honour.

But what about the added “if”? We can never pass over God's “if's” slightly. The Lord means to PROBE our hearts. But He would not terrify our hearts. “If” joined with a future, in the ACCOMPANYING clause, suggests uncertainty as to the future, but joined with a present tense, it uses the present as a precious TEST. And that is the Divine lesson. It is better to be CONCERNED as to the present than to lightly assume all is well. God keeps by godly concern from an ungodly apostasy. The true assurance of His love has never made a man careless, and we would praise Him for this. Oh how wondrous are His methods of dealing with our varied needs. We must not assume we are His house because of doctrinal profession or verbal confession. Holding fast does not make us His house, but absence of holding fast shows we are NOT that precious dwelling place.

The tendency of many in days gone by was variability. And so is it now. The Lord's proof is CONTINUANCE. We hold because we are held, but when there is grace there is a holding. And the response to His love is a precious response. May it be ours, in the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

The blood of Christ is *ever* emphasized by the Holy Spirit, and he who values not the blood of Christ *cannot* know the real nature of *sin*, nor the *amazing* love of God, nor the meaning of a new creation with new power in spiritual every-day living. A right realization of Christ's atonement is a stepping-stone to a holy walk.

“AND JOAB ANSWERED.”

1 Chron. 21. 3.

If there is one thing we do not expect in Joab's character, it is **spirituality**. He was loyal to David year after year, but the loving temperament of the king found the sons of Zeruiah too hard for him. A man of determination, (witness his entry into Jebus), a man of skill in warfare, Joab does not shine forth as a man of God. He could not have become the sweet psalmist of Israel. David awakened love. “The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David” (1 Sam. 18. 1); “All Israel and Judah loved David” (1 Sam. 18. 16); “The people answered, Thou shalt not go forth” (2 Sam. 18. 3); “The men of David swore unto him, Thou shalt go no more out with us to battle, that thou quench not the light of Israel” (2 Sam. 21. 17). In such language we see ardent affection. Joab was cold and calculating. By his murder of Abner and Amasa we see his “policy”: he would take no risks. He was ready to suspect. David was generous.

But **EVEN JOAB** was able to warn David with regard to the numbering of Israel. There was wisdom when he dealt with the king's excessive grief in 2 Sam. 19. 5-8, but that may have been ordinary wisdom. And we must not forget David's sense of **HIS OWN** sin, as the background for the sword not departing from his house (2 Sam. 12. 10). Indeed, he could behold in Absalom's earlier sin, that led to the first flight, the effect of Amnon's sin, and that, in turn, a reminder of his own. The order of the inspired record suggests this.

But in 1 Chron. 21 we have a different narrative. David was carried away by Satan's working, and, apparently, by pride. **EVEN A JOAB MAY SEE SOME SINS OF THOSE WHO LOVE THE LORD** earnestly, and may rebuke. Let us realize the **DISHONOUR** of this, but let us not refuse the reproof because Joab gives it. Rather let us be swiftly humbled. Do we need a man of the world to condemn us? Do we not need to walk with God sufficiently to perceive more quickly His will, and to detect more speedily our departure from Him? Oh that we may be enabled to hear God's voice humbly, and to have His guidance, **FIRST**. Many human schemes **ARE** attractive, but let us beware of all that is without **HIS** warrant. Pride is more subtle than we imagine. If Joab answers, let us seek to give up our devices; but is it not better to know God's will **BEFORE** Joab speaks?

It is so important to *grow up* unto Christ in *all* things. The flesh is glad to “specialize” on certain actions. *Spiritual life* is never seen by such a condition. If I love *part* of God's will, my love may have *motives far different* from the precious motive of love to *Him*.

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(No Messages received on the Lord's Day).

For Particulars of Meeting at 2, Minorjes (Tues. 6. 30), see “Thoughts from the Word of God.”

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

*"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."
John 17. 14, 16.*

*"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly
calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our
profession, Christ Jesus."
Heb. 3. 1.*

A Word of Introduction.

B*Y the loving kindness of our God we send forth these pages, a little token of His love, and a little testimony for Him. Are evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse? Are many who bear Christ's Name being deceived? Is Satan using every effort to deceive the elect? Should we not be CONCERNED? Apart from outward blasphemy, and denial of the very Scriptures, by those who SAY they are Christians, do we not behold the tendency for the love of many to wax cold (Matt. 24. 12)? Are not many believers "linked up" with evil which they personally deplore? Is there not a peril in worldliness? Are not many children of God afraid not to compromise with the world's fashions, and, strangely, are not these the very ones who, in slavery, themselves, remark that Christians who avoid such evil are bound by those who emphasize godly neatness? And is there not some fear of this taunt even among earnest believers? Are not the times perilous? Imperceptible departure from God is so easy. IMMEDIATE backsliding may be rare. But many who confess the Lord Jesus do many things which they would not have done once, and gradually dull their perception of the heavenly calling. Is it not so? Surely there is a need for a deep reviving, not a merely emotional revivalism, that God may be exalted, as His Word and His indwelling Spirit have the right position in the DAILY WALK of those redeemed by precious blood, looking for that Blessed Hope!*

THE BELIEVING ONES

Or the Privilege and Joy of CONTINUED FAITH.

EVERY word of Scripture is precious, and every distinct grammatical form is used *by the Holy Spirit* with a purpose. There is a holy emphasis on the *present* tense in the usual description of children of God as *believing ones*. We meet it first in Matt. 18. 6, and John 12 has the *same* refreshing encouragement. The mark of a saved one is *abiding faith*. Continuance is the test: The rarer perfect participle is found in John 8. 31 to characterize those who have believed with an *ever-present effect*.* But the usual participle is itself *present*, e.g. John 3. 15, 16, 18, 5. 24, 6. 35, 40, 47. 7. 38, 39, 11. 25. 12. 44, 46, 17. 20 (probably). The prayerful reader will see a *remarkable* repetition. Faith, faith, faith, "we *walk* by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5. 7). A godly *characteristic*, and of the deepest importance, for it is by faith, and not by reasoning, that we can quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. The "aorist" is found in John 20. 29: the context illustrates that the *primary* thought there, is *not* so much the continuance of the faith. Rather, a contrast with Thomas is before us. This tense is likewise found in Mark 16. 16, 17: and we would ponder the language. If we had here the *mark* of *believing ones* generally, throughout the dispensation† would not the *present* have been expected? It is well to be clear on this, *not* to encourage unbelief and seeking to doctors, *but* that "believing ones," may not *despond* if the Lord permits physical trials to-day, and that there may not be the theory of condemning *as unbelievers*, those who do not perform miracles. The Holy Spirit never makes a mistake. We are *not* told that Acts 2. 17, 18 shall mark the end of the dispensation, *any more than the verses 19, 20 marked the beginning*. The *second* fact is often overlooked. Praise be unto God for the works of power. Let us be humbled because of the disunity which was linked with the loss of power. But while beloved children of God are, alas, scattered

* Acts 15. 5, using the same participle, seems to allude to this, to remind us how Satan would seek to hinder *even when there is the fruit of faith*. The power of early prejudice is great. We need to pray for victory in the Holy Spirit. How readily *we* should have assumed that these knew nothing of *faith*. The Lord corrects our inferences.

† It is worthy of prayerful consideration that, where *obedience* is concerned, we have "Unto the end of the age" (Matt. 28. 18-20: Cf. "Till He come," 1 Cor. 11. 26, a wondrous hint that assemblies will be raised up to keep the Lord's Supper Scripturally even in the last days): but there is *not* the same addition in Mark 16. 19, 20. And a special act of faith seems before us, to remind us that believers must have a *warrant* from the Lord as to miracles: there is not the statement that these signs follow *believing ones*: we cannot demand this "warrant" just as the natural wish pleases. O for more humility. The Lord's hand is *not* shortened. But we must ask in the line of His will.

in various organizations, may there not be unconscious pride in assuming signs which were associated with a united "body" (1 Cor. 12. 13), and which are not promised in the definite precious unveilings of revivals in the closing days? There is need for *more faith*, even amid trials and chastisements: and we would not *crave* for display: godliness needs more emphasis than it receives.

We return to the present tense in Acts 2. 44, 5. 14, 10. 43, 13. 39 (mark the *individual* experience), 22. 19. Again the abiding of faith. But it is fitting to notice the *same* form of the word in Acts 4. 32 as in Mark 16. 16, 17, and also in Acts 11. 17—peculiarly appropriate, linked with the fulfilling of Christ's promise. He has kept His Word so wondrously. Passing through the Scriptures, we notice the stress on the "perfect" tense in Acts 16. 34, 18. 27, 19. 18 and 21. 25. Here the *continuance* in the Lord's Word is graciously brought to the front with the thought of an *effect* or *fruit*. Beloved friends, do we show this, as we should?

The Epistles have a further, and parallel message. The *usual* "present tense" is before us in Rom. 1. 16, 3. 22, 4. 3, 11, 24, 9. 33, 10. 4, 11, 1 Cor. 1. 21, 14. 22, Gal. 3. 22, Eph. 1. 19, 1 Thess. 1. 7, 2. 10, 13, 1 Pet. 2. 6, 7, 1 John 5. 1, 5, 10, 13. How often are believers thus described. An untrustful believer is an anomaly. We refer *not only* to faith in inspired words, but also to a simple trust amid daily trials, which would otherwise become daily worries. The "aorist" is rare, but the Holy Spirit always knows His meaning. Mark the occurrences. 2 Thess. 2. 12 is negative, and linked with those who believe signs and wonders of evil. In Eph. 1. 13 we have the positive, but the word used adverbially (and thus without the article): 2 Thess. 1. 10 gives the standpoint of "that Day," and looks *back* on faith, when faith is changed to sight. The *link* of tenses in Heb. 4. 3 would seem to give the reason for the Holy Spirit's choice of this tense. "We who believed *do enter*," and Jude 5 shows the failure of Israel in the type. The perfect occurs in Tit. 3. 8, a unique occurrence, but with a beautiful reason. Here the thought is not so much an emphasis on the characteristic of *faith*, but the characteristic of *fruit*. How blessed to realize both parts of truth. *Should we not have more fruit?* Thus, beloved friends, our hearts are stimulated by about 40 examples of the present participle. God has a right to expect so much from His beloved people. He has given them *all* things that pertain to life and godliness. He never stints them. He will enable life more abundantly. The river of grace is not a winter brook. The trees of oil supply the need continually. Keep on believing, whatever be the circumstances. Unbelief will despond, complain, scheme, and otherwise dishonour the *Lord*. May it not be that half the devices of Christendom have been largely brought about through lack of simple dependence on the Lord even when His way means 40 years in the desert, or apparent spending of strength in vain? 'Tis then the reproach of men

goads to the use of strange fire, unless we are made willing to wait for God's time, and simply please Him IN FAITH.

TRUST GOD.

IT is a privilege to know the trustworthiness of God. Faith is a very simple thing, but very precious and powerful. SIMPLE, indeed, in its quiet DIRECTNESS. It takes no account of CIRCUMSTANCES, when God is concerned. His will decides: nothing else. Nothing else has even a voice. "The Author and Finisher of the faith" alone illustrated this fulness. We often fear—at least to some extent. "Be not afraid, ONLY believe" has a wondrous meaning. Do not MIX anything with faith. Let faith be SIMPLE. Not that we can have "faith" at human will, or whatever we "like," as we "like." Nay, faith needs a word of God. But THAT is sufficient. One word of God will remove mountains of human speculation, whether they be the mountain range of FEAR, or of WORLDLY PRUDENCE.

Trust God, and be not anxious. That is to say, if you are seeking to please Him. The splitting up of Scripture is unwarranted. None were to rest on the seventh day among Israel, unless they did six days' work first. And to professedly obey the command, "Be anxious for nothing" is inappropriate WHILE one makes light of OTHER COMMANDS. The doctrine of God is one.

Trust God as to the body. The FIRST thought before us is not the use or disuse of a doctor or a "medicine." Something far deeper, namely, the use of human wisdom. "Cease from thine own wisdom." Here is a brother who takes a certain medicine. It may be you and I feel grieved over this, and realize that he is losing spiritually. But there is something worse if he trusts to that medicine, and says, "I cannot do without it." He is like the smoker who says, "I CANNOT give up." Just as a child of God may be blest in breaking a LEAVENED loaf on the Lord's Day morning, blessed because of devotional love, though there is a twofold failure, the Lord may bless the faith in HIMSELF that a brother has, ALTHOUGH he may ignorantly attach it to something else, the use of that which is UNAPPOINTED. Hence, if you have, by grace, given up human "remedies," be careful lest you trust to YOUR GIVING UP, three years ago, instead of HIS enabling TO-DAY. We must know GOD. LIVING FAITH IN our FAITH may be more harmful than unapproved means, when there is, nevertheless, faith IN HIM. Rahab's unbelief, which told a lie to save the Israelites' lives, did not UNDO the faith, and ITS reward. NOW, with FAR MORE knowledge, you and I would be much more sinful if we told a lie. Some beloved children of God err in this. They think that if another is blessed, ALTHOUGH he does a wrong action, they can do the same, and be blessed, after THEY HAVE BEEN CONVICTED of the Holy Spirit as to its wrong. Sins of ignorance are not justified by ignorance, but knowledge intensifies.

Trust God as to circumstances. Do not scheme. Rebekah schemed

to obtain the blessing for Jacob. It was a grave mistake. The Lord would have looked after Abraham in Egypt without a lie. Joshua ADDED a "make believe" to the Lord's COMMAND,—added, "We will flee before them" (Jos. 8. 6).* The Lord did not say this. HE could have worked as easily without it. He is by no means limited. When Peter was to be brought out of prison, the Lord had no difficulty. There was no "need," to bribe the guards. There was no "need" to use a lie. God has all the keys, and evil that good may come is never justified. When Paul escaped from Damascus, the use of the basket was good: and illustrated, "When they persecute you in one city, flee ye into another" (Matt. 10. 23). The disciples did not ADD some deceit. So is it to be at all times. Trust God.

**"I Complete Cures, To-day and To-mor-
row, and the Third Day I Am Completed"
(Brought to the Goal). Luke 13. 32.**

IT seems almost impossible to render the fulness of this wondrous declaration. And, indeed, it is. The privilege (and responsibility) of a translator is to avoid positive errors AGAINST the truth, but he ALWAYS omits much. The NEGATIVE failures are very real: who can be proud?

The Lord Jesus suggests not only His COMPLETENESS of work in healing (e.g. Matt. 12. 22, Mark 3. 5, cf. Luke 8. 35), so that there was an entire change, but also an anticipation of that Day.† And, further, He illustrates His ACTIVE obedience to the will of the Father, and then, by the added passive, the OTHER part of His one complete life. John 17. 4, "I HAVE finished the work," and 19. 30, "It hath BEEN finished" have been long in the mind, to set forth this precious twofoldness. THE WHOLE was ONE obedience (Rom. 5. 19). Surely Luke 13. 32 emphasizes the same teaching, which the Holy Spirit would impress on our hearts. There is no incompleteness in the work of the Lord Jesus. How grateful redeemed ones should be. He, the Perfect One, was, (as the sacrifices in the types), COMPLETE, that He might COMPLETELY bear the wrath of God for us, and thus He also COMPLETELY accomplished righteousness, (for there was active love right up to the last moment); and saved ones have become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21). It is all so wonderful, and RESTFUL, and thus a call to love's devotedness in our lives. There were no deficiencies in Christ: may we seek more likeness to Him, and a godly walk in the Spirit.

* See leaflet GOD'S THOUGHTS AGAINST DECEIT for fuller notes.

† Note Phil. 1. 6, and Jas. 1. 15 for the same word, and one similar.

“ARE WE AS HIGH AS PAUL IN GOD’S SIGHT?”

THIS question reaches me, and the meditation on it proves helpful. Therefore I would pass it on.

First, it is blessed to realize that “in Christ Jesus” God’s people are made near, and in Him there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female (Gal. 3. 28, *cf.* Col. 3. 11). **That** is the precious meaning of “all one in Christ Jesus.” Such oneness in no way undermines God’s other arrangements: the Christian parent is a **parent** still, and the Christian child delights to be subject. So is it with brethren and sisters: ’tis only the **misuse** of “neither male nor female” which would hinder. As to **the love of God in Christ Jesus**, ALL believers are UNITED. “Thou hast loved **them** as Thou hast loved **Me** (John 17. 23). What could be higher? Concerning “life,”—how blessed to realize all children of God are **equally living**. And Matt. 23. 8 **applies** the underlying thought to warn us against all pride. Truth is ever to be **experienced—felt—enjoyed**.

Secondly, as God has made distinction among unfallen angels (1 Thess. 4. 16 illustrates), and as He was pleased to appoint a difference between man and woman before Adam fell (Gen. 2. 18, “a help,” and “meet for him”), so He has **ever** shown His **sovereign** wisdom. “God hath set some in the Church, **FIRST** apostles, **SECONDLY** prophets” (1 Cor. 12. 28). A **Divine order**. We cannot put ourselves above apostles in this matter. All envy and jealousy are grievous indeed. Rather, **we thank God for another’s** privilege. The words ring out, “As it hath pleased Him” (1 Cor. 12. 18), and any complaint is schism (25). Does our physical foot feel it is “as high as” the hand, or our little finger oppose the thumb’s exaltation? O for more love to the Lord’s will. Paul was set on high with other apostles, and we humbly **thank God** for “**first** apostles,” and then rejoice to add that “those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary” (22)* Furthermore, much fervent **love** gives a **true dignity** (1 Cor. 12. 31, with ch. 13). **Seek this**.

Thirdly, the **friendship** of John 15. 14 is precious, and **conditional**. Our “height” with regard to this depends on our **spiritual obedience**. An earthen vessel may be used to honour, and an unclean golden or silver vessel laid aside. “If a man love Me, he will keep My Words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto Him, and make Our abode with Him” (John 14. 23). Beloved readers, do we seek this enjoyment of His love as we should? Let us beware of the spirit of Luke 22. 24, and also of glorying in men (1 Cor. 3. 21). The glory belongs to the Lord, and the Holy Spirit ever exalts **Him**! Thus we look on His people as **His**, and value for **His** sake, and the parallel in our physical frame which delights His

* A leaflet will be gladly sent.

heart is, that if **one member is honoured** all the members rejoice with it (1 Cor. 12. 26). What a wonderful thought.

THE MARVEL OF GRACE. A SIDELIGHT FROM NATURE.

GOD speaks through everything. Yet His people alone have ears to hear, and eyes to see. Their hearts have been opened to behold His hand, and they praise Him for all that He sends. The sun is "His sun" (Matt. 5. 45). The sea is His (Ps. 96. 5) and they realize the beauty of the words "His earth" (Prov. 8. 31). Hence they understand, in measure, God's wondrous testimony to Job in the well-known 38th. chapter of that marvellous book. The natural tendency toward complaining **seemed** to have a real ground in Job's life, but his heart was silenced, except to confess sin (Job. 40. 3-5), and then He spoke of God the thing that was right (Job 42. 7). And God used His works in **nature** to bring His tried servant to this delightful end.

Happy are we if we recognize **the Lord more**. An imitation-science thinks that by explaining some **laws** of nature it has eliminated the **Lawgiver**, unmindful that an extraordinary action **oft repeated** becomes no less **marvellous**.* A gift of £100 repeated daily would not make the money cease to be valuable. In all else, except nature, **repetition** would be regarded as intensifying the display of glory, but man wishes to get rid of God.

The stress on the **earth** in Scripture surprises some. "Ah," they remark, "It is evident the writers did not enter into the immensity of the universe." Wait one moment. Who **now** enters into this? Who claims that the writers understood all nature? But, if we realize **their** personal limitations, the fact that the Book **never** contradicts real science becomes a strong witness that **One** beyond them spake through them (1 Pet. 1. 11, 12). The critic often displays the glory of Scripture the more, to his own discomfiture.

"But," it may be added, "though nothing can be found definitely against the breadth of the universe, there is much that over-exalts the earth." Vague charges are usually an evidence of a failing cause, and so we must regard the attack on Scripture to-day. And, further, IS there not a stress on immensity? "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways" (Isa. 55. 8). When God would lay stress on a **tremendous** contrast, this is the very one He uses. Again, "As far as the east (not of the earth, but the east in its widest sense) is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103. 12). Here is a

* A strange confusion exists, in many minds, that "miraculous" is a synonym of "extraordinary," but *ordinary* things may be equally beyond man.

picture of an **infinitely** wondrous removal.

And with all man's "knowledge," what does he really know of the stars? He speaks glibly of other "worlds." **Scripture does not.** What **evidence** has he of life, parallel with ours, elsewhere? His intelligence may seem great to him, but there is a continual full stop in his researches. So **frequently** is he checked, that a **little** increased information is heralded with joy, **because** there are **so many** full stops, and each one provides an opportunity for more knowledge. The **extent** of human ignorance gives the **ampler** scope for some discoveries, but man forgets the **humbling** nature of **such** discoveries.

"But," we are told, "Is it not, presumption to say that the earth is so exalted, and the sun, moon and stars wait upon her?" Although this seems a misrepresentation of the striking **distinction** as to the stars in Gen. 1. 16, and although many overlook God's testimony in Isa. 40. 26, there is something more to be said. But first we quote the testimony, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold Who hath created these things, That bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them all by names by the greatness of His might, for that He is strong in power; not one faileth." There is no thought here of a few insignificant lights. But, granted that there are exalted works of God, ministering to men on this earth. Is this strange? What if it be **AN INTENDED PARALLEL TO A GREATER MARVEL?** When some belittle the stars, and others, on the other hand, wrongly complain that Scripture belittles them, we would remember against these contrasted errors, a **condescension** before which all other surprises are as nothing. And what is that? The Son of God's love came down to this earth to die for guilty sinners! Wondrous indeed! And when I look at the **great** works of God in nature, and see how much they seem to do for this earth, I feel God is giving me a picture, faint but beautiful, of how much more He has done for insignificant me,—though I am but one upon the earth, and His Beloved Son is infinitely greater than all the stars which He has created. Yet, (wonder of wonders), "**the Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me.**" I know **nothing** in nature to **compare** with this, but I find in the way in which nature is caused to serve and attend to the earth on which we live, an **appointed** reminder that God has thought of me with a love which I cannot comprehend, and saved me to be His. And if we are quickened from above, and the Holy Spirit has given our hearts this precious unveiling, what manner of persons ought we to be!

The writer is much impressed with the loveliness of this lesson in nature, and he would earnestly plead with any believer, to whom it may not be quite clear at once, to re-read, and ponder, while gratefully rejoicing in the death of the Lord Jesus.

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(No Messages received on the Lord's Day).

For Particulars of Meeting at 2, Minories (Tues. 6. 30), see "Thoughts from the Word of God."

The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

“ He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.” Isa. 40. 29.

A Word of Introduction.

“**B**Y the grace of God”—oft repeated words, but with ever present meaning. It is of His mercies we are not consumed. Wonderful indeed is the privilege of declaring His Name. The Lord Jesus declared the Name of the Father, and His people are sent forth to continue His work of declaring. NOT to continue His work of saving. **THAT IS FINISHED.** And it is on this ground that we have the privilege of emphasizing His Words and Will. Amid the perplexities of a changing and disappointed world, we would seek to tell of Him. And if there is life from above, if we are a new creation in Christ Jesus, how wonderful is the privilege of counting on Him for every “to-day” when it arrives, and of knowing that HIS strength is made perfect in weakness. These pages are sent forth to encourage to a simple and loving confidence in the Living God.

“WHAT CONCORD HATH CHRIST WITH BELIAL?” or DID THE EARLY CHRISTIANS KEEP “CHRISTMAS?”

DEAR BELIEVING readers, are you willing to follow God’s will even if it alters many of your arrangements? If not, is it wise to read these lines? What if Christmas is not in the mind of God, as revealed in Scripture, and any of us have made up our minds to keep it, will not information increase our sin?

* Other literature as to this deeply important subject, for prayerful use, gladly sent.

Have you ever thought as in God's presence, over YOUR REASONS, if any, for keeping Christmas? Perhaps not. "I always thought," very many say, "that it was the birth of Christ." Honesty is precious, but it does not make an error into truth. The point is, are we sufficiently honest to be WILLING to find out? God will guide the MEEK in judgment (Ps. 25. 9). When "all the proud men" (Jer. 43. 2) sought prayer with minds already made up (Jer. 42. 20, cf. Ezek. 14. 3), what was the profit? Are we humble enough to want God's will, or do we want God's will to second ours?

The Lord Jesus was born at the appointed time (Gal. 4. 4). Praise be unto God for the wondrous Gift. Precious types were granted of His death and resurrection, and of the descent of the Holy Spirit. And the TIME of the year was indicated in each case. No such type of His birth is found. Apparently the old time saints did not keep a feast which led up to Christmas. Even this would not give us a warrant so to do. But the omission is striking. We notice that when the Lord Jesus was born, Joseph is NOT said to have been near Jerusalem for a Jewish feast, but for a Roman census.

The shepherds came to Bethlehem in accord with the loving message, "Unto you is born THIS DAY in the city of David a Saviour, Which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2. 11).* The shepherds returned glorifying and praising God (Luke 2. 20): there is no hint of an observance introduced. NO CLUE as to the exact day is given. How different is it in Esther 9. 21, 22.

In the earthly life of the Lord Jesus we have no record of HIS observance of a birthday. When an exact age is given (Luke 2. 42), we are at once told that the record concerns the feast, not His birthday. The thirtieth birthday was marked out for the Levites, in the service of the sanctuary (Num. 4. 23, 30, 39, 43, 47). In the plain ALLUSION to this in Christ's life the Holy Spirit specially says, "ABOUT thirty years old" (Luke 3. 23). These are the TWO time-marks given,—apart from Matt. 2. 16, which shows Herod did NOT know the exact age from DILIGENT ENQUIRY of the wise men.

The work of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 fulfilled the type of Leviticus 23. SABBATH WAS THUS PASSED OVER. There is a yet more striking passing over as to Christ's birth. Passover time, reminding of Christ our Passover, is more than once mentioned in Acts, (NOT, however, as an ANNUAL remembrance for believers), but even the hint of the date of His birth is not before us. Indeed, His death and resurrection are frequently in front, rather than His birth. The very hour He was put upon the cross (Acts 2. 15), the hour when darkness came (22. 6), and the hour of His death (3. 1) are all associated with the record of the fruits of His finished work. It is the BLOOD that makes atonement. Hence when Paul emphasizes birth, HE PASSES OVER THAT WHICH MANY WOULD HAVE MENTIONED, AND

* "This Day" is not marked out in the same manner as the resurrection "This day" (Acts 13. 33, Ps. 118. 24); though even in this latter connexion we have a *weekly* memorial, and a thousand years, *not* an anniversary.

REFERS TO THE BEGETTING FROM THE DEAD (Acts 13. 33). The RESURRECTION day is emphasized, THAT is the time of being born. We realize union with Him on RESURRECTION ground, and ask again, "Did the early Christians keep 'Christmas'?"

We may well search the epistles as the Acts. There we find clear indication of the first day of the WEEK (1 Cor. 16. 2), but no hint of an anniversary. The apostles do not tell us WHEN Christ was born, although the references to His position in Judah, and His relationship to David, are clear. The arrangements for God's people are given, but no hint of Christmas. Does God teach us all that is necessary? Undoubtedly. Did not Paul warn the believers against observing days and years (Gal. 4. 10)? If there were any exception, should we not find some guidance on this matter, as in the case of the Lord's Day? The absence of such instruction is striking, and (may we not add?) conclusive. Would not a humble believer have been AFRAID after such warning, to keep Christmas, in the absence of Scriptural teaching to keep it?

The Book of Revelation gives a last view of Christian assemblies. The Lord Jesus Christ is gloriously exalted. He is ALPHA and OMEGA. The Lord's Day is mentioned, but the only possible reference to Christmas is a parallel with Balaam and Balak's feast (Rev. 2. 14). For, however we hide the reality, Christmas is not ONLY an unwarranted observance, it has an historical basis, far back in heathenism,—in mythology which has a reality, a Satanic reality behind it. December 25th belongs to paganism, not to the New Testament, beloved friends. Shall we not say, "Let it remain there?" Is not Nehemiah's definiteness needed?—"IT GRIEVED ME SORE: therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber" (Neh. 13. 8). "For what concord hath CHRIST with BELIAL?" (2 Cor. 6. 15).

"They Reasoned Among Themselves, Saying, IF." Matt. 21. 25.

IT is a precious privilege to know the TRUTH (John 8. 32). It is a precious privilege to be CONCERNED regarding the TRUTH. There have been, and are, many to whom truth is less important than comfort, and quite secondary to success. This is a peril in daily life and business. But a child of God can EXPECT heavenly victory. He is quickened from above, and the Holy Spirit indwells.

The chief priests and elders were asked a plain question. They did not say, "What is the RIGHT answer?", but "What will be the EFFECT of our answer?" Here we have an extreme case of the argument FROM EFFECT TO CAUSE, showing its grave danger. If we know the Lord, we must leave CONSEQUENCES with Him. His questions may change our ACTION, as we seek humbly to find the TRUE answer. But His will is best.

“A false balance is abomination to the Lord: but a Just Weight is His Delight.”

Prov. 11. 1.

THERE is no doubt as to the practical nature of the book of Proverbs. God's appointments extend even to details of DAILY LIFE, and it is in these things we can “adorn” His doctrine (Tit. 2. 10). The thought is full of attractiveness. Vast opportunities for God's dear people are before us. Those saved by grace can please and glorify Him in tiny actions. Nothing is small, if it springs out of love to Him. Nothing is trivial. Everything is a privilege.

But it is equally true that this book is full of Christ. Not only is He unveiled as the True Wisdom, but we see Him more than once as the Righteous One, and as the One Who makes an atonement in ch. 16. 14, as well as the Glorious Son of 30. 4, and the Mighty Man in a virgin (30. 19 lit: with Isa. 7. 14). Nor is He to be omitted from the “Surety” passages (e.g. 11. 15*). Christ is everywhere.

Is it surprising then that we find His work in 11. 1? “Weighing” is not only of MATERIALS (4. 26, 16. 2). Men weigh their own actions wrongly, and OVERestimate their “merits.” They little realize that they themselves have been weighed and found wanting (Dan. 5. 27) The false balance of SELF-righteousness is an ABOMINATION, but there is a “PERFECT STONE” (margin), Which is His delight. That “PERFECT STONE” is UNHEWN, the VERY WORD for the altar in Joshua 8. 31. But plainly in Joshua we have a view of the work of the Lord Jesus. HIS people are acceptable, but they need HEWING (1 Kings 6. 7). It is not so with Him. It is wondrous to view His actions as needing NO alteration or modification whatever. They are “complete” and “unhewn” stones, and the word “PEACE” is from the same root. Herein we see the OPPOSITE of the mind of the flesh which is enmity against God, and, moreover, meditate in measure, on the infinite SATISFACTION which the Father has in His Beloved Son, “His Delight”—(cf. Matt. 12. 18).

But the thought is PARTICULARLY helpful when we think of weighing. A weight is MADE according to a STANDARD. But here is an UNHEWN Stone Which exactly fits that STANDARD. There is no need for addition or substitution. Either would SPOIL. The Stone is brought to the standard of God's law, and at once exactly weighs. And, henceforth, that Stone becomes the Standard for further weighing. Thus we see the glory of the Lord Jesus, and the sinner, weighed against Him, is shown to be a FAILURE. And then we realize that the “COMPLETE STONE,” the “DELIGHT” of the Father (precious word), is the One Whose perfection is counted to His people. They are made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5. 21, with Prov. 11. 4). THEY, too, are “His delight.” They can add nothing to this work of acceptance, nor take from it (Eccl. 3. 14), and their

* Elsewhere the Surety gives up bed (rest, 22. 22, 27) and garment (20. 16). Wonderful He gave up both on Calvary, for “strangers”

secured salvation is a wondrous joy. Will God abandon those who are His delight? Will He undo the work of His Beloved Son? IMPOSSIBLE! Thus the joy of salvation shines forth, and the redeemed are able to rest in a love that has no parallel, and no end. Surely they should love more because FIRST loved (1 John 4. 19).

How can a believer live as a member of a ruined world? The heavenly calling takes away all pride, and removes the false balance that God hates, but the Holy Spirit thereby leads to the simple confidence of living faith. God will not suffer His faithfulness to fail. "Thanks be unto God for His Unspeakable Gift."

SEEMING SURPRISES.

WE need God's grace for everything :—to be kept from GRADUAL backsliding, and ALSO from sudden and surprising re-action. We need grace to realize the ENTWINED relationship of sin with sin, however unlike they appear. When Peter said, "I am ready," he was soon TOO ready, and drew a sword unbidden. Willing to go to death, he proved more willing to cause death. And then, almost immediately, being "afar off," denied his Lord. Thus through lack of prayer, he ENTERED into temptation. Human minds may study psychology, but God has HIS unveiling of the tendencies of the flesh, the trend of the human heart. Phosphorus may be in more than one condition, and graphite and carbon may appear very different, but they are one. The same illness too may take various forms, and it is easy to pass from hysterical laughter to crying. Is it surprising then to find that pride and despondency are practically identical, or, rather, the fruit of the SAME attitude? Two or three inches on a mountain range may decide which way the stream flows. If I look to self, I may be proud or discouraged, AND PASS FROM ONE CONDITION TO THE OTHER in less time than it takes to write this: how important to look to Him, and to judge self, and to be above circumstances. Is it strange to find Jews and Roman Catholics friendly against the Gospel? Their root-principle is the same—salvation VIA works. Pilate and Herod were made friends against Christ. Sadducees and Pharisees were joined in rejecting Him. Rationalism looks to man's mind to-day, Ritualism to man's mind yesterday, faith looks to God's mind. All "ism's" depend on "development": God's people should depend on His unchanging truth.

Luke 22. 24 is startling. The surroundings should have banished such a thought, but WISHES will conquer everything. O for CONSECRATED WISHES. "If any one will to do His will":—a precious thought.

To-day's obedience is no guarantee for to-morrow. Manna even a day old stinks and breeds worms. Uzziah was marvellously helped, and THEN failed. The delightful determination of Hezekiah in Isa. 38 is not seen in chapter 39. "If ye CONTINUE in My Word" means much (John 8. 31). Though Moses obediently took the rod in Numbers

21, he soon disobediently smote the rock. The man of God stood firm against the king, but he faltered when he sat down (1 Kings 13).* Purpose of heart to CLEAVE to the Lord is so important (Acts 11. 23).

A praying meeting has a precious fragrance. But it was at a prayer meeting that the dear children of God were SURPRISED when their own prayer was answered, and unkindly said to Rhoda, "Thou art mad." The error of one who "opened not the gate FOR GLADNESS" is suggestive—WE are often thoughtless unintentionally. But the sin of those who spake rudely is more startling. And we, too, may speak unwisely THE MOMENT we rise from our knees, unless a watch is kept before our mouth (Ps. 141. 3). We marvel at the UNBELIEF and sinful language alike. BUT do we KNOW OURSELVES, and our limitations,—enough to depend on the Lord more? Do we wonder at the gracious warning, "BE NOT DECEIVED." We are less dependable than we think. How valuable is SIMPLE faith. How gracious is the unveiling that the Holy Spirit indwells, and is willing to lead (Rom. 8. 14).

"NO DOCTRINE."

"THERE is no doctrine in the earliest epistles, only a life to live." Some such words were addressed to me by a Gentile in a Jewish watchmaker's shop at Manchester. They provided a background for the glorious gospel, but reveal an utter confusion. Remarkably, PART of 1 Thess. 1. 9, 10 was offered as a proof, "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven." The last words were significantly omitted, "Which delivered us from the wrath to come." It is solemnizing to see how many quote a PART of a passage, and thus change its meaning. May we be thoughtful and honest! But, even apart from the last words, how much precious doctrine is found throughout.

The turning to God here set forth is an acknowledgment of HIS DEITY against polytheism, and a confession of the ruin of man. The order, too, is helpful: "to God" before "from idols." He is the Centre, and herein is the power. The service of the Living and True God is a LIFE indeed, but how do we know what service is, apart from HIS REVEALED will? And service implies the acceptance of sound doctrine as to His authority and His standpoint. "And to wait for His Son from heaven." Here we behold the Deity of Christ, and His ascension, and, moreover, the glad reception of His promise, "I will come again." Many will call this a declaration FULL of doctrine. And the added words emphasize deserved wrath, and the atonement of Christ. Furthermore, the earlier verses of the chapter show the fact of election, and the RESULT in Christian faith, fellowship and prayer. It is true that the Gospel was not "in word only," but it WAS "in word" as well. A creed without a life is vain, but godly knowledge must precede godly action. The whole theory of divorcing faith and conduct is a grievous mistake. The Lord links the practical

* A leaflet will be gladly sent.

arrangements of the home with sound DOCTRINE (e.g., Eph. 5. 24, 25, Tit. 2. 5). The employee's life is to adorn the DOCTRINE of God (Tit. 2. 10, cf. 1 Tim. 6. 1). And we must speak the things which become sound DOCTRINE (Tit. 2. 1).

The extreme of this error is seen if we hear those who disparage inspiration, say, "It is not a book that we want, but a Person: the glory of Christ as a Living Person is to be realized." The man who sets aside the words of Scripture will delude unwary souls whenever he speaks in rapture of the Living Christ, and of devotedness to Him. But HE said "Me and My Words": "If ye love ME, KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS." And there are many APPROACHES to this evil before us, not a few of them unconscious. To exalt Him while putting aside His own declaration is easier than we think. Fellowship of believers which is only possible while election, for example, is UNMENTIONED, and while baptism of believers alone is kept in the background, can hardly be to His glory. But it is easy thus to grieve the Holy Spirit, and the more so, because those who point this out have sometimes SHOWN LITTLE LOVE. Hence the natural inference, "YOU are less loving than those whom you correct." The swing of the pendulum is sad. "Deeds not creeds" must ever be regarded as a sinful motto, but sound doctrine without warm love to the Person of Christ is more than incomplete. The testimony of Rev. 2. 5 is graciously severe. May those who read these lines, and the one who writes them, alike be exercised before God to grow up unto Christ in ALL things, and to show spiritual FAITH by spiritual WORKS, that He may be exalted in an all-round Christian experience.

CAESAR'S FRIEND or CHRIST'S.

(John 19. 12).

(John 15. 14).

PILATE did not wish to be condemned. Cæsar's friendship was more to him than Christ, and there are many to-day to whom position in life and the world's friendship are more than they themselves realize (Jas. 4. 4). A salary binds many souls. They are not conscious how deeply the world's approval has entered into their life. They do not know how the world's threads and shoe-latchets tie them up. And have not many believers undervalued spiritual things? Is not the friendship of Christ less to them than it should be? Ah, it is less to ALL of us than it SHOULD be. But is there not a manifest disregard of His wishes by many who bear His Name? His "Whatsoever" is a far-reaching word. He has a right to command and, if we love Him, and joy in Him aright, we delight that He DOES command.

John the Baptist rejoiced to be the FRIEND of the Bridegroom (John 3. 29): he anticipated the precious words of John 15. 14. It is remarkable that the epistle which unmasks a friend of the world emphasizes that Abraham was "a friend of God" (Jas. 2. 23, 4. 4)! An ancient translator rendered "servant." Could he not realize the height that grace makes possible?

We would confess that we are not Cæsar's FRIENDS. Let not this be misunderstood. We would render HONOUR to whom HONOUR is due, and the powers that be ARE ordained of God. We gladly pay our taxes, as part of Christian service, and cheerfully render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, but we are not Cæsar's friends. We hate the spirit of human revolution, we delight to pray for all in authority, we regard them as the MINISTERS OF GOD for good to us, and Rom. 13 is impressed on our hearts, but we are not Cæsar's FRIENDS. We deplore the spirit of complaint, and dare not ever speak evil of dignities (2 Pet. 2. 10), but we are not Cæsar's FRIENDS. To despise government is iniquity,* and the attitude of any government to us is NOT the deciding factor, for if it treats us cruelly we bear no malice, if it is kind toward us we accept God's mercy, with gratitude to men, but we are not Cæsar's FRIENDS.

OUR FRIENDSHIP HAS BEEN SEALED WITH CHRIST: at least this is our desire. And our longing is for HIS COMING. We cannot ignore His Words. If any one commands us to break His appointments, we cannot be in two minds for a moment. Christ has the pre-eminence!

Nor can we enter into Cæsar's standpoint. Friendship rightly implies some fellowship of heart. But Christ has changed the whole attitude of His redeemed. Let Cæsar be an individual or a parliament, there MUST be the sword: there cannot be meekness; but "blessed are the meek." National interests are real to men of earth, but Christ died for sinners of all nations alike, and geography of a man's birth, and the colour of his face, are nothing to CHRIST'S friends.

The friendship to which He calls is one of rejection, and if any of Cæsar's friends catch a glimpse of it they must COME DOWN FROM THE THRONE OF JUDGMENT, where they would necessarily be called, at times, to punish believers for obedience to Christ, as in a time of warfare. They must, because of the enfranchisement of Christ, lay aside their earthly vote,—that bids for friendship with Cæsar, inasmuch as it desires unity with the ruling party.—And they must take a simple path outside the camp, bearing CHRIST'S REPROACH (Heb. 13. 13). Hence, while we praise God for His providence in ordering government, we must confess that He has put His people in a heavenly calling (Heb. 3. 1), even THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS. We own that Christ is in the glory,—and so our interests are there, our hopes are THERE, our friendship would ever be THERE. We are NOT Cæsar's FRIENDS. How can we be? There is more in the words of 1 Cor. 2 than at first appears, "We have the mind of Christ." The music is beautiful, but let us ask ourselves the question, "Are we, in business relationships, as well as in meetings, those of whom our Lord says, 'MY FRIENDS'?"

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The STUDENT of SCRIPTURE.

Edited by Percy W. Heward.

"By grace are ye saved" Eph. 2. 8.

*"The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."
1 Cor. 3. 13.*

A Word of Introduction.

GRACE never obscures responsibility. An ABSOLUTE SALVATION does not make the Judgment Seat of Christ unnecessary, or undesirable. There is a perfect BLENDING in all God's arrangements. If He saves, He never undoes the work, but He never excuses one sin. The WAY of salvation honours law beyond all else. If we may so say, there is even MORE stress on law in satisfaction, and complete settlement, by the work of Christ, than in the everlasting punishment of those who never fully understand what His anger means,—to approve thereof. It is a wondrous thought that God's wrath cannot be regarded as COMPLETELY dealing with sin unless the One Who bears it entirely takes God's standpoint, and COMPREHENDS, and thus approves it ALL. How wondrously this exalts Christ's Name. And, after salvation, though there is no death penalty in the family, there is a holy hatred of sin. And works that grieve God's Holy Spirit will be burnt up. The future testing will be very real. To some this seems nothing. To others, it may be an emphasized theory, and nothing more. To yet others, it may become an object of fear. But to others, it may be made a sanctifying encouragement to walk in the Spirit, and to please the precious Saviour, Who died for us.

OBEDIENCE.

The standpoint of obedience means much. Complete obedience is complete approval of the will of God from His own stand-

point. But if we are "dutiful" because we are afraid of the consequences, that is not satisfactory, though reverential care is good in proportion. If we "obey" for reward's sake, there is selfishness, unless we mean that our desire is to have reward unto His joy. We would not *undervalue* rewards and *our* joy, but all must be wrapped up in seeking *His praise*. If we only keep to God's commandments because of habit, we misuse a right principle. If we obey because we feel happier in obeying; we make a precious effect the cause. If we walk in His ways, because we have said this is right, we are only partly setting forth the link of doctrine and practice. Christ died for us. Here is an argument for love's grateful obedience. The law on the heart signifies that we have a new power and wish within; and *not to obey* would be unnatural to the new nature. The will of God is the will of the new life born of God, and sanctification is the experience, in the Holy Spirit, of willingness for His gift of a new life to have its right recognition. The redeemed person is *privileged* to exalt his Lord for his Lord's delight, and to mortify the deeds of the body, because self has been set aside. Love is to be the motive power.

IRRITATION.

WHAT is irritation? Is it not displeasure at our circumstances? Is it not therefore complaint? Even the slightest "irritation" *forgets* God's perfect will. It questions *His* wisdom. Is this right? Irritation is not gratitude. If we murmur at our lot, we are not praising Him. To try to be resigned to trials is a poor thing. To put up with circumstances is a failure. "In everything *give thanks* : for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5. 18). How precious is the privilege of praising God for all trials. Rejoicing in tribulation seems strange to the natural man. But the Lord Jesus appointed this. If I am irritated because of what "A" says, and what "B" does, I am acting as though A and B are able to touch me without my Heavenly Father's permission. *But it is not so.* The trial was *censored* by Him *before* it reached me. *Why* should I be irritated? If I feel annoyed, I am like a man who complains of his position in the world, and feel envious of others. How sad is this condition of antagonism to God. Many saved ones need to be reconciled (2 Cor. 5. 20).

Grace brings *gratitude* unto *everything*. There is only one thing for which we should be troubled, our own sin. For all else, by the time it *reaches* a believer, he should give thanks. Let it be repeated,—whatsoever comes is from a *Father's loving* hand. Let us seek to learn His lessons, and to rejoice in Him, as never before.

A RETURNED LETTER.

A LETTER has been returned, refused because *unstamped*. God has some lessons in every detail. Shall I learn His lessons from this, or am I largely unmindful? I *want* to hear what He says in each circumstance, but in the service of daily life it is easy to take things for granted. But nothing is "a matter of course." If we are His children, our Father graciously speaks even by a lost train, a mislaid article, and a slight cold.

There is the general instruction against carelessness ever needed. How prayerful should one be *not* to make mistakes. They often hinder others, and waste the Lord's money as well. But, secondly, I think on *this* occasion He indicates that the suggestion in the letter is not His will at *this* time. It is well to *ask Him what* He deigns to teach. How graciously He alters our wishes. It is blessed to learn from Him. May we *never* be peevish, or irritated. Is there a hint that I should have been omitting to follow His holding back *without this extra guidance*? *Possibly*, then, the time spent in writing was not used to His glory. It is often possible to find out His will more fully *first*, is it not? Again, it may be that the letter would have involved extra work, without any result to His praise. Graciously He spares me. He knows best.

"Threepence surcharge." A loss. We should not *worry*, and His lessons are worth much more, and often *learnt* best by a little *loss*. But every penny belongs to Him, and one may wonder if we are concerned as we *should* be, or as we *used* to be, regarding the tiniest waste. Ordinary business problems may make us *expect* some "accidents," but there are no accidents with Him. I fear we do not pray enough that, if He will, machinery may not go wrong, and that, if He will, certain breakages may be prevented. These are just examples among many. He can cause our clothes to wear longer, for, surely, if we are walking *with Him*, we do not *want* to vary these, nor to change for the sake of change.

"Redeemed . . with the precious blood of Christ."

'Tis precious to be bought
And *not* to be our own,
In love redeemed and brought,
Made *His* and His alone,
Who took our place, our doom to
bear,
In wondrous grace:—we had no
share.
Precious indeed, the cost,
And precious is the goal:
We shall not now be lost,
Christ's work remains *one whole*:—
Ne'er will He change, nor forfeit
one,
Nor rearrange:—the work is *done*!

Let praise indeed flow out,
The praise that loves His Name,
His love removes each doubt,
His truth we would proclaim;—
Redeemed by blood, and *His* for
aye,— [way.
To praise our God, and walk His
Soon will our Lord come back,
And we His face shall see,
Then nothing shall we lack,
Redeemed eternally!—
A prospect *vast*, The Cause and
Goal,
The Centre—Christ,—Himself the
whole.

A QUESTION AS TO ATONEMENT.

Does "Atonement" belong to the Old Testament and "Redemption" to the New Testament?

THE thought underlying this question may be one of love to the Lord, and gratitude, that He has *not merely covered* His people's sins, but put them away altogether. There is indeed, a wondrous contrast in His work with bare covering (Prov. 28. 13), and with the putting *aside* of sins (Rom. 3. 25 marg.), in accord with the types which could *never* take them away (Heb. 10. 4). We praise God for every desire to exalt His beloved Son and His *finished* work, and for every heart-felt realization that the Antitype *far* excels the type. How blessed to be in Him!

But we must be prayerful and careful lest we misunderstand and adopt interpretations without the Holy Spirit's foundation for them. So many thoughts have been uttered by some who are esteemed, and then others keep on reproducing, without examining the Scriptures. This failure has caused much dishonour to the Lord in prophetic *misinterpretation*.

It is a fact of the deepest importance that God permitted one, and only one, translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, which we possess, *before* the New Testament. And the language was *Greek*. Thus the Holy Spirit in the Greek Scriptures can allude very definitely to certain *Hebrew* words, by using the already known Greek translation of them. And He *has* done this as to the word "atonement." Somewhat remarkably our valued English version uses "atonement" in Romans 5. 11, where the original has the word for "reconciliation," and yet employs "reconciliation" in Hebrews 2. 17 where we find the ordinary verb from which "atonement" comes. *We* do not receive the atonement: *God* has both provided and accepted that: believers enjoy the *fruit*. At-one-ment is not atonement, any more than "now here" is "no where." This verb is found only here and in Luke 18. 13, where we have *mercy because of atonement*, a beautiful thought, explaining an added definiteness,—"*the* sinner," not *a* sinner. Substitution is implied by the Lord Jesus, and without substitution what have we? This verb occurs in the rendering of the atonement-word of Ps. 65. 3. and 79. 9—"Thou shalt make an atonement." 'Tis God's gracious work.

The use of the derived *nouns* is yet more striking. In 1 John 2. 2, and 4. 10 alike we have "propitiation," the *same* term being found in the Septuagint of Num. 5. 8. Thus Christ was sent to make atonement. The Holy Spirit marks this as *the* object in view. And Romans 3. 25 contains the very name of *the mercy seat* (cf. Heb. 9. 5) i. e. the very word emphasized in Exodus

25 and Leviticus 16. Now "mercy seat" and "atonement" are inseparably united words in Hebrew, and our beloved Lord is thus declared unequivocally to be the "Atonement," and "the Mercy Seat": He is the Antitype. "Atonement" is a New Testament word.

This is what we should *expect*, for on the day of atonement there was the *bullock* for the priestly family, as well as the goat for the nation; and could we separate this first type from saints in the present dispensation? Moreover, the Epistle to the Hebrews is built up on the teaching of the day of atonement, and the way into the holiest for saved ones *now* is associated *therewith*. Far from being a *partial* word, "atonement" tells of *full* acceptance (Lev. 1. 4 etc).

The Holy Spirit's quotation of another word for "covering" in Romans 4. 7 makes evident that there is no suggestion of covering up. Far otherwise, the thought is that God's eye is on the work of His beloved Son, and the sin of His people is blotted out. And the word "atonement" cannot be limited. It brings before us a righteous meeting of righteous wrath, so that there is a holy *appeasing*.^{*} Forgiveness is the fruit—mark the order in Lev. 5. 10. Thus there is the covering because of a righteous settlement, that iniquity may not be before God's eyes. (Contrast the sinner's condition in Psalm 90. 8, and man's vain attempt in Genesis 3. 10 and Job 31. 33).

Probably some of God's dear children have assumed a merely physical covering instead of a *legal* covering, and have thought that the sins *remained* beneath. But even in English we use the word more widely. "This will cover your debts" or "your expenses" does *not* signify that they *remain unsettled*, but the reverse. And the Holy Spirit uses language of mightier force.

On another occasion the Lord may grant a study of the precious thoughts of purchase and freedom wrapped up in the word "redemption." Meanwhile let His people *rejoice* in what atonement means to them.

"RELIGION."

"PURE religion and undefiled" is precious as a fruit and effect, if a man has salvation *first*. But how can he have *pure* religion unless he has pureness of heart? A *motive* is needed, and that motive must be, "Unto the Lord." Religion is valuable, as a second thing, but mere religion as a *first* thing is not pure, nor is it powerful. It is an *attempt* to "bind," but it is

^{*} *This* is the one fundamental idea, common to *both* the Hebrew word and the Greek. Proverbs 16 6, 14 may illustrate, "By mercy and truth iniquity is made atonement for," and "A Wise Man (the truly Wise One) will make an atonement,"—appeasing wrath.

transient, and incomplete. Till a soul is *saved* by the grace of God, and "a new creation in Christ Jesus," everything lacks its true value. 'Tis *then* that new things are brought about, and all things are of God. The man in the street thinks that we preach *religion*, but we preach *Christ*. Religion has *never* saved a soul and *never can save*. "*It*" is powerless. The gospel is God's *power*. The axe is laid at the *root* of the tree, and God, in wondrous love, brings *out of death into life*. He does not merely patch up. How wondrous is eternal salvation by the precious blood of Christ!

"CHRISTMAS TRADE."

IF the "Christmas" shops are meant to remind us of the *Lord Jesus CHRIST* they offer but a caricature. He Who was Rich, for our sakes became Poor, (2 Cor. 8. 9), and sometimes He hungered, and had not where to lay His head. And, not only so, the link of *the name of Christ* with "*Christmas*" shows Satan's aim to-day. He Who said, "Make not My Father's house a house of merchandise" (John 2. 16), foreknew a parallel sin in the present time. The woman of *Babylon* dwells awhile in the *ephah* of commerce, and the rebuilt metropolis of the world's religion shall be the metropolis of commerce also. Is it not a fact that some of the world's "choice" wines have been sent forth by "religious orders"? A remarkable beacon of a *far* larger Satanic scheme. Revelation 17 leads up to Revelation 18; and commerce is central in the latter chapter.

Therefore when any plead that "Christmas is good for *trade*" they at once brand it as *not of God*,—to say nothing of the overstrain of many, and the problems of children of God, enabled to witness against taking up remunerated work on the Lord's Day. "Trade" and a dispensation of "strangers and pilgrims" *cannot* have the same standpoint.

The metropolis of the future is *God's* exalted city to which worshippers *flow up* (Isa. 2. 2)—"contrary to nature" (Rom. 11. 24),—as *grace* always is. "There shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 14. 21)—the merchant (Hos. 12. 7).

We cannot but notice how Israel in *departure* from God have become merchants, and we remember Solomon's decline (2 Chron. 1. 16, 17 with Deut. 17. 16). Believers need to be on their guard, and to beware of the spirit of Christmas and Christmas trade. Let them avoid patronizing this trade, and, if they have an opportunity as salesmen let them lose for Christ's sake, rather than deal in the goods that will pain their hearts. Christ is worth and worthy of many a loss, if loss it can be called. O to exalt Him. The Holy Spirit never ceases to glorify Him.

* Further literature gladly sent, for witness in the Lord's Name.

“I Came Not To Send Peace But A Sword.” Matt. 10. 34.

POSSIBLY we have met the man who glibly quotes this verse against our beloved Lord. A little thought would often prevent such a sin. Does the questioner *really* think that Christ advocated *force* on the part of His disciples? Did He not *continually* show meekness, and begin the address on the mount with “Blessed are the meek”? Did He not emphasize glad suffering for His Name’s sake? Moreover, a little honest consideration of *this context* might surely be expected—“Ye shall be hated of all” (22). “When they persecute you, flee” (23), “Fear not them which kill the body,” He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me” (38). Few chapters are more decisive. Nor have we exhausted the verses, “Behold I send you forth as *sheep* in the midst of wolves” (16), “They deliver you up” (19): you do not attempt to deliver them up. But then there may come the sinful attempt to escape from the difficulty, and to charge the Lord Jesus Christ with contradiction. This, however, is equally futile,—and equally sinful. Granted He speaks in parables, in accord with Matt. 13. 13, we have the definite testimony that His people would *have* foes, not *be* foes (36). He came to cast one sword on the earth, not two conflicting swords.* He did not come to bring conflict, but a position of rejection for His blood-bought people. Hence there is *not* a quarrel in verse 35, but *one* bears injustice, and that one is the Christian, as verse 38 makes abundantly clear. Are we willing for this, beloved friends? The testimony of Christ is precious and humbling. Christendom has substituted a new arrangement instead of the rejection of a pilgrim people appointed by Christ. “The disciple is *not* above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord” (24). *Why* are we not rejected *as He was*?

“I Will Pray for You.”

I would ever desire to say, and *feel*, “Thank God for everything,” but I am not quite sure in what way I should say, “Thank you.” Permit my plainness for I find within a tendency sometimes to put “praying” in the place of acting. It is precious to pray about everything (Phil. 4. 6, 7), but prayer is not a laziness. And a promise to pray is not precious, and not to the glory of God, if it is only a way to avoid loving labour, or whatever it may be. And the “promise” is not always fulfilled by thinking once or twice of the problems of a dear fellow-believer. How much grace we need to be honest and transparent in these things.

* Observe that in Luke 12. 51-55, where *divislon* is mentioned, and not a sword, *both* sides are before us.

These *are* occasions when we can *only* pray—a blessed “only.” Anything else would, sometimes, usurp the Lord’s place, or involve wrong identification. But we need prayerfulness of heart that we may know when this is so, and that we may walk in the Spirit.

PRAY—GO.

Matt. 9. 37, 38, 10. 6.

Luke 10. 2, 3.

THE LINK of commands, as often in Scripture, is precious. And many thoughts are entwined. The Lord Jesus would not approve of going without praying : so as to everything. Prayer is preparatory. And the CONVERSE is true. Praying ones are not to be content with praying. I do not mean that in every case we can “go” physically, or that our prayer should be limited to the lands we personally can reach. BY NO MEANS. The Lord did not appoint prayer for one district alone: the WHOLE “harvest” was before Him. And an aged bed-ridden saint is not excluded : the WILLINGNESS of Abraham to offer up Isaac was acceptable, and thus accepted. Moreover, the “going” must be in AN APPOINTED WAY. If the Lord leads NEXT door, I must not wish to journey 1000 miles. If He says, “Go to the workshop,” the mission field is THERE, not in Africa. Never would we forget Africa, but neither would we forget THE WORKSHOP. In this sense “the field is the WORLD.” And the FOREIGN field is not limited, for a believer is a stranger and pilgrim everywhere, a FOREIGNER except with the saints (Eph. 2. 19).

Observe the prayer is not only for ONE’S OWN sphere. There is more selfishness in asking than we realize (Phil. 2. 4). Have we noticed sufficiently the order? Not “go—pray,” but “pray—go.” This is helpful as to the WHOLE daily life. And there is also the thought that willingness to do God’s will must be learnt on the knees. A shrinking heart may be brought to true confidence. Fear may be shaken, as we pray. Hesitation and impetuosity are twins: and prayer witnesses against both.

“Pray—go” is a solemn message as to ALL else. Ofttimes we pray one thing AND DO ANOTHER. We ask the Lord to save our dear ones, and then put stumbling blocks in their way. ’Tis true that GOD answers prayer, and OUR actions are not decisive, but frequently we are not in a condition to receive the blessing. Moreover, LACK OF INTEREST, in that concerning which we pray, hardly suggests prayer in the Spirit. A mere sense of duty does not befit a child’s approach to his Father. The throne of grace is for felt needs, not for mere forms.

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(No Messages received on the Lord’s Day).

For Particulars of Meeting at 2, Minorities (Tues. 6. 30), see “Thoughts from the Word of God.”