

# 52

## BIBLE LESSONS



VOLUME  
**THREE**

*By*  
WILLIAM RODGERS

# FIFTY-TWO BIBLE LESSONS

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SERIES No. 3

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### **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

The widespread interest in these NOTES shown by Christian workers in general, in addition to Sunday School teachers, has encouraged the publishers to present the "lessons" in permanent form for the use of preachers and teachers in every sphere of Christian service.

The arrangement in sets of 52 subjects per volume with page margin for notes, presents the weekly subject-matter, commencing at Genesis, in convenient book form for the period of a year.



# FOREWORD

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These NOTES, originally written to assist teachers in our local Sunday School, have since then been made use of in the pages of "THE CHRISTIAN WORKER" during the years 1945, 1946 and 1947. They are now issued in a more permanent form at the request of many, in volumes each of which deals with lessons sufficient for a year.

They are merely what their title claims them to be, "NOTES" on the lessons, not the "Lessons" themselves ; and they are not meant to take the place, either of the teacher's own preparation of his subject, or of his mode of presenting it ; but to help him in both, by rendering it more interesting to himself. It was also hoped that they would be a means of spreading the teaching over the entire Scriptures, and of preventing it from becoming a continual repetition of a few favourite passages. The subjects have been taken from all parts of the Word of God, from the first chapter of Genesis to the last of Revelation ; and those have been chosen which could most easily be given a gospel interest. Many other passages might well have claimed a place in the selection, but it was deemed advisable to limit the scope of the arrangement to THREE YEARS, lest the children, whilst learning what is new to them, should forget what they have previously been taught.

One half of the Lessons have been taken from the Old Testament and the other half from the New ; and although in these volumes the former are placed first, it may in using them be found best to do so alternately, in periods of a month or two months each. It will be noticed that many of the subjects are treated in the form of question and answer, in order that the teacher may be encouraged to make full use of this method, a method which, generally speaking, will hold the attention of the class more readily than will an unbroken address from the teacher himself. The side column on each page for "Additional Notes" will well repay all who make use of it, either for jotting down thoughts of their own, or for adding points from other writers and speakers.

WM. RODGERS.

## GENERAL NOTES

# INDEX

No.	SUBJECT.	READING	MEMORY TEXT
105.	Feeding 5,000 ....	John 6. 1-15, 30-37 ....	John 6. 51
106.	Walking on the Sea ....	John 6. 15-29 ....	John 6. 29
107.	Traditions ....	Mark 7. 1-23 ; etc. ....	Mat. 15. 8
108.	Gentiles Blessed ....	Mark 8. 5-13 ; 15. 21-28 ....	Mat. 8. 11, 12
109.	The Church ....	Mat. 16. 13-28 ....	1 Cor. 3. 11
110.	The Transfiguration ....	Luke 9. 26-42 ....	2 Pet. 1. 17
111.	The Children ....	Mat. 18. 1-14 ; 19. 13-15 ....	Mat. 19. 14
112.	Following Christ ....	Luke 9. 49-62 ....	Luke 9. 62
113.	Christ at Jerusalem ....	John 7. 1-11, 37-53 ....	John 7. 37
114.	The Good Samaritan ....	Luke 10. 25-37 ....	Rom. 8. 3
115.	Man Blind from Birth ....	John 9. 1-25, 35-36 ....	2 Cor. 4. 4
116.	The Good Shepherd ....	John 10. 1-31 ....	John 10. 9
117.	Raising of Lazarus ....	John 11. 1, 5, 17-46 ....	John 11. 25
118.	The Great Supper ....	Luke 14. 15-33 ....	Luke 14. 22
119.	Lost Sheep, etc. ....	Luke 15 ....	1 Pet. 2. 25
120.	Two Rich Men ....	Luke 16. 1-12, 19-31 ....	Luke 16. 31
121.	Christ's Coming ....	Luke 17. 20-37 ....	Luke 17. 24
122.	Pharisee and Publican ....	Luke 18. 9-43 ....	Luke 18. 13
123.	Zacchaeus, etc. ....	Luke 19. 1-10, 41-46 ....	Luke 19. 10
124.	The Pounds ....	Luke 19. 11-28 ....	Luke 12. 48
125.	Entry into Jerusalem ....	Luke 19. 29-44 ; Mk. 11. 4 ....	Luke 19. 42
126.	Wicked Husbandmen ....	Mark 12. 1-12 ....	Isa. 5. 7
127.	The Marriage Feast ....	Mat. 22. 1-14 ....	Zeph. 1. 8
128.	Four Hard Questions ....	Mat. 22. 15-46 ....	Mark 12. 24
129.	Eight Great Woes ....	Mat. 23. 1-33 ....	Luke 16. 15
130.	Close of Ministry ....	John 12. 20-50 ....	John 12. 48
131.	The Ten Virgins ....	Mat. 25. 1-13 ....	Mat. 24. 44
132.	The Last Supper ....	Luke 22. 1-24 ....	1 Cor. 11. 27
133.	Betrayal and Denial ....	Mat. 26. 47-75 ....	Acts 2. 23
134.	Pilate and Herod ....	Luke 23. 1-25 ....	Mat. 27. 22
135.	At the Cross ....	Luke 23. 26-49 ....	1 Cor. 1. 18
136.	The Resurrection ....	John 19. 30 to 20. 10 ....	1 Cor. 15. 3, 4
137.	The Ascension, etc. ....	Luke 24. 13-53 ....	Acts 1. 11
138.	Descent of Spirit ....	Acts 2. 1-24, 37-42 ....	Acts 2. 4
139.	A Cripple Healed ....	Acts 3 ....	Acts 4. 10, 12
140.	Stephen's Address ....	Acts 6. 12-15 and 7 ....	John 16. 2
141.	The Ethiopian Eunuch ....	Acts 8. 26-40 ....	Isa. 53. 8
142.	Saul's Conversion ....	Acts 9. 1-20 ....	1 Tim. 1. 15
143.	Cornelius ....	Acts 10. 1-17, 33-45 ....	Acts 10. 43
144.	Herod and Peter ....	Acts 12 ....	Psa. 34. 7
145.	Sermon at Antioch ....	Acts 13. 14-43 ....	Acts 13. 38, 39
146.	Three Conversions ....	Acts 16. 13-40 ....	Acts 16. 30, 31
147.	Paul at Athens ....	Acts 17. 13-34 ....	Acts 17. 30, 31
148.	Work at Ephesus ....	Acts 19. 8-41 ....	Eph. 2. 19, 20
149.	Troas and Eutychus ....	Acts 20. 1-14 ....	Eph. 5. 14
150.	Felix and Paul ....	Acts 24 ....	2 Cor. 6. 2
151.	Agrippa and Paul ....	Acts 26 ....	Acts 26. 18
152.	Voyage and Shipwreck ....	Acts 27. 1-25, 39-44 ....	Psa. 107. 28, 29
153.	Guilty Sinners ....	Rom. 3 ....	Rom. 3. 23, 24
154.	How to be Saved ....	Rom. 10 ....	Rom. 10. 9
155.	Material of Church ....	Eph. 2 ....	Eph. 2. 13, 14
156.	Wrath and Salvation ....	Rev. 6. 17-17 ; 7. 9-17 ....	Rev. 7. 14
157.	Resurrection, etc. ....	Rev. 20 ....	Rev. 20. 13
158.	Life and Glory ....	Rev. 21. 1-8 ; 22. 1-21 ....	Rev. 21. 27

**T**HIS is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. See Mat. 14. 14-21 ; Mark 6. 34-44 ; and Luke 9. 12-17. It must therefore be of special importance. It is interesting to note what various points are mentioned in one gospel and not in the others ; yet all fitting into the one complete story. For instance, John alone tells us that it took place just before Passover time ; but Mark mentions that the grass was "green" (Mark 6. 39), and this in Palestine would be more noticeable at that time of year than at any other.

*Additional Notes.*

Again, it is only in Matthew we read that there were "women and children" present, as well as the 5,000 men. Yet it was one of these children, "a Lad," mentioned only in John, who was the source of supply for the multitudes. He must have been a wise lad to have brought his food with him, or else he had a wise and kind mother who had seen to it that he would not be left hungry. But what can have been his thoughts when he was asked to give up his little supply to be divided amongst that great crowd of people ? Perhaps that he would have to go hungry after all, as his "ration" of it would be so little. Yet he and all of them got their "fill" (v. 12) of fishes and bread. Note too that, as John alone mentions, it was "barley" bread he had, which was a cheap kind. In 2 Kin. 7. 1 barley was only half the price of wheat, and in Rev. 6. 6 it was only one-third the price of it.

In the latter part of John 6 we get the spiritual lessons which this miracle teaches. The people were contrasting the manna in the wilderness with Christ's multiplication of the loaves in this desert place ; and were suggest-

*Additional Notes.*      ing that Moses had wrought a much greater miracle than Jesus (vs. 30, 31), and that He could not claim to be the prophet "like unto Moses" unless He did something greater still (see ch. 1. 21 and 5. 46, with Acts 3. 22 and 7. 37). But he shows them that the true comparison is not between the manna and the loaves, but between the manna and Himself, Who is the true Bread from heaven.

Even then, their request of v. 34, "Lord, evermore give us this bread," proves that they were still thinking of material things, like Nicodemus in ch. 3. 4, and the Samaritan woman in ch. 4. 15. So in v. 35 He definitely proclaims Himself to be the Bread, saying, "I am the Bread of Life ; he that cometh to Me shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst." Here we are shown that to get saved is to become a partaker of Christ, and that nothing less than this is real salvation. Also that to "come to" Him and to "believe on" Him mean the same thing, and that each is equivalent to "eating" of Him as the Bread of Life. Further on, at v. 58 He points out that, while those who ate the manna have died long since, those that eat the Bread of Life shall live for ever.

These truths were so unpalatable to those who heard them, that "many" (v. 66) of His professed disciples turned away, thus showing that they had never partaken of the Living Bread. But Peter had (v. 69), as his confession of Christ on this occasion shows. Compare his later one in Matt. 16. 6.

How blessed that Christ's invitation and promise of v. 37 still hold good. "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

**W**E have in the Gospels two stories of Jesus and His disciples in a storm on the Lake of Galilee. In the first one, which is recorded in Matt. 8, Mark 4, and Luke 8, He was in the boat with them, and being asleep, the disciples in their fear of the storm awoke Him to save them. In the second one, recorded in Matt. 14, Mark 6, and John 6, He was not with them at first, but came to them during the storm, walking on the water. It takes both narratives to fully illustrate what the Lord Jesus is to His people. He is ever with them, for He has said, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Matt. 28. 20); yet He is on the mountain praying for them (Mar. 6. 46), or in other words, at God's right hand making intercession for them.

*Additional Notes.*

The sixth of John describes two great miracles of Christ, (1) the feeding of the 5,000, and (2) the walking on the sea. They suggest to us two distinct pictures of the relationship between God's people and their surroundings during the present period of grace. In the first they are seen in a "desert place" (see Mark 6. 35), which is just what this world is to a saint; and they are surrounded by hungry multitudes of the unsaved, famishing for the Bread of Life. As Jesus fed the 5,000 by means of His disciples, so He does to-day through His servants in gospel testimony. Compare the multiplying of the loaves and fishes with Acts 12. 24, "The Word of God grew and multiplied." In the second picture, which is our present lesson, His people are seen crossing the sea of time, tossed and hindered by Satan's storms, while Christ Himself is absent from them. But, as has been pointed out above, He is making intercession for them at God's right hand, and He sees them all the while (see

*Additional Notes.* Mark 6. 48). His coming to them over the water, which according to Mark took place in the fourth or last watch of the night, is the means of bringing them immediately to the shore (John 6. 21) ; just as His coming again for His saints will end all the trials and storms of their present earthly experience.

It is only in Matthew's account (Matt. 14. 28-30) that we are told of Peter's attempt to walk on the water to Jesus. He found that he could do so, as long as he kept looking to Christ? but when he looked away at the boisterous wind, he began to sink. In that same account, at verse 33, we learn that this was one of the occasions which caused the disciples to confess Jesus to be the Son of God.

This 6th of John has an interesting series of links with the threefold temptation of Jesus by Satan in Matt. 4. There He refused to turn stones into bread to supply His own need ; but here He multiplied the loaves to supply the hungry people. There He refused Satan's offer of the kingdoms of the world ; and here at verse 15 He refused to let the people make Him a king. There He would not accept Satan's suggestion to defy the Law of Gravity, by casting Himself down from the Temple to prove his Sonship ; but here he did overcome that law by walking on the water to rescue His disciples. In all these incidents He acted in subjection to the will of His Father.

Both in this storm and in the previous one, according to Mark 4. 35 and 6. 45. Jesus had bidden the disciples to cross "to the other side." Therefore, having His word for it, they had no reason to fear that they would not be able to reach it.

**T**HESE Scribes from Jerusalem came for the purpose of making trouble. So anxious were they to find fault with Jesus and His disciples that they actually stood watching them while eating their dinner, to see if they broke any of the rules which the "elders" had made. And, of course, they at once noticed that the disciples had not washed their hands. It was not the lack of cleanliness that annoyed them, for the disciples' hands were likely as clean as their own; but this washing of hands was a religious rite before eating, as is clear from vs. 3, 4. Compare also Luke 11. 37, 38, where Jesus Himself was blamed by a Pharisee, who had asked Him to dinner, for the same omission. It was not a command of the Law of God, for if it had been, Christ and His disciples would have certainly obeyed it. It was merely "a commandment of men" (ver 7).

*Additional Notes.*

The words, "Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up," occurring in ver. 13 of Matthew's account, might well be used as a title for the whole passage; for in His reply to the Scribes, Jesus seeks to root up from the people's minds some "plants" which God had not planted there. They are called in vs. 3, 5, 8, 9, 13, "the tradition of the elders," "the tradition of men," and "your tradition"; while in ver. 7 they are spoken of as "the commandments of men." They stand in contrast with "the Commandments of God" (vs. 8, 9), and the "Word of God" (v. 13); and the result of their hold upon men's minds is that they—

- (1) "lay aside the commandments of God" (v. 8).
- (2) "reject the commandment of God" (v. 9).
- (3) "make the Word of God of none effect" (v. 13).

According to (1) and (2) they set more value



*Additional Notes.*

on their own man-made rules than they do on God's Commandments ; and according to (2) and (3) they even wilfully frame these rules in such a way as to make void God's Commandments. King Saul is an Old Testament illustration of the former. In 1 Sam. 14. 24 he made a rule that anyone who ate food until the battle ended, would be slain, and was about to kill his son Jonathan for breaking this rule, had not the army prevented him. Yet in the next chapter he himself broke the commandment which God had given him about the destroying of the Amalekites. Of the other point an example is given by Christ Himself in our lesson. One of the Commandments is " Honour thy father and thy mother." It was and still is a very important one. It means much more than that they are to be respectfully addressed by their children, though this also is included. It means that when they are no longer able to work and support themselves, the children are bound to supply them with whatever they need, as is shown by Christ's words here in vs. 12, 13. But the "elders" found a way to escape having to do this. They made it a "tradition" that since God confessedly must have first place, all the son had to do was to tell his parents that what he must otherwise have given to them was already "corban," that is, "a gift devoted to God"; and once he had said this, his parents had no further claim, whether he did actually give it to God's work or not.

There are many of these man-made rules among the religious bodies of to-day, rules about sprinkling water on babies, about eating fish instead of beef on certain days, and about many "other such like things" (vs. 4, 8, 13), which are not found in the Scriptures. But as Jesus shows in vs. 18-22, it is not the outward forms, nor is it what goes into the mouth that is important. It is that which comes forth from the heart ; and what a nest of evil things a man's heart is, with no less than thirteen of them in it, according to Mark 7. 21.

ON these two occasions only did Gentiles directly receive blessing during the public ministry of Jesus ; for as He says in ch. 15. 24, His immediate mission was "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." And in both the cases those who sought the blessing wanted it, not for themselves, but for others, the centurion for his servant, the woman for her daughter.

*Additional Notes.*

A centurion was a Roman army officer, so called because he commanded a "Century," that is, a hundred soldiers. How many other centurions are mentioned in the Bible ? There was the one in charge of the soldiers at the Crucifixion, who acknowledged Jesus to be the Son of God in Mark 15. 39. There was Cornelius, who was saved under Peter's preaching in Acts 10. There was Julius, in charge of the prisoners going to Rome, who was kind to Paul in Acts 27. 1, 3, etc. And there was the one who warned the chief captain not to scourge Paul in Acts 22. 26. These all seem to have been men of a good type, and (what is more remarkable) of a kindly nature ; but in no case was this more noticeable than in the man we have read about. The Jews, who were not fond of Gentiles as a rule, pleaded for him, according to Luke 7. 4, 5, on the ground that he loved their nation, and had built for them (see R.V.) their synagogue at Capernaum, probably the very one in which Jesus Himself had preached, as recorded in Mark 1. 21, etc. Moreover, the fact that he took such an interest in a servant, who, now that he was paralysed, could be of no further use as a servant, shows his kindness. Contrast the Amalekite master in 1 Sam. 30. 13, who left his servant by the wayside to die when he took ill.

The woman of ch. 15 belonged to Sidon (or Zidon), as did the widow to whom Elijah

*Additional Notes.*

was sent in 1 Kin. 17. 9. She had not even as much claim upon Christ as the centurion had ; but she pleaded so persistently that the disciples wanted her case dealt with, in order to get rid of her. That this is what they meant when they said " Send her away," is clear from the nature of Jesus' reply to them.

But the chief point which links our two stories together is that in these two instances alone did the Lord remark upon the greatness of the faith shown by any who came to Him. Of the woman He said, " O woman, great is thy faith " ; and of the centurion, " I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel." Instead of this He elsewhere had to rebuke the " little faith " of His followers. Now it is interesting to notice how this " great faith " was evidenced in each case. In that of the woman it is shown in her willingness to take a very low place. Even when Christ compared her to the dogs as being a Gentile, she was not insulted, but said, " Truth, Lord, yet the dogs are allowed to get at least the crumbs." The centurion's faith, on the other hand, was seen in the very high place that he gave to Christ, as One who had full authority to do, even with a word, whatever He willed. Notice that, when comparing his own position as an officer, he says, " I am a man under (not in) authority." That is to say, when he gave an order, he had with him all the power of the government under authority from which he was acting, to enforce that order. And similarly he looks on Christ as having all the power of heaven at his call. Thus we see that great faith is faith which takes a very low place, and which gives Christ a very high place. Such, too, is the faith that saves the soul. But see, in verses 11, 12 of Matt. 8, where the people come from who have this faith. And see how, for lack of it the privileged " children of the kingdom " will be cast out for ever.

**W**E have in this passage the first mention of the Church, the calling out of which has been God's great work of the present dispensation. The words, "I will build," of v. 18, show that at this time it was something future, on which no start had as yet been made. It is mentioned again, but in its local aspect, in Matt. 18. 17; and then we read no more about it till Acts 2. 47, where the forming of it had begun at Pentecost.

*Additional Notes.*

The Greek word for "Church" means "a company of those who are called out from a larger number." It is formed from both Jews and Gentiles; and its distinguishing feature is the uniting of these into one body by the Holy Spirit; and the breaking down of the middle wall of partition "that had previously existed between them (Eph. 2. 14). None but truly saved people are in this Church, as Acts 2. 47 shows; and all such are members of it, no matter what their outward religious connections may be.

We learn here from Peter's confession, and from Jesus' reply to it, that its foundation is "Christ the Son of the Living God"? and the same thing is stated in 1 Cor. 3. 11, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

V. 13. "Caesarea Philippi," where this announcement of the Church was first made, was just outside the Jewish border, and thus it was made on Gentile ground. This occasion, and that in the previous chapter where He healed the daughter of the woman of Sidon, were the only two we know of, on which Jesus went out of the land of Israel during His ministry.

V. 14. These opinions, quoted by the disciples, were amongst the best which unsaved men held about Christ. Many held far worse ones; such as that He was a Samaritan and had a devil (John 8. 48), and that he was mad (John 10. 20). The opinion that He was John the Baptist, risen from the dead, was held by Herod who had killed John (Mark 6. 14).

*Additional Notes.*

Concerning Elias or Elijah it had been foretold in Malachi 4. 5, 6 that he would appear again before the great Day of the Lord ; so it was natural that some people should think Jesus to be he, especially as He showed similar faithfulness to God in His Ministry. As for Jeremiah, he was perhaps the most sympathetic of all the prophets, and one who on various occasions wept over his people, just as Jesus did ; therefore it was also natural that some should associate these two names together.

But it was a Saviour that the world needed, and it was a sure Foundation that the Church would need ; and neither John, nor Elijah, nor Jeremiah could be these. It required the very Son of God to come forth and put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Those other opinions could be formed by intelligent men from their own observations ; but Peter's belief in Him as " the Son of the living God " could only be the result of Divine revelation (v. 17) ; and Divine revelation has been the experience of every saved soul. See Matt. 11. 25-27.

V. 18. " Peter " (Greek, Petros) means " a stone," while the word here for " Rock " is *Petra*. There is thus a play on the two words. Peter will be a Stone in this Church that is to be built, while Christ, the Son of God as Peter has confessed Him to be, is the Rock on which it is built. For of course a Peter would be a no more stable foundation than a Jeremiah, or an Elijah.

Vs. 22, 23. In these verses we see that Peter, who a moment before had spoken what God had revealed to him, is now speaking what Satan has put into his mouth. Jesus in v. 23 looks past Peter to the Tempter who was using him to seek to turn his Lord from the Cross, as Satan himself had tried to do in Matt. 4. 8-10.

V. 26. Who can answer the solemn questions of this verse ?

**T**HE Transfiguration is described in Matthew, Mark, and Luke ; and in each of the three the story of it comes immediately after a statement similar to the one in our 27th verse. Matthew expresses the thought perhaps the most plainly of the three, when he says, "There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (Matt. 16. 28.) Now this event is still future, so far as its complete fulfilment is concerned, yet all the disciples who were present when Jesus spoke are dead long ago. His words must therefore have had their accomplishment in some other sense ; and the fact that the Transfiguration is mentioned immediately afterwards in each gospel would suggest that this is what He meant, as being what we might call a preview of His future coming in glory to reign. That idea is confirmed by what Peter long after wrote in 2 Pet. 1. 16-18. "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses . . . . in the Holy Mount."

*Additional Notes.*

We may, therefore, look on the Transfiguration as a foretaste of the coming glory ; and as such it is fittingly brought in after Christ's announcement of His own sufferings in verse 22, and of those His followers would have to pass through in verses 23, 24. It reminds us that the sufferings are "not worthy to be compared with the glory" (Rom. 8. 18). Christ Himself shall have "exceeding joy" (Jude 24) for His "exceeding sorrow" (Matt. 26. 38). Moses will no longer be distracted by the trials of the wilderness and waywardness of the people, but shall have that "recompense of the reward" (Heb. 11. 26) for which he turned his back upon Egypt. Elijah will no longer have to look to the ravens for his food, or to fly for his life from Jezebel (1 Kin. 19. 3). Both are said to "appear in glory" (v. 31) ; and they do not even talk of their own past

**NJ. 110. THE TRANSFIGURATION. (Read Luke 9. 26-42.)**

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*Additional Notes.*

experiences, or of their own end, remarkable though it was in both their cases ; but of the death of their Lord. Throughout the scene they are doubtless representative of all other saints. Moses of those who have died and will be raised again, Elijah of such as will be translated to glory without dying. Also they represent the Law and the Prophets which all point to Christ. Or, by including Peter, James, and John, we might say that Old Testament saints and New Testament saints are severally represented.

Verse 28. " An eight days after." Matthew and Mark say " after six days." There were six full days between the day on which verse 27 was spoken and the day on which the Transfiguration occurred ; but if these two end days are counted in also, it may be described as " about an eight days after." Note that it is only in Luke's account we learn that it was " to pray " that Jesus went up to the mount (v. 28) ; and that the disciples were " heavy with sleep " on this occasion (v. 32) ; as the same three were when He was praying in Gethsemane (Mark 14. 35, 40). Also note that Luke alone tells us what was the subject of conversation between the two O.T. saints and Christ. What was it ?

Others, according to verse 19 of our chapter, had been putting Elias, the Baptist, etc., on a level with Jesus, while Peter had confessed Him as Son of God. But now in verse 33 Peter himself seems to put Christ on a level with Moses and Elias ; and it is God the Father who has to proclaim Him as His beloved Son (v. 35), and to withdraw the other two from sight. (v. 36.) None are worthy to be compared with Him.

Contrast the scene of failure at the foot of the mount in verses 37-42. The disciples " could not " cast out the evil spirit, although in verse 1 they had got " power . . . over all devils."

**F**IVE times in Matthew we read of children being in close contact with Jesus. When the 5,000 were fed in ch. 14 ; and again when the 4,000 were fed in ch. 15 ; Matthew in each case tells us that women and children were present and got their share. In ch. 18 Christ sets a child in the midst of the disciples to teach them some lessons. In ch. 19 He blesses little children whose mothers brought them to him. And in ch. 21 the children were crying "Hosanna" to Him in the temple. Thus children get all possible encouragement to come to Jesus.

*Additional Notes.*

How do we know, from both ch. 18 and ch. 19, that it is easier for children to get saved than for old people ? Because in both places we are told that the old have to become like children in order to be saved. In ch. 18. 3 we read, "Except ye . . . become as little children ye shall not enter the kingdom." And in ch. 19. 14 it is said, "Of such (that is, of people like little children) is the kingdom." But what does this becoming as little children mean ? It is not to become like them in foolish childish ways, but to receive God's gospel message with humble childlike simplicity and confidence.

Notice the difference between the disciples question in ch. 18. 1 and Christ's answer in verse 3. They ask, "Who is the "greatest," but He replies, "Except ye be converted ye shall not enter." But in verse 4 He goes on to tell them that to become great in it is similarly attained, by becoming still more childlike. Note that the expression "One such little child" in verse 5 refers more particularly to one who has become as a little child in order to be saved ; and this is made plainer in the words of v. 6, "One of these little ones which believe in Me." In both verses, and also in



*Additional Notes.*      verse 10, we see what value Christ sets upon them.

In verses 6-9 "offend" means "cause to stumble," and "offences" mean "occasions of stumbling." In verses 6, 7 it is the case of a person causing others to stumble ; but in verses 8, 9 it is that of the things which cause oneself to stumble. And it is remarkable that the three members of the body mentioned, the hand, the foot, and the eye, are those which a man uses to keep himself from stumbling ; his eye to see the danger in time, his foot to hold him up firmly, and his hand to grasp some support if the foot slips. Yet these members, which in the physical world should preserve from stumbling, may be the cause of it in the spiritual realm. For a man may be tempted to trust to his own skill (as though to hand, foot, and eye), instead of trusting God as a little child would trust its father.

In ch. 19. 13 the disciples were so foolish as to imagine that Jesus would not wish to be bothered with children coming to Him. They would not have made good Sunday-school teachers. The parallel passage in Mark 10. 14 says that He was "much displeased" with them for this, and it is the only time He is spoken of in the four gospels as displeased with anyone.

"What does the word "Suffer" mean as used in ch. 19. 14 ? It means "allow" or "let." But there are other ways of not allowing children to come to Christ besides forbidding them. Those who teach children to depend on baptism and churchgoing and good works for salvation, are keeping them by this means from coming to Christ who alone can save them ; and all such are as displeasing to Christ as the disciples who forbade them. So are all others who in any way try to hinder them from listening to the gospel.

**T**HIS 9th chapter of Luke contains more failures and weaknesses on the part of Christ's disciples than almost any other in the Gospels. Yet it is the chapter in the beginning of which He had sent them out to preach, and given them power over "all devils," and to cure diseases. Here are some of the failures mentioned in it :—

*Additional Notes.*

- (1) They wanted the multitude sent away v. 12.
- (2) They were "heavy with sleep" at the transfiguration. v. 32.
- (3) They placed Moses and Elias on a level with Christ. v. 33.
- (4) They could not cast out a devil, though given power. v. 40.
- (5) They quarrelled as to who should be greatest. v. 46.
- (6) They forbade another man who was casting out devils. v. 49.
- (7) They wished to burn up those who refused them lodging. v. 54.

V. 49. It is remarkable that the disciples should forbid another to cast out devils, so soon after they themselves had failed to cast one out in v. 40. If the Lord is pleased to use others who perhaps have not learned to walk in the light that we have got, He has the sovereign right to do so, and it is not for us to interfere. The rule which Christ lays down here, "He that is not against us is for us" (v. 50), is what we might call our own side of the matter. It is balanced by another in ch. 11. 23 which gives Christ's side of it, "He that is not with Me is against Me." We should use the first of these when judging others, but the second when testing ourselves.

V. 50. "Forbid Not." Compare how in ch. 18. 16 Jesus had again to say the same thing to them, when they sought to prevent the children from coming.

V. 51. Set His Face to go to Jerusalem" (Compare Isa 50. 7, "I set my face like a flint"). We have here the first reference to Christ's last journey to Jerusalem previous to

*Additional Notes.*

His death. Luke makes other references to it in the succeeding narrative up to ch. 19. 41, where He arrives at the city. See verse 53 ; ch. 13. 22 ; ch. 17. 11 ; ch. 18. 31 ; ch. 19. 11, 28.

V. 54. See in Acts 8. 25 how this same John who here wants to burn the Samaritans is found preaching the gospel in their villages.

Verses 57-62. Note how the story of these three prospective "followers" is told us soon after the command to follow and the conditions of following in v. 23. Christ's words to the first one in v. 58 imply that the Lord knew that this man would not be able to "deny himself" the comforts of a home to go preaching. His words to the third in v. 62 suggest that he was one who would not be able to "take up his cross" to the extent of turning his back on his old friends. It is noteworthy that these two offered to follow without being asked ; whereas the middle one was invited to follow by Jesus Himself. This man seems to have been the only real one of the three ; and his difficulty appears to have been, Whether he should put first the new command of Christ, "Follow Me," or the old command of the Law, "Honour Thy Father and Thy Mother." The latter was just as right as the former, and Jesus Himself had emphasised it at Mark 7. 10. But the point was, "Which should have priority ?" And the answer is that the Lord's claims must always come first. By the words, "Bury my father," the man probably meant, not that his father had already died and was about to be buried immediately, but that he should remain with him and look after him till his death, and then go and preach afterwards. But Christ's reply suggests that there were enough unsaved relatives to do that ("the dead"). In all likelihood this man became one of the seventy sent out in the next chapter. The Lord's words to him were, "Go thou and preach the Kingdom of God," which is the very thing that they were sent to do in ch. 10. 9, 11.

**C**HRISt'S ministry at Jerusalem, both of teaching and of working miracles, is recorded only in John. The other three Gospels give no particulars of any visit to the city or to the feasts from the beginning of His public ministry until He came there to His last Passover just before His death. But in John we read of Him being present at six feasts there, of which at least three were Passovers. See John 2. 23; 5. 1; 6. 4; 7. 2; 10. 22; 11. 55.

*Additional Notes.*

The feast in our chapter was the feast of Tabernacles (v. 2), the last of the seven which took place in a Jewish year, and the most joyous one of them all. See its description in Lev. 23. 34, 39, 40, where we learn that their main occupation during the week it lasted was to "rejoice before the Lord" (v. 40). It also, according to v. 39, served as a harvest festival, and in Exod. 23. 16 it is called "The Feast of Ingathering."

On this occasion Jesus, after going to it in a secret manner (v. 10), began when it was half-way over to teach the people (v. 14), and on its last day (v. 37) taught them again, and invited all who were athirst to come to Him and drink. This invitation is all the more interesting on account of the circumstances under which it was given. In John 4 He had made a similar offer to a Samaritan woman who, having gone in for the pleasures of sin, was thirsting still. But here it was made to those who had just gone through a great religious feast, and indeed had completed a full year's round of religious observances. Was it possible that after all this there might be those still athirst for something better, those who were feeling that religion could no more satisfy their heart than could the pleasures of sin? If there were such, Christ's invitation was just what they needed; but there does not appear to have been a response on this occasion like that in ch. 4, when

*Additional Notes.*

the woman and many of her neighbours believed and had a drink of the living water. The only result that we know of was that it caused two arguments, one amongst the ordinary listeners in vs. 40-43, and the other amongst the rulers in vs. 45-53. It is remarkable that both these arguments turned on the question of Christ's origin, for some of the people said in v. 41, " Shall Christ come out of Galilee? " and some of the rulers said in v. 58, " Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." Since Jesus had grown up to manhood in Nazareth of Galilee, the people all seemed to think that He had been born there; and as v. 42 shows, they all knew that Christ was to be born in Bethlehem of Judæa according to Micah 5. 2. But the expression used by the rulers, " Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet," was not true. One of their best known prophets and one too who, more than any other prophet, was typical of Christ, Jonah the son of Amittai, belonged to Gath-hepher in Galilee (2 Kings 14. 23), a town situated almost on the very spot where Nazareth afterwards was. Their saying is an example of how prejudice will blind men's minds to the plainest statements of Scripture.

This meeting of the rulers had, however, at least one good result. It made Nicodemus, who was one of them, speak a word for Jesus. When they said, "This people that knoweth not the Law are cursed," he replied that they who did know the Law should be aware that it did not condemn a man without hearing him. Probably he himself was the only member of the council who had taken the trouble to hear Jesus personally. Contrast too with their statement the words of Gal. 3. 10, " Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the Law to do them." The curse is on him " that continueth not in," rather than on him " that knoweth not " the Law.

**THIS** Parable contains two separate lessons. On its surface it teaches that kindness and neighbourliness to those in need are of much more account in God's sight than an outward form of religion. But beneath its surface lies the truth of the utter helplessness of the sinner (the wounded man); and of the failure of the Law (the priest), and of the Ordinances (the Levite) to save him. Only Christ (the Samaritan) can do that.

*Additional Notes.*

"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Two men in Luke ask this question; here a certain Lawyer asks it to tempt Christ; but in ch. 18. 18 "a certain ruler" asked it with some measure of earnestness. Yet even he was not earnest enough, for he went away sorrowful. The former knew and read the Law (v. 26); the latter had tried to keep it (ch. 18. 21). Note that a "Lawyer" in the New Testament is one skilled in the Law of God as given by Moses, not merely in human laws as it signifies with us. See what Jesus said of these Lawyers in the next chapter at verses 45, 46.

V. 26. "How readest thou?" Note that it is "How" and not "What". There is a right and a wrong way of reading. Had he been reading the Law in a right way, it would have condemned him (Rom. 3. 19); but those who read it in a wrong way are only puffed up by doing so (Rom. 2. 17-20).

Vs. 27, 28. The path to life which is described in these verses will be found an impossible one by any sinner who tries it, and he will thus be brought to see himself as helpless as the half dead man of v. 30. Only one who has been born again can make any real attempt at doing these things.

V. 29. "Willing to justify himself." So are most people. He would have been glad if he could have got the meaning of the word "neighbour" whittled down to "just a few select friends," thus making obedience easier.

*Additional Notes.*

But his question had already been answered by the Law itself at Lev. 19. 34, "The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you ; thou shalt love him as thyself."

V. 30. "**Went down.**" The way from Jerusalem to Jericho was very much "**down**"; for Jerusalem was among the hills, while Jericho lay in the vale of Jordan. It therefore well represents the sinner's course which is **downward**. But Jerusalem also was the city of God's blessing (Ps. 128. 5); and Jericho was the city of the curse (Josh. 6. 26). Note that it was thieves who did the stripping here; but the Prodigal in ch. 15. 13 was stripped by pretended friends. "**Half Dead.**" So the sinner is **dead in sin**.

Vs. 31-33. The Priest and the Levite were going "**down**" themselves (v. 31) but of the Samaritan it is said "As he journeyed." And Christ when He spoke this parable was on His last journey **up** to Jerusalem (see ch. 9. 51). While they "**passed by on the other side,**" the Samaritan "**came where he was.**" Not only so, but he put the wounded man where he himself had been, "**on his own beast**" (v. 34). Thus Christ took our place, and has put us in His place (see 2 Cor. 5. 21).

If the man had been well and at the Temple, the priest and the Levite could have been of use to offer his sacrifice for him, and they no doubt would have been glad to take his "**tithe**" from him (Num. 18. 21). But in the condition in which he now was, he was of no use to them, nor they to him. If he should happen to be dead entirely he would "**defile**" them (Num. 19. 11).

Vs. 34, 25. The Samaritan first "**took care**" of the man himself, and then he paid the innkeeper to "**take care**" of him. Note that the one whom he typifies is **coming again** (v. 35); and will then fully "**repay**" all service done for Him.

**W**E have here the second of the three great miracles which were wrought at or near Jerusalem, the impotent man of John 5 being the first and Lazarus of John 11 the third. As was remarked in the lesson on the former, the effect of each of the three was to make the Jews more determined to kill Jesus (ch. 5. 16; 10. 31, 32; 11. 33). Taken together, they present a threefold picture of the sinner's condition; Helpless in ch. 5; Blind in ch 9; and Dead in ch. 11. Our miracle is also one of the Seven which were wrought on the Sabbath, as mentioned in that former lesson.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 1. "Blind from Birth." Compare how David in Psa. 51. 5 speaks of being a sinner from birth. This man was also poor, for he was a beggar (v. 8); he therefore could not have paid to be cured; but even if he had been rich, no doctor "since the world began" (v. 32) had cured a case like his.

"As Jesus passed by." The last verse of the previous chapter shows that at this time Jesus was "passing" from the Temple where the people had sought to stone Him. Before our present chapter ends, the man who had been blind was also cast out of the Temple (v. 34); and it was then that he met with Christ a second time.

V. 2. "Who did sin?" This is the first of a remarkable series of questions found throughout the chapter. See for example, v. 10, "How were thine eyes opened?"; v. 12, "Where is He (Christ)?"; v. 17, "What sayest thou of Him?"; v. 26, "What did He to thee?"; v. 35, "Dost thou believe?"; v. 40, "Are we blind also?"; etc., all of which have lessons for us to-day. But this first question was a stupid one; for had the disciples taken time to consider what they were asking, they would have realised that it could not be the man's own sins that had him blind from birth,



*Additional Notes.* before they were committed. The Pharisees would, however, have answered the disciples' question without hesitation (see ver. 34).

Vs. 2-4. While the disciples were questioning, "Who is to blame?" the Lord's mind was occupied rather with the healing of the trouble. Compare what He says here as to doing His "works" while the "day" lasted, and before night came on, with the exhortation to us as His servants in Eccles. 9. 10, "Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work . . . in the grave whither thou goest."

Vs. 8, 9. The neighbours saw such a change in the man that they could scarcely believe it was the same person. Such a change they still should see in one who is really saved. Notice that he had to give his "Testimony" to them three times, in verses 11, 15, and 25.

V. 16. "A division because of Him." Three times in John do we read of this. In ch. 7. 43 there was a "division" as to His birth and origin. Here there was one as to His works. And in ch. 10. 18, 19 there was a third as to what He said about His death.

Vs. 18-22. The Parents could not answer for their son. Neither can parents to-day. Everyone must experience salvation for himself.

V. 24. "Give God the Praise." They probably meant by this, "Confess that you have been telling us lies." See how Joshua used similar words to get Achan to confess his sin at Josh. 7. 19.

V. 25. "One Thing I Know." This knowledge they could not take from him—that he had got his sight. See another thing he knew in verse 31.

V. 28. "We are Moses' disciples." But were they? Christ in ch. 5. 45-47 showed they were not.

**T**HIS Parable of Christ and His Sheep is spoken by Him in three separate parts. The first part is in verses 1-6, and ends at the latter verse with the statement that the Jews did not understand it. Then we have a new beginning at v. 7, and the second portion runs from that verse to verse 18, ending with an argument amongst the Jews in vs. 19-21. The third section, which was spoken on a later occasion, follows in vs. 22-30, and closes with the Jews taking up stones to stone Christ, as they had before done at ch. 9. 59.

*Additional Notes.*

It is interesting to notice the close connection which the first part of this chapter has with the end of the previous one. There is no break and Jesus appears to be continuing His speech of ch. 9. 41 to the Pharisees who had questioned Him. This fact would further suggest that He has them in mind when He speaks of "thieves and robbers," of "strangers" and of "hirelings."

V. 1. "The Sheepfold," and v. 16, "not of this fold." In both these verses the sheepfold referred to is the Jewish fold, though some of our hymns tend to give us a different impression of it. The mention in vs. 3, 4 of "His own Sheep" as being led by Him out of it, suggests that there were sheep in it which were not his own; and v. 26, where he tells some that they are not His Sheep, confirms this. On the other hand, v. 16 speaks of some of His sheep who were "not of this fold"; that is, of course, Gentiles, who were to be saved though they had never belonged to the Jewish fold at all.

The second occurrence of the word "fold" in the A.V. at v. 16, in the phrase "There shall be one fold" is a mistake. The term used is quite different from that in the other two places, and means "flock," as the Revised Version shows. It should be read, "There

*Additional Notes.*

shall be one flock." It is important to understand this—that the Gentiles are not brought into the Jewish fold, or into any other fold, on getting saved; but that they, together with those whom the Shepherd leads out of the Jewish fold in verse 3, are now united together in one flock. Compare Eph. 2. 14. In a "fold" the sheep are kept together by a wall or fence that surrounds them; but a "flock" is kept together by the presence of the Shepherd who leads it, and by "hearing His Voice" (vs. 4, 16). And this is the true position of saints to-day—Jew and Gentile both brought out from all other associations, as One flock to follow the Shepherd.

V. 3. "To Him the Porter openeth." This is like what John the Baptist did for Jesus as His forerunner. See an example of how he prepared the way for Him in the last three verses of this chapter.

V. 4. "Goeth before them." Eastern shepherds do not drive sheep. They go in front and the sheep follow them.

Vs. 7-18. In this middle section, Jesus twice says, "I am the Good Shepherd" (vs. 11, 14); and twice, "I am the Door" (vs. 7, 9). As the Good Shepherd He provides salvation by His death (v. 11); and as the Door He gives that salvation to all who enter by Him (v. 9). While in connection with His dying for His people He is here called the Good Shepherd, in connection with His present resurrection care for them He is called in Heb. 13. 20 the Great Shepherd; and in connection with His coming again for them He is called in 1 Pet. 5. 4 the Chief Shepherd.

In verse 11 Jesus gives His life for the sheep; in verse 28 He gives life to the sheep. Note that in v. 27 we get two great marks of "His own sheep" (1) They know His Voice; and (2) they follow Him.

**W**E here reach the last of the three great miracles recorded alone by John, and wrought at or near Jerusalem. What were the others? The **Helpless** man of ch. 5, and the **Blind** man of ch. 9. But the present case is worse than either, for the man is **Dead**, a picture of the sinner "dead in sins."

*Additional Notes.*

V. 1. "**The Town of Mary.**" It is interesting that in Luke 10. 38, when the home is mentioned, it is called "**The House of Martha.**"

Note the threefold mention of Christ's love to them. In v. 3 the sisters' message is "**He whom Thou lovest is sick.**" In v. 5 the writer says that **Jesus loved** all three of them. And in v. 36 the Jews said, "**Behold how He loved him.**"

The Death and Resurrection of Lazarus had a fourfold outcome :

- (1) It was for the glory of God and of Christ (v. 4).
- (2) It was for the disciples' sakes, that their faith might be strengthened (v. 15).
- (3) It was for the people's sake, that they might believe (vs. 42, 45).
- (4) It led to further plotting of Christ's death by the rulers (vs. 47-53).

V. 8. "**Of late sought to stone Thee.**" See ch. 8. 59 and ch. 10. 31.

Vs. 11-14. Note that death is merely as a sleep to the saint. He is "**asleep in Christ**" (1 Cor. 15. 18); and he is "**asleep through Jesus**" (1 Th. 4. 14, R.V. Mar.).

V. 16. "**That we may die with Him.**" Thomas here means "with Christ." He still fears that the Jews may stone Jesus, but he is willing to die with Him.

V. 22. "**Even Now.**" She still hopes that something may be done.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 24. She is sound in doctrine that there will be a future resurrection. But sound doctrine is not enough, and Jesus at v. 25 turns her from the doctrine to Himself. He says, "**I am the Resurrection and the Life.**" Then in v. 26 He teaches her a truth which had never before been revealed: that saints alive when He comes again will be taken to heaven without dying.

V. 27. There are in John three great confessions of Christ as the Son of God; each of which represents a triumph over a difficulty :

- (1) Nathanael's in ch. 1. 49, a triumph over prejudice against Nazareth.
- (2) Peter's in ch. 6. 69, a triumph over the defection of others from Christ.
- (3) Martha's in this verse, a triumph in the face of death itself.

V. 32. It is noteworthy that Martha (v. 21), Mary (v. 32), and the Jews (v. 37), all agree that Jesus could have kept Lazarus from dying.

V. 35. "**Jesus Wept.**" We are told of three times that Jesus did this :—

- (1) At the grave of Lazarus, John 11. 35.
- (2) Over Jerusalem's impenitence, Luke 19. 41.
- (3) In Gethsemane, etc., Heb. 5. 7.

V. 39 and 44. "**Take ye away the stone**" and "**Loose him.**" These things they had to do themselves. Christ only did what they could not do—raise the dead man to life. So to-day it should be the aim of teachers and preachers to remove stones of hindrance from the way of the anxious ; and when anyone has been saved to assist in the loosing of him from the old bands. But they must never forget that raising a soul dead in sin to life in Christ is the Lord's own work.

**T**HE Parable of The Great Supper is the last of three messages which Jesus spoke while sitting at meat in a Pharisee's house (v. 1). The first one (vs. 7-11) was addressed to the guests who strove for the best seats. The second (vs. 12-14) was spoken to the giver of the meal, who had restricted his invitations to well off people. And this third one was in reply to a man present who had said, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God" (v. 15).

*Additional Notes.*

What the man said was perfectly true, for it is surely blessed to have the prospect of enjoying the good things of God eternally. But many who acknowledge it to be true (including perhaps this man himself) make no effort to accept the invitation when it is offered to them; and are far more interested, as Christ's parable shows, in other concerns of their own. In such cases one must judge their true condition, not by pious words, but by their actions.

**V. 16. "A Great Supper."** What other suppers of special interest do we read of in the New Testament? (1) "The Lord's Supper," 1 Cor. 11. 20; (2) "The Marriage Supper of the Lamb," Rev. 19. 9; (3) "The Supper of the Great God," Rev. 19. 17. Putting the four together, We have Gospel, Remembrance, Glory, and Judgment. Which meal of the day is supper? It is the last one, and for this reason our parable expresses more of the urgency of the gospel call than does the similar parable in Matt. 22. 4, which is about a dinner.

**Vs. 18-20.** It is of interest to notice that in Deut. 20. 5-7 a man who had got a new house, or a vineyard, or a wife, was not required to go out to war. The excuses made here might have been valid in a case of that kind; but not when it was the matter of accepting an invitation to a feast. See also Deut. 24. 5.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 21. "Poor—Maimed—Halt—Blind." These were the same classes which Christ had exhorted the host to invite to his feasts in v. 13.

V. 24. "None of those men which were bidden shall taste of My Supper." Their last opportunity was gone.

V. 25. "Great Multitudes." It seemed here as if they were all going to accept the invitation to the gospel feast. But Christ's words in the verses which follow would soon weed out the unreal ones.

Vs. 25-33. Note the Three Great "Can-not's" of this passage (vs. 26, 27, 33) ; and see how they help us to understand the preceding parable, and how the parable helps us to understand them. In v. 33 it is said, "Whosoever he be of you that renounceth not (R.V.) all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." Compare this with the first two excuses of the parable, which were made by men unwilling to do this very thing. Their land and oxen meant more to them than the gospel feast. Then in v. 26 we read, "If a man come to Me and hate not . . . his wife . . . he cannot be My disciple." This sounds strange, especially when we remember that in Eph. 5. 25 Christian husbands are commanded to love their wives. But when we think of the third man in our parable, who made the excuse that he had married a wife, and therefore could not come, we can understand what is meant, and that "hate" in a connection such as this simply means to love less. Compare Malachi 1. 2, 3, where God says that He loved Jacob and hated Esau. Since we know that God loves the whole world of sinners, the meaning evidently is that He chose Jacob in reference to Esau. Compare also Matt. 10. 37-39 ; where in a passage similar to this in Luke, the thought is more clearly expressed, "He that loveth . . . more than Me is not worthy of Me."

**T**HREE Pictures of a Lost Sinner. That of the Sheep illustrates Christ seeking the lost one. That of the Silver illustrates the Spirit doing so. And that of the Son illustrates the attitude of the Father.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 1. "Then drew near . . . to hear Him." Connect this with the closing words of ch. 14, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." Evidently the publicans and sinners were the ones who had "ears to hear" on this occasion; and the Pharisees and Scribes did not wish to "let them hear." But what the latter said was true. Christ does still receive sinners, and sinners may receive Him. In ch. 19 Zacchaeus, a publican (v. 2), and a sinner (v. 7), and lost (v. 10), received Him joyfully (v. 6) and was Saved.

V. 3. This parable of the lost sheep is also told in Matt. 18. 11-14; where we get the additional point that the shepherd went "into the mountains" after it; and where it is left in doubt whether it will be found or not. The words there are, "if He find it," not, "until He find it," as here.

V. 5. "On His Shoulders." In Isa. 9. 6 it is said, "The Government shall be upon His Shoulder." But both shoulders are used here.

V. 7. The first "Joy" a sinner gives to God is when he gets saved.

V. 8. "One Piece." The coin here meant was called by the Greeks Drachma, and was worth about eightpence. A small thing to make a search for. "A candle." Illustrates the Word of God, as used by the Spirit to search out the sinner.

V. 11. "Two Sons." Compare another parable of two sons in Mat. 21. 28-32, which teaches much the same lesson as this one. There the son who pretends to be obedient is not really so, which is doubtless true of the elder son here also (see v. 29). And there, as here, the one who at first shows disobedience afterwards repents. The lesson is there



*Additional Notes.*

expressed in the words, "The Publicans go into the kingdom of God before you (Pharisees)." For "sons" compare ch. 19. 9 where Zacchaeus the Publican is called a "son" of Abraham.

V. 12. "Give me the portion." He could not wait till his old father was dead. Compare and contrast the two sons mentioned in ch. 12. 13-15, who were quarrelling about their portions after their father had died.

V. 13. "Wasted his substance." The Steward in the next parable (ch. 16. 1) wasted his master's substance. The one story suggests privileges, the other responsibilities. Compare the two words, "Given" and "committed" as used in ch. 12. 48. A thing given becomes one's own; but a thing committed has to be accounted for to the owner.

"Riotous Living." There are three merry-makings in this story. (1) That of the prodigal in the far country. (2) That of the elder son and his friends. (3) That of the father and the returned prodigal.

V. 14. "Spent all." He spent all on his sins; but the woman of Mark 5. 26 "spent all" in seeking a remedy. Well it was for both when they came to an end of their resources. "Famine." God in the Old Testament often used famine to bring Israel back to Himself.

"Began to be in want." Contrast "Began to be merry."

V. 15. "Joined Himself to a citizen of that country." The Publicans did this literally by becoming Tax-collectors for the Romans.

V. 28. "He was angry." Like the Pharisees and Scribes in v. 2.

V. 29. "My friends." His friends also were not his father's.

V. 16. "No man gave." While his money lasted he had friends. When it was gone the friends were gone too.

V. 17. "Came to Himself." He had been beside himself until now.

**T**HE Gospel of Luke contains more than any of the other three about **rich men and riches**. There are in it four sharp statements regarding them. In ch. 1. 53 they are sent away empty by the Lord ; in ch. 6. 24 a woe is pronounced on them; in ch. 18. 24, 25 they can hardly enter the kingdom ; and in ch. 8. 14 their riches choke the Word of God. We have also several examples of them, such as the rich farmer in ch. 12 who intended to retire from business and enjoy his riches, but died that same night ; the rich man here in ch. 16. 19, who did get enjoying his riches on earth, but then went to hell ; the rich young man in ch. 18. 23 who missed salvation ; and the rich publican in ch. 19 who got saved.

Vs. 1-12. In this first story the interest centres, not in the rich man personally, but in his steward who, like the elder son in the previous parable, is in the first instance a picture of the Pharisees and Scribes. These evidently understood it so themselves, according to v. 14. See what is said of their failure in stewardship at Matt. 23. 2-4. In that previous parable of ch. 15 it was the other son, representing the Publicans, etc., who **wasted** his substance ; but here it was the steward who **wasted** his master's goods, and lost his job for doing so. There is only one good point about this man, and it is that when he awoke to his danger he did at last begin (vs. 3, 4) to think of the future and plan for it. The rich man in the next parable did not think of it at all until it was too late and he was in hell. But though the steward planned, his plans were very bad ones, and involved cheating his master by cutting down the debtor's bills. The only other alternatives were to " dig " or to " beg " and he knew he could not dig (i.e., work for his salvation) ; while on the other hand he was too proud to take a beggar's place (the only ground on

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*Additional Notes.* which salvation is to be had).

Vs. 6, 7. "Write Fifty." This whittling down of his lord's claims is just like what many religious leaders do with God's claims against the sinner. They make sin appear less sinful, or indeed to be not sin.

V. 8. The steward's cheating was not very successful, for his lord got to know of it. But being himself one of the "children of this world," he could not help commending the cleverness of his dishonest servant, even though he was the loser by it. Note that "the lord." in this verse means the man's master, as in verses 3 and 5.

"In their generation wiser." But not wiser for eternity.

V. 9. "Make friends . . . that they may receive you." This is what the rich man of v. 19, if he had been a saved man, could have been doing with the beggar Lazarus. And if he had, Lazarus would have been there before him to welcome him to "Abraham's Bosom." Note that in this verse we have one lesson drawn from the steward's good point mentioned above ; while in v. 10 we have a different one drawn from his unfaithfulness.

V. 19. We are not told of any definite sin committed by this rich man, apart from his neglect of eternal things. He did not even chase the beggar from his gateway.

V. 21. "Crumbs." Compare the drop of water which was all the rich man asked for when in hell.

V. 22. "Abraham's Bosom." Apparently the thought is, not merely Paradise, but a specially privileged position there. Compare Matt. 8. 11, "Sit down with Abraham." Compare also "Jesus' Bosom" in John 13. 23.

V. 31. "Though one rose from the dead." Soon after this a man called Lazarus did rise from the dead. But see in John 12. 10 how little effect it had.

**A**CCORDING to Luke's gospel, Jesus on two separate occasions gave an address on events connected with His coming again, one here and one in ch. 21. 5-36. The latter is recorded also in Mat. 24 and Mark 13, but the former is found here only. This one was the outcome of a question asked by certain Pharisees (v. 20); while the other as we are told in Mark 13. 3, resulted from questions asked by four of His own disciples.

*Additional Notes.*

In both addresses the judgment aspect of His coming is prominent; but later, to Martha in John 11. 23-26, and to the Twelve disciples in John 14. 3, He spoke of coming for His own saved ones, to take them to be with Himself eternally. In the epistles both these aspects of His Coming are explained more fully, and distinguished from each other. His coming for the saints is dealt with at length in 1 Cor. 15 and 1 Thes. 4; while His coming to earth to judge is dealt with in 2 Thes. 1 and 2 Peter 3.

Our passage here emphasises three things especially. (1) The suddenness of the coming, v. 24. (2) Its unexpectedness, vs. 26-33. (3) The separations it will bring about, vs. 34-36. On the other hand, in ch. 21. 25-31 we get certain signs which will make evident, to the saints at least, that the coming of Christ is nigh; and some of these are much like what we are seeing in the world to-day. They are, "Distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring (see Rev. 17. 15); men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth; . . . when these things begin to come to pass, then look up and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

But the Coming itself, as v. 24 of ch. 17 tells us, will be as sudden as the lightning flash; and will be no more expected by the people of the world in general than was the Flood in Noah's days, or the brimstone and fire in the days of Lot. Men will be going on with their

**No. 121. CHRIST'S SECOND COMING. (Read Luke 17. 20-37).**

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*Additional Notes.*

**social life, "marrying and giving in marriage" as Noah's contemporaries were (v. 27). They will be going on with their business life, "buying and selling and planting and building" as the Sodomites were (v. 28). And all this will continue until the very moment of separation (vs. 34-36).**

**V. 21. "Kingdom . . . within you." It should rather be "among you." It was not in the Pharisees, but it was among them when Christ its King was present. Yet it was not "with observation," for these people did not see it. It requires a "born again" man to see the Kingdom of God, John 3. 3.**

**Notice that the words "day" and "days" occur ten times in our passage. Note also how it is said at v. 31, "in that day," but at v. 34, "in that night." This double description of the time is in keeping with what follows—men in bed as if at night—men in the field as if in the day—women grinding corn as if in the early morning. All this is true to life because, the earth being a globe, it is night in the one part when it is day in another.**

**V. 31. "On the Housetop." The house would be flat roofed, as they still are in Palestine ; and there was evidently an outside way of getting down from it, without having to pass through the house. No time to go in and pack one's bags.**

**V. 32. Lot's wife took time only to look back, and was lost. V. 33 implies that whoever takes time to go after his property will lose himself.**

**V. 37. "The Eagles." (Rather, "The Vultures," which feed on dead things.) This is a semi-quotation of the last clause of Job 39. 30 ; and it answers their "Where ? Lord" by suggesting that they will have no trouble finding out "where," when the time comes. The vultures will be seen gathering.**

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**A**N interesting point about the stories in this part of Luke is the way in which they are linked together in their teaching. This parable of the Pharisee and Publican, for example, is followed by the narrative of the young ruler (doubtless a Pharisee) who missed salvation and went away sorrowful ; and shortly afterwards by that of the Publican Zacchaeus who got saved and received Christ joyfully. Notice also three hindrances to getting saved which are suggested in our chapter : (1) **Religion** in the case of the Pharisee, v. 14 ; (2) **Worldly Wisdom** or unchildlikeness, v. 17 ; (3) **Wealth** or riches, v. 24. Again, see how the warning about riches in vs. 24-27 is preceded by the story of one rich man who missed salvation ; and is followed by stories of both a poor beggar and a rich publican who got saved. A hindrance of another kind was the attitude of Christ's own followers, both to the women bringing their children, and to the blind man. In each case they "**rebuked**" them (vs. 15, 39).

**Vs. 9-14.** This Parable has its explanation both before and after it. In v. 9 we are told that it was spoken to certain who trusted in themselves that they were righteous (as did the Pharisee in it), and despised others (such as the publican). In v. 14 its teaching is said to be that "Everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased ; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

**V. 10.** "Went up . . . to pray." Doubtless they did so at the usual hour of prayer in the Temple, which was the 9th hour according to Acts 3. 1. At that time the lamb of the evening sacrifice was being offered (for its connection with prayer see Psa. 141. 2 and Dan. 9. 21). Thus the publican's words, "God be propitiated to me the sinner" (R.V. Margin) would mean that he was thinking of himself

*Additional Notes.* as the sinner who needed and who accepted the value of that sacrifice which was being offered at the time. The Pharisee on the other hand was conscious of no sin, and had no use for the offering. To be "justified" we must still, like the publican, claim for ourselves personally the value of Christ's sacrifice.

V. 11. "Prayed thus with himself." Note the form of expression. It is as if God had no interest in the prayer at all. Indeed there is not a single petition in it. V. 12. "I give tithes" (i.e., the tenth). Jesus tested the rich ruler at v. 22 by suggesting to him to give all. And Zacchaeus, having received Christ, offered of his own free will to give half, and to use the rest in paying back fourfold any he had wronged. V. 13. "Afar off." This is the sinner's true place (see Eph. 2. 13). Notice that it is an expression often used by Luke. See for example how the lepers stood afar off, ch. 17. 12; the father recognised the prodigal afar off, ch. 15. 20, R.V.; and the rich man in hell saw Abraham and Lazarus afar off, ch. 16. 23.

V. 18. "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Another man had put the same question in ch. 10. 25, but had done so merely to tempt Christ. This young man was in a large measure sincere. In Mark's account it is said that he came running and kneeled. Also, that Jesus beholding him loved him, Mark 10. 17, 21. This makes it all the sadder that "he went away sorrowful."

V. 37. "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by." He was on His last journey to Jerusalem just before the Cross. Therefore it was the only opportunity that the blind man would ever have had.

Vs. 42, 43. From these verses it seems clear that Bartimaeus got saved, as well as getting his sight.

**T**HE story of Zacchaeus is that of a rich man who got saved in face of the difficulty which had been mentioned in verses 24-26 of the previous chapter ; and in contrast with the failure of the rich young man in verses 22, 23 of that chapter. It is narrated so soon after Christ's parable in ch. 18. 9-14 of the Publican who was justified rather than the Pharisee, that the one may well have been the outcome of the other. Such strange teaching it was to hear of a Publican getting blessing while a Pharisee missed it, that the report of what Jesus had said would spread far and wide ; and coming to the ears of Zacchaeus (perhaps as a taunt—"there's a chance for you yet, Zacchaeus"), would arouse in him that desire to see Jesus, of which we read in verse 3. Moreover, another report had likely just reached him of the healing and conversion of a poor blind beggar at the other end of the town (ch. 18. 35-43), and had awakened in him the thought that he, the richest man in it, might be saved, even as the poorest man had been.

*Additional Notes.*

But while the story has these close links with ch. 18. it seems also to stand in contrast with what we read of in the end of ch. 19. itself. In verse 1 Christ enters Jericho, which had been known as the city of the curse ; while in verses 41, 45 He enters Jerusalem, which had been the city of blessing. In the former a man makes use of what may have been his one and only chance of getting saved ; in the latter, although the citizens had many opportunities, they "knew not the time of their visitation" (vs. 42-44). Note also that while Zacchaeus had come to consider his salvation more important than his money-making (v. 8) ; the



*Additional Notes.* Jerusalem sinners had introduced money-making into the very Temple of God (v. 45).

In v. 2 Zacchaeus "seeks" to see Jesus ; in v. 10 Jesus "seeks" to save the lost. No wonder that the two seekers should come together. Zacchaeus was "little of stature" ; what others does the Bible speak of as "short" ? All sinners are, in Rom. 3. 23.

What had Zacchaeus to do in order to be saved ? Three things according to v. 6 : (1) He had to "make haste" ; (2) He had to "come down" ; (3) he had to "receive" Christ. Some miss salvation because they are in no "haste" to be saved ; some because they are unwilling to "come down" from their dignity and religious attainment ; and some simply because they refuse to "receive" Christ as their only Saviour. But Zacchaeus was willing for all this, so he got saved.

"A Man that is a Sinner" (v. 7). This was the very thing which the Publican of ch. 18. 13 confessed himself to be. But these murmurers evidently did not think that they also were sinners. Zacchaeus had now become a saved sinner, and he proves it in the next verse by his willingness to part with practically all the wealth he had. Half of it he would give to the poor (perhaps Bartimaeus who was following Christ at this very time would gain by that? : the other half he was going to use in restoring four-fold to those whose taxes he had over-charged in the past. Contrast the man of ch. 18. 22, 23, who would not give up his wealth in order to be saved, with Zacchaeus who was giving it up because he had been saved. Thus one man at least had got through the Needle's eye of ch. 18. 25.

*Additional Notes.*

**T**HIS Parable of the Pounds, according to verse 11, is said to be "added" after the two incidents of men with money, the young ruler and Zacchaeus, one of whom made no good use of it, while the other did. It therefore has a close connection with them. It is a similar parable to that of the Talents in Matt. 25. 14-30, but varies from it in several points. One of these is that the number of Talents given to the servants differed, Five—Two—One; while here each servant gets one Pound only. That is to say, the Talents were given to each "according to his several ability" (Matt. 25. 15); while the Pounds seem to have been given merely as a test of faithfulness. In keeping with this is the fact that a talent was a big sum of money (about £200), while a pound was only a small amount (about £3). A further difference is that in Matthew the one who gained five with five, and the one who gained two with two, receive as might be expected, the same commendation. But in Luke the man who gained ten pounds with one gets rule over ten cities, whereas the man who gained five with one gets rule over only five cities.

In this parable there are not only the servants as in that of Matt. 25. but others who are called "citizens" (v. 14). These citizens are opposed to their lord getting the kingdom, which as the context makes clear, meant the kingdom or rule over themselves; and they send a message to those in authority saying, "We will not have this man to rule over us." So when he returns, having received the kingdom in spite of their message, he executes judgment on them as "enemies" (v. 27).

It is of interest that Herod's son Archelaus,

*Additional Notes.*

who ruled this part of Palestine in those days, had actually gone to Rome to receive his kingship from the Emperor Augustus, and that his Jewish subjects had sent a message of protest after him. Some of them had been punished for this by him on his return (see History of Josephus).

These citizens typify the Jews in their attitude towards Christ, who has gone to receive the Kingdom from His Father ; but will return to reward His faithful servants and to judge His enemies. The stoning of Stephen in Acts 7 may be looked on as the sending of a message after Him to say they will not have Him. They also typify sinners in general, who reject Christ. In Dan. 7. 13, 14 He is seen as the Son of Man receiving the kingdom from the Ancient of days.

V. 13. "Occupy." In old English meant "trade." Compare its use in Ezek. 27. 16, 19, 22, and see the R.V. here. V. 20. "Napkin" is the rendering of a Greek word which literally means "sweatcloth." This man had no sweat to wipe with it, since he did not work ; so he put it to another use, to wrap up the pound in. V. 23 "Usury." This word formerly meant no more than "interest," though now it means "unreasonable interest." "Into the Bank." This would have been less trouble than trading with it, and something would have been gained ; but the servant would not do even that much.

In the parable of the Talents this unprofitable servant is "Cast into outer darkness" (Matt. 25. 30). Evidently he, too, is counted an enemy, though he professed to "know" his lord and to serve him.

**T**HE narrative of Christ riding on the Ass into Jerusalem contains a wonderful picture of the sinner being reached by the gospel, especially when the details added in Mark 11. 4 are taken account of. And we have the best authority for using the story in this way, because it is stated as early as Job. 11. 4 that man is "born like a wild ass's colt." Notice that—

*Additional Notes.*

- (1) This ass was "tied"—so the sinner is "holden with the cords of his sins" (Prov. 5. 22).
- (2) It was untamed, since no man had ever sat on it—so is the sinner in the verse from Job quoted above.
- (3) It was "by the door" (Mark 11. 4)—so many a sinner to-day is near to the "Door" of God's salvation.
- (4) Yet it was "without"—as many such will still be found without when the Door is shut (Luke 13. 25).
- (5) It was at "a place where two ways met"—so the sinner has choice of Two Ways before him in Matt. 7. 13, 14.
- (6) It had "owners" (Luke 19. 33) who objected to it being loosed—compare the woman whom Satan had bound for 18 years (Luke 13. 16).
- (7) But the "Lord had need of it" (v. 34) and when the Lord claims a sinner for Himself, Satan has to let him go

In old times in Israel the ass was ridden in time of peace, while the horse was used almost exclusively for war. Note the contrast between the two in Zech. 9. 9, 10, of which passage this incident in Luke 19 was a fulfilment. See also Prov. 21. 31. In view of this, it is interesting to notice the difference between Christ's entry here, and His return on a horse to fight His foes at Rev. 19. 11. Here the multitude cries "Peace" (v. 38) ; and Jesus Himself in His

*Additional Notes.*

lament over the city says "If thou hadst known . . . the things which belong unto thy Peace" (v. 42). In these last words there appears to be a reference to the meaning of the city's name; for the word "Jerusalem" means "city of Peace." And yet they had rejected Christ's offer of peace.

V. 38. "Blessed be the King." Contrast their acclamation of Him here with the message ascribed to the "citizens" in the parable at verse 14. "We will not have this man to reign over us."

"Peace in Heaven." The angels' song of ch. 2. 14 was "On Earth Peace": so that we have peace proclaimed from both sides. And in both songs we get the words, "Glory in the Highest." The cause of this outburst of praise according to v. 37 was the "mighty works" which they had seen done by Jesus. John in his account at ch. 12. 17, 18 specially mentions the recent raising of Lazarus from the dead as one of them.

V. 41. "Wept over it." Just a few days before this He had wept at the grave of Lazarus. But the words employed are different. That used at the grave means "shed tears"; but the one used here is much stronger, and means "broke out in copious weeping." This was a sadder matter than the death of a saint.

V. 44. "The Time of Thy Visitation." A similar expression to "the accepted time" and "the day of salvation" in 2 Cor. 6. 2. See how Luke calls Christ's ministry a "visit" in ch. 1. 78 and ch. 7. 16; and in Acts' 15. 14 he speaks of God now "visiting" the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His Name. Peter in 1 Pet. 2. 12 also has the phrase "The day of visitation" in connection with testimony amongst the Gentiles.

**THIS** Parable, which is also given in Matt.

*Additional Notes.*

21 and Luke 20, is based on an Old Testament parable in Isaiah 5. 1-7. But there it is the vineyard itself that turns out badly (i.e., the nation of Israel) ; while here it is the workers in it (i.e., the leaders of the nation, as in v. 12). In each case we have the "hedge," the "tower," and the "winefat" or "winepress" ; the hedge for keeping out trespassers and animals, the tower for defence against enemies, and the winepress to squeeze the wine out of the grapes. There is also in each case reference to the "wellbeloved" ; and its meaning here at v. 6 may help to explain what it means in Isa. 5. 1.

V. 1. "Went into a Far Country." So did the Nobleman of Luke 19. 12, in a parable which is somewhat similar to this one, except that he left his servants to trade with his money, instead of to keep his vineyard. In this one is pictured leaders in Israel ; but in that one it is rather leaders and others in the Church. Who else in the Gospels is said to have gone into a far country ? The Prodigal, in Luke 15. 13. In Luke's account of the vineyard owner's journey, the words, "for a long time" are added ; and this well expresses the long period of Israel's responsibility, and of that of the Church as well.

Vs. 3-5. This ill-treatment of the messengers is just what the various prophets whom God had sent to Israel received at their hands. See Matt. 23. 34, 35. It is also similar to the treatment which has been given to God's messengers in later days from Stephen onward. Peter and the other apostles were "beaten" (Acts 5. 40), and so were Paul and

**No. 126. THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN. (Read Mark 12. 1-12.)**

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Silas (Acts 16. 37). Paul as well as Stephen was "stoned" (Acts 14. 19), while James and many others since then were "killed."

Vs. 6-8. We have here how they treated the Son of God when He was sent amongst them. Compare with it the treatment of Joseph by his brethren when sent to them by his father in Gen. 37. 18-20. As they saw Joseph coming they planned among themselves what they would do, in words very like those of the husbandmen in our parable.

V. 9. "Unto others." That is, to Gentiles of the present period who are now getting their time of opportunity, same as the first husbandmen did. See how Paul gives them also a warning in Rom. 11. 22.

V. 10. "The Stone." As in vs. 7. 8 we have the Rejected Son, so here we have the "Rejected Stone." God meant this stone to be the foundation of the entire building (Isa. 28. 16). But the builders were unwilling to make it their foundation (as sinners still are), so they rejected it, as being unable to fit it in anywhere else. Christ cannot be fitted into any man-made way of getting to heaven. God, however, is going to take the matter into His own hands, and make of it a Head Corner Stone to execute His judgment. Matthew and Luke add the words, "Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Men stumble or fall on the Stone when they refuse to be saved through Christ crucified (1 Pet. 2. 7, 8). It is going to fall on them when He comes to judge them. Compare Dan. 2. 34, 35, where the "Stone cut out without hands" smashed to powder the great image.

**I**N this passage we have a Companion Parable to that of The Great Supper in Luke 14. 16-24. But here it is "a certain King," and there "a certain man"; in keeping with the fact that Matthew sets forth Christ as King, while Luke views Him as Son of Man. Compare too the punishment meted out to the rejectors of the invitation in each case. In Matt. 22 armies are sent against them; but the "man" in Luke 14 only states that none of them would be allowed to taste of his supper. In keeping with this difference also, the "man" is represented as having but one servant, while the "king" has many servants.

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Yet another distinction between the two parables is that here in Matt. 22 we have a "dinner," or as the word more strictly means, a breakfast; whereas in Luke 14. it is a "Supper." This corresponds with the Jewish tone of Matthew ("To the Jew first"), and with the Gentile tone of Luke. Also with the emphasis which in Luke is generally laid on the urgent necessity of getting saved at once (Supper, the last meal of the day).

V. 7. The reference to the murderers and to the destruction of their City also suits the Jewish character of Matthew. The City meant is doubtless Jerusalem, over which the Lord had wept a little before this, and which was destroyed by the Romans soon after.

V. 4. The words of this invitation appear to be based on that of "Wisdom" in Prov. 9. 2.

V. 5. "Made Light of it." The same Greek word as is rendered "neglect" in Heb. 2. 3, "How shall we scape if we neglect so great salvation." "His Farm . . . His Merchandise." Both Farmer and Shopkeeper refuse.



*Additional Notes.*

V. 6. These acted like the wicked husbandmen of ch. 21. 35.

V. 8. "Not Worthy." So called, not because of their sinfulness in general; but simply because they turned down the invitation.

V. 9. "Go . . . unto the Partings of the Highways" (R.V.). As we would say, "to the street corners and cross-roads," where groups of idlers gather.

V. 10. "Both Bad and Good." Whether demon-possessed like the damsel of Acts 16. 16, or religious like Lydia of the same chapter. The Gospel makes no distinctions.

V. 11. Here we have a man who would fain eat the King's food, but did not wish to wear the King's uniform. Like many who would desire to be saved from Hell, but do not care to live for God on earth. He was probably one of the so-called "good" ones of v. 10, and thought his own clothes presentable enough.

V. 12. "Friend." The same Greek word is used for Judas the traitor in ch. 26. 50, and for the discontented labourer in ch. 20. 13. "How camest thou in?" This seems like a reflection on those whose carelessness had allowed him in without the garment. There are still some who would allow any kind of profession, however poor, to pass for real.

V. 13. "Servants." Here a different Greek word is used from that used in Vs. 3-10, where the reference is to saints who pass on the gospel invitation to others. The "servants" here are angels who execute God's judgments.

V. 14. "Chosen." This speaks of election, yet no greater freedom of choice could be imagined than is seen in verses 3-6.

THREE parties or sects were prominent among the Jews when Christ was on earth, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Herodians. He likened all three of them to leaven (Matt. 16. 6 and Mk. 8. 15) because they were corrupting the mass of the people with their doctrines, as leaven does to meal or flour. The Pharisees were the Ritualists of those days, who occupied themselves entirely with the outward forms and ceremonies of religion. Most of them were mere religious hypocrites ; but a few at least among them, such as Nicodemus and Saul of Tarsus, were in earnest though wrong. The Sadducees were like the infidels and modernists of our time, for they believed in only part of the Word of God—the Books of the Law ; and they denied the truth of resurrection, and existence of spiritual beings of any kind (see Acts 23. 8). The Herodians were timeservers, who mixed religion with politics and tried to keep in with the rulers of the land, who at that time were of the Herod family.

*Additional Notes.*

In the passage we have read, each party in turn asked Jesus one of their stock “hard questions” with a view to entangle Him (v. 15). First the Herodians inquired as to the right or wrong of paying tribute to their Roman conquerors (vs. 16-22). Then the Sadducees asked about marriage and remarriage in connection with the resurrection (vs. 23-33). And finally the Pharisees questioned Him concerning the comparative importance of the various commandments (vs. 34-40). Afterwards Christ asked them a question that involved the relationship between David and the Messiah ; and as they were unable to answer, it put an end to their questioning of Him.

The “hard questions” (I Kin. 10. 1) of the Queen of Sheba were easy to Solomon ; and the hard questions put by these people were

*Additional Notes.*

easy to Christ. The first especially was one in which they were sure they had him trapped, no matter what answer He gave. If He said it was not right to pay the tribute, the Herodians could report this to the government and have Him arrested as a rebel. If he said that it was right, the Pharisees present could report it amongst the common people, thus causing Him to lose His influence amongst them, since they hated their subjection to the Romans. But he made them to acknowledge that they themselves were willing to accept and handle Roman money with Cmsar's head on it, and therefore had no excuse for not paying it back to those to whom it belonged. And He drove home on them an additional lesson when He added "And to God the things that are God's" (v. 21). Note that in this verse "render" means to "give back"; whereas they had used the simple word "give" (v. 17), as if the Romans had no claim on them.

As to the second question, the Sadducees no doubt thought He would reply, "The first husband," or "The seventh husband," or something similar. But His answer that marriage had no place in the resurrection state, knocked them out completely; and His proof of resurrection, taken from the Books of Moses, which were the only Scriptures they acknowledged, added to their defeat. So did His rebuke that their error was due to their double ignorance, (1) of the Scriptures, and (2) of the power of God to do whatever pleased Him (v. 29).

In reply to the third question He quoted a commandment so great that it included all the others—the command to love.

With regard to the Lord's own question of verse 45, the answer is easy to all who believe that the coming Messiah was the Son of God as well as the Son of David.

**N**ONE of the Jewish parties opposed Jesus so greatly during His public ministry as did the Pharisees ; and we have in our chapter His final words of condemnation on them, just before they brought about His death. The Scribes, who are named with them here and elsewhere, were men specially skilled in copying out and explaining the Law of Moses ; and most of them were Pharisees also. They are practically the same as the "Lawyers" of Luke 11. 45, 46. That there were at least some good scribes is evident from verse 34 and ch. 13. 52. Also from the fact that Ezra was one (Ezra 7. 6), perhaps the first to be called so in the New Testament sense of the word. They are said (v. 2) to "sit in Moses' seat," because they read and explained the Law to the people, as Ezra and others had done in Nehemiah, 8. 4, 5, 8.

*Additional Notes.*

But these eight "Woes," together with the words spoken to the disciples and others in the beginning of the chapter, set before us a life-like picture of the character and ways of the Pharisees and Scribes in general ; and it is well worthy of our consideration, because most of the features described are to be seen in certain people of our own days. We still meet with those who know and teach what is right, yet will not do it (v. 3) ; who show others what they ought to do, but will not themselves move even their little finger to help (v. 4) ; whose sole desire is to appear well before their fellowmen (v. 5) ; to be given places of honour by them (v. 6) ; and to obtain titles of honour from them (v. 7). And there are still to be found those who are neither inclined to get saved themselves, nor to allow others to get saved (v. 13) ; who pray long prayers, yet would cheat even the poorest (v. 14) ; who like to count their converts, however badly these may turn out afterwards (v. 15) ; who even in their religion count more

*Additional Notes.*

on the “*gold*” and the “*gift*” than they do on the “*Temple*” and the “*Altar*” (vs. 16-22); who are strict about trifles, yet careless about important things (v. 23); who are more concerned about the outward appearance than about the state of the heart (vs. 25-28); who pretend to have respect for God’s servants of past days (vs. 29, 30), yet vent their spite on those of His servants who are sent to themselves (v. 34).

V. 5. “*Phylacteries.*” Short passages from the Law, written on parchment, put in a little case and worn on the forehead and left arm when the wearer was worshipping, in a too literal obedience to Deut. 11. 18. Pharisees made theirs bigger than those of others for a show. The “*borders*” were those commanded in Numb. 15. 38, 39. It was this border on Christ’s garment that the woman touched in Luke 8. 44.

V. 7. “*Rabbi.*” Nowadays it is by “*your Reverence*” that such people are styled. But the R.C. priest still gets “*Father*” as in v.9.

V. 15. “*Proselyte.*” A convert from Heathenism to Judaism.

V. 22. “*By Heaven.*” An oath or adjuration still in use. According to what is said here, it is a more fearful one than its users think.

V. 23. “*Tithe.*” The tenth part of all their produce, which the Jews were to render to God. The Pharisees were very particular about doing so with the little plot of herbs, the mint, anise, and cummin, that was in the corner of their garden, but not so particular about much bigger matters.

V. 24. Should be “*strain Out a gnat,*” i.e., a dead one in their drink, lest its dead carcass should “*defile*” them.

**I**N the early part of John 12 we get three glorious foretastes of the ultimate results of the Work of Christ on the Cross ; but in the latter part of it we have a sad description of the immediate results of His Public Ministry.

*Additional Notes.*

In the Supper of verses 1-3 we get a picture of the Church with Christ in glory, as one day it shall be. Saints who have died and been raised (as Lazarus) are there, together with the saints who have not died but been "caught up" (as Martha and Mary). And among them we see perfect fellowship ("Lazarus . sat . with Him") ; perfect service ("Martha served") ; and perfect worship ("Mary anointed").

In the public entry to Jerusalem of verses 12-16 there is represented Christ's future triumph as Israel's King, in fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies.

In the incident of the Greeks (Gentiles) who desired to see Him in verses 20-24 we have an illustration of how one day the Gentile Nations of the earth shall be blessed by Him in millennial times.

The three above pictures show how Christ will be "glorified" (v. 23) ; will bring forth "much fruit" (v. 24) and will "draw all men unto Him" (v. 32) ; and it is to be noticed that in connection with each of these three statements, His death is mentioned as its means of accomplishment.

Vs. 21, 22. "Philip" and "Andrew" are names of Greek origin, unlike those of the other apostles, which are Hebrew in character. This fact may have led the Greeks to ask them, rather than any of the rest. See the same two at the work of bringing others to Jesus as early as Ch. 1. 40-45.

V. 28. "A Voice from Heaven." This is the third time that Jesus was acknowledged from

*Additional Notes.* Heaven, the other two being at His Baptism and at His Transfiguration.

Vs. 32-34. "Lifted Up." That is, on the Cross, as verse 33 shows. It is remarkable that when asking in v. 34, "How sayest Thou the Son of Man must be lifted up," they do not repeat His words of v. 32, nor even His earlier words to themselves in ch. 8. 28; but quote the exact words He had used to Nicodemus at his midnight interview in John 3. 14.

Vs. 35. 36, 46. "Light" and "Darkness." These words are used by John far oftener than by any other New Testament writer. In darkness is the original condition of unconverted men (ch. 1. 5). They love it rather than light (ch. 3. 19). Christ presents Himself to them as "The Light of the World" (ch. 1. 9; 8. 12; 9. 5; 12. 46). Those who receive Him become "Children of Light" (ch. 12. 36.). Those who reject Him are overtaken by the darkness again (ch. 12. 35); and shall be in darkness eternal. (Mat. 8. 12.)

V. 37. "Yet they believed not on Him." A sad finish to His three years of public ministry amongst them. And some of those who seemed to be exceptions to this statement were not much better; for in verses 42. 43 we read. "Many believed on Him . . . but they did not confess Him . . . for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

V. 24. Note that when the "Corn of Wheat" dies to bring forth much fruit, it becomes the "Bread of Life" of ch. 6. 35.

V. 31. "The Prince of this World." The Devil; as is made clear by the two other occurrences of the term in this part of John. See ch. 14. 30 and ch. 16. 11. Here the "I" of v. 32 is emphatic, and is thus in strong contrast to "the prince of this world."

**T**HE Parables of this chapter are the last spoken by Jesus during His public ministry. They form part of an address to His disciples on the subject of His Coming again, which occupies two whole chapters, 24 and 25. It was spoken in reply to a threefold question of theirs in ch. 24. 3 : (1) "When shall these things be ?" (2) "What shall be the sign of Thy Coming ?" (3) "And of the end of the world ?" And the address is therefore as wide in its scope as the questions are.

*Additional Notes.*

In this address are seven illustrations of various matters connected with the coming of the Kingdom ; just as in ch. 13 He had given them seven illustrations of the mysteries of the Kingdom.

These illustrations are—

1. The Fig Tree, ch. 24. 32-35.
2. The Days of Noah, ch. 24. 37-41.
3. The Householder and the Thief, ch. 24. 43, 44.
4. The Faithful and Unfaithful Servants, ch. 24. 45-51.
5. The Ten Virgins, ch. 25. 1-13.
6. The Ten talents, ch. 25. 14-30.
7. The Sheep and the Goats, ch. 25. 31-46.

The two parables of the Virgins and the Talents are in particularly close connection with each other. The former teaches us to get ready and to watch ; while the latter teaches us to be faithful in our work in the meantime.

V. 1. "Took their Lamps." Thus all of them professed to be light-bearers. "Went forth to meet." Evidently they also all believed in His coming again. "The Bridegroom." John the Baptist had called Jesus by this name in John 3. 29.

V. 2. "Wise." They were "wise unto salvation," as it is called in 2 Tim. 3. 15.



*Additional Notes.*

Matthew, who here speaks of wise and foolish virgins, tells us also in ch. 7 of wise and foolish builders.

Vs. 3. 4. The difference between the wise and foolish ones was such as might not be noticed until the testing time came. Yet the fact that the wise "slumbered" beside the foolish ones showed sad failure on their part. "Damnation slumbereth not," says 2nd Peter 2. 3. And Psalm 121 has, "He (God) . . . neither slumbers nor sleeps." Notice that the foolish ones took "no oil." It is not merely that they did not take enough ; they took none at all.

V. 6. "At Midnight there was a cry." Compare the great Midnight cry of the Egyptians in Exod. 12. 29, 30, when God destroyed their first-born. In both cases there were those who had preparation made, and those who had not. In Egypt it was a question of the blood (Christ), but here of the oil (The Holy Spirit). Compare, too, the earthquake at midnight in Acts 16. 25, 26, when the jailor got saved.

Vs. 8. 9. No sharing of salvation with others ; each must get it for himself or herself. And "trimming the lamp" will not do instead of oil.

V. 10. "Ready." Compare the "Be ye also ready" of ch. 24. 44.

V. 12. "I know you not." The same was said to those shut out in Luke 13. 25. Compare, too, the shutting of the Door of the Ark in Gen. 7. 16.

Vs. 10-12. The foolish virgins here are shut out in the darkness. In verse 30 the unprofitable servant is cast into "outer darkness," as were the "children of the Kingdom" in ch. 8. 12, and the guest without a wedding garment in ch. 22. 13.

**V**ERSE 1. "The passover." What was this ?

*Additional Notes.*

A Memorial Feast held yearly by the Jews. Of what was it a memorial ? Of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and of that of their firstborn from death. What did they do at it, besides eating unleavened bread ? They killed a lamb and ate it roasted. Of what was the lamb typical ? Of the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. This occasion therefore was the very last previous to the type being fulfilled ; and Jesus after having partaken of the lamb, went out to be Antitype of it in His death. What verse in the epistles tells us that this is what the Passover meant ? 1st Cor. 5. 7, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." What verse in the gospels links Him most clearly with the lamb ? John 1. 29, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

V. 3. "Then entered Satan into Judas." Judas is the only person of whom this was ever said. "Devils" or demons, who of course are Satan's agents, are said to have entered into other people, but not Satan personally. Compare how he sought to do mischief to the disciples at verse 31 (the "You" is plural) ; but he could not take possession of those who were really the Lord's (see John 17. 12). He could only "Sift them as wheat."

V. 5. "To give him money." How much did Judas get ? Thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26, 15). Who foretold that this would be the price ? Zechariah (Zec. 11. 12, 13). In Exod. 21. 32 it was the value of a slave.

V. 10. "A man . . . bearing a pitcher of water." An unusual sight, as it was women's work to draw water. They would therefore notice the man the more readily.

V. 11. "The Guestchamber." It was a usual

*Additional Notes.* thing for those living in Jerusalem to reserve room for other Jews coming up from the country for Passover week.

V. 14. "**He sat down.**" According to John 13. 4, He soon rose up again to wash His disciples' feet. There had been a quarrel among them at this time as to who was the greatest (v. 24 here) ; so it was not surprising that no one of them would stoop to do for the rest the feet-washing which was customary when coming in from a journey. The lesson thus taught them by Christ was a pointed one ; and it explains what He meant when in verse 27 He said : "**I am among you as He that serveth.**" "**The Twelve with Him.**" Peter, who "**sat down**" here with the others, soon afterwards "**sat down**" with a very different company at verse 55.

Vs. 19, 20. "**Bread . . . also the cup.**" Thus was instituted a new Memorial Feast, in remembrance, not of Israel's deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, but of the deliverance of sinners from the bondage of sin and the devil, through the work accomplished on Calvary. When partaking of the **Bread** and **Wine** those who are saved remember that Christ's body was given to the sufferings of the Cross, and His lifeblood was shed, to put away their sins. Various religious sects have given to the ordinance other significations of their own, calling it "**a means of grace,**" and imagining that the mere partaking of it procures, or helps to procure salvation. But in the Scripture it is simply a memorial of what Christ has done, and has no virtue in itself.

V. 17. "**Take this and divide it.**" This earlier cup, which is mentioned in Luke only, was connected with the Passover ; and has no connection with the one in verse 20, which forms a part of the new memorial feast.

**V**ERSE 47. "Judas." This man's story shows how far one can go without being really saved. He was numbered with the apostles, though Jesus Himself knew from the beginning what his real condition was. See John 6. 70, 71, and 13. 10, 11, 18. He had been sent out with the rest of them to preach the gospel (Matt. 10. 1-8), and doubtless worked miracles like the others on that occasion. He had been treasurer for the entire company (John 13. 29), though he was not an honest one, as the R.V. of John 12. 6 shows ("a thief, and . . . took away what was put therein"). In betraying Jesus to His enemies he probably thought that it would force the Lord to display His power in escaping from their hands, as He had often done before. But when he saw Him condemned without freeing Himself, he was filled with remorse; and having thrown down the thirty pieces of silver before the priests in the temple, he went and hanged himself (Matt. 27. 3-5). From Acts 1. 18 it appears that he did so in the very field which the priests had purchased with the money; and also that in doing it he fell from whatever he was hanging to, so that his bowels burst open. In John 17. 12 he is called by the terrible name of "The son of Perdition"; and in Acts 1. 25 we are told that he went "to his own place."

*Additional Notes.*

Vs. 48, 49. What sign did Judas give to those with him, by which they would recognise Christ? He kissed Him.

V. 50. "Friend." The word which Jesus used here to Judas occurs in Matthew's Gospel only. It does not signify a real friend, but one who takes that place. It is used to the discontented labourer of ch. 20. 13, and to the guest who would not put on the wedding garment in ch. 22. 12. These, like Judas, although professors were false at heart.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 51. "One of them which were with Jesus." From John 18. 10 we learn that it was Peter who did this, and that the name of the man who got his ear cut off was Malchus.

V. 53. "Twelve Legions of Angels." A "legion" consisted of from 3 to 5 thousand soldiers; so twelve legions would be at least about forty thousand. In 2 Kings 19. 35 we read of one angel slaying a hundred and eighty-five thousand in a night; so it is difficult for our minds to conceive what forty thousand angels could do.

V. 58. "Peter followed Him afar off." His courage was not so great now as when he had boasted in verse 35, nor even as when he cut off the servant's ear in verse 51. Still he loved his Lord and was anxious to see what would happen to him. "Went in." From John 18. 15-17 we know that John himself ("that other disciple whom Jesus loved") had also followed; and that being known to the high priest, he not only went into the house, but got Peter brought in as well. The fact that John was present makes Peter's cowardice all the more remarkable, especially since according to John's statement, the maid who first challenged Peter was the same one whom he, had asked to allow him in. This would explain why in her words to Peter at verse 69 she used the word "also" (Thou also wast).

V. 61. "Destroy this Temple." In John 2. 19-21 where Jesus spoke words like these, it is explained that by the word "Temple" He meant His own body. And although they here pretended to understand it of the temple building, their speech to Pilate in ch. 27. 63 shows that they understood His real meaning well enough. For it was only in private to His disciples that He had said in plain words He would rise again on the third day.

**NOTICE** the various ways by which Pilate sought to evade the responsibility of crucifying Jesus—

*Additional Notes.*

- (1) He first suggested to the Jews that they should judge Him themselves. See John 18. 31.
- (2) He then found an excuse for sending Him to Herod, Luke 23. 6, 7.
- (3) He tried to set Him forward as the prisoner to be released in honour of the Passover, John 18. 39.
- (4) He appealed to their feelings by bringing Jesus forth and proclaiming “Behold the Man,” and later, “Behold your King” John 19. 5, 14.
- (5) He finally washed his hands and professed to clear himself from the guilt of it, and put it on them. Matt. 27. 24.

V. 1. “Led Him unto Pilate.” It should be clearly understood that the Lord was given two trials; the first before the high priest and elders, was a religious one, in which the main charge was that He claimed to be the Son of God (see ch. 22. 70); the second which begins here before Pilate, was a political one, in which the main charge was that He called Himself King (see verse 2).

V. 2. “Forbidding to give tribute.” This was a deliberate lie, as may be seen in ch. 20. 25, “Render to Caesar the things which be Caesar’s.”

V. 3. “Thou sayest.” This was a formal way of saying “Yes.” Compare Christ’s answer to Judas in Matt. 26. 25.

V. 4. “I find no fault.” Three times altogether Pilate made this confession (see verses 4, 14, 22); yet he yielded to the priests’ demand for Jesus’ death. The Lord’s innocence was also acknowledged by—

Judas, in Matt. 27. 4.

*Additional Notes.*

Pilate's wife, in Matt. 27. 19.

The dying thief, in Luke 23. 14.

The centurion, in Luke 23. 47.

V. 7. "Herod's Jurisdiction." Herod Antipas, the man here meant, was at this time Tetrarch of Galilee (see ch. 3. 1); and as Jesus had been brought up in Nazareth of Galilee, He was looked on as being a Galilean; though actually He had been born in Bethlehem of Judea.

V. 8-12. It is worthy of note that, though Jesus replied to Pilate (v. 3), He would not speak to Herod at all (v. 9). This was the same Herod who had listened gladly to John the Baptist, and afterwards had slain him (see Mark 6. 20-28). No doubt his day of opportunity was now past. Why then was Herod "exceedingly glad" to see Jesus? Because he hoped to see Him work a miracle. "Arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe." This was done by Herod's men; but the other gospels tell how, at a later time, the Roman soldiers of Pilate put on Him a scarlet or purple robe (see John 19. 2). "Were made friends." People who cannot agree about anything else can agree about rejecting Christ.

V. 20. "Willing to release Jesus." But from Mark 15. 15 we learn that he was also "willing to content the people." He could not do both at once; and it was the wrong "willingness" which ultimately prevailed. Compare how both Felix and Festus were "willing to do the Jews a pleasure"; and therefore refrained from releasing Paul, although they knew that they should do so (Acts 24. 27 and 25. 9). Pilate had no personal feeling against Jesus, but he yielded to the Jewish rulers, and lost his soul through lack of manliness. See how in John 19. 21, 22, he did show manliness when it was too late.

**V**ERSE 26. "Simon." Here we are told of a man who literally bore the cross after Jesus; possibly a type of the thousands of others who, since then, have borne it in a spiritual sense. Mark mentions the names of his two sons, Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15. 21); perhaps because they were men known among the saints at the time his Gospel was written. "Cyrenian." Cyrene was in that part of North Africa which is now called Tripoli. Men from Cyrene were present at Pentecost (Acts 2. 10); and men of Cyrene were amongst those who first preached the Gospel to Gentiles at Antioch (Acts 11. 20).

*Additional Notes.*

V. 27. "Women." Notice that Luke speaks of two companies of women as present at the Crucifixion. These of verses 27-30 were "daughters of Jerusalem," who although they made a great noise of weeping, were expressing mere human feelings of compassion. They are reminded by Christ of the judgment soon to come upon their city and themselves. But in verse 49 we have a company of women who were real disciples of His, and who had followed Him from Galilee. Apparently they made no fuss at all, but "stood afar off beholding these things." Luke also mentions other groups; the people who "stood beholding" of verse 35; the Jewish rulers of the same verse who "derided"; the Roman soldiers of verse 36 who "mocked"; and the "people who came together to that sight" of verse 48, and who "smote their breasts and returned."

V. 28. "Weep for yourselves." Compare how He Himself, a few days previous to this, had wept over their city, in view of the very destruction of it, concerning which He here warns them, (ch. 19. 41-44). "For your children." Their fathers a few minutes before this had said, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matt. 27. 25).



*Additional Notes.*

V. 31. **"Green Tree."** That is, Christ Himself. **"Dry."** That is, the Jews. Compare the question here asked with that in 1 Peter 4. 18. See also Ezek. 20. 47; 21. 3.

V. 32. **"Malefactors."** That is, "evil-doers." They were likely members of the band of which Barabbas was leader. See Mark 15. 7, which mentions others as being in prison with him. The middle cross had doubtless been meant for Barabbas himself, but he had been freed, and Jesus occupied his place.

Vs. 39-43. At first both thieves had reviled Christ (Matt. 27. 44). Now one of them is repentant, and rebukes the other in words every one of which is weighty. **"Dost Not Thou Fear God?"** implies that the fear of God had come into his own heart. **"In the same condemnation"** shows that he realised his doom to be at hand. **"We indeed justly,"** and **"For we receive the due reward of our deeds"** form a full confession of guiltiness. **"This Man has done nothing amiss"** is an acknowledgment of Christ's innocence. **"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom"** gives to Jesus the place of his Lord and King; and at the same time is an expression of remarkable faith. He believed that the One hanging beside him, apparently helpless and soon to die, was to come into a Kingdom. Christ's reply to him in verse 43 gave to him a definite and firm assurance of salvation.

V. 47. **"The Centurion glorified God, saying certainly this was a righteous Man."** Probably this officer, who was in charge of the soldiers present, was saved, as well as the thief; since, according to Mark 15. 39, he finally acknowledged Jesus as the **"Son of God."**

V. 45. The rent veil suggests that the way was being opened into God's presence (Heb. 10. 20).

**I**N ch. 19. 30, where we began to read, we have the actual death of Jesus, which took place just after He had spoken the words, "It is finished." In the language in which He was speaking, this was but a single word; but it is a word of deep meaning and of great importance. To us it bears the message that in dying He "finished" or accomplished the work by which salvation becomes ours. But taken in its immediate context, it signifies that He had fulfilled all which had been written in the Old Testament concerning the humiliation and sufferings through which he would have to pass. Note that in verse 28 He had said, "I thirst," not merely because He was thirsty, though that, of course was true, but in order that "the Scriptures might be fulfilled"; and it was "When he received the vinegar" that He said, "It is finished," implying that by fulfilling Psa. 69. 21, "In My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink," He was accomplishing the last of the "all things" of verse 28. The word rendered "accomplished" in that verse is the very same Greek as is rendered "It is finished" in verse 30. See other references to fulfilling the Scriptures in verses 24, 36, 37.

*Additional Notes.*

Vs. 31-35. The arrangements here made had the unlooked effect of proving beyond doubt that Christ's death really took place. See the emphasis laid by John in verse 35 on what he saw.

Vs. 36, 37. The first of the Scriptures quoted here goes back to the Passover at the beginning of Israel's history in Exod. 12. 46. The second looks forward to their future at Christ's Coming in Zech. 12. 10.

Vs. 38, 39. Joseph and Nicodemus, disciples who had seemed too timid to confess Christ until now, come boldly for-

*Additional Notes.* ward, when Peter and all the other disciples have turned away.

Vs. 40-42. "Wicked Hands" (Acts 2. 23) had crucified the Lord, but clean hands now bury Him in a new tomb.

Ch. 20. 1. "Mary Magdalene." In Mark 16. 1 two other women are named who came with her, "Mary the mother of James and Salome." By comparing Matt. 27, 56 with Mark 15. 40 it will be seen that Salome was the wife of Zebedee, and therefore the mother of his sons James and John. The other Mary must have been mother of the disciple called in Matt. 10. 3, "James the son of Alphaeus." According to Mark 16. 3 the women were in a difficulty as to getting the great stone rolled away, which had been put at the entrance to the tomb; but when they came there it was rolled away already; and Matt. 28. 2-4 tells us that an angel had done this, and now appeared to the women to tell them that Jesus was risen.

Vs. 3-8. "That other disciple," who of course was John himself, was the better runner, and got first to the tomb. But Peter was the more daring, for he went right in. Mary Magdalene seems to have been the most loving, for she came back to the tomb, and did not leave until she had seen Christ (ver. 16). But Mary of Bethany beat them all, for she was the only woman that had been in time to anoint Him (John 12. 7).

The Resurrection of Jesus is a most essential part of the Gospel Message, as may be seen in Acts 2. 24, 32; 4. 2; 10. 40; 17. 31; etc., as well as in Rom. 4. 25; 10. 9; 1 Cor. 15. 4; etc.

**C**HRI**S**T'S Appearances between His resurrection and ascension seem to have been ten in all—

*Additional Notes.*

- (1) To some women returning from the Tomb, Matt. 28. 9, 10.
- (2) To Mary Magdalene at the Tomb, John 20. 11-18.
- (3) To Peter, Luke 24. 34 and 1 Cor. 15. 5.
- (4) To two disciples going to Emmaus, Luke 24. 13-35.
- (5) To the apostles in the upper room, Luke 24. 36-48.
- (6) To the apostles a week later, John 20. 26-29.
- (7) To seven apostles at the seaside in Galilee, John 21. 1-24.
- (8) To apostles and 500 brethren on a mountain, Matt. 28. 16 and 1 Cor. 15. 6.
- (9) To James, 1 Cor. 15. 7.
- (10) To the apostles at His ascension, Luke 24. 50-53.

It was during these appearances that the “many infallible proofs” that He was risen were given, as mentioned in Acts 1. 3. See for some of them verses 39-43.

After His Ascension He also appeared:—

- (1) To Stephen at his martyrdom, Acts 7. 55.
- (2) To Paul at his conversion, and after, Acts 9. 17; 1 Cor. 15. 8.
- (3) To John in banishment at Patmos, Rev. 1. 13-18.

As may be seen, four of the former appearances, the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 10th, are mentioned in the passage which we have read.

V. 13. “Two of them.” As to who these were, we know no more than that the name of them was Cleopas. He may possibly have been the same as the “Cleophas,” or “Clopas,” mentioned in John 19. 35 as being the husband of “the other Mary.” It is some-

*Additional Notes.*

times suggested that the second traveller may have been his wife, but this is unlikely, though they do seem to have been going to a place that was their home.

V. 13. "Threescore furlongs." About seven English miles. Yet in ver. 33 they walked back to the city that same evening, after Jesus had revealed Himself to them.

Vs. 14-17. They were talking about the right thing when Jesus drew near to give them light upon it. V. 16. "Their eyes were holden." In Mark 16. 12 it is said that He "appeared in another form" to them.

V. 18. "A Stranger." Cleopas was himself so full of what had taken place that he thought everyone else in Jerusalem ought also to be so.

V. 21. "The Third Day." He appears to have been remembering that Jesus had spoken of rising on the third day. See Luke 9. 22; 10. 33; and the angels' words to the women here at verse 7.

V. 30. "He took bread." Though He was the invited Guest, He here takes the place of Host.

Vs. 27 and 44-46. Two of the most wonderful Bible readings ever held.

Vs. 47-49. The Commission to preach the Gospel is given in a different form and connection in each gospel. Compare the verses here with Matt. 28. 18-20; Mark 16. 15, 16; John 20. 21-23; and also Acts 1. 8.

V. 53. Luke begins his Gospel with a scene in which all the people are Praying in the Temple. He ends it with the disciples praising in the Temple. See ch. 1. 10. He also begins and ends with "great joy" (see ch. 2. 10 and 24. 52); and twice in Acts he uses the same expression, in ch. 8. 8 when the Gospel is being preached and accepted, and in ch. 15. 3, when a good report of the Gospel preaching comes to the ears of the saints.

**T**HE word "Pentecost" means "fiftieth" and was given to the Feast because it was held on the fiftieth day after the presentation of the Sheaf of Firstfruits, which took place about the time of the Passover. Instead of Pentecost, the Old Testament calls it "The Feast of Weeks," because seven weeks intervened between the First fruits Sheaf and it. See Deut. 16. 9, 10 and Lev. 23. 15-21.

*Additional Notes.*

According to Exod. 19. 1, 16, the Law was given at Sinai on the 3rd day of the 3rd month, just seven weeks later than the Passover of Exod. 12, and on the very day in which the Feast of Pentecost was afterwards held. Thus the Holy Spirit came down on an anniversary of the day on which God "descended" at Mount Sinai. This becomes even more interesting when it is noticed that at the giving of the Law 3,000 were slain (Exod. 32. 28); while at the descent of the Spirit 3,000 were saved (Acts 2. 41).

V. 7. "Was Fully Come." The R.V. margin points out that the Greek term is "was being fulfilled." This was also true in a far deeper sense than the mere question of time. The type was being fulfilled.

V. 4. "Spake with other tongues." At Babel in Gen. 11. 9 God confounded the builders by causing them to speak in other tongues; but at Pentecost, by causing the disciples to speak in other tongues, he confounded the multitude (v. 6). The word "confounded" here is exactly the same as in the Greek version of the Old Testament at Gen. 11. 9. There it made the builders misunderstand one another; but here it made those who came from the foreign parts named, to better understand what the apostles said.

*Additional Notes.*

Vs. 9-11. The maps at the end of a Bible will show that these people came from North, South, East and West. Yet they were all Jews, as verse 5 proves. There were at that time Jews scattered in all parts of the world, just as there are to-day. But they endeavoured to get to Jerusalem for the great feasts, at least a few times in their lives; and this is why we find so many of them there in Acts 2.

V. 13. "Mocking." Compare the entire description here with what Paul says in 1 Cor. 14. 23, "If therefore the whole Church (compare here the "all" of v. 1) be come together into one place compare again v. 1) and all speak with tongues (compare v. 4); and there come in unlearned or unbelievers (compare v. 6), will they not say that ye are mad" (compare vs. 12, 13).

V. 15. "Third Hour." It was 9 o'clock in the morning, so they had not time to become drunken.

V. 16. "This is that." Notice he does not say that this fulfills all which is meant by the prophecy in Joel; a prophecy that reaches on to a time yet future; but simply "This is that," i.e., it is of that character.

Vs. 22, 23, 24, 36. Note how often Peter mentions God and attributes to Him all that had taken place. God's "determinate counsel" was being wrought through it all; though this did not lessen the guilt of those who "by wicked hands" crucified Him.

V. 39. "The Promise." That is, of the remission of their sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost, as the previous verse shows. Notice that the promise is to children, as well as to older people.

**V**ERSE 1. "Ninth Hour." Daytime was reckoned to begin at 6 a.m., so the ninth hour was at three o'clock in the afternoon. At this time the Evening Sacrifice was being offered in the Temple. See how this sacrifice and this incense which accompanied it are connected with prayer in Ps. 141. 2 ; 1 Kin. 18. 36 ; Dan. 9. 21 ; and Luke 1. 10, 13.

*Additional Notes.*

**V. 2. Lame from Birth.** Like the sinner who is born in sin. Also poor, for he was a beggar. And according to ch. 4. 22, he was "more than forty years old."

**V. 5. "Expecting."** But he got far more than he expected.

**V. 6. "Silver and Gold have I none."** The preachers were not rich. "In the Name." See how Peter emphasised afterwards that the power was not in themselves, but in the Name of Jesus ; first in verses 12 and 16, and later before the rulers in ch. 4. 9-12.

**Vs. 7, 8.** The cure was instantaneous, and it was complete. It is called in verse 16 "perfect soundness." Note the seven words here used in describing it. He leaped up—he stood—he walked—he entered—walking—and leaping—and praising. Thus it is when one gets saved. There is a new standing ; there is power to walk in God's ways ; and there is praise. Compare Psa. 40. 2, 3.

**V. 11. "Held Peter and John."** He wanted to keep near to those whom God had used in his healing. And in ch. 4. 14 he is still near to them, even when they are prisoners being tried by the Rulers.

**Vs. 12-26.** The healing afforded a fine opportunity of preaching the gospel to the gathered crowd, and Peter made full use of it.



*Additional Notes.*

V. 13. "Determined." Poor Pilate's determination was not strong enough to withstand theirs. Contrast God's "determinate counsel" in ch. 2. 23.

Vs. 13, 14. "Denied." He charges them twice over with doing the same thing that he had been guilty of himself.

Vs. 14, 15. "A murderer . . . The Prince of Life." A remarkable contrast. They had to choose between one who took life, and One who gave life. Then another contrast—they killed Him, but God raised Him.

V. 17. "Through ignorance." Compare what is said of Paul's case in 1 Tim. 1. 13 ; and contrast the result of "wilful" sin in Heb. 10. 26, spoken of Jewish professors who apostatised from Christ.

Notice the three things of which he says "all the prophets" have spoken—

1. Christ's sufferings, verse 18.
2. Christ's future return, verses 20, 21.
3. "These days" of grace, verse 24.

V. 19. "Repent . . . be converted." The first is the inner change of mind and heart from sin to God ; the second the outer change of life produced by it. Note that the R.V. has a "that" instead of "when" in the middle of the verse.

V. 22. "A Prophet." Such as they had been asking for in John 1. 21. Stephen links this same prophecy with Jesus in Acts 7. 37. See the judgment that will come on one who refuses to hear His voice (v. 32).

V. 26. "Unto you (Jews) first." And then to "all the kindreds of the earth," as in verse 25.

**CHAPTER 6. 13, 14.** In these verses we have the accusations which were brought against Stephen, namely that he had spoken blasphemous words against (1) the Law ; and (2) the Temple. He replies to both charges in his address ; for in vs. 48-50 he points out that he had been speaking in accordance with the prophet Isaiah, when he said that God did not dwell in temples made with hands ; and in verse 53 he shows that it was they and not he who were rejecting God's Law.

*Additional Notes.*

**V. 15.** Here we have glory on Stephen's own face before he spoke ; in ch. 7. 2 he begins by reminding them how "the God of Glory" had appeared to Abraham ; and in ch. 7. 55, 56 he ends by beholding "the Glory of God" himself, with Jesus in the midst of it.

**Ch. 7. 23.** Notice how from this verse onwards Stephen seeks to prove that their fathers had "refused" Moses, even as they were now refusing Jesus. See especially vs. 27, 35, 39 ; and note the repetition of "This Moses" (v. 35)—"This is that Moses" (v. 37)—"This is he" (v. 38)—"This Moses" (v. 40).

"Forty years old." Stephen divides Moses' life of 120 years into three periods of forty ; 40 years in Egypt (v. 23) ; 40 years in Midian (vs. 29, 30) ; and 40 years in the Wilderness (v. 36).

"Came into his heart to visit his brethren." The long time he had spent in Pharaoh's palace had not caused him to forget his own folk. But Hebrews 11. 24-26 shows that he had deep soul exercise at this time. Doubtless it was the time of his conversion to God.

**V. 30. "An Angel."** He is referred to again at v. 35. See also in v. 53 how the Law was given through Angels.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 35. "Moses whom they refused." The same word is used in Heb. 11. 24, where Moses "refused" to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He had refused to stay away from them, yet they refused to have him. It is the same word, too, which is translated "denied" in Peter's address at ch. 3. 13, 14. See how Stephen also quotes at v. 37 here that very prophecy of Moses which Peter had quoted at ch. 3. 22.

V. 38. "Church." This is the only place in the New Testament where the word for "church" is used of the congregation of Israel. The meaning of the word is "Called-out-ones," and there was no time in the Israelites' history when it would have suited them but this, just after they had been called by God out of Egypt.

Vs. 39-41. There are seven steps mentioned here in their apostasy. "Wot" in verse 40 is an old English word for "know."

Vs. 44-47. The reference in these verses to the Tabernacle and to the Temple lead on to Stephen's own statement of v. 48 (which had been one of the charges against him), and to his proof of it from Isaiah (v. 49).

V. 51. "Ye Stiffnecked." There seems to be at this point a sudden and sharp change in Stephen's way of addressing them. It is as though he has become aware from their countenances that they are hardening themselves against his message. V. 54 shows the outcome.

V. 58. "Saul." Yet it is this very man that God raises up afterwards to carry on, in an even greater degree, the same kind of work in which Stephen had been engaged, and to preach the same kind of preaching. Compare his addresses in ch. 13 and ch. 17 with the one here.

**T**HIS is the first of three conversions recorded in successive chapters of Acts, doubtless as being typical of all other conversions. A comparison of the three will bring out many points of interest :—

Ch. 8. An Ethiopian Court Official. Of Africa. Descendant of Ham.

Ch. 9. A Jewish Religious Leader. Of Asia. Descendant of Shem.

Ch. 10. A Roman Military Officer. Of Europe. Descendant of Japheth.

From these we learn that sinners of every race and of every class need salvation, and may have it if they will.

It is further to be noticed that in the narrative of ch. 8 prominence is given to the Scriptures ; in that of ch. 9 we have a direct revelation of Christ Himself ; and in that of ch. 10 it is the preacher and his address that stand out most markedly. Thus there may be many differences in the outward circumstances of conversions, yet they must all lead up to believing on Christ as the final means.

So far as the persons who were saved are concerned, it may be noticed that all three were men deeply in earnest, and were acting according to what light they had. This is shown, not only by the eunuch's long journey in search of the Truth, and by the fasting and prayers of Cornelius, but even by Saul's zeal in wiping out what he believed to be wrong. Yet their earnestness was not enough to save them.

V. 26. "Philip." This is not the apostle Philip of whom we read in the gospels, but one of the seven men appointed in Acts 6. 5 to have charge of certain affairs of the church. Two at least of these seven turned out to be good gospel preachers afterwards, Stephen and this man Philip. The latter, in the early part of

*Additional Notes.*

*Additional Notes.*

our chapter, had been holding a successful gospel mission at Samaria ; but was now called from it to a desert place on the way southward from Jerusalem to Gaza, a most unlikely place for gospel work. But Philip obeyed and got what was perhaps the most important convert he ever made.

V. 27. "Of Great Authority." He had probably been Prime Minister in the country from which he came ; and was certainly Chancellor of the Exchequer, for he had charge of all the treasures of its ruler.

"Came to Jerusalem to Worship." It was a long journey in those days, at least a thousand miles each way ; and the fact that he made it shows that the Spirit of God had been dealing with him. We may think of him as a long deferred answer to Solomon's prayer of 1 Kin. 8. 41-43, concerning the stranger who would hear of the fame of the Lord, and come from a far country to Jerusalem to seek Him. We may also compare him with another Ethiopian eunuch who got blessed in the time of Jeremiah (Jer. 39. 16-18).

V. 28. "Read Esaias the Prophet." He does not seem to have received much help from anyone at Jerusalem ; but he somehow had got hold of a copy of Isaiah, and was now reading it as his servants drove him on his homeward way. When Philip met him he had got as far as chapter 53, but doubtless he had begun at the beginning of the book, and had read already many remarkable passages such as ch. 1. 18, etc., through which God had been speaking to him. Now he had reached the very chapter by means of which thousands since his day have been led to trust in Christ. From it Philip "preached unto him Jesus" (v. 35) and he then and there was saved, and went on his way rejoicing, no doubt to become a witness for the Lord in his own country.

**O**F all narratives of conversion in the Scriptures, that of Saul of Tarsus, afterwards known as Paul, is doubtless the most important. He himself tells us in 1 Tim. 1. 16 that God showed His mercy to him "For a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting"; and this is perhaps the reason we find his experience mentioned far oftener than that of any other. The actual record of it taking place is here before us in Acts 9; while in ch. 22. 3-16, and in ch. 26. 4-20, the apostle tells his story over again. In his epistles, too, he refers to it at length in Phil. 3. 4-9 and 1 Tim. 1. 12-17, as well as more briefly in Gal. 1. 13-17.

*Additional Notes.*

In passing, it may be noted that the references to his unsaved days in Phil. 3 and in 1 Tim. 1 are strikingly different. In Phil. 3 he describes himself as so religious and so law-keeping, that the wonder is he needed salvation at all; but in 1 Tim. 1 he thinks of himself as such a vile sinner, that the wonder is God was willing to save one like him, a "blasphemer" of His Son, a "persecutor" of His saints, and an "injurer" of His work. In the one case he is depicted as men saw him; but in the other as he was in God's sight.

V. 1. "Saul." The only previous mention of him is in ch. 7. 58 as present at the death of Stephen, and in ch. 8. 1, 3 as taking a prominent part in the persecution which followed. Here we find that his zeal made him wish to persecute the saints in other cities as well as Jerusalem. Yet the reference made by the Lord in verse 5 to his "kicking against the pricks" shows that during this period the Holy Spirit was dealing with him, and seeking to show him his guilt, probably by bringing back to his mind some of the words he had heard Stephen speak in his address of ch. 7.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 2. "Of this Way" (R.V. "of the Way"). Here we get the first occurrence in Acts of this term to describe Christianity, not as a mere doctrine to be believed, but as a way of living (which true Christianity still is). Compare other references to "The Way" in ch. 16. 17 ; 18. 25, 26 ; 19. 9, 23 ; 22. 4 ; and 24. 14, 22.

V. 3. "A Light." Saul now sees for himself the Light that illumined the face of Stephen in ch. 6. 17 ; 7. 55, 56. When he tells his story in ch. 22. 6 he calls it "a great light" ; and when he is telling it again in ch. 26. 13 he describes it as "a light above the brightness of the sun." So it was not becoming any dimmer in his memory.

Vs. 5, 6. Saul's two questions here, "Who art Thou, Lord?" and "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" are a key to what occupied his heart and mind ever afterwards, to know Christ, and to serve Christ. Compare Phil. 3. 10-12, "That I may know Him" and "That I may apprehend that for which I am apprehended" ; also 2 Tim. 1. 12 and 4. 7, where at the end of his life these desires had been attained and he can say, "I know Whom I have believed" and "I have finished the course."

The rest of Paul's experiences at this time may be summed up thus—He acknowledged a new Master (v. 6) ; He went to live in Straight Street (v. 11) ; he prayed (v. 11) ; he was baptized (v. 18) ; he joined himself with the disciples (v. 19) ; he preached Christ (v. 20) ; he increased in strength (v. 22) ; he suffered persecution (v. 23) ; he still joined the disciples when he went to reside in another town (v. 26).

**I**N Acts 10 we have the account of the **First Opening of the Door of faith to the Gentiles ;** and the beginning of that great work of God which has since then spread over the entire world. Peter had been told by the Lord in Matt. 16. 19 that he would be given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven ; and in Acts we find him using them, in ch. 2 to admit 3,000 Jews from all parts of the earth, and again in ch. 10 to admit Gentiles for the first time.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 1. Cornelius was a "centurion" of the Roman Army, which means that he was Captain over 100 men, though doubtless they were often in charge of more. See Acts 23. 23. Practically all the centurions mentioned in the New Testament have something good said of them, as may be seen in Luke 7. 2, 4, 5, 9 ; Mark 15. 39 ; and Acts 27. 1, 3.

V. 2. "The ninth hour." According to verse 30 Cornelius was praying at this time ; so although a Gentile he seems to have been observing the Jewish hour of prayer mentioned in ch. 3. 1

V. 4. "Thy prayers." Since Peter's visit is looked upon, here and in verse 31, as an answer to the prayers of Cornelius, he must have been praying for more enlightenment. And since Peter's expression in verse 37, "That word, I say, ye know," implies that Cornelius was to some extent acquainted with the history of the Baptist and of Jesus, it is probable that this knowledge may have helped to cause him to pray for more light upon these matters.

V. 5. "Send men to Joppa." Joppa had been the starting point of an earlier mission to Gentiles in Jonah 1. 3 ; but Peter was more obedient to the call than Jonah had been. Note that he had come to Joppa for a funeral



## **No. 143. HOW CORNELIUS WAS SAVED. (Acts 10. 1-17 ; 33-45.)**

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### *Additional Notes.*

(ch. 9. 37-43); but had raised the dead woman to life instead of burying her. Where do we read of an apostle taking a long seaside holiday ? In verse 6 here, coupled with the reference to “ many days ” in ch. 9. 43.

V. 12. All the animal Creation is here divided into four classes—(1) Tame, or vegetable eating beasts ; (2) wild beasts ; (3) creeping things ; (4) fowls of the air. And since the Lord uses them collectively to represent Gentile sinners, from amongst which some would be saved ; we may further use the different classes of them to illustrate the various sorts of sinners ; some wild, and some of a tamer kind ; some who fly high in their imaginations, and some who are mere crawlers.

V. 16. The fact that the vision was given thrice may suggest that Peter was not easy to persuade to preach amongst Gentiles.

V. 24. “ Had called together.” Peter had no trouble announcing his gospel meeting. Cornelius had it waiting on his arrival. Moreover, they were not only waiting on Peter, but Cornelius could say of them, “ We are all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.” It was easy to preach to such an audience, and it is not surprising that “ all ” of them got saved (see vs. 33, 44).

V. 32. “ Shall speak unto thee.” What Peter was to say is more fully expressed in his own repetition of the story at ch. 11. 14, “ Shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.” With all his good points, Cornelius needed Salvation. And how well Peter did his work, his address shows, especially in the offer of verse 43, and the previous warning of coming judgment in verse 42.

**T**HERE are two main parts in this chapter, of which the first might be called A Story of Salvation, and the second A Story of Judgment. In the one Peter is saved from the fate Herod had designed for him, in the other Herod himself is cut off in his sins. It will be noticed that Peter was saved at the last extremity, on the night before his execution ; while Herod died at the highest pinnacle of his prosperity, after having been acclaimed as a god (vs. 6, 23).

*Additional Notes.*

V. 1. "Herod." He was a grandson of the Herod of Matthew 2, and a nephew of the one who slew John the Baptist. Agrippa and Bernice, of ch. 25. 13, were children of his, and so was Drusilla of ch. 24. 24. The persecution of the Christians started by him here was the first organised by a political leader. What was done earlier in Acts was done by the Jews themselves as a religious body.

V. 2. "Killed James." James was told by Christ in Mark 10. 38, 39 that he would "drink of His cup" (i.e., of suffering). Now that saying is fulfilled by his being put to death.

V. 4. "After Easter." This should read, as in R.V. "after the Passover." Compare "days of unleavened bread" in verse 3.

V. 4. "Quaternions." This word means "groups of four each," and as there were four such groups in charge of Peter, there were 16 in all. Each group would take their turn as guards ; and if they lost their prisoner they would forfeit their own lives, as seen in verse 19.

V. 6. "Bound with Two Chains." All these precautions were of no avail against the prayers of verse 5, nor against the power of God. Notice that though it was to be his last night, Peter is "sleeping" as soundly as though there was nothing the matter.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 7. "The Angel of the Lord . . . smote Peter." Contrast verse 23 where "the angel of the Lord smote" Herod with a much sorer blow.

V. 10. "The Iron Gate." This gate, which was in charge of enemies, opened of its own accord ; but the gate of Mary's house (v. 13), which was in charge of saints, had to be opened by themselves. Peter had more trouble getting through it than at any other point.

V. 12. "Mary the mother of . . . Mark." This Mary was sister of Barnabas, according to Col. 4. 10. "Praying." Though they still kept at it as in v. 5, they were now in despair of an answer, as verse 15 shows.

V. 13. "A Damsel that kept the door" had recognised Peter in John 18. 17 and so brought about his denial of Christ. Here another damsel that kept the door recognised his voice.

V. 20. "Their country was nourished." In a prophecy against Tyre at Ezek. 27. 17 we learn that the land of Israel supplied the Tyrians with wheat, honey, oil, and balm. This fact explains the above phrase ; and the matter would be of special importance to them at this time, because a famine was threatened, as we know from chapter 11. 28.

V. 23. Here we get Herod's miserable end ; while immediately after, in chapter 13. 1, one is named as among the teachers of the saints, who had been associated with the Herod family, his uncle's foster-brother Manaen.

V. 24. "The Word of God Grew." This is stated three times in Acts—(1) When the dispute among the saints was settled in ch. 6. 7 ; (2) when a persecutor had been cut off by God's judgment in ch. 12. 24 ; (3) when the devil's books had been burned in ch. 19. 20.

**T**WO great Gospel Addresses of Paul are recorded in Acts, this one to Jews in their synagogue, and the one of ch. 17. 22-31 to Gentiles on Mars' Hill. They illustrate his manner of approach to each class.

*Additional Notes.*

**"Antioch in Pisidia."** This Antioch is so described to distinguish it from Antioch in Syria, referred to in verse 1 of this chapter and elsewhere, in which there was already a Christian assembly.

**V. 15. "After the reading of the Law and the Prophets."** It is here implied that it was the custom in Jewish synagogues to read a portion out of the Law (the five books of Moses), and another out of the Prophets (the rest of the Old Testament Scriptures). Compare Christ in the synagogue of Nazareth at Luke 4. 16. 20. Probably some of Paul's quotations from the Old Testament in his address here, were from the portions which had just been read in their hearing. The Law set forth God's claims on them; the prophets showed how they had failed to meet those claims, as well as what their punishment on this account was to be; while the Gospel as preached by Paul after the readings, offered them God's one remedy for their failure and sin. Notice how, in the end of his address, he refers both to the Law and to the Prophets at verses 39, 40; to the Law as having no power to justify the sinner, and to the prophets as having given warning of the judgment to come. Compare also verse 27.

**"If ye have any word of exhortation."** This is what they asked for, but Paul instead gave them a "word of salvation" (v. 26). They needed something more than exhortation, being "dead in sins."

**V. 16. "Ye that Fear God."** A term used in Acts for those who had become proselytes from Heathenism to Judaism. See v. 26, and also v. 43.

**Vs. 22, 23, 34-37.** In these verses Paul shows that some things which had been spoken in

*Additional Notes.*

connection with David have a greater fulfilment in Christ who was David's seed. Compare the expression in verse 22, "A man . . . who shall fulfil all My will," with that in verse 36, "Served his own generation by the will of God." This was as far as the literal David could go. But in a far deeper sense Jesus could say, "Lo I come to do Thy will, O God."

Vs. 26, 27. "To you . . . sent." The Jews of Jerusalem had been given the message first, and most of them had turned it down. So it was now being sent to these Jews of the Dispersion. Verse 46 shows that many of these also turned it down, so it went to a still wider circle, and eventually was offered world-wide.

V. 35. This quotation from Psalm 16 had been similarly used by Peter in his address at ch. 2. 27-31.

V. 36. We find in this speech the end of three men described. Saul, after a life of failure, was "removed" by God. John the Baptist "fulfilled his course." David, having served his own generation, "fell on sleep."

Vs. 38, 39. A message that is plain and wide, and full, and free. "Be it known unto you" is a form of proclamation found three times in Acts ; in ch. 4. 10 to emphasise Who it is that saves ; in ch. 13. 38 to emphasise what being saved means ; and in ch. 28. 28 to emphasise to whom salvation is offered.

V. 41. Quoted from Habakkuk 1. 5. Their sin here is the "despising" of God's message, and because of it their fate is to behold and wonder, and perish. They behold others getting the blessing ; they wonder at them ; and while beholding and wondering, they perish. An apt illustration of this is the unbelieving lord of 2 Kings 7. 2, 17-20, who, while others got the food which God had promised them through His servant Elisha, beheld and wondered and perished.

**T**HE three types of sinners who are brought before us in this passage stand in marked contrast with one another, and so do the outward circumstances in the conversion of each ; yet all three needed the same Salvation. In verses 13-15 we have Lydia, who was so religious that she attended the Prayer-meeting, and continued to do so even when she was hundreds of miles away from her home in Thyatira. In verses 16-18 we have the possessed damsel, so much under the control of the devil that he could use her as his mouthpiece. And in verses 24-34 we get the Jailor, whose whole concern seemed to be the strict carrying out of his official duties.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 14. "Thyatira." This place was in the province of Asia (see Rev. 1. 11) ; so although Paul was forbidden to preach the Word in Asia (v. 6), a woman from that place was his first convert in Europe. Possibly she became a helping cause of the church which was planted there at a later time.

"Heard . . . opened." In the Greek the tense of these two words is different. That of "heard" suggests continuance ("was listening") while that of "opened" expresses an act. When the Lord opened her heart she accepted salvation then and there.

V. 15 "Baptized . . . come into my house." These same results of being saved were seen in the jailor's case at verses 33, 34.

V. 17. Her commendation of them was a true one ; but coming as it did from the devil, it would do more harm than good.

Vs. 20, 21. "Being Jews . . . being Romans." The Jews about this time had been ordered to leave Rome (see ch. 18. 2) ; and Philippi being a Roman colony (v. 12), its people would naturally have a feeling against them just then. But before their magistrates had done with Paul and Silas they discovered that

*Additional Notes.*

these, too, were possessed of Roman citizenship (v. 37), and that they had acted illegally in treating them as they did. Paul might have raised this point before getting the beating and imprisonment, but doubtless he was guided by God with a view to the jailor's conversion.

V. 25. "Prayed and Sang." This was not as comfortable a spot for the purpose as the place by the riverside of verse 13.

V. 29. "Trembling." Paul himself had trembled when he got saved, ch. 9. 6. Felix trembled also, but he missed salvation, ch. 24. 25.

V. 30. "What must I do to be saved?" No question could be more important. Men have sought to answer it in various ways, but the only correct answer is that which is given here by Paul and Silas. Notice that they were so eager to tell the jailor the way of salvation, that both replied together, and both said the same thing (see "they said" v. 31). Notice also that the wording of the jailor's question suggests that he already had some idea of what he needed, since he spoke of it as being "saved."

V. 32. "To all that were in his house." It is clear from this that all who were in his house were old enough and intelligent enough to hear the gospel message, each for himself or herself. Compare verse 34, "Believing in God with all his house." They all heard, they all believed, and they were all baptized.

V. 39. "Came and Besought Him." This was a big climb down for the magistrates from their high-handed proceedings of the evening before.

V. 40. "The House of Lydia . . . brethren." Since we are told in verse 15 that Lydia's household were baptized, it is satisfactory to learn that they were "brethren," that is, saved people.

**W**E have here a sample of the apostle's preaching to Gentiles, as in ch. 13 we had a sample of his preaching to Jews. The most noticeable difference is that while to the Jews he quoted largely from their Old Testament Scriptures, he does not do so here, since those Scriptures were unknown to Gentiles. He does, however, at verse 28 quote from one of their own poets who had called mankind the offspring of God ; and by this quotation he shows how foolish it was to liken God to images of gold and silver and stone, as they were accustomed to do.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 13. "Stirred up the people." Paul's first three missions in Europe, at Philippi, at Thessalonica, and at Berea, had each ended in disturbance and persecution. This fourth one at Athens, of which we have been reading, did not end in persecution ; yet it was less fruitful of results than those which did. Only a few received the-gospel at v. 34, and we do not read of any church having been formed there.

Vs. 14, 15. "Silas and Timotheus abode . . . commandment to come to him." According to 1 Thess. 3. 1, 2, they seem to have reached Paul at Athens, and to have been sent back by him to Thessalonica, from which they once more returned to him in Corinth in Acts 18. 5.

V. 16. "Wholly given to idolatry" (R.V. "full of idols"). Athens was full of beautifully carved statues of their gods, and of altars to them. Any other traveller might have been lost in admiration of these, for they were and still are, world-famous. But Paul saw only the gross idolatry represented by them.

V. 18. "Epicureans" were philosophers who held that pleasure was the highest good for man ; while "Stoics" were rival philosophers who held that the highest good was to cultivate indifference to both pleasure and



**No. 147. PAUL'S ADDRESS AT ATHENS. (Read Acts 17. 13-34.)**

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*Additional Notes.*

pain. "Arcopagus" (v. 19) is the same word as is rendered "Mars' Hill" in verse 22. On it courts of law were formerly held in the open air.

V. 23. "Devotions" here means "objects of worship," as in R.V. "To the unknown God." On other altars they doubtless had the names of the gods or goddesses to whom they were dedicated ; but for some reason this one was set up to a god whom they did not know. So it served Paul as a text from which to preach.

Vs. 24-31. Paul in his address hits out all the time against ideas popular among the Athenians. He tells them of the One God Who, being Creator of all things, left no room for any other gods ; Who was too great to be housed in the beautifully built temples of which they were so proud (v. 24) ; and too great also to receive anything from their hands (v. 25. See Ps. 50. 8-12). He gives them to know that this God had made all men alike (v. 26) ; so that they, who looked upon themselves as of divine descent, and upon all other peoples as "earthborn" and "barbarians," were really no better than any of the rest. Moreover, God had marked out beforehand the "times" and the "bounds" in which each nation would exist, and which neither that nation nor the individuals composing it could pass, and had done so with a view to their realising their weakness and seeking after Him (vs. 26, 27). Worst blow of all, the apostle dwells on their "ignorance" (vs. 23, 30) ; though they likely thought that no one knew as much as they ; and finally warns them of their need of repentance in view of the coming judgment (vs. 30, 31), when their Judge would be the One who had been raised from the dead.

Vs. 32-34. His address produced three classes among them—(1) The mockers ; (2) the procrastinators ; (3) the believers.

**PAUL'S** mission at Ephesus, which according to his own words in ch. 20. 31 continued for three years, was the longest of which we have any record in Acts ; his next longest being that at Corinth, which lasted for eighteen months (ch. 18. 11). It was probably also his most successful work, for not only was there a large company of Christians gathered in Ephesus itself, but it is stated in v. 10 that "all they which were in Asia (i.e., in the Roman province of which Ephesus was the capital) heard the word." It is therefore likely that "the seven churches in Asia," of which we read afterwards in Rev. 1. 11, were formed at this time. Not perhaps by Paul personally, since he speaks in Col. 2. 1 of at least some of them as not having seen his face in the flesh ; but by his companions and converts such as Epaphras (Col. 6, 7 ; 4. 12).

*Additional Notes.*

Since the work at Ephesus was so successful, it was only to be expected that Satan would do all in his power to hinder it ; and nowhere do we find the apostle faced with his activities to such a degree as here. He first raised up some in the Jewish synagogue to speak evil of the "Way" (v. 9), a title often used of Christianity in Acts. Then he caused certain "vagabond" (i.e., wandering) Jews, who claimed to have power over evil spirits, to imitate the miracles wrought by Paul (vs. 13-17). This having proved a failure, he stirred up Demetrius and other silversmiths, who manufactured small shrines of the goddess Diana, to start a riot among the populace (vs. 23-34). In his letters to the Corinthians written about this time, the apostle says of the work at Ephesus, "A great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (1 Cor. 16. 8, 9) ; and again, "Our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life" (2 Cor. 1. 8-10). See also his reference in Acts 20. 19 to the plots of the Jews at this

*Additional Notes.*

period, of which Satan doubtless was the real author.

It is interesting to compare with all this the later reference to Satan in the letters of Rev. 2 and 3 to the churches of Asia, which deal with further activities of his in the same district. In ch. 2. 9 and 3: 9 we read of his "Synagogue" being there; in ch. 2. 13 of his "seat" or throne; and in ch. 2. 24 of his "depths" or deep things. Need we wonder that he resisted any disturbance of his authority in a region where it was so great.

It was no doubt with a view to countering this influence that God "wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" (v. 11) at this time.

V. 19. "Fifty thousand pieces of silver." This would be at least £2,000 so the bonfire was a costly one. Notice in verse 9 that it was "the Word of God" which prevailed against these other books.

V. 27. Demetrius mentions two reasons for taking action. First a financial one—"our craft is in danger." Second, a religious one—"the great goddess Diana . . . despised." The temple of this goddess at Ephesus was so magnificent that it was counted one of "the Seven Wonders of the world," and was resorted to by pilgrims from all parts.

V. 31. "The Chief of Asia." God had raised up for His servant some in high places who were friendly to him. Even the "town clerk" appears to be well disposed, to judge by his speech.

V. 33. "Alexander." Probably the same as the "coppersmith" of 2 Tim. 4. 14, and put forward here by the Jews as known to his fellow craftsmen, to clear and dissociate them from the Christians. But perhaps both he and they had helped to stir the trouble up, as hinted by Paul in ch. 20. 19.

**A**T verse 3 of this chapter we get the start of what might be described as Paul's **Last Journey to Jerusalem**, which place he reaches at ch. 21. 17. The same writer, Luke, dwells much in his Gospel on Christ's last journey to Jerusalem (see Luke 9. 51 ; 13. 22 ; 17. 11 ; etc.); and he seems to trace a similarity between Paul's steadfastness in going there, and that of the Lord. In each case there were "bonds and afflictions" awaiting (see Acts 20. 23 and Luke 18. 31-33), and in each case there were those who sought to dissuade from going. (See Acts 21. 12 and Matt. 16. 22.) Even in the end of each journey there is resemblance, in the cries of "away with Him" (Luke 23. 18 and Acts 21. 11).

*Additional Notes.*

Vs. 5. 6. "Us" and "We." These two pronouns had been first introduced in the narrative at Ch. 16. 10, and show that at that time the writer of Acts had himself joined Paul's company. They ceased to be used when the apostle left Philippi at ch. 17. 1, which suggests that Luke was left behind there ; and they do not appear again till these verses insert them at the point where Paul is once more departing from Philippi some seven years later. It is therefore possible that Luke stayed at Philippi during all the intervening period. From this onward he seems to have remained almost constantly with Paul, until shortly before his death the apostle could write, "Only Luke is with me." (2 Tim. 4. 11.).

V. 5. Troas. This was the place from which Paul first crossed the sea from Asia to Europe at ch. 16. 11. On that occasion he made the voyage in two days, but here for some reason the journey in the opposite direction required five days, with the result that he arrived in Troas on a Monday, and had to wait the full seven days to accomplish his desire of being with the saints at their meeting for Breaking of Bread.

On that first occasion, when he passed

*Additional Notes.*

through Troas on his way to Europe, he does not seem to have stayed to preach there ; and the gospel work in the district had apparently been done only about a year previous to the visit now described in verses 6-12. The statement in 2 Cor. 2. 12, 13, when read with 1 Cor. 16. 8, 9 and 2 Cor. 1. 8, proves that it took place after the three years' work at Ephesus recorded in Acts 19. Thus the saints at Troas were still very young in the faith when Paul now visited them again, and doubtless needed the further instruction which he gave them in his long speech of verses 7-11.

The young man Eutychus seems at first sight to have had but little interest in the apostle's address, since he fell asleep during the course of it. But it is scarcely fair to condemn him without knowing something of the circumstances. It is quite possible that he had been at his work until almost the time of the meeting, and if so to listen to a very long sermon, even from Paul, would be no easy matter. The "many lights" mentioned, and the large company which doubtless was present, would render the atmosphere hot and stifling, and cause him to choose a seat in an open window. (The R.V. has "the window," so it was likely the only 'one in the room.) It was a dangerous position, however, and if Eutychus had intended to sleep during the address, he certainly would not have chosen it.

But he is not the only one who, for the sake of comfort and ease, has placed himself or herself in a place of danger, with the same result—a grievous fall. It is well that even for such there may be restoration, as there was for Eutychus.

V. 12. "The Young Man." The word here differs from that in V. 9, and means "boy" or "lad" (as rendered in the R.V.). He therefore was younger than we might otherwise have thought.

**VERSE 1.** "With a certain orator." They were determined to have their case presented in the best possible manner, so they brought with them this professional "orator" or "advocate"; who knew how to preface his speech (vs. 2, 3) by flattering the governor with fulsome praises, to which his bad record gave him no claim. Contrast Paul's beginning at verse 10 in which he mentions the one real point in the governor's favour, the fact that he had been "many years" in his office, and was on that account the more competent to judge a case dealing with Jewish religious matters.

*Additional Notes.*

Vs. 5, 6. Tertullus brings three charges against Paul—(1) that he was a "mover of sedition," or stirrer up of insurrection amongst his fellow-countrymen; (2) that he was a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes"; and (3) that he had profaned the Temple. The apostle in his answer at verse 12 entirely denies the first and third charges, but at verses 14-16 he to some extent acknowledges the second charge, while at the same time he points out that no evil was involved in it.

V. 22. The deferring of the case here by Felix was not for the reason which he gives in this verse, because he never did bring Lysias into it again at any later time. It was more likely for two objects which come to light in verses 24 and 26; on the one hand a desire to hear for himself a little more about "the Way," and on the other a hope that Paul's friends would give him a bribe of money to have him set free. This hope was doubtless as much the cause of the permission given them to visit Paul, as any thought of kindness to the prisoner.

V. 24. "Drusilla." A daughter of the Herod of ch. 12, and a sister of Agrippa and Bernice mentioned in ch. 25. 13. The reference here to her being a Jewess may suggest that she had

*Additional Notes.* something to do with the desire of Felix to hear Paul. He himself was a Gentile.

“Concerning the faith in Christ.” It is remarkable that this description of Paul’s conversation with them should be followed immediately by the statement that he reasoned of “righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” Such words show what a wide range of truth is included in that great subject ; and they also remind us that a sinner has to learn his true condition and danger, if he is to be brought to “the faith in Christ.” It is of interest, too, to compare them with the teaching of Jesus in John 16. 8-11 as to the mission of the Holy Spirit, part of whose work was to be to convict the world “of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.” Of these three the two last named are amongst those mentioned in our passage ; while the other one “sin” is what results from absence of the temperance or self-control, concerning which Paul reasoned with Felix and his wife. Notice that in John 16, as here, the words are closely linked with one’s attitude to “the Faith in Christ” ; for Jesus says, “Of sin, because they believe not in me.”

V. 25. Satan, who was careful to provide “a convenient day” (Mark 6. 21) for Herodias to have the Baptist murdered, was equally careful that the “convenient season” for Felix to get saved should never arrive. Though according to verse 26 he had more interviews with Paul than the one, it is most unlikely that he ever came as near to the kingdom as on this first occasion when he “trembled” at the message. The jailor had trembled and was saved (ch. 16. 29), so had Paul himself (ch. 9. 6), but Felix trembled and missed it. Why ? Because his mind was divided between no less than three objects. He would have liked (1) to escape from coming judgment ; (2) to make some money out of Paul’s case ; and (3) to please the Jews (v. 27). He likely failed in all three.

*Additional Notes.*

**A**GRIPPA'S expressed wish to hear Paul for himself (ch. 25. 22) shows the same state of mind that was in his sister Drusilla and her husband in ch. 24. 24. Probably in either case it was little more than curiosity as to what the apostle's teachings were. On this occasion it was made the excuse for a big display of pomp (ch. 25. 23) in the presence of "the chief captains and principal men of the city." But that very fact made it, in our manner of speaking, the chance of a lifetime for Paul to set the gospel before persons whom he could not have hoped to reach in any other way ; and he took full advantage of it. He did what doubtless was the very best thing to do in the circumstances, by relating to them his own conversion. He had been a more bitter opponent of the saints than perhaps any of those present, and yet he had been so completely turned round that he now preached the faith which once he destroyed. And what Christ had done for him the "chief of sinners," He could also do for them.

His address may be divided into six short sections :—

Vs. 2, 3. **His preface**, in which he acknowledged the "expert" acquaintance of Agrippa with Jewish questions.

Vs. 4-11. **His unsaved life**, during which he belonged to the strictest Jewish party and shared their views, showing more zeal than most in his persecution of those whom he looked on as heretics.

Vs. 12-15. **His conversion**, by Christ revealing Himself to him at midday in the neighbourhood of Damascus, while actually engaged in the work of persecution.

Vs. 16-18. **His commission** to go to the Gentiles, and by opening their eyes to turn them to God.

Vs. 19-21 **His service**, in which he sought to the best of his ability to carry his commission



*Additional Notes.*

into effect.

Vs. 22, 23. His preaching, with Christ's death and resurrection as its subject ; and its accordance with the O.T. Scriptures.

From these various sections we may gather that the Gospel as preached by the apostle was in keeping with—

1. His own experience, in verses 13-16.
2. His commission, in verses 17, 18.
3. Godly living, in verses 19, 20.
4. The Scriptures, in verses 22, 23.

Notice the differing ways in which the Gospel is set forth in each of these connections in the verses named.

V. 10. "My voice." The R.V. has "My vote," which implies that Paul was a member of the great Jewish Council, the Sanhedrin.

V. 15. "I am Jesus." This is the point at which Saul got salvation. He calls it afterwards a "Revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1. 12).

V. 16. Note the two parts of his testimony here—(1) "The things which thou hast seen"—his own conversion. (2) "Those things in the which I will appear unto thee"—further revelations he was to get later.

V. 17. "The people." That is, the people of Israel.

V. 18. A slight change made by the R.V. at the beginning of this verse is the means of dividing it into three interesting parts. Instead of "to turn them" it has "that they may turn." Thus we have—

- (1) The preacher's responsibility—"To open their eyes."
- (2) The hearer's responsibility—"That they may turn," etc.
- (3) God's responsibility—"That they may receive," etc.

As with Felix in Ch. 24. 25, so here with Agrippa, he was probably as near to salvation at verse 28 as he ever got in his life.

**I**N this Chapter we have a narrative, not only most interesting in itself, but still more so if we think of it as illustrating what we might call The Voyage of Life. As a sea story it rivals the one in the Book of Jonah, and indeed provides a perfect contrast to that. For while the presence in the ship of God's disobedient servant Jonah brought danger to everyone on board, the presence of God's obedient servant Paul secured the safety of all who sailed with him (see vs. 23, 24). Paul's own safety was assured from the start, because long before the voyage began, the Lord in ch. 23. 11 had told him that he must bear witness at Rome ; and since this had not yet taken place, no waters could meanwhile drown him.

*Additional Notes.*

As an illustration, almost every verse of the chapter contains points which may be applied. The more noticeable of these are—

- V. 1 "It was determined"—Self-confidence.
- V. 2 "Meaning to sail by"—Good intentions, which often, as here, fail to be realised.
- Vs. 4-7 "Winds contrary"—Unforeseen difficulties and hindrances.
- V. 9 "Much time spent"—Opportunities lost.
- Vs. 10-12 "Paul said . . . believed the master . . . the more part advised"—Good and bad advisers. The majority followed, but wrong.
- V. 12 "Not commodious"—A poor sort of reason for making a choice.
- V. 13 "South winds blew softly"—Deceived by outward appearances.
- V. 14 "A tempestuous wind called Euroclydon"—Danger threatens.
- V. 17 "Used helps"—As the so-called "means of grace," etc.
- V. 18 "Lightened the ship"—Reformation.

*Additional Notes.*

V. 20 "Neither sun nor stars"—Without guidance.

V. 20 "All hope taken away"—Man's extremity.

V. 22 "No loss of any man's life"—God's opportunity.

Vs. 24-25 "I believe God"—Assurance of salvation.

Verse 1. "Julius," like others of the centurions mentioned in the New Testament, is a likeable character. See how he acts in verses 3 and 43, and in Ch. 28. 16.

V. 3. "Aristarchus." He had been a "companion in travel" of Paul as early as Ch. 19. 29 and Ch. 20. 4. In Philemon 24 he is called a "fellow-labourer," and in Col. 4. 10 a "fellow-prisoner." Note that the use of "We" throughout our chapter signifies, here as elsewhere, that Luke the writer of Acts was himself present. So Paul was not left without friends during the voyage.

V. 8. "Hardly" here means "with difficulty."

V. 9. "The Fast." That is, the Jewish Day of Atonement, on the 10th day of the 7th month, which would be about the end of our September.

V. 10. "I perceive," etc. This verse contains Paul's own judgment, as one who had experience of the sea. He was right in it, too ; but of course did not know what was revealed to him afterwards in verses 23, 24 about the Lord granting him the lives of all on board. Note that in 2 Cor. 11. 25, "Thrice was I shipwrecked" was written long before this, and refers to earlier experiences not mentioned in Acts.

V. 19. "We . . . with our own hands." Paul and his two companions were not above giving the sailors a helping hand.

V. 26. "A Certain Island." It turned out to be Malta, or Melita, as it is called in Ch. 28. 1.

**O**F all the Epistles, Romans, is pre-eminently the Gospel Epistle, and it is therefore fitting that it should be placed first amongst them in our Bibles. It is also, more than any other, the Reasoning Epistle, because in it the apostle established by careful argument each point he wishes to make and then goes on to build upon it his next point. A study of it will help us to understand what is meant in Acts when it is said that Paul "reasoned" in his gospel ministry (see Acts 17. 2 ; 18. 4, 19 ; 24. 25).

*Additional Notes.*

An interesting feature in his style of reasoning is the extent to which he makes use of questions. This 3rd chapter for instance begins with a question and its answer, and it ends the same way. Altogether it contains no less than fourteen questions, for each of which the apostle has his own reply ready. S.S. teachers might do well imitate him in this respect, because it greatly helps to hold the attention and interest of both hearers and readers.

As has often been remarked, Romans presents its message in a very orderly fashion. This is true of the epistle as a whole, and it is particularly true of the setting forth of the Gospel which occupies its first eight chapters. After the introduction in ch. 1. 1-17, in which he speaks of his desire to preach the gospel in Rome, Paul begins to describe the sinner's need of it. He depicts in the rest of ch. 1 the sinfulness of the entire Gentile world, and then in ch. 2 the sinfulness of the most highly favoured nation in the world, the Jews. Or, to put it in another way, he begins to trace the course of departure from God from Eden onwards, showing how men turned, first from the knowledge of God that Creation could have given them (see ch. 1. 19-21), and then from the knowledge of God's Will which the Law could have given them (see ch. 2. 17-20). When we come to the third chapter, he brings together sinners of all kinds, describes their

*Additional Notes.* condition in God's sight by means of Old Testament quotations, and finally at verse 19 sets them down as "guilty before God."

When he has reached this point, Paul turns to deal with the remedy, that is, with God's provision to meet the great need. But first he must show that, so far as this side of the matter is concerned, the Law can do nothing. It has fulfilled its office by bringing home to man his guilt, but it has no power to lift him out of that condition. The remaining verses of our chapter are occupied with this part of the subject, and so from a somewhat different point of view, is the whole of chapter 4. From the clear proofs which he gives us, we must, as he himself puts it, "conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law" (verse 28).

Verses 1, 2. The Chief Advantage the Jew had over the Gentile was that he possessed the Word of God. And this advantage many possess to-day, though, like the Jew, they make poor use of it.

V. 4. "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings." This is quoted from Psalm 51. 4, where David is confessing his sin, and in doing so acknowledges that God is justified in all His sayings concerning the sinner's state. Almost immediately after, in verses 10-18, Paul quotes no less than fourteen of God's sayings, most of them from an adjoining psalm the 53rd; and it is the sinner's place to "justify Him" in these sayings by acknowledging their truth. They condemn successively his standing (v. 10); his mind, and his heart (v. 11); his course, his service, and his actions (v. 12). Then, as though turning to his person, they describe his throat, his tongue, his lips, his mouth, and his feet (vs. 13-15); and finally his malice, his hatred, and his independence of God (vs. 16-18).

**A**S any reader of it may see, the epistle to the Romans, between its preface in the early part of Ch. 1, and its concluding messages in Ch. 16, contains three main sections. In the first eight chapters we have Gospel Truth ; in the next three, Dispensational Truth ; and in the three which follow those, Practical Truth. Of the three which deal with dispensational truth, the first, Ch. 9, chiefly looks back at Israel's Past, the third, Ch. 11, looks forward to their Future, while this middle one, Ch. 10, with the opening verses of Ch. 11, has something to offer in the Present, both to them and to all.

*Additional Notes.*

**Verse 1.** "My heart's Desire and Prayer." The views of Paul on the subject of God's election, as given in Ch. 9, are not such as to prevent him from praying that his people may be saved.

**V. 2.** The phrase, "A Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge," well describes the condition of many other religious unsaved people, besides the Israelites of whom it was written. Such are "ignorant of God's righteousness" (v. 3) ; and therefore "Go about to establish their own righteousness." (Does not the very form of expression here suggest something that is badly built and about to fall on them.)

**V. 5.** The message of the Law. "The man which doeth those things shall live by them," holds out no hope to the person who has already broken the Law, which is the universal condition of mankind.

**Vs. 6-9.** What a contrast with the previous message we have here ! No climbing up to heaven, for Christ has come down. No need to go down to the abyss (R.V.) since Christ has been through death and back again for us. The "Word of Faith" is now so nigh that it

*Additional Notes.* is in our mouth and heart, to be made use of this very moment if we will. But how ?

Vs. 9, 10. Here is How. "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord (R.V.) and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

The references to the mouth in this epistle form a most interesting sequence. In ch. 3. 14 the sinner's mouth is "full of cursing and bitterness." In verse 19 of the same chapter it is "stopped" in the presence of God's holy Law. In these verses of ch. 10 it is opened again in confession of Christ, as he believes and is saved. And lastly, in ch. 15. 6 the cursing and bitterness have been exchanged for the glorifying of God in happy unison with other saints.

V. 12. "No Difference." In Ch. 3. 22, 23 there is no difference as to the sinner's condition and need of Salvation. In our present verse there is no difference as to God's offer and the mode of Salvation. And in Acts 15. 9 there is no difference as to the outcome and effects of Salvation.

V. 16. "But they have not all obeyed the Gospel," simple and easy though it is to do so. The same complaint has had to be made by every gospel preacher that ever has been. Paul makes it here ; and as he shows by his quotation in the end of the verse, Isaiah, the greatest gospel preacher of Old Testament times had to make it. Yea, in John 12. 37, 38 the same quotation is introduced in connection with the ministry of our Lord Himself. And to-day, though God has brought His salvation so near (v. 8) and made it so easy (v. 9), there are still many who refuse to obey the Gospel. Is it any wonder that He turns away from them, and sends the message to those who have never heard it before (v. 20).

THE Ephesian Epistle, like that to the Romans, is logical and orderly ; its various sections and their subject being easily discernible. Of its six chapters, the first three are doctrinal, and the last three practical ; in the former the writer teaches us, in the latter he exhorts us. In the first of these triplets, and to some extent in the second also, the Father, Son, and Spirit come successively into prominence. Thus, in ch. 1 the forming of the Church is the purpose of the Father, and a display of God's power. In ch. 2 it is the work of Christ, and a display of God's love. In ch. 3 it is the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and a display of God's wisdom.

*Additional Notes.*

Each of the three chapters divides readily into two smaller sections, and in each of these again a threefold structure may be observed. In ch. 2, which we have read, the division shows very plainly between verses 10 and 11. In its earlier half we have a description of the state in which all the saints were, prior to their conversion ; while in the latter half there is another description of what the Gentile saints had been, as distinct from the Jewish ones. These are followed in each case by a portrayal of the change brought about by the Grace of God, introduced in the one passage by the " But God " of verse 4, and in the other by the " But now " of verse 13. And then in each we are led on to the object ultimately in view ; in verse 7, " That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus " ; and in verse 22, " For an habitation of God through the Spirit."

Verse 1. It should be noticed that the words " hath he quickened " are in Italics, which implies that there is no word corresponding to them in the Greek original. The translators evidently introduced them (from v. 5) because there is no principal verb in the sentence that occupies verses 1-3. But if they are omitted, and due emphasis is placed on the " you " at



*Additional Notes.*

the beginning of the verse, the description becomes much more striking. Paul had just before been viewing the Church as **Christ's body**. "the Fulness of Him that filleth all in all"; and now he suddenly turns to survey the class of materials from which it is being formed. "You," he says, "You who were dead in trespasses and sins, who walked after the course of this world, yea after Satan himself; who wished for nothing better than to enjoy your fleshly lusts, who in short were once what the "others" still are—can it be possible that this glorious Church is being formed of such as you." Soon, however, the wonder is explained in vs. 4-7. "But God Himself is the One who has wrought the change. He has quickened (i.e., "given life to") you and myself also: He has raised us up: He has seated us in the very heavens in Christ Jesus."

Vs. 2, 3. We have here the **World**, the **Devil**, and the **Flesh**.

V. 2. "In time past." This expression, which in Greek is a single word, is used twice in each half of the chapter, in verses 2 and 3, and again in verses 11 and 13. In the last of these the A.V. unfortunately renders it "sometimes," which conveys an altogether wrong impression to present-day readers.

Vs. 20-22. "Groweth into an Holy Temple." It should be remembered; as we read this beautiful description of God's glorious Temple, the Church; that at Ephesus was the great Temple of Diana, one of "The seven wonders of the World" as it was called, of which we read in Acts 19. Here the apostle describes one infinitely grander than it.

V. 22. "Ye also." That is, You Gentile Ephesians have also a place in this great "habitation of God" which I have been describing.

**I**N one of these passages we have A Scene on Earth, in the other A Scene in Heaven. In the former, frightened sinners seek to hide from the wrath of the Lamb ; in the latter, praising saints ascribe their salvation to the Lamb. Ch. 6 ends with the despairing question, " Who shall be able to Stand ? " but in ch. 7. 9 " A great multitude . . . . stood before the Lamb ; thus furnishing an answer to the question.

*Additional Notes.*

This verse supplies also an answer to another question, the one put by the man in Luke 13. 23, who as he looked at Christ's handful of disciples, inquired sarcastically, " Lord, are there few that be saved ? " He, of course, got his answer at the time, when the Lord, after warning him that he himself might not be of the number, told him that his great ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, would be in the Kingdom, in company with saved sinners from every quarter ; while others who had full confidence in their prior claim would be left outside. But Rev. 7. 9 gives an even more remarkable answer, for it speaks of " A great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and people and tongues." And yet these are by no means all the saved, for from verse 14 we learn that they are only that section of them which came " out of the great tribulation " (sec R.V.).

Ch. 6. 12. " Opened the Sixth Seal." Since the seventh seal is not opened till ch. 8. 1, the three visions which come in between, that is to say, the two we have been reading and the one in the early part of ch. 7, are in some sense connected with this sixth seal.

Vs. 12, 13. A fulfilment of Joel 2. 31 and Matt. 24. 29. According to the latter, it immediately precedes the actual coming in glory of the Son of Man.

*Additional Notes.*

Vs. 15, 16. Here is surely a **United Prayer Meeting**, and a large one. But it is to the mountains and rocks they are praying. Notice the seven classes of verse 15, with all sorts from kings to slaves in the one company. "**Hide us.**" Adam's first reaction after he had sinned was to hide himself from God. Here it is, so to speak, the last endeavour of these descendants of his. "**The wrath of the Lamb.**" One of the strangest expressions in all the Word of God. Who would think of associating **wrath** with a **Lamb** ? And that Lamb is Himself the One who is to-day the true hiding place for sinners (Isa. 32. 2).

Ch. 7. 9. Note the great contrast between, not only this company and that of Ch. 6. 15, but also between it and the company mentioned in ch. 7. 4. The one is without number, the other is numbered as being exactly 144,000. The one is "**of all nations,**" the other "**of all the tribes of the children of Israel.**" The one is in heaven, the other on earth.

Vs. 10-12. Note that the cry of "**Salvation to our God**" is from this redeemed multitude only, but the Doxology of verse 12 is joined in by all. The latter is sevenfold, with an **Amen** at each end.

V. 13. The elder is said to have "**answered,**" yet John is not said to have asked anything. He answered the unspoken question in John's mind, by putting it into words for him.

Vs. 16, 17. "**Hunger no more, etc.**" Contrast this with the hunger, thirst, and nakedness, which they must have endured in the "**Great Tribulation**" out of which they have come (v. 14) ; when the beast would not allow them to buy or sell without his Mark (Ch. 13. 17). Contrast also these who come out of the great Tribulation, with the saints of ch. 3. 10 who are to be kept from it.

**T**HOUGH it has only fifteen verses, the twentieth chapter of the Revelation is amongst the longest in the Bible, since it covers more than 1,000 years. In verse 3 Satan is being bound, and in verse 7 he is being loosed again "when the thousand years are expired."

*Additional Notes.*

V. 2. Here, as in ch. 12. 9, the Devil is given all his four titles. As the **Dragon** he persecutes (ch. 12. 13) ; as the **Old Serpent** he deceives (ch. 12. 9) ; as the **Devil** he slanders (1 Tim. 3. 11, where "slanders" is simply the plural of the word usually rendered "devil") ; and as **Satan** he accuses the brethren (ch. 12. 10, with Job 1. 9-11 ; etc.).

Vs. 1, 2. "**The Key.**" Contrast the one who has this key in ch. 9. 1, and also what it is used for.

V. 5, 6. "**The First Resurrection.**" Verse 6 makes it clear that the first resurrection is of saints only. Verses 5 and 12 show that the resurrection of the unsaved takes place a thousand years later. In John 5. 29 the former is called "**The Resurrection of Life,**" and the latter "**The Resurrection of Damnation.**" Verse 4 proves that even the saints who will be martyred during the rule of the Beast will be raised to life as part of the first resurrection, and will reign with Christ in the thousand years, or as it is called, the **Millennium**.

V. 8. Even the long reign of Christ and His saints does not eradicate the evil that is in the hearts of men, as is seen when Satan gets again an opportunity of putting them to the test.

V. 8. "**The four quarters of the earth.**" In Luke 13. 29 men come from east and west and north and south to sit down in the Kingdom of God ; but here they come from all quarters to fight against it.

V. 9. "**Fire came down . . . and devoured them.**" There is no battle scene here, as had

*Additional Notes.* been the case before the Millenium in ch. 19. 19-21. They are burned up in a moment. On what other occasions were sinners devoured by fire from God's presence ? It devoured Nadab and Abihu in Lev. 10. 2 ; the murmurers of Num. 11. 1 ; the two hundred and fifty men who offered incense in Num. 16. 35 ; the captains and their men of 2 Kin. 1. 10, 12 ; and of course Sodom and Gomorrah of Gen. 19. 24.

V. 10. "Lake of Fire . . . tormented." The word that is here rendered "tormented" in connection with the Lake of Fire, is the same that is used in Matt. 14. 24 of the disciples' experience of being "tossed" in the storm on the Lake of Galilee.

V. 11. "Him that sat on it." Such passages as John 5. 22, 27 ; Acts 10. 42 ; 17. 31 ; etc. make it plain that the Judge here, from whose face the heaven and earth flee, is the Lord Jesus.

V. 12. We might say that God keeps His Books by double entry. On the one hand there are the Books of the Deeds, and on the other the Book of Life. These Books of God never disagree or contradict one another ; for if the Life be possessed, it invariably shows itself in the deeds. Notice that "the small" as well as "the great" are judged. However small they are, none will be overlooked.

V. 14. "The second death." Those who have been born but once have to die twice ; those who have been born again have their names in the Book of Life, and "on such the second death hath no power" (v. 6). Though the Lake of Fire is here called "the second death," it does not imply that those put into it cease to exist. The Beast and the False Prophet had been cast in alive a thousand years before this (ch. 19. 20) ; yet they are still in torment there in verse 10 of our chapter.

*Additional Notes.*

**I**N Genesis 1. 1 we read that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. In Rev. 20. 11 we read of them fleeing away so that there is found no place for them, while in 2 Peter 3. 10 we get a vivid picture of how complete their destruction will be. But 2 Peter 3 also states that we “Look for new heavens and a new earth,” and these we now have before us in the opening verse of Ch. 21. Moreover, in Heb. 11. 10 we are told that Abraham “looked for the city which hath the foundations,” and this, too, is before us in the second verse, as well as more fully in the latter part of the chapter. All three, the heavens, the earth, and the City are spoken of as a new creation in Isa. 65. 17, 18.

At Ch. 17. 1-3 John had been invited by one of the angels who had the seven vials, “Come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the Great Whore.” Here at ch. 21. 9 in almost identical words one of them invited him, “Come hither, I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb’s Wife.” The introduction to each vision is worded similarly, as though for the purpose of drawing our attention to the contrast in the descriptions which follow, between the Whore and the Bride, between old Babylon and New Jerusalem.

In Ch. 18. 14, 21-23 the ruin of Babylon is described in seven negatives. No more of the fruits that she lusted after, no more music, no more craftsmanship, no more grinding of the bread mill, no more lights, no more weddings, and the city itself found no more at all. In a somewhat similar way, much of the blessedness of the Heavenly City is expressed by negatives ; no more sea (ch. 21. 1 ; ) no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain (ch. 21. 4) ; no more curse, nor night, nor need of candle, or of the sun (ch. 22. 3, 5). It will doubtless be part of the torments of the lost that they will no more have the things upon

*Additional Notes.*

which their hearts were set, and for the sake of which they missed salvation. And it will be a part of the happiness of the saved that they will no more be afflicted by those things which caused them so much grief when on earth.

In our two chapters are found the two last Gospel invitations of the Word of God, one in ch. 21. 6, and the other in ch. 22. 17. In both the Water of Life is offered freely, and the offer is addressed to "**Him that is athirst.**" Yet there is an interesting variation in the form of the two. In ch. 21. 6 it is "I will give to him that is athirst," but in ch. 22. 17 it is "Who-soever will, let him take" ; so that in the one we have God's promise to give it, and in the other the sinner's responsibility to take it.

Preceding the latter there is at ch. 22. 11 a strange quartet of sayings, the first two of which seem to run counter to the "**Let Him Come . . . Let him take**" of verse 17. They are "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy let him be filthy still," and they appear to suggest that a sinner should remain as he is. Some solve the difficulty by connecting them with the eternal state, as emphasising that there shall be no change for ever in the condition in which one enters it. This is true, but here, as in other cases, a comparison with Daniel may help us to understand Revelation. In Dan. 12. 10 we read, "The wicked shall do wickedly," the reason suggested by the context being that the vision is sealed up, and the time appointed is long. Here in Rev. 22. 10 the vision is not to be sealed, because the time is at hand. Yet the effect on the wicked is just the same. He says "Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," as he said long ago in Isa. 22. 12, 13, at a time when judgment was nigh. The "**Let him be**" suggests that if he wishes to remain "unjust," he will not be forced into salvation against his will.