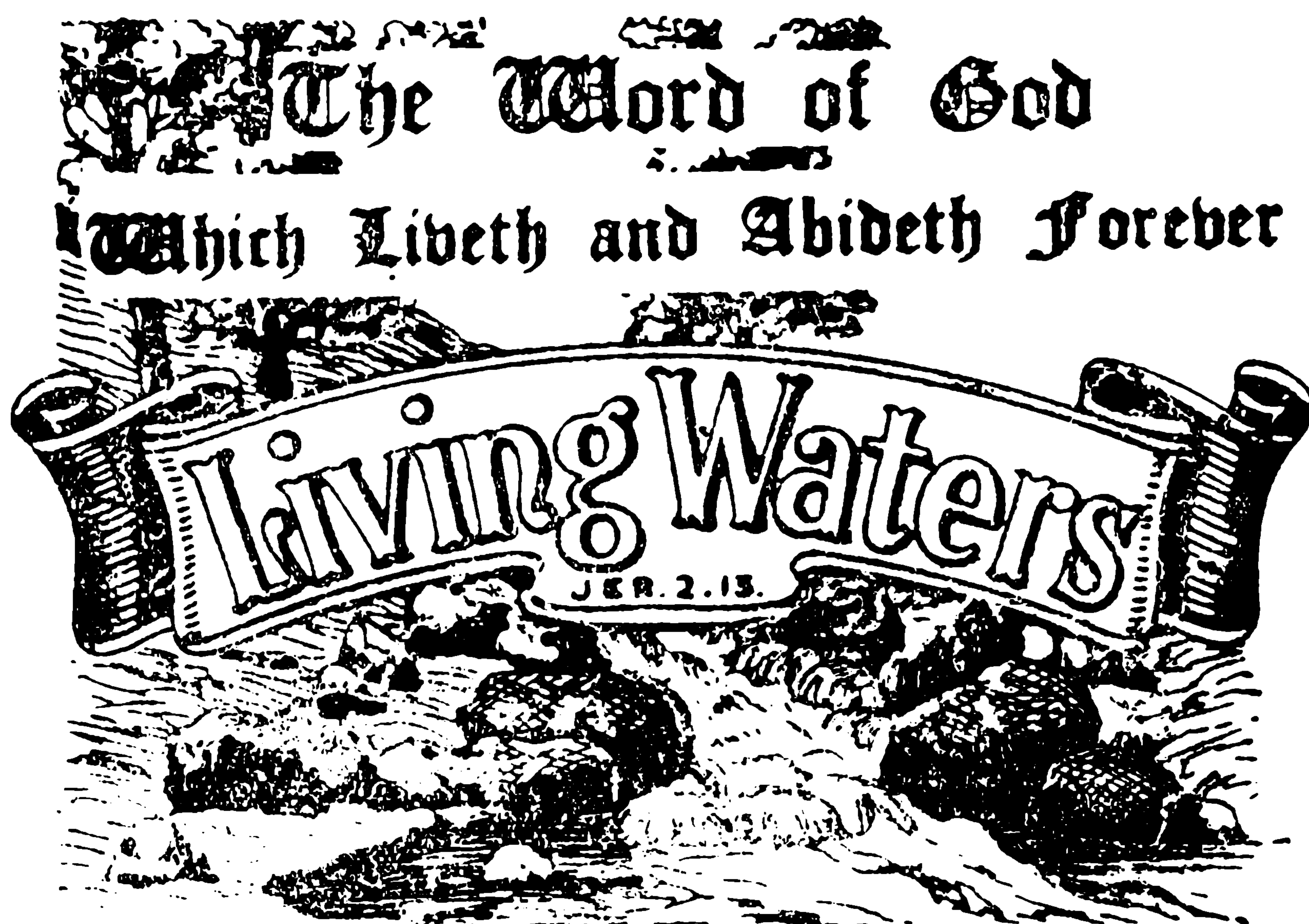


Living Waters

VOL. XI.





VOLUME XI.

BEING

A Collection of Monthly Articles intended to encourage Children of God to "live Christ"—and to lay more firmly hold upon "heavenly things."—(John 3 : 12.)

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1947.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
A Great House 	49
“And It Was Winter” 	20
Authority 	9
Bond of Fellowship, The 	41
Church-Building 	11, 66
Comfort Corner 8, 16, 24, 32, 40, 48, 56, 64, 72, 80, 88, 96	96
Confessing Faults 	89
Essence of Faith to Reveal, The 	60
Faith and The Faith 	29
Fishers of Men 	73
Foreshadowings of The Glory 	62
Gentleness 	2
“He That Hath An Ear” 	90
Hymns in Worship 	17
Individual and the Individual Church 	47
“Jesus Himself Drew Near” 	34
Jottings from Scripture Readings 	7, 39, 42
Joy and Gladness 	82, 92
Kingdom of God, The 	18
Lebanon’s Glory 	50
Matchless, Supreme 	36, 44, 52, 68
No Leisure Principle 	81
Pillars 	4, 13
Reverence 	10
Simple Faith 	26
Sincerity 	23
Spirit of the Master, The 	65
Strangled Faith 	57
Sweet Thoughts 	74, 85
“The Lord Looketh on the Heart” 	58
“The Trial of your Faith” 	27
“The Governor marvelled Greatly” 	33
Things Working Together 	71
Two Aspects of Faith, The 	77
Walking with God 	25
“Why.” (Poetry) 	87
Will We Honour the Covenant ?	1
Word in Season. A (Poetry) 	95

LIVING WATERS.

VOLUME XI.

Will we honour the Covenant during 1947?

ISRAEL entered into a covenant with Jehovah—so have we ! God will certainly honour **His** agreement in Christ ; shall **we** fail in 1947 ? Can we make January the Month of resolution to fulfil our part ? Gather My saints together unto Me : those that have **MADE A COVENANT** with Me by sacrifice.” (Psalm 50 : 5).

To simplify to all let it be understood that the word “testament” and “covenant” mean the same in our New Testament part of the Bible. When “in the night in which He was betrayed” Jesus “took bread,” He also “took the cup.” Both were to bring to remembrance His Body and His Blood.

Now notice !—connected with “the cup” are the words of the covenant ! “**For** this is My Blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. 26 28). We put the conjunction or causative “For” in bold type for good reason : read and you will find this “for” links the covenant-fact with the words, “Drink ye all of it.” Yes, “Drink ye **ALL** of it, **FOR** this is My Blood of the New Testament.”

Here is our “covenant” to express. Some **may** drink of it ; others do drink of it ; but all are commanded to drink of it for, if we do not where it is possible to do so, we dishonour our part of the covenant. What we have done during 1946 as to missing opportunities cannot be redeemed, but in the will of God 1947 will not find the name of “Thomas” upon us if we can avoid it—“But Thomas . . . was not with them when Jesus came.” (John 20 : 24).

Now although Matthew says “Drink ye all of it,” Mark (chap. 14) confirms that “ . . . they all drank of it.” The command was obeyed—for they “all” drank of it. “As oft” therefore as we so eat, and so drink, we “shew the Lord’s **DEATH** till He come.” (I. Cor. 11). Brother or sister, be you one of the “all” of a Church of God, your duty is before everything else to “make your count for the lamb” in being where He is in the midst of His people. Work for men, dinners for sisters, holidays in outlandish places, and-so-on—none of these should hold a priority over our covenant obligations. Everyone, all, are expected to declare their part, particularly in the Blood of the covenant.

In Heb. 9 we read that Moses “sprinkled . . . **all** the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath **enjoined** you.” What a picture !—the people returning to their tents marked by blood on their person and garments !—and it was “enjoined” upon “all” ! The Blood of Christ cannot be **seen** on our clothing or person, but our “conscience” is “purged” : let 1947 therefore shew by practice and place that we have “true hearts !”

Gentleness.

WHAT a lovely grace is this! Unobtrusive, yet very effectual! Behind it lies much power and fruitfulness. Of the nine-fold fruit of the Spirit it is the middle one, so all these graces seem to cluster round "gentleness." It is the least seen to-day, yet it is at the heart of all done by the Spirit of God in us.

Significant, is it not, that when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus at His baptism in Jordan, it came in "a bodily shape like a dove upon Him"? A dove is easily frightened away, yet how gentle and affectionate it is! Jesus produced all the fruit of the Spirit perfectly, so gentleness was not lacking in Him. He knew exactly what one could bear and how wisely He spoke. His "speech did distil as the dew" and in a fuller sense He yet shall be "as the dew to Israel." (Deut. 32 : 2, Hosea 14 : 5).

Much is implied in "as a dove" and "as the dew." How we need this Teacher to instruct us! See in John 4 how gently He opened the heart of the woman of Samaria! There was no forcing of her will, but how effectually He reached her heart. We need to learn of Him how to win a soul: "He that winneth souls is wise." "Gentleness" is not lacking in heavenly wisdom. (James 3 : 17).

Striking the effect of "dew" on such a man as Nebuchadnezzar, for this proud, vain-glorious man, smitten with insanity, became like a beast, and was "wet with the dew of heaven" for seven years. This brought him right, for the proud of heart was humbled and he became a reverent worshipper of the God of Heaven. (Dan. 4).

Oh to speak and act with dew-like gentleness and efficacy! It is said of Christ: "a bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench, till He send forth judgement unto victory." Careful of even the faintest expression of life and the feeblest display of light. Blest Exemplar! Paul in ministry to the Corinthians said: "I Paul, myself, beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." This brought out graces in those who were once divided and corrupted through carnality.

The Thessalonians, marked for their faith and activity, owed much to how they were brought up spiritually. This speaks plainly: "we were gentle among you even as a nurse

cherisheth her children ; so being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the Gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us." (I. Thess. 2 : 8, 9). Gentleness is a great power. David knew this as he said of the Lord : "Thou also hast given me the shield of Thy salvation : and Thy right hand hath holden me up, and

THY GENTLENESS HATH MADE ME GREAT."

(Psalm 18 : 35).

God raised him up, tended and taught him, that the shepherd lad became king of Israel. Lessons learned by the sheep cotes fitted him for far more important service. "He chose David also His servant, and took him from the sheep-folds, from following the ewes great with young, He brought him to feed His people and Israel His inheritance. So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." (Psalm 78 : 70-72). A real shepherd king ! The gentleness of God's training seen in his wisely caring for his flock and subjects ! In measure is seen the grace and gentleness of "the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (I. Pet. 2 : 25). This One never fails as feeder and leader. What comfort in this : "Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand and His arm shall rule for Him . . . He shall feed His flock like a shepherd ; He shall gather the lambs with His arm and carry them in His bosom and shall GENTLY lead those that are with young." (Isaiah 40). To rule and feed others well we need gentleness. The last word of Paul to Timothy is helpful : "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be GENTLE unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth ; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." Alas ! we have so little of the Master's spirit, "meek and lowly in heart." Let us learn of Him and so beseech in "the meekness and gentleness of Christ," and "be gentle unto all men" to recover some. Thus by kind acts we show the fruit of the Spirit which is

GENTLENESS. (Gal. 5 : 22).

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Pillars.

WE read much of "pillars" in the Word of God—pillars weak and strong, pillars of flesh and stone, pillars human and divine, pillars set up for remembrance and thanksgiving, pillars for use and for ornament, pillars for judgement and for testimony, pillars for guidance and for sacrifice, pillars of sinful pride erected by man, pillars set up by God in His infinite wisdom and love.

A good definition of a pillar would be an upright support, and if the support is not upright, the pillar instead of being strong, must be weak and very little use as a support. Often a whole building rests upon one or more pillars, and the burden and responsibility is indeed heavy. Paul said, "That which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches." (II. Cor. 11 : 28). A mighty pillar of great strength Samson should have been in his day. His birth was announced by an angel. His mother was given instructions in regard to strong drink, and he was a nazirite unto God from the womb. No razor was to be used upon his head, and he was to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines. He was endued with the Spirit, yet he failed to work any abiding work for Israel. His weakness lay in his fleshly appetites ; he again and again defiled the head of his consecration. Falling a victim to the wiles of a Philistine maid, he is delivered into the hands of the enemy. How are the mighty fallen ! His eyes are put out, he is bound with fetters of brass and grinds in the prison house.

How great indeed the lesson to the believer, called to be nazarites unto God, not to trifle with sin in any shape or form ! We have been delivered from the great tyrant, our eyes have been opened, our chains have been snapped, the bonds of sin have been broken, and we are free. "The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye : his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened." (Zech. 11 : 17). Spiritual strength and spiritual vision lost completely, yet by grace Samson gains a mighty victory over his enemies. They were making sport of him in the temple of Dagon, when he took hold of the pillars that supported the house, in answer to his prayer to God strength was again given to him, and he pulled down the temple of Dagon upon them all. "Swifter than an eagle, stronger than a lion."

Great the contrast in the life of the Lord Jesus ! A nazarite unto God Who never defiled the head of His consecration, He could say, "I do always the things that please Him." He was "the blessed man" of the Psalmist, but "His delight is in the law of the Lord : and in His law doth He meditate day and night." In some respects how similar was the death of the Lord Jesus ! He was an object of derision ; they made sport of Him ; yet He entered the house of the strong man, and He pulled it down upon him. "Through death, He destroyed him that had the power of death," and He who was so upright in life, by dying becomes the support of all who put their trust in Him. "All power is given unto Me, in heaven and in earth." How great this pillar of our faith, this upright support, capable of meeting our every need !

"In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth :
At home or abroad, on the land or the sea ;
As the day may demand shall thy strength ever be."

But we would pass on to a different kind of pillar. Absalom erected a pillar to himself, surely this was

A PILLAR OF SINFUL PRIDE.

He called the pillar after his own name ; and it is called unto this day, "Absalom's place." (II. Sam. 18 : 18). This is indeed the spirit of the world—self-glorification. It showed itself early in the history of man (Gen. 11 : 4)—"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven ; and let us make us a name." It brought down judgement from God. How different the outlook of the great apostle Paul ! "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal. 6 : 14). And to us the words of the Spirit speaking of the self-humbling of the Lord Jesus, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, . . . but made Himself of no reputation." The attitude of the world still is, "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called ?" But the Father hath given Him "a Name which is above every name." And to us the words of the poet are sweet indeed, "I will glory in the Saviour's Name." Seeking no place or name in the world that has rejected Him, looking forward with joy to the time when His name shall be written in our foreheads, pil-

grims and strangers here, we shall be like the stones taken up from the river Jordan and set up by Joshua for

A PILLAR OF TESTIMONY.

The story of the passage over the Jordan dry shod had to be told by the fathers of Israelites to the children. But more, we read in Josh. 4 : 24 “That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty !” It was a double memorial : the stones set up in the Jordan speak to us of the Lord Jesus going down into the river of death, that we who had the sentence of death upon us might be brought up from death and given eternal life ! What mean these stones ? The spiritual mind alone can understand the deep truths signified here. They speak to us of a double testimony. We think of the Remembrance Feast, and blessed indeed it is to have the privilege of remembering Him. But it is also a testimony “For as oft as ye eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord’s death, till He come.” A testimony in the place where He was despised and rejected ; more than that, before principalities and powers in heavenly places. Moreover, reconstructing again in our own simple way the scenes of His life, death, resurrection and ascension, delighting again the heart of God.

Baptism also is here in type. This is the place where the Lord said, “This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.” To the believer to-day the Cross takes the place of circumcision. “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by **the circumcision of Christ** ; buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead ; and you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses”—(Col. 2 : 11-13). We, like the stones, have been brought out of the river of death, and set up on the other side as a memorial, as a testimony. From the depths of our hearts we give thanks unto God for our deliverance, like Samuel who took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it, “Ebenezer” saying, “Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” (I. Sam. 7 : 12).—A pillar of thanksgiving !

Jottings from Scripture Readings.

I. Cor. 9 : 9-10—"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen ? Or, saith He it altogether for our sakes ? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written."

THE ox, treading out the corn, not to be stopped eating the corn as it separated it from the chaff. Paul protests to Corinthians—verse 11—"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things ?" Paul had an excellent character—independent ! He had every right to be sustained as a minister of Christ, but rather than be held to "abuse his power" in the Gospel, he would not put the Corinthians under obligations to assist him temporally.

No soldier "goeth a warfare at his own charges"—verse 7. This suggests, apparently, that—similar to the days of David in I. Sam. 30 : 22-25—those who engage in battle earn a right to part of the spoils. At least the soldier has a right to his food and clothing.

II. Tim. 2 : 6—"The husbandman that laboureth must first be partaker of the fruits." Even in the Law of Moses it was a provision that owners when reaping must not reap all their field—they must leave "the corners" for the widows and poor to glean. "God giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not." (James 1 : 5). There should be no selfishness in us, therefore, as the Lord's people.

I. John 3 : 16-17. "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ?" In the Law—we see by the example of the ox treading the corn—the commandments were not merely superficial, but had a deeper meaning underlying them. The work of the Lord may be carried on by persons unseen—ministering of substance to those actively out in the work of the Lord. We should minister unto God's servants in carnal things : regular ministrations to them indicate a healthy sign in God's people.

II. Cor. 8 : 2. The "poverty" of the Macedonian churches abounded unto "the riches" of their liberality. The gathering of the manna teaches us this principle—"they that gathered little had no lack"—"they that gathered much had nothing over." God demanded proportionate distribution to provide for all.

In Malachi's day "the tithes" were lacking and the implication was, "Will a man rob God ?" In the days of the remnant from Babylon certain Levites had to leave the work of the Lord and return to their fields—"then contended I with the rulers and said, Why is the house of God forsaken ?" (Nehemiah 13 : 10-11). Every church of God should see its responsibility to those who "for His name's sake" have gone forth "taking nothing of the Gentiles." (III. John 7).

Comfort Corner.

SHEEP are naturally wanderers. A flock suggests unity under control. God has "little flocks" here and there on earth. What pathos there seems to be in the words, relative to Jesus on earth: "When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd!" (Matt. 9 : 36).

Thousands and thousands of the Lord's sheep there are indeed on this globe, but the age with modern environment has had scattering effects. The "flock" idea never suggests itself to some. They need not, they say, meet together with other children of God; they vaunt that they can read their Bible at home. They witness as individuals. But there is loss, nevertheless, to those who "foresake the assembling of themselves together," for God's Will is the little-flock idea of "exhorting one another daily" to be kept in His love. Those who do not meet in one with God's flock miss much happiness: truly "our fellowship" is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ! (I. John 1 : 3).

Do we not then appreciate "those who labour" among us and, as shepherds, by imitation of Christ seek to lead and shepherd His sheep and lambs? Surely. Under The Chief Shepherd absent in Person, they have been delegated by Himself to tend His "little flock" dotted here and there within the sphere of His love. They hear His words, "Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept and none of them is lost . . ." and this warms their heart to do likewise. Sheep stray, but love goes out to find them.

These shepherds are Scripturally called "elders" or "overseers." The principle that governs their devotion to Christ and His flock is, "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." The shepherds on Bethlehem's plain by night "watched over" their flocks: these "watch" for your souls, for they must "give account" to The Chief Shepherd "at that day." The Spirit of God therefore commands that, ruling well, they should be "counted worthy of double honour." (I. Tim. 5 : 17).

Suspensions should not arise that these servants, raised of the Holy Spirit, are rulers in the sense of rigour. "Taking the oversight" of I. Peter 5 : 2 simply means "leading": in fact, the two words employed by the Spirit for "rule" both mean "to lead" and "go before." An elder or overseer has certainly authority under The Chief Shepherd, but it should not be thought they may "lord" over God's heritage. Nothing may substitute the idea of "leader" in the sense of "being ensamples to the flock."

"Great peace have they that love Thy law." Therefore, "esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves." (I. Thess. 5 : 13). W.N.C.

Authority.

AUTHORITY is that vested power, usually from someone higher, by which order is maintained to carry out some specific work. "All power (authority) is **given** unto Me in heaven and in earth : go ye therefore . . . "—words through lips we reverence—provide the root-principle.

Whether in matters civil or spiritual God has delegated power to be obeyed. Civil—"Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth **the ordinance of God.**" (Rom. 13.) Spiritual—Paul said, Our authority which **the Lord hath given us** for edification." (II Cor. 10.) We must not "despise dominion." (Jude 8.)

In matters spiritual the ascended Christ, as Head of the Body through the Spirit, governs or administers (I Cor. 12 : 5) to every member—"till we all come in the unity of the faith" the ulterior motive. "Unto everyone of us is **given** grace"—some to serve, others to be served. Thus, the Body is "fitly joined together." The "joints" **supply** (Eph. 4 : 16) and so the Body increases. These "joints" are active, the Members more or less passive. "The work of the ministry" = "joints", "the perfecting of the saints" = those ministered unto. In graded order, therefore, the "joints" are seen in "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors (shepherds) and teachers." Each has respective authority under the Head : "**He gave** some apostles, some prophets . . ."

What has just been stated has its general contrast in two words found in the Acts of the Apostles—"disciples" and "brethren." Trace these words through and it will be found that "brethren" is a development of "disciples" or **learners**. At first, we have "the disciples" at Pentecost, but as certain developed in knowledge to impart to others, the Gentile believers were in turn viewed from Jerusalem as the "disciples" or learners. Compare, e.g., Acts 1 : 15 and Acts 11 : 29. Paul and Apollos at Corinth were seen as "**labourers** together with God" : "WE are labourers"—"YE are God's husbandry." (Marg. tillage.) Seen as "joints" of the Body they, in a correlative sense, "planted" in God's field, then "watered" as they "compared spiritual things with spiritual," or—as in the case of the saints in Rome—"Imparting unto you some spiritual gift." (Rom. 1.)

Nowhere in the New Testament is executive power invested in sisters. They have no authority as brethren "but they are commanded to be under obedience (**hupo** = under ; **tasso** = to arrange)" I Cor. 14 : 34 ; compare also "subject" (the same Greek word) of verse 32. Sisters are seen as "learners" (disciples) in public, never "teachers" (didaskalos). Throughout the Acts the saints collected are usually addressed, "Men-brethren," which literally is "Male-brethren" and does not include sisters. Eve received her commandments through Adam and to-day "brethren" only rule in the things of God.

Reverence.

God's holy Presence demands reverence. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints and to be had in reverence of all them that are about Him" (Psalm 89 : 7).

Reverence and godly fear, so beautifully and inseparably complete : would to God that they were more and more pronounced in each of our lives ! It becometh us in every activity for God to show reverence.

If it be in His Presence

AS PRIESTS

to worship, while we rejoice in His Person, let us revere the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the poet to say—

"The mention of Thy Name shall bow
Our hearts to worship Thee !"

None who really glimpses the Lord could be haughty or high-minded. Rather it produces a humble overflowing of gratitude and adoration from a heart bowing low in rich and reverent appreciation.

In handling

GOD'S HOLY WORD

also, we should never forget that God has "magnified His Word above all His Name (Psalm 138 : 2). This should help us to approach it reverently, as the Psalmist would say—"But my heart standeth in awe of Thy Word" (Psalm 119 : 161). Whether it be in the Church, or in the home, let us open God's Word with reverence, ever prepared to practise in life what the Spirit is pleased to reveal.

The inspired writer to the Hebrews said, "Let us have grace whereby we may

SERVE GOD ACCEPTABLY

with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12 : 28). By grace only will we be enabled to serve acceptably, reverently, and in godly fear. Reverence is a beautiful characteristic seen in the child of God, who realises and appreciates that his is a God Whose Presence is holy and Whose Name is reverend" (Psalm 111 : 9).

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Church-Building.

EXTRACTS OF AN ADDRESS BY THE LATE G. THOMSON IN 1922.

Phil. 1 : 10. "That ye may approve the things that are excellent."

SOME translators have it "Things that differ," a beautiful thought. There are things that differ in the Scriptures, yet are excellent in themselves. Well for us if we are able to prove and approve the things that differ.

In Col. 2 : 1 is written, "that their hearts might be comforted" (we are seldom out of the need of it), being knit together in love, unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgment of **THE MYSTERY OF GOD.**" The R.V. reads, "To the full (knowledge) assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ." What a blessing it would be for all of us, if we were quite clear about the dispensation in which our lot is cast, and the principles of the work of God in this our time. The Jews in a coming day will look back and trace their blessings to Abraham. The Gentiles in a coming day will also trace their blessings back to Abraham. But the saints of this present dispensation go further back than Abraham, further back than the foundation of this world, back into the eternity of God, to "His eternal purpose." "Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world."

Matt. 16. "Thou art Simon the son of a dove, Blessed art thou." "Happy art thou." What a happy statement. "Thou art Peter (a bit of a rock) and upon this Rock I will build My Church." Notice it is upon "THIS Rock." If Peter had been the rock, He would have said, "that rock." "I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH." Every sinner saved by Grace has his place in this building. It made me so happy to think of the security of our being saved, and the impossibility of our being lost. Then in Ephesians, "He loved the Church and gave Himself for " it." That is how it came to me : I saw there the building, the individual as "a living-stone" placed in the building and kept there by the Master-mind and the Master-hand. I saw the building in its entirety kept by **Him**. This should keep us from the lullaby—"The Church is in ruins." "HE" is the Builder. "HE" is the Preserver, and shortly "HE" shall present it to Himself "without spot or wrinkle." Oh what a presentation !

It is usual that the first occurrence of a subject in Scripture, is a keynote to that subject. Take the subject of "Building." The first building we read of is in Gen. 2. The man was put to sleep and, while he slept, the Lord took from his side a rib and "BUILDED A WOMAN" and presented her to the man. GOD was the Builder. The man looked on the gift of God to him and said, "This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh." "This is a great mystery (the union existing between husband and wife) but I speak concerning Christ and the Church."

In Ephesians we read of "Praise," praise, praise. The Blessed God is bent on getting praise. Three times over do we read in chap. 1, "Praise, praise, praise." He is heaping blessing upon blessing upon the believer in Christ, and all with the object of getting "praise." In chap. 1 you get the "Church." In chap. 2 you get a Building. You get Solomon's quarry and a Builder. Then you get a Bride. The blessed God was searching nature to present to our hearts His great thoughts concerning this Mystery we have been occupied with.

Col. 3. "Put on the new man." Put him on ! We should labour to be down here, what we are up there in Christ. Verse 11 "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew . . but Christ is all, and in all." Gal. 3. 28. "Neither Jew nor Greek . . neither bond or free, neither male or female . . . all one in Christ." These are very important distinct Scriptures in connection with the Church which is His Body.

I would like to give a note of warning against the abuse of these Scriptures, that all nationalities, all relationships have no place in the Church which is His Body. We know the result of this in some parts. For on questioning some about women keeping silence in the churches, they reply, "There are no women in the church, neither male nor female," alluding to the Body aspect.

I Cor. 3. "We are labourers together with God." That's beautiful, isn't it ? "Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." "As a wise master-builder I have laid the foundation." Here is a building again. We saw one in Matt. 16. We know who its builder is, our Lord Jesus Christ in His resurrection life and power from the throne of God, baptizing into one Body in the Spirit. He never delegated this glorious work to the hands of any human being. But now in I. Cor. 3. the Apostle claims to be a wise master-builder. And we'll not dispute the claim. He did lay the foundation of that which came

into the existence for God in Corinth at that time. Others were to build there, so he gives the warning, "Take heed how ye build." He pointed out the possibility of building wood, hay and stubble. But the builder in Matt. 16. will put no wood, hay or stubble in His building, we may be sure. This is distinct, it is given into human hands, to human hearts, this of I. Cor. 3. In connection with Matt. 16 is the truth, "He is the Preserver" of that Building. Hence it never can come to ruin. It is bordering on blasphemy to say it is in ruins. Saints are never exhorted to keep the unity of the Body (He will see to that).

Pillars.

SORROW may come to us as it came to Jacob. He set a pillar upon Rachel's grave—

A PILLAR OF REMEMBRANCE.

Different, indeed, it was to the pillar of Absalom set up for himself ! Jacob's was a mark of the great love and esteem that he had for Rachel.

Yet surely he had shewn in a much greater and nobler way in the years of service to win her, and no doubt that in the years of bliss they had spent together! When a great sorrow comes to us here below, how good to know the truth of the words, "As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." (II Cor. 6 : 10.) And the rejoicing based upon the Word of God, "That ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." (I Thess. 4 : 13).

"When the weary ones we love, enter on their rest above;

When their words of love and cheer, fall no longer on our ear;

Hush ! be every murmur dumb ! It is only 'Till He come.' "

Pillars erected by man speak to us of sinful pride, testimony, thanksgiving and remembrance. But God also in His Word has set up pillars for our learning. He speaks to us of

A PILLAR OF JUDGEMENT.

Here a child of God who had once been in company with Abraham and had shared in his pilgrim testimony, had gone back to the things of the world. Sad indeed is the story. Lot looked towards Sodom, pitched his tent towards Sodom, then he dwelt in Sodom. He continued there, although vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. It cost him the loss of fellowship with God enjoyed by Abraham. The angels would rather abide in the street than accept anything from him. He was no testimony to the men of Sodom, nor to his own sons-in-law. He still craved the city life, the life of the world, even in the time of

judgement. His example was of such influence upon his wife that her heart was in Sodom also, and she was turned into a pillar of salt when she looked back in defiance of God's warning—that which they should have been spiritually if they had been true to their calling, salt ! “Ye are the salt of the earth.” Salt to stay corruption: salt, an emetic for the sickness of the world. And finally drunkenness, and dishonour of his daughter—a lesson indeed to us to “watch and pray.”

The Lord Jesus said in speaking of His visible coming to the earth, “As it was in the days of Lot” ; judgement coming to this world ! And a warning to His own, “Remember Lot's wife ! ”

A PILLAR OF GUIDANCE.

“And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way : and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light : to go by day and night.” (Exodus 13 : 21)—every provision for those who had been redeemed by the blood of the lamb. And when danger threatened them, the pillar came between the hosts of Pharaoh and Israel. To the Egyptians it was cloud and darkness, but to Israel it was light. So God guides and protects His children even to this day.

Satan speaking of this protection afforded to Job said, “Hast Thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side ? ” The Psalmist could say, “And He led them forth by the right way.” The Word to Israel by Isaiah was : “And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” The Holy Spirit speaks even to-day through God's Words, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” If we were left to our own devices, how often we would fall, or stray away. But the Lord Jesus commended us to the care of God the Father. “I have given them Thy Word : and the world hath hated them. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” Peter wrote, “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations.” (II Peter 2 : 9.) But to “the disobedient,” the Word is a cause of “stumbling” (I Peter 2 : 8) and “destruction.” (II Peter 3 : 16.) A wonderful shadowing we see in Gen. 24. The servant calls for decision, he dispenses gifts, and leads Rebekah through the wilderness. He speaks not of himself, but unfolds the riches of the Father and of the Son.

A PILLAR OF TRUTH.

God has been pleased to erect in this scene a pillar of truth. In a world given to unrighteousness, in the place where Satan reigns in the heart of men. He Who said, "I am the truth" was despised and rejected. His trial was a travesty of justice, false witness was used against Him, and although the judge publicly declared He was innocent, yet He was condemned to death. The heart of man is unchanged, men are willingly deceived and blinded. How true it is that a man is what he reads; it moulds and influences his character. Scan the bookshelves of any public library to-day and the great majority of the books will be found to be fiction, or not the truth. Read the biography of any great man and his faults are glossed over, and his virtues painted in glowing colours—not the truth ! According to the world's literature, man is becoming more and more civilised—not the truth ! The only book that tells the truth about man is the Word of God. In this scene given up to "the lie," God has raised a pillar of truth. The apostle says in I Tim. 3 : 15, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." The ground speaks to us of the foundation, the pillar speaks of holding up. Built upon the truth, holding up the truth to the public gaze.

A PILLAR OF REWARD.

The reward of the world was foretold by the Lord Jesus. Remember the word that I said unto you, "The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you : if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also." (John 15 : 20.) The truth of these words is experienced by all who seek to be faithful witnesses in the world to-day. How grand to look away from this scene of time to that future day described in Rev. 3, "For thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My Name." And again, "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience . . . Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the Temple of My God, and he shall go no more out ; and I will write upon him the Name of My God, and the Name of the city of My God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God ; and I will write upon him My new Name."

Comfort Corner.

Sometimes upon the mountain-top, sometimes in the valley—as comforts come and comforts go—there is one “Comfort Corner” which always remains to those “born-again”—the joy of being forever “in” Christ Jesus. Whatever dark clouds threaten or nights depress, we have this consolation to raise us from our despair—things for us might have been far worse ! Instead of “in” Christ Jesus, safe for eternity, think of the alternative !—“outer” darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth ! Oh dreadful thought ! Nothing on earth brings more comfort, surely, and it is a balm for every sting, we well know !

Some professed children of God seem to live in terror continually of “falling away” from Christ, failing of grace and becoming lost. This is largely due to their not resting in the finished work of Christ, that “there is **now** no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 8.) “Knowing”—as we do—“that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law : for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” (Gal. 2.)

Consider what “condemnation” means ! Condemnation is the **result** of judgement.. The judge examines, he then passes judgement, then the prisoner if found guilty is “condemned.” To those who are **in** Christ Jesus there is “settled forever sin’s tremendous claim”—not only “no condemnation,” but for them “no judgment.” They will not stand before the judgement bar of God to be “judged” for their sins even, much less any thought of their being “condemned.” This is proved by John 5 : 24 which says that those who “believe” will not come into “judgement” (the Greek word is **krisis**, not the **katakrima** =condemnation of Rom. 8 : 1) but are “passed from death unto life.” Such are not looking for “the Judgement Day,” for **their** judgment-day was at Calvary where Jesus bore the penalty, being punished for their sins. God is righteous and will not judge me for sins for which Christ has already died to purge away. This is joy ! This is true comfort taking the sharp edge from earthly adversities ! Here is something in which true faith never falters !

Since Jesus has died our souls are like that of Mary at the resurrection. She knew what she owed to Him, and although angels might appear saying, “Woman, why weepest thou ? ”. let her Beloved but utter one word—“Mary ! ”—and her heart almost sprung from her breast. “Touch Me not ! ”—but would she not otherwise have done so ? **Her** sins, **our** sins, **had** passed away in His glorious Person and work and who, knowing HIM so, could repress such outburst of affection ?

W. N. C.

Hymns in Worship.

AMONGST the thousands of hymns sung generally, it is common for each of us to have some liking or dislike for one or the other. The poetic wording of some hymns is so deep one is apt to misunderstand the theme of the writer, so let us be slow to criticize.

There does not seem to be a perfect hymn-book anywhere to fully meet the needs of the liberties and strictures of all. It is during what is called "public worship," however, that there seems to be most criticism raised. Some hymns address God, others Jesus as Lord. It is pressed that in worship God and God only should be addressed, for which there is much to say. But Jesus, glorified for His work, is the theme of many a hymn, and it is believed by many that, in worship, these hymns are out of place.

Let us not go to extremes ! Let us try to understand one another ! Let us not see one standpoint of Scripture, press it, and neglect what is to be said from another standpoint !

That "God may be all in all" and that "the Father seeketh . . . to worship Him" no child of God will deny. God should be supreme. But is worship so confined as to limit entirely our singing to God and exclude addressing also the Person of the Lord Jesus ? We have known in days gone by when certain have been so definite in their view that, if the Lord Jesus were addressed in a hymn, let others sing in assembly their mouths would remain sealed. We are not, observe, condemning their firmness of conscience.

One or two Scriptures, perhaps overlooked, may help. Has John 5 : 22 any bearing ?—"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son : that all men should honour the Son, **EVEN** as they honour the Father." Again, "From Jesus Christ . . . **UNTO HIM** that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood . . . **TO HIM** be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen !" (Rev. 1 : 5-6). Again, in Rev. 5—"The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is **THE LAMB** that was slain to receive power . . . and every creature . . . heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, **AND UNTO THE LAMB** for ever and ever."

Peter does write of the "Lord God," but in the Pauline epistles the title "Lord" is usually applied to Jesus. Read, then, in Eph. 5 : 19 as to singing itself—"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart **TO THE LORD** ; giving thanks always for all things unto God."

To the candid reader it must be a point of fair observance that, while all due reverence must be attributed to God as supreme, it is not meant thereby in the Spirit to so subserviate the Lord Jesus that His Name may not come into worship language at all.

The Kingdom of God--In Vision and Figure.

We have a vision of the KINGDOM OF GOD on the holy mount—for there it will be seen firstly (Gen. 22 ; Matt. 17 ; Mark 9). Of this vision Peter writes in his second epistle, as an eyewitness of our Lord Jesus Christ's Majesty, when He received from God the Father honour and glory. (II Peter 1 : 16-18). Then on the earth after His coming down from the mount there is a foreshadowing of the KINGDOM. Compare John 1 : 47-51; Gen. 28 : 10-17. On "the holy mount," the "high mountain of God," "Jesus only" as the Saviour and Salvation of Jehovah for His people from their sins, fills the vision of every eye, and His Glory the whole horizon ; and His sufferings, the theme of those in Glory. Moses and Elias with Jesus remind us of the law and the prophets which were until John (Luke 16 : 16) and John Baptist is the "Elias" that was to come, and to Him (Jesus Christ) give all the prophets witness : "And the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." Now "Jesus only," "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Then in the Kingdom of God manifested here—in **Moses** we have a type of the believing sleeping-ones in Jesus, and dead in Christ raised up from among the dead; and in **Elias**, the living, believing ones in Christ caught up without dying, and thus together manifested with Him in Glory, as will be the Church. In Peter, James and John there is presented the called, chosen and faithful (Rev. 17 : 14) sealed remnant of the twelve tribes (the 144,000) who "stand on Mount Zion before the Lamb, and follow Him whithersoever He goeth." (Rev. 7 : 2-8; 14 : 1-5.) These three hear God the Father speak from heaven, "A voice from the Excellent Glory" (II Peter 1 : 17, 18) and the communication between Christ and His, as represented in Moses and Elias. And "the Beloved Son," "the Son of His love" is the object of pleasure, "In Whom I am well pleased." "And the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand." (Is. 53.) Then, we behold in His coming down from the hill, according to Mal. 4—"Unto you that fear My Name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings." "Much people met Him," here foreshadowing the inhabitants of the earth,

“the nations of them which are saved.” (Rev. 21 : 24.) Again, we have the “son” and “holy child” of a certain man, who being exposed to demon power, passed through fire and water; this may represent the seed of Jacob, who in the time of Jacob’s trouble are exposed to the water and fiery trial from the dragon (Rev. 12; Ps. 66 : 10-12), but who are preserved by God in a place prepared for them in the wilderness, and at His coming pass into a wealthy place. Then His disciples, as representing those of the seed of David, a faithless and perverse generation, who being of His bone after the flesh, were out of joint with Him as their Kingly Head in the days of His humiliation (Ps. 22 : 14, 17—figurative), but now as seen in Nathanael (John 1) an “Israelite indeed in whom is no guile,” they come to acknowledge Him as “Son of God,” and as “King of Israel.” “The One of Whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write.”

Here, then, in figure He is seen as having come in “His Own Glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels,” and as Son of Man—is the ladder or way cast up that Jacob saw in Gen. 28, bringing EARTH INTO UNISON WITH HEAVEN, the gate of heaven to the inhabitants of earth : “that while they call Jehovah will answer.” And the angels in “ascending and descending on the Son of Man,” as this way cast up, are seen as the direct communicators of heavenly blessing, and administrators of judgement throughout the reign of righteousness over the earth. For the twelve gates at which are the twelve angels, are subject to the twelve thrones on which are the twelve apostles; for the glorified heirs of salvation for whom angels are ministering spirits, **then** are above angels, as now they are a little lower than angels. But angels and heirs will be subject unto Christ as Head over all things, manifested in Kingly Glory, to Whom the world to come, whereof we speak, is put in subjection. Angels in their public ministration then seem not to be hidden from mortal eyes as now, but rather similar to the past dispensation when they appeared in some bodily form. And seeing that the earth will be in unison with heaven, how heavenly-like when Israel under her vine and fig-tree, in His glorious rest, and plenteous goodness, is visited with heavenly messengers as Abraham was in his day !

JOHN STEPHEN
 (“At Home with the Lord”).

“And it was Winter.”

IN the beginning God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night : and let them be for signs, and for **seasons**; and for days, and years.” The divine approval was given to all creation; it was very good. How soon man marred the perfection of God’s work, until the cup of iniquity being full to the brim, God cleansed the earth by the flood of water ! The sweet savour of the burnt-offerings of Noah’s altar being acceptable to God, this covenant was made : “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and **WINTER**, and day and night shall not cease.” And as a token God said, “I do set My bow in the cloud . . . and I will remember My covenant.” God has been true to His promise right down the ages, even to this moment of time. The sweet promise of Spring, the fulfilment of Summer, the ingathering of Autumn, and then Winter. The time when plant-life rests, and the Earth is again prepared for the harvest by the Winter’s weather. God prepares, man sows and reaps. How finely Elihu speaks of the Winter-weather in Job 37. The thunder and lightning, the snow and rain, the whirlwind and the cold, frost and the water’s straitened-ice.

This season of the year is spoken of in John 10 : 22-24—“And it was at Jerusalem, the feast of the dedication, **and it was winter**, and Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon’s porch. Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt ? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.” The words “and it was winter,” no doubt explain why Jesus walked in the porch. But to the spiritual mind they bear also a deeper meaning. The Springtime of His ministry was over, the time of

POPULAR FAVOUR WAS PASSING.

The Messiah they were looking for was to be a mighty temporal prince, one who would strike the iron yoke of Rome from their necks and set them free. He had whetted their appetite by His mighty deeds of power, and the many wonderful words He had spoken. If He was indeed the one for whom they were longing, why not come right out into the open ? “How long dost Thou make us to doubt ? ”

This feast of dedication would bring many thoughts to their minds. It was said to be instituted B.C. 164. The temple had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes, and Judas Maccabaeus had

set them free and cleansed the temple. Surely their thoughts would go to that scene when the Lord Jesus had cleansed the Temple with His words, "My Father's house." It was known also as the feast of lights, and they might remember His words, "I am the Light of the world." Again it was called the feast of freedom, for had He not said, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" ? Was He then, indeed, the answer to their prayers, the national dream come true ? "If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." To the woman at the well, and to the man born blind, He had given direct answers, but now He answers indirectly, appealing to the works that He did in His Father's Name. To give a direct answer to them would have given sanction to their thoughts of a mighty temporal prince. The real unbelief of their hearts we find in verse 31—"Then the Jews took up stones **again** to stone Him." After the feast of tabernacles they had acted similarly. (John 8 : 59.) Truly the Summer was over, the grey of Autumn was passing, and it was Winter. The time of

HIS UTTER REJECTION WAS AT HAND.

"Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put Him to death." (John 11 : 53.) They ignored the voice of God. It brought no fear to their hearts as it did to Elihu before mentioned. "God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." The voice of God had been heard from the opened heaven giving a direct testimony to His beloved Son. Elihu could say, "At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place. Hear attentively the noise of His voice, and the sound that goeth out of His mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and His lightning unto the ends of the earth." Thunder and lightning speak to us of majesty and judgement. All the people trembled at Mount Sinai because of thunder and lightning and a thick cloud. David in his song of deliverance said, "The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave His voice, hail stones and coals of fire. Yea, He sent out His arrows, and scattered them : and He shot out lightnings, and discomfited them." (Psalm 18 : 13-14.) The Lord Jesus speaking of judgement upon Satan said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven;" and speaking of the manner of His own visible coming to judge the earth, He said it would be "as the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West." God's assuring judgement upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus, we find

at the resurrection : “There was a great earthquake ; for the angel of the Lord descended from Heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow.”

The Psalmist could say, “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” “For He saith to the snow, be thou on the earth; likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of His strength. Out of the South cometh the whirlwind ; and cold out of the North. By the breath of God frost is given, and the breadth of the waters is straitened.” The great rain of His strength would speak to us of the judgement of the Flood. All the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven opened, and the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. Elihu indeed speaks of wintry weather. And it was winter would further speak to us of the treatment of the Lord Jesus by the Jews. They utterly rejected Him,

THEY DESIRED A THIEF AND A MURDERER

to be released in preference to Him. They gave Him over to the soldiers and the dreadful death of crucifixion. For the full expression, however, of the words, **and it was winter**, we must enter in to the Holy of Holies. With hearts filled with deep reverence, with unshod feet, with anointed eyes to pierce the dense darkness that veiled the scene from the curious gaze. That Winter in all its awful fury and dreadful severity broke upon the person of the Lord Jesus. There God expressed all that a Holy, sin-hating God could feel against sin. Thunder and lightning of judgement, in that darkness that enveloped the Cross for three hours. When a thundercloud comes into contact with a mountain top, every crag, every tree, even every blade of grass becomes a conductor, drawing electricity from the cloud, rendering the cloud harmless by dissolving. Even so, that awful cloud of judgement against sin, charged with concentrated lightning, rested upon “a green hill far away.” The Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross drew out all that hurtful lightning into His own great heart of love. He absorbed and dissolved the judgement of God against His people’s sins. “I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions and, as a cloud, thy sins.” (Isa. 44 : 22). Down came the great rain of His strength. “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy waterspouts ; all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.” (Psalm 42 : 7). “The waters compassed me about, even to the soul ; the depth closed me round about, the weeds were

wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains." (Jonah 2 : 5-6).

Elihu says, "Out of the South cometh the **whirlwind**." How grievous the whirlwind at the place called Calvary ! "Behold, a whirlwind of the Lord is gone forth in fury, even a grievous whirlwind : it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked." (Jeremiah 23 : 19). How true the words of the hymn-writer,

" The **tempest's** awful voice was heard ;
O Christ, it broke on Thee !
Thine open bosom was my ward ;
It braved the storm for me."

Cold out of the North !—"By the breath of God frost is given ! and the breadth of the waters is straitened." The Lord Jesus went down into the waters of death, the waters were straitened, they were made fast. The Lord Jesus was held in the power of death. "The earth with her bars was about me for ever ! Yet hast Thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God." (Jonah 2 : 6). "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death ; because it was not possible that He should be holden of it." (Acts 2 : 24). In the dreadful darkness like a cloud at Calvary, a covenant-keeping God had set His bow. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Now all is favour to us, judgement behind, glory before, waiting for His voice. "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the **Winter** is past, the rain is over and gone : the flowers appear on the earth ; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." (Song of Songs 2 : 10-12). "Surely I come quickly. Amen ! Even so, come, Lord Jesus !"

Middlesbrough.

HEDLEY DRAKE.

SINCERITY. "Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly **SINCERITY**, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world." (II Cor. 1 : 12.) "Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of **SINCERITY** and truth." (I Cor. 5 : 8.) "Judgement; that ye may approve things that are excellent, that ye may be **SINCERE** and without offence till the day of Christ." (Phil. 1 : 10.)

Comfort Corner.

IN the parable of the talents the faithful were commended by their lord in the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, . . . enter into the joy of thy lord."

It has often occurred to the writer what exactly was to be understood by these words, "the joy of thy lord." Was it a possessed "joy" his lord had, or an achieved "joy"? Was it because he possessed and these his faithful servants would share? or, had he himself passed through an experience before them and the joy of faithfulness was to be theirs proportionately with his own at the end of things?

As far as our Lord Jesus Christ is viewed, at least, He has attained "a joy" set before Him. His span on earth has attained for Him the honourable words, "faithful and true," and God His Father has seen to it that His heavenly station awards "the fulness of joy." So to those following His steps He writes: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My father in His throne." (Rev. 3 : 21).

The joy of salvation is one thing, but we should concern ourselves also, as God's servants, with the joy of faithfulness. The "joy of faith" sees the gates of Hell closed against our souls—in fact, all that the Lord Jesus in sacrifice procured for us by sovereign grace alone. But surely most of us have greater foresight than the brother who, many years ago, said he did not mind what else happened so long as he just got "a foothold" within the gates of heaven!—saved and satisfied! There is the future position in the kingdom to be considered, however. We have **life** in Christ, but there is **service** in Christ. There are promised crowns to the faithful to Christ over against the careless—crowns of **life** for some (Rev. 2 : 10) who forfeit life down here as martyrs; crowns of **righteousness** to others (II. Tim. 4 : 8); crowns of **glory** for faithful shepherds among Christ's flock. (I Peter 5 : 4.) Whoever receives a crown, therefore, will receive added joy.

Paul, through the Spirit, encouraged the Corinthians to "run" the course, at the end of which was to be a "prize." He suggests many runners in the race, but that "one" receiveth the prize. He himself was running "to obtain" a crown and seemed to have a certain fear lest, having encouraged others, he himself should be a "castaway" at the Judgement-seat and lose the reward. "We **must** all appear before the judgement-seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II. Cor. 5: 10).

"The Lord Jesus Christ shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." (II. Tim. 4 : 1). Our testimony on earth will be investigated then, the faithful approved, and all given their respective rewards and places in the kingdom with Christ. Happy the man that endureth trial and who finally receives the smile of his Lord in the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

W. N. C.

Walking with God.

THE first two Books of our Bible have simple suggestions. Genesis is the Book of the beginning or origin of life on earth. In it much is said about walk. Birth first, next how to walk, is nature's order for a child. So, when the Lord-God "walked" in Eden in fellowship with Adam, when Enoch walked with God and Abraham "walked before God," we seem to see individual testimony foreshadowed. To us to-day are the words—"Ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God." (I. Thess. 4 : 1). Progress in the "divine nature" demands a daily walk with God.

If Genesis, therefore, present individual walk with God, Exodus is an advancement and is strongly suggestive of collective testimony—a people or nation "called out" of Egypt to constitute "God's house." "Moses verily was faithful in all His house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after." (Heb. 3 : 5).

The word "Exodus" means "a way or road out." It is a Greek word : EX=out ; and HODUS=way or road. The idea underlies the words in chapter 12 : 17—"This selfsame day have I **brought your armies out** of the land of Egypt." Does it say "armies" ? Yes, for God's delivered people marched out orderly—Septuagint rendering=PARATASSO, "in military array" or "five in a rank." (Margin Exodus 13 : 18).

"Three days' journey into the desert," away from Egypt with its abominations, was God's demand. **En route** "they **all** were under the cloud, and **all** passed through the sea ; and were **all** baptised unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." (I. Cor. 10.) The cloud (heavenly) suggests in figure for us that "by one Spirit are we **all** baptised into One Body." The sea (earthly) suggests baptism (dipping) in water incumbent upon all believers in Jesus as Lord, the mode as in Acts 8 : 38—"they went down both into the water." Modern "Christening" does not conform to God's revealed Will and, in reality, is used by Satan to counterfeit the true gospel of Christ.

The "way" out of Egypt found Israel eventually in the desert with "the Lord in their midst" and their tents surrounding the Tabernacle in due order according to their tribes. Thus, it is written, "I will dwell in them and **walk** in them." But when, reaching Canaan, Israel sinned and forsook God's commandments, He delivered them captives into Babylon (confusion), where they neither sang nor testified. (Psalm 137.)

The Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ begins with the Divine pattern—seven churches of God and the Son of Man "walking" amidst the golden lampstands. It ends with "Babylon the Great" destroyed and the call of God, "Come out of her, My people !" Sectarianism to-day, which began in I Cor. 1 : 12, God's people meeting under the names of men, is fast developing towards the great "falling-away" or apostasy. Is the reader in a "Church of God" or meeting with modern Babylon's sects ?

Simple Faith in a Mighty Person.

AS children of God we are indeed a feeble few, but how grand to think we are

IN GOD'S MAJORITY

like the man in Luke 7 : 9. The Lord said to **the many** that followed Him—"I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." This centurion was alone in his faith over against the many that followed Jesus.

What a joy to hear God speak to us in His Son!—"Whom He hath appointed Heir to all things" ! The Son is

THE FINAL CAUSE OF ALL,

the end of all things, as also He is "the beginning" of the creation of God. "Through Whom also He made the worlds"—He is the origin and efficient-cause of all that exists. "Without Him nothing was made that was made." Of all that exists

THE END AND THE BEGINNING MEET

in Him. And He is

THE CENTRE, TOO,

"upholding all things by the Word of His power." He bears all things; and all things "consist in Him." Little things as well as great things cannot exist without Him; He "upholds" them every moment by the Word of His power, even as by His Word they were created.

This is **THE SON** through Whom God speaks to us. It is "through" Him alone that the incomprehensible glory of God is made manifest. His relation to creation rests on His

RELATION TO THE FATHER.

He is "the out-shining of God's glory and the express image of His substance"—thus bringing the creature and Creator into contact and fellowship. "Who when He had made

PURIFICATION FOR SINS

sat down on the Right-hand of the Majesty on high." We see, therefore, the Son of God as the Man of Calvary at the Right-hand of the Throne of Majesty, making it a Throne of Grace.

Surely, poor is our effort to speak as we ought of Him so worthy ! Faith in prayer links on to His mighty power and Eternity alone will reveal the value of prayer : oh, for more of it in our lives !

Airdrie,
Lanarkshire.

JAMES LAWRIE, Sen.

The Trial of your Faith.

PETER by the Spirit explains the purpose of the trial of our faith, in the need-be of manifold temptations. It is well we receive the instruction of righteousness : “the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ, Whom having not seen ye love” (I. Pet. 1 : 6-8). The reward is at “the appearing of Jesus Christ,” so it takes the eye from the present suffering unto the future glory. Heart affection for our Unseen Lover is sweetly sustaining in all our trials.

Remarkable how all the seven men of Genesis, presented by the Spirit in Hebrew XI, had a distinct expression of faith. Abel had “the **word** of faith” and so the work of the Cross of Christ is foreseen in his sacrifice. Righteous Abel ! Enoch came next and he had the “**walk** by faith,” typically, from the Cross, until the Coming of the Lord. Before God translated him it is said he “walked with God.” Noah had a “**work** of faith” and God remembered him and brought him into a purged scene to acceptably sacrifice. Abraham displays “the **obedience** of faith,” right from his coming out of Ur of the Chaldees until he offers up Isaac on Mount Moriah. God was delighted in him as He said ; “because thou hast obeyed My voice.” In Isaac we discern “the **sacrifice** of faith,” obedient unto death from which, in figure he was received. Jacob, a man of service, brings out “the **service** of faith.” He served for a wife and for a wife he kept sheep. In all he served twenty years for his wives, flocks and herds. Lastly we have Joseph who seems vividly to bring out “the **trial** of faith.” Sore and searching his trials but he is refined thereby to be revealed in great glory.

Let us consider him for he bears chiefly on our mind in the heading of our article. Joseph had the Word of the Lord revealed unto him in dreams, in keeping with God’s way at that time. In early life, God makes himself known to Joseph and incidently reveals the future glory to which He would bring him. What simplicity of faith, sincerity of love, as Joseph relates his dreams to his brethren and his father !—the two-fold revelation in “the sheaves of the field” and “the sun and moon and eleven stars,” all doing obeisance. These indeed **Spoke of earthly blessings** coupled with the rule and resplendency of the heavens. What a fiery trial was to try him before he reached such glory ! The result of His message : “his brethren envied

him, and his father observed his saying." "Who is able to stand before envy?"

The trial of Joseph's faith now becomes evident. Soon afterwards he is sent by his father to seek the welfare of his brethren, and they exclaim as they see him, "Behold, this dreamer cometh ! Come now therefore and let us slay him and cast him into some pit, and we will say some evil beast hath devoured him and we shall see what will become of his dreams." The Word of God cannot be broken, so Reuben delivers him out of their hands, yet they determine to get rid of him. How true and touching is the description in Psalm 105 : 17-22, where we see how God makes the wrath of man to praise Him ! They may sell him, but really it is God Who sends him :

"He sent a man before them,
Even Joseph, who was sold for a servant :
Whose feet they hurt with fetters :
He was laid in iron :
Until the time that His Word came :
THE WORD OF THE LORD TRIED HIM."

Despite what others meant, **God planned it for good** and fulness of glory. But the trial must be endured. "The word (or saying) of the Lord tried him." How often in his prolonged trial he must have reflected on his dreams, given by God ! While no outward sin is mentioned in Joseph's life, it is evident he needed purifying. The Word of the Lord tried or refined him. He was put in the refiner's fire so that no dross would dim the splendour in the day of manifestation. It matters not what his brethren did with his coat, or Potiphar's wife his garment, God would bring him forth clothed in purity, bright with glory. How beautifully descriptive the word as we see Joseph graced and glorified : "Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand, and **arrayed him in vestures** of fine-linen, and put a gold chain about his neck, and made him to ride in the second chariot which he had, and they cried before him, Bow the knee, and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. The despised and rejected one became ruler. How it speaks to us of Jesus Whose glory will fill all earth and heaven ! Instructive His last word as to this in Rev. 22 : 16.

But as to us, we Joseph-like must suffer reproach and rejection for the Truth's sake, and so undergo the trial of our faith. No wealth to compare with it : "Much more precious than gold which perisheth." "The fining pot for the silver, the furnace for the gold, but the Lord trieth the hearts." (Prov. 17 : 3). The

refining process ! Again, “as the fining pot for silver, and the furnace for gold, so is a man to his praise.” (Prov. 27 : 21). The refining, revealing the glory. So soon, beloved, our manifold trials will end in the rapture and glory of our Lord’s appearing. When we are “caught up” to meet Him,

OUR BODIES WILL BE GLORIFIED,

then after we appear before His judgement seat we shall be rewarded. “Then shall every man have praise of God.”

“Them that honour Me, will I honour.” (I. Sam. 2 : 30). “If any man serve Me, him will My Father honour.” (John 12 : 26). What abiding reward is seen in the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Then when Christ comes back with His saints what an unveiling ! When we appear with Christ in glory what seemingly was lost in faith’s trial is found in “praise and honour and glory.” Rich recompense for suffering and loss !

“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end for the grace to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Grace and glory perfectly blended ! Every vestige of sin and sorrow gone from us as we are fully graced and glorified for our Lord’s abiding presence of manifest glory. Let us therefore be joyful in our tribulations !

Kirkintilloch,
Glasgow.

R. McCRACKEN.

Faith—and the Faith.

EVERY child of God, living in the Spirit, has the desire to please God. Therefore, if “without faith it is **impossible** to please Him,” this should give faith a place of importance. We should get to know all we can about it—what it is, its power, and what it is not !

Viewed in one way, faith is **not** “sight” (II. Cor. 5 : 7)—“we look at the things which are **not** seen” (II. Cor. 4 : 18). Moses **saw** Him Who is “**invisible**” (Heb. 11 : 27). Again, faith is **not** “doubt”—“let him ask in faith, **nothing wavering** ; for he that **wavereth** is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed ; for let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord ; a **double-minded** man is unstable in all his ways” (James 1 : 5-7). This is faith negatively.

Positively—what faith **is**, is forcibly presented in our A.V. in Heb. 11 : 1. “Faith is the **evidence** of things **not seen**.” Take the letters “vide” from the middle of “evidence” and we have the Latin word often used in books as reference to pages, e.g. “Vide page so-and-so.” Hebrews 11 : 1 explained therefore means : “Faith **is** the seeing (**evidence**=things seen) of things not seen.”

Now, although faith is not natural sight, yet “hearing” is employed, interesting to notice. “Faith cometh by hearing” and not **hearing** anything, but “hearing **by** the Word of God” (Rom. 10). Hearing is a necessity to faith, sight is not, for the Galatian believers were asked the self-evident questions, “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the **hearing** of faith ? . . . He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the **hearing** of faith ? ” (Gal. 3.) “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear !” was a crowning word of advice to all who heard Jesus in His day. There was more in it than mere natural hearing, for they verily **all** heard with their ears : what He must have meant was apparently what Israel in the wilderness lacked, who did not “mix faith” with what they heard (Heb. 4 : 2).

As to **the power** of faith, Paul said, “though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains.” Elijah closed the heavens—“it rained not”; he prayed again “and the heaven gave rain.” The blind, the lame, the sick—things human, animal, vegetable and the spirit-world—were all under control to the faith of the Lord Jesus upon earth. Faith honours God ; God honours faith. No person likes another to doubt his word ; when God speaks He expects to be believed—to hold to what God says, however contrary to common opinion, is faith, is trusting Him to be true. This is what “pleases” Him. Otherwise it is “impossible” to please Him : so it is that “whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are **pleasing in His sight**.” (I. John 3).

THE FAITH.

What we have already written deals with “faith” as a principle operating through the heart of the believer. We are dealing with another phase when, in certain contexts, the word “the” is placed before “faith.” “The faith” is God’s standard set up in this day of grace by which the conduct of those who exercise “faith” are controlled and prepared for the future “kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” Its chief contrast is “the law of Moses”—and is so contrasted in Romans 3 : 27

in the words, “the law of faith.” As the “commandments” combined to constitute the law of Moses, so “the apostles’ doctrine” in all its ramifications presents “the faith.” To the Roman believers Paul wrote : “Ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that **form of doctrine** which was delivered you.” (6 : 17).

What we have just stated is illustrated aptly in the priests of Acts 6 : 7. They were serving as priests under **the law of Moses**, but once they had accepted by faith Jesus as their Saviour, they changed over and were said to be “obedient to the **faith**.”

It is “the faith of the gospel” for which we have to “strive” (Phil. 1 : 27). Therefore Jude, in giving “all diligence to write” to certain “of the common salvation,” found it “needful” to exhort that they should “earnestly contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints.” “Teaching them to observe **all things whatsoever** I have commanded you”—words of the Lord Jesus—neatly cover the requirements of “the faith.”

We must not forget—to whatever Community we belong—that the words of Matt. 28, “Lo, I am with you” spring from the words preceding, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” For example, to-day we are concerned with laxity as to carrying out water baptism—one of these “all things whatsoever.” “You make baptism a bar to fellowship,” we are told. Surely we do ! Every individual who has not been baptised, and every Community claiming the Lord’s Presence who do not practise the ordinance of the Lord, are denying the faith and are also guilty of disobedience. “**Whatsoever I HAVE COMMANDED YOU.**” (Matt. 28). And note in Acts 10 : 48 the believers were “**COMMANDED**” to be baptised, and that “**IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.**”

Paul asked some to examine themselves as to whether they were “in the faith” (II Cor. 13 : 5); and again, while he himself at the end of his “course” said he had “kept the faith,” at the same time he mentioned some who had “made shipwreck concerning the faith.” It all depends upon our behaviour here : “I have kept the faith” said Paul—“henceforth there is laid up for me a crown . . .” This crown was also to be the reward of “all them that love His appearing.” The faith is important : reader, your crown depends it !

“MUSTARD-SEED.”

Comfort Corner.

THE reasoning of Hebrews 4 as to rest is illuminating to us as children of God in this day of grace.

The Holy Spirit takes as a starting-point the creation and travels through history to find a people worthy of entering into His rest. "For He spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, and God did rest the seventh day from all His works."

Israel should have "entered into His rest," one would think, but through "the provocation in the wilderness" the Holy Spirit declared, "They do alway err in their heart ; and they have not known My ways; so I swear in My wrath, They shall not enter into My rest." Those "whose carcasses fell in the wilderness" did not enter in "because of unbelief."

The entering the promised land is next viewed and Joshua as leader of the people. Rest is offered again, as written, "For if Jesus (Joshua=in Hebrew) had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day."

And what was this "other day" ? It was a day spoken of by the Holy Spirit "in David" as written in Psalm 95 : 11. Over 400 years had elapsed since Joshua and still the Holy Spirit was waiting—"after so long a time," He says—and so, "limiteth a certain day, saying in David, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

"Some must enter" into God's rest, saith the writer : "there remaineth therefore a rest (keeping of Sabbath) to the people of God." To be sure, "he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His." The reason why those in the wilderness failed to enter into God's rest was due to their **not mixing faith** with the Word of God they heard. Therefore, "we which **have believed** do enter into rest."

We enjoy rest as we walk by faith, "for we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end ; while it is said, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." "An evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God" we should all guard against, to "exhort one another daily" our endeavour, "while it is called To-day," lest any of us "be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

"The Lord in the midst" of His people ought to produce fear, "lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" as seen in "the carcasses" which fell in the wilderness. Why ? Because to us also, "The Word of God" is likened to "a sharp two-edged sword" which pierces through spirit, soul and body. But, happy the thought, fellowship daily in "exhorting" (comforting) one another : "so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"—for the smile of God upon the obedient is sunshine in the soul.

W. N. C.

“The Governor marvelled greatly.”

It is not to say that because God demands of our sisters “a meek and quiet spirit” that we, brethren, are permitted to be turbulent and self-assertive. That which in our sisters is to Him “an ornament of great price” was well established in Jesus on earth. What an example and life-study ! Many a time in quiet has our spirit been refreshed to muse upon His excellent spirit. We admire His lovely spirit and self-subjection before Pilate when, falsely accused and misrepresented on all sides, Pilate says, “Hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee ? And he answered him to **never a word**, insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly”!

The flesh in all ever glories in self-justification. Nothing grinds in our nature more than our being put in a wrong light. We just hate to let anyone away with a wrong impression lest we be thought vulnerable and unable to defend ourselves. Why is this ? It is due largely to our losing sight of the Judgement-seat of Christ, for we are assured that it is there the Lord “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts” (I. Cor 4 : 5). What is therefore cloudy here can often afford to await His “appearing and His kingdom.”

Whoever follows the Lord closely must be passive, misjudged and silent. “Oh, I don’t see that ! ” says one. Well, it is for everyone to “be fully persuaded in his own mind.” Not only have we the Lord Jesus before Pilate for example, but Paul through the Spirit writes, “Why do ye not rather take wrong ? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded ? ” (I. Cor. 6 : 7). We repeat “Why ? ” Again, “Ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise. For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.” (II. Cor. 11).

The Scriptural antidote to self-will, disorder and dissension is found in Phil 2 : 3—“Let nothing be done through strife or **vainglory** ; but in lowliness of mind **let each esteem other better than themselves**. Look not every man on his own things, but every man **also** on the things of others.” The man of the world speaks of “not taking things lying-down,” but children of God are advised not to “walk as men” but to “be followers of God as **dear** children.” The spirit of Jesus, “the meekness and gentleness of Christ,” “the simplicity that is in Christ”—these furnish an ideal which, if in bygone days, had been given due observance, would have gone far to have obviated much of the “doubtful disputations” rending the oneness of God’s people universally. Even to-day many in sectarianism might be gained if, in speaking the Truth, we spoke “the truth in Jesus”—which is “in love,” “in meekness” instructing those that oppose themselves. (II. Tim. 2 : 25).

“Jesus Himself Drew Near.”

AT times the perplexities of life are various, sometimes vexatious, and call for deep exercise of heart and patient waiting upon the Lord. Our finite minds easily obscure things in their issue, by our inability to pierce the low-lying clouds of things earthly, which are eventually dissolved by the rays of “the sun of righteousness.” We need not wait for the glorious sunrise of the fair millennial morn (Mal. 4 : 2) to see things in their true light, for even now the Lord’s countenance in the midst of the Churches is “as the sun shineth in its strength.” (Rev. 1 : 16). “He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgement as the noon-day.” (Psl. 37 : 6). Good indeed to wait upon the Lord, whether now or hereafter, to reveal His approval of our life and labour. Things do not move according to the counsel of our will but according to His. We make just the tiniest ripple on the sea of time, but He controls all things and is “mightier than the mighty waves of the sea.” (Psl. 93 : 4).

Great were the perplexities of Christ’s disciples as their Lord and Master was ruthlessly taken away from them to suffer a violent death. Outwardly it seemed to upset all their hopes, but really the violent death was a vicarious one, and achieved the greatest victory in time, which will resound in glory to all eternity. Well might we say of Him : “Thine . . . is the victory.”

The morn of resurrection found the disciples “much perplexed.” The assuring word from “two men in shining garments” did in measure drive away doubt and brought a little comfort, but the women who were first at the tomb and carried the news that the Lord was risen, seemed to speak “idle tales.” Peter and John might run to see if it were true and find the tomb empty, but were perplexed as to the risen Lord. The position of the grave-clothes spoke of order as well as power in the resurrection, but much yet was baffling.

Cleopas made his way home along with another disciple (would it be his wife, who had stood astonished by the cross of Jesus ? John 19 : 25), and as they walked those seven or eight miles to Emmaus, their countenance and conversation showed they were sad at heart—just an opportune time for the Lord to draw near and relieve their anxiety by revealing Himself. Beautiful and thoughtful the divine record : “Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.” (Luke 24 : 15). He

well knew their thoughts, He entered sympathetically into their distresses as He approached their company. He knew how they communed and reasoned. Comforting thought, He knows "all about our struggles" and sorrows, and as we sometimes sing :

"Though exalted, feels afresh what every member bears" !

Listen to His kindly enquiry : "What manner of communications are these which ye have one to another, as ye walk and are sad ? " He rightly read their hearts and brought from them the surprised question : "Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem and hast not known the things which are come to pass there, in these days ? " "What things ? " says He, Whose knowledge was perfect, but His way of counsel was equally perfect. They relate their version of their Lord's death and the seeming blighted hope of redemption. He listens attentively and then in gentle reproof, yet glorious revelation, says : "Oh fools and slow of heart to believe ALL that the prophets have spoken : ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter His glory ? "

They had believed the prophets in their glowing description of Israel's redemption and kingdom of glory, but seemingly omitted "the suffering of Christ" which preceded these glories. But His reproofs are in the way of life for them as He leads them—"beginning at Moses" and in "all the prophets" He reveals the things concerning Himself. They wondered at the accuracy of the prophetic writings, clear and copious, in their description of His "suffering of death," which was so inexplicable to them.

In their heart the fire of love and worship is kindled. The journey was not weary miles of tedious toil, but oh so short and sweet with such a Comforter and Counsellor ! When they reach home they invite Him in and He responded to their constraint. He loves the constraining where there is no half-heartedness and hypocrisy, but the warm desire of heart aflame to Himself. The One they desired, but did not recognise, is soon revealed as "He took bread and blessed and break it." "Their eyes were opened and they knew Him" and He then vanished out of their sight. Their pent up delight and overflowing joy finds rapturous expression : "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened unto us the Scriptures ?" "He talked by the way." What a conversation and what a walk ! How efficacious it was, for in the unspeakable joy of this manifestation they forsook the

comfort of home, and immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the glad tidings. We picture them, breathless with emotion and excitement, relate their delightful experiences as "Jesus drew near and went with them." Those moments, perhaps hours, the sweetest on earth, were a pleasant foretaste of the heavenly ecstacy in eternal glory with Christ.

Their return visit was well rewarded, for as soon as they had spoken to the disciples, Jesus again reveals Himself and says : "Peace be unto you ! " Strange, the disciples are terrified and affrighted, thinking they had seen a spirit ! But Jesus calms their fears and assures their heart as He said : "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I, Myself : handle Me and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have." To fully convince and comfort them He showed them His hands and feet. With incredulous joy they wondered, as they saw Him Who was pierced. Further delights are theirs as He opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures. What illumination would shine upon "the law of Moses, and the prophets and the Psalms" as He interpreted the things concerning Himself ! Little wonder that even after He had been taken from them and "carried up into heaven," they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. Great joy in His absence as they awaited His Coming again.

Beloved, we cannot have any such experiences as those disciples had the "forty days" He was seen of them, but we may by the Holy Spirit Who indwells us, receive vivid unfolding of the suffering and glories of Christ, even as we journey heavenward. Nothing else is so sweet and sustaining in present reproach with Himself "without the camp," as we ardently long for His Coming and revelation. Until He comes FOR us to give us a glorified body, may we even now manifestly experience His promise : "I will come TO you," (John 14 : 18-23), so in spiritual sweetness He may "draw near," and go with us.

Kirkintilloch,
Glasgow.

R. McCRACKEN.

Matchless ! Supreme !

THE Lord Jesus gave a glorious testimony to His forerunner—
"Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Surely it lends added weight to the words of John—"But one mightier than I cometh, the

latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose." "He must increase, but I must decrease." Sweet in our ears sound also the words of the Psalmist, "Thou art

FAIRER THAN THE CHILDREN OF MEN ;

grace is poured into Thy lips." Our hearts concur with the apostle, "That in all things He might have the pre-eminence." How true the words of the hymn,

" Majestic sweetness sits enthroned
Upon the Saviour's brow :
His head with radiant glories crowned,
His lips with grace o'erflow."
" No mortal can with Him compare
Among the sons of men ;
Fairer is He than all the fair
That fill the heavenly train."

Yet there was one who dared to say, "Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle ?" Water in that hot climate was a necessity, water sweet and pure was a luxury. She realised the labour that was involved, the cost of the gift by Jacob in digging a well of such great depth. As yet she knew not the gift of God, nor the greatness of Him with Whom she spake—He who could give living water to assuage thirst—a gift purchased by Himself at such a terrible cost !

" I've found a friend : Oh, such a friend !
He bled, He died to save me :
And not alone the gift of life,
But His own self He gave me."
" Nought that I have, mine own I'll call,
I'll hold it for the Giver :
My heart, my strength, my life, my all
Are His, and His for ever !"

Jacob gave a well of water, a boon indeed to meet the need of thirsty humanity. A greater giver than Jacob is here, He satisfies a spiritual craving by the giving of Himself. "O God, thou art my God : early will I seek Thee : my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." To meet that spiritual need atonement must be made. Sin had caused separation between God and man. So the Lord Jesus stood in the place of the guilty—"Who His Own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness : by Whose stripes ye were healed." The world also is a snare,

so we read "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world." And now the way to God is opened by the Lord Jesus—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." "Art thou greater than our father Jacob . . who drank thereof himself?—Yes, greater ; the Lord Jesus

" TASTED DEATH

for every man." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

" Death and the curse were in our cup—

O Christ, 'twas full for Thee !

But Thou hast drained the last dark drop—

'Tis empty now for me :

That bitter cup—love drank it up :

Now blessings draught for me."

The children of Israel were forbidden to partake of blood, for "the life of the flesh is in the blood ; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls ; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." But to us, we hear Him say in the upper room : "Drink ye all of it ; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Few have suffered like Jacob. The furnace of affliction was heated hotter for him than for many other men. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver : I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction !" But he never suffered on behalf of others. A greater than Jacob is here ! " Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." There has been only one Gethsemane, only One Whose sufferings caused a bloodlike sweat. In the realm of suffering He has no peer. In the school of sorrow He was an apt pupil. "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered." Jacob could say, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been. I have not attained." A greater than Jacob said, " I have glorified Thee on the earth : I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." The greatest monarch upon the earth at that time bowed his head to receive a blessing from Jacob. A greater than Jacob by far, gives blessings to kings and commoners, rich and poor, old and young. Blessings abound where'er He reigns, the prisoner leaps to loose his chains ; the weary find eternal rest, and all the sons of want are blessed. Well might the apostle say, "Thanks be unto God, for His unspeakable gift !" He

was astounded at the magnitude of the gift, and the magnificence of the Person. Human thought cannot comprehend, nor human language describe the wonders of this superlative gift. **He is beyond compare !**

Middlesbrough,
Yorkshire.

HEDLEY DRAKE.

Jottings from Scripture Readings.

(I. Cor. 4 : 16).

“ **WHEREFORE** I beseech you, be ye followers of me.”
When a person follows Christ it is a very practical life that is needed.

Rev. 3 : 1.—“I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead.” Some have a name to live, but are dead. Formality is insufficient. Many of our ways do not correspond with the life of Christ. We just need to think of the choice the Lord Jesus made at His birth—brought up in Nazareth. There is often class distinction among brethren. (James 2 : 1-4). No mere profession was found in Paul. He could have gained much **naturally**, but in following the Lord was often hungry, naked (I. Cor. 4 : 11-13); in Philippi, for example ; at Lystra he was stoned ; 5 times he received 39 stripes ; in jeopardy amongst the Jews ; no house to dwell in.

Phil. 4 : 11.—“I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” No regular salary, he worked—“these hands have ministered unto my necessities and unto them that were with me.” (Acts 20 : 34). When we are reviled and sneered at for our beliefs, rarely ever do we in return bless. The Lord Jesus on the Cross—“Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” He treated it as their ignorance. Peter also said to his hearers—“I wot that through ignorance ye did it.”

“ His foes might hate, despise, revile ;
His friends unfaithful prove :
Unwearied in forgiveness still,
His heart could only love.”

It is good to pray for those who spitefully use us. We should arise to this standard : “Ye know not what spirit ye are of ; I am not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.” Jesus thus rebuked James and John when they asked for the destruction of their fellows in a certain city that would not receive their Master.

I. Cor. 4 : 12.—“Being persecuted, we suffer it.” In the Philippian jail there was much to discourage. When the flesh suffers we usually revolt. Paul and Silas rather prayed and sang—result ? the salvation of the jailor and his household.

Comfort Corner.

[T was David who said, "I have been young and am now old"
— "I go the way of all the earth."

Naturally, there is a pitiable side to advancing years—"the day when the keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened." (Eccl. 12). "The days of our years are threescore years and ten ; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow ; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." (Psalm 90).

To the child of God, however, there is great comfort in the hour of death. "I reckon," said Paul, "that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8). The very idea of stepping over the threshold through death into the Lord's presence is beyond words to express : no wonder Paul said, "We are confident, I say, and **willing rather** to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." (II. Cor. 5). There is no borrowed joy to such as can say, "I am now ready to be offered and **the time of my departure** is at hand : I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : **henceforth** there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." (II. Tim. 4).

In our boyhood days it was common to hear the expression, "See Naples and die !" The inference was that Naples, being so beautiful, once seen, nothing was left worth seeing : one might as well die. We never think of this without turning to the closing scene of old Simeon giving the lie to the words of Satan, "Skin for skin : all that a man hath will he give for his life." (Job 2). Earth offered nothing as he held the child Jesus in his arms !—he had no more desire to live after seeing in that child the salvation of God ! "Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, **NOW** lettest Thou Thy servant **depart in peace**, according to Thy Word : for mine **eyes have seen** Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people." (Luke 2).

How lovely that scene as the old man Jacob "gathered up his feet into the bed !" Many a day he had "halted on his thigh" since wrestling with the angel, but now "worshipping, leaning upon the top of his staff," with full confidence in the face of death, he gives commandments to his sons. His shrunk-en thigh lifted for the last time on earth in "the certain hope" of his future resurrection to glory with Christ of Whom he prophesied by faith. All our aches and pains, rheumatism and sciatica, will cease forever and will know no experience once we are in our resurrection-body fashioned like unto that of our glorious Lord, Whom we hope soon to see !

W. N. C.

The Bond of Fellowship.

THE truth of God has a binding effect. Error confuses and bursts asunder. Separation is of God, for in the beginning He “divided” the light from the darkness. But “God is not the author of confusion” even in seeming unity.

Meeting into **the Name** of our Lord Jesus Christ **ONLY**, not **names** such as Methodists, Congregationalists, Church of England, Church of Scotland and so on, is the first-essential to fellowship of God. There is universal mourning that all children of God are not one as Jesus desired : let them discard the names of men and “come out” to the **NAME OF JESUS CHRIST as Lord** and the Divine-centre of worship, and this will prove the first-step to the oneness we all long-for !

Whenever a child of God takes to himself the word “sect”—saying, “I am of such-and-such a **sect**” and asking his neighbour, “What **sect** do you belong to ? ”—is he aware that this English word “sect” is the Greek word “schism” condemned by the Spirit of God in I Cor. 12 : 25 ? Why then be in anything condemned by God ? “Is Christ divided ? ” (I Cor. 1 : 13.) Sects are a violation of “the Body of Christ”—“wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate” from the unclean thing !

We are not asserting that there are no children of God in the “sects.” What we do assert is, that such children of God are children away from the House of God and in their wrong place.

It has been stated in the past “that that which binds us together as children of God is greater than anything which can separate or divide us.” What is meant is that “the Blood of Jesus” is the binding-link and therefore, say they, it is wrong to separate from any who are blood-bought. This seems sound, but it is only a part-truth and therefore dangerous policy for the faithful to follow.

“Light” must be added to “Blood” to express true fellowship—the light of truth ! “If we say that we have **fellowship with Him** and walk in darkness, we lie, and **do not the truth** : but if we **walk in the light**, as He is in the light, **WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP ONE WITH ANOTHER**, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (I. John 1 : 6-7). Surely we cannot make the Blood a plea to our own self-will and disobedience ? The Blood of Jesus gave us **life**—being **born** of God—but the light of truth is needed to guide our steps, **to govern the life** in the way of godliness.

This is the answer to, “How can Christians become one again ? ”

Jottings from Scripture Readings.

“To us there is but one God—the Father—of Whom are all things and we in Him ; and one Lord—Jesus Christ—by Whom are all things and we by Him. Howbeit, there is not in every man that knowledge : for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.”—I Cor. 8 : 7.

It is good to be established in the “things” of these verses. There should be no idea as to there being other gods—“no other gods beside Me”—for to us, children of God, there is but one God, “of Whom are ALL THINGS.” Everything we should recognize as coming from God through Jesus Christ, because of His cross-work. This is significant for, some of the Corinthians were still believing “things”—their food particularly—came from idols. It was not easy for them to rid themselves of their inbred traditions.

Others in the Church at Corinth were “stronger in faith” than their brethren and had rid their minds of the idol existing at all. “Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge” and those “strong” in their faith were exhorted to show “love” to their weaker brethren—for while “knowledge” puffed up one against another and was not good, “love” built-up or edified one and all.

In some degree the weakness of the Corinthians while believing Christ and yet yielding to idol-superstition as to receiving their meat through the idolatrous shambles, has a certain correlative to-day. It is wrong for children of God to be constantly referring to what is called “luck.” We believe God to be ordering our path and governing our circumstances. To speak of “luck,” therefore, is to attribute “things” to fortuitous event and not to God and is dangerously near becoming a fatalist.

The word “conscience” in the Greek is literally to “know-together.”

I Cor. 8 : 8—“Meat commendeth us not to God : for neither if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse.” So many children of God to-day still show ignorance of God’s will by abstaining from meats and drinks as though divinely commanded.

I Tim. 4 : 3-4—“Commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of

God is good and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” Food is “sanctified by the Word of God and prayer.” Restrictions as to food, clean and unclean, belong to a past dispensation through the Law of Moses. Christ “nailed to His Cross” the hand-writing of ordinances in these matters of abstinence : therefore we have to “let no man judge us in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.” (See Col. 2 : 16.)

Hebrews 13 : 9—“It is good that the heart be established with grace and not with meats, which have not profited them . . . which serve the tabernacle . . . We have an altar.”

Hebrews 9 : 9-10—“Which stood only in meats and drinks . . . imposed on them until the time of reformation.” Now that “the time of reformation” has come in Christ, meats and drinks no longer “commend us to God” as in that day.

Acts 15 : 20—“That we write unto them (Gentiles) that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.” Here we have abstinence from things strangled “imposed” to prevent setting a stumbling-stone to Moses’ disciples “in every city.” It seems a compromise to the Law to overcome difficulties due to Jews and Gentiles being together in the churches of that day.

Romans 14 : 17—“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.” The principle of faith is seen in verse 23—“**He that doubteth is damned (condemned) if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**” The meat supplied in Corinth came through the shambles, as evidently offered in sacrifice to idols. Those amongst the believers with “weak” consciences were affected and, conscious of the idol, were eating meat as if it had come from an idol, consequently not eating “of faith” toward God in His giving. Those with “strong” consciences were instructed by the Spirit through Paul to regard the consciences of the weaker. They were not to “sit in an idol’s temple” and eat, although in itself the meat would be taken as from God—this for the sake of those who by their example might be “emboldened to eat” without exercising the required faith, which would bring their condemnation. “**Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**”

I Cor. 8 : 10—“For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol’s temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak

brother perish for whom Christ died ? ” To-day a lesson, in a general way, may be learned from these verses. The Holy Spirit would impress how we must consider our brethren and show forbearance to those not so far advanced in knowledge. In the epistle of John we have “children,” “young men” and “fathers” as to knowledge. Paul had great knowledge, but if taking meat or drink was a means to “stumbling” a weaker brother, he would rather restrain himself and eat “no flesh while the world standeth.”

Romans 14 : 22—“Hast thou faith ? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.” Let us be careful in doing certain things “with a good conscience” before God, lest our example “embolden” others to follow, but not in faith. There have been times when certain devout brethren have been deeply exercised about not joining such as the Trades’ Union. They maintained their integrity by faith. Others **imitated** them, but not in faith, simply in admiration. So, in such cases it often occurs that, as in the parable of the seed in stony places, “he hath not root in himself, but dureth for a while : for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended.”

Matchless !—Supreme !

THE Son of God seeking to portray Himself to the people in language they could understand, used these words, “But I say unto you, that in this place is One greater than the temple. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the sabbath day.” The only God given

RELIGION IN THE WORLD HAD DEGENERATED into empty ceremony. That which was meant to point them to Christ had now become a vail upon their eyes and hearts. How greatly they prized the temple ! When the Lord Jesus purified the temple the first time, they said unto Him, “What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things ? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty-and-six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days ? ” King Solomon, famous for his wealth, had lavished all his resources upon it formerly. It was a marvel to the world for its beauty—the marble stone used, the costly mosaic work, the fragrant woods, the glittering roofs, the golden vine sculp-

tured over the entrance, the embroidered vails, the magnificence of the silver, gold, and precious stones used in its construction.

How deep the impression made upon them by His words can be seen in this fact, that three years afterwards they tried to twist His words into evidence against Him ! They used them against Him as He hung upon the Cross. And surely they understood their deepest meaning, for note their words to Pilate when the Lord Jesus lay in the sepulchre. “Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive,

AFTER THREE DAYS I WILL RISE AGAIN.”

The echo of these words, “Destroy this temple,” was a contributory cause to the death of Stephen—“This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law, for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth **shall destroy this place**, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.”

Solomon had said, “But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth ? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee : how much less this house that I have builded ! ” Yet the glory of the Lord filled the house, but later the Lord said, “Where is the house that ye build unto Me ? and where is the place of My rest ? For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My Word.” Now the Spirit of God was abiding in the temple “not made with hands,” even in the sacred body of the Son of God. This was the temple of His body of which He spake—“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”

The actual destruction of their temple the Lord Jesus foretold. “See ye not all these things ? Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” It was the intention of God to raise a better temple, a temple composed of living stones. We who once were dead stones, so to speak, have been drawn out of the darkness of death by the power of God, “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone ; in Whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord ; in Whom ye also are

BUILD TOGETHER FOR A HABITATION

of God through the Spirit”—everyone indwelt by the Spirit of

God, every stone having a wonderful story of redemption, every stone resounding with the praises of God ; “bought with a price,” glorifying God in body and in spirit ! How true His words, that “in this place is One greater than the temple. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the sabbath day.”

In creation God worked six days, and having finished the work, He rested on the seventh day, “And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.” Many years afterwards the sabbath was given to Israel, and made part of the law. It was a sign, and a reminder to them of their separation to God. It was also a wise provision, a complete day of rest for man and beast. How true the words of the Lord Jesus, “The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath !” In Numbers 15 a man was put to death for disobeying the law in regard to the sabbath. But different Rabbis had added to the Word of God, and so we find that the Lord Jesus in the eyes of these narrow-minded formalists was a sabbath breaker—He who instituted the sabbath, the Lord of the sabbath.

But in Luke 6 : 1, it is the disciples who are attacked. Passing through a cornfield, and suffering from the pangs of hunger, they plucked the ears and rubbed away the chaff between their hands. Of course reaping and threshing was a violation of the sabbath, and the Rabbis may have decided that plucking corn was reaping, and rubbing between the palms of the hands was threshing. Therefore, in their eyes, the disciples were liable to be put to death by stoning. According to Deut. 23 : 25 the action of the disciples was in line with the law of God, but not with the law of the Rabbis. The Lord Jesus referred them to the actions of David (at the time of his rejection). David’s deep need lifted his action above a ceremonial law. Jesus also would be a rejected King, and the need of the disciples rendered them blameless. He also pointed out to them that according to the Rabbis, there was “no sabbatism in the temple.” The priests on the sabbath might hew wood, light fires, place hot fresh-baked shewbread on the table, slay victims, circumcise children, and in every way violate the sabbath, and yet be blameless. So the law that had ordained the sabbath also permitted them an expedient, and the reason was, the temple. If the temple was a sufficient excuse for the priests, His disciples also are to be excused, for “a greater than the temple” was there, Lord even of the sabbath, Supreme !

The Individual—and the Individual Church.

“**T**HE seven churches which are in Asia” form the preface to the Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. That He appears as “The Son of Man” depicts Him in character about to judge (John 5 : 27)—firstly, within the churches, then in due course toward the outside world. “Judgement must begin at the house of God : and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ? ” (I Peter 4 : 17.)

Nothing refutes church-independency more than (1) the fact of the Lord “walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks” (churches), giving a personal **link** in Himself; and (2) also that, whatever is spoken by Him to **each** church, is distributed over the remaining six by the words, “He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the **churches**.”

Nevertheless, this very word “He” as having an “ear” shews how church-condition depends so much upon **individual** behaviour. Each church is seen as **one**—addressed as “thou” and “thy” in the 2nd Person Singular, **not** Plural. But it is also noticeable that the 3rd Persons “they” and “he” are prominent when **part** of a church is appealed to to remedy declension or, on the other hand, to receive commendation.

“**Thou** hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments : and **they** shall walk with Me in white : for they are worthy”—“**Thou**” the church as a whole; “**they**” the faithful part.

To Philadelphia **as a church** it is spoken, “I have set before **thee** an open door, and no man can shut it : for **thou** hast a little strength, and hast kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name.” (3 : 7.) But to the following church Laodicea the condition is such that the Lord, Whose place was or should be in the midst, is signified as standing “at the door” knocking, appealing to the **individual** within. “Repent . . . behold, I stand at the door and knock : if **any man** hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in **to him**, and will sup **with him**, and **he with Me**.” (3 : 20.)

Every **individual**, therefore, who becomes “strong in the Lord” automatically strengthens the church with which identified, also the churches as a whole.

“MUSTARD-SEED.”

Comfort Corner.

HUMAN nature usually takes defeat very badly. We have heard of gladiators in the Arena of old who, having advanced from victory to victory by their sword, would rather plunge the dagger into their own heart than live to face defeat.

A brother we knew once said about David, the psalmist, that he had many falls during his lifetime, but there was this to his credit and our example that he always rallied and arose again to his feet ! Happy the child of God who can take knocks, lift up his head again, then face the next onslaught with confidence in his God !

David was once sorely distressed during his stay with Achish of the Philistines. He had offered to fight with the Philistines but their lords discountenanced the idea and David returned to Ziklag. He and his men were horrified to find that the Amalekites had attacked and burned their city in their absence and taken captive their wives, sons and daughters. "Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep . . . and David was greatly distressed, for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters." (I. Sam. 30).

Imagine David's dilemma ! What would **you** have done ? —and what could **he** do ? Nine words show his deep spiritual understanding : "BUT DAVID ENCOURAGED HIMSELF IN THE LORD HIS GOD." He called for the priest, called for the ephod, and enquired at the Lord, saying, "Shall I pursue after this troop ? Shall I overtake them ? And He answered him, Pursue ; for thou shalt overtake them, and without fail recover all." It was a remarkable recovery and stands as a spiritual "pick-me-up" for all children of God dispirited and inclined to give-up—

" When tempted to forsake his God,
And give the contest o'er,
He hears a voice which says, 'Look up'—
'Tis better on before."

Things enter our lives at times producing sorrow and discomfort and we wonder why ? It would not be for our spiritual welfare if things always went as we wished. Discipline under the good hand of our God is needful to mould character, for if we do not suffer adversity, how can we enter into and sympathise and help those of our brethren and sisters needing a helping hand ? We may sometimes think our burden "more than we can bear," but it will help to ease the weight if we consider "that the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world." (I. Peter 5).

"In the day of adversity consider": remember David who, amidst his tears was not too demented that he could not turn his mind and "encourage himself in the Lord his God."

W. N. C.

“A Great House.”

IT does not take a very keen sense of observation to see that the apostles and elders of the early days had their hands full of difficulties. One thing—the daily table of “things common” found the Grecians complaining against the Hebrews about the neglect of their widows. (Acts 6 : 1.) Another thing—the old rite circumcision for Jews being nailed on to justification by grace in Gentiles also raised issue as in Acts 15.

Coming to the epistles to Timothy, viewed with Acts 20, what developments ! Wolves entering from without, from within among overseers men arising, “speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.” This is Acts 20 and prophetic. Link up the Timothy epistles and there is fulfilment. “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me,” says Paul. Names as Hymenaeus, Philetus, and Alexander come under “the contrary part”—men who had “made shipwreck concerning the faith” and whose word ate “as a canker.”

Such is the background to this simile of “a great house” ! Some had led, others had been led, and so it seems a dubiety was left in Paul’s mind as to who was, and who was not. The teachers in question had “overthrown the faith of some,” but if **men** were in doubt there was this assurance—“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, **the Lord** knoweth them that are His; and let everyone that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

This “house” has a master and there are “vessels.” “In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.” “If a man therefore purge himself from these” he would be “a vessel unto honour”—sanctified, meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work. (II Tim. 2 : 21.)

Paul’s dilemma had one solution—“that day !” “Holding faith and a good conscience” his concern now; the Judgment-seat of Christ his confidence against “that day.” “Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come” were his words of counsel to Corinth. To those who were “building” upon Apollos, or Cephas, or Paul he hinted a human-foundation and works that would be “burned up.” “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (I Cor. 3 : 11.)

“A great house” with vessels “unto honour and unto dishonour” does not seem to correspond with “the house of God.” God does not countenance mixture anywhere; holiness is the habitation of His throne and, where Jesus is Lord in the midst, the position demands fear and trembling, “fearful lest we go astray.” To name the Name of Christ means “to depart from iniquity.”

Lebanon's Glory.

DEUT. 3 : 24—"O Lord God, Thou hast begun to shew Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy mighty hand. What God is there in heaven or in earth that can do according to Thy works, and according to Thy might ? I pray Thee let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan,

THAT GOODLY MOUNTAIN AND LEBANON.

But the Lord was wroth with me for your sakes, and would not hear me : and the Lord said unto me, Let it suffice thee; speak no more unto Me of this matter. Get thee up into the top of Pisgah and lift up thine eyes westward and southward, and northward and eastward, and behold it with thine eyes : for thou shalt not go over this Jordan."

Moses is here desirous to enter the good land—how pleasant ! Lebanon speaks of the blessings of God bestowed upon His people and those who dwell in the fear of the Lord. But, alas, Moses !—he cannot enter for his act of disobedience toward God; the Lord denied him the glorious privilege. Ours, too, is to gain the goodly land of our inheritance by faith now before we enter—that sphere where God can bless and the sweet-smelling savour return to God in thanksgiving and praise. But how often we similarly are denied that place; owing to our acts of sin, misdeeds, we keep ourselves from entering that sphere where the joy of the Lord exists.

"Get thee up to the top of Pisgah"—consideration—"and lift thine eyes . . ." Lebanon, compared with Amana, Shenir and Hermon might suggest in order Incense, Truth, Light and Devotion—the glory, the streams, the dew and sweet-smells.

"Will a man leave

THE SNOW OF LEBANON

which cometh from the rock of the field ? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken ? (Jer. 18 : 14.) These snow topped mountains never ceased to supply the valleys, fresh and moist from their melted streams, nor was dew ever lacking. Was ever a land so blessed ? "Will a man cease to leave it ? " Who, even among the heathen, ever heard of such a thing, "yet the virgin of Israel hath done a very horrible thing." (verse 13.) "For My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." (Jer. 2 : 13.) Such was the case, for they had

withdrawn to their own resources—their broken cisterns—which would only fail them in time of need.

Disappointment is often met by those who wait at the world's streams. Resources dry-up, then what of the roots depending? Dried, withered and ready to die, so the soul becomes a desert with no root, no blossom and therefore no fruit! O Lebanon! thy snow and all it gives in streams refreshing would remind us that

“When all created streams are dried,
Thy fulness is the same;
May I with this be satisfied,
And glory in Thy Name.”

“O Israel, return unto the LORD thy God . . . I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his

ROOTS AS LEBANON.

His branches shall be spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and

HIS SMELL AS LEBANON.

They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.” (Hosea 14 : 1, 5-7.)

Moses' desire and prayer was, “Let me see that goodly mountain and Lebanon.” We find in Psalm 133 this suggestive parallel—“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing.” The Lord commanded the blessing! We are introduced to the kingdom sphere—

“The sands of the desert shall flourish in green,
And Lebanon's glory be shed o'er the scene.”

“Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice.” (Psalm 89 : 12.) “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly and rejoice even with joy and singing:

THE GLORY OF LEBANON

shall be given unto it . . . the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.” (Isaiah 35.)
“Springs shall abound.”

Song of Songs 4 : 9—"Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse ! . . . how fair is thy love, my sister my spouse ! how much better is thy love than wine ! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices !"—see Psalm 133 : 2—"Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue, and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon . . . a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and

STREAMS FROM LEBANON."

"Together in unity !"—the highest degree of one ! Fragrant, flourishing, until on the mountain top we hear His voice, saying, "Come with me from Lebanon, from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenir and Hermon, from the lions' dens, from the mountains of the leopards."—"Thou hast ravished my heart !" (Song of Songs 4 : 8.)

California,

MATTHEW STEWART.

Falkirk.

Matchless : Supreme.

THE Lord Jesus makes definite statements—"Behold a greater than Jonas is here"—"a greater than Solomon is here." They had brought to Him a man blind and dumb, possessed with the devil; and He had wrought a wonderful cure. The Pharisees could not deny the fact that a mighty miracle had been performed, but they ascribed the supernatural power to Satan—"This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils." The Lord shows how foolish their words are,—"Every kingdom, city or house divided against itself shall not stand. If Satan cast out Satan, how shall his kingdom stand?" He told them that their evil words came from an evil heart, and every idle word would have to be accounted for in the day of judgement. They then demanded from Him a sign, to prove that He had the authority to speak in such a manner.

Again, He rebukes them by these words, "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the **preaching** of Jonas: and,

BEHOLD, A GREATER THAN JONAS IS HERE."

The contrast here seems to hinge upon the preaching. Jonas went into that great city, and his message was, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." His preaching saved Nineveh. The people believed God. They fasted and put on sack-

cloth from the greatest to the least. They repented and turned away from their evil ways. How different the behaviour of this generation, so greatly favoured in hearing the voice of the Son of God !—

“ Christ the blessed One, gives to all
Wonderful words of life.”

We read that on one occasion they “wondered at the gracious words that proceeded” out of His mouth, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me because He hath anointed Me to **preach** . . .” Also it was said of Him, “Never man spake like this man !” Again it is recorded, “the people were astonished at His doctrine, for He taught them as “one having authority, and not as the scribes.” He often suited His words to their intelligence, speaking of the every day things of life, as one would speak to children.

“He spoke of lilies, vine and corn, the sparrow and the raven,
And words so natural yet so wise, were on men’s hearts en-
graven.

And yeast and bread, and flax and cloth, and eggs and fish
and candles,

See how the whole familiar world, He most divinely handles.”

Believing the words of Jonas brought a temporal deliverance. “Behold a greater than Jonas is here.” He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.” Jonas was a prophet. A prophet is one who speaks forth the message that has been divinely given. Here Jonas failed at first. He was disobedient, and the reason we find in Jonah 4 : 2—“For I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, of great kindness and repentest Thee of the evil.” He knew that God would spare them if they repented and turned away from their wickedness. His motives were poor. Behold a greater prophet is here !—Jesus of Nazareth, Which was a prophet mighty in **deed** and **word** before God and all the people.” Behold a greater servant is here !—“I do **always** the things that please Him.” “Behold My servant, Whom I uphold, Mine Elect in Whom My soul delighteth!”

Behold One actuated by higher motives, and loftier sentiments than Jonas ! Whose heart was “moved with compassion for the multitude.” He sighed when He healed the deaf mute. His tears flowed in sympathy with the sisters at Bethany; Who wept at the calamity about to come upon Jerusalem. For his disobedience Jonas passed through a terrible experience; that experience brought salvation to the gentile seamen, and to the gentile city. Yet it was but a sign of One Who, in His obedi-

ence, passed through the portals of death, went down into Sheol, and rose again from the dead. An incomparably "greater than Jonas is here ! " One Who has brought salvation full and free to millions of gentiles. One Who could say, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

"The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgement with this generation, and shall condemn it : for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the **wisdom** of Solomon; and, behold,

A GREATER THAN SOLOMON IS HERE."

She came a great distance, but He, the Son of God, came down from heaven to them, just where they dwelt, even to their very doorstep. The trait that is brought into prominence here is wisdom. Solomon asked for wisdom, ("By me kings reign") and this pleased God so much that He gave him also that for which he had not asked, riches and honour—making him the greatest king of his day. His wisdom was shown in solving the problem of the two harlots and the living babe. The threat of dividing with the sword bringing out the love of the true mother. The hard questions of the Queen of Sheba were answered, for she said, "It was a true report that I heard of thy wisdom." Truly the wisest man on the earth! But a **wiser** than Solomon is here! "Christ the power of God, and **the wisdom** of God." In a by-gone eternity, He was the "Wonderful Counsellor." "Counsel is Mine, and sound wisdom : I am understanding : I have strength."

Wisdom personified, He was the thought of God regarding creation. As the Word He spake worlds into existence. As the Word made flesh, He shewed forth the wisdom of God. Hear His verdict in the case brought before Him of the woman taken in open sin ! Guilt in the presence of stainless purity, misery brought before Mercy ! Moses, in the Law, commanded, "stone" her. "But what sayest Thou ? " It was a custom of the Jews to bring any doubtful case before a distinguished Rabbi. Would He uphold the Law and belie His own compassionate behaviour? or would His decision be contrary to the Law, and His own words ? They had heard Him say, "Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Now what will He say ? Mark the wisdom of His reply ! "Let him that is without sin among you, first cast the stone at her." This was upholding the Law, but making them the judges and also the executioners. He knew that they were all guilty of the very sin they were bringing to His notice. And He judged them through their own conscience.

In Matth. 22 we find His wisdom again tested. First, the Herodians with their question, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not ? " To answer "Yes ! " would not be in accord

with the popular conception of Messiah, "King of the Jews." To answer "No !" would be open revolt against the power of Rome. Surely He cannot escape this trap ! Divine wisdom was again manifested in His reply, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Next He answers the Sadducees and the Pharisees and the chapter closes with the words, "And no man was able to answer Him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask Him any more questions."

But the gift of wisdom to Solomon degenerated into foolishness, because he heeded not the Word of God. (Deut. 17 : 14-20.) Instruction there for a king was plainly given, yet Solomon multiplied horse, wives, gold and silver. His navy brought him gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. Between genius and madness there seems to be only a line; very clever people are often eccentric. But Solomon here seems to deliberately choose the experience of both. He said, "And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly." (Eccles. 1 : 17.) To mention horses would speak to us of war, and defence. God would have been his defence. His wives brought him to idolatry. He described a virtuous woman as "far above rubies." (Prov. 31 : 10). Amongst all the women he chose, there was not one. If he had left the choice to God, He would have given him one. Gold and silver for wealth and luxury. Ivory for display and polish. Apes for folly, and peacocks for pride and vanity.

How different the greater than Solomon

"THE KING OF KINGS !"

He rode upon the ass's colt, in obedience to the Word of God. (He will ride a white horse, in God's time); God is choosing a Bride for Him ; All that the Father giveth Me, shall come to Me." He who was so rich, came down into poverty. The stable, the manger, no place to lay His head, a borrowed grave! Instead of display and polish, He was clothed in purity and meekness. "Consider the lilies of the field, even Solomon in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these." "For he shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground : he hath no form or comeliness : and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." The badger skin, so to speak, concealed His glory from the carnal eye, yet there were those who could say, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Instead of folly, pride and vanity, "I am meek and lowly of heart." "A wise son maketh a glad father." "A greater than Solomon is here." The vision of the glory of this great King, enabled Stephen to die gladly, and Paul to live so as to "count everything else as dung, that he might win Christ." A greater than Jonas, a greater than Solomon is here—beyond compare, supreme, **Pre-eminent !**

Middlesbrough,
Yorkshire.

HEDLEY DRAKE.

Comfort Corner.

AS the eagle stirreth up her nest." The little eaglets in the nest, simply opening their mouths for food sought and found by mother, must be stirred up to self-responsibility. They must use their own wings.

There is always the fear among God's people of settling down on earth, forgetting we are called out to Him and made "strangers and pilgrims on the earth." In Moab the word of Moses was, "The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount : turn you, and take your journey." (Deut. 1 : 6-7.) There must be a weaning from things "on this side Jordan." "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" is an Old Testament warning that earthly prosperity is often dangerous to spiritual growth. There is reason to watch and pray

"When the sky above is glowing,
And around thee all is bright."

Peter writes to "the strangers scattered." James also sends greeting "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad." This seems to be two ways of addressing the same people, for the mind goes to the opening of Acts 8 which reads, "At that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem, and they were all scattered abroad."

To see the Church of God "increasing in number daily" as at Jerusalem is what most, anxious for God's testimony, delight to see. But in those primitive days it is edifying to note how the Lord allowed such persecution and scattering: what could be the reason? It was God's mind in Genesis that those from the Ark should spread and "replenish" the earth, but at Babel they were contradictory, doing this and that "lest we be scattered," said they. Scattering therefore, in God's method, is often the way to "multiplying;" for, again, if the Spirit had not said to Paul and others, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" the Gospel of God's grace may not have reached these shores of Britain.

No sooner had James opened his epistle with greeting than he added, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." This is strange language to the natural mind. It is even stranger when, in the same chapter further down, "the rich" man is exhorted to "rejoice" in that he is "made low."

Peter, likewise in his epistle, stresses the mind of the Lord that they were not to think it "strange concerning the fiery trial" which was to try them, "as though some strange thing happened" unto them.

Reader, take comfort!—when things seem to be black and all goes wrong, think! Think of the eagle stirring up her nest; think of the Lord, kindly and good, working in you "that which is good" through the channel of adversity.

W. N. C.

Strangled Faith.

TO speak of "strangled faith" may seem strange, but our meaning will be understood better when we refer to the teaching of the Lord upon faith.

The work of God needs faith in us, and many of us strive and strive in the work of seeking souls for Him without success. May it not be that the faith we endeavour to exercise is strangled by another condition escaping our notice ?

In Mark 11 our Lord had cursed a fig tree. He had been hungry, had come to it for figs and found only leaves, whereupon He said, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." Next day the tree was "dried up from the roots" and Peter said, "Master, behold, the fig tree which Thou cursest is withered away." "Have faith in God," He replied. He then spoke about faith removing a mountain and casting it into the sea. This would surely be done if no "doubt" were in the heart—"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, **WHEN YE PRAY**, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them, **AND WHEN YE STAND PRAYING . . .**"

We have broken the sentence here to give it emphasis. Faith begins—"What things soever ye desire"; faith proceeds—"when ye pray"; faith qualified—"and when ye stand praying, **FORGIVE . . .**" What has forgiveness to do with faith ? A great deal, for "the prayer of faith" here taught may be strangled if, in attempting it, the brother praying has neglected to forgive, "if he have aught against any."

"When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any : that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses."

It would therefore seem sound principle to say that before anyone attempts even to consider exercising faith in God he must firstly say to himself, "Have I any trespasses ? I must clear my conscience, then. But will God forgive me ? It depends !—has anyone trespassed against me ? Yes—so-and-so ! But, Lord, I forgive him !" The sky above is now clear for faith to begin. But it remains, on the other hand—"BUT if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father . . . forgive your trespasses." So, then, what becomes of your faith ? Will God hear ? Not if you have not forgiven your brother his trespasses. Faith is strangled.

The disciples asked their Lord to teach them to pray. It is here in Mark 11 for our learning what first to do when we stand up to pray. True prayer should begin with confession, proceed with forgiveness to others, and so be on good terms with our heavenly Father and "receive" responses to faith. Faith must be pure.

“The Lord looketh on the Heart.”

It is very affecting to be conscious of “the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do,” for appearances may deceive men, but never God. How humbling is this as we are searched as to our sincerity. Our God is a God of truth, doing no iniquity, so He desires truth in the inward parts, for it is what a man is inwardly He considers the real proof. If one is right within there will not be lacking the outward correspondence. Many only delight in sentiment and superficiality and trouble not to discover what is spiritual. God is infinite in knowledge as well as foreknowledge, and He knows the heart whence spring all man’s motives and imaginations. Of the heart it was asked : “Who can know it ? ” “I the Lord search the heart,” is the answer. (Jer. 17 : 9, 10.)

Long ago He looked down from heaven and it grieved Him to see in man “every imagination of the thoughts of his heart, was only evil continually.” (Gen. 6). The creature brought Him no gladness but grief, so His judgement purified the earth. To Noah He said : “Thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation,” so the effects of grace were seen. When God chose and called Abram He revealed His pleasure and raised up one for His glory. Speaking of Abraham afterwards He said : “I KNOW HIM,” (Gen. 18 : 19) and in that wonderful confession of Nehemiah 9, we read: “Thou . . . didst choose Abram . . . and foundest his heart faithful before Thee.” No little wonder so much blessing is through faithful Abraham instrumentally.

The trials of Israel in the wilderness were the Lord’s discipline, as it is written : “To humble thee and to prove thee, to know whether thou wouldest keep his commandments or no.” (Deut. 8 : 2). How searching is this, for we may be found faithful or foolish, a source of gladness or of grief unto the Lord !

The words which head our article were spoken by the Lord to Samuel when he sought to find the man God had chosen to be king. Samuel, so singular for his sincerity, was not clear on the one God desired. The eldest son of Jesse seems to be the one, but the timely correcting reproof comes : “The Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” (I. Sam. 16 : 7). Alas, if

we only see as man sees for then we walk as men and consider most important the countenance and height of stature ! We are so easily deceived, firstly in our own heart. The first fruit of disobedience is in our own heart which soon departs from the living God and it takes not much to deceive us; sometimes it involves the long road of correction from corruption, which only comes by confession and contrition. Initial disobedience to the Word is fraught with much danger. Good to have the commendation : “ye obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.” (Rom. 6 : 17.) This moulds us to the will of God. Obedience is from the heart, so disobedience also begins there. Backsliding begins in the heart. Solomon wisely said : “Keep thy heart with all diligence (or above all keeping) for out of it are the issues of life.” (Prov. 4 : 23.) If the heart is not kept diligently the things we esteemed highly for the Lord's sake will be parted with easily.

David was a man of heart exercise, for the Lord Who does not err said : “I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after Mine Own heart, which will fulfil all My will.” (Acts 13 : 22; Psl. 89 : 20.) Unlike Saul, David was a man of patience, and waited on the Lord to place him on the throne, and finally brought all his enemies down. Not without failure, for which he suffered sorely and repented sincerely. It is delightful to read the Lord's word about him as the faithful shepherd of his people: “so he fed them according to the integrity of his heart and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.” (Ps. 78 : 72.) He was a man whose heart and hand were in the work, for he himself knew the care of the GREAT SHEPHERD. (Ps. 23.) It were good to see a similarity in those who feed the flock of God, to-day. (I Pet. 5 : 2-4.)

Every man of old whom God used had heart exercise before Him, so may we be cleansed and contrite and so enjoy reviving and revelation from God. We do not pursue the subject meantime but may we all be exercised as David and say : “Search me, O God, KNOW MY HEART.” (Ps. 139 : 23.) Oh to be conscious of Him Who walks in the midst of the churches and says : “all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts : and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.” (Rev. 2 : 23.)

The Essence of Faith to reveal.

Hebrews 11.

THE essence of faith consists in receiving without question what God has revealed. It is defined as a trust in God. It gives substance to unseen things, things of which Scripture speaks, making us act upon the conviction of their reality.

Luke 2 : 7.

“And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger.” This verifies the arrival of One, Emmanuel, spoken of in the Old Testament. It also indicates or reveals to us the first coming of Christ. At the very time the birth occurred we find there were also some shepherds in the field : “Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them”—more so, the angel of the Lord spoke to them, saying, “Fear not, for I bring you good tidings of great joy, for unto you this day is born in the city of David, a Saviour Who is Christ the Lord.” Also about the same time there “came wise men from the East” who had been informed about Christ being born among men. These men were heaven-summoned to go to the scene of the birth of the Son of God and would reveal a gathering unto Himself of those who had the essence of faith necessary in all to whom God would reveal.

We, like the shepherds, have heard the tidings of joy, for God has revealed to us the birth of Christ. Through faith we have seen Him in the manger, seen Him entering Jerusalem, most of all we have seen Him on the Cross as He was crucified for our transgressions and mocked for our iniquity. Like Simeon we say, “Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people.”

I Corinthians 2 : 9.

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

I Corinthians 15.

Paul could say, “Behold, I shew you a mystery—we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.” This mystery, hidden previously, is a truth now divinely revealed, but in which the supernatural still remains despite the revelation.

Acts 1 : 11.

The angel of the Lord said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven, this same Jesus which is taken up from

you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Although primarily His coming to earth, this Scripture has within its compass a similarity to that of His coming to the air for us. He has gone to prepare a place for us, but will come again and receive us to Himself.

John 16 : 22.

"Ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." This will certainly be ours when He comes to mid-air, coming from the right hand of God to take His own into the reception-chamber prepared for His bride. "With a shout, with the archangel voice, with the trump of God" we shall all change into the image of the heavenly, into the perfect beauty of divine holiness : there must be a change, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever." "We are troubled but not distressed, we are perplexed but not in despair, persecuted but not forsaken." "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Look not at the things which are seen, which fade away, but at the things which God has, and will reveal to us through the essence of faith—they are eternal, for "we walk by faith, not by sight."

James 5 : 7.

"Be patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it until he receive the early and latter rain. Stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

"For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise . . . but is long-suffering to us-ward." "Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober."

Mark 14 : 37.

"And He cometh and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou ? Couldst not thou watch one hour ? " Let us be counted worthy to stand before the Son of God !—"for what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming ? "

II. Cor. 5.

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” We are meantime in “the bondage of corruption,” waiting to be “delivered into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

Harthill,
Lanarkshire.

JOHN MORRISON.

Foreshadowings of the Glory.

IN John 12 : 19, 20, we have a foreshadow of the prophetic word in Zech. 8 : 20-23, 14, 16, fulfilled in view of that coming glorious rest. See also Isa. 56 : 1-8 with Acts 8 : 27, 28. The Eunuch as representative of the Queen of the Ethiopians, coming and returning to and from Jerusalem, to worship at the appointed seasons. “BEHOLD, THE WHOLE WORLD IS GONE AFTER HIM.” And certain Greeks desire to see Him. “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn (again) unto Jehovah. And all kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee.” (Ps. 22 : 27; Dan. 7 : 13, 14; see also Ps. 72). “The prayers of David are ended” because the King is on the throne, and he has all that heart could wish. The rich do not oppress the poor, neither do the poor put forth their hands to steal, for all need is fully supplied. “Prayer shall be made for Him continually, and daily shall He be praised.” “And men shall bless themselves in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed. And blessed be His glorious Name for ever.”

Then reading John 12 : 37-41 with Isa. 25 : 7; I. Cor. 3 : 1, the face of the covering cast over all peoples; and the veil that is spread over the nation of Israel . . . swallowed up; and the whole earth full of His Glory, shadowed forth according to Isa. 6. Now Isa. 6 comes in his book before chap. 53, but in John 12 according to the words of Jesus in the spirit of prophecy, the sufferings of Christ come before His Glories. Our Saviour Jesus Christ in His appearing (and descent into the lower parts of the earth) hath nullified death, and hath brought life and incorruptibility to light through the Gospel. Thus the the Gospel of the Glory in John 12 shadows forth the liberty of the glory that Creation and the children of God long for, as it is

written in Rom. 8 : 19-23. Then, the Hope of Creation, liberation from the bondage of corruption, to share in the Glory of Him Who is the Head of all Creation. "He hath set His glory above the heavens." (Ps. 8). And when He so revealed Himself to Isaiah as King of Glory, high and lifted-up, it was as the great and wealthy one sitting on His throne, the thrice holy Jehovah of hosts. And all this while JUDAH'S THRONE WAS EMPTY, and their leprous king, Uzziah, in death, for his sin of presumption in pride of heart, to unite kingship and priesthood the civil and ecclesiastical power in his own person in the Holy Place, as well the man of sin : but he is destroyed. The Glory fills the temple, and fills the earth by the presence of the King of Glory on the throne of His Glory in His coming down to reign over the earth.

"His feet shall stand on that day on the Mount of Olives, and it shall cleave in the midst causing a very great valley, and His enemies shall flee, like as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah : And Jehovah my God shall come, and all His holy ones with Him." (I Thes. 2.) (Zech. 14 : 4, 8.) The great battle fought at the Cross by Christ alone, rendered the Devil powerless, so that as a beaten enemy he is cast out of heaven, and the heavens cleansed : then cast out of the earth into the abyss, the earth is cleansed and liberated from the bondage of corruption passed upon it through the fall of man. "He cursed the ground for man's sake," and the brute creation came under it likewise; for the first man, Adam, was head over all, and thus his fall affected all—the human family, the brute creation of all flesh, in land, sea and air, and the material earth with all its reproduction.

JOHN STEPHEN ("At Home with the Lord.")

"The wicked borroweth and payeth not again: but the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth; for such as be blessed of Him shall inherit the earth, and they that be cursed of Him shall be cut off."

Psalm 37 : 21-22.

Comfort Corner.

BLIND Bartimaeus was deeply conscious of his great need. He was unable to distinguish light from shadow; his life now was spent in a darkness as dense as the darkness of that night in Egypt. The wonderful beauty of nature was a sealed book to him. Well might he cry for mercy to the Lord Jesus ! How soothing to his troubled soul came the words "Be of good comfort, rise : He calleth thee." The blindness of Bartimaeus, the hunger and rags of the prodigal son, the helpless victim upon the Jericho road, speak to us of our condition and need, in our natural state. Sweet indeed the words of pardon addressed to each of us "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee !"

He washed the bleeding sin-wounds,

And poured in oil and wine !

He whispered to assure me,

"I found thee, thou art Mine."

I never heard a sweeter voice,

It made my aching heart rejoice !

His pardon is a gift beyond price yet it prepares us for something even sweeter—the comfort of His presence. God's word to Moses was, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." His disciples in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, facing a contrary wind, heard the comforting words "Be of good cheer : it is I : be not afraid."

"Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go." How often we have proved this glorious truth, in the storms of life. The sick-bed with long days, and the weary watches of the night, yet His presence known in a greater measure than in days of health. "Jesus Himself drew near and went with them." And when a great sorrow comes, seeming almost to engulf the soul in despair, a blow causing faith to stagger, and even perhaps to rebel, remember to "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee : He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."

"In the days of His flesh" the prophecy of old was fulfilled, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." Now in the glory He is still engaged on our behalf. "For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities . . . Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." "These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation : but be of good cheer : I have overcome the world." As Son of God, all power belonged to Him, as Son of Man He could say, "All power is given unto Me." Again He says "As Thou hast given Me power over all flesh." He "destroyed him who had the power of death," so now He has power over the world, the flesh and the Devil. What need we more to sustain here below ? "Be of good cheer" brings to us His pardon, His presence, His power.

"Thy touch has still its ancient power :

No word from Thee can fruitless fall !"

Middlesbrough.

HEDLEY DRAKE.

“**W**HO is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you ? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness and wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” (James 3 : 13-16.)

“All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.” (Gal. 5 : 14-16.)

“Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” (Romans 13 : 14.)

“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh : yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are past away ; behold all things are become new ; and all things are of God.” (II Cor. 5 : 16-18.)

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world : but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think ; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” (Romans 12 : 1-3.)

“Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works : shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God ; thou doest well : the devils also believe, and tremble.” (James 2 : 18-19.) “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat : all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do ; but do not ye after their works : for they say, and do not.” (Matt. 23 : 2-3.)

“They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 6 : 5.) “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled ; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4 : 13.)

“For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye ? do not even the publicans the same ? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others ? do not even the publicans so ? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Matt. 5 : 46-48.)

“Be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children ; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and hath given Himself for us.” (Ephesians 4 : 32 ; 5 : 1.)

Church Building.

Notes of an Address by G. Thomson. (Glasgow 19.11.22).

THERE was nothing in Corinth when Paul went there, nothing for God, we mean, nothing that He could own. Paul lays himself out to lay in Corinth a good foundation. In Acts 18 we see him at his work, at his labour. "We are labourers together with God." He is labouring, and what is the burden of his message? It is "that Jesus is the Christ." Many hearing, believing, were baptized. Very like the results of Peter's preaching in Acts 2. "Hearing, believing, were baptized and added." Not added and then baptized. What were these saints in Corinth added to? The address of the letter is, "To the Church of God in Corinth." Some ask, "where is your scripture for keeping dear saints from the table?" We don't seek Scripture for that, but we do seek to bring them forward, but by the Book, and there's only one Book, and we have only One Lord.

"God's husbandry." It is lovely. It is just like a little garden, hedged round about, God's property. He expects to get fruit out of it (Eph. I); to get "Praise, praise, praise." The first time I had a garden I didn't grudge any labour upon it; I expected results . . . The Corinthians follow the lines of Acts 2, the footsteps of the flock left on record for us to follow. "Let your women keep silence in the Churches." I am calling attention to this because it is the plain Word of God in contradistinction to what we read concerning **the Church which is His Body**, where there is "neither male nor female." When the subject of the husband and wife is taken up, it is in order to illustrate the relationship between Christ and the Church which is His Body, the union existing between the Head and the members. **But in the Church of God** in Corinth, there were "male and female." In the Ephesian and Colossian epistles, we read exhortations to children, "Children obey your parents." So there must have been children in these assemblies, and very young children at that. Nationalities and relationships do not sink then, in Churches of God. In Rom. 16, "Not only I give thanks, but **also** all the Churches of the Gentiles." You mind when Paul was getting into trouble at Philippi, he challenges them, was it lawful to beat him, a Roman, and uncondemned? Down here as men amongst men, and women amongst women, our relationships in this respect are, rather than obliterated, intensified and enhanced.

All nationalities and relationships sinking in the Church which is His Body, are looked at from the heavenly standpoint.

In I. Tim., 3, we read, “If a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?” “How shall he take care?” “How shall he take care of the Church of God?” This is to shew the marked distinction between the Church of God and the Church which is the Body of Christ. The care of the Church and Churches of God is in human hands, in the hands of men, erring men, failing men, whereas the Church which is His Body is kept intact by HIMSELF entirely. We read of some “creeping in,” (men that should not be in) “Brought in,” of “wolves entering in,” into the Church of God. We don’t expect wolves in the Church which is His Body, biting and tearing one another there. The Master-Builder, Who said, “I will build,” will make no mistakes like that. “As for God, His way is perfect”; His work is perfect. In Acts 2 the together-saints have not got their title yet. We turn over a few leaves and read of them in chapter nine, as “disciples,” followers of the Lord, Who said, “Follow Me.” They have taken up their Cross and followed Him. Saul is breathing out threatenings. In chap. 8 the Church in Jerusalem got its name, but not its full name. We have to turn to I. Cor. 15 for that. “I persecuted the CHURCH OF GOD.” He estimated his own worthlessness in view of his treatment of the “Church of God.” In Gal.—“I persecuted the Church of God and wasted it.” Wasted it? Yes. So when you hear that the Church is in ruins, just ask, “Which Church?”

Rom. 11 : 36, “Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things.” “Of Him, through Him, to Him.” You get the force of the words “the Church **of God**” as you read this, and as you read down the first of Romans, “Of God, of God, of God,” seven times over. First, “The Gospel **of God**,” then, “The Son **of God**,” and next, “the beloved **of God**.” “**BE-LOVED OF GOD**,” this should warm our hearts, to know ourselves to be the objects of His love. “Of God,” “Beloved of God,” it brings us to the fountain-head, to the first cause, to the Source. Oh, what value and comfort it gives to this, “a Church **OF GOD**.” It is “**OUT OF HIM**.” It is HIS as He is the Cause of its existence. “Of Him, and through Him, and to Him.” It is all “Him,” “Him,” “Him.” It is His very Own. The dearest thing on earth to the heart of God, is a Church of God. The only sphere on earth where He expects, and where

it is possible, that His will can be learned and done. The Church of God is the standing witness to the Devil of his coming overthrow, and a testimony to the truth, that the will of God will yet be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Matchless ! Supreme !

THOSE greatly favoured disciples, Peter, James and John, saw the mighty **power** of the Prince of Life in the house of Jairus. At a later date they saw His dreadful agony in the Garden. But on the mountain they were taken aside to see His **glory**. How great an impression that awe-inspiring sight must have made upon them ! Surely it was intended to brace them for the ordeal of the Cross, that they might view with anointed eyes the humiliation, and the indignities heaped upon Him.

When the Lord Jesus passed through the temptations in the **wilderness**, angels of God came to Him. This was a preparation for His **work of life**. When upon **the mount**, His decease the topic, the **work of death** being prepared for, His visitors—Moses and Elijah—were those who had passed beyond **death**. Both had been alone on the mount of God, both had fasted forty days. They had passed away from this scene in an unusual way. Moses had been buried by God, and Elijah translated into Heaven. The disciples only just awakened from sleep, saw the glory of the Lord—truly

A MAGNIFICENT SIGHT !

His face shining like the sun, and His garments white, white as the light, white as the virgin snow ! How greatly favoured to see and to be present in that company ! They fain would have prolonged the delightful experience—"Lord, let us build three tabernacles." But even these two mighty men of faith, Moses and Elijah, must not be placed on the same plane as the Lord Jesus. God spake from the glory-cloud, "This is My beloved Son, hear Him ! " When the cloud passed they saw no man, save Jesus only. A greater than Moses, a greater than Elijah is here. They were wonderful servants, and mighty men for God; but just men of like passions as we are, fashioned also from the clay. Their glorious victories, and their grievous failures are recorded by the Holy Spirit for our learning. By their mistakes we should fortify ourselves against the evil one. Satan overcame both these mighty men by attacking them at

their strongest points, where we would have thought them least likely to fall. How true the words of the apostle, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

Solomon, the **wisest** man in all the earth, became a fool. Moses, the **meekest** man in all the earth, spake unadvisedly with his lips. Surely we could say Elijah, the **bravest** man in all the earth, became a coward. "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." How sorely the murmurings of the children of Israel tried him ! "Hear now, ye rebels ! must we fetch you water out of this rock ? " It was said of a greater than Moses, "Christ also suffered for us,

LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE

that ye should follow His steps : Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth : Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again, when He suffered, He threatened not."

Mark the bravery of Elijah. Standing all alone at Mount Carmel, he faced the hosts of idolatrous priests and their chief, Ahab. Yet a woman's empty threat caused him to stampede into the wilderness. A greater than Elijah, knowing all things, stood before all the hosts of darkness and their chief Satan. With Jew and Gentile united against Him also. He could not be turned away. "Get Thee out, and depart hence : for Herod will kill Thee." But he replied, "Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do

CURES TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW,

and the third day I shall be perfected." He knew every step of the way. He knew the awful depths He had to fathom. Shall we ever know the dreadful price that He paid for our redemption ?—

"But none of the ransomed ever knew

How deep were the waters crossed ;

Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through,
Ere He found His sheep that was lost."

God said to Noah, "Come thou and all thy house into the ark : for thee have I seen righteous before Me in this generation." In a world of wickedness, Noah was a just man and walked with God. He was the most righteous man upon the earth. But his history tells us that he "also was flesh." A greater than Noah is here ! Hannah said, "There is none holy as the Lord." "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vultures eye hath not seen : the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." Surely this

means nature cannot walk there. Nature's keenest vision cannot see it, nature's most powerful cannot force a passage. This is the path the Saviour trod. Never the slightest deviation! "I have set the Lord alway before me; because He is at My right hand, I shall not be moved." Every deed, word and thought, in perfect harmony with God! More noble than even the most noble of His apostles! Paul when smitten by the servant of the High Priest, in a flash of anger said, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." He retracted the words at once. A greater than Paul is here. Placed in the same position, smitten by a servant of the High Priest. He answered quietly, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?" In reading the trial of the Lord Jesus, we find these words, "They sought false witness against Jesus, to put Him to death." Deliberate lies against Him Who could say "I am the truth." False witness against "the Faithful Witness!" Speaking of Him, God said, "I have given Him for a witness to the people." When the false witness failed, although hounded on by the High priest, Caiaphas said, "Answereth Thou nothing?" I adjure Thee by the living God, that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Picture this scene, a bound defenceless prisoner: the failure of the false witness: and such a question from the High Priest, seeking to incriminate by His own words the Lord Jesus! When he gained his end by these illegal means, he rent his robes, also illegal. (Lev. 10:6; 21:10). A greater than Caiaphas is here! "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek." "But this man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." When brought before Pilate, the judge who publicly confessed "I find in Him no fault at all," yet condemned Him to a cruel death. A greater than Pilate is here! "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgement unto the Son," "Because He hath appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained: whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." "Now Barabbas was a robber," and a murderer, yet the people clamoured for his release. Surely the world has had robbery and murder released to them by that choice. A greater is here! One Who came not to take away life—"I

am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” Truly He is Matchless, Supreme ! We read of those wonderful heroes of faith—“of whom the world was not worthy.” Then the Spirit directs our gaze to One exceedingly greater—“Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith”—He who could say, “Before Abraham was, I am,” now is made higher than the heavens, “the first fruits of them that sleep.” He says, “I am the First and the Last.” He gives the joy of the knowledge of sins forgiven now. He gives a peace that passes all understanding. He is the Prince of Peace. God has “anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows.” If all the love that has ever been on the earth were placed into one heart, it could not compare with that great heart of love that met the Roman spear. **Incomparable, Supreme, Pre-eminent, Matchless.**

“ Come, let us sing the matchless worth
And sweetly sound the glories forth
Which in the Saviour shine.”

“ Jesus ! our Saviour, Shepherd, Friend :
Prophet, and Priest, and King :
Our Lord, our Life, our Way, our End,
Accept the praise we bring ! ”

Middlesbrough,
Yorkshire.

HEDLEY DRAKE.

THINGS WORKING TOGETHER.

BIBLE quotations used over and over again often become distorted, worldly property. A man or woman by disappointment has been heard to say, “Oh, you know, all things work together for good.” But to the man or woman of the world, things do not so work-out, for “the sorrow of the world worketh death” we read. No ; to be correct, it is “ TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD ” that “all things work together for good” ; it is to children of God only, for they are “called” within God’s “purpose” and He makes fit-in every rising circumstance. “ TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD ! ” How do we know who loves God ?—for quite a number of people generally will contend that they love God. “If ye love Me,” said Jesus, “keep My Commandments.” To whom do all things work together for good ? “Them that love God.” Who are they that love God ? They who keep His commandments. Be assured, dear child of God, that no matter what happens, so long as you walk in godliness, God will see all turns to “good” in the end.

Comfort Corner.

OLD age can be the result of infirmity, but it is often a mental condition. When some reach "the forty line" they begin to imagine their becoming old—"not so young as we used to be" is the common precaution to vigorous action. Eternal hope in the breast is a good antidote to thinking old, to set the mind beyond and grow into the glorious things that "never grow old" and where the song of the redeemed is ever "a new song" about "the young Lamb."

It must have **enlivened** the poor, down-trodden slaves in Egypt to hear of the land of promise "flowing with milk and honey"! None of us can fully appreciate the **disappointment** of Moses, on the other hand, pleading with the Lord to be allowed to go over Jordan into the goodly heritage! The joy of anticipation goes far to stave off being cast-dwn and feeling old, for the "strength is renewed like the eagles" as we "wait upon the Lord." (Isaiah 40 : 28-31.)

Forty years old was Caleb when, as one of the twelve spies sent by Moses, he set foot upon the soil of Canaan. Ten of the twelve by their report of the land made the people's heart melt—not so Caleb! By his glowing report, as much as saying that the feared giants "would be bread"—a mere bite—he reversed the "slander upon the land." **Forty-five** years after this—at 85 years—hear him! "Now behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty years . . . lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me : as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day . . .". His heart was on his inheritance and, with the Lord's blessing, eighty-five young maintained the vigour of his early days. No inferiority complex! No senile decay! There is no pleasure in feeling old—

"Let none hear you idly saying, 'There is nothing I can do,'

While the souls of men are dying, and the Master calls for you." --for the only "retirement" that "Paul the aged" knew was when, as it is said, he laid his head upon the executioner's block.

We have no doubt that, prior to the children of Israël's disobedience in the wilderness, as the cloud lifted and went forward the hearts of the people would lift with it and rejuvenate. "It beckoned forward to the heritage of light," so that "as the cloud lifted," said one, "up went Joseph's bones!" It is not good to be constantly dwelling in thought upon "change and decay in all around I see" : Joseph's bones were a reminder of death in the camp, but the lifting cloud, of the land and life beyond, for to us it has been said, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die."

The Lord may come to-day, then what happiness in full! The sight of His blessed face would light up our countenance forever. Do you not feel a thrill through your soul at the very thought? Why feel old when, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" those "pleasures for evermore" may just be round the corner?

W. N. C.

“Fishers of Men.”

WHAT is astounding in the days of the Lord upon earth is to see His ability to turn everything to good account. “I will make” He says—“I will make”—what? “Follow Me and **I will make** you fishers of men” is the appeal to the faith of the poor Galilean fishermen. If He “make” the fish to bite, it matters not the circumstances—fish “in season or out of season.” It is ours to cast the net, or throw the hook—catch the crowd in the deep, or the individual in the shallows—it is His to draw the fish.

Now that the Summer weather turns the desire to the open-air, let us cease our moaning about “not getting the people in.” Out!—out!—“into the highways,” again, “into the by-ways!”—“tell the poor wanderers a Saviour has died!”

Luke 5 opens with this fact—“The people pressed upon Him to hear the word of God.” He therefore forms a water-barrier and, entering Simon’s ship, thrusts out a little from the land. From this platform(!), free from crowd pressure, He gives the Word they crave. “I will draw all men unto Me.”

There is the fact, and **here** is the sequel for our learning! “Launch out into the deep!” “Let down your **nets** for a draught!” But, says Peter, “We have toiled all night and caught nothing.” “Nevertheless, **AT THY WORD** I will let down the **net**.” Why a “net” when He said “nets”?—was it just “a try-on” which, if the one net succeeded, the others would be lowered? Did Peter need convincing? If so, the proof was near, for up came “a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.” More, calling to their partners for help, they “filled both ships”—and the ships “began to sink.” What, then, would have been the haul if they had let down the “nets” instead of limiting HIM with one “net”?

Peter was humbled under unbelief, astonished!—“Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord,” only to be reassured by “Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt **CATCH MEN**.” Did not Paul remind the Corinthian believers how he had “caught” them?

Yes, beloved fellow-workers, “the people pressed upon Him to hear the Word of God,” and “broken net,” and “sinking ships,” have all one affinity—that they dovetail into the glorious fact that, be it material or spiritual, “the Lord’s arm is not shortened that it cannot save.”

Never let us become depressed that it is the spirit of people in 1947 to go in for pleasure—that they have little or no desire to “hear the word of God”! **That** may be their side of things, Satan’s side: ours is that, as to our Lord Jesus, we “have gone forth unto HIM without the camp, bearing His reproach,” yet empowered by the Holy Spirit to return as His witnesses—“As Thou hast sent Me into the world, even so have I sent them.”

Sweet Thoughts.

SWEET indeed the thoughts of those who, though absent from each other, yet are linked by love, longing for the time when they will be together, and no longer separated. For those particularly who have suffered bereavement, who have endured a crushing blow, how true that memory is the only friend that grief can call its own! Yet when that mound of earth in the cemetery has been clothed with grass, when time has softened the blow, sweet thoughts of the absent one often engage the heart. "In memory's garden we meet every day." A pensive sweet sadness, in recalling events or sayings, "Sorrowful yet always rejoicing," knowing that for those who are in Christ, there is no real separation.

Often the thoughts of the heart cannot find expression in words or in actions. An artist can express his thoughts in that particular work in which he is engaged, his thoughts can take shape, they are revealed to the eyes, heart and mind of others. A wonderful painting, a sermon in stone, a musical composition, a thoughtful book can be the breathings of the heart and soul. If this is true of the work of man, how true also of God's thoughts and God's works! Creation would give us an insight into God's innermost thoughts. He spake worlds into existence by the words of His mouth. The wisdom of God, the thoughts of God take shape. He expresses Himself, He in part reveals Himself by the work of His hands. Who can gaze upon the beauty of the heavens without being inspired? The sun by day, the great life giver, the blue ethereal sky, the fleecy clouds; the queen of the night, the myriads of stars; surely an awe-inspiring sight! The majesty of the sea, mountain and valley, the charm of some quiet nook set like a cameo, the music of a mountain stream, the roar of a waterfall. With reverence we see and hear Him in these things. We hear His mighty voice in the roll of thunder, in the gales sweeping over land and sea. God laughs in the rivulet as it gurgles over its stony bed. Could we but understand how much of His thoughts would be revealed in the lower creation! The extent of them, how they range from one extreme to the other. The lion with its majestic appearance and awe-inspiring voice, the homely ass with its discordant bray. The cunning of the fox, and the stupidity of the ostrich seeking to hide himself by burying his head in the sand. The rage and fury expressed in the scream of the eagle, the love in the cooing of the dove. The speed

of the grizzly bear, the plodding of an ox. The melody of the nightingale, the jar of the laugh of the jackass!

But His thoughts of love and mercy could not be told out in creation, all that His great heart of love contained could only find expression in redemption.

“Before Thy hands had made
The sun to rule the day,
Or earth’s foundation laid,
Or fashioned Adam’s clay—
What thoughts of peace and mercy flowed
In Thy great heart of love, O God!”

How sweet to know His thoughts in regard to ourselves! The psalmist could say, “How precious also are Thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I could count them, they are more in number than the sand.”

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.” Surely a source of never failing wonder that a holy sin-hating God did not sweep us into perdition!

Yet those eyes of purity looked down into this pit of corruption and, sweet thought, He purposed taking out a people to be the companions of His well-beloved Son through the eternal ages. How true indeed the words spoken aforetime, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts.” Down the ages He revealed His thoughts, a little here, a little there, but the greatest revelation came through His Son. “God Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, . . . Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.” Dreadful indeed the price He had to pay for our redemption.

How often in the days of our extremity we heard these words, “All I promise you is blood, sweat, toil and tears” Present suffering to win a future reward. Did the speaker borrow these words from the experience of another? They de-

scribe exactly the life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. A life of unremitting toil, always accessible to the needy. Days in which He was so busy, there was hardly time to eat. How deeply the sorrows of humanity affected Him ! “Himself took our infirmities, and bore our sickness.” “Other’s woes pierce like a dart”; He made them His Own. His tears flowed in sympathy with the sorrows around Him, sorrows caused by sin. As to sin, even the anticipation wrung from Him a blood-like-sweat. He set His face as a flint to endure the baptism of the Cross.

The divine imperative urged Him on. “I must preach the gospel.” “I must work the works of Him that sent Me.” “Them also I must bring” and at last, “the Son of Man must be lifted up !” “Then said I, Lo, I come : in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Hear Him in boyhood days, “Wist ye not that I must be about My Father’s business?” Could we have seen Him in these hidden years of childhood and said, “Son of Mary what doest Thou?” no doubt His reply would have been, “The will of God !” Had we been privileged to see Him during the glorious ministry upon earth, when He caused the deaf to hear His voice, the blind to see His glory, the lame to leap for joy, the dumb to sing His praises, the dead to live, and rescued the leper from a living death—could we then at the end of an exhausting day have said to Him, “Son of Man what doest Thou ?” Like a silver trumpet would have come the reply, “The will of God !” Could we have stood with John at the foot of the Cross as He passed through His hour of deepest woe, and said, “Son of God, what doest Thou ?” from those dying lips would have been heard, “The will of God !” God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

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HEDLEY DRAKE.

The Two Aspects of Faith.

THE Reformation of Luther’s day was a revolt against priestcraft imposing penances and good works as a means to life in Christ. The light of justification by faith only, revived the hearts of the hitherto misguided, common people. Two extreme camps were formed, however, who have never seemed to fully understand one another.

Luther was so incensed against Popery that anything that savoured of works which, in his opinion, had the appearance of gnawing at the root of faith, came under the hammer of his vigorous denunciation. Faith seemed an obsession to the extent that it is stated, he labelled the Epistle of James "a bundle of straw." It did not just comply with his idea and zeal against Roman Catholicism.

On the other hand, the adherents of the Pope have pressed for the triple wording, "Faith, hope and charity," laying great stress upon "charity" as qualifying "faith." A number of years ago the writer conversed with a Roman Catholic priest upon the subject of faith, but whenever "faith" was quoted from the Scriptures, no sooner was the word uttered than he quickly added—"Yes; faith, hope and charity!" and no amount of Scriptural reasoning would divert him from his sweet refrain!

But those who have examined these two extremes under the limelight of Scriptures duly compared, neither justify Luther's misunderstanding of James, nor the mingling of "charity" with "faith" as a means to life in the Catholic view. They rather see two aspects of faith revealed by the Spirit of God which, when tempered together, give to faith and the faithful an elevated idea of what God requires of men and women who would serve Him truthfully.

In the epistle of James we have :

"Was not Abraham our father justified by works,
 "when he had offered up Isaac his son upon the alt-
 "ar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works,
 "and by works was faith made perfect?"

It is easy to see, therefore, if we are not careful how this may be misconstrued and made to mean just exactly what the Catholic idea contends it does mean—that faith needs works as essential to salvation.

This is a "putting the cart before the horse" in principle, for, as Scripture governs Scripture and modifies, it is when we apply to the Epistle to the Romans that we find the Epistle of James in its true setting.

Thus, to the saints of God at Rome, we read :

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath
 "whereof to glory; but not before God. For what
 "saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it
 "was counted unto him for righteousness."

It is just this expression "not before God" that presents the clue to solve the seeming contradiction of the two Epistles. To do anything "before men" is one thing, and to do the same thing "before God" may be, and often is, essentially another.

It is the manward aspect of faith and the Godward aspect that proves the difference between the epistles of James and Romans respectively.

A little thought will help us to decide that, as far as God requires, works are not needed to convince Him who has faith in Him and who has not. God knoweth the heart, He judgeth motives before actions. Not so man; for motives are hidden from our fellows and actions or works are needed in his case to produce the evidence of faith existing within the individual confessing faith.

When I put my trust in the Lord Jesus and sheltered under the shedding of His Blood for my salvation and eternal security, God knew my heart, my faith. Whatever works—say morally—might have stood to my credit, such works were “of the flesh” only. Therefore, like Abraham in measure, if I might “glory” before men in any attainment, I could not “glory” before God. “They that are in the flesh cannot please God.” As Abraham believed God and His promise, likewise did I and, although the circumstances of Abraham and myself were different, our faith was identical in this—that it “pleased God.” In my case He was “pleased” for Christ’s sake to forgive my sins, justify me, grant me eternal life and make me a child of hope. All this was a God-to-me transaction. This is what Roman Catholics should understand, but, poor souls, they will persist in mixing works into faith. Works are not needed “before God”—and, in fact, to offer God works of our own in face of the work of Christ at Calvary, is presumptuous, insulting, and next to saying that Calvary is not complete in itself. “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.”

But how are men to know our faith? They cannot read the heart, nor measure secret faith. They must have evidence, faith to them must be demonstrated in some shape. It is here, therefore, that James in his epistle adds his teaching and becomes so definitely practical. He brings faith man-to-God out of its secret chamber, as it were, making it take on a man-to-man phase. He shows that “as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” It is said to be “alone” and this is exactly the position of faith when it is “faith toward God,” before man knows it exists in anyone—it is “alone.”

Faith in **essence**—Godward—is, therefore, distinct from faith in **practice**—manward.

“Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works” (James 2). When Abraham offered up Isaac upon the altar the Lord said, “Now I know that thou fearest God;” as James, through the Spirit says, “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works.” “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” Surely, it is “by their fruits ye shall know them.”

As to our being "heirs" in Christ, it is written—"Therefore it is **of faith** that it might be **BY GRACE**" (Rom. 4 : 16). Now, if it is by "grace" it cannot be of "works," for immediately the element of "work" enters into anything it excludes the idea of it being "grace" at all. When we "work" for anything, "wages" become the "debt" of the person worked for; he is bound to pay his workman. "If by **GRACE**, then it is no more of **WORKS**: otherwise **GRACE** is no more **GRACE**. But if it be of **WORKS**, then it is no more **GRACE**: otherwise **WORK** is no more **WORK**" (Rom. 11). We repeat again—"Therefore it is **OF FAITH** that it might be **BY GRACE**." This shews conclusively, whatever work-in-faith advocates may contend, that **FAITH GODWARD** is pure from works, as it is written, "Where is boasting, then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the law of faith. Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith without **the deeds of the law**" (Rom. 3 : 27).

In view of the above it seems strange that so many so-called religious people of to-day, Bible in hand, are striving and striving to "keep the ten commandments" to obtain, and maintain, life—which they profess to have one day, yet may lose the next through transgression. They cannot see that we, being naturally helpless, Christ by His crosswork did for us what we could not accomplish ourselves, whatever our attempts at law keeping. The manner in which "Faith, hope and charity" are snatched from the context of I Cor. 13 and made an indissoluble trio—as though faith and charity (in the alms sense) could not be treated apart—has been responsible for thousands while, naming Christ, yet holding to their own works to secure a place in heaven, to remain in a blinded ignorance for centuries.

Let us be clear. The Roman epistle allows no mistake to be made as to faith. It is faith rounded-off, with no adulteration of works. Once faith in Christ and His work of the Cross has been exercised toward God, that soul is immediately "born from above" through the entrance of the Holy Spirit. Not a finger of the sinner can add to the work of Christ for salvation. He receives eternal life "hands-down," by faith alone.

But once a child of God, with all thoughts of self-justification eliminated, then the James' Epistle steps in and demands his attention. A child of God already, he does not work for salvation, but having it in Christ through initial faith, his duty now is to show to all around that faith within his heart can be seen in his works day by day. "Christ liveth in me." "We are **HIS WORKMANSHIP**, created in Christ Jesus **UNTO GOOD WORKS**, which God hath before ordained **THAT WE SHOULD WALK IN THEM**" (Eph. 2 : 10). "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, **ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS**" (Tit. 2).

"**MUSTARD-SEED.**"

Comfort Corner.

IT was Goliath day. With what scorn did Eliab reprove his baby-brother David who had suggested going out himself to meet the giant! "Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou **LEFT** those few sheep in the wilderness?" But David had made that right before he came away—"David rose up early in the morning, and **LEFT** the sheep with a **keeper**." Good to be a "keeper" of sheep!

"The Good Shepherd" contrasts Himself with the "hireling" whose own the sheep are not, saying, "He that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming and **LEAVETH** the sheep and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth (snatcheth—R.V.) the sheep." The hireling has not the heart of the shepherd.

The sheep belonging to the Good Shepherd—and how blessed to belong to Him!—pass through the valley of the "shadow" of death and "fear no evil." Wolves threaten, growl and show their teeth but the "shadow" never realizes because the sheep have been given "eternal" life. "Those that Thou hast given Me I have **kept** and **not one** of them is lost, but the son of perdition."

"I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish"—

"I will never, never **LEAVE** thee,
I will never thee forsake;
I will guard, and save, and **KEEP** thee,
For My Name and mercy's sake :
Fear no evil—fear no evil !
Only all My counsel take;
For I'll never, never **LEAVE** thee,
I will never thee forsake."

Under the eye of the "hireling" the wolf "snatcheth" the sheep, but in John 10 : 28-29 this word **negatively** employed strikes a sharp contrast to verse 12. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck (snatch—R.V.) them out of My hand. My Father, Who gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck (snatch—R.V.) them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one." No fear of losing "eternal" life when it rests on and evolves from life-substitution!—"the Good Shepherd giveth **His life** for the sheep." Can **that** life be withdrawn and in effect cancelled? If not, then **my** life in Him **must** remain "eternal." "They shall **never** perish," and "never" means "not for ever."

Satan might look over "the hedge" around Job, but the divine halt-sign was "Touch not his life!" "I hear the Accuser roar," saith the poet: let him roar—"our life is hid with Christ in God."

W. N. C.

The “No Leisure” Principle.

THE art of economy is mostly applied to money and goods. Is there not economy of **time**? Life is short, too short to waste: how many prodigals “wasting” this substance! Living as we are in days of “higher wages and shorter hours,” let us beware our love for leisure grow not upon us to our **eternal** loss. An hour filled in **now** for the Master, when faith operates, if wasted otherwise cannot be “made-up” in that perfect service in eternity when faith will be displaced by sight of our Lord.

The more we look at the life of Jesus on earth, the more we are convinced of a life lived without a time limit. The boy Who said, “Wist ye not I must be about my Father’s business?”—busy-ness—carried throughout life a “no leisure” principle worth our close observance. Nicodemus found no clock-governed Worker when he came “by night”; and He Who “early in the morning came again into the temple” had spent the night upon the Mount of Olives—not sleeping, we are sure! His snatching a little sleep crossing the lake of Galilee, being “wearied” at Sychar’s well, and often having “no leisure so much as to eat,” give us food for deep thought in His asking, “Are there not twelve hours in the day?”

Note how in the early days of the apostles this untiring spirit seemed to be transfused into His chosen servants, particularly Peter and John. The matter of daily food and serving tables arose, but the apostles were definite as to the futility of leaving the Word of God to serve tables. Men were to be appointed “over this business,” but for the apostles themselves—“we will give ourselves **continually** to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.” Not only “in the temple daily,” but “in every house,” they “**ceased not**” to teach and preach Jesus Christ. (Acts 5 : 42).

Alluding to “the chiefest of the apostles” the apostle Paul stated he “laboured more abundantly” even than they all. “Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant . . .”. Even under captivity, as in Acts 28, there came many to his lodging, to whom he “expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from **morning till evening**.” He too, not only taught “publicly”—as the other apostles at Jerusalem—but also went “from house to house,” diligently imparting to the saints all possible that was “profitable” to their spiritual edifying. “Night and day” is a familiar expression in his writings. Leisure to him seemed out of the question. Work, work, work of which the backbone was “that day” of rest and reward, impelling him forward through a world of hate and persecution.

To “take things easy” may please the flesh, but better it be if the zeal of God’s house should “eat” us up, to “spend and be spent” for His glory!

Joy and Gladness.

(I Chron. 16 : 27; Ezra 6 : 16; Nehemiah 8 : 10.)

ONE of the reasons for John's first epistle being written was that "Our joy may be full." (I John 1 : 4.)

To faith joy is not dependant upon pleasing circumstances or pleasant surroundings. The prophet Habakkuk lived in a most perplexing and exacting day—a day of devastation and destruction as far as God's people were concerned. It would almost seem as if God were disinterested. The prophet under these circumstances takes the only wise course—"I will watch to see what He will say unto me." The answer Habakkuk received contains words that have been a source of comfort and strength to a multitude of saints ever since—"The **just shall live by his faith.**" Habakkuk's faith not only took him into God's counsels as to coming judgements but enabled him even at such a time to pray on behalf of the Lord's work, "O Lord revive Thy work ; **in the midst of the year.**"

A great Revival did take place, idolatry was cast down, the temple was repaired, the book of the Law was found and read before the king, then before the people, and the Passover was kept. (II Chron. chapters 34 and 35.) A covenant was confirmed "To walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments, and His testimonies and His statutes, with all their hearts and all their soul, to perform the words of the covenant that were written in this Book"; "And all the people stood to the covenant." What a mighty restoration was wrought during Josiah's reign, yet we feel we cannot dissociate Josiah's revival from Habakkuk's faith, which faith is tellingly presented in the closing words of his prophecy—"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olives shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls : yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. (Heb. 3 : 17-18.) Here is rejoicing and joy in and despite the direst straits.

The Word we especially wish to bring for the readers' consideration is not the usual Old Testament word for "Joy"; indeed the three Scriptures in the title of this article give the only occasions in which this word (Chedvah) occurs. Twice it is translated "Joy" and once "Gladness." Remarkable too, are the incidents which occasion its use. In each instance it is a

time of restoration and revival—once during the kingdom under David and twice in connection with the returned captives from Babylon.

The first mention is in I Chron. 16 : 27. “Glory and honour are in His presence : **Strength and gladness** are in His place.” Here the ark of God has been brought back from the house of Obed-Edom; a time of joy and gladness. When the Ark was taken by the Philistines the significance was “The glory is departed from Israel for the Ark of God is taken.” (I Sam. 4 : 22.) “I-chabod was no meaningless name. The Ark symbolised the Lord’s presence with His people, and when it was captured there was death and dishonour. (see I Sam. 4 : 18-23). The return of the Ark therefore is of paramount importance. It typifies Christ and speaks to us of Immanuel—God with us. Little wonder, then, that on its return the people of Israel were rejoicing, praising and worshipping.

The contents of the Ark are rich in their spiritual application. They speak of Christ :—

- (1) The golden pot containing manna—Christ as the provision for the people of God—the Bread out of Heaven.
- (2) Aaron’s rod that budded—God’s choice and God acting in the power of resurrection.
- (3) The tables of the Covenant—Christ in Whose heart was God’s law.

David’s exercise of heart is seen in that he prepared a tent for the Ark, and so the Ark now is under curtains, and indeed since captured by the Philistines it had never returned to the tabernacle nor did it have any real or lasting rest until Solomon’s Temple was built. On its return the “joy of the Lord” is to be known and experienced. “The people shall be willing in the day of Thy Power” (Ps. 110) and this is prefigured in the scene before us. Their willingness is firstly seen in that God’s portion is first given, “they offered burnt sacrifices (ascending offerings) and peace offerings before God.” (I Chron. 16 : 1-2.) Where God is so honoured the people prosper, so we find that everyone of Israel, man and woman, is given a loaf of bread, a piece of flesh, and a flagon of wine, suggestive to us of spiritual sustenance and joy. Here we have strength and gladness—the ideal condition of service, for “the joy of the Lord is our strength.”

Now for service, David appoints certain of the Levites for ministry before the Ark, to record, to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel. Then on that day David delivered first this

Psalm, to thank the Lord. into the hand of Asaph and his brethren. What a day this must have been !—God honoured and worshipped, the people sustained, strengthened and rejoicing, the singer praising ! Every minute of it seems to utter His glory.

Historically it is a day to be remembered.

Prophetically it takes us forward to that time, when He, Whom the ark pre-figures, shall take His place in the Kingdom, when “The whole earth shall be full of His glory” and “His Name shall be excellent in all the earth, Who has set His glory above the heavens ” (Ps. 8).

Presently this joy is ours in anticipation as we pray “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.”

Spiritually this joy is our portion **now**. The Ark was the means of communication between God and Israel (contrast I. Chron. 13 : 3). “Glory and honour are in His presence, strength and gladness are in His place.” What glory is there seen, yet it is a passing glory to be superseded and surpassed by the glory that excelleth—“the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” They had the types and shadows; the substance or body of which things is Christ. Ours is a “joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

In the age to come, in which we find the final fulfilment of this Psalm of I Chron. 16, the heavens shall be glad, the earth rejoicing, the sea roaring, the fields rejoicing, the trees of the wood singing. The fountainhead of all joy and gladness is God’s presence : notice they sing in the presence of the Lord. (v. 33). Is not the glory of the city as depicted by Ezekiel found in the fact “that the Lord is there” ? Is not the joy of I Chron. 16 found in the presence of the ark of God ? So in Psalm 68 a song full of the rejoicing of God’s people, yet the basis of their every blessing is God’s presence. (Vs. 2, 5, 7, 8, 16, 17, 24).

So with Gideon of old, he was more perturbed about the apparent absence of the Lord than the presence of their three-fold enemies (Judges 6 : 13). So to-day in the Churches of God His presence is promised, “Where two or three are gathered together unto My name, there am I in the midst of them.” Christ among us, the hope of glory ! Are we not of the Household of God?—and “built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone in Whom each several building (see I Cor. 3 “Ye are God’s Building”) fully framed together groweth unto an Holy Temple

in the Lord, in Whom ye also are builded together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit." "The Lord is there." His presence calls for holiness and vouchsafes happiness. Let us be exercised about this. It is our present inheritance. Do we live in the good of it? And let us also be exercised about the prayer of Psalm 85 "Wilt Thou not revive us again that Thy people may rejoice in Thee."

Kirkintilloch.

JAS. THOMSON. (Junr.)

Sweet Thoughts.

"Thoughts of His sojourn in this vale of tears :
The tale of love unfolded in those years
Of sinless suffering and patient grace,
I love again and yet again to trace."

YET it was "for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the Cross and despised the shame." The joy of obedience to the Father's will, the joy of the bridegroom in His bride! As He endured the kiss of the serpent in the wilderness, the kiss of the bride was before Him. As He wandered "a homeless stranger in the world His hands had made," sweet the thought of the Father's house of many mansions—"I go to prepare a place for you." In His rejection He had perfect peace of heart, "all that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me." And again He could say, "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight." In His desertion also how sweet the thought of the nearness of the Father!—"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave Me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."

At Pilate's bar before the raving of the multitude, listening to that death song, "Crucify, crucify, crucify!" sweet in His ears the song of the redeemed through the countless ages of eternity!—"Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father: to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen!" Picture Him in the centre of that motley band of soldiers, maybe of questionable character. No thoughts of pity in their hearts for the helpless prisoner, they mocked His claims to be king. A crown of thorns pressed down pos-

sibly with savage hatred upon His forehead, a reed for a sceptre placed in His hands, the scornful derision of bended knee, and the salutation—"Hail king of the Jews!" He had refused the kingdom from the hands of Satan, and from the hands of sinful men; now the centre-figure of this buffoonery, how sweet the thought of His heart of that coming day!—"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of Thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows."

Now He goes to the place of execution, and the torture to which He has been subjected seems to have so sapped His strength that He needs another to carry the weight of the Cross. Sweet to Him the thought that He could bear without faltering the sin and iniquity of the whole world! As He hung naked upon the Cross, "they parted His garments among them, and for His vesture they did cast lots." Thoughts of those who would come to Him in their nakedness, and be clothed with divine righteousness, would sweeten the bitterness of the cup He was called upon to drink. As that representative stream of humanity rolled beneath His Cross, bearing the likeness of the power of darkness, sweet the thought of those who could take to themselves the words of the Psalmist, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." Hour after hour the concentrated hate of His enemies was expressed in the chorus of gibes and jeers. No word of sympathy fell upon His ear when dying, how sweet in fact to His ear would be the appeal of the dying thief, the thought of a brand plucked from the burning. So He hung upon the Cross, His wounds untended, consumed with thirst, His body racked with excruciating pain and, as He felt that body that had been prepared for Him passing away, sweet the thought of that mystical body which would grow and grow. As members of that body we rejoice in the words of the poet—

" Thy path on earth, the Cross, the grave,
Thy sorrows all are o'er :
And O, sweet thought ! Thine eye shall weep,
Thy heart shall break no more."

For Him the dreary night is over. "Joy cometh in the morning"—the joy of accomplishment. Hear His words to the woman on that resurrection morning. "All Hail !" (O the joy !)—a sweet foretaste to Him of the joy that was set before Him, a joy that will be His through eternal ages. The joy of the bride-

groom in His bride ! Faith gives place to sight, hope blossoms into fruition, love goes on unchanged through eternity ! Sweet thoughts have matured into exceeding joy, the joy of our Redeemer !

Middlesbrough,
Yorkshire.

HEDLEY DRAKE.

A SWEET MORSEL.

WE pass on a sweet remark dropped at the mid-week Prayer Meeting the other night. “We know,” said our brother, “that Satan as a roaring lion seeketh **whom he may devour**” : “we thank Thee it is not, **devour whom he may.**”

It reminds one of the Job-hedge. A brother once quaintly remarked that Satan, “walking up and down and going to and fro in the earth,” would “take a look over” the hedge and long to attack Job within. Satan had to get permission to touch Job—cannot devour whom **he may** !

W H Y ?

Mansions above—such is the promise true,
 To sanctify all awaiting their Lord’s review ;
 Union it means to living and “dead in Christ,”
 When in the sky arrives that heavenly tryst :
 Sure, clear and steadfast lies the hope ahead,
 Displacing all that once was fear and dread ;
 The claims of death, dispersed forever now,
 Have lost their power and, subjected, they bow ;
 Ah, who can solve the mysteries of such grace,
 Or, understand God’s will in every phase ?
 Remembering who, and what, in sin we were,
 Really, such worthless worms to spare !—
 Does it not cause our wondering souls to cry,
 “WHY DID HE DIE ? ”
 Sent by His Father, the Cross came into view,
 On it He suffered to bid our sins adieu !
 Every stain that soiled our chequered career,
 By Blood is cleansed—His death it was severe !
 Eager, we feel, to know how love could be
 To punish God’s Own to let the stranger free ;
 Deep in its mystery, nothing on earth can show—
 WHY GOD LOVED MEN !

Comfort Corner.

A DAY at a time ! It would seem the Lord in separating the light from the darkness intended also to limit the human family to a complete break between each day's activities.

Sleep should still the anxious mind, but how often like the stars we tend to let our troubles the darkness their vigil keep, when our eyes should close under the blessing of God in happy forgetfulness of the day that has gone !

The Lord Jesus on earth so wisely remarked that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." "To-morrow," He affirmed, **would** "take care for the things of itself." This word "evil" is not the sense of wickedness, as often understood, but under a specific use in the Word of God meaning adversities which come into life to harass. Sometimes we have heard sisters, particularly, mentioning how during the night their thoughts have been tense as to the following day's events. In these days of restrictions we feel sorry for the housewife plodding her way between queues and ration-books, but let her not forget Phil. 4 : 6 joined to Romans 8 : 28 ! "The lilies of the field" and "the birds of the air," the former as to clothing, the latter as to food, were given to teach us not to be over-anxious in the earthly commodities which "our heavenly Father" can control for the need of His own.

The sun cometh out with "the wings of the morning," rejoicing "as a strong man to run a race," but with "sun-down" nature is hushed to rest—

" Birds and beasts and flowers
Soon will be asleep."

Bodies of the crucified, or those hanged on a tree and cursed, were not to remain suspended beyond sun-down ; and, comparably, any having a difference with any and angered must not "let the sun go down" upon their wrath (Eph. 4 : 26). A fool contemplating "years to come" was divinely reminded—"This night" his soul would be required !—not another day ! The Israelites gathered the manna to-day for to-day, nothing kept for the morrow. The twelve apostles in prayer were to ask provision for no more than day by day—"Give us **this day** our daily bread ! "

We should not take too definite a lease upon the future, but in every detail seek the leading of our heavenly Father. Human arrangement in modern times is apt to fasten the mind upon the wages coming either at the end of the week or the month and to rely upon the channels instead of the Source of all good. "Acknowledge the Lord IN ALL thy ways and He shall direct thy paths." Paul knew "both how to be full and to be hungry" because the Lord had "instructed" Him in these. If he had much he was "content"; if he had little he was "content": "I can do all things," said he, "through Christ Who strengtheneth me." He met events as they arose, come what may—

" Trust to-day, and leave to-morrow.
Each day has enough of care ;
Therefore whatso'er thy burden,
God will give thee strength to bear
He is faithful,

Confessing Faults.

ALTHOUGH the Bible is read regularly it is remarkable how certain truths in practice hardly gain a foothold.

It would appear from the epistle of James that, for certain sins, sickness had come upon children of God here and there. Those addressed were advised to "pray for one another that they may be healed," but the healing was made an essential only upon their "confessing their faults one to another." "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5 : 16.)

It is not a self-accepted truth to-day, but evidently it was then, that men and women were suffering ill-health because they had sinned in some way. Some affliction had come upon them, possibly by "a messenger of Satan" to buffet them.

To confess faults one to another is definitely a matter out of fashion to-day. For one thing, few if any, attribute sickness to sins committed before God : therefore, in that case, what need is there to "confess" faults one to another to claim the advantage of this "effectual" prayer of my righteous brother ? As a point of interest see Job 42 : 7-9.

In every way of life there is a keenness to "fight" oneself right. Few show the ready disposition of justifying God by confessing their wrong. But to "confess one to another" must have been a commendation in the days of the apostles. It would produce humility of God in keeping with grace which, if shining as it should in the face of every child of God to-day, would have gone far to prevent so many of the offences and divisions which have blackened most of our careers in modern times.

It is possible to sin and allow pretension to confess with a smile on the lip ! It seems nothing in some brethren to have to confess. They appear to have as much delight in confessing faults as in offering thanksgiving. Sin on our part should produce shame and, blessed the man before God who, when he is discovered in a fault, drops his eyes and hangs his head in unhappiness ! This contrite spirit is what the Lord acknowledges, as it is written—"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, Whose Name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of contrite ones." (Isaiah 57 : 15.)

To the one who walks in fellowship with Christ it is a source of grief to know if at any time he offends his brother or sister. He is ready therefore to own his wrong, confess to God, confess to his brother or sister, and thus renew the happy bond of love.

Joseph's parting advice to his brethren was, "See that ye fall not out by the way ? " Faults and forgiveness—490 times daily ?—but it is better rather that love crown our behaviour. "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples," said Jesus, "if ye have love one to another."

“He that hath an ear let him hear.”

IN Proverbs there are two women mentioned, and a little of their spiritual significance we would draw your attention to in these pages. “The strange woman” is heard to speak, in contrast to wisdom who is made known in the feminine gender. As children of God to one or the other are our ears open. If ever there was a day in which there is great need to be warned from the lips of our Lord Himself it is in the present.

In Mark 4 : 24 we read, “And He said unto them, take heed **what** ye hear.” From this we learn that the warning is with regard to **what** is heard. In Luke 8 : 18 He says, “Take heed therefore **how** ye hear.” From this we observe that the responsibility lies more on the one who hears. Read and consider how a man of God was seduced by what he heard. (See I Kings 13).

Even to-day the characteristics of “the days when the Son of Man cometh” are in evidence, in false prophets. (Matt. 24 : 4-5; 23-24; II Peter 2 : 1-3.) As a comparison to this read I Sam. 15 and note that Samuel was not to be deceived by what Saul said to him as to his feigning himself to have performed the commandment of the Lord. Therefore, it is not every one who can thus speak—“Say unto wisdom thou art my sister and call understanding thy kinswoman.” (Prov. 7 : 4). Of those who know the Lord as their Shepherd—and we write in a practical sense, that is by following Him and knowing His voice—Jesus says “They know not the voice of strangers.” Only as we sit at His feet and hear His words will we be kept from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words !

Why are so many to-day carried about with divers and strange doctrines ? Ephes. 4 : 14 tells us that “children are tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness.” Such are the fruits of listening to the voice of the stranger. Well might Paul write, “But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.” (II Cor. 11 : 3).

The Psalmist in Psalm 144, whilst praying for deliverance and real prosperity, says “Deliver me from the hand of strange

children (or the sons of the stranger).” See the blessings which are the result—“that our garners may be full affording all manner of store.” Only in such a condition can our Beloved come into His garden and eat His pleasant fruits, for it is at the door that He stands and knocks—“If any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him and he with Me.” (Rev. 3 : 20).

In Judges 6, after the land had rest forty years, the Amalekites and the Midianites (sons of the stranger) prevail against Israel and so we read “Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites.” “Amalek” speaks to us of the flesh and “Midian” of strife. Both in activity are always allies against the Lord’s people. In Corinth these were uppermost in the Church of God, hence the reason why Paul writes as he does. Yet Corinth was a Church that came “behind in no gift.” Carnality had so impoverished them and so dwarfed in the things of God, he could not speak unto them as unto “spiritual,” but as unto “babes in Christ.” The characteristics of Amalek were evident—“Seeing that many glory after the flesh.” (II Cor. 11 : 18). The work and words of the Midianites—strife-makers were in manifestation. (See I Cor. 3 : 3; II Cor. 12 : 20). God receives no glory where these prevail and, not only is it soul impoverishing to the soul, but God Himself is robbed of His portion in the saints.

In the passing, be clear in this—that spirituality is not sentimentality. However pleasant the tongue may sound, remember our opening warning—“Take heed what you hear.” It is “Good words and fair speeches” which deceive the hearts of the simple. Spirituality is only recognised where there is an acknowledgment of the commandments of the Lord. (I Cor. 14 : 37).

Therefore in conclusion, beloved, beware of any who would “teach for doctrine the commandments of men,” for these are but sons of the stranger, coming as from “the lips of the strange woman that drop as an honeycomb and her mouth is smoother than oil.” Rather give ear to wisdom who saith, “My son attend to my words, incline your ear unto my sayings, let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midst of thine heart.” Always remember, “if any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil

surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

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JOHN BOYLE.

Joy, Gladness.

IN a previous paper we noticed that the word which interested us (Chedvah = Joy or Gladness) was first used in association with the return of the Ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the tent prepared for it by King David at Jerusalem.

We consider it now at the dedication of The House of God built by the liberated captives from Babylon. In both instances it was an occasion of deliverance and restoration.

The experience of these exiles presents indeed a history showing that "Our God is a God of deliverances." (Ps. 68 : 20 Newberry.)

This deliverance from Babylon was in the purpose of God (Jeremiah 25 : 11-22, Jeremiah 29 : 10-14), and promised in the prophets (Isa. 42 : 28, Jeremiah 32 : 15) while Daniel who had an "understanding of the times" is seen asking for it in prayer. (Daniel 9 : 4-13.)

That God was working is evident by the fact that, not only did He raise up the spirits of His servants, but also stirred up the spirit of the Gentile king Cyrus of Persia to make and put in writing a proclamation stating that God had charged him to build for God a house at Jerusalem in Judah—"How unsearchable His judgements and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11 : 33).

How important ! It was God Who worked. No work can be **for God** unless it is **of God**, for "Of Him and through Him and unto Him are all things to Whom be glory forever, Amen." (Rom. 11 : 36.) So it is only as in obedience we submit to "God working in us" (Phil. 2) that we can be "workers together with God." (I Cor. 3 : 9; II Cor. 6 : 1). So God worked in the hearts of his own, even in Babylon, and deliverance was wrought—"Blessed be Jehovah, Who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth; our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers, the snare is broken and we are escaped." (Ps. 124 : 67). What joy accompanied their going out from "the strange land"—"When the Lord turned again the cap-

tivity of Zion we were like them that dream; then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing." (Ps. 126 : 1-2.) Even the heathen take notice "that the Lord hath done great things for them."

In all, congregation and servants, 49,697, left Babylon to build the House of God at Jerusalem, in figures presumably only two and a half per cent. of the number of multitude which left Egypt on that passover night. However "little is much if God be in it," so to-day we cannot boast of "the Three Thousand Souls" of Acts chapter 2, nevertheless, if God be with us and in us, as the Churches of God, forming House of God, what do numbers matter ?

The heart exercise of this remnant is noteworthy. They honoured the Lord with their substance, for out of full hearts "they offered freely for the House of God." Notice too, "that they gave after their ability" (Ezra 2 : 69); compare I Cor. 16 : 2, "as God hath prospered"; and contrast Malachi 3 : 8-9, "will a man defraud God ? "

The Altar was then built, a truth that shows us that they recognised that God's claims came first for "the altar sanctifies the gift." Then, how appropriate ! They now offered burnt offerings mornings and evenings. It would seem that they were restored to "the kindness of their youth and the love of their espousals, when they went after the Lord in the wilderness in a land that was not sown." (Jer. 2.) The first essential truth of the burnt offering is approach to God.

Then the feast of tabernacles is kept, but how significant it was kept—as it is written ! Is this not the abiding principle of all our activities as in testimony for God all that is done must be according to the Word of the Lord. But all the time the foundation of the temple was not laid.

However, in the second month of the second year of their coming to Jerusalem, under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua the work of building is set forward and the foundation laid. It was a time of mixed emotions; the elder of them who had seen the first house wept, while the younger gave shouts of joy.

It was at this point when the adversaries, posing as friends, sought to help in the work, and when this help was refused they became openly antagonistic. How often this is seen to-day as those who maintain separation from the world, and separation from the sects of men, are bitterly opposed not only by the

worldling, but by the carnally minded. It is to us such as are faithful that God says, "I will be a father unto you." (II Cor. 6 : 14-18).

We feel this opposition would never have been successful had there not been unfaithfulness amongst the people themselves. (See Haggai 1 : 9). How careful we should be to hear from the Lord's lips, "Be not faithless." Anyway, how sad ! After such a beginning, the work ceased and they, as far as God's House was concerned, remained idle for fourteen years. Where was their former zeal ? Let us be careful "to live the rest of our time to the Will of God." (See I Peter 4 : 1-2). It was at this time of inactivity that the prophets Haggai and Zachariah ministered. Thank God for faithful ministry ! To-day in the House of God we do not have prophets who speak by inspiration as did Haggai, nevertheless in the sense that prophecy may also be forth-telling, let those who minister hear I Cor. 14 : 3, "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort."

Haggai's ministry was faithful; consequently it was fruitful. He condemned their neglect of God's house and their care for their own houses. (Hag. 1 : 4). Have we not a new testament parallel in Phil. 2 : 21—"All seek their own and not the things of Jesus Christ." How happy ! His message produced obedience and fear of the Lord in the hearts of the leaders and also in the people. (Hag. 1 : 12). His second message assured them of the Lord's presence, and the work which had been lying dormant was restarted and prospered through the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah. (Ezra. 6 : 14; Haggai 1 : 13-14).

God's work is perfect (complete), so the house was finished twenty-one years after the proclamation of Cyrus. The house completed, now the dedication was kept. Here was a new start indeed, from the bondage of Babylon to the light and liberty of God's house. Little wonder it was kept "with joy." They might well exclaim, "I love the habitation of Thy house and the place where Thine honour dwelleth." We know of no joy on earth to equal the joy of approach to God, and this, as seen in the spiritual house as an holy priesthood, we offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

The writer knows well an aged saint over 50 years in Christ, saved at a Salvation Army meeting. As he grew in grace, baptized in a Baptist chapel, and as he still progressed was identified with the Church of God where he resided. One day I asked him what day was the happiest day in his memory.

Without a moment's hesitation he answered, "The day when I was received into the assembly of God and remembered the Lord in accordance with the truth of God."

Beloved brethren, it is a "day of small things," but our joy may be full ! "In His presence there is fulness of joy and at His right hand there are pleasures for evermore." Strength and gladness are in His place. Shall the language of our hearts not be "If I do not remember Thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy" ? (Ps. 137.)

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JAMES THOMSON, Jr.

A WORD IN SEASON.

(Tune—"Retreat.")

" What variance hindrances we meet
In coming to the mercy-seat;
Yet, who that knows the worth of prayer,
But wishes to be often there ?

Prayer makes the darken'd cloud withdraw,
Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw,
Gives exercise to faith and love,
Brings every blessing from above.

Restraining prayer, we cease to fight;
Prayer makes the Christian's armour bright,
And Satan trembles, when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees.

Have you no words ? Ah ! think again :
Words flow apace when you complain,
And fill your fellow-creature's ear
With the sad tale of all your care.

Were half the breath thus vainly spent,
To heaven in supplication sent,
Your cheerful song would oft'ner be,
'Hear what the Lord has done for me ! ' "

—Words of a good old Hymn.

Comfort Corner.

THe Saul-Damascus-Road incident is often chosen to illustrate the Gospel. It might equally be chosen to comfort children of God in face of persecution.

Saul of Tarsus seemed to have it all his own way. Like a wolf among sheep he devoured and scattered. But what a different side does the Holy Spirit reveal to us in the words, "Saul, Saul, . . . it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." He is here seen by other eyes than man's—not as dominating, but dominated.

The picture presents an ox ploughing in the yoke with the ploughman directing behind him, goad in hand. A goad is a spiked stick. In those days, the man in control of the plough in urging forward a slow beast thrust the goad into the fleshy hind-quarters. The natural impulse to such sharp prodding would be to kick out, but what was the use of kicking? Rebellion was useless. The hand that held the goad could, and would, give a second prod, repeating more severely every time the beast refused to be ruled.

Man saw a promising, persevering young zealot in Saul, sweeping all before him: "I have heard by many of this man," said the disciple Ananias, "how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem." But **the Lord** had "separated" him from birth for another purpose than murdering innocents. This theatrical display was mere incident. Saul would soon be subdued, controlled, kick as he would! Well might people wonder and say, "Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this Name in Jerusalem," and the saints "glorified God" in his remarkable conversion.

It ought to be a lesson to suffering saints not to despair under dark clouds. After all, the breath of man is but in his nostrils and, no matter how virulent may be the persecutor, there is a higher hand holding the reins. "So far, and no further," the Lord-Almighty saith to the proud, foaming waves! "When a man's ways please the Lord, He **MAKETH** even his enemies to be at peace with him."

There is always the trial of our faith to be considered. Certain fiery trials must come to purge the life of the believer. Yet, once through the trial, the Lord turns His attention to those inflicting the trial upon His people. Saints at Jerusalem suffered severe discomforts, Saul prospered, but the decisive hour arrived when the lion became a lamb and in consequence "the churches had rest throughout all Judea, and Galilee and Samaria." (Acts 9 : 31.) Remember the two sides—"THE EYES of the Lord are over the righteous and HIS EARS are open unto their prayers," but what of our persecutors?—" . . . but THE FACE of the Lord is against them that do evil, and **who** is he that will harm you if ye be followers of what is good?" Who, indeed, who?

W. N. C.