

# NEEDED

# TRUTH

*They read in the book, in the law of God, distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.—*  
NEHEMIAH viii. 8.

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACCEPTABLE SERVICE . . .	334
AMBITION . 121, 158, 177, 200, 226	
ANGELS . . . . .	73, 106
ANTICHRIST, THE DOWNFALL OF . . . . .	155
ARBITER BETWEEN THE NA- TIONS, THE . . . . .	325
BIBLE, THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH . . . . .	84
BOOK OF LIFE, THE . . .	180, 234
BURDEN, OUR DAILY . . .	173
CALL OF GOD, THE . . .	310
COVENANT, THE NEW . . .	59
CREATION GROANETH . . .	337
DAY OF APOSTASY, THE ONE THING FOR GOD IN A . . .	193, 230, 252, 269, 302
DOWNFALL OF ANTICHRIST, THE	155
ENGLISH BIBLE, THE STORY OF THE . . . . .	84
FIVE AND TWENTY YEARS AGO	83, 115, 192, 209, 240, 257, 284, 301, 324
HANNAH'S VOW . . . . .	131
HE THAT OVERCOMETH . . .	322
HEAVENLY CALLING, A . . .	138
HIGH PLACES AND GOD'S PLACE 204, 221, 258, 297	
HOLY SCRIPTURES, THE TESTI- MONY OF THE, TO THE UNIQUE PERSONALITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST . . . . .	241, 285, 289

	PAGE
HOLY SCRIPTURES, THE VER- ACITY OF THE . . . . .	116, 133, 145
HOUSE OF GOD, THE . . .	67
IN HIS PRESENCE . . . . .	78, 123
KNOWLEDGE OF GOD, THE	90, 112
LIFE, THE BOOK OF . . .	180, 234
LOOK NOW TOWARD HEAVEN .	215
LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE PER- SONAL RETURN OF THE, AND HIS REIGN ON EARTH . . .	313
LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE TES- TIMONY OF THE HOLY SCRIP- TURES TO THE UNIQUE PER- SONALITY OF THE . . . . .	241, 285, 289
LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE TES- TIMONY OF THE, TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES . . .	169, 211, 217
MARANATHA . . . . .	321
MODERN THEOLOGY AND ITS DOOM . . . . .	349
MOSES, NOT OF, BUT OF THE FATHERS . . . . .	49
NAME, THE . . . . .	1
NAME, THE AND THE MEM- ORIAL . . . . .	45
NAME, THE PLACE OF THE . .	14
NEW COVENANT, THE . . .	59
NOT OF MOSES BUT OF THE FATHERS . . . . .	49
OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES, THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO THE . . .	169, 211, 217

	PAGE		PAGE
ONE THING FOR GOD IN A DAY OF APOSTASY, THE . . . . .	193, 230, 252, 269, 302	TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES TO THE UNIQUE PERSONALITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE	241, 285, 289
OUR DAILY BURDEN . . . . .	173	TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS, CHRIST TO THE OLD TESTA- MENT SCRIPTURES, THE	169, 211, 217
PERSONAL RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND HIS REIGN ON EARTH, THE . . . . .	313	TO THE UTMOST . . . . .	161
PLACE, THE . . . . .	26	UNIQUE PERSONALITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, TESTI- MONY OF THE HOLY SCRIP- TURES TO THE . . . . .	241, 285, 289
PLACE OF THE NAME, THE . . . . .	14	UNITY . . . . .	97
PRESENCE, IN HIS. . . . .	78, 123	UNITY IN ADMINISTRATION . . . . .	187
PSALM 46. . . . .	328, 357	VERACITY OF THE HOLY SCRIP- TURES, THE . . . . .	116, 133, 145
PSALM 107. . . . .	149	WAR, THE . . . . .	265
PSALM 144. . . . .	341	WILL OF GOD, THE . . . . .	275
QUESTION AND ANSWER . . . . .	166, 280	WORDS OF HOLY WRIT	95, 105, 179, 198
REPENTANCE AND SEPARATION . . . . .	69		
SEND NOW PROSPERITY . . . . .	250		
SONG, SET TO ALAMOTH, A . . . . .	328, 357		
SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD, THE . . . . .	344		
STORY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE, THE . . . . .	84		



# NEEDED TRUTH.

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MAY, 1910.

## THE NAME.

“GREAT Sovereign, forgive!” said a vanquished general when communicating to his imperial master the news of a failure which practically terminated an historic war. “Great Sovereign, forgive!” the words recur to our mind and find an echo in our heart in regard to the failure of these lines to do justice to the exalted subject with which they deal.

All divine subjects are great, but the subject of the Name is so stupendous as to foredoom to failure the weak effort of our hand, and lead us to cry to Him who occupies the throne of the universe, “Great Sovereign, forgive!”

“Thou Sacred One, Almighty Three,  
Great everlasting Mystery;  
What lofty numbers shall we frame,  
Equal to Thy tremendous Name!”

True indeed, yet is it equally true that it pleaseth the Most High to employ the feeble sons of men, permitting His servants to speak of divine themes which intrinsically are as far above them as the heavens are high above the earth. How great is His pity—“He remembereth that we are dust”; how inscrutable His wisdom—“God hath chosen the weak things of the world that He might put to shame the things that are strong.” We need not therefore apologize for venturing to write upon the Name, although if apology were needed it would be furnished in the design of this paper, the object being to write a foreword which shall arouse interest in the subject to which the present

number of NEEDED TRUTH is devoted, and bring the reader with animated expectancy of mind to the perusal of the articles that follow. In these articles it will be submitted that now, as aforetime, God has a place for His people, a position wherein they may serve Him in all things according to His will and thus fulfil the great end to which all collective legislation has been given.

God having made choice of the place and revealed His will thereon in the Holy Scriptures, no room is left for man to choose a religious position—should he do so, he sins: it is the sin of Sectarianism: in its concrete expression it is “Babylon”—“Confusion.”

The confusion exhibited in the many Sects of Christendom is appalling, it arises from the activity of the human mind choosing: *αἵρεσις*, *hairesis*—a choice, opinion. In Galatians 5. 20, “Heresies,” that is, Sects, are among the works of the flesh, men choosing according to their religious opinions. If it be said that in many cases the error is committed through ignorance of the will of God, it must be remembered that such ignorance is culpable, for God has spoken.

Leviticus, chapters 4 and 5, conclusively proves that deviations from God’s will arising from ignorance are not to be excused on that ground—“Though he knew it not yet is he guilty and shall bear his iniquity.” This could only be expiated by sacrifice, a guilt offering was demanded, and forgiveness for the sin of ignorance only granted on the ground of atonement having been made.

We submit that the question of the Place, the divine position, is a very important one, and would beg the courteous reader to examine the Holy Scriptures on the point; we would also bespeak attention to the articles that follow as dealing with the Place. To this end we bring forward a vital consideration—indeed, we think it the supreme consideration, namely, the relation of the Name to the Place.

Only too frequently it happens that an important subject receives but scant attention owing to the non-perception

or non-consideration of some vital issue which if clearly perceived would demonstrate the importance of the matter and command attention. We therefore place the Name in the forefront here (even as it occupies the pre-eminent place in our hearts).

It is indeed a weighty fact that, apart from being in the place of divine appointment, collective obedience to the will of God is impossible, but we are persuaded that the importance of the Place will never be properly perceived nor its claims adequately examined by any one who has a low estimate of the Name. This is the centre of gravity in relation to the subject, the ruling factor; it is for the Name that the Place exists, to which also it imparts corresponding character and value. The better our apprehension of the Name, the greater our appreciation of the Place where the Name dwells.

A fine illustration of this is furnished in David, the projector of the Temple, and Solomon, the builder. It was David's heart that conceived and Solomon's heart that executed that great work; but how? after what fashion? Mark how the man after God's heart prepared with all his might, how he bestowed gold in thousands of tons, and silver in tens of thousands, with all manner of precious stones in abundance. Mark also how Solomon, wiser than all men, made such arrangements and secured such workmen that the House erected with almost superhuman care and skill stood forth "exceeding magnificent of fame and of glory throughout all countries." But why all this? Why such devotedness, such zeal, such labour? The answer is found in THE NAME! It was because David and Solomon knew that this was the place for the Name that they thus devoted themselves to the house. Dimly do we in this far off day picture the colossal magnificence of the Temple, but this much we know, that it was what it was because of the Name.

"For the Name" and "To the Name" are expressions repeatedly used in connexion with the House (more than a

score of times). For the Name it existed and to the Name it witnessed. Also for the sake of the Name and to the honour of the Name did both David and Solomon give themselves unreservedly to the building of the House, the Place of the Name.

In this devotedness they become an example to us. Would that we might follow with intense earnestness such an example! Oh for more worthy thoughts of the Name! more exalted views of that Name which sanctifies the Place and leads the godly soul to cry, "Lord, I love the habitation of Thy house and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."

We would seek to further appeal to the heart of the reader on this vital point by dwelling a little on

#### THE CHARACTER OF THE NAME.

The Name, properly speaking, stands for the expression of all that God is and does, hence in its fulness it is ineffable, yet the Spirit of God implants in the heart deep longings after the knowledge of the Name. Godly men from of old have desired to learn the secrets of the divine Name. "Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy Name," was the first thing upon the lips of Jacob at "Peniel" (that is, the face of God) in the power of his new title "Israel" (that is, a prince with God). "Tell me, I pray Thee, Thy Name," is ever the cry of the Israel of God. "That I may know Him," is an echo of the same principle. Doubtless we would all, from the experimental standpoint, acknowledge with Job,

"How small a whisper do we hear of Him,"

nevertheless it is ours in the riches of God's grace to have access to the sacred Word and mark with wonder and joy the divine unfoldings of the ineffable Name.

Wishing to make good use of the small space at disposal, perhaps we could scarcely do better than to call attention to a few attributes of the Name: seven would be a number in keeping with the character of the subject, therefore we decide on that number and select the following:—

“This GLORIOUS and FEARFUL Name” (Deut. 28. 58).

“HOLY and REVEREND is His Name” (Psalm 111. 9).

“Thy GREAT and TERRIBLE Name” (Psalm 99. 3).

“How EXCELLENT is Thy Name” (Psalm 8. 1).

What a constellation of glories shines before us in these disclosures of the divine Name! We jot a few words on each several attribute above mentioned.

### GLORIOUS.

The root idea in this word as used by Moses is that of *weight*—the weightiness of the Name; but a different word in the original is used by David in 1 Chron. 29. 13. This word means *beauty, splendour*. We do well to remember that these are not words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth, and in the twofold diction mentioned we read the weightiness, that is the dignity, the honour, which, conjoined with the splendour, unite to make the Name glorious.

“Stand and adore! how glorious He  
That dwells in bright eternity:  
We gaze and we confound our sight,  
Plunged in th’ abyss of dazzling light.”

The moral effect of this is strikingly brought out in the case of Abraham, for it was the God of glory that appeared to the Patriarch (Acts 7.), and the power of this is reflected in his after-life wherein he confessed himself a stranger and pilgrim on earth and obtained the honoured title, “the Friend of God.”

Abraham-like, may we know the moral power for separation which springs from the knowledge of the God of glory, our hearts being controlled and our pathway ordered in the light of the Glorious Name.

### FEARFUL.

Truly awe-inspiring is this attribute of the Name. Many impressive examples may be found in the Word, for instance, the scene at Perez-uzza.

When a well-meaning but unsanctified hand was laid on the ark "whereon is called the Name" (2 Sam. 6. 2), the fearfulness of the Name was manifested in upholding the order of His word, "None ought to carry the ark of God save the Levites," by Jehovah striking Uzza dead. "And David was *afraid*" (2 Chron. 13).

"Thou, even Thou, art to be feared.

And who may stand in Thy sight when once Thou art angry "  
(Psalm 76. 7).

"Fear ye not Me, saith Jehovah ;

Will ye not tremble at My presence ? " (Jer. 5. 22).

"Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy Name ? "  
(Rev. 15. 4).

For that Name is glorious and fearful.

### HOLY.

Sacred, Hallowed. Especial prominence is given to this attribute of the Name (being mentioned in conjunction therewith more times than all the other adjectives under reference put together). Surely God would thus impress upon His people that He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is holy" (Isa. 57. 15). "Hallowed be Thy Name" is our proper response, as taught by the lips of Him of whom it is witnessed

"He hath known My Name" (Psalm 91. 14.),

and who Himself said, "I have manifested Thy Name."

Perfectly did He maintain the holiness of that Name in His life, wondrously did He magnify it in His death.

"Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."

Thus did He own that holy Name amidst the overwhelming experiences of Golgotha. The Atonement is the eternal witness to the universe that God's Name is holy.

In resurrection also, "holy to Jehovah," shines forth from the holy crown on the sacred brow of the great High Priest. In the holy place He now ministers in per-

petual care for the requirements of God's holy Name, while upon our lips is found the song—

“For us He wears the mitre  
Where holiness shines bright.”

Thus a people upon whom the Name is called are able to call upon the Name; a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices (1 Peter 2. 5).

Here also we cannot refrain from mentioning the holy anointing oil with which, it will be remembered, the tabernacle and all the furniture thereof, and the altar and all the vessels thereof, were anointed and sanctified (Num. 7. 1). “The tent of meeting, and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all the vessels thereof, and the lampstand and the vessels thereof, and the altar of incense, and the altar of burnt offering with all the vessels thereof, and the laver and the base thereof. And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy. And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and sanctify them that they may minister unto Me in the priests' office. . . . This shall be an holy anointing oil unto Me throughout your generations . . . it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you” (Exod. 30. 26-32).

God forbid that we should not fully acknowledge the Holy Spirit in connexion with the demands of God's holy Name in relation to His house. Every service of the Sanctuary and of the Altar, from within to without, must be in sanctification of the Spirit “holy to Jehovah.” But we must refrain, however reluctantly, for lack of space, and with these fragmentary remarks leave this field of truth, a field as wide as it is important. As we pass from it, however, let us do so with these words from the guide book of the sanctuary (Leviticus) ringing in our ears: “Ye shall not profane My holy Name”; “Ye shall be holy unto Me, for I, Jehovah, am holy.”

## REVEREND.

*Reverend*: that is to be revered, to be held in reverence. Much might well be written in this connexion, but we must be content with a word upon one point only, namely, its bearing upon our deportment in regard to access, worship, and so forth. When Jehovah appeared to Abraham as recorded in Gen. 17. Abraham fell on his face. Moses also hid his face in the presence of God (Exod. 3.), and Joshua fell on his face to the earth and did worship (Jos. 6.), but we need not multiply examples.

Turning however to the unveiling of heavenly scenes in the book of the Revelation, we note that, "the four and twenty elders which sit before God on their thrones, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God." The four living creatures also fell down and worshipped God and "all the angels . . . standing round about the throne. . . fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God." Thus the prostration of all heaven before God, and the like demeanour of godly men on earth, unite in teaching us the reverence that becomes us in our drawing near (Heb. 10. 19-22).

Further, "Ye shall reverence My Sanctuary" is a scripture that should by no means be overlooked in connexion with reverence for the Name. True, the dispensation is different, but the principle is unchanged (and unchanging). Personally we could not deny the principle a place within the scope of those far reaching words, "These things write I . . . that thou mayest know how men ought to behave themselves in the House of God" (1 Tim. 3. 15), and other New Testament scriptures. Indeed, we think any fairly informed Christian of unbiassed mind would agree with us that there is much of the present truth in absolute harmony with the spirit of the Levitical command, "Ye shall reverence My Sanctuary."

In view of all the foregoing and with due respect to all concerned, we seriously ask, is an indolent attitude, a careless manner, and outward display, befitting those



who are together in the Place of the Name? Nay, but rather "Let us have grace whereby we may offer service to God with reverence and awe" (Heb. 12. 28), for "Reverend is His Name."

### GREAT.

"Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." The loud swelling note at once fills the ear as we listen to the first strain of the magnificent Song of Deut. 32. "Give ear, ye heavens, and I will speak; and let the earth hear the words of my mouth—for I will proclaim the Name of Jehovah." An impressive prelude to the lofty strain that follows—"Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." How fittingly these words fall from the lips of the venerable man who was King in Jeshurun! But more than this, Jehovah Himself ascribes greatness to His Name: "Behold, I have sworn by My Great Name, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 44. 26). How great the Name upon which the divine oath is based! Words fail us, even as the human mind sinks in puerile inability to grasp the infinitude of God. Our common use of the word "great" and our frequent application of it to things that are not really great, may well serve to remind us of our natural incompetence to form a proper estimate of the divine greatness. How many are our limitations, how narrow our views, how feeble our conceptions of divinity! Where throughout the vast realm of creation shall we find a standard by which to measure the greatness of God? The confession of David is very significant: "Thou art great—there is none like Thee." Simple words, but potent in their very simplicity to express the fact that here we have no standard of comparison. Upon the earth,

"Among all the wise men of the nations,

And in all their royal estate,

There is none like unto Thee" (Jer. 10. 7);

"Who in the skies can be compared unto Jehovah?" (Ps. 89. 6);

"He is God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great God" (Deut. 10. 17).

whose greatness dwarfs every created being and thing and leaves no room for any standard of comparison.

It may not be without interest to remark that Scripture makes mention of many divine qualities which have a relation to the greatness of the Name, for example :

Great power (Nahum 1. 3),  
Great mercy (Psalm 103. 11),  
Great goodness (Psalm 31. 19),  
Great faithfulness (Lam. 3. 23),

and so forth. Scripture also makes mention of divine ways in

Great judgments (Exod. 6 6),  
Great deliverances (Psalm 18. 50),

and great works and wonders too numerous for reference, although we may note that the New Testament specifically names His

Great love (Eph. 2. 4), and  
Great salvation (Heb. 2. 3).

But the theme is one past tracing out, for His greatness is unsearchable (Ps. 145. 3).

### TERRIBLE.

“God hath upon Him terrible majesty” (Job 37. 22).  
“Jehovah Most High is terrible” (Psalm 47. 2).  
“My Name is terrible” (Mal. 1. 14).

This attribute of the Name is almost lost sight of to-day, so widespread is the influence of what is styled modern thought. Not a trace of the God of terrible majesty is to be found in the postulates of the “New Theology.” Men whose ignorance of divinity is equalled only by their effrontery, have promulgated such degraded ideas of Deity as to bring themselves under the scathing irony of that word

“Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself,  
But I will reprove thee” (Psalm 50. 21).

Special efforts are directed against the terribleness of God's Name : it is stated that, " There is no such thing as punishment, no far off judgment day, no great white throne, and no Judge external to ourselves." Over against these tenets of the " New Theology," we would like to set a few statements which come with the authority of " Thus saith Jehovah."

" How terrible are Thy works.

Through the greatness of Thy power shall Thine enemies submit themselves unto Thee.

. . . Come, and see the works of God.

He is terrible in His doing toward the children of men " (Ps. 66. 3, 5).

" The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, Before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come " (Joel 2. 31).

" And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them, and I saw the dead, the great and the small standing before the throne ; and books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works . . . And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire " (Rev. 20. 11-15).

Wherefore

" Tremble, tremble, ye that hate Him."

" For true and righteous are His judgments."

In concluding this brief reference to a truth much needed in testimony to-day, we may point out that, within the scope of that which is terrible in the Name, such scriptures as 1 Peter 4. 17, have a place : " For the time is come for judgment to begin at the House of God," and " How dreadful (same word as " terrible " in the original) is this place ! This is none other but the House of God " (Gen. 28. 17). Truly

" Jehovah is great in Zion . . .

Let them praise Thy great and terrible Name " (Psalm 99. 2, 3).

## EXCELLENT.

“O Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name.”

Some idea of the force of this fine word may be gathered from the fact that it is elsewhere translated noble, worthy, famous, lordly. According to its derivation it signifies expansive, vast. (The Septuagint in Psalm 8. has “wonderful.”) Another word is used for “excellency” in Psalm 68. and is elsewhere translated, majesty, highness.

Vividly expressive is all this of the excellency of the divine Name; and it is interesting and comforting to observe that one connexion of this attribute is associated with divine intervention on behalf of God’s people.

In the history of Israel, at the beginning of the way of the wilderness, by the Red Sea, and at the end of the wilderness by the plains of Moab, the Song of Salvation (Exod. 15.), and the Blessing of the Tribes (Deut. 33.), celebrate the Excellency of Jehovah in intervention for His people.

“In the greatness of Thine excellency  
Thou overthrowest them that rise up against Thee,”  
“Who rideth upon the heaven for Thy help,  
And in His excellency on the skies.”

Other illustrations in this connexion are furnished by Scripture, but we must leave these in order to find space to note the way in which the Excellency of the Name is identified in New Testament associations, with Him who “was despised and we esteemed Him not.”

Made a little lower than angels in Incarnation, He becomes in Resurrection seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, “So much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent Name than they.”

Far above all the angelic dignities, every principality and authority and power and lordship, He bears the Name which is above every Name, not only in this age but also in that which is to come (Eph. 1. 20, 21). To this

age which is to come the Psalm refers which begins and ends with "How excellent is Thy Name in all the earth."

Eight is the number of resurrection and the eighth Psalm deals with that age which is mystically the eighth day for the earth.

"The fair Millennial morning."

In that day it will be seen that "Thou hast put all things under His feet." (Ah, those feet! deeply scarred with the eternal memorials of that awful hour when He sounded the lowest depths of shame and woe. How just that under those feet all things should be put.) "Worthy art Thou . . . for Thou wast slain."

"O, Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth."

"The Lord shall be King over all the earth

In that day there shall be one Lord and His Name one" (Zech. 14. 9).

The universal pæan ringing from pole to pole,

"Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is Thy Name in all the earth."

Meanwhile "We see not yet all things subjected to Him," but as knowing His authority and the excellency of His Name it is ours in the grace of a royal priesthood to show forth the excellencies of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

We must not pursue the subject of the Name further, and as to the attempt we have made to look at it, at best it is only like the glance of a child who essays to look upward at the sun when shining in his strength: the object is too glorious for the eye. Yet we hope that what we have written on the ineffable Name may serve to secure greater attention to the contributions on the Place of the Name that follow, although in the deep consciousness of our failure in the sight of God, we have to cry with bowed head and heart: "Great Sovereign, forgive!"

HENRY ELSON.

## THE PLACE OF THE NAME.

### THE GENESIS.

IN the early record of God's dealings with man we read that when Noah came forth from the ark he built an altar unto Jehovah and offered thereon to God that which gave to God a savour of the rest that was to come in after days, when the Christ should offer Himself.

As we pursue the divinely-given history in Genesis we find that when Abraham had responded to the call of God and come to the land that God showed him, he built there an altar unto God, even unto Jehovah who appeared unto him. Moreover, as he travelled from place to place under divine direction, we find him building, as for instance near to the place that afterwards came to be called Bethel.

When indeed, without divine direction, he went down into Egypt, he built no altar there, but when through God's restoring grace he was delivered and went up out of Egypt, he went to the place where he was before, to the place of the altar he built at the first, and there, as he could not do in Egypt, he called on the name of Jehovah.

Isaac, too, after Abraham was dead, knew the goodness of God, and acknowledged it by building an altar at Beer-sheba, where he called upon the name of Jehovah. Jacob also was bidden to leave Paddan-aram and to build an altar at the place to which he had given the name of Bethel.

Thus, in the days of the Patriarchs, we find altars built at various places where in the will of God they came, and where they were enabled to worship God and to offer unto Him according to what was then revealed of His mind and purpose for the day in which they lived. (See Genesis 8. 20, 12. 7, 8, 13. 3, 4, 18, 22. 9, 26. 25, 33. 20, 35. 17.)

### THE PEOPLE IN THE WILDERNESS.

The present writer has previously pointed out that when God appeared unto Moses in the bush He did not bid him

build an altar for the worship of himself and his family as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had done.<sup>1</sup> The children of the promise had multiplied, and God's special purposes were no longer confined to a family, but concerned a people. Therefore the word of Jehovah came to Moses that he should go into Egypt to bring God's people out from thence, that as a people they might serve God in the wilderness.

When God's people were in the wilderness, when the Red Sea (and all of which it spoke) was between them and the land of Egypt, God called to Moses to come up to Him in the mount and there showed him what manner of service He would have from a worshipping people. This found its expression in connexion with a sanctuary which the people were to build and which He would deign to honour with His own presence as a God dwelling amongst them.

The tabernacle had in closest association with it an altar of copper. This on the one hand linked it on with the worship of God that had found expression in the altars of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. On the other hand, in its material and in its immediate association with other vessels of divine service, it told of further development of that purpose by which God would speak to His own people and to others of the Coming One, the Seed of Abraham, the true Joseph, the antitype of all the offerings and sacrifices as well as of the altar itself and of the tabernacle and all its vessels.

### IMPORTANCE OF GOD'S WAY.

This is not the time or place to speak particularly of the tabernacle in the wilderness and the various vessels of service connected therewith, amongst which the copper altar occupies an important position. But we may say that all was ordered by divine direction, and that the need of divine direction lay in this, that while God was desirous

<sup>1</sup> "Workers Together" in NEEDED TRUTH, vol. 2, p. 86, and reprinted in a booklet.

of His people offering to Him the worship of their hearts, this could only be acceptable as it bore a direct reference to the promised Seed of Abraham, and the great work that He was to accomplish. All this is, therefore, in direct contradiction of the principle first enumerated in connexion with the tower of Babel—

“A man said to his neighbour,”

which in later days found expression in the words—

“Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.”

which, again, is found to-day in the well-known and too commonly accepted adage that it matters nothing what a man believes or what his religion is if he be sincere therein and upright in his life and in his behaviour towards his fellow-men.

### FORM DOES MATTER.

On the contrary, the form of worship does matter ; it is of infinite importance that a man worship God according to the revelation given of that which is pleasing to God, because of its relation to the One whom He delights to honour.

It was then around the tabernacle that the worship of the people of Israel centred according to the mind of God, though we learn from later scriptures that there was much idolatry in their tents all the time, and though at a very early time they had turned back in their hearts to Egypt.

But if we confine our attention to God's purposes and their fulfilment, we find that as they wandered through the wilderness, the tabernacle and the altar were ever the centre of the service that they offered to God. The constant shifting of the place of worship was God's provision for their wilderness need ; but ere they crossed the Jordan and entered into the promised land they had been instructed in unequivocal language that in that land God would fix



upon a definite place where He would put His Name and whither they should bring their oblations and their sacrifices.

### THE PLACE OF THE NAME.

A single instance of this may be quoted from Deuteronomy 26. "When thou art come," are the words, "into the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, . . . thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the ground, . . . and thou shalt put it in a basket and shalt go unto the Place which Jehovah thy God shall choose to cause His Name to dwell there." A careful perusal of the latter part of the book of Moses will show how much stress is laid on this matter. Three times in the year all the males of the people were to go to the Place of the Name to worship.

When we come to the historical record of the entry of the people into the land and of their dwelling there, we find this confirmed, and this not the less surely because the Name of Jehovah was at first made to dwell elsewhere before it finally was found in Jerusalem, and though there are some difficulties in places in tracing the movements of the tabernacle and its history until the building of the temple that superseded it.

### THE NAME IN SHILOH.

We find from Joshua 18. that when the land was subdued the sons of Israel assembled themselves together at Shiloh and set up the tent of meeting there, and it seems pretty clear that this was the Place of the Name for a fairly long period. It is not contrary to this that on occasions altars were erected to Jehovah in other places, for God is a sovereign and can meet and does meet His people where He will. But there were special privileges and responsibilities associated with the Place in which He put His Name that belonged to no other spot. We may, however, instance the altar erected at Mount Ebal, where Joshua wrote the whole of the law of God, given through Moses, after he

had offered thereon sacrifices and offerings to show that the divine purpose was not limited to the place of the Name.

But the altars of historical significance that marked stages in the history of the people, as did this one at Ebal, must be carefully distinguished from those erected by Gideon and Elijah, for instance, in connexion with God's sovereign kindness in meeting and reaching His people when they had wandered from Him. But whether Ebal or Jehovah-shalom, no other place could have that special divine service which belonged to the one only Place of the Name where God dwelt, and where might be offered to Him praise and worship such as could be accepted nowhere else.

It may be that this place was moved oftener than we know. It might seem, for instance, probable, though it is by no means certain, that the tabernacle was at Shechem at the end of Joshua's life, when he added his portion to the sacred Scriptures, writing in the book of the law of God, and erecting a stone of witness under the oak that was by the Sanctuary (see Joshua 24. 1-28).

But we find Shiloh still the Place of the Name when Samuel appears on the scene in the wonderful tale of his holy and God-pleasing childhood, and it was Shiloh that was set at nought by the idolatrous tribe of Dan as recorded in Judges 18.; see verse 31.

### ICHABOD.

In the tabernacle, in its most holy place, was the ark of the covenant. At the crossing of Jordan and at the taking of Jericho it had been carried before the people as a symbol of divine presence. But in the apostate days of Eli it had been taken from its place as if it had a power of its own, and the result of this idolatry was one of the greatest disasters that the people of God ever knew. For then God forsook His people and allowed the symbol of divine presence to be carried away captive by the ungodly Philistines, whilst the death of the profane sons of Eli completed

the calamity that fell on the man whose tenderness had overcome his sense of duty, so that he had even suffered his sons to bring the name of Jehovah into contempt.

Shiloh was thus desolate, and the temple of God (for so the tabernacle was rightly named as being the dwelling-place of God) was robbed of its most precious possession.

The ark of God, however, was not lost, for it was impossible for the Philistines to keep it ; but it was many a long year before it again had a fitting home.

### THE DAYS OF SAUL.

The king whom Samuel set in authority was a brave soldier and a man in many respects to be admired, but he never displayed any interest in the things of God, nor any care for the honour of the Name. During his day the tabernacle, or what was left of it, probably remained at Shiloh ; but the name of Shiloh disappears from the record, and it is to Nob, the city of the priests, that David went at that significant period when he ate of the shewbread and gave thereof to his young men.

Two things, we may observe at once, markedly distinguished David from Saul ; alike in valour and in loyalty to the great nation over whom they were called to reign, they differed more than all else in these two things : first, that David habitually enquired of God to know the way in which he should walk, while Saul knew little or nothing of the need of divine guidance ; second, that David had a heart to worship God and to serve Him, whilst Saul had little or no thought of anything of the kind.

### DAVID'S CARE FOR THE ARK.

When David becomes established on the throne his thoughts go out toward the ark of God, to fetch it up from Baale Judah, which we suppose to be the same as Kiriath-jearim, where the ark had been for twenty years. We do not stop to speak of the mistake that led to the disaster

of Perez-uzzah, but hasten on to notice the joy with which David brought the ark into the city of David, into a tent that he had prepared for its reception.

Bearing in mind the many instances in which David is reported to have enquired of God, and remembering that he was one to whom and through whom God often revealed His mind, we make no doubt that in this David was acting under divine direction.

The dwelling-place of the ark was temporary, nothing is said of the other vessels of the sanctuary, and with a few exceptions we may say that we read nothing of any of them from the day of Ichabod to the day when Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem. The reason is doubtless to be found in the backslidings and apostasy of the people. Whatever else was wrong, during the whole time of the judges the tabernacle was in Shiloh, and though perhaps we might think that some of the material would have been showing signs of wear and tear, yet whatever had been necessary to meet this had been accomplished; for the picture in the beginning of Samuel is evidently that of a habitable place and not of a ruin as far as its material structure was concerned.

But when once without divine command the ark has been removed from the tabernacle and the other vessels, we do not read of the tabernacle that Moses built being again associated with it. It would be perhaps mere conjecture if we ventured to suggest what was the relation of the ark on the one hand to the golden altar and lampstand and table of shewbread, and to the copper altar and laver during the reign of David. But we are keeping well within the bounds of certainty in making the statements that follow.

#### THE SITE FOR SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

There can be no doubt that David, as a reverent worshipper of the Triune Jehovah, set great store by the ark of the covenant, and was sincerely solicitous that it might

be housed in a manner worthy of the Mighty God who dwelt between the cherubim.

In his provision for the ark, saving the mistake he made in the matter of Perez-uzzah, David acted under divine direction, and was the chosen instrument of God, being prophet as well as king, to make known God's will as to the Place of the Name.

In particular, it was in accordance with divine revelation made to him that David fixed on the place where Solomon actually built the glorious temple that David would fain have erected himself.

### THE OLD ARK IN THE NEW TEMPLE.

In the temple of Solomon, with all its grandeur, with its ten lampstands, ten tables, and its one golden altar, its huge copper altar, its capacious sea, ten lavers and two lofty pillars all new, into the place of honour, the holy of holies, was brought no new ark, but the same one that Moses had made and that had accompanied the people in all their wanderings (2 Chron. 3. 4, 5).

It is clear that the other vessels were not thrown away or despised, though they were no doubt in measure superseded by the larger and more numerous vessels that Solomon had made. But the ark, small as it was in comparison with the vast building, still occupied in this the same place that it had occupied in the portable tabernacle.

Here was the Place of the Name, and to know how much that meant to the godly men of old we must read their writings. In particular a perusal of some of the psalms of David show what the Place was to him when it was by no means surrounded with the glory with which Solomon was permitted to encircle it, and when it was not even associated with such orderly arrangements as Moses had prepared, but when the ark of the presence was in a mere temporary place of abode. A few quotations from David's

psalms shall be given to show whither his heart continually turned :

### DAVID'S LOVE FOR THE HOUSE OF GOD.

In the multitude of Thy loving kindness will I come into Thy house :  
In Thy fear will I worship toward Thy holy temple (Psa. 5. 7).

Jehovah who shall sojourn in Thy tent ?

Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill ? (Psa. 15. 1).

Who shall ascend into Jehovah's hill ?

And who shall stand in His holy place ? (Psa. 24. 3).

Jehovah, I love the habitation of Thy house,

And the place of the tabernacle of Thy glory (Psa. 26. 8).

One thing have I asked of Jehovah,

That will I seek after ;

That I may dwell in the House of Jehovah

All the days of my life,

To behold the beauty of Jehovah,

And to enquire in His temple (Psa. 27. 4).

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of Thy house :  
And Thou shalt make them drink of the river of Thy pleasures  
(Psa. 36. 8).

But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the House of God (Psa. 52. 8).

I will dwell in Thy tabernacle for ever

I will take refuge in the covert of Thy wings (Psa. 61. 4).

My soul thirsteth for Thee,

My flesh longeth for Thee

In a dry and weary land,

Where no water is ;

So have I looked upon Thee in the sanctuary,

To see Thy power and Thy glory (Psa. 63. 1, 2).

Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest,

And causest to approach unto Thee,

That he may dwell in Thy courts :

We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy house,

The holy place of Thy temple (Psa. 65. 4).

While quoting from the psalms we may refer to the beautiful Maschil of Asaph and cite :

So that He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh,  
 The tent which He placed amongst men;  
 And delivered His strength into captivity.

Then the Lord awaked as one out of sleep.

... chose the tribe of Judah,  
 The Mount Zion which He loved,  
 And He built His sanctuary like the heights  
 Like the earth which He hath established for ever.

Psa. 78, 60, 61, 65, 68, 69.

Surely enough has been quoted to show what was thought by David and his friends and immediate successors of the Place where Jehovah caused His name to dwell.

\* \* \* \* \*

Jerusalem was also made desolate. As with Shiloh previously, so with Zion and its temple; the backsliding and apostasy of God's people, alas, too often led by their kings and priests, had brought about dire disaster, and God had arisen to accomplish His strange work of judgment after unparalleled forbearance and longsuffering (see the Lamentation of Jeremiah).

#### “TURN AGAIN OUR CAPTIVITY.”

Yet when the time came, the spirits of some of the people of God were stirred, and a way was made for them to return; and they did return, as God has been graciously pleased to record, to Jerusalem and to the Place which was His delight, and which in a sense we may say God had never forsaken.

To this Place there came one after another the companies of returning ones whose spirits God had raised, and here they were enabled to worship God as in Babylon they never could. Here the altar was raised, here the temple was rebuilt. There was nothing of glory or grandeur, but God was there. They were few, poor, despised, but God was with them. They became cold and neglected that for which they had been brought back, but God revived them.

Time would fail now to speak of the work of Sheshbazzar, of Zerubbabel and Joshua, of Haggai and Zechariah, of Ezra and Nehemiah, and others whose names are written in heaven indeed, but, thank God, are recorded also in books that we can read and which have been written for our learning.

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In the Scriptures of the New Covenant we find references not a few to the account God has given in the Old Covenant Scriptures of the Place of the Name and the House of God.

Are all these references effete? Have they outlived their purpose? Were they only meant for those who lived in apostolic days?

#### THE SPIRITUAL HOUSE.

Then certainly God had a house, a spiritual house containing so many of His children as were found together, having been gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, forming indeed in their several localities churches of God; but all forming part of one House, one Fellowship, one Flock, where Christ Jesus was Shepherd, Lord and Great Priest. His will being done, praise and worship in His Name ascended to His God and Father in fulfilment of the words He used in the memorable discourse with the Samaritan woman.

Is all this at an end now? Is there no possibility of such worship ascending to God to-day? Must God's children indeed be content to remain in the great Babylon and offer up individually to God their praise and worship as they may, and know no fellowship or association with one another but such as is comprised within the provision which the king of Babylon, the god of this world, suffers in his domain?

In Babylon, or Christendom, as it is more often called, there is nowadays much liberty for diversity of worship and service, and therein are to be found not only gods



many, but also lords many. But in Christendom there is no more room for the will of the Lord Jesus Christ than there was for Him in the inn at Bethlehem. We freely grant that many children of God in Babylon are thoroughly sincere, are earnest workers, and have a real desire to please God. But in Babylon God has not placed His Name. It is not the Name of the Lord which is the centre of Christendom; far less is it possible for the will of God in the matter of worship to be carried out there in incorruption as it has been revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

We ask again, Is there nothing else possible? Must God's children perforce remain there? Has no provision been made in the revealed will of God for days like the present?

We reply, Yes, there is an alternative, God has made provision, the call to come out of Babylon is not a form of idle words. To the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, where His will may be done and where worship and service may be offered to His God and Father, it is the privilege of repentant saints of God to come. Glory and grandeur as men count such they will not find, reproach and contempt will surely be their portion. But God's call being heard and obeyed, He will be found faithful, and if He be pleased what matters aught else?

C. M. LUXMOORE.

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## THE PLACE.

These are the statutes and the judgments, which ye shall observe to do in the land which Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath given thee to possess it, all the days that ye live upon the earth. Ye shall surely destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree : and ye shall break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and burn their Asherim with fire ; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods ; and ye shall destroy their name out of that place. Ye shall not do so unto Jehovah your God. But unto the place which Jehovah your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His Name there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come : and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herd and of your flock : and there ye shall eat before Jehovah your God, and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put your hand unto, ye and your households, wherein Jehovah thy God hath blessed thee. Ye shall not do after all the things that we do here this day, every man whatsoever is right in his own eyes : for ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which Jehovah thy God giveth thee. But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which Jehovah your God causeth you to inherit, and He giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety ; then it shall come to pass that the place which Jehovah your God shall choose to cause His Name to dwell there, thither shall ye bring all that I command you ; your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your hand, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto Jehovah : and ye shall rejoice before Jehovah your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates, forasmuch as he hath no portion nor inheritance with you. Take heed to thyself that thou offer not thy burnt offerings in every place that thou seest : but in the place which Jehovah shall choose in one of thy tribes, there thou shalt offer thy burnt offerings, and there thou shalt do all that I command thee.—Deut. 12. 1-14 (R.V.).

THE references here and elsewhere to “the Place” are calculated to cause enquiry in the minds of those who know the grace of God and are anxious to be well-pleasing to Him in their service.

Evidently Jehovah desired that not only should the right thing be done, but that it should be done at the RIGHT PLACE.

In the foregoing passage very much is made of "the Place," and this, like all else that was written aforetime, was written for our learning ; for God is one, therefore His ways are one and all stand together ; and though dispensations come and go, the ways of God remain. Dispensations alter the forms in which the ways of God are expressed, but not the essential ways themselves, for these are eternal.

At the very dawning of God's ways with men we find that Abel "brought of the firstlings of his flock," no doubt according to divine instruction, and perhaps to an altar. At any rate his offering was "brought." Afterwards the altar is spoken of as that to which offerings were brought ; and later on the altar was placed at the Tabernacle, and still later at the Temple, and to this altar all must bring their sacrifices and there offer before God. And when through sin, chiefly idolatry, that place was abandoned by God, and His people scattered, they never attempted to offer to God, for they were away from the Place.

When, however, their captivity was ended and an opportunity given, some of them returned to the Place and set the altar on its base (Ezra 3. 3), and built the House of God in its place (Ezra 5. 15). They did not regard the offerings as all important, and the place as non-essential ; but right back to God's chosen Place they went, and there they served their God.

They had learned from God the truth afterwards so clearly enunciated to their posterity by the Great Rabbi Himself as recorded in Matthew 23. 16, 21, where He declared that the temple was greater than the gold, and the altar greater than the gift.

To this day and hour the same holds good, although that altar, temple and place have ceased to be in the form in which they were then known ; and alas for us if we reverse

the teaching of the Lord and make the gold greater than the temple, and the gift greater than the altar.

May we reverently enquire what voice this has for our day, in order that what our God regards as greater may be regarded as greater by us also.

Very similar is the striking truth placed before Saul by Samuel on that momentous occasion when there had been a struggle between obedience on the one hand and sacrifice on the other, with awful consequences to Saul, who regarded sacrifice as being better than obedience. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. 15. 22), came forth from God through Samuel with no uncertain sound, and it remains for all time.

When Christ was amongst the professing people of God He found the kindred error and exposed it as we have seen. And both errors are to be met with on every hand to-day, even amongst Christians who claim much enlightenment; for the gift is made much of, and the sacrifice and offering extolled, but obedience is lightly esteemed, and that which the altar and temple speak of is regarded as very unimportant indeed. Every effort that is put forth to get back to the Place is characterized as resulting from narrowness and want of love and spirituality, whereas every sacrifice that is offered, and every gift given, is applauded without any regard to the question of obedience, either as to the use to which they are to be put, or the place in which they are to serve. To such the gold is greater than the temple, and the gift greater than the altar.

How many forms that gold and these gifts take the all-seeing Eye alone can detect, and He knows when they are exalted above His way, His place; and where such is the case, whatever be the object, yea, even though it be going out to rescue men, if obedience to His will and His way be not first rendered, disapproval must result—for the altar must ever be greater than the gift, and the temple greater than the gold.

The great harlot of Revelation 17. 4 is seen "decked with gold," it may be like Belshazzar's vessels of gold, that it has been carried away from the House of God. But no amount of decking, even with gold, can make her acceptable—for is not the temple greater than the gold? Neither can scarcity of gold make that which is of God unacceptable, for is not the gold less than the temple?

How great and far-reaching, then, is the common error that the gold and the gift are great and the altar and temple of little importance, that we need not much concern ourselves as to where and how we worship and serve, that the great thing is to busy ourselves about worshipping and serving!

This reflection brings us to where we want to dwell for a little, even to the feeble remnant that were in Babylon, who made bold to turn again to the Place which their fathers had despised. They had a little gold, but had no temple to put it in; they had offerings, but no altar to offer on; for how could they sing Jehovah's songs in a strange land? (Ps. 137.). What little they had they wanted to have in the right place; and their God brought them to that place and assured them, through His prophet, that He took great pleasure in them, poor and feeble though they were, little gold and few gifts though they had—for was not the altar greater than the gifts, and the temple greater than the gold?

This remnant has been held up as an example for us during the past sixty or eighty years by enlightened believers who saw something of the confusion into which spiritual things had fallen through the mixing up of believers and unbelievers, and man's ways with God's ways; but whilst in measure this was seen, the example of that remnant was not really followed, for a definite leaving of the confusion on the one hand and a definite coming to the place on the other did not result. Things were said and written that indicated a godly exercise on the part of many

as to these things, but the actual practice of them was lacking. A progressive line of teaching that would make the separation wider and wider there has not been ; but rather a relaxing tendency which simply broadens the area of confusion and leaves God's own people far and yet farther away from the Place, and adds a few more byways to the huge labyrinth which keeps believers moving ever further from the Highway constructed by God's truth.

Had the example of the remnant referred to been looked at carefully, it would have been seen that they not only left Babylon, but also all their brethren who remained there, and returned, not only as a remnant of Israel, but as a remnant even of the tribes that were sent into captivity to Babylon. They were well aware that the twelve tribes of Israel were one before God, that God's High Priest bore all their names on his shoulders and breast, and that Elijah the man of God put twelve stones in his altar ; but this did not cause them to wait until they could get all the twelve tribes to go together, neither to wait until they could get even all their brethren in Babylon to go.

As a remnant, a feeble remnant, they dared to return and to take their stand in the very place which God had long before chosen, and where the assembly of God, in all its divine glory, had stood. A small remnant they were, but a remnant that was of the same nature and quality as the whole, as all remnants are, and God was highly pleased with them and sent two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to speak His mind to them and to say some things to them that might well be coveted to-day.

This definite return to the Place on their part is the vital point that has been missed by many these sixty to eighty years, and missed because of the wrong idea that except we can now have all saints together we cannot know ourselves to be the Assembly of the living God. This fatal error finds expression in such statements as, "The Church is in ruins," "The House of God has now become a great

house," "There is only one Church, that composed of all believers," and so forth.

Those who use these and kindred expressions seem not to notice how completely they are condemned by the example of that remnant to which they have so often referred, who while not ignoring their responsibility to their brethren who elected to remain, responded with stirred up spirits to the divine grace which opened up for them the possibility of getting back to His own chosen mountain and there serving Him in His own perfect way.

These beloved and much longed-for brethren prefer to discourage every attempt at reaching a definite place, and try to make out that it results from carnality and departure from God, and some of them will even go to great excesses to prove that this is so ; in this they may secure the approval of many, very many, but not of "the truth itself" (3. John 12).

While, however, out of touch with that remnant in thus taking their stand in the Place, and those to-day who would endeavour in much weakness to follow their high example, these brethren themselves essay to carry out certain things which can only be properly carried out at the Place, and thus attempt to sing the Lord's songs in a strange land, to offer on that which is not God's altar, and to put gold on that which is not God's temple, vainly thinking that the song is greater than the land, that the gift is greater than the altar, and that the gold is greater than the temple. Songs may be loudly sung, gifts piled high, and gold lavishly spent, but if we have not the land, the altar and the temple, alas ! alas ! alas !

Every vessel of the House of God may be in use as in Belshazzar's day, the great harlot may be decked richly, as no doubt she will yet be, but swift and terrible will be the judgment of High Heaven on that awful prostitution of holy and divine things, that using of them away from the Place to suit the desires and thoughts of those who refuse the doctrines and commandments of the Lord.

Happy, thrice happy, are those who, notwithstanding all the confusion, have brought what little they have to God, to His Place.

If those who hold that we cannot now occupy a divine collective position would accept the only alternative and act alone as individuals, without attempting to carry out ordinances that were given for the churches of God, then they would be at least consistent with the clear import of their teachings: and though failing to reach the Place would at any rate escape the judgment of those who carry away the golden vessels of God's house and use them elsewhere, *who hand out that which is divine to be used as decoration on the ample figure of the great harlot.*

They are not, however, satisfied to do this, but instead proclaim themselves as those who "meet simply as believers in the name of the Lord," or who "gather simply to Himself," or who "meet to remember the Lord," or who "with a few others call on the name of the Lord out of a pure heart," or who "clear a place for God in the midst of the ruins," or who "gather on the ground of the one Body," or some other phrase or set of words which, whatever they do mean or are intended to mean, most certainly do not indicate that those who use them wish to testify clearly to the confusion in which they found themselves and the definite place to which they have been brought.

Churches of Christ we have in Scripture at the houses of saints, and churches of God in towns and cities; buildings of God we have mentioned, and the House of God; but where are such things mentioned in Scripture as are indicated by the words which we have just been quoting? Where indeed? They are evidently as much without divine warrant as the large churches (so called) and the denominations of the religious world; absolutely without divine warrant.

In the light of the return of the feeble remnant to Jerusalem there is no excuse, even in these last days, for anything



less than that which God can recognize. Weakness and poverty are no excuse, given that those who come together are stirred up by God, for is not the temple greater than the gold, and the altar greater than the gift? And is there not a merciful and faithful High Priest who only demands that which all who draw nigh can have, even a true heart?

In the second epistles, which are supposed to be written specially for the remnant times, we have no suggestion of anything less than churches of God. We have the form (pattern) of doctrine unto which we were delivered repeated in various ways and committed to faithful men in the second letter to Timothy (ch. 2.), and we have the possibility held out that those who err may receive repentance "unto the knowledge of the Truth" (ver. 25), corresponding to the "pillar and ground of the Truth" of the first epistle. Also in chapter 3. 16 the Scriptures are spoken of as profitable amongst other things for "correction," which means "to set upright again," in other words, to bring back to the original place or state—weaker, no doubt, and enfeebled by sin's awful influence, and impaired in every way, but yet back again on the firm foundation which standeth, and started again to follow after righteousness (ch. 2. 22) with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Such, according to the analogy of the Faith, are nothing less than the House of God; they can be nothing less.

The golden lampstand must either be in its place, or else removed out of its place (Rev. 2. 5); and when thus removed the enemy will do what he can to get some of that gold displayed on the great harlot before referred to.

Those who have set their hearts on this high and holy thing are not unaware of the seriousness and responsibility of the position taken up, and what it involves; neither are they where they are without sympathetically considering all previous movements known to them. Some friends have an amazing confidence in the perfection of their position,

but confidence is not in itself satisfactory evidence, for it is also found in many who belong to sects and parties far removed from the divine standard. This is lamentable in the extreme ; it may pass for divine assurance with those who have not learned that there are precepts and doctrines of men, yea, even what would be called good precepts and good doctrines of good men, that frustrate the good and perfect and acceptable will of God ; but it cannot mislead those who are following after righteousness in living faith—a faith often sorely tried.

Such as act by faith are always anxious that no mistake be made, and they cannot rest satisfied until they discern everything bearing on the question, whether in the matter of eternal salvation or the salvation of the believer's life. All is serious with them, and they therefore court the keenest scrutiny, the full light of all truth.

What a joy if in any measure they can experience the truth of 1 Corinthians 2. 15: " But he that is spiritual examineth (Revised margin) all things, and he himself is examined of no man." How carefully will souls that are tempted to fear that they have missed the Cross, examine the experience of others, and allow the whole truth to bear on them until everything has been tested. And so with those who, as believers, are anxious to be in, and of, that which is of God ; they will, and must, examine everything that claims to be anything spiritually, and can never rest satisfied until they have reached the Place. Such will not be upset by the failures and weaknesses of those who claim to be in the right place, for they are well aware that men have never been perfect, and that they themselves are not perfect.

The latter part of the verse will also be experienced—" He himself is examined of no man "—for it is very noticeable that deceived souls will not come to close quarters with those who are real, and similarly believers are very slow to come close to their fellows in order to have their collective position tested by the truth.

After examining all things, and giving full credit for every particle of truth held by each and all, a few were compelled with much sorrow (God knoweth) and yet much joy (God knoweth) to arise up and to seek the Place of which God had told them, even where all the truth can be taught and practised as opportunity offers and ability enables.

It appears to the present writer that a clear grasp of the definite position has been much hindered in the case of some believers known to him, and much esteemed by him, by the hazy teaching that obtains amongst them as to baptism, and as to the one Body. Baptism whether infant or household, is held to bring the subjects into some place of privilege, into the House of God as some would say, or into the sphere of Christian influence or other badly defined zone of that kind.

Does such teaching not deny entirely that the lamp-stands were removed, and that God's people were sent into spiritual captivity, and that though many truths were recovered by mighty men of God, the Place was not reached where each truth could have its divine surrounding and be made the complement of every other truth, where, in a word, the gift could be laid on the altar and the gold put in the temple?

If the captivity be lost sight of, how can intelligent reference be made to the godly remnant of a past day? or if it be said that the House is in ruins, or that the House of God has become a great house with all manner of dishonourable vessels therein, what voice have Ezra and Nehemiah for us? Surely this calls loudly for an answer; and if that answer be unfavourable, then these scriptures should remain unused by those who are not prepared to go the full length of the truth, and rebuild both the altar and the temple.

If the so-called baptismal rite performed on an unregenerate child or heathen brings the subject into a place of privilege, then that place, with all the failures and errors of those who occupy it, is the Place of which God speaks, and

should not be departed from. Dissent is commonly but the act of a few who leave and find themselves together in order to give prominence to this truth or that, and though engaged in by well-meaning and devoted believers is yet wrong, if so be that such baptism brings persons into the place of privilege.

This is the position occupied by the late Mr. J. N. Darby, and those who are influenced by his powerful personality and teaching as we understand that position.

If, however, this idea of a place of privilege into which children and heathen are introduced by baptism (so-called) is without Scriptural warrant, as we believe it to be, and is, therefore, a huge delusion which misleads souls in the matter of eternal salvation, and also misleads believers in the matter of reaching the Place to which God's light and truth would bring them, how sad that it should be blindly followed by so many otherwise exercised persons who have freed themselves from many errors, and yet have allowed this huge mistake to dominate their whole position and rob them of the truth?

And not only is there no such place of privilege indicated in the Scriptures, but on the contrary, this mass of baptized profession is symbolized by a great harlot, and the divine command is "Come forth, My people, out of her" (Rev. 17. 18.). Dissent, because of a few errors, without judging the whole, must end, sooner or later, in failure, seeing that it contains as much as will keep it in touch with that out of which it came and will, therefore, little by little, be led back sufficiently far to cause it to be regarded by God as part of that great apostasy, although few even of Christians may have eyes to see it thus.

Dissent is right, but to secure permanent result it must judge that from which it dissents to its centre, and then seek for divine light and guidance as to what may be constructed. There must be obedience to the two-fold command, "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." The ceasing to do

evil is commanded in 2 Timothy 2. 19, "Depart from unrighteousness"; and the learning to do well is pointed out in verse 22, "Follow after righteousness . . . with them," and so forth.

The great apostasy must be judged and departed from definitely; the way of righteousness must be enquired for and followed after earnestly, every day finding exercised ones farther away from the one and nearer to the other. Wherever this dark error regarding baptism obtains, there never can be clearness as to these things.

Then as to the one Body, it is held to govern the relationship of believers to one another collectively, and to the Head, such an expression being used as "The Church of God on the ground of the one Body."

No such thing ever existed or can exist. It is clearly revealed that all believers are in one Spirit baptized into one Body, of which Christ is the Head, and also that behaviour toward one another should be governed by that close relationship, but that it ever formed or could now form a basis for collective testimony is, in the nature of things, impossible, for collective testimony makes distinctions imperative that do not exist in the Body relationship; for example, males and females are distinguished between in the church in Corinth, whereas there is neither male nor female in the Body; indeed, the one Body imagery was never intended to express collective testimony to the truth, but a much more subtle relationship of member to member in a mysterious vital spiritual organism which exists far beyond the boundary of our reason but within easy reach of faith, and yet can only be properly recognized by those who are together of God.

The one Body structurally we can never add to nor take from, but the Temple of God we may build or destroy, for in connexion with it we may be builders and helpers in one way or another, or destroyers (see 1 Cor. 3. 10-16).

Those who teach that we should be together because of

our recognition of the truth of the one Body, but that as all the members are not so together we should not claim to be anything collective, are using the one Body imagery for a purpose for which it was not given, and thereby losing sight of the precious truth regarding God's House. Much was written to Timothy in order that men might know how they ought to behave themselves in the House of God, not in the one Body, for the divine arrangements here set forth are not compatible with a body, proving to us beyond question that the carrying out of this legislation is only possible when we have the House of God in existence; and if we cannot have it we cannot carry out these perfect ways which are suited to it, and to it alone. No amount of occupation with the one Body, however good in itself, will take the place of this, and when used to frustrate it, is but a delusion and a snare, and a contribution to the general confusion.

There are various other esteemed fellow-believers who, while recognizing the truth that all believers are one Body, do not associate it with the basis of gathering. They, however, also find themselves together in what some of them call "little meetings," others "little assemblies," and others make bold and speak of them as "Churches of God." Some of these say that they gather to remember the Lord; others, that as children they find their place at the Father's table; and others say, that they "gather to Himself," "to the person," or "to" or "unto the name of the Lord." But all these have one thing in common: they deny that we can now have the House of God, the Place, as one thing for God, and they unite in opposing the teaching that clearly sets it forth.

It is not necessary to call attention to the insufficiency of such expressions as the first two, but the latter are more misleading and require looking at in the light of that which is written.

It seems very plausible to say that we gather to Himself,

to the Person, but it is nothing more or less than a pious delusion, when it is set forth as God's centre of gathering, for such it is not. The Person was associated with the Place in the past as seen in 1 Samuel 10. 3, "Three men going up to God to Bethel." But if these men had ignored Bethel and yet had professed to be gathered to God Himself, what a delusion! notwithstanding that they might have quoted the divine words, "gather My saints together unto Me," and have claimed that they were gathered to God Himself.

Similarly, persons may claim to-day that they are gathered simply to Himself and ignore the Place, the spiritual House of the present dispensation, which is indicated in 1 Peter 2. 1-10, particularly in the words quoted from the Old Testament: "Behold, I lay in Zion," showing unmistakably the unity of the faith, the connexion between the past and the present.

The terms building, house, as used in 1 Corinthians 3., Hebrews 3., 1 Timothy 3., 1 Peter 2., further prove the connexion in the divine mind between the material place of the past and the spiritual place of the present, so that any thought that believers may now gather to Himself, or unto His name in churches, without having the divine thought as to the Place is a delusion, however well-meaning the persons may be, and however excellent in many respects.

Churches have their God-given functions to perform in their respective places, even as individuals have also theirs, but the individual must not set aside the church, and the church must not set aside the House, the Place.

For instance, if a few individuals, as such, essay to break the bread, it is a solemn contravention of the law of the Lord; and if little meetings or churches, as such, essay to perform that high and holy act, it is equally wrong.

That which brings His death before us must be brought to the Place and there engaged in before God.

Many lambs were killed in the houses of the Israelites in Egypt on that night, but the eye of God only saw one: "The

whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill IT " (Exod. 12. 6). And afterwards, at the tabernacle and temple the one great altar received all the sacrifices, and there before God the one great coming sacrifice was ever typified.

Some say that we have gone too far and speak too strongly, but the writer believes that timid words are unworthy of such a theme, and as to going too far, the distance from Babylon to Jerusalem may be measured, but who shall measure the moral and spiritual distance between the apostasy of to-day and the beautiful order of God's House as given to us in the epistles !

Much failure there will ever be in attempting to carry out this high and holy thing ; but will some one show from the Scriptures that less can be set before us, or less attempted ?

Were all the beautiful ways of God for His together people given to be carried out in case all His children would remain corporately one ; but as soon as one left or was put away, or a schism took place, God's work was frustrated and all the godly must there and then cease to build ?

Godly Hezekiah and Josiah did not so act when they found that all Israel would not come to Jerusalem to serve God, but instead they carried out all the good ordinances of God that they knew, and carried them out in the Place, well knowing that they could not please God and carry them out in any other place, even if they could have had all Israel there.

How, then, can our God be acceptably served to-day away from His Place, however many believers may be there, and however many golden vessels and gifts, seeing that the valuation of the sanctuary is that the temple is greater than the gold, and the altar greater than the gift.

Why, then, should those whose spirits are being raised in these days fear to leave for ever those pretentious Churches (so called) which have no Scriptural warrant, and those little meetings and simple gatherings which have equally no warrant in Scripture, and ascend to God's holy hill and there



worship and serve the living and true God, according as they find it written.

Those who to-day obey the divine call will have an experience very similar to that of the remnant which we have had under consideration, which experience is recorded in Psalms 120.—134., called the Songs of ascents. Psalm 119. is a fitting base from which to start, with its wonderful variety of references to the word of God, for every movement that the Holy Spirit has begun starts from here—

“O, send out Thy light and Thy truth;  
Let them lead me;  
Let them bring me unto Thy holy hill,  
And to Thy tabernacles;  
Then will I go unto the Altar of God,  
Unto God, my exceeding joy.”

(Psalm 43. 3).; and if we are not led and brought by that light and that truth in our measure of ability to see and understand the same, our God cannot take pleasure in us.

Starting then from this divine starting-point, we have the first of the songs of ascent: and be it noted that they are songs notwithstanding all the difficulties of the way. The first verse speaks of distress which was caused by finding themselves in a place where they could not sing the Lord's songs, where they could not place their gifts on God's altar and their gold in God's temple. The second verse speaks of “lying lips”—Satan's lie placed beside God's truth in order to turn them aside; but the truth prevails over the lie and on they go until the sanctuary is reached in Psalm 134. Then “Praise ye Jah” follows in Psalm 135., and Psalm 136. is occupied with “For His mercy endureth for ever,” as well it might be, for indeed His mercy does endure for ever.

Those who have exercise to-day will experience distress as they find themselves in a place where they cannot carry out what God has exercised them about. They will also have experience of the “lying lips,” for Satan's lie will be put alongside God's truth, and it will be made as like the truth

as possible, even as in a future day, of which we are told, if it were possible even the elect would be deceived. Eve was deceived by Satan's lie. Saul was deceived by it when he placed sacrifice above obedience. Jonah was turned aside by it, for he says, "They that regard lying vanities forsake their own mercy." And our Lord and Master warns us against it, by telling us that Satan stood not in the truth, because there is no truth in him, and that he is the father of lies. Every lie, therefore, in connexion with spiritual things comes from him, and is opposed to the truth, and is intended to supplant the truth, however nice and plausible it may be, and however good the person may be who is putting forth something to keep an exercised one from obedience.

Satan stood not in the truth. And now his fell design is to get others, either regenerate or unregenerate, to disobey what God places before them; and his best servants have always been those who, like himself, had some light and truth and disobeyed, and who now love to get others with them, whether they be those who have disobeyed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, or those who, though believers, have disobeyed the truth which was placed before them by God. To one and all how very, very solemn are the words, "If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness" (Matt. 6. 33). For the darkness that follows rejected light is indeed great darkness, and those who have thus rejected the light are generally the most persistent in trying to influence others, yea, even in formulating doctrines and teaching them to others as exposed by the Lord in Matthew 5. 19, "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." It is serious to break one of these, but much more serious to teach men so, that is, to set up a form of teaching which frustrates one of the least of God's commandments. How terrible and yet how possible!

How careful should all who desire to please the Lord be to

make sure that they have obeyed from the heart that form of teaching (Rom. 6. 17), which is of God, and have escaped the many forms of teaching which have crushed out one or other of the precious truths of God as they were brought before saints for their obedience.

Those who refuse to obey this or that particular truth which is being recovered from amongst the rubbish of the "doctrines and commandments of men" at any given time will not admit, even to themselves, what their real attitude is, but instead will take refuge in a form of teaching which may contain many truths not in active dispute, but which effectually sets aside the least commandment, it may be, then being assailed by the powers of darkness. When Samuel said to Saul, "Thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah; He hath also rejected thee from being king," it did not mean that Saul had rejected everything that the Lord had spoken, but the particular thing then enjoined, and because he rejected it, he stood in the same position as if he had rejected all, and, therefore, lost his crown. The great sacrifice which he purposed to offer did not save him from that awful judgment.

The most usual method to-day, when setting aside the present truth, is to quote scriptures leaving some part out, as, for instance, the well-known quotation or mis-quotation, "Mark them which cause divisions and offences and avoid them." This, like an equally incorrect quotation of a saying of our Lord, "went abroad among the brethren," and has been used by the enemy to keep many away from the Place.

The two serious things in this scripture are, "Causing divisions and offences," and doing so "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." To quote the one and leave out the other, is to put asunder what God has joined together, and he who did so at the first, and those who continue to do so, have much to answer for.

Those who so quote this scripture make it manifest that "the doctrine which ye have learned" has not its proper

place in their thoughts, and that the unity of persons is their great object, which must be secured at the expense of that doctrine which they deliberately ignore.

Such are thus contributing, however far removed, their share to that great movement, which is slowly but surely gathering strength, and gravitating toward the union of Christendom, a consummation which seems to be indicated in that wonderful symbol in Revelation 17., concerning which John says, "And when I saw her, I wondered with a great wonder," as well he might.

Whatever ideas and considerations will yet prevail so as to make the union of Christendom possible, it is certain that "the doctrine which ye have learned" will not have its divine place.

It is well to remember that John saw this great harlot by divine pointing-out, and from the divine standpoint; this suggests that she may not be so seen by men, so that the union of Christendom may not require as much definiteness as we might suppose in order to satisfy that symbol.

It is evident that it will not be merely a movement amongst the great mass of profession as some may suggest, for we find the call, "Come out of her, My people," so that true believers will be in her, perhaps, indeed, they will supply all the gold with which she will be decked, for the truths now being used by believers in such associations were once unknown in those places, but were carried there, like the golden vessels of old, by those who would not follow after righteousness, and, therefore, gradually lost ground, finding themselves more and more in sympathy with persons and things not occupying the Place, and more and more out of sympathy with persons and things at the Place.

If John wondered with a great wonder when this huge apostasy and prostitution was pointed out to him by the angel, surely it is high time that exercised ones should seek for heavenly guidance, that they may escape from her influence and her judgment, for when it is complete she shall

be found "no more at all, for strong is the Lord that judgeth her" (Rev. 18, 8, 21). Evidently when that great union takes place there will be but it and those who have escaped its seducing influence, as the eye of God sees; and happy are they, and happy will they be, who are able and who will be able to say, "By the word of Thy mouth have I kept me from the paths of the destroyer." And not only kept from the paths of the destroyer, but by that same word led, brought to God's holy hill and to His tabernacle, and yet further to His altar, and still further to Himself, to God.

W. J. LENNOX.

## THE NAME AND THE MEMORIAL.

"The way of the just is uprightness.

Thou that art upright dost direct the path of the just.

Yea, in the way of Thy judgments, O Jehovah, have we waited for Thee.

To Thy name and to Thy memorial is the desire of our soul."

—Isa. 26. 7, 8.

The truth here presented concerning the Name and the Memorial, offers food for thought, and may yield profit and blessing. The place in which Jehovah chose to put His name of old, was that to which was the desire of His soul, as the words of Psalm 132. 13, 14, tell:—

"For Jehovah hath chosen Zion,

He hath desired it for His habitation.

This is My resting place for ever,

Here will I dwell; for I have desired it."

But previous to this, that place was Shiloh (see Jer. 7. 12), and here was the tabernacle, the dwelling place of Jehovah. Here, in the appointed season, the Passover was to be kept, in the Place which Jehovah chose to cause His Name to dwell there (Deut. 16. 2, 6, 11, 15, 16), so that, in the Place of the Name, in the appointed season, the Memorial was to be

kept, according to the words of Exod. 12. 14: "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial, and ye shall keep it a feast to Jehovah throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."

Further legislation concerning this was given in association with the circumstances recorded in Num. 9. These present certain restrictions imposed, as well as certain possibilities that might arise to prevent the desire of the soul being effected. Where such desire existed, it was pleasing to God, even when circumstances over which one had no control prevented effect being given thereto. If defilement had been contracted, those having this desire would eagerly embrace God's provision for removing the same, so that they might take advantage of His gracious consideration in giving them opportunity to keep the Memorial a month later. But he who failed to embrace such gracious consideration, or could not plead being on a journey or defilement as a reason for failing to keep the Memorial, surely evidenced lack of the desire of soul to the Name and to the Memorial.

Possibly, Shiloh, as a place, presented little to attract the natural eye and heart, but it was the place Jehovah had chosen to put His name; and in the Name was the attraction, and to the Name was the desire of the soul of the faithful Israelite of old. And in the place of the Name was the Memorial. This was in the early days of their history; so was it in the latter days of their history. All in whose heart were the high ways to Zion, and whose desire of soul was to the Name, even in those dark and difficult days, had the opportunity to express appreciation of Jehovah, His desires, and His ways, by being found in the Place He had chosen to put His name, where His House was, and where His presence was. The songs of the goings up thereto express the intensity of the soul's desire to the Name and to the Memorial of those who came thither up out of Babylon, in response to the call of Jehovah thus to do, and there to be.

If it was so in the early days, how much more so in the

latter days, when the appearance of things was so repelling to the one who walked by sight, and the associations of the Place would test as well as evidence the intensity of the desire of the soul to the Name. But, to those, however few or feeble, who had a desire for the honour of Jehovah, as finding practical expression in association with His name, His altar, His ordinances and His house, what encouragement and what strength to know that Jehovah hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that feared Jehovah and that thought upon His name. "And they shall be Mine," saith Jehovah of hosts, "in the day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure."

We go further, however, and seek to show how these principles apply with equal force and significance in the present dispensation as in the past, and that even unto the last days thereof, and the appreciation of the Son of God is as surely expressed in His closing messages to the churches in the book of the Revelation, concerning those of whom the words are true, and in whom they have practical manifestation, "To Thy name and to Thy memorial, is the desire of our soul."

In the present dispensation the Place of the Name is associated with the person and authority and presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son over God's House. The One in whom the Father rested and delighted; who wrought His will, and finished the work given Him to do; who glorified the Father on the earth; and has now been glorified by Him in the heavens; is the One to whom God hath given the Name which is above every name, in which every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

In inseparable association with the place of the Name, is the Memorial; and in the comings together, referred to in 1 Cor. 11.-14., are presented the privilege and opportunity, in the appointed place, at the appointed season, to do the

appointed thing—"This do in remembrance of Me." In the right and proper apprehension and appreciation of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the language of the hearts and lips of His redeemed and His own should fittingly be, "To Thy name and to Thy memorial is the desire of our soul." Such desire of soul being there, the opportunity of giving effect to the same will not be treated lightly nor indifferently, but (except for some very legitimate reason) will be loyally and lovingly embraced. Sad indeed is it in the experience of any, when with the opportunity and privilege at hand, to express appreciation of Christ our passover, who hath been sacrificed for us, they should fail to use it, through the lack of the desire of the soul.

In these last and closing days of the present age will be found further and greater opportunities of evidencing the desire of the soul to the Name and to the Memorial. In the circumstances presented in 2 Tim. 2. 16-22 of apostasy from the truth, when the place and honour of the Lord Jesus Christ are at stake, the call comes, "Let every one that nameth the Name of the Lord, depart from unrighteousness." Rev. 2. 3, shows the evidence of the desire of soul to the Name, and the appreciation in which the Lord held the same, by His presence and by His words. Likewise in the relation to the Name of those in Pergamum, and those in Philadelphia, whom He who walks in the midst of the churches commends so highly, "Thou holdest fast My Name," "Thou didst not deny My Name," may opportunity yet be found, by those of His own, in whose hearts His person and His honour fill the pre-eminent place, to go and do likewise, and thus by actions declare that, to His Name and to His Memorial is the desire of the soul.

DAVID SMITH.

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## NOT OF MOSES, BUT OF THE FATHERS.

FAR back, in the years of ancient times, there is not want of evidence, shadowy and in thin and intermitting outline though it be, that there was a place where men called upon the Most High and presented their gifts, where they heard His voice and realized His unseen though real presence. In this connexion it may be noted that while in Genesis are hidden the seeds of the future bud and flower of fuller and deeper revelation of later days, it contains nevertheless the root and stock of the Mosaic economy. Much appears upon this densely-written page, where persons and events, seemingly unassociated and unrelated, abruptly and suddenly appear and recede, only to lead to the deepening conviction that such are but glimpses of a large and ample background of God's unwritten dealings with men, and that they never would have been brought to light there, nor appeared even as hints and glimpses upon the page at all, except for their relation, directly or indirectly, to the history of the promised seed.

The words which fell from the lips of Infinite Wisdom, "Moses gave you circumcision, not that it is of Moses, but of the Fathers," lead us by divine warrant to conclude that while Jehovah made known His ways to Moses from the throne overshadowed by the Cherubim of Glory, at the door of the tent of meeting as well as from Sinai's summit (Exod. 25. 22, Lev. 1. 1, Exod. 19.), He incorporated therewith certain ordinances, such as circumcision, which were of the Fathers; intimating thereby that what was of the Fathers was as divine in origin as that which was of Moses, both alike being set forth in the writings of which those enlightening and far-reaching words of the Lord were uttered, "Had ye believed Moses' writings ye would have believed My words."

This being so, it is but an obvious inference that the

inauguration of the Levitical economy, the outstanding features of which were the sanctuary, the Place of the Name, and the divine indwelling,<sup>1</sup> did not entail an absolute breach with the past. Rather with those golden threads of divine revelation which threw their halo and sheen around the patriarchal and pre-patriarchal times, Moses mingled others; when he received divine revelation anew and afresh, in a setting fitting the nation to whom they came, and in agreement with the will of Jehovah, who spake to him at the door of the tent of meeting (Lev. 1. 1).

Hence the Divine Revealer Himself originally displays in His own speakings to men those characteristics of the scribe as set forth by the Lord Jesus, who instructed into the Kingdom, brings forth from the treasury things new and old, the old giving weight and solidity to the new, and the new bringing freshness and fuller meaning to the old.

As to the Mosaic economy itself, the utterance of the Lord Jesus, "I came not to destroy the Law but to fulfil it," may well impress the mind with the dignity and authority with which the Levitical Code was invested, for how great and divine must be that Law of which the incarnate Logos Himself deigned to become the fulfiller and fulfilment!

Hereafter it is hoped to show that the principles of worship and approach to God connected with the Place of the Name and exemplified in the Mosaic age did not so absolutely supersede, or were not so entirely divorced from earlier times and from the prior speakings of God as many think; nor are the principles which pertain to the present age isolated or utterly outside those utterances of God which Moses heard at the door of the tent of meeting. In other words, the different ages or periods, though characterized by revelation peculiar and prominent to such several times, do not form absolute watertight compartments, nor does each age contain absolutely within itself the whole of the divine principles which are still operative in respect to calling upon the Name, or approach to God, and the

other natural concomitants of divine worship, subjection to Him and service for Him.

Perhaps it has been too hastily inferred from Ezekiel 20. 10-12 that the Sabbath was never observed till the Exodus. Such an inference is by no means sound, as the deduction could as justly be made that no statutes or judgments were given till the same epoch. It is also plainly seen that Ezekiel is speaking as to the Sabbath being given to the nation of Israel, and his words do not necessarily carry with them the thought that prior to the national existence of the sons of Israel, the sons of men did not observe the seventh day. It is at least certain from Genesis 2. 3 that the seventh day was hallowed and blessed by God, and left standing sacred, alone and detached from the other days in the earliest flow of time as men know it, and therein was enshrined some idea of the Blessor and His work.

The fact that Noah sent out the dove three successive times at intervals of seven days tends to suggest that it may have been observed; but the language of Exodus 20. 8. can scarcely be interpreted otherwise than as referring to something previously known as existing, and the words do not appear to point to the inauguration of something hitherto not known. This is made more clear on comparison with the monitions of Malachi in reference to the Law of Moses, "Remember the Law of Moses." Attention seems to be called here to that which was previously known and observed, and the same is quite possible in reference to the words "Remember the Sabbath Day" of Exodus 20. 8. Hence the Lord's words concerning circumcision may also be pertinent to the observance of the seventh day.

Of the Fathers there is much else given in Genesis, for instance, the distinction between clean and unclean amongst birds and beasts, and the placing of the clean alone on the sacrificial altar (Gen. 8. 20); the pouring out of the blood ere the animal was meat for man (Gen. 9. 4); the law against the one who murders, making the crime punishable with death

(Gen. 9. 5); the marriage with an idolater or one uncircumcised forbidden (Gen. 34. 14); sanctification and purification enjoined on those who approach or present themselves at Bethel (Gen. 35. 2). These and many other divine institutions of the Fathers, and the times prior to them, which lie scattered through Genesis, were renewed, and reset and amplified in most cases, and given from God, as divine legislation to Moses and the people in the Wilderness, who occupied the Place of the Name. These principles were never revoked nor suspended, because they pertained to the place of the altar or approach to God in connexion with the heads of families, and by them they were held inviolable and supreme, as truly as the same in later days became incumbent upon the redeemed host, who though brought up like sheep, were led through the wilderness like a flock, amongst whom Jehovah dwelt within the curtained tabernacle on the desert sands.

Gathering up the scattered hints lying upon the surface of the Book of Genesis, widely apart though they be, but indicative of deep underlying principles which pertain to the Place of the Name, we note a startling and significant sentence which calls our attention and arouses our interest: "Rebekah went to inquire of the Lord." That a prophetic response was vouchsafed to her of the Most High assures us of the genuineness of her request as well as of the reality of her approach to God. The word "went" carries with it the sense of a local place of approach to God for intercession, and can find no adequate answer in any mental process. Truly a tiny straw barely seen upon such a wide stream, but it contains within it the foreshadowing of what Hannah did in later days, when she went up to the House of Jehovah in Shiloh. Was this simple episode, involving so much unwritten background as to the Place of the Altar and Name, alone in the history of the Patriarchs? We think not.

A glimpse from the life of him whose bitter groanings

did not equal the calamities which overtook him, confirms this thought. In the anguish of his heart he says, "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him : that I might come even to His seat" (Job 23. 2). This surely is no vain utterance for something that never had been nor could be, but the echo of an experience, now no longer his, of days gone by ; an experience in which Job had known where to find God and had approached to His seat ; and this is further shown in a later lament, where he says :—

"Oh ! that I were as in the months of old, . . .

When the secret of God was upon my tent ;

When the Almighty was yet with me."—Job 29. 2-5.

What was there, we may well ask, in connexion with this tent of Job's that made it possible for him in language neither of poetic imagery nor license, but of reality and experience, to associate with it the secret (or counsel) of God, and view it as a place sanctified by the Almighty's presence ? There is but one answer : the tent was sanctified by the presence of the altar, the Place of the Name, opposite to which it stood, so that the door or opening or entrance to the tent faced the altar. Standing at such a place Abraham is said to stand before Jehovah ; it was then, as later, the place of approach to God.

Comparing these experiences of Job with those of Abraham in Genesis 18. 1, how certainly they are parts of one whole. The Lord appeared to him by the plains of Mamre as he sat in the door of his tent. Here he received the prophetic announcement of the promised seed, and here also he interceded. "He stood before Jehovah" (Gen. 18. 22). He "drew near" (Gen. 18. 23). Evidently a place of revelation, and also as with Job a place of intercession (Job 42. 8), the prototype of the door of the tent of meeting where stood the copper altar, and the place before Jehovah. It was to this the sons of Israel brought, in later days, their sacrifice, in accordance with the opening words of the book called in the Hebrew tongue "*vayyik'rā*"

that is "And He called," which read thus: "He shall offer it at the door of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah, and he shall kill it before Jehovah."

Not only in the times of the Patriarchs was the altar, with its answering victim, the place at which they called upon the Lord, but an identical principle is found by winding back the thread to the still earlier times, when Noah builded an altar (Gen. 8. 20) as he set out upon the earth purged by judgment; and this he did, we may well understand, not because then called thereto by Jehovah, but of a custom and wont (Job 1. 5) learned prior from Him who skilled him to distinguish between clean and unclean, and lay upon his altar none but clean. Upon him as he stood at that altar God pronounced His blessing, and laid upon him responsibility as to His divine behest, coupled with prophetic utterances as to His own purposes.

Nor must it be conceived that the altar was absent because not named in connexion with Abel's offering, the acceptance of which, however indicated, marked the divine presence, which was also indicated by the rejection of Cain's offering, and the rebuke and solemn sentence upon Cain which followed, and to which Cain replied, "From Thy face shall I be hid," or as paraphrased by some, "From the place where Jehovah revealed His presence shall I be hid," establishing thus early the combined privilege and corresponding accountability to God of those who call upon His Name.

From these dim and bare outlines it must be clearly and definitely seen that from ancient times the leal hearts of men, Abel the martyr, Noah the preacher of righteousness, Abraham the prophet, Job the patient one, found expression to God at the place of the altar, and though as yet there was no sanctuary, divine service was rendered to the Most High there, upon the altar of earth, placed perhaps under some oak, for there He made Himself known to them, and there their accountability to God's command was acknow-

ledged, and there also His will was received by them as a divine and precious trust.

Though this service was most simple at first, yet by divine injunction and power a sanctuary was reared later according to the divine will and pattern, and Jehovah took up His abode in the midst of His redeemed people. This building when pitched in Shiloh is dignified with the name of temple (Hebrew *Hēikhal*, Greek *Naos*),<sup>1</sup> although such a curtained sanctuary might seem unworthy of the name; yet, ere the pattern of the house was made known to David, the tabernacle was God's temple, God's house, His temple where He is approached and worshipped, His house in which He is served, the place of His Name, His Throne and His Presence, and where alone the nation of Israel, in their organic unity could fulfil the words, "Thou shalt worship Jehovah thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

No words can emphasize too strongly the reality of this approach to God by men, even by those who had already been brought to Himself (Exod. 19.), as the words of Leviticus 1. 2 bear witness, "When any man of you offereth an oblation unto Jehovah." Here is recorded the privilege and exhortation. The word "offereth" and "oblation" being from the same root as the familiar word "*Korban*" or approach offering of Mark 7. 11, no mere formal drawing near is intended, but that of the closest and most intimate kind, and this is made plain by the fact that the word "inwards" of Leviticus 1. 13 comes from the same root. Such approach was ever in connexion with the Sanctuary, Temple or House of Jehovah as Psalm 65. 4 indicates. "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest and causest to approach unto Thee,

That he may dwell in Thy Courts.

We shall be satisfied with the goodness of Thy House,  
The holy place of Thy Temple." See also Numbers 16. 9.

In view of the light shed upon the ways of God as seen

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. 1. 9; 3. 3; 2 Sam. 22. 7.

in connexion with His people, in the words of 1 Corinthians 10. 11, "Now these things happened unto them by way of example, and they were written for our admonition," we may well ask what is the New Testament counterpart of the Place of the Name, the Sanctuary, and whether the words of the Psalmist above quoted have any meaning or expression as applied to the way of the Lord for His people to-day. We believe they have, but a present meaning and expression which almost every device of the adversary has been expended in his repeated and persistent attempts to destroy or distort. Of these devices none have been so successful as those which have magnified some characteristic truths of this age, to the overlooking, and even obscuring of those principles of worship and approach to God which He has laid down for all time.

As one has well said, "The recluse, for instance, by habitual contemplative thought may weaken his genuine rational conviction of external reality, and even of his own individual personality"; so many to-day who essay to divide the word of truth rightly, by continual meditation and exposition of those portions of the Epistles which deal with the Mystery, the Church, His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all, have failed to perceive equally precious truth as to the churches of God, God's Building, and the Temple of God.

To understand what the Holy Spirit teaches on such matters no knowledge of original languages is necessary, but it is very necessary that the mind shall be purged and purified from the prejudices generated by early and inevitable submission, under certain circumstances, to those with whom authority is truth.

In considering the Place of the Name in the present age it is to be noted that threads of divine principle run through the entire fabric of revelation as to this matter, and further establish the above assertion that what is revealed as the present word of the Lord to His people to-day as to His



dwelling, contains within it the germ of previous speakings, and is not so divorced from previous dispensations as some imagine. All of which go to show that the entire history of men's approach to God in worship, as revealed and enjoined by God, is of one piece, although unfolded in divers portions and in divers manners. The materials of the Sanctuary differ greatly, then and now. But the structure and divine presence are conditioned by unvarying principles, "for," says the Apostle, "we are temple (*Naòs*, *Naos*, dwelling or shrine) of the living God, even as God said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' "

That the infinite grace of God, which unites men through faith to the living Head, making them thereby members of His Body, does not by so doing constitute them temple of God "even as God said," is here plainly set forth, otherwise there would be no need for the building spoken of in Ephesians 2. 22, "in whom ye also are being builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit," for those addressed in this verse were already in Christ (2. 13); and the building cannot be that of the addition of members to the mystic Body, His Church. Some illustration and help may be found as to the meaning of "even as God said," by reviewing the divine *Naos* raised on the desert sands by Moses. We may note that—

(1) The material of which it was made was divinely chosen, removed from its natural setting, shaped and measured for its divine setting in the sanctuary by workmen filled with the Spirit of God.

(2) That this material was put together in agreement with a God-given pattern previously revealed to Moses, and his instructions were "So shall ye make it"; upon these and more detailed arrangements as to the furniture being fulfilled, "as the Lord commanded Moses," Jehovah took up His dwelling amongst His people.

(3) Later it is found that this sanctuary, in which so

much of God's will was reflected, both in the material and in the shape and construction, and which was called the Temple of God, was afterwards forsaken by Him, and the people amongst whom He dwelt had to learn that bitter lesson, that to forsake Him and turn from His commandments was in turn to be forsaken by Him and to be left to their own devices and resources (compare 1 Cor. 3. 19).

God's Temple to-day is not composed of inanimate or spiritually dead material, but those to whose hearts His words have come in life-giving power, who have been called to Him and put in a place by Him, a place of subjection to Him as Lord in that House as of apostolic days, over which God's Son is, and in which alone the divine service expressed in Hebrews 10. 19, 22, 13. 13-17 can be rendered to God the Father; which is utterly impossible to scattered ungathered units; albeit such are, as born-again persons, members of the Body of Christ, the Church.

The local expression of this Temple is called in Holy Scripture the church of God; for instance, "the church of God which is in Corinth." That the church of God is co-extensive with the Body of Christ, or embraces all saints, is a huge chimera, an invention of the heart that has not heard God speak about the matter.

It is plain, beyond all telling, that "the church of God in Corinth" contemplates a together-folk, brought together by the call of God (1 Cor. 5. 4), a corporate body to whom the word of God could and did come. It is idle to suppose that the Assembly which is His Body could act together as one, as the assembly at Corinth was bidden to do. The sequel shows that they were not only God-gathered, but God-governed, for effect was given by them to the apostolic injunction. For if the word "ye" of chapter 5. does not at least refer to the persons addressed in chapter 1. as the assembly of God in Corinth, words fail to have meaning, knowledge must cease.

Here is seen one phase of that divine service of approach

and worship, namely the judgment of those within, as that of restoration is seen in 2 Corinthians 2. 9, and internal discipline in 2 Thessalonians 3. 14, as laid by divine authority upon those among whom Jehovah dwelt, whether it be that of the Sanctuary of Moses or the House of New Testament times, compare Numbers 5. 2.

Time and space forbid our pursuing these analogies further, and more fully examining the threads of principle therein agreeably to the will of the Lord, which albeit of Moses, found no small place in the Divine Naos of the present age, suffice it to say that whoever shall find in his heart, whatever may be his assurance as to the contrary part, to examine without prejudice or passion the principle herein adduced, will discover no little evidence that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

JOSHUA HAWKINS.

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## THE NEW COVENANT.

It is well known to students of the Holy Scriptures that in Hebrews 8. the writer makes a lengthy quotation from the prophecy of Jeremiah, and uses it to illustrate a most important change in the manner of God's dealings with His people. It may well be that Jeremiah's prophecy has also a future fulfilment; and indeed this must be so, because of its reference to the children of Israel. But our present concern is with the use that is made of it by the Holy Spirit speaking through the writer of the letter to Hebrews.

Much has been said and written of the contrast between the Old Covenant and the New. And much stress has rightly been laid on the fuller manifestation of Divine grace that is seen in the latter—the New Covenant which was confirmed by the blood of no less a Victim than the Incarnate Son of God, who is Himself the Mediator of it and the Surety, and who has enacted it upon better promises.

But in certain important respects we think that many who have expounded the subject of the New Covenant have not given due weight to what may be found even in the very quotation from Jeremiah itself.

Under the Old Covenant it behoved every man of Israel to appear three times in the year before Jehovah in the Place where He had put His Name, and there to offer to God the firstfruits of all that had been bestowed upon him. There in the Place of the Name was to be found the Altar and there the Mercy Seat, and whatever the vicissitudes of the People and of the Temple might be, it was to this Place that the godly Israelite ever turned, and thither he directed his prayer. This attitude was characteristic alike of David and of Daniel, of Moses and of Ezra.

The point to which we now wish to direct attention is what might answer to such a Place under the New Covenant.

In addressing the church of God which was in Corinth in his first letter to them Paul speaks of them as God's temple, especially in connexion with the fact that the Spirit of God dwelt in them collectively, and that holiness was characteristic of the temple of God (1 Cor. 3. 16, 17). But if, in writing to Corinth, Paul so spoke, surely he would have used similar language of other churches, that is of other companies who were together as a result of God's call. To some this may appear as if, under the New Covenant, God had many temples, namely, that each company of His people was a separate temple more or less independent of others. To the present writer such a meaning is impossible.

The passage in 1 Corinthians 3. 16, 17 is in some respects parallel to chapter 12. verse 27, where the same people are addressed, "Ye are the Body of Christ," or literally, "Ye are Body of Christ," for the article does not occur in the original and is, we believe, designedly omitted.

If we stood in front of a large mirror of burnished silver reflecting the rays of the sun, we should see from any point

of view an image of the heavenly luminary, and according to where we were standing it would be one part or another of the mirror that would reflect this image. We could thus see the sun in any part of the mirror, however small, and if the mirror were perfect the smallest part of it would give a perfect image. But look at it how we might, we should never see more than one image of the one sun. Let, however, the mirror be distorted or broken into fragments, and while any fragment not itself distorted would give a correct image of the sun, there would be a multiplicity of images (more or less correct) of what really is only one object. In the mirror as designed and originally made, the sun is represented by one perfect image, whereas the fragments each give a separate image and thus fail to represent the unity of the whole.

This illustration, defective as it is and as all illustrations must be, may yet help to give a conception of what is meant by the passages quoted from 1 Corinthians 3. and 1 Corinthians 12. An assembly which is indeed an assembly of God, where, in spite of human frailty and imperfection, He is working by His Spirit, will reflect and embody in large measure the character of God's temple. It will be in a sense a part thereof, and it will present in a form that can be, in measure, appreciated by the world the Temple which in its entirety they cannot know.

So with the relationship of the assembly to the Body, of which, however, it is not now the time to speak. We must be content to point out that the Body includes all believers from Pentecost to the coming of the Lord, that membership of it is of free divine grace alone, absolute and unconditional. Its relationships transcend human knowledge and are only fully known to its one Supreme, Almighty and All-knowing Head, who is in heaven. Yet may every assembly which is truly of God reflect in measure its lineaments, though it can never display its dimensions or be the measure of its possibilities.

Having written on the subject previously, we do not now pause to quote the abundant Scriptural evidence of what we have just said. We pass on to point out that the House, the Temple, is very, very different from the Body. The gates of Hades cannot prevail against the Church which is the Body, but the Temple of God may be destroyed, the House may be brought to ruin. But it may also be restored, and in God's grace He may find pleasure in it, even when it is small and men despise it, as with the Old Covenant Temple in the days of Haggai (see Ezra 3. 12, 6. 14-22, and Haggai 1. 2.).

The scripture quoted from 1 Corinthians 3. serves to show that God's temple may be destroyed or corrupted, and many passages might be adduced to show as to churches of God that they may fall and cease to be recognized by God as His. See for instance Revelation 2. and 3.

It remains for us to give reasons from the Scripture of the New Covenant for believing, first, that the Temple or House of the New Covenant is one, and secondly, that when it has been brought down, provision has been made for its rebuilding.

It is interesting and suggestive, and if we are duly impressed with the fact that Paul's epistles were written in the very words that the Spirit of God taught, it is perhaps more than suggestive to note the exact phraseology of 1 Corinthians 3. 16, 17, and 2 Corinthians 6. 16, 17, 18, in relation to the way the two epistles are addressed.

We may legitimately paraphrase these passages thus: "You, the assembly of God in Corinth, are temple of God," not the temple as if comprising the whole, or a temple as if there were many, but temple of God in character, "for God's Spirit dwells in you. Beware of injuring (that is corrupting) the Temple (if you injure a part, of course you injure the whole), for the Temple of God (note the article "the ") is holy and so are you. (That is, not only are you in general of temple character, but in particular the holi-

ness of the Temple, its separated character, belongs to you.)

“What agreement hath God’s temple (in part or whole) with idols. (The word temple used in both these scriptures is *Naòs*, naos, which means dwelling-place). What can there be in common with the place where God dwells and idols? For we (note this word, which helps to enlarge the scope)—we are dwelling-place of the living God.” How is this known? because of what God said to His earthly people here applied to His heavenly people. See the quotation from Leviticus 26. 12 as to the original work of God, and the quotations from Isaiah 52. 11 and Jeremiah 31. 1 as to separation in later times.

Let it, then, be well noted that the first letter to Corinth, from which we have first quoted, was specially addressed to the assembly there as being conjoined with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, whilst the second letter, from which our second quotation is taken, regards them as being in partnership with all the saints in the whole of the province of Achaia.

Confessedly at an early date all saints were together. Would some argue that therefore there could not be one House of God when all saints were not found together? None could, it seems to us, reasonably do so who closely followed in their historical place the later writings of the New Testament.

Commencing at the letter commonly called Ephesians, and not basing anything on the presence or absence of the doubtful words “in Ephesus” in the inscription, we find there that local companies viewed as several buildings are fitly framed together and grow into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom those addressed in the letter (perhaps all Gentile believers) are also builded together for or into a habitation of God in the Spirit (Eph. 2. 19–22).

Coming to Peter’s first letter, it is seen to be addressed to the elect sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia,

Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, five Roman provinces making up nearly all of the peninsula now called Asia Minor, in fact all probably that lies north of Mount Taurus. These sojourners were exhorted to come to the Lord Jesus, in His character as Living Stone; they are described as being built together in Him as a spiritual House for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2. 1-10). The minor points of interpretation of this passage we leave untouched, but direct attention to the one House at least throughout these five vast provinces. They are viewed as one race, one priesthood, one nation, one people, and one flock.

Passing to Paul's first letter to Timothy we again read of the House of God, here described as the Church of living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth (with which compare the expression "the Church" in Ephesians 3. 10).

But when Paul lays such stress on the House of God as he does in his first letter to Timothy, he was actually writing to warn him against Hymenæus and Alexander, whom he had delivered unto Satan. So that although men had made a terrible commencement of the shipwreck of the Faith of which later history tells, yet behaviour in the House of God was and remained a fundamentally important thing for one to know who wished to please God.

When Paul writes his second letter to Timothy, Timothy is still in association with the teachers of evil doctrine in what at any rate had been an integral part of the House of God. He is exhorted to purge himself out—to leave Hymenæus and his companions behind, and to follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace with them that called on the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Timothy 2. 14-26).

What would be the result of obedience to this exhortation? When Timothy and others who desired to be holy, to be vessels unto honour, made holy and meet for the Master's use—when they came out, where would God's Temple be found then? With Hymenæus, or with Timothy? Or



would that association in which Timothy and others were found be any the less the House of God because Hymenæus was outside? Ay, though so many as Paul calls "all that were in Asia" turned aside after the deceivers, did that make the Temple, the Dwelling-place, the House of God any the less to be such?

Let Old Testament analogy help, and a perusal of the Remnant books will soon furnish an answer. No one can read Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi and think so.

But to come to the New Covenant Scriptures themselves we may refer to the epistle of John to the seven churches in Asia commonly called Revelation, which is undoubtedly later in date than 2 Timothy. What do we find here, reading the first three chapters in their primary, historical, unmistakable meaning?

Seven churches (how few!) in this province where such a mighty work had once been known (Acts 19. 8-20; 1 Cor. 16. 8, 9). Seven churches in feebleness, with many failures, some on the brink of disaster! But what do we see? Seven churches all addressed by John as with him in the tribulation and kingdom and patience which are in Jesus. Did these seven churches include all the born again in Asia? We have no reason whatever to believe they did. But the Remnant in these seven churches in all their feebleness and imperfection are seven golden lampstands—that is, they are represented not only as churches, but in House of God character.

In the passage in Hebrews to which we referred at the commencement of this article, Paul says that even (note this word)—even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service (*λατρεία*, *latreia*), and in alluding to the model tabernacle that Moses made he first names the lampstand as one of its most important vessels. When Solomon's temple was built the single lampstand of Moses' day was replaced by ten lampstands, which clearly, whatever else

they speak of, may be taken to stand for a plurality of churches of God in their testimony, all having a place in one House. And the number, ten, is certainly significant, though why ten and not twelve we will not here say. But there were ten tables also, and on each twelve loaves, though there was but one golden altar of incense and one ark.

The poor feeble churches of Asia, then, with all their shortcomings, had their place in connexion with the House of God ; a place we make bold to say that Hymenæus could not have, even if he was, as we think highly probable, himself a born-again person.

Perhaps we have said enough. After all if there is any honey in this flower working bees will find it, but neither drones nor birds of the air will do so. Some will very likely say that spiritual pride and the like are manifest whenever one seeks to point back to the old ways, and under such a stigma we must perforce remain. In truth there is no room nor place for pride. For God has not chosen wise or prudent or noble save just a few. It is feeble and weak and foolish ones He has ever chosen in whom to display His grace, that no flesh may glory in His presence.

Yet we must speak what we have been taught, and leave it with God Himself by His Spirit to raise the spirits of some to come up with us and build the House of God in the Place He has chosen to set the Name there, that He may take pleasure in His Remnant People of to-day and in the worship they offer to Him.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

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## THE HOUSE OF GOD.

EVER since Jacob on his journey to Haran gave the name of Beth-El<sup>1</sup> to the place where Jehovah had appeared to him, hearts of God-fearing men have been turned with longing to the place on earth where the Eternal One has had a dwelling.

When in their journey from Egypt to Canaan the people of Israel made for God a sanctuary according to His commandment to Moses, He came and dwelt among them in the plenitude of His condescending grace (Exodus 25. 1-9 ; 40. especially verse 34). It seems clear, from a comparison of Judges 18. 31 with 2 Chron. 1. 3, that the Tabernacle and the tent of meeting were called the House of God, and indeed, David speaks of the House of God as already in existence, as for example Psalm 52. In a fuller sense of the word "house," however, the House of God was first built by Solomon the king (compare 1 Chron. 17., 2 Chron. 3., and so forth, and Acts 7. 47).

When the people of God turned aside from Him, and Gentile monarchs were allowed to oppress them and carry them away captive, the House shared in the process of wasting and destruction, till it was the sorry ruin of which the book of Ezra tells.

God gave a reviving and turned the captivity of His people, and the House was built again, though not in its original grandeur (compare Haggai's prophecy and note especially Haggai 2. 9, R.V.). Again, later the Son of God Himself stood in the House which was the Temple of God, but He was rejected by His own people when He came to His own Temple and finally pronounced on it and on them the solemn doom recorded in Matt. 23. 38 : "Behold your house is left unto you desolate." Yet again, in a future day God will have a temple, a material house, the work of human hands upon this earth, as 2 Thess. 2. 4 clearly shows. But for the present God owns no temple made with hands,

<sup>1</sup> Beth-El means House of God or House of the Mighty One.

no house of stone or wood. Nevertheless, it is His will to have a House, a Temple on earth, as we proceed to show.

Peter, in his first letter already referred to, addressed the elect who were sojourners of the Dispersion in five adjoining countries, provinces of the Roman Empire, and says to them (1 Peter 4. 17): "The time is come for judgment to begin at the House of God"; referring doubtless to the time of Ezekiel's prophecy, but applying it to the time when the material house had already been rejected, and the House of God no longer meant stones or wood, but persons, for the Apostle adds, "if it first begin at us," clearly showing one House of God composed of men in the flesh, as the place for the dwelling of God in the present age. This House is composed of believers, disciples, who have not only come to the Lord once for all to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life, but are still coming to Him, and are being builded together.

This is confirmed by what is written in chapter 2, which seems to view the House of God especially in connexion with the offering up of worship to God when the saints are gathered together for the remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the breaking of the bread: "Putting away therefore all wickedness . . . the Lord is gracious, unto whom coming a Living Stone rejected indeed of men but with God elect, precious, ye also as living stones are being builded (or be ye builded, for the Greek will carry each meaning, and there is no word 'up,') a spiritual House to be (or for) a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices. . . ."

The conditional character of the House of God as of a thing committed to human responsibility is clearly shown in Hebrews 3. First note that Moses was faithful in God's House (verse 3), but this was as a servant and for a testimony of things that were to follow. But over the House of God now is Christ, and that not as a Servant but as a Son. "Whose House," it is said to the Hebrews, "are we if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm

unto the end." That this " if " is truly conditional is clearly shown by the context and by the construction of the sentence (the subjunctive mood being used here ; whereas in such a passage as Col. 3. 1 the indicative mood is used because there is no uncertainty or doubt).

That the spiritual House of New Testament Scripture may as truly be forsaken of God as the material temple was in the calamitous time of Ezekiel referred to by Peter, is clear beyond all doubt.

On the other hand, where there is continuance in the boldness and in the glorying of the hope there is also boldness for collective entrance into the holy place (see Hebrews 10. 19-25), and in such entrance He who is over the House of God is known as a Great Priest, as well as a High Priest, able to save to the uttermost them that are coming unto God through Him.

The House of God is in 1 Tim. 3. 15 identified with " Church of Living God, pillar and ground of the Truth." That right behaviour in the House of God may be known the first letter to Timothy was written, and clearly such instruction as chapter 3. especially contains is only of use within the circle of the House of God which comprises, as Peter's letter shows, the saints of God who are gathered together.

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## REPENTANCE AND SEPARATION.

WE now proceed to give reasons for believing that what we have been saying as to apostolic times is deeply important to-day for those who seek to please God.

When God's ancient people Israel had been for years captives in Babylon God raised up a king who issued a decree giving permission to return to Jerusalem. Those whose spirits God had stirred then rose up and returned, and later on a company under Ezra, and later still Nehemiah,

followed them. What was then done pleasing to God was a return to His revealed will as contained in the law of Moses.

Thus we read "Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God. . . . And they set the priests in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of God, which is at Jerusalem ; as it is written in the book of Moses. . . . Ezra went up from Babylon ; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which Jehovah the God of Israel had given " (Ezra 3. 2, 6. 18, 7. 6 ; see also Neh. 1. 6-11, 8. 1-8, 14-18, 9. 3, where the same prominence is given to a return to the law of Moses).

The divine principle of returning to God's Word that has been neglected is further enforced in the final paragraph which closes the writings of the Old Testament. "Remember ye the law of Moses My servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, even statutes and judgments " (Mal. 4. 4).

If any doubt the bearing of these facts on our circumstances, we are content to quote " For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope " (Rom. 15. 4), and " Now these things happened unto them by way of figure, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come " (1 Cor. 10. 11), ere we turn to the teaching of New Testament Scriptures.

Many readers of New Testament Scriptures are prone to miss certain very important provision for days of widespread apostasy which is contained in the later Scriptures to which we are about to refer. We therefore urge the words of the Lord, " Take heed what ye hear," and " Whoso readeth, let him understand."

At the first all that believed were together. The earliest

gaps in the numbers of the gathered disciples were due to death. Then later on we have such a case as the wicked man of 1 Corinthians 5. put outside the Community. This of itself, though a small point, is instructive, because when he was outside the company in Corinth it is still called the church of God in that place, though there was one believer not within it. See 2 Cor. 1. 1; 2. 5-8.

Later on the Apostle Paul warned the elders at Ephesus that grievous wolves would enter in after his departure and that men would arise even from among themselves who would speak perverse things to draw away the disciples after them, not merely "disciples" (as given in the A.V.), but "the disciples."

In Paul's first letter to Timothy at Ephesus he speaks in warning words of two of these perverse teachers, Hymenæus and Alexander, who had made shipwreck of the Faith. When he wrote his second letter the influence of the evil teaching had become more manifest, for he says, "Their word will eat (or spread) as doth a gangrene, of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus. . . ."

What word is now spoken for faithful ones who find themselves where teachers of false doctrine are pre-eminent and the mischief they are doing cannot be stopped, so that they overthrow the faith of some? "Let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness. . . . If a man therefore purge himself out from these (so the Greek) . . . follow righteousness, faith, love, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." That is separation from all manner of association where the will of the Lord Christ is not paramount, and fellowship with all who are likeminded in seeking after Him and His will in a dark day.

Later on they who in response to the word of the Lord in 2 Timothy 2. came out and were found together are divinely addressed, as we read in the Book of Revelation, as the church in Ephesus, joined with six other churches in Asia,

partakers with the Apostle John in the tribulation and kingdom and patience in Jesus.

Coupled then with the teaching by analogy of such scriptures as Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi we have here in later New Testament Scripture evidence that the existence of an assembly in no wise depends on its containing all the Christians living in the given place. An assembly of God is such not because it is "a congregation of faithful men," but because they who constitute it are together at the call of God to contend earnestly for the Faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. We therefore are no more reluctant to use the expression "church" or "assembly of God," for fallible and failing companies than to call fallible and failing persons saints and Christians. The names are of God, and the sole question is, To whom does He give them? The same principle applies to the use of the terms: "The House of God," "The Fellowship," and so forth.

Having been brought out by God from the sects of Christendom, seeking from Him repentance and forgiveness for all share we have had in its works of human religion, we are now gathered into the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we can welcome all children of God who, turning their backs on Christendom in all its forms come forth to the Name and Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. In such we expect to find heart repentance for their association with the sects. Then, if and when they as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ have been baptized into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, they are gladly received into the assemblies of God, in which, by the grace of God, we find ourselves, for which we render unto Him the grateful homage of our hearts.



## ANGELS.

WOULD that unseen things had a firmer hold upon us, and that our eyes were indeed opened (2 Kings 6. 17; Luke 24. 31), or at least anointed in greater measure with eye-salve that we might see (Rev. 3. 18).

The subject of "Angels" is peculiarly fascinating. The ministry of angels is clearly taught in the Scriptures for the comfort of those for whose sake they are sent forth to do service (Heb. 1. 14). By way of gendering thoughts in other minds, a few out of the many scriptures bearing upon the subject may prove interesting, and may serve as introductory to the chief point to which we wish to direct attention. They are given without any design at arrangement or definite order.

To begin with, we have connected with Creation—a song. When the Almighty Workman laid the foundations of the earth, and determined the measures thereof, there were beings looking on in wonder, for we read that—

The morning stars sang together,  
And all the sons of God shouted for joy (Job 38. 7).

To end with, you have connected with Redemption—a song—a new song. When the Little Lamb emerges from the midst of the Throne to receive as the All Worthy One the Kingdom of the World (and oh, how much else besides!), then the angels, ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of them, are not slow to utter His praises (Rev. 5. 11). When God again bringeth in the First-born into the world, He saith, "And let all the angels of God worship Him" (Heb. 1. 6).

Then we read of morning stars; and the blessed Son of God Himself is "the Bright, the Morning Star" (Rev. 22. 16), for in all spheres He must have the pre-eminence. This sphere is evidently connected with an order of high degree, for it is held out as an incentive to the overcomer (Rev. 2. 28).

Then we might connect Luke **10. 18** and Isaiah **14. 12**. Satan is there described as day star, son of the morning, and we know from Ezekiel **28.** the very high place he at one time occupied. But unrighteousness was found in him. He sinned and fell, and the eternal fire is prepared for him and for his angels (Matt. **25. 41**).

“And angels which kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation, He hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6). They are in Tartarus (2 Pet. **2. 4**).

Angels are greater in might and power than men (2 Pet. **2. 11**).

The Devil is now described as the Prince of the power of the air (Eph. **2. 2**). Might we call him a princely spirit and view him as having his princely emissaries? For we read of “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” (Dan. **10. 13**), also of “the prince of Greece” (Dan. **10. 20**)—evidently spirit beings; and there are others. And what shall we say of those principalities and powers, those world rulers of this darkness and of the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places? (Eph. **6. 12**).

It is God's princes, however, that we are occupied with, and in this sphere also the Lord Jesus Christ is pre-eminently supreme. For not only is He the Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords (1 Tim. **6. 15**), as well as Messiah the Prince (Dan. **9. 25**), and the Prince of Peace (Isa. **9. 6**); but He is the Prince of princes (Dan. **8. 25**). How many others there are we cannot say. Michael is one of the chief (Dan. **10. 13**). He is the great prince, and connected specially with Israel (Dan. **10. 21**; **12. 1**). He is the archangel, and as such he contended with the Devil (Jude 9). How mysterious was that encounter! Then there is the man Gabriel, who could fly swiftly (Dan. **9. 21**). Of himself he said later, “I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God” (Luke **1. 19**). Wondrous indeed was the errand upon which he was sent—to announce the long

looked for moment when God was about to send forth His Son.

At last Christ was born, and on that happy morning the ecstasy of the angels had well nigh burst all bounds. To the shepherds upon the plains of Bethlehem the angel of the Lord, who made known to them the good tidings of great joy, was suddenly joined by a multitude of the Heavenly Host, praising God, and saying—

Glory to God in the highest,

And on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased  
(Luke 2. 13).

Yet He whose advent had caused such joy is seen at last a Man of Sorrows, an object of contempt beneath, surrounded by a murderous multitude with swords and staves. Poor Peter, well meaning, thought only of His seeming helplessness, and on the spur of the moment would have defended Him, although afterwards, in cooler moments, he denied Him. How different it would have been could Peter's eyes have been opened as were the eyes of the young man in Elisha's day. He would have seen those angelic hosts—swift of flight and keen of vision—standing ready, instantly to obey the sovereign word of the Rejected of men, who was made for a little while lower than the angels . . . because of the suffering of death. He would have understood the meaning of His words, "Thinkest thou that I cannot beseech My Father, and He shall even now send Me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26. 53).

Angels worship at His feet! . . .  
All the powers of heaven adore Him,  
All obey His sov'reign word.

Ah yes, how eagerly would they, who had previously ministered unto Him (Mark 1. 13), have executed His judgments, had it not been that unutterable love and compassion filled the divine bosom of Immanuel. Love for His enemies prevailed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Love for you and me!

In the days of His flesh He was seen of angels (1 Tim. 3. 16). His passion over and His triumph complete, He ascended on high. Gates and everlasting doors were lifted up, and the King of glory passed inside. Bearer of the greatest name; Gainer of the highest seat.

We think we see the glorious King  
By hosts angelic owned;  
They shout and heav'n's high arches ring  
With the triumphant sound.

Micaiah, in his day, saw "Jehovah sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him on His right hand and on His left" (1 Kings 22. 19). We repeat, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1. 14).

Swiftly they fly at His command,  
To guard His own of every land,  
To keep the heirs of glory.

"Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently . . . which things angels desire to look into" (1 Peter 1. 10).

And in connexion with lost ones saved, as in Luke 15., we have, coming first, the private joy of the Good Shepherd—those moments when He alone, with neither friend nor neighbour near Him, raises the lost one upon the almighty shoulders of His strength. What a joy, beloved, is His, as He sees of the travail of His soul! Here again He must have the pre-eminence, and His joy therefore is first. After which He calls upon friends and neighbours to rejoice with Him. "Even so," He said, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Thus we have a manifest desire on the part of the angels spoken of, to look into the wondrous things connected with Christ's sufferings and glories, and we have also the holy joy that pervades their presence when lost ones are found.

To a great extent, as indicated in the Scriptures, especially in the book of the Revelation, the angels are generally the

executors of God's judgments, although on the other hand, many and varied are the errands upon which they are sent. For instance, when the beggar Lazarus died "he was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom" (Luke 16. 22).

Of the Lord Jesus it was written—

He shall give His angels charge over Thee,  
To keep Thee in all Thy ways.  
They shall bear Thee up in their hands,  
Lest Thou dash Thy foot against a stone (Ps. 91. 11).

And the circumstances surrounding the Temptation are surely worthy of more than passing notice. Who will venture to say that these precious words were not literally fulfilled? Were there not stones lying about? And we view a hungry man, whose human strength was well nigh spent, just, might we say, speaking reverently, at fainting point; and "angels came and ministered unto Him."

Then again we read that—

The angel of Jehovah encampeth round about them that fear Him,  
And delivereth them (Ps. 34. 7).

And still more wonderful is the statement of the Lord Jesus when speaking of little ones who believed on Him, "See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you that in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in Heaven" (Matt. 18. 10).

Does it not seem as if each such believing one had a special angel all to himself? And does it not seem that among the early disciples in the church of God in Jerusalem such thoughts had a place? Otherwise, how are we to account for the fact that many who were gathered together, and were praying for Peter's release, said to Rhoda, when she confidently affirmed that Peter stood outside the gate, "It is his angel"? (Acts 12. 16).

The Lord spoke of "their angels." They spoke of "his angel." So that it seems to the writer just within the range of probability that in the glory we may each be introduced

to the holy guardian whose special service it was to encamp just beside us all our way homeward.

Not without meaning, too, are the words, "Forget not to shew love unto strangers : for thereby some have entertained angels unawares " (Heb. 13. 2).

There are many other precious incidents connected with the ministry of angels, but time and space fail us. We will reserve to another month the chief matter to which we desire to direct attention, which is the very suggestive connexion which the angels have with the House of God.

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

*(To be concluded.)*

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## IN HIS PRESENCE.

"But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order : Christ the firstfruits : then they that are Christ's at His coming " or " in His presence "—1 Cor. 15. 20, 23.

WE suggest that if the last three words are translated as "in His presence," the sense will be very much more apparent in this, as also in many other portions of the Word of God which we propose to consider. Unto this end, however, we shall have to proceed on methodical lines so as to make ourselves understood by all.

In this scripture it will be perceived that various "bands"<sup>1</sup> are spoken of as sharing in what is spoken of in Revelation 20. as the first resurrection. These bands will be raised

<sup>1</sup> The word *τάγμα*, *tagma*, translated in the English Bible "order" is only found once in the New Testament and is a military word.  
1. An ordinance, command. 2. A fixed assessment or payment.  
3. A regular body of soldiers, a division, brigade. 4. An order or rank. (Liddell and Scott's Lexicon.) We suggest the word "band" gives a very good idea of the word in our language, and we have accordingly adopted it in this article as meeting all requirements.

as we shall see, not all in the twinkling of an eye, but during a period of time covering, at least, seven years—the last week of Daniel's seventy weeks (Dan. 9. 23, 27).

The first event which is foretold in Scripture to take place is the coming of the Lord Jesus to the air, His people being caught up to meet Him there ; remembering that times and seasons (Acts 1.) belong unto God's ancient people and will not recommence until after this happy event takes place. Those caught up to meet the Lord at this time, both the dead in Christ and those in Christ living upon the earth at that moment, are designated by the expression "in Christ"—in other words, "the Church which is His Body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1. 22, 23). Marvellous, glorious oneness surely of which the following inspired words are recorded: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body ; so also is the Christ." (It can be easily ascertained that this is the correct rendering, "The Christ.")

And furthermore we read, "For in one Spirit were we all baptised into one Body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free ; and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12. 12, 13).

This scripture leads us to consider another class or band which will share in the first resurrection ; for we must not confuse the expression "in Christ" with "Christ's." Many there are who are Christ's, but they are not in Christ. Only those baptised in the Spirit are in Christ. This implies that they have come to years of discretion and know themselves in God's holy sight as sinners and know Christ as their own personal Saviour.

We refer now to that band of countless millions, as far as we are concerned, of the infant dead. It will be at once readily seen that these are not in the Body, never having been baptised in the Holy Spirit, as they never knew Christ as their own personal Saviour. We have but a faint idea of the numbers here, for it is only quite recently that child

life in this land has been rescued from the ravages of disease and premature death ; not to speak of countries like China, for example, where infant mortality, especially that of girls, has been thought little of. Scripture might be asked by some to support the above. John 1. 29 seems very clear: "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"—that is original Adamic sin. Note that it is not "sins" here.

A reference to 2 Samuel 12. 15-25 will be a confirmation of this. David says concerning the child of Bathsheba, "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (ver. 23), doubtless to Upper Sheol, where the saved who died went, as also the soul of the Lord Jesus, for three days and three nights. A reference to Deuteronomy 32. 22 and Psalm 86. 13 shows us that Sheol of the Old Testament and Hades of the New Testament is a place of two compartments. See also the account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16.).

We consider now another band, far smaller doubtless than the last, but on the other hand, one of great importance. We refer to the Old Testament Saints ; these will be raised to share millennium glory. Daniel 12. 13 leaves us without a doubt as to this: "But go thou thy way till the end be : for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will be amongst these. For a considerable time after I became a serious reader of God's word, Matthew 22. 23-33 presented a great difficulty to me, for while it could be seen that the words of the Lord Jesus proved the continued existence of the patriarchs, how could the words prove their resurrection ? This they evidently did for the Sadducees who said that there is no resurrection were absolutely silenced—"The multitudes were astonished at His teaching." "He had put the Sadducees to silence" (ver. 34). Those who have the number of this magazine for February, 1906, will do well to look up a



most interesting fragment on this point. (Volume 18, page 33.)

These were promised the land according to the Abrahamic covenant, and that they will be raised in the body to share the glorious time that is coming cannot well be questioned. Doubtless there will be different classes of persons upon the earth at this time—some as we have seen with resurrection bodies—who, we judge, will not be confined to this earth, not in body pent, but will have access to other parts of God's universe—perhaps the true antitype of Jacob's ladder. We know that the King of kings and Lord of lords Himself in His glorified body was not confined to earth, though we are aware that Zion will be the city of the great King.

“Yet I have set My King  
Upon My holy hill of Zion,”

Psalm 2. 6. See also Zechariah 14. 9.

The great majority, however, amongst whom are those that will come through the great tribulation, will have natural bodies, as well, of course, as those who will be born during the 1,000 years. The question may be asked, when will these latter get resurrection bodies? As far as the writer is aware, the Scriptures appear to be mute on this point; but probably something akin to what takes place at the coming of the Lord Jesus for His loved and His own will take place after the Millennium and before the eternal state. Isaiah 65. 20 informs us that there will be sin and death during this time: “There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old, and the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.” Of course this could not refer to those with resurrection bodies. Then again we read frequently in the Old Testament that some of the nations will yield feigned obedience; consequently at the close of this period when Satan is loosed for a little time (Rev. 20. 3-7)—Marvellous this may appear to us; we know so little

of the inscrutable wisdom and ways of God—a terrible revolt against the King of kings and Lord of lords is organized, so that Satan deceives the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them to war : the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, only to meet, however, with absolute and final defeat. All this proves that unregenerate man is always the same, ever hating God and His Christ.

On the other hand, though some may have painted the Millennium in too glowing colours, we must not forget that the glory of Christ's personal reign upon this earth will outstrip Solomon's glory (the greatest glory of Israel's past history) as the glory of the sun outshines that of the moon. The Sun of Righteousness when He arises with healing in His wings will cause to sink into insignificance all other glories.

It may present a difficulty to some how the comparatively small Land of Promise could contain all the millions as suggested above. The Scriptures, however, seem to indicate that great changes will take place ; for instance, when Christ comes as Son of Man " His feet shall stand upon the mount of Olives . . . and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west : and there shall be a very great valley ; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south " (Zech. 14. 4).

Then again Isaiah 33. 17 appears to suggest a greatly enlarged land : " Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty : they shall behold a far stretching land " (*Heb.*, a land of far distances, Revised Version margin). See also Isaiah 54. 2, 3.

In the above we have only touched upon three bands who will be raised in the first resurrection or in His presence ; there are others doubtless such as those mentioned in Revelation 7. 9, 17, but space will not permit of writing upon these.

J. C. RADCLIFFE.

## FIVE AND TWENTY YEARS A O.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME I NUMBER I.

I SUPPOSE all will be agreed that only as our lives individually are conformed to the mind of our God shall we become such a power as He would have us, and as He is able to make us. This will not be necessarily by our having any special gift as teachers or rulers, but simply by our individual conformity to the will of Him who has chosen us in Christ, and who will have us to be holy because He is holy. We often excuse ourselves by saying we have not this or that gift, and can therefore do little for God. But is not the real fact of the matter that we have little heart for His service, and that we are trying to hide our sad state of soul from our own eyes and from those of others? If we would but let the Spirit of God who dwelleth in us wholly possess us as vessels for His glory, and lead us into that truth which can sanctify and save us (John **17. 17**; 1 Tim. **4. 16**), we should find the will of God accomplished in us and through us, and this would be INDIVIDUAL HOLINESS.

But yet another thought: is there not such a thing as COLLECTIVE HOLINESS, and thus collective power for God, a church of the living God in which His will is done and His power manifested (1 Cor. **14. 25**)?

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# THE STORY OF THE ENGLISH BIBLE.

## NOTES OF AN ADDRESS IN TORONTO.

THE place that the English Bible has occupied in the minds of English-speaking people during the last three hundred years is worthy of the careful consideration of all. It is not possible to me, nor would it be desirable, to give you now the history of the Book, intensely interesting as that subject is. My intention is in some respects of a more modest character, and yet in a sense more ambitious. Before, however, I turn to present to you in a fragmentary way the transcendently important matters which form the main subject of my address, I will take a few moments to refer to the origin of the Revised Version.

The Authorised Version, as we call it, was produced and issued in the reign of King James I of England, being itself based on earlier versions, and these in turn, I may add, were to a very large extent founded on the Latin version commonly known as the Vulgate, which had been for long the Bible of the none too numerous persons who were able to read the Latin tongue.

The art of printing was discovered in the middle of the fifteenth century, but it was not till the year 1514 that the Greek New Testament was first issued in a printed form. In subsequent years attention was directed to the collation of the different Greek manuscripts of the New Testament with a view to ascertaining the true text of the original Scriptures, but it was the middle of the nineteenth century before any very great progress was made in this task. The names of Lachmann, Tischendorf and Tregelles stand out most prominently amongst those who devoted themselves to this work. By their labours an amended Greek Text was gradually produced which was far more correct than that published by Erasmus in 1514, and also than the texts of subsequent editors who preceded them. On the other hand, the points left uncertain by Tischendorf and

Tregelles are comparatively few or unimportant. I may remind you at this point of the immense value of the discovery by Tischendorf of the Sinaitic MSS., which is one of the two MSS. of the Greek New Testament now extant that was written as far back as the fourth century.

Further, in the time that intervened between the production of the 1611 Bible and the work of the Revisers much knowledge had been acquired of the Greek language. The obscurantism of the Roman Catholic clerics in pre-Reformation days had not been favourable to the study of the Greek tongue, but its study became much more popular, partly as a direct result of the Reformation itself, and partly in connexion with the general revival of learning called the Renaissance. Moreover, the actual disputes of the Reformation led to greatly increased interest in the meaning and force of Greek words and phrases, in spite of the desire of many of the Romanists to make the Vulgate the ultimate court of appeal as to what the Scripture actually taught. In a word, the meaning and sense of the original Greek Scriptures had been studied to a very large degree, and points which were obscure or difficult in 1611 had become comparatively plain when the Revisers set themselves down to their task in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. What I have been saying applies in particular to the New Testament. In the matter of translation, very nearly the same things might be said of the Old Testament and its translation out of the Hebrew.

As a result of these and other causes under the divine blessing, we have in the Revised Version both in the Old and in the New Testament a far more faithful and accurate translation of the original Scriptures than the Authorised Version supplies. When, then, we come to consider the miracle of the Authorised Version, as I shall call it, it becomes still more remarkable from the fact that the English Bible which has produced such effects is itself but a human translation, that it contains errors and imperfections due

to the various causes that I have enumerated, and that in it that which is divine is, as it were, clothed in that which is human. This, of course, is true of all versions ; and in saying so I am in no way wishing you to lose sight of the fact that the Authorised Version is itself a very good translation of the original. What I have said may be summed up as follows :—All translations of the Scriptures must contain elements of imperfection because they are human in their execution ; the English Authorised Version is a very good version indeed, and in fact decidedly better than the majority of translations of the Scriptures ; the Revised Version is an improvement on the Authorised Version.

I now wish to direct your attention to what the English Bible, that is the Authorised Version, has accomplished in the three centuries of its existence. This is the story of the English Bible ; it is the story of what the Bible has effected in the English-speaking races. The book is divine though clothed in a human form and accompanied by the imperfections that go with its character as human translation. I maintain that its divine origin and character are abundantly proved by the power that the Book has exercised in the minds of the English-speaking races.

The English Bible by the power it has exercised through three centuries has borne its own witness to its divine origin. The story of the English Bible is a story of what can be wrought, of what has been wrought, by that which is divine, though clothed in that which is human, and though imperfect as being a translation merely of what God has caused to be written. I ask what effects has it produced, what power has it exercised in the minds of the English-speaking races during the past 300 years ? I have asked you to come here and listen to me while I talk of the story of the English Bible ; but I may well be content to leave it to you to answer that question from your own knowledge, and from your own appreciation of the position in civilization which is occupied by the English-speaking peoples. For I

venture to assert that the moral character of the Holy Scriptures has in a measure impressed itself upon those people who have had such abundant opportunities of reading it.

But many of you might be prepared to demur to what I have just said because of what the Bible has not done. And I grant at once, not gladly, but sadly, how little the Bible has accomplished compared with what might have been. How small has been the effect of the reading of the English Bible upon the English peoples compared with what would have been the case if the Book had indeed been read as what it really is, a revelation from God to man ! Of this, however, there is no time now to speak. I do not think any consideration of what has not been done should blind us to the real evidence to which I have referred as to the power of the Bible as exemplified in the history of English-speaking peoples ; and I want you to follow me as I try to point out some of the characteristics of the Bible that help to account for what it has accomplished.

The answer to the question, as to wherein lies the wonderful power of the Bible of which I have been speaking, is to be found, I think, in verses 144, 152, 160, 167 of Psalm 119.

Many people look upon the Bible as a book of doctrines ; well it is that, but it is something more. Many regard the Bible as a kind of manual of religious duties ; it is that certainly, but it is far more than that. Many men, again, think of the Bible as an interesting book for women and children, which is a great testimony to the worth of the book, though it may not be intended in that way ; for it means that the Bible can supply women and children with something they need that men cannot give them ; but the Bible is more than that, for if there is one book in the world that is a man's book it is the Bible. But what is the Bible ?

In Psalm 119, the Holy Scriptures are viewed in an eight-

fold manner, and one of the eight things is this :—the Bible gives us the Testimonies of Jehovah. It is God's record of the History of the World. It is God's account of His dealings with mankind. It is God's testimony of what man has said and done as viewed by Him.

Although men say hard and wicked things about the Bible, it is still true, I am confident, that the common sense of a large number of everyday men and women assures them that, whether they like it or not, the Bible tells them truly what God has said. To this truth also the conscience of men who read their Bibles bears convincing testimony till it is seared and hardened.

Let me give you an illustration of the character of the Bible records. In spite of the very great and ever-increasing degree in which man has succeeded in bringing the forces of nature under his control, there are manifestly some things that he can never expect to be able to do. He may harness the Falls of Niagara and render them useful to him, but he cannot harness the stars, nor change the course of the heavenly bodies. He cannot loose the bands of Orion nor alter the length of the day or of the year. The Bible is like that. Man cannot alter it.

It is because the Bible is in the main a record of facts that it has suffered so little, wherever there have been errors of transcriptions, where there have been mistakes in translation, as, of course, there are in the nature of things difficulties in translation.

If the Holy Scriptures were firstly and chiefly doctrines of the mind, in the sense of imitating philosophical dissertations, which some people are so anxious to look upon as the highest effort of religious thought, things would be very different.

But the best of everything, the most potent things, the most moving things in the Holy Scriptures, are the facts which they record. It is what took place, it is what happened, and let me remind you of this, it was what happened in connexion



with men and women and children of one nature with you and me.

This cannot be denied, that the central interest of the Bible is to be found in the Cross at Golgotha. The Old Testament points onward to the Coming One, the Christ. It takes its value, its rich and abundant meaning, from the fact that One was expected ; that One was to come of whom all the Prophets spake. When He came the Heavens burst with song, and when He reached the age of manhood, thirty years, the vault of heaven opened again and a voice came from the excellent glory. I must not stop to-night to speak of these wonderful words or of His kindly grace as He trod this desert scene.

But who can deny that the life of the Lord Jesus Christ as given by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, is the most moving story that has ever been written. From the banks of Jordan He moves onwards, illuminating this world with the light of kindness and goodness which He shed all about Him. But His path as He went on was for Him one of dark and deepening gloom as He approached the dread hour of His redeeming work.

This history is the theme that gives its value to what we have in that English Bible ; for which we can never thank God enough.

The value of the death which He died upon Golgotha's Cross has been little appreciated. Indeed, every effort has been made by those who should know better to water down the value of His precious Blood.

But let the gospels be read, and one thing at any rate the reader cannot fail to see :—that in the dread hour of His suffering upon the Cross we have the culmination of the story of which the Scriptures are full.

Then there is one more thing I should like to say ere the time runs out.

On the one hand, it is most striking how the pages of the Holy Scriptures as we have them in our English Bible are

filled with those human figures which we recognize none the less because of their Oriental dress. On the other hand, as you read that Gospel story there can be no doubt that the figure that moves through those pages and illuminates the darkness wherever He treads is no mere human person; that He is not some man greater than other men whose faces we see; that He is not merely a leader of higher thought, any more than His death is a mere martyrdom. I venture to say that no man can read the account in the Holy Scriptures and esteem the Lord Jesus Christ as pictured there to be a mere man. His unique personality is assured again and again and yet again in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, as well as in the Gospel according to John.

This is what gives the Bible its unique character and raises it above every other book. It is the divinely-given history of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the Word who became flesh and dwelt among men—Very God and very man, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and for us died and rose again and is alive for evermore.

Communicated by H. W. WATERS.

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## THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

“O righteous Father, the world knew Thee not.”—John 17. 25. THIS statement, made by the Lord Jesus at the close of His earthly ministry, tells of the ignorance in which the world was then wrapped in reference to God and His Christ, and in spite of all man’s supposed progress and intellectual attainments it is true still. In the scene and sphere into which He came, and into which He had been purposely sent, to make known the Father, this is His own statement concerning it.

The first chapter of Romans looks back at a time in the remote past, when God was known as Creator. The fuller revelation of Himself, as expressed in redemption, was still prospective. Slowly but surely they to whom God had

made Himself known had drifted further and further away from God. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things." This was a reversal of God's original order of things. Then angels were placed above man, creation beneath him and subject to him. But God has been dethroned; God has been put down, and creature and creeping things have been put up to be the objects of man's veneration and worship. The wise men to-day speak of themselves as "philosophical doubters." "There may be a God; we are not so very sure." Or if they own to a God, it is as much a creation of their own mind as if it had originated in the mind of the heathen in Central Africa or China. But in that day when God rises in judgment the wise men will know that they have been fools, and those who in their judgment were considered fools will be the wise men. "God chose the foolish things of the world, that He might put to shame them that are wise" (1 Cor. 1. 27).

With us at one time sin was of a trifling nature, and self was of great importance. What a reflection of ourselves is seen in the conceited, religious Pharisee! His prayer was our prayer, although not expressed in the same way: "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men." I suppose that each of us had a very exalted opinion of himself, but happily we were disillusioned when we learned sin and self in the light of the cross. The cross reveals man in all his inherent, inveterate hatred to God and His Son. Here man once proud and boastful is for ever humiliated. Man can now no longer advance any plea or pretension of merit; mercy alone can avail him. Professor Simpson, of Edinburgh, was asked on one occasion, "Among the many discoveries which you have made, which do you consider the greatest?" He reflected for a moment, and then answered, "The greatest discovery that ever I made

was this : I discovered I was a lost and ruined sinner on my way to hell."

"He that will show thee what thou art  
Will show Himself in turn."

When Joseph's brethren came down to Egypt to buy corn, they failed to recognise him. Seventeen years had made a wonderful change. In all his gorgeous robes of office, hidden behind his official glory, they only see the rigid, austere governor of all the land of Egypt. He needs to be cruel to be kind. They must be brought face to face with the sin of previous years ; sins long forgotten and buried must be brought to their memory. They are branded as spies. Ready to maintain their innocence, they deny the charge. "We be true men," was the answer then, and is the answer still. But they stood in the presence of the one who knew them through and through. In memory he goes back to that day when they put him in the pit ; the agonies of that hour are fresh before him, how they refused to hearken to the cry of his distress. They must know their sin before he will reveal himself fully to them.

In the binding of Simeon the dark past is recalled. Now lashed by their guilty conscience, they whisper the one to the other, "We be verily guilty." In order, presumably, to prove the veracity of their statement Simeon is detained, and the only means whereby he can be released is by bringing Benjamin, the one of whom they spake. Oh, the bitterness of that homeward journey as they retrace their steps toward Canaan, reminding them of the day of an absent Joseph ! The wound once closed will be freshly opened ; the absence of Simeon will recall the absence of Joseph. Afresh they will witness the grief of Jacob, again they will be reminded of their sin.

Their limited supply of corn is soon exhausted. Again they must face the governor of Egypt. But only on cer-

tain conditions can they hope to appear before him on terms stipulated by him. If Simeon is to be released, they must bring down Benjamin. How they hesitate as they witness the grief and tears of Jacob, and think of the prospect of meeting the governor! However, overmastering circumstances, the force of famine pushes them on. At last Jacob parts with Benjamin, that he may fulfil the double purpose of recovering Simeon and procuring a fresh supply of corn. Judah takes responsibility for his safe return. Lest it was an oversight the last time, they will take double money this time and prove beyond refutation the truth of their statement: "We be true men."

Again they stand before the governor of Egypt. He is much nicer this time; they think Benjamin being with them explains his altered attitude. He makes a favourable impression on them. "Make ready, for the men shall dine with me at noon" (Gen. 43. 16). How good and generous he must be! They are surprised at the courtesy and kindness shown. However, they must comply with the invitation. Possibly they would rather have refused; they would feel awkward and ill at ease in his presence, but he is so sociable and agreeable that they soon find themselves at home. They are amazed. What an honour is conferred on Benjamin! Raised over their heads he has now his proper place as "son of the right hand." Why are these special favours shown? Joseph, as yet unknown, would watch each face to try to discover if there was any trace of jealousy. Would they begrudge the favours shown to Benjamin as they envied the favours shown to Joseph? That coat of many colours at one time had been to them a hateful eyesore. Evidently they are delighted; an honour conferred on one is an honour conferred on the whole. Their previous thoughts concerning the governor they now conclude to be wrong. They now think they know him.

The feast at last terminates. The best of friends must

part, but they will carry away with them happy memories of the kindness shown to them in Egypt. Simeon released, Benjamin safe in their keeping, they now consider that their character has been vindicated, and that they must stand very high in the estimation of the governor.

Joseph desires to watch his brethren on their homeward journey from some point of vantage. The final thrust must be given. The last terrible exposure of self and sin must be made. "Pursue! Overtake!" is the word to his servants. Their master's divining cup is stolen. Alarmed by the pursuing Egyptians, fresh fears are awakened. Their worst fears are realized. A fresh charge is made. Once branded as spies, now they are suspected as thieves. It is considered an insult to honest men. Still they say, "We be true men." They invite the fullest investigation. To their horror and amazement the cup is found in Benjamin's sack! They must again stand in the presence of the governor. The quarry is run to earth. Judged in the light of circumstantial evidence, no explanation can remove their seeming guilt. There can be no further evasion or equivocation. Judah speaks and speaks for all the rest: "God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." This was the moment for which Joseph had wrought and waited. Sin and self have been exposed, and he can now reveal himself in grace. "I am Joseph your brother whom ye sold into Egypt" (Gen. 45. 4).

In all this we see the greater grace of a greater than Joseph revealed; the inward work of the Holy Spirit convicting and convincing men of sin. Men are loath to admit their guilt, and the same painful experience is necessary before the candid, unqualified admission of sin and guilt is forthcoming: "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned" (Ps. 51. 4).

Sychar's Well (John 4.) furnishes another example of the same principle, the meeting of the sinner and the Saviour. Under the strict scrutiny of the One who read the past as an open book a life of sin and shame is disclosed. Every-

thing is naked and bare in the presence of the One before whom she stands. Years of sin and shame now flash before her. She confesses, "I perceive that Thou art a Prophet," and finally, "We know that when the Messiah cometh, He shall tell us all things." "I that speak unto thee am He." He wounds to heal, and comforts those that mourn. Oh, the joy that fills and floods the soul as we realize that all is forgiven, that we now stand unimpeachable before God!

*(To be concluded.)*

### Words of Holy Writ.

THE Greek word "τάγμα, tagma, a band," that is referred to on page 78 of this number is derived from the verb "τάσσω, tasso." It has been thought that it might interest a few of our readers who have an elementary and only an elementary knowledge of Greek to trace the occurrences of this verb and of its extremely important derivative "ὑποτάσσω, hupotassō," in the New Testament, with due regard to their inflexion (conjugation). The meaning of the simple verb "τάσσω, tassō," may be given as "place" or "arrange," while the compound "ὑποτάσσω, hupotassō," may be rendered "to place under" or "to subject."

We shall first give the forms that are based on the present stem, and these are almost all passive or middle forms of the verb "ὑποτάσσω, hupotassō." In Romans 8. 7 we read of the mind of the flesh, "τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐχ ὑποτάσσεται, tō nomō tou Theou oukh hupotassetai," "It is not subject to the law of God," "it is subject" is the rendering of the third person singular of the present indicative of the middle or passive voice. We get the same form in Ephesians 5. 24, "ἡ ἐκκλησία ὑποτάσσεται τῷ Χριστῷ, hē ekklēsia hupotassetai tō Khristō," "the Church is subject to the Christ." Again in Luke 10. 17, "τὰ δαιμόνια ὑποτάσσεται ἡμῖν, ta daimonia hupotassetai hēmin," "the demons are subject unto us," and in verse 20 the same thing is said but

the demons are called spirits. Once more in 1 Corinthians 14. 32, “*πνεύματα προφητῶν προφήταις ὑποτάσσεται*, pneumata prophētōn prophētais hupotassetai,” “spirits of prophets to prophets are subject.” In the last three examples we have illustrations of the rule of Greek grammar that seems so strange to us that a nominative in the neuter plural takes the verb in the singular.

We pass to 1 Corinthians 16. 16, where we have “*ἵνα καὶ ὑμεῖς ὑποτάσσησθε τοῖς τοιούτοις*, hina kai humeis hupotassēsthe tois toioutois,” “that also ye be in subjection to such.” We have here the second person plural of the present subjunctive ; the indicative would be “*ὑποτάσσεσθε* hupotassēsthe. “The subjunctive is used because “*ἵνα*, hina,” connects with the words “I beseech” or “exhort” of verse 15.

The imperative mood occurs in Romans 13. 1, “*Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις ὑποτασσέσθω*, Pasa psukhē exousiais huperekhousais hupotassesthō,” “Let every soul be in subjection to the higher authorities.” (third person singular) ; Colossians 3. 18, “*Αἱ γυναῖκες ὑποτάσσεσθε*, Hai gunaikēs, hupotassesthe,” “Wives, be ye in subjection” (second person plural) ; 1 Corinthians 14. 34, “*ἀλλ’ ὑποτασσέσθωσαν*, all hupotassesthōsan,” “but let them be in subjection” (third person plural). The meaning of all these is quite plain. It is the present imperative commanding present and continued subjection.

We will only enumerate without quoting the occurrences of the infinitive middle or passive “*ὑποτάσσεσθαι*, hupotassesthai,” “to be in subjection,” namely Romans 13. 5, Titus 2. 9, 3. 1.

A little more attention must be given to the present participle, which implies continuance in a very definite way ; and first we shall quote Luke 7. 8, where the centurion says of himself that he is “*ὑπὸ ἐξουσίαν τασσόμενος*, hupo exousian tassomenos,” “set under authority.” This describes him as to that which was continuous and lasting.

*(To be continued.)*



## UNITY.

**THERE** are flowers from other climes that will not thrive in this, except they are sheltered in a hot-house from the winter blast and the biting cold of a foreign land. So, also, divine unity cannot flourish in the atmosphere of humanity, amidst the contentions of sectarianism and the strivings of the flesh. It is that which needs to be carefully guarded if it is to be manifested in its heavenly beauty amidst the saints of God.

Humanity craves for that which it can accomplish by its own exertions and by its own will-power. The blessed Lord Jesus, when on earth, was popular and many disciples followed Him till a certain point in His history ; they then went back and walked no more with Him. Had there been another popular teacher at the time, they would probably have followed him, perhaps excusing themselves by saying he was a more loving man and did not say such hard things.

And what was the hard thing the blessed Master had said, which gave such offence ? It was that at which humanity has ever rebelled, the sovereignty of Jehovah. The first murderer, Cain, was quite willing to be a worshipper and come into God's presence in his own way, but quite unprepared to approach God in His. That which gave such offence to the disciples of the Lord Jesus was, that He had told them that they could not come to Him except the Father who had sent Him, drew them (John 6. 44, 65, 66). What an end to human will and human energy !

These disciples appeared to be followers of the Lord, but when the testing time came, "they went back and walked no more with Him." How intensely sad ! The Lord walked on in the pathway of obedience, and they walked away in sullen rebellion against that which opposed their own wills and made them feel that if they were to be followers of the Lord, they would need to know a power that was not their own. The blessed Master walked on

and on through His lonely pathway, and they missed their opportunity of walking with Him. How many of those who profess to be His disciples to-day, are missing their opportunity of walking with Him and sharing His rejection ? He walked on, ever doing the will of the Father, with the shadow of the Cross darkening His pathway, until through the cross He won the many crowns, and is set down on the right hand of the Father. They went back, and we are never told that they had another call ; they missed the cross, they lost the crown. " That no man take thy crown " (Rev. 3. 11).

Divine Unity is that which cannot be carried out by the energy of humanity. " Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh " (Gal. 5. 16). This is the divine safeguard against humanitarianism and clerisy.

From the earliest days of Christianity subtle principles of evil were at work ; Satan has been busy all down the ages, thwarting the purposes of God so far as he has been permitted to do so. In the case of Ananias and Sapphira we find that Satan had put it into their hearts to lie unto the Holy Spirit. They wished to have the credit of doing what others were doing, whilst they had no desire to do the right thing in the right way. Again, with Simon we have another instance to the point (Acts 8. 18), he wished to purchase the gift of God with money : in other words, he would have done the work of God, or what would appear to be the work of God, in his own way, and to his own credit. The strong language used by the Apostle to him, as being in the " gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity," and that he needed repentance ; all this shows us the man's condition, and how unfit he was to undertake a work that he could only have attempted in the energy of the flesh.

Again, we find the Apostle warning the elders at Ephesus that men would arise from amongst themselves, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Unquestionably, these men would have formed assemblies in which

the lordship of the Lord Jesus would have been set aside, and these assemblies would have been lorded over by the will of men : there would have been an outward union, but the divine unity would be lost.

And this was exactly what we find developing immediately upon the passing away of apostolic authority in the person of the apostles. Human authority began to assert itself, and human order, and then tradition took the place of divine authority, the unity of the Spirit and the written Word of God. Bishops began to strive amongst themselves for supremacy, and the disgraceful scenes that arose in their assemblies brought discredit on the name of Christianity. It is impossible to read church history of those early days without a feeling of shame and humiliation : the conduct of some of these men was such that it brought from the lips of a heathen emperor a fitting rebuke. We do not mean to say that there were not many men in those days who sought to stem the torrent of ungodliness ; there were many such : but our present purpose is with others.

The tide rose, and as it rose it swept away that which had its origin from God, and in the place of divine unity a cruel uniformity was established : the stronger party persecuted their opponents with unrelenting cruelty. The stake, the rack and every sort of torture were later on brought into operation, and on one occasion we are told in history that the stronger party tore out the tongues of their opponents (Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. II, page 376) : and this, to produce uniformity ! Beloved brethren, let us bear these things in mind, and let them humble us as we remember that it is by the grace of God if we have been made to differ ; and it is of that same grace, if we are endeavouring in some measure to keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," and to own the lordship of Christ.

Nor did things stop at this point ; as we have said, the churches of God passed from the scene ; the govern-

ment of God as seen in their administration, passed away with them, and in their place and in its place, a deadly uniformity was established by the will of man. In this uniformity the Church of Rome or the Western Church, and the Church of Constantinople, the Eastern Roman Empire soon assumed a supremacy, and to the present hour we have them in their uniformity, without divine unity.

The popularity of a system will greatly depend upon the extent to which that system can be carried out by the power and authority of man ; that which exalts the creature and soothes the pride of the human heart, is that which will exalt itself upon the earth, and in none of the systems of men that surround us do we find this more manifest than in the Church of Rome. The writer has stood in the dome of St. Peter's and looked down into the misty depths : how much to impress the outward senses, how much to produce a religious sentimentality : but amidst all the grandeur of that building, what is there to recall the meek and lowly One who had not where to lay His Head ? And thus, a building made with hands, and of human plan and architecture, no matter how magnificent, has usurped the place and sacred name of Church. Once in Rome, a little company of despised and persecuted Christians met at the risk of their lives and liberties, to remember their rejected and crucified Lord, and they were the Church of God in Rome. What a contrast ! The same may be said about the Church of St. Sophia in Constantinople with this difference, that there the Crescent has triumphed over the Cross, and what was once a Christian church in name, is now converted into a Mohammedan mosque.

But some will say " We agree with much that you have written, and surely, with the example before us of such failure and ruin, it is not for us to seek to restore the past that has failed. All that we can do in the present day is to recognise our weakness, to exercise love towards all the

people of God, and to show our oneness with such by gathering with them in church fellowship."

This may sound well, and there is an undoubted measure of truth in what is said, but part of truth may be dangerous error, as with the scripture cited by Satan in the temptation. We would simply say at this point in passing on, that those who advocate such a position, will have to produce their authority from the written Word. In the analogy of the faith it is far different; the people that God called out of Babylon, whose spirits He had raised, went up to build the House of the Lord at Jerusalem (Ezra 1. 5).

When they came back to Jerusalem they had to recover the stones out of the rubbish and to clear away the rubbish from the old foundations ere they could raise that which was in accordance with the will of God. "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." But how are we to know them? The answer to this question is—"and let every one that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness" (2 Tim. 2. 19). It is then that we shall be able to recognize them; it is then, and only then, that a divine fellowship can be formed and a unity be manifested amongst those who have learned to "abhor that which is evil and cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12. 9). And this is coupled with what follows, and is perfectly compatible with a godly hatred of what is evil; that is, to "be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another."

In the present age we are called upon to keep the unity of the Spirit, to own the one Lord: the practical owning of His lordship, is brought out in the first chapter of 1 Corinthians, but more of this hereafter. The writer believes that in a coming age there will be a uniformity as well as a unity, but this will exist under far different circumstances from those which at present surround us: a unity will be manifested amidst the saints, a uniformity will be seen

amongst the nations, for in that day the Lord Himself will reign upon the earth and will rule the nations with a rod of iron, and with Him in this rule will be associated those that overcome (Rev. 2. 26, 27 and 19. 15). But many will be rebels at heart against this rule, only awaiting their opportunity to manifest their condition by open rebellion (Ps. 66. 3, 81. 15, Rev. 20. 7, 8).

But to return to our more direct line of thought (Eph. 4.), "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit," and this to be done "in the bond of peace." How beautiful the expression ; it implies effort and a godly exercise, no room for indifference, no agreeing to differ, but a united seeking to the one end and object. The moment unsanctified human energy comes in, divine power departs. If we were more on our knees before God, before seeking to act for Him in any matter, I am confident we should see more results in harmony with His will.

I am also convinced that much may be accomplished that is right in principle, that is in accordance with the revealed will of God in the written Word, and yet, that the result may be bitter disappointment.

David brought up the ark of God with great rejoicings, but the answer of God to it was judgment (2 Sam. 6. 7, 8). David did God's work in his own way, in consequence of which estrangement from God resulted ; a fear of God instead of a closer fellowship with God : but David learnt his lesson, he learnt that if he was to please God he must do things in God's way : but God's way was a difficult way, and by nature we choose an easy pathway, or more rightly a pathway in which we can do what appears to be God's work, in our own way. I have said David learnt his lesson ; it was, that the Levites should carry the ark, and when they did so, they left room for God to come in and help them in their weakness.

Yes, beloved fellow-saints, the pathway of faith is the pathway of trial, the pathway in which we learn our own

weakness, and in which we learn the exceeding greatness of His power, He who alone is able to keep us from falling. The desire to bring up the ark on the part of David was a right and laudable thing : the desire for the union of saints to-day is a right and laudable thing, but let us see that we do not shut God out by the principle of the new cart, or in other words, of human expediency. Oh, beloved brethren, what a mighty work might be done for God if only His people were in a right condition, and in a right position to do it !

We have in 1 Corinthians 1. 2, what I would call a practical illustration of unity ; it is not a mere idea or a sentiment. The Apostle addresses “ the church of God which is in Corinth . . . with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place.” Note : it is one Lord for all, not one Lord for the church of God which was at Corinth, and another for the saints who are spoken of as being in every place. The Lord’s will being carried out in every place would have manifested a divine unity : but how was His will to be known by the saints in Corinth, and in every other place ? It would not be by a direct revelation of that will to every individual saint nor to every assembly, but it would be by that will being made known to them through the apostles : the apostles and elders (for mark, the elders are joined with the apostles) (Acts 15. 6-22) were those through whom the truth of God would be communicated to all, so that there would be a perfect joining together in the same mind and in the same judgment (verse 10).

What a beautiful picture of harmony and unity this brings before us ; but alas, how difficult, yea, how impossible for humanity to accomplish ! How soon we find the carnality of sectarianism doing its deadly work, and the saints whose eyes should have been upon their one Lord, begin to be occupied with the gifts instead of with the Giver. “ I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ ”

(v. 12). Spirituality was giving place to carnality (chap. 3. 1-4). As we have already said, the pathway in which our feet are called to tread, is indeed a difficult one, for whilst we are called upon to hate every false way (Ps. 119. 104 and 128), and also to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3), we are equally called upon to love all the children of God because they belong to the one Lord, and we should try to make them feel that we love them whilst we hate that with which they are associated. This is no easy thing to do, and cannot be done except we ourselves are walking in newness of life. And yet again there must be forbearance, a godly forbearing with one another where there is difference of judgment or a difference in the understanding of the will of our Lord, and united waiting upon Him for a revelation of His will, whilst we walk together in that to which we have already attained (Phil. 3. 15, 16).

Beloved fellow-saints, our time is short, and passing swiftly are the few moments that are left us for the keeping of the faith : let us awake out of sleep ; our salvation is nearer than when we believed ; oh, how near it may be to us to-day, a salvation that will change our bodies of humiliation so that they are fashioned like unto His glorious body, a salvation that will bring us to the end of our pathway through the valley of the shadow of death, a salvation that will usher us into the light which no man can approach unto, and present us spotless in the presence of Him who has loved us and given Himself for us.

J. A. BOSWELL.

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## Words of Holy Writ.

(Continued from page 93.)

THE corresponding part of the other verb is used of the Lord Jesus in His boyhood in Luke 2. 51, “*ὑποτασσόμενος*, hupotassomenos,” “being subject”; this is the nominative masculine singular of the present participle, middle or passive. If we take it as the middle it would mean “subjecting Himself,” but with the idea of continuance strongly marked, by the use of the form “*ἦν ὑποτασσόμενος αὐτοῖς*, *ēn hupotassomenos autois*,” “He was being subject to them.” The nominative masculine plural “*ὑποτασσόμενοι*, hupotassomenoi,” is found in Ephesians 5. 21 and 1 Peter 2. 18. In both these occurrences the “middle” sense is very marked; saints in the former are exhorted to be occupied in subjecting themselves one to another; continuous reflective action. In the latter, household servants (not slaves here) are exhorted to be in the habit of subjecting themselves in all fear to the master; it is the constant work of putting oneself under another. The same thought is in 1 Peter 3. 1, where, of course, the feminine plural is used; for the wives here are exhorted, in like manner, to be “*ὑποτασσόμεναι*, hupotassomenai,” “subjecting themselves.” So, finally, in Titus 2. 3, 4, 5, where it is given to the aged women as their duty to train the young women to be “*ὑποτασσόμενας*, hupotassomenas,” “women subjecting themselves,” as we might render it. The accusative is used, of course, because of being governed by the verb translated “train.” The structure of those few verses would repay careful study but our present purpose is to point out that all these passages speak of that which is continuous and habitual.

(To be continued.)

## ANGELS.

*(Concluded from p. 78.)*

FROM its earliest mention we find the angels spoken of in some way in association with God's House.

The seed-plot furnishes us with its genesis. "A ladder set up on the Earth, and the top of it reached to Heaven, and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And, behold, Jehovah stood above it . . . and Jacob . . . said . . . surely Jehovah is in this place. . . . How dreadful is this place ! this is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven " (Gen. 28. 12-17).

How many wondering eyes were intently gazing upon poor worm Jacob, and upon all that he did ? And how many wondering ears were intently open to hear all that he said ?

In the same way, when we come to Paul's first letter to Timothy, which was written concerning behaviour in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the Truth, a spiritual House in very deed, can it not be said with equal truth, how many wondering eyes were as intently gazing upon Timothy and others who were in and of God's House in that day, and upon all that was done ? And how many wondering ears were as intently ready to hear all that was said ? "I charge thee," said Paul, "in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things," and so forth (1 Tim. 5. 21), thus linking God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels so beautifully together in connexion with the House of God.

Going back in thought for a moment to the day of small things, does it not seem striking that God should speak of Himself as Jehovah of Hosts so very often ! The expression occurs some fourteen times in Haggai's short prophecy, some fifty-two times in Zechariah, and some twenty-four times in Malachi. As if God wished to remind the feeble remnant of His people, the weaker and fewer they became,

of those innumerable, though unseen Hosts with which He is ever surrounded, and who so perfectly do His will in Heaven.

When He said, as Jehovah of Hosts, "If thou wilt walk in My ways, and if thou wilt keep My charge, then thou also shalt judge My House, and shalt also keep My courts, and I will give thee a place of access among these that stand by," did He not refer to the angels? I suggest He did.

Going further back to David's time, a time when the ark was only dwelling within curtains—the tent which David had pitched for it—we find that David's heart was ever towards God's House.

Jehovah, I love the habitation of Thy House,  
And the place where Thy glory dwelleth (Ps. 26. 8),

and,

One thing have I asked of Jehovah,  
That will I seek after ;  
That I may dwell in the House of Jehovah  
All the days of my life,  
To behold the beauty of Jehovah,  
And to inquire in His Temple (Ps. 27. 4),

and again,

O God, Thou art my God . . .  
My soul thirsteth for Thee . . .  
So have I looked upon Thee in the Sanctuary (Ps. 63. 1, 2).

Then we have it recorded that "David the King went in, and sat before Jehovah" (1 Chron. 17. 16). Might it not have been on such an occasion that the words of Psalm 103 filled his heart? Can we not think of how the fire kindled while he mused upon Jehovah's greatness and goodness?

Bless Jehovah, O my soul ;  
And all that is within me, bless His holy name ;  
. . . Who forgiveth all thine iniquities ;  
Who healeth . . .  
Who redeemeth . . .  
Who crowneth . . .  
Who satisfieth. . .

Still he mused ; his heart and soul and mind rising until he had stamped upon his vision heaven's myriads who surround the throne. He sees them all, for in the spirit David is there.

Jehovah hath established His throne in the heavens :  
And His kingdom ruleth over all.

No longer is he occupied with all that is within himself, but with them—

Bless Jehovah, ye angels of His :  
Ye mighty in strength, that fulfil His word,  
Hearkening unto the voice of His word.  
Bless Jehovah, all ye His hosts ;  
Ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure.

Passing again to the day of small things it is interesting to note the particulars God gives us of what the remnant did. How definitely, if slowly, progress was made in connexion with the high service of God. Some were gifted to do certain things, and as in other days there were both wise-hearted and willing-hearted. There were those, for instance, who had the oversight of the outward business of the House of God, and we have also one specially mentioned as the chief to begin the thanksgiving in prayer, though he was not alone in this sublime service.

It is the last-named service which we wish briefly to consider, for we have the conviction, shared, we doubt not, very generally, that however much we have failed in other departments (and alas, how much in this one too !), yet in the exceeding kindness and grace of the God of patience and of comfort we have collectively made some progress in this our day in connexion with the Service of the Holies. Brethren, let us go on to perfection.

Now in that remnant day we find that certain of the Levites said—

“Stand up and bless Jehovah your God  
From everlasting to everlasting :

And blessed be Thy glorious name,  
Which is exalted above all blessing and praise.  
Thou art Jehovah, even Thou alone ;  
Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens,  
With all their host,  
The earth and all things that are thereon,  
The seas and all that is in them,  
And Thou preservest them all ;  
And the host of heaven worshippeth Thee" (Neh. 9. 5, 6).

"I saw," said Micaiah, "Jehovah sitting on His Throne, and all the host of heaven standing by Him."

"If thou wilt walk in My ways," said Jehovah of Hosts unto Joshua, "I will give thee a place of access among these that stand by" (Zech. 3. 7). Well might He add, "Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee," for sublime indeed was their opportunity and holy their service.

If God's remnant people to-day have the deepening desire to go on to perfection, then it can only be as we hear His voice and harden not our hearts. In God and the word of His grace is our sufficiency (Acts 20. 32).

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope. Now the God of patience and of comfort grant you to be of the same mind one with another according to Christ Jesus : that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15. 4-6). This, to the present writer, is the omega of Holy Priesthood service—"that with one accord ye may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." He is Son and Great Priest over the House of God ; the Public Minister of its holy things—"a Minister of the Sanctuary" (Heb. 8. 2). While of the angels God saith—

"Who maketh His angels spirits,  
And His ministers a flame of fire (Heb. 1. 7).  
Bless Jehovah, all ye His hosts ;  
Ye ministers of His that do His pleasure."

Now in the epistle to the Hebrews we read, "Let us draw near." Not "unto a mount that might be touched . . . but ye are come (that is, ye have approached) unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn ones who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel" (Heb. 10. 19-22, 12. 18-24).

If the heavenly Jerusalem is explanatory of the city of the living God, is not the general assembly and church of the firstborn ones who are enrolled in heaven meant to be explanatory of the innumerable hosts of angels? For were there not angels long before there were men? The Lord Jesus passed by angels in order to take hold of the seed of Abraham. Let that be suggestive, but may we at all events be preserved from looking around us (Isa. 41. 10, R.V.M.) at the apparent smallness of the One Thing for God, collectively together of Himself in these days, and at the many defects and weaknesses in ourselves and others. Rather let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God with reverence and awe, and seek for more grace to worthily enter into God's thoughts about the service of the Holies. We have made, I suggest, a little progress in this direction, thanks be to God; and not the least of His blessings has been the placing in our unworthy hands of "Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs," which were compiled expressly for the use of God's remnant people in this high and holy service. We are now, in the tender mercy of our God, enabled to give expression in words of song to thoughts, many of which have unquestionably emanated from Zion: songs of Zion which it would be impossible to sing with the spirit and with the understanding also in a strange land. In those songs—

“It was arranged that an attempt should in the first place be made to meet the most pressing need, namely, to provide for the collective expression of praise and worship to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ when the saints are together for the breaking of the loaf.

“This ordinance was instituted by the Lord Jesus in the night of His betrayal, and by His expressed command has been delivered to the people of God called into the Fellowship of the Son of God, that they may have their adorable Redeemer brought vividly to remembrance when they are gathered on the first day of the week for that very purpose. Then it is that having boldness to enter into the Holies by His blood we can draw nigh unto God our exceeding joy ; then it is that we can offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. This service of the Holy Priesthood includes singing with grace in our hearts unto God, as may be expressed in the words of the Sweet Singer of Israel (who himself set in order a musical service in the dispensation in which he lived), ‘Sing unto Him, sing praises unto Him,’ or, as we find in the prophecy of Hosea, ‘We will render as bullocks the offerings of our lips.’ That we may offer service well pleasing to God with reverence and awe (for our God is a consuming fire), it behoves us to have grace (or thankfulness) and to remember that the sacrifice of praise which we are exhorted to bring must be the fruit of lips which make confession to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (From the Preface, P., H., and S.S.).

Now, when we are thus together, and sing, for instance—

Come, let us raise a joyful song  
Of Christ upon the Throne,  
And join with heav’n’s angelic throng  
To make His glories known,

do we mean anything? Do we join in the Spirit with Heaven’s angelic throng? Or again—

Hark! the heavenly notes of praises—  
Loudly swells the song again;

Joy responsive "Amen!" raises,  
Hallelujah, and Amen!

Do we hear such sounds at all when we listen?

Well may we "Stand and adore" the God and Father of  
our Lord Jesus Christ, and desire increasingly

"... to know the joy and love  
With which all worship Thee above  
In heaven, Thy blest abode."

And may

We go from strength to strength  
Through this dark vale of tears,  
Till each arrives at length  
And safe in Heaven appears.

Oh, glorious seat,  
Where God the King  
Shall shortly bring  
Our willing feet!

Then, beloved, we shall see the altogether lovely One,  
and be like Him, and be with Him, to 'join in

... One lasting, long Amen,  
Heaven's blissful cadence, deep and loud,  
While every heart before the throne  
In holy, solemn awe is bowed. Amen.

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

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## THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

*(Concluded from page 95.)*

The cross, with its inscription in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, tells of threefold rejection by the world's Religion, Wisdom, and Poyer. Jerusalem was the centre of religious activity. Here we should have thought He would have received a right royal welcome, but, alas, it was otherwise! The Holy One of God had taught in its Temple; had healed the sick and maimed; had ministered to the people's need in various ways; had lived and laboured among them. In return for love He reaped only hate. It was here He met with bitterest



opposition. Chief priests and religious rulers are up in arms against Him. Their influence with the mob results in the general cry, "Away with Him! . . . Crucify Him! crucify Him!"

There can be no compromise nor covenant-making with the religious world. We would as soon have their persecution as their patronage. When persecution fails to accomplish their purpose, then they resort to the wiles of the Gibeonites: "Garments old and rent . . . this bread which we took fresh from our ovens, behold, it is old and mouldy." But there can be no covenant with the religious Gibeonites of our day. We can see past their knavery.

The world has been looking with interest on the recent war in the near East; watching the progress of the Cross or the waning of the Crescent. Many have been hoping that the so-called Christian nations may emerge triumphant from the conflict. The child of God has nothing to choose between the two. It is an open question whether the atrocities of the Cross have not surpassed the atrocities of the Crescent! If a religious world crucified and cast out your Lord, has it any place for you? God's purpose for His people in the past should be equally true of us to-day: "Delivered from the nations and their gods" (2 Sam. 7. 23).

Athens, the centre of the world's wisdom, is described by Cicero as the fountain whence civility, learning, religion, arts, and laws were derived for other nations. Another has said, "If thou hast not seen Athens, thou deservest to be a block; if thou hast seen it and art not in love with it, thou art a dull stupid ass; if having seen it thou canst be willing to leave it, thou art fit for nothing but to be a pack horse!" What a fascinating power! What a magnetic influence! Truly Athens was the loadstar that attracted men in their thirst for knowledge in that day. Of the idols and altars of Athens there is one that especially arrests attention. Let us draw closer and observe it. Superscribed are the words:—

“ TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.”

The Apostle, a stranger, arrives among them ; interest is quickened. “ We wonder what he has to say ! ” “ Has he anything to add to our already accumulated stock of knowledge ? ” “ He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods.” There was room in Athens for all the various shades of religious thought, but no room for the One of whom the Apostle spoke. Any observant one can see the same altar that graced, or disgraced, the ancient capital of Greece, in the fashionable West End church, patronized by the religious and learned of to-day. Suitably might the words be written over the portals of the religious piles of to-day : “ To the Unknown God ! ” How disappointing were the labours of the Apostle in Athens ; only a very few were reached and saved. “ Christ crucified ; to Jews a stumbling-block, to Gentiles foolishness ! ”

Rome was the seat of earthly government, of world-power, where Cæsar ruled. Strong nations feared and submitted to her imperial claims. She set herself the impossible task of exterminating those who had espoused the cause of Christ. The fire and sword could neither intimidate nor crush into submission the courageous spirit of those who trusted Christ. They were like Israel in Egypt, “ The more they afflicted them the more they multiplied and grew.” The young tree, shaken by violent winds, only strikes its roots the deeper and takes a firmer grasp of the soil. The power of God penetrated into the precincts of the royal palace. In the shadow of the imperial throne there were those who, while submitting to the claims of their imperial master, recognized their place in relation to a greater than Cæsar and from saints in Rome comes the happy salutation to their brethren in Philippi : “ All the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar’s household ” (Phil. 4. 22).

Already we see indications of the coming crisis. The subterranean rumblings of the internal forces of democracy

tell us of the coming struggle. The nations marshalled under the leadership of the earth's coming king, the anti-christ, will set themselves against Jehovah and against His Anointed (Ps. 2.). In the zenith of his power, the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven, as the executor of God's righteous wrath. Then shall an ungodly world know God as the Righteous Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

WILLIAM REYNOLDS.

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## Five and Twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME I, NUMBER 2.

AMONGST those whom God in these early days added together was Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit. He, in communion with all saints, was a partaker of eternal life as a believer in the Son of God. Moreover, he was in special communion with the saints whom God had brought together in His church which was in Jerusalem, amongst whom he lived his life and in co-operation with whom he did his life work. But a time came when in the grace of God he fell asleep, or rather (literally) was put to sleep. He did not cease to possess the Life which is in the Son; it is his to-day; but he did there and then cease to have part in the communion of that visibly united company: no longer could he with them remember the Lord Jesus in the breaking of the bread; no longer could he with them continue steadfastly in the prayers. For him the opportunites (so well used) of testifying to the Lord Jesus were over. They who were still at home in the body might by means thereof, do deeds pleasing to God or otherwise. For him, "safe in the arms of Jesus," it but remains in the blessedness of His enjoyed presence passively to wait the Coming Morn when his corruptible shall put on incorruption.

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# THE VERACITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

## NOTES OF AN ADDRESS IN TORONTO.<sup>1</sup>

WE do not propose to deal at all this evening with any lines of external evidence ; but to test the veracity of the Holy Scriptures by letting them speak for themselves.

The people who doubt the veracity of the Scriptures are not in the habit in a general way of abusing them or of stigmatizing them as a tissue of falsehood. Such extreme criticism was more common at one time, but the palpable absurdity of pouring unmeasured abuse upon a book with such a record as the Bible has been abundantly manifested, and therefore a more subtle attack has now taken its place to a large extent.

The critics commence, as a veiled enemy will often do, with flattery, with praise that it is difficult to believe to be sincere. The Scriptures are represented by many as a most excellent book, containing the most desirable moral teaching generally, but a little exception is taken in a general way to this or that : “ You must not believe this little thing ” they say, or “ that little thing ” ; and “ The Scriptures are all very well ” they will tell you, but virtually it comes to this, that you can improve the Scriptures by making little corrections here and there. In a word, they do not accept the Scriptures as a reliable historical record of facts. And those who begin as I have indicated have often very little idea of how far they will be taken before they have made an end of their corrections of the Book.

Now our business to-night is not to ascertain whether the Scriptures have a high moral character, nor whether, as we were saying last night, for example, it is a good book, that is to say a profitable book to read and to believe. Our subject is the Veracity of the Scriptures, that is whether

<sup>1</sup> The notes kindly furnished by the reporter have been amplified by the speaker, but it has been thought wise to preserve the form of an address.

they are utterly and entirely reliable as regards the facts that they record.

The subject being so large, and the Scriptures containing so much as, thank God, they do, I propose to confine myself almost entirely to the Book of Moses, and refer to other books only as ancillary thereto. We speak generally of five books of Moses, but the Lord Jesus Christ spoke of one Book of Moses only, and the fact is that the well-known division into Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy is merely a matter of greater or less convenience, and rests on no divine sanction.

You all remember that quite early in the book of Exodus so-called we read that beautiful Miriam story about the little boy that was going to be drowned, and his discovery by the Egyptian Princess, and how Miriam secured for the mother the precious privilege of nursing her son, and bringing him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

But when we get to what we call Exodus 2. 11 we find Moses grown to manhood, and from this point onward almost to the very end of the book of Deuteronomy we have events occurring in the lifetime of Moses, events of which he would have first-hand knowledge. It is but a little further on in the Book that we find Moses leading his flock to the backside of the desert, where God appeared to him as recorded in which we call Exodus 3. This portion of the Book of Moses has a name given to it that I should like to impress on your minds if I could. The Lord Jesus Christ calls it the Place of the Bush. Therefore, instead of speaking of a chapter and verse, we too may call this most important and critical portion of the Book of Moses the Place of the Bush as the Lord Himself did.

It is here that we get the beginning of the new chapter, we might almost, in a sense, call it the first chapter of the dealings of God with His people. Here at the Place of the Bush it is recorded how God appeared to His servant Moses and revealing Himself as the One who had heard

His people's cry, He sent Moses into Egypt to deliver them. From this Place of the Bush then and on through the Book that bears, and, as we shall show, rightly bears, the name of the Book of Moses, from this place on, as we say, the whole story is bound up in the most intimate manner with Moses himself. Through the whole story there moves one figure of whom we never can lose sight, a man of commanding personality, whose life and work is so utterly devoted to the people of God that we can never separate them.

This we say is what the Book of Moses tells us. If it be not true that this Book is written from close, intimate, first-hand knowledge of the facts recorded, then the writer, whoever he may be, shamelessly endeavours to deceive his readers; or the writers, whoever they may be, if there be more writers than one, one and all of them shamelessly endeavour to deceive their readers. Again and again, page after page, there is this constant effort to mislead, to persuade the reader to believe that the writer is what he is not, and who he is not.

I will in a few moments read you passages to substantiate what I have just been saying. But I may first point out that at one time we were even told that in the day when this Book purports to have been written, writing as we understand it was quite unknown, and therefore not only was it a mistake to suppose that Moses did write the Book that bears his name, but that he could not possibly have done so. You will therefore be interested to note as I read some portions of the Book that it is definitely asserted therein that the writing down of the matters in question was virtually synchronous with the events themselves. That is to say, the things were written down at the time when they happened or immediately after. Of course it is well known that more than a quarter of a century ago, clay tablets were unearthed on the eastern Banks of the Nile, which were probably written 100 years before the date of the Exodus.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See NEEDED TRUTH, Volume II, pages 79 and following.

I shall now ask you to read with me some of the passages from the Book of Moses that establish two statements that I have made, first that the writer professes to be writing from first-hand knowledge of the facts that he records, and second that these records were made at the very time that the events took place. So that if it be true as certain modern critics say, that the Book of Moses is a composite work, and that it was not written at the time when the Israelites journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, it must be teeming with falsehood.

“Jehovah said unto Moses, ‘Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua’” (Exod. 17. 14). Here we at any rate have a statement that Moses was bidden to put something on record in writing at a very early stage of the journeys.

When Moses had told the people all the words of Jehovah we are told that he wrote all the words of Jehovah (Exod. 24. 4). I do not regard it as a matter of the highest importance whether Moses wrote with his own hand or whether he had an amanuensis; but as far as the evidence goes I think it is all in favour of the original Book of the Law being what is called a Holograph, that is a document written entirely in his own hand.

Before Moses came down from the mount as recorded in Exodus 34. 27, “Jehovah said unto Moses, ‘Write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.’ And he was there with Jehovah forty days and forty nights; and he did neither eat bread nor drink water. And He (God, see verse 1) wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, ten words.” This statement of facts is surely quite precise, and must be either true or false.

After we have read of the setting up of the tabernacle we read in Leviticus of what Jehovah called unto Moses out of the newly erected Tent of Meeting at the foot of Mount Sinai, and after further utterances we find the follow-

ing words :—“ These are the statutes and judgments and laws which Jehovah made between Him and the children of Israel in Mount Sinai ” (Lev. 26. 46). Observe that it is not that these are good laws or that they ought to be kept ; but that they were given, says the writer, at such a time and such a place and by the hand of Moses. Similarly in the last verse of the next chapter, where it is again stated that the commandments mentioned were given through Moses at Sinai. We lay stress on that because one of the statements of the so-called “ higher criticism ” is that much of the Book of Moses was written at a very late date, and may have been written at the time of Ezekiel, for instance. But the writer here tells us that the date of the giving of these commandments was the time when they were at the foot of Mount Sinai. Now of two things one ; either this is true or it is false. The writer here is not saying, “ These are very good laws.” His statement is that they were given at Mount Sinai, and this is put down in the most explicit and unmistakable manner. If, therefore, they were not given at that time, the writer is making a false statement, and we can place no reliance on his word, for he is convicted of forgery and falsehood.

We now come to a still more definite statement, if that be possible ; more definite, at any rate as to the connecting of Moses with the actual written records. “ These are the journeys of the children of Israel when they went forth out of the land of Egypt by their hosts under the hand of Moses and Aaron. And Moses wrote their goings-out according to their journeys by the commandment of Jehovah ” (Num. 33. 2). Here is a definite statement of fact again ; and again we say, of two things one. It is true or it is false. If it is false, if the writer deliberately misleads his reader by saying that the writer was Moses when it was not, that the journeys were written down at the time, when in point of fact the record is a late compilation, what value attaches to his writing at all ?

*(To be continued.)*



## AMBITION.

1 John 2. 16.

O WORD of mingled import, hard inscribed  
 Upon the varied page of earth's records ;  
 Whose characters, when seen through mottled deeds  
 Bred by its potent influence, stand out  
 In colours lent by that through which they're viewed ;  
 Pleasing, or harsh and startling in their hues.  
 They here shine gold-like through illustrious lives ;  
 There, red and lurid through the scenes of war ;  
 While, all too often, human annals show  
 The letters black as night through sin and crime.

Deep underlying human energy,  
 It knows no limit to its lofty aims.  
 The spring that puts in motion and maintains  
 Much patient study and much strenuous toil.  
 The flame that oft has stirred heroic breasts ;  
 That often, too, has kindled fires of hell.

At times, in fairest guise, it has conferred  
 A flood of benefits upon a race ;  
 When, concentrated not on self alone,  
 Th' ambitious aim of some has been to give,  
 By toil or study or discovery,  
 Invention or that mighty power the pen,  
 Their fellows something for the common weal.

To such Ambition, under God, man owes  
 Much of the earthly knowledge that is his :—  
 The harnessing of natural forces which,  
 Like captive giants, in his service toil ;  
 The means so marvellous by which his news  
 Are swift transmitted to a world-wide ken ;  
 Facilities for travelling land and sea ;  
 And, latest, power to navigate thin air.  
 These only need be named of all the crop  
 This phase of man's ambition has produced,

That makes for human comfort ; and to which  
This favoured land in which our lot is cast  
Her generous quota has contributed.

Men with such aims the world has recognised,  
And to successive generations given  
Their names and deeds for them to emulate ;  
Like them aspire and like them also do.

But there are names the world, too, glorifies,  
Of men whose genius Ambition stirred  
To crave dominion, eminence, and power ;  
Whose only aim was self-aggrandisement ;  
Who marched to win the goal they coveted,  
Through carnage, devastation, and rapine,  
Their pinnacle of glory mounted on  
The groans of peoples crushed beneath their feet.

Thus ALEXANDER trod the path to fame ;  
And, but a century since, NAPOLEON  
Climbed to Imperial state on nations' sighs.  
These cast a glamour o'er the world they scourged,  
And left their names to hist'ry as " THE GREAT."  
Then there are others who, ambition-fed,  
Acquired a sinister celebrity.

By sinuous paths, intrigue, and cunning craft  
They upward wormed their way to despot power,  
Whose names, in life inspiring fear and hate,  
Are execrated by posterity,  
Men who bequeathed to fame a chronicle  
Replete with gross injustice, treachery,  
Foul deeds, and murder oft in secret done ;  
The ruthless sacrifice of friends and kin  
Whose purposes or persons crossed their will,  
Or seemed to hamper their ambitious aims.

This is Ambition's most repellent side,  
That conjures visions up in many minds  
Of rampant arrogance, aggressive greed,  
Unpitying oppression paramount ;

Of many downward thrust inflexibly  
To forward one man's lust of place and power.

Through such an atmosphere Ambition stares  
A ghoulisn spectre, undesirable.  
A thing of dread—a blighting influence,  
A very curse upon humanity.

This will suffice,

The object here surveyed  
Seen in its workings in the human heart  
Is such the follower of the Lord eschews  
As fitting ill the lowly character  
Of him who humbly seeks to imitate  
One who when here, sought not for earthly fame.  
“Who being in the very form of God,  
Yet deemed it not a prize, equality ;  
But Himself emptied, took a servant's form,  
And in the likeness of a man became ;  
Who, found in fashion thus, yet further still  
Himself did humble, and obedience gave  
E'en unto death, yea, such a death, the Cross.”

*(To be continued.)*

## IN HIS PRESENCE.

*(Concluded from page 82.)*

LET us now examine the meaning of the word, translated in our Bibles, “coming.” This same word is translated “presence” in the following scriptures:—

“For his letters they say are weighty and strong, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech of no account” (2 Cor. 10. 10). Here it will be readily seen that the word does not apply to a moment in time ; but rather to an interval of time during which the Apostle was amongst them. This will be more apparent perhaps in the following example:—

“So, then, my beloved, even as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence” (Phil. 2. 12). Here the word “presence” is in contrast to “absence,” the only difference in the original being in the fact that the former word is prefixed with the preposition meaning “by the side of,” whereas the latter is prefixed with the preposition meaning “away from.” It will be seen that the apostle was present with them for some considerable time. In the R.V. we have the word again translated “presence” in Philippians 1. 26. See also 1 Corinthians 16. 17, and 2 Corinthians 7. 6, 7, where the word is used in very much the same sense, although translated “coming.”

The word occurs twenty-four times in the New Testament, six times it refers to man, once to the Man of Sin; the remaining occurrences refer to the Lord Jesus Christ, with the exception of 2 Peter 3. 12, where we read “looking for and earnestly desiring the coming (presence) of the day of God.”

It will be found that where it refers to the Lord Jesus it is not always in connexion with the first stage of His second coming as Son of God, sometimes it is used in connexion with the second stage when He appears as Son of Man (Matt. 24. 3, 27, 37, 39). 2 Thessalonians 2. 8, refers to this time, as well as 2 Peter 1. 16, when He appeared in the Mount of Transfiguration, and Peter, James and John had a glimpse of the Kingdom of God coming in power as it will in that day when His feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives. As we purpose (if the Lord will) writing more fully on this at a future time, we will not linger on this important passage now.

2 Thessalonians 2. 8, 9, is an important scripture, as we find the word here, spoken of the Lord Jesus and of the Man of Sin in juxtaposition. Note the words “the manifestation of His (Christ’s) presence,” and “whose presence (the Man of Sin’s) is according to the working of Satan.”

From the above it will be seen that it would be very improper to say that this word always refers to Christ's coming as Son of God into the air.

To help further in the understanding of the word, we might add that the verb from which it is derived is found in many places. We give the following as examples :—

“Now there were some present at that very season” (Luke **13**. 1).

“For I verily, being absent in body but present in spirit, have already as though I were present” (1 Cor. **5**. 3).

This is an interesting scripture, as it is parallel with Philippians **2**. 12, which we have looked at, but here we have the verb used in both cases.

“All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous but grievous” (Heb. **12**. 11).

“Such things as ye have” (Heb. **13**. 5), that is, content with present circumstances.

It will be seen that the force of this word is found to be in “presence” rather than “coming,” of course including the thought of “arrival,” but by no means ending there.

With this before us, the expression which we find no less than four times along with the one which we have chosen as a heading to our remarks in 1 Corinthians **15**. will, we suggest, read better “In His presence.” The word translated “at” in these places, be it noted, is “ἐν, en” the usual word for “in.”

We propose now to examine briefly the three passages in 1 Thessalonians and one in 1 John, where this expression occurs.

It will have been noticed by many that each chapter in 1 Thessalonians closes with a reference to the second coming of our Lord. The original Scriptures, of course, were not divided into chapters and verses, but possibly the reference to the Lord's second coming may have suggested to those who ventured this work a natural division of the letter. The more we accustom ourselves, however, to read the Bible

according to the divine sections and paragraphs, the better.

The closing words of the first chapter are so grand and glorious that we cite them here in full :—

“ For from you (Thessalonians) sounded forth the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth : so that we need not to speak anything. For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you : and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and a true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come ” (1 Thess. 1. 8-10).

May the Thessalonian Christians (who, be it remembered, were very young in the faith) have their counterpart in us.

“ For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of glorying ? Are not even ye, before our Lord Jesus in His presence ” (1 Thess. 2. 19).

The word “ presence ” here causes this scripture to be far more intelligible, for it is not referring to a moment in time as the word “ coming ” might suggest, but rather to an interval of time—the same period as referred to in 1 Corinthians 15. during which many “ bands,” as we have seen, were raised. Ay ! that very solemn time for the child of God is termed by the Holy Spirit in Philippians 1. 10, and 2. 16 “ The Day of Christ,” and is referred to in many scriptures as “ the day,” “ that day,” during which the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5. 10) will be set.

Perhaps still more remarkable is the next scripture, 1 Thessalonians 3. 13 : “ To the end He may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before our God and Father in the presence of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.” We believe that this scripture has been much misunderstood. All is plain when it is seen that the solemn time, “ the day of Christ,” is mentioned here, unto which time may we be sincere and void of offence.

We pass over the well known passage of the fourth chapter,

where the word "presence" is found in the fifteenth verse, and briefly touch on the last reference to the word in this letter: "And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5. 23). This, of course, means the entire man, constituted thus: "spirit and soul and body." 2 Corinthians 5. 10 shews us that the works done by means of the body according to what he hath done, whether good or bad, will be manifested at the judgment seat of Christ.

We are also enjoined to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God (Rom. 12. 1), our body being a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in us. We are not our own, but are bought with a price, ay, what a price! see 1 Corinthians 6. 19, 20.

1 John 2. 28 brings us to the close of the places where the expression "in His presence" is found. "And now, my little children, abide in Him: that, if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him in His presence." It may be well to point out that the revised reading "if" is supported by all the best authorities. We leave the reader to consider why "if" instead of "when." Possibly it may give a pang to some, but it is ours to find out what the original reading is, in so far as we are able, and adhere to the same, even though the meaning may not be so obvious.

We find the same expression in chapter 3. verse 2, and the reading there seems to suggest that the "if" stands in relation to the "manifestation" and not to the "presence." This is a most solemn scripture, for it seems to indicate that in that day it will be possible to have regrets when looking back over the past neglected opportunities and so forth: remarkable words, "ashamed before Him in His presence." The fact is that, speaking generally, the solemn truth of the time that is coming for the child of God, the judgment seat of Christ, has been lost and hidden away

amongst the rubbish of apostate Christianity, and only within the past century or so has been again, in some measure, brought to light. One thing we know that those, such as the apostle Paul and many others, will have a very near place with Him upon the throne—such have counted the gain of this world as loss for Christ, whereas others, although truly children of God and members of the Body of Christ, having had rewards and riches here will have to take a low place there eternally; saved, it is true, in heaven for ever, but alas! not with Him upon the throne.

“If we endure we shall also reign with Him” (2 Tim. 2. 12). Note the word “with.” It is those who are with Him now in rejection and suffering who will reign with Him then in glory. It is well to remember that there is a vast difference between the little words “for” and “with.” “He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father in His throne” (Rev. 3. 21) is another scripture in confirmation of this.

We must make no mistake here. This will not be the portion, by any means, of all children of God in the eternal kingdom, neither will it be the portion of all those, in the Fellowship of God's Son. Not all those alas, who are in the Fellowship are there because of principle and loyalty to the risen Lord; although it is almost past the writer's comprehension the thought of any one being in the present testimony for God, apart from love of the truth of God alone. Yet it is evident that from one cause or another some may be in the Community who are not there because of principle, and besides this, many of us may, perhaps, have an evil heart of unbelief, and have fallen away from the Living God, see Hebrews 3.

It must be admitted that there is a measure, at all events, of reproach and loss to most of those who are in some little way earnestly contending for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, although not having yet suffered the loss



of all things, nor having had the joy (would it be considered joy?—however, grace is only given to meet present need) of the early Christians, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, nor yet resisted unto blood striving against sin.

Perhaps younger ones amongst us to-day, with whom the ambition and expectations of this world are more in evidence, feel the keenness of the difficulties of the narrow path more than those to whom the word is addressed, “Take heed that no one take thy crown” (Rev. 3. 11) or such an one as Paul the aged, who was able to say when nearing the end of his earthly pilgrimage: “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing” (2 Tim. 4. 7, 8).

Oh, for the spirit that animated Moses of old, who, when he was grown up;—“refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to be evil entreated with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season: accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompence of reward” (Heb. 11. 24, 25).

If these words are carefully read we suggest that we have in them divinely expressed, far better than we could, the principles which we are endeavouring to enunciate.

There is and must be suffering, even to-day, for the truth of God in one shape or another, there is the reproach of Christ, but if so, there is also the recompense of reward.

“To few on earth His Name is dear,  
And those who in His cause appear,  
The world’s reproach and shame must bear.”

How good and how kind is our loving God and Heavenly Father, not only to show us what is yet to take place, the

judgment seat of Christ, which will settle our eternal position in the glory (be it remembered, however, that if it is so that regrets and even tears find a place in that day, these will be but ephemeral, for "He shall wipe away every tear," Rev. 21. 4), but also what will take place upon the earth during that time—seven years at least—as we have glanced at in the earlier part. Unto this awful time Satan to-day appears to be actively engaged preparing the way and marshalling his forces. We are left in no uncertainty as to the ultimate fate of things. This restless scene of confusion, strife, and anarchy with its socialism, syndicalism, suffragettism, spiritism, rationalism and such like—all will yet be headed up in the consummation of all wickedness, energised by the Old Dragon and Satan. Of course, some of these principles of evil now at work may fade into insignificance, whilst others, perhaps, not yet even known, may come to the front and predominate.

Is it not a fact that that time, when no man shall be able to buy or sell, save he that hath the mark, even the name of the beast or the number of his name (Rev. 13. 17), is ante-dated in some measure at least, in many circles to-day?

Before that terrible time arrives we shall be taken off this scene to be with Himself in His presence.

Seeing that these things are thus to come to pass, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy living and godliness!

J. CROSTHWAITE RADCLIFFE.

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## HANNAH'S VOW.

GREAT was the sacrifice, but greater the reward. Hannah prayed and vowed—prayed for a son, and vowed to give him back again to the Lord all the days of his life. Old Eli, the priest, with fast-dimming eyes mistakes the form of praying Hannah for a woman of Belial, but after hearing that she was pouring out her complaint to the Lord he told her to go in peace and the Lord grant her her request.

The son was born, and his name was called Samuel (Heard of God), and with purpose of heart she brought him up to present him to the Lord in fulfilment of her vow. One can well imagine that many a time the motherly nature of Hannah, as she clasped little Samuel in fond embrace, would cause her to shed a silent tear at the thought of the parting, when he went to the house of the Lord to be engaged in the Lord's things all the days of his life. But the bright spiritual joy would afterward shine in; the clouds would pass and the tears dry, and she would say to herself, "Well!—it's for the Lord I'm doing it," Her vow to the Lord and His claim upon Samuel were of first importance. From her vow she never wavered, though if she looked at the condition of the priests, the sons of Eli, and of the disrepute the House of God had fallen into, and the sad condition of Israel generally, there was enough to damp the ardour of a woman of smaller faith than she, in the fulfilment of the vow.

Women like Hannah are greatly needed to-day, women who will look up in their preparation of men for the work of the Lord. What we would say we would say to all, "Be not ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." Small and weak it was becoming in Timothy's time. Apostasy was sweeping in like a mighty deluge, carrying many away in its onrush. Let us be truly thankful for what there is of testimony to-day, stand by it and not be ashamed of it, but boldly take each our part in suffering hardship with the gospel according to the power of God.

The time of weaning came and the day of Samuel's departure from Ramathaim-Zophim for Shiloh. A day of sorrow and joy—parental sorrow and divine joy ! Hannah leaves her boy and returns home alone, just as she had done before he was born ; but what joy God gives in compensation for her gift to Him which she expresses in her prayer :—

“ My heart exulteth in Jehovah.  
Mine horn is exalted in Jehovah.”

Great sacrifice !—A sacrifice which has made this woman great for ever. Hannah was made great in her great son, whose greatness was the result of having a great mother. Samuel has an outstanding place amongst those that call upon the Name of the Lord (see Psalm 99. 6, and connect 1 Cor. 1. 2 ; 2 Tim. 2. 22), but his mother called on the Lord in His house before he was born, his name shewing that she knew what it was to be heard of God.

Never, perhaps, was a man so much needed ; so great was the need God had for a channel through which to speak that He began to speak through him while he was yet a child. The Lord, after revealing Himself to Samuel, spoke to him regarding the judgment of Eli's house, and from that time he began to bear the burden of the Lord to Israel. His early days were spent in one of the darkest times in Israel's history, in which the ark was taken by the Philistines, and the house in Shiloh forsaken, but he continued on, as the prophet and judge of Israel in times of adversity, fulfilling his course until near the end of Saul's reign. The clouds were then beginning to break and a brighter day was about to dawn upon Israel with the ascension of David to the throne.

Hannah vowed and gave a son. David vowed to build a house. “ If thou vowest a vow, defer not to pay it.”

JOHN MILLER.

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## THE VERACITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

*(Continued from page 120.)*

OUR business to-night, you will understand, in the first place is to ascertain what the Book that we call the Book of Moses says as to its authorship. In the record of the concluding portion of the story of the Book we read that an ordinance was made for any king "when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites" (Deut. 17. 18). You will have noticed that the book of Deuteronomy, that is the concluding portion of the Book of Moses to which that name is given, gives an account of a repetition, a recital of matters that Moses set forth, as his days drew near that he should die. The name itself, as I dare say most of you know, is of Greek origin, meaning "second law," for it tells of the second, or rather the final charge that Moses made to the people before he died.

We may now stop for a moment to notice the charge that Moses gave the people to write the law on great stones set up on the far side of Jordan (Deut. 27. 1, 2, 3). If the law or any substantial part of it really was written at a late date as the so-called "higher critics" wish us to believe, what a mad thing it was of the writer to introduce all this detail, to court investigation by contemporaries that could only have led to his discomfiture.

We return to the important fact that the writer or writers of this book claim that it was Moses who wrote it. The evidence of this becomes very plain as we get to the end of Deuteronomy, and in addition to the passage I read from chapter 17. I shall now quote from some of the later portions.

Moses is said to warn the people, "If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this Book. . . . Also every sickness and every plague which is not

written in the Book of the Law, them will Jehovah bring upon thee" (Deut. **28.** 58, 61).

In the following chapter we are told that this was a covenant made by Moses at the command of Jehovah in the land of Moab beside the covenant made in Horeb. This of course plainly binds the record in Exodus and Leviticus with that in Deuteronomy. And again the statement is plain that there was in existence at the time a Book of the Law (Deut. **29.** 1, 20, 21, 27). So also we find in Deut. **30.** 10.

But what shall we say when we come to the following chapter? "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the Covenant of Jehovah, saying, 'At the end of every seven years, . . . thou shalt read this Law.'" Then comes the song, "So Moses wrote this song the same day, and taught it the children of Israel." Afterwards we are told, "When Moses had made an end of writing the words of this Law in a Book . . . 'Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant. . . .'" (Deut. **31.** 9, 19, 22, 24-26).

This completes the quotations I am going to make to-night. You find not only that the Law was written in a book, but you find what was done with the Book. This was written at the time that followed the Exodus from Egypt, that is during the last forty years of Moses' life, except you will adopt the impossible and absurd proposition that the whole thing is a fraud of the most gross and palpable character.

The fact that Moses wrote the Book is confirmed by other writers of the Old Testament. I shall first refer to Joshua, into whose hands Moses put the charge over the people as the time of his departure drew near. In the book which bears his name we find Joshua ascribing the law to Moses as the one who had received it from God (Josh. **1.** 7, 8, 13) and recording also their obedience to the command

to write the law on stones. In this passage (Josh. **8. 31, 35**) the statement is made in the most explicit manner that the Law was given by Moses.

That a certain part of what we call Numbers was part of the law given by Moses is specifically asserted in Joshua **20. 2**; see Numb. **35**. Another testimony to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is found in Joshua **23. 6**.

Finally we read that Joshua actually wrote what he had to put on record in the very book that contained the Law of Moses (Josh. **24. 26**). Thus we have full confirmation of the fact that Moses wrote the Book of Moses if we accept Joshua as a reliable witness of what he knew from first-hand knowledge. If Joshua is worth nothing as a witness, how can we accept any witness of anything at all?

David's words are on record also in connexion with his charge to Solomon his son "according to that which is written in the law of Moses," and "Then shalt thou prosper if thou observe to do all the statutes and the judgments which Jehovah charged Moses with concerning Israel" (1 Kings **2. 3**; 1 Chron. **22. 13**). The fact that we have here two independent records of David's charge or perhaps of two charges to Solomon, and that in both the law is ascribed to Moses as the one through whom God gave it, adds much force to the evidential value of the testimony.

Solomon himself also is a witness to us, for in the prayer that he uttered at the dedication of the temple he said: "Thou spakest by the hand of Moses Thy servant, when Thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt . . . there hath not failed one word of all His good promise which He promised by the hand of Moses His servant" (1 Kings **8. 53, 56**, and see verse 9).

Amongst other witnesses we may mention Joash and Josiah as recorded in 2 Chron. **24. 6, 9**, and 2 Chronicles **35. 6, 12**. These kings clearly recognized Moses as the great law-giver of Israel who had ordered a certain tax and had

made regulations as to the passover, and written a book dealing with such matters.

The Books of Kings were very likely written by different writers, who were probably, in some cases, the recorders that the kings appointed. The writer of 2 Kings 14. 1-7, refers to what Jehovah had commanded as it was written in the law of Moses : " The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, nor the children be put to death for the fathers." This is found in Deuteronomy 24. 16. The writer of 2 Kings 18. 1-12 may be put alongside. He speaks of Moses having made a serpent of brass (copper) as well as having given commandments from Jehovah. So, too, the writer of 2 Kings 21. 8, who records what God had said to David and Solomon : ". . . all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that Moses My servant commanded them."

It must be noted that all this testimony dates from before the Exile. It is the evidence of those who lived before the people were carried captive to Babylon, and most of it before the removal of the ten tribes. These witnesses all of them speak of what Moses had said and done, and in particular of what he had written. They speak of the word of Jehovah that they had received by the hand of Moses. What, then, can we think of the theories of the so-called " higher critics," who wish to persuade us that much of what we call the Book of Moses is post-exilic, was written after the Exile ? What evidence have they to put against the testimony that I have been arraying before your eyes to-night ?

The reply to this question, I suppose, would be that they have made a study of the language, that they have acquired expert knowledge of the style, of the growth of the language, and I know not what beside, and we must take their word for it that it is impossible to believe that these parts and those parts could have been written by Moses. Now I am far from denying that there is such a thing as study of



language and style that has a value very difficult for those to understand who have not made a life-study of it. But I ask what are the evidences that these "higher critics" are specially qualified to speak with authority on the subject on which they make such positive and deliberate assertions? I reply that the methods of the "higher critics," their arrogance, their assurance, the utter want of restraint that they display in what they so confidently assert, is quite enough to warn against them all those who believe, as I for one most earnestly do, that true wisdom is always characterised by modesty and real knowledge by diffidence. No authorities in the realm of natural science can match the "higher critics" in their self-assurance or in their positiveness; though the workers in these branches of knowledge have given the world its railways and its steamships, its telegraphs and telephones, its painless surgery and the knowledge of antiseptics, and a thousand unnoticed benefits that have made temporal life happier and brighter for mankind. Whilst those who would rob mankind of its only guide for the future, of its only means of knowing of the grace and truth of God, these display a confidence in their destructive criticism that has never been shown by such men as Sir Isaac Newton or Lord Kelvin, as Professor Simpson or Lord Lister.

I might add something as to the testimony of the men of Old Testament Scripture who belong to a later date. Specially at any rate Ezra's witness is worthy of notice. He describes himself as a ready scribe in the law of Moses which Jehovah, God of Israel, had given (Ezra 7. 1-10); and he makes other statements in his book that confirm the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (Ezra 3. 2; 6. 18). It seems likely also that Ezra had a good deal to do with putting the books of Chronicles in the form in which we have them, though he no doubt made use of existing records. In any case we may make note of the discovery of the book of the law in 2 Chronicles 34, 14-28. Clearly

the writer of this passage was satisfied that the Book was indeed the Book of Moses. But to come to Ezra more particularly, we ask what manner of man was he? Was he a fool who had no ability to form an opinion as to the authorship of the Pentateuch? Or was he a rogue who for some purpose of his own desired to deceive? For ourselves we have no doubt; he was a competent and experienced literary man of his day and time; and his evidence stands for us to-day, and is infinitely more reliable than that of the "higher critics."

*(To be concluded.)*

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### "A HEAVENLY CALLING."

THE recipients of the portion of Scripture known as the Epistle to the Hebrews were a people together of God in Church of God capacity, whether forming one or more assemblies, and we propose to consider what brought them thus together, what their condition was, and the means used by God to establish them therein.

The contents of the letter show that the readers were a remnant of Jewish people who had confessed Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God; that the Messiah had come, and that He had fulfilled all that was foretold of Him, so far as could be in the present stage of God's dealings; that, having given Himself a Sacrifice to God for the sins of the people, He had passed through the heavens into God's presence, there to continue His Mediatorial work until God should make His enemies the footstool of His feet, when He will come again to earth to set up His Kingdom and reign as King-priest upon His throne.

This was a good confession, good because true. But to make it publicly involved so much that a valiant faith was needed, similar in character to that which brought the Father of the Faithful out of Ur of the Chaldees; for the moment

it was made their connexion with the Jewish community had to be severed. It was impossible for them to associate with those who rejected the Lord Jesus Christ as an impostor. There could be nothing in common between these confessors of Christ and those who had become His betrayers and murderers, and were doing despite to the Spirit of Grace. What was true of the people themselves was true likewise of their religion. To join with them in their service in temple or synagogue, would have been to bid them God-speed, and thus become partakers of their evil deeds, which was not possible, though the temple service had a divine origin, and formerly served a purpose pleasing to God and profitable to men. On principle they must keep away from these things, since to mix again in them at the stage reached at the time when this letter was penned, would have been inconsistent with their confession of Jesus Christ as Lord. Hence their place was outside the Jewish camp.

But there are other reasons for their separation from their kinsmen after the flesh, though they were Israelites to whom belonged many privileges of great worth. The first of these reasons is that they had received a distinct call to go forth unto Christ, without the camp, bearing His reproach. A moment's reflection brings to mind the reason of that call. Great guilt and great defilement lay upon the camp of Israel, greater by far than that which lay upon it on that day when Moses came down from the Mount from God and found the people engaged in the worship of the golden calf, and stood in the gate of the camp and cried "Whoso is on the Lord's side, let him come unto me. And the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him" (Exod. 30. 26, 27).

It will be remembered that these sons of Levi became afterwards ministers about God's dwelling, and this was given them as a reward for their faithfulness to God. In like manner and circumstances our Hebrew brethren had

come out unto Christ, and similarly we find them associated with the House of God, and the true and spiritual worship and service belonging to it ; yea, more, they form part of it as the writer tells them, " Whose house are we if we hold fast the boldness of the glorying of our hope firm to the end " (Heb. 3. 6).

There is another reason we may mention for their being in the outside position, a very potent one too : there was no room for them within the camp. It could not hold such confessors of Christ. Though hastening on to its dissolution the Jewish community, as represented by its leaders, still retained sufficient power to expel from among them any of their countrymen who dared to oppose their views on the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to the Messiahship. In the mercy of God, many even from among the ranks of the Scribes and Priests, as well as from among the common people, had accepted Jesus as the Promised One of God, but, comparatively speaking, their number was small when compared with those who still remained in unbelief and continued in the temple worship and service. And so it came to pass that the testimony of Jesus on the part of our brethren brought down upon them a terrible storm of suffering, reproach and loss, which eventually drove them from synagogue and temple.

And so it is that they find themselves outside their old associations, and away from their friends ; and it is recorded to their credit that in the warmth of their first love to the Lord, they took all this joyfully. There was no room for their Master, and there was no room for them because they were faithful to Him. Is it not ever thus ?

Now it is never the will of God for His people, whether few or many, to be scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherds, any more than it is His will for them to be associated with anything that does not give the Lord His proper place of authority, or to be together in independent companies of whatever order or name. Where-

fore, when the old order of things had waxed old and was vanishing away, and the priestly service belonging to the temple could no longer be accepted by Him, He made gracious provision for those He was calling out both from Jews and Gentiles to be together in one community for His worship, service, and testimony; the form and the ordinances thereof may be clearly traced in the Book of the Acts and in the Epistles. In this, His new and spiritual dwelling place, He would have His people be, and here He would manifest His gracious power and presence unto them.

This new community was not a large thing as men count numbers, yet it could be said: "The Lord is there," and it was the centre of His operation for the deliverance of men from the kingdom of darkness. Into this community of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is variously referred to in the Scriptures, our Hebrew brethren had been gathered, and of it they formed part. And thus it is that we find them together in Church of God capacity, as we have previously seen they were.

This is a heavenly calling, and great and many are the privileges of those who are in such a position, but it is a position of great difficulty, and one which no man can maintain but by the grace of God. Our Hebrew friends were finding it so, perhaps much more so than we do who have come out of the religious camp of Christendom to-day to maintain our place of separation unto the Lord. As we have seen, they stood face to face with a strong opposition and were enduring much suffering and loss. And as the Lord seemed to delay His coming, their hearts had already begun to fail them and various other signs showed that some, at least, were in danger of turning from the Living God, and returning to Judaism.

This was their condition, the knowledge of which drew forth this most opportune and suitable letter. Humanly speaking it was a noble endeavour by all means to save some, and though we know not the results, we would fain

hope that many were reached and saved from so great a catastrophe. Could anything be more pitiable than to see them building again the things that they once destroyed ?

Let us pass on from their condition to note how the writer proceeds to help them, keeping in mind that he is acting under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in order to learn where to look for help in any similar time of need either for ourselves or others. If Hebrews 3. 1, 2, be read, it will be seen that the writer gathers up the thoughts he had set forth in the two preceding chapters, and continues as follows : Therefore, that is, seeing then, that all these things are so concerning the Son of God—the glory of His Godhead, and the grace of His Manhood—and though the Messiah is so excellent and so exalted above all, yet He for a time humbled Himself for our sake and blessing, it is our duty to consider Him earnestly both as regards His Person and offices. Consider Him !

There are many things the Scriptures point out for consideration, each interesting, all profitable, but in importance and profit the consideration of the Son of God excels them all. Remember, this exhortation is given to a people in most trying circumstances, whose faith was failing, whose feet had well nigh slipped. Better advice could not possibly have been given them, for there is nothing so effectual in freeing believers from the entanglements and errors of mutilated and false doctrine, or failures in life, or errors in worship and service, as a diligent consideration of the Person and work of Christ. Considering Him, the soul takes on His lovely image and is changed from glory to glory, and the life is affected accordingly.

This exercise is equally effective, and equally necessary for a collective position. Accuracy of confession and position is dead and fruitless without vital union with Him whom God the Father has appointed to be the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, to instruct us and main-

tain us therein. Sooner or later the faith and principles we profess will surely be abandoned, and return be made to the defiled camp, unless we continue to consider Him in whom dwell all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who is conversant with all the secret counsels of God, His will and purposes, through whom He hath spoken unto us, and called us with the heavenly calling. This is our only safeguard against such a calamity.

There are iniquities in our most holy things that would almost cause us to give up in despair, errors and weakness in our worship as there were in those of our Hebrew brethren, for which the consideration of Him was the true and only remedy. Many questions as to the proper mode of worship, which now wait their answer, would receive their solution by carrying out this exhortation to consider Him whose one offering for sins for ever removes out of the way all barriers of approach into the presence of God.

In short, this word of exhortation bears upon it the stamp and impress of divine wisdom, and this evident alike in the matter expressed and the terms used to express it.

In conclusion let us look for a little at two of them. "Holy brethren." This throws them back to 2. 11. The term reminds them of their identity and union with the Sanctifier. None could be rightly termed "holy" but the Lord Himself, that is, as regards nature, but these had been born again of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, wherefore He is not ashamed to call them brethren.

Next comes,—“Partakers of a heavenly calling.” The term is used to point out the difference between their present position and that of the Old Covenant people. Their past calling stood connected with promises and privileges which were essentially temporal and earthly, whereas their present calling was both spiritual and heavenly in its character, its privileges, and its end. There were many advantages belonging to the earthly calling which

the Hebrews had given up for Christ. But rightly understood, their loss was great gain. City, temple, country, all may go, for they had now many things very much better.

But of these they had as yet only a very imperfect apprehension, yet a consideration of Him who had called them thereunto and maintained them therein would perfect their knowledge, and thus they would become strengthened and established therein.

What was good for them is good for us. We too are partakers of a heavenly calling, and their Apostle and High Priest is ours.

We have been elected by sovereign grace, and called out of darkness, death, alienation from God, and wrath; in short, from all that misery which man is capable of or liable to in consequence of sin, in time and eternity. And there was nothing in us more than the rest to draw out God's love towards us. We have been called to many excellent benefits, to life, light, holiness, righteousness, peace with God, and eternal glory, unspeakable benefits and privileges all, and there are many others besides. We have been called into the Fellowship of His Son Christ Jesus our Lord. We have been brought to God's dwelling to share in the worship, service, and testimony, and all the comfort and help that is there, which, rightly understood, must ever be counted among our greatest blessings and chief joy, so long as we are pilgrims and sojourners upon the earth.

Wherefore let us give all diligence to make our calling and election sure, by considering the Person and work of Christ, the Apostle and High Priest of our Confession. Let us not be put to shame at the Judgment Seat of Christ by the diligence and self-sacrifice of those who have less reason to be grateful than we have.

WILLIAM SAVIGAR.

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## THE VERACITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

*(Concluded from page 138.)*

IN much of what we have been saying hitherto we have confined ourselves to that part of the Book of Moses that dates from his own manhood, say from when he was forty years of age. Of course, the events immediately preceding would have been well known to those a few years older, and to them we will pay no particular attention here. But we wish to say something about the earlier part of the Book, and particularly about the earlier chapters of Genesis. The evidence that Moses wrote these chapters is very full and definite, but as it is bound up with the witness-bearing of the Lord Jesus Christ to which I propose to direct attention to-morrow night, I do not intend to-night to prove that Moses did write Genesis, but rather taking that for granted, to make some observations about this part of the Book where, as I say, Moses does not speak from personal knowledge.

There are many people who think that the early chapters of Genesis are out of date now, that they are quite unbelievable. It is supposed that in the light of modern knowledge it is impossible to give credence to their tale. I have great pleasure in deliberately opposing this view. I propose to give you some reasons for believing that the early chapters of Genesis are genuine authentic records, and that the account they contain is a true account of the early days of human history in the fullest sense of those words.

First, then, we must speak of the sources of information that Moses had at his disposal. Moses, you will remember, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Whatever knowledge there was among the ancient Egyptians, Moses was in possession of it. Now it may be mentioned here that modern excavations in Egypt have shown the most wonderful civilisation to have been in existence in that ancient country for an immense period of history. The learning

of the Egyptians was very wonderful, and it would be foolish of us in our day to belittle it because of its character, so diverse from that with which we have some acquaintance. Remembering then that Moses was well learned in all Egyptian lore, is it not very noteworthy that there is not the least trace in the book of Genesis of anything that he could have got from that source? There is not the least flavour of Egyptian science or philosophy in Genesis 1., not a trace.

So again, throughout the whole account in Genesis of the early history of mankind, say from the Deluge to the Exodus, we find practically no mention of Egypt at all. Yet the Egyptians had had a history throughout a great part of those years, and no inglorious one either. It is as if a man trained in the Colleges of Oxford or Cambridge could write a history of the last 500 years and say nothing about Queen Elizabeth or Cromwell. Or as if one educated in the famous seats of American learning could write as if he had never heard of George Washington or Abraham Lincoln.

There is only one explanation, and that is that Moses possessed in the records of the chosen seed, matter of far greater value. For God Himself had caused to be preserved with the greatest care records that came to Moses from Joseph, from Jacob, from Isaac, from Abraham, from Shem, from Enoch, from Adam, to mention some of the names only of those who had been guardians in their day and time of the sacred oracles. This heritage of truth was evidently scrupulously preserved by the chosen seed, which God so carefully guarded in preparation for the fulfilment of His great promise.

The human race grew and multiplied, and God never closed His eyes to any who in any nation sought after Him and worked righteousness; but His special care and love were for His elect race, from whom in the fulness of time the Messiah was to come. And not only was the promise

of the future connected with them, but with them were the oracles of God. These, then, in his time came into the hand of

That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose. . . .

It was because Moses had in his hands the record that had been passed on through all these generations of what God had said to Adam, and of God's dealings with His own chosen line, that he thought so little of Egyptian learning that he gave it no place whatever in his writings. The reproach of Christ was to him of far greater account than the treasures of Egypt.

Moses tells us in Genesis 1. and 2. what God had told Adam. We may have difficulty in understanding this, we may make great mistakes in any attempt to interpret these chapters; and we know that they have been the subject of most hopelessly absurd and impossible exegesis. But that in no way touches the foundation fact that here we have God's own account of His work. It was this that made Moses absolutely independent of human conjecture, and it is this that raises the account far above the possibility of scientific criticism.

The very fact that the accounts in the two chapters do not appear altogether to agree, that there are many points of difference between them, should lead the reverent reader to two conclusions that he will find very useful. One is that he does not fully understand either, the other is, that true records are known by their having no need of the doubtful support of verbally agreeing reports.

The main point, however, that I wish to place before you is that we have here human records that carry us back to a divine revelation made by God to Adam (as well, of course, as revelations made to Abraham and others), and that because these things come to us from God they are true and reliable to the last degree.

Now it would be neither candid nor sincere to ignore the fact that the first two chapters of Genesis have in them difficulties, and perhaps more difficulties than are found in other passages of the Holy Scriptures. Supposing I were to exaggerate those difficulties and put it into the mouth of some one else who should say that the records in Genesis 1. 2. are incredible. But it is a mistake, and a very common mistake, to suppose that things which are incredible are necessarily untrue. This is very far from being the case. A great many incredible things are true. Supposing some one had said to my grandfather in the middle of last century, Your "grandson will be able to cross the Atlantic in a week or ten days, and when he has arrived he will be able to send a message to his friends that will only take a few minutes to transmit over that great distance." Would that have been credible, do you think? I say no, it would have been quite incredible; but it has proved to be true. In point of fact, credibility or incredibility is entirely a matter of the knowledge and intelligence of the person who is to believe or disbelieve. We are all of us liable to give credence to impossible tales, and to refuse our assent to well-authenticated records that transcend our understanding.

To me, as I freely admit, there are great difficulties associated with the accounts of God's working on those six days of which He speaks in those early words of the Book of Moses. But to me they come as His word, and therefore to refuse my credence would be as irrational as it would be foolish. Herein, at the beginning of the Book as throughout we have veracious and trustworthy accounts of what God has seen fit to communicate to us through His servant Moses.

*Communicated by H. W. WATERS.*

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## PSALM 107.

THIS Psalm is experimental and should therefore have a voice for all who have an inner life with its many vicissitudes. The ups and downs, the dark days and bright days, the ebb and flow herein disclosed, should touch a sympathetic cord in most of us.

There are some who have apparently few ups and downs, it may be because their spiritual life is not abundant, or perhaps it is due to a greater command of their feelings ; for no doubt some are cast down too much on the one hand, or elated too much on the other, because of their mental dispositions or bodily temperaments ; for oftentimes what is supposed to be spiritual is really mental or physical, and those who are subject to such elations and depressions would do well to give weight to this consideration ; but after all is said, genuine spiritual fluctuations will be experienced even by such as possess a large measure of self-control. This is proved by the fact that those experiences which have been honoured by a place in the divine record are found to contain evidence of similar variations to our own, and therefore we can turn to them for sympathy and help.

Our Psalm opens with the outburst " Hallelujah " coupled with a declaration that " Jehovah is good : for His mercy endureth for ever," and then the redeemed are reminded that they were redeemed from the hand of the adversary, and not only so, but gathered from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south ; where they wandered in the wilderness and found no city of habitation, they were hungry and thirsty, and finally their souls fainted in them.

In this sad and hopeless condition (true in the first place of Israel) we see a strong resemblance to the experience of awakened souls before it can be said, " Then they cried to Jehovah in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses."

Here we have the fundamental truth that before deliver-

ance can be known need must be realised, and this truth has to be learned at all costs by those who are destined to know dealings with God ; for our helplessness and God's ability and willingness to deliver is the first lesson in His school, and it has to be repeated again and again long after we have known His grace in the first great deliverance from Satan's grasp and sin's penalty.

What a joy to the awakened and distressed soul to find that God has provided a straight way which leads to the city of habitation (ver. 7)! "I am the Way." Well may such sing, "Oh that men would praise Jehovah for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men; for He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (vers. 8. 9).

It might be thought that having reached this place of liberty and blessing, with our feet in the straight way and our eyes looking on to the great city of habitation, there would be no more trouble or distress; but alas, alas! it is not so. Although now in Christ, raised up with Him and made to sit with Him in heavenly places, we are also down here under discipline, with the world, the flesh, and the Devil in league against us, frustrating in every way possible our spiritual growth, and hindering us from manifesting the life of Christ in our mortal bodies.

Further experience of this character seems to be contemplated in verse 10, where we read about "Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron," not because they were in the hand of the adversary, hungry and thirsty and far away from the straight way, but because, having known the goodness and mercy of God in the first deliverance, they "rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High" (ver. 11).

Two very serious things surely. To rebel against the words of God is no light matter, and we should judge ourselves carefully lest we be found guilty of this. Also the

suggestion of the possibility of our being guilty of contemning the counsel of the Most High should cause us to tremble. Let us be warned, therefore, and remember the solemn words, "Them that honour Me I will honour, but they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Sam. 2. 30). "Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13. 13). May our attitude be that of trembling at His words, and reverently waiting for His counsel.

In mercy He withdrew His presence, and they got into darkness and the shadow of death, where the adversary was permitted to reach them, so that they were bound in affliction and iron, and furthermore Jehovah Himself brought down their hearts with labour, and so sad became their plight that there was none to help (ver. 12). "Then they cried unto Jehovah in their trouble, and He saved them out of their distresses. He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder" (vers. 13, 14).

Well it is when we turn to the One who in love has hidden His face because of our rebellious and proud attitude toward His words and counsel, and therefore do not seek help from creature sources; for who can help those who are under divine discipline? or who can make glad those whom God makes sad?

He who redeemed them from the hand of the adversary at the first now breaks their bands in sunder, and thus liberated they again join in praise to Jehovah for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men, adding, "For He hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder" (ver. 16). How fittingly "gates of brass" and "bars of iron" describe the prison into which those are thrown who listen to the tempter and in a little measure become like him in rebellion and pride.

A further experience, or a third class of persons, is brought before us in verses 17 and 18: "Fools, because of their transgressions, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted: their

soul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw near unto the gates of death." These have been guilty of transgression and iniquities for which they have been afflicted. It is not rebellion and pride as in the last case, but sins of a more open kind, and discipline takes a form suited to such. The hand of God is so heavy on them that at length they draw near unto the gates of death, and when all hope seems to be gone, as we should naturally think, "Then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses." The same old story of grace to meet realized need. Furthermore "He sendeth His word and healeth them, and delivereth them from their destructions." They had transgressed His law, and now on confession, real and sincere, He sends His word to them and delivers them, not from the hand of the enemy as at the first, nor from the prison house of iron bars and brass gates as in the second case, but from their destructions. Transgressions and iniquities will work destruction, for "every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward," whether that recompense resulted from a judicial sentence or from the operations of the moral law directly on the persons or circumstances of the offenders. From such destructions the Lord is able to deliver those who call upon Him, although results may remain which will have to be borne to the end of life's journey. After this deliverance men are again exhorted to praise Jehovah for His goodness, and to offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving and declare His works with singing.

This brings us to the fourth class as introduced in verse 23, which differs from the others. They are not in the hand of the adversary, neither have they rebelled against the word of Jehovah, nor contemned His counsel; they have not been guilty either of transgression or iniquity; but of them it is simply recorded that they "go down to the sea in ships and do business in great waters." We seem compelled to conclude that this cannot have been contrary



to the will of God in any way, and therefore could not have been subject to His displeasure. Would we be safe in suggesting that the experiences here detailed are the experiences of those who stretch out after persons and things beyond, who risk much in order to compass larger purposes ?

Those who have had grace and courage to face the difficulties which inevitably must be encountered by such as push out into the deep, will no doubt experience a fulfilment of verse 24 : " These see the works of Jehovah and His wonders in the deep." It will not be all smooth sailing for those who venture beyond the customary limits, and strange though it may seem, the Lord Himself will test them, for it is He who commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind and so forth until they are at their wits' end.

It may be that in their going forth they relied on their own resources, and therefore required to be brought to an end of themselves, as so well described in verses 25, 26, 27. At last, however, when their extremity is reached, " then they cry unto Jehovah in their trouble, and He bringeth them out of their distresses, He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet ; so He bringeth them unto the haven of their desire " (vers. 28-31). He who commanded and raised the stormy wind now says to that wind " Peace " and to the waves " Be still," and a great calm results. How enjoyable the calm after such a storm ; but how much more enjoyable the haven of their desire to which they were brought, a haven on which their hearts were set although at times they must have despaired of ever reaching it.

We might profitably ask ourselves as to whether we have a desired haven, as to whether there is, far in the distance, an object which if obtained will fully satisfy a long-felt desire. If the answer be yes, then let us be assured that between us and that haven storms will sweep, which will sorely test us at our weakest points, and bring out what is contrary to our God in us and about us.

It is of Himself that we should have before our hearts a desired haven, and that we should make for it at all hazards ; but we have much to learn before He can bring us to it, and we must not think that some strange thing happens when storms arrive. When the long-desired haven is reached it is surely fitting that the tempest-tried mariners should call on men to praise Jehovah for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men with a further exhortation in the words : “ Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people, and praise Him in the assembly of the elders ” (vers. 21, 22).

A higher peak is reached here than in the former cases, and rightly so, for here there is no question of punishment for sin and forgiveness or repentance, but the disciplinary dealings of God with those who stretched out after things beyond their own immediate environs, and in doing so revealed self-sufficiency and other things which in mercy required judgment, as the hymn so beautifully says—

“ With mercy and with judgment  
My web of time He wove.”

In mercy He remembers judgment, even as in judgment He remembers mercy ; for it would be bad for us if judgment were overlooked, even as it would be most serious if mercy were forgotten.

The thought of reaching our destined haven should make present adversities more easily borne, and we shall be helped by remembering that the Captain of our salvation passed through storms which we can never know before He reached His desired haven. For of Him it is written, “ who for the joy that was set before Him endured . . . ” After that storm He now rests well in eternal calm. May we in our measure push off even a short distance from the shore, and make for some little haven, and thus be more worthily fitted to join in the high praises of the congregation of the people and the assembly of the elders, and even here and

now help to raise the tone of the congregations of the people and assemblies of the elders.

The remainder of the Psalm is taken up with further experiences on which we cannot now dwell. We may perhaps point out that verse 42 leaves us with the righteous rejoicing, and iniquity with her mouth stopped—a consummation looked forward to by all the godly right down the ages; whilst the last verse assures us that, if we are wise and observant, one thing will emerge from what may seem at times to be a seething mass of angry confusion, in which we feel ourselves to be the mere playthings of forces too strong for us, that one thing being the lovingkindness of Jehovah. He means to do us good at our latter end, and happy shall we be if through all the ups and downs we fear before Him and hold fast to His goodness, praying with the Psalmist, “Let Thy lovingkindness be for my comfort” (Ps. 119. 76). He will in His own good time bring us to our desired haven, for has He not said, “Delight thyself also in Jehovah, and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart”?

W. J. LENNOX.

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### THE DOWNFALL OF ANTICHRIST.

THE kingdom and reign of the Antichrist will probably be a short one; yet long enough indeed in the history and experience of many who will then live, both of Jews and Gentiles; for, if in the present times the righteous is scarcely, or with difficulty, saved, the difficulty then will be manifold greater. But there will be some who, in the well-doing of maintaining allegiance to God, commit the keeping of their souls (lives) to Him, as unto a faithful Creator, amid the throes and woes of that terrible time; and He will not suffer them to be tried above that they are able; but will with the trial make also the way of escape, that they may be able to endure it. Thus, they will be victorious over the beast, and his image, and the number of his name, and sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb, saying “Great and

marvellous are Thy works, O Lord God the Almighty, righteous and true are Thy ways, thou King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name, for Thou art holy ; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee ; for Thy righteous acts have been made manifest."

These truly are the people that know their God, and are strong and do exploits. And they that be wise among the people shall instruct many (for they that be wise shall understand) yet, they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity and by spoil many days. Their faithfulness and devotion cost them their lives ; yet better that than that they should listen and yield to the flatteries of the flatterer.

These thus present to us in our day of opportunity an example of steadfastness and faithfulness, worthy of our imitation. But the time of the end shall come ; and he shall come to his end ; and at that time the people shall be delivered, every one that shall be written in the book. "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel," they then shall say, as they look on Him whom they have pierced, their Deliverer and Redeemer. For He will deal swiftly and summarily with their great enemy and oppressor, and bring to a speedy termination the worst of all reigns, in which he sought to crush out every vestige of acknowledgment of God and His authority, as expressed in the words, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." He unto whom it hath been said, "Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet ;" has it also said unto Him, "Thou art My Son : this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the nations for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron ; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

The acceptable year of the Lord has now run its course ; and the silence of God, and the long-suffering of the Lord

have reached their climax and end, with the rebellious sons of men ; and the time to speak and act, has come. The time for opening the book, proclaiming the day of vengeance of our God, has come, and He who alone is worthy to open the book and loose the seals thereof, is " the Lion of the tribe of Judah," who is the Lamb in the midst of the throne in heaven. His right by conquest, and His right by purchase are acknowledged ; and He is acclaimed by the highest and greatest intelligences of God's creation, cherubim and seraphim bowing down before Him, with others besides in their ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a great voice, " Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power and riches, and wisdom, and might, and honour and glory and blessing." " Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ." " The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ."

For not unto angels did He subject the world to come, whereof we speak. And when He again bringeth in the Firstborn into the world, He saith, " And let all the angels of God worship Him." He is the Ruler of the kings of the earth, and He now comes to establish His rule and reign upon the earth. With Him come the armies of heaven ; others whom He associates with Himself in the work of subduing the nations, overcoming ones, who have won such honour (Rev. 2. 26, 27). They that are with Him are called, and chosen and faithful. The chief actors in the usurpation of His kingly place and power, having received their righteous doom, being cast alive into the lake of fire, and their armies of poor deluded earth-dwellers having been routed and destroyed, the great rebel chief is then seized, and bound, and cast into the pit of the abyss for a thousand years. This introduces us to the time when the King shall sit on the throne of His glory, and when He shall reign whose right it is.

DAVID SMITH.

## AMBITION.

## II.

## PHILIPPIANS 3. 3-14.

THE while 'tis right the Christian should beware  
 Lest earth's ambitious lustings lurk within,  
 And seek for grace that he may keep in check,  
 Subdue, and put to death the unholy thing ;  
 There are ambitions he may rightly know ;  
 Such as the Word of God indeed commends,  
 Exhorts to, and examples gives  
 Of things to which he should direct his aims.

“ Ambitious be ! ” These are the words of one  
 Who knew the worth of earthly glory well ;  
 Had tasted once the sweets of growing power,  
 And its intoxication sometimes felt ;  
 To whom the prospect of a great career,  
 Of influential place lay opened wide.  
 For Saul of Tarsus, both in mind and cult,  
 Gifted with natural abilities,  
 Stood head and shoulders o'er the common crowd,  
 As Saul of old o'ertopped them in physique.  
 Birth, parentage, and training all combined  
 With striking gifts and personality  
 To help the young Jew on his upward march,  
 To post pre-eminent among his race.

So from the few brief glimpses that are giv'n  
 Of this the early period of his life,  
 His genius, ability, and zeal  
 Are seen advancing him to public note,  
 And giving him a place with hoary heads  
 Among the counsels of his countrymen.  
 His was the leading spirit when they sought  
 To extirpate the hated Nazarenes.  
 By force of will, and purpose resolute,  
 The hierarchy's confidence he gained.

Who, when his fiery zeal new fuel sought,  
And 'twas his mind yet further to pursue  
The Lord's disciples scattered far and wide,  
Gave sanction to his project and conferred  
On him authority to execute  
His purpose in the Syrian capital.

Oh what a vista opens up before  
The man thus early on the road to fame  
(Here giving, as I think we rightly may,  
Imagination just a little rein).  
What can he not become? Perhaps he may,  
Like Saul of old, a people's hero be;  
Like him lift up the standard of revolt,  
And lead to victories, by which the yoke  
Of the proud foreigner shall broken fall;  
Maybe acclaimed by popular consent  
As one to whom were regal honours due.

What might he not have been? What glory known?  
If—Ha! 'tis here we reach the crucial point—  
Some other object had not interposed,  
And blocked effectually the gilded path;  
His rapt attention firmly rivetted;  
His heart's affection permanently gained;  
Deflected from their course his energies,  
And altered the whole tenor of his life.

With what result? At once a speedy fall  
From the high place he held in men's esteem;  
To lose his social status, influence, friends.  
To know instead their scorn and enmity.  
To be an outcast, persecuted, spurned,  
As one unworthy any place on earth.  
To suffer hunger, cold, and nakedness;  
Stripes and imprisonment; yea, stoning, too.  
Then, after all, ignobly end his days  
With violence at Nero's tyrant hand.  
Thus, to the world, a great career was spoiled,

A life was wasted that had promised much.  
And all for—what ?

What wrought the wondrous change ?  
What claimed his heart, his mind, his all through life ?  
What made him deem this seeming bitter lot  
As light affliction, only momentary ;  
And unregretful of the course he'd run,  
Lay down his life rejoicing at the close ;  
Not counting such an end inglorious,  
But consummation fit and honourable ?  
What ?

Here's the answer in the words of PAUL.  
“What things were gain to me I counted loss ;  
Yea, verily, I count all loss to be,  
For excellency of the knowledge of  
My Lord, Christ Jesus, for whose sake all things  
I lost, and do esteem them worthlessness.”  
Yes, he was won by that which far surpassed  
The best the world could give. A priceless gem  
Had gleamed across his path, entranced his gaze,  
Had then and there engaged his talents all  
In life-long, earnest, undeterred pursuit ;  
That yielded full return for all he lost.  
A gem whose brilliant lustre far outshone  
The things by men most prized and coveted.  
Revealing earthly wisdom, knowledge, power ;  
With all their tinsel glory and renown,  
As things of little value, poor and vain,  
When with its true, eternal worth compared.

*(To be continued.)*

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## TO THE UTTERMOST.

“Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—Heb. 7. 25.

## THE PERSON.

“WHEREFORE also He.” We are caused by these words to turn our thoughts to the foregoing portion of the chapter from which this verse is taken, which must be read and carefully studied before we can grasp the full force of the verse before us. We only propose at this time, however, to examine the preceding verses for an introduction to the Person of our text.

In the fourth verse we read: “Now consider how great this man was.” Which man? The man unto whom Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth out of the chief spoils. Melchizedek! And who was Melchizedek? “King of Salem, priest of God Most High, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; to whom also Abraham divided a tenth part of all (being first, by interpretation, King of righteousness, and then also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God) abideth a priest continually.”

“Now consider how great this man was.” A Priest, not after the law of a carnal commandment, such as the Aaronic priesthood, but after the power of an endless (indissoluble) life (see ver. 16). A Priest for ever!

Melchizedek was greater than Abraham; this we learn from verse 7; and yet Abraham was so great that he was called “The Friend of God.” How truly great was Melchizedek! Yet, great though he was, we are told that he was “made like unto the Son of God.” Abraham was great. Melchizedek greater. The Son of God. greatest. Such is the divine order of Hebrews 7.

We are all more or less familiar with those passages of

Scripture which speak of the greatness of the Son of God ; and contemplate with joy the blessed fact that He who was originally in the form of God, emptied Himself, and humbled Himself, even unto the death of the Cross. To enter into the wondrous condescension of the Son of God in all its fulness is beyond our present capabilities, but this we do know, that in His tremendous stoop He became lower than Abraham, becoming of his seed, and lower than Melchizedek, becoming a Priest after his order.

We also know that God hath highly exalted Him, and hath given unto Him a name which is above every name—that of Abraham and Melchizedek included. And now, although all authority hath been given unto Him in heaven and on earth, and although He has the greatest name and the highest station, He is still of the kingly tribe of Judah—of the seed of Abraham—and a Priest after the order of Melchizedek. A King who is heir to the exceeding great and precious promises which God gave to Abraham, and a Priest after the order of an indissoluble life. Both King and Priest ! How wonderfully great !

The Son of God stooped to raise, and He has raised to the level of His own high station those things upon which He has taken hold. Has He taken hold upon the seed of Abraham ? Then He will raise it above all the nations of the earth. Has He taken hold upon the Melchizedek order of priesthood ? Then He will add His personal glory and honour to it, and will raise it above all other orders of priesthood. Has He taken hold upon the vilest criminal in the cell ? Then He will honour and glorify him and will raise him to the level of His own high station.

King of kings and Lord of lords ! High Priest and Great Priest after the power of an endless (indissoluble) life ! Such is the Person of whom we read : “ Wherefore also He is able.”

#### THE POWER.

“Able.” The full meaning of this word can only be

obtained from a study of the word in the original. It means "power." From the same word we have derived the name given to that powerful electrical machine the dynamo. The miracles are sometimes spoken of in the Scriptures as "Powers," the same Greek word being used. From this we learn that the miracles of the Son of God performed in the days of His humility were demonstrations of Divine power; and if such power was shown in His humility, how great will be the power shown in His exaltation.

Our Lord was made a Priest for ever, after the likeness of Melchizedek, "after the POWER of an endless (indissoluble) life" (Heb. 7. 16). His power lies in His indissoluble life. Never again will He know dissolution, as He did when He died upon the Cross; but He abideth a Priest continually, and death can never rob us of our High Priest. The power of an indissoluble life! Such is His power. A power which all the powers of darkness, death and destruction are unable to resist.

"Wherefore also He is able to save."

#### THE PENALTY AND THE PARDON.

"To save." "The whole world lieth in the Evil One." Men and women in their natural state are lost to God through sin, and are in the hand of His great adversary; nor can they be released without a ransom.

Try for a moment to imagine the terrible position of an unsaved soul. It matters not who he or she may be; whether rich or poor, religious or irreligious, if unsaved, that one is in the hand of Satan, and stands under condemnation as that Evil One does, exposed to the wrath of Almighty God, and under the penalty of the second death. What a terrible position!

No one has yet realised the danger to which the unsaved soul is exposed as the Son of God has done, and He so realised the fearful doom of the guilty soul that He laid aside His

heavenly glory in order that His blood might be poured out upon the cross as a ransom for the lost.

Realising this, the Apostle Peter wrote: "Knowing that ye were redeemed (loosed by a price) not with corruptible things, with silver or gold from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, even the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1. 18 R.V.).

The precious blood of Christ is the only ransom for the redemption of a lost soul. Good works, prayers or penance will not suffice; nothing short of precious blood, the blood of Christ.

Thanks be to God, the ransom is free for all who will by faith claim the Lamb of God as their sacrifice; for all who will take the blood of the Passover Lamb—the Lamb of God—and apply it to the sideposts and lintel of their own heart's door. To such the words of Jehovah come with Divine assurance: "And when I see the blood I will pass over you" (Exod. 12.) And to such as are cleansed by the precious blood of Christ God extends a royal pardon, so that the lost soul who places faith in the finished work of Christ is saved from the penalty and is pardoned by God; is taken from the hand of the Evil One and is kept in the Father's hand (John 10. 29). Saved and safe!

#### PRESERVATION.

"Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost." To the uttermost! How far does this wonderful word carry us? We may look into the future and see God's judgments upon this sinful world as dark clouds looming above the horizon. We may realise that the great day of God's awful wrath is fast approaching, and what of this all-important word? It bridges the terrible judgments ahead and carries us beyond—beyond—yes, to the outermost bound of our feeble comprehension, and still beyond.

.But perhaps the most blessed phase of this word's meaning is, that from the moment the exalted Saviour lays hold

upon the poor trembling sinner He does not let him go, no, not for a moment, and will not let him go until he is found in His own presence, in a body like unto His own glorious body, there to remain for ever.

Speaking of His sheep, our all-powerful Saviour said: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who hath given them unto Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand" (John 10. 28). How secure! "I and the Father are one." Safe! Safe in the almighty hand of the Greater than all.

But, whispers the Evil One, you may be lost again, and then what? And, he continues, there are passages in the Bible, as you know, which are very difficult to understand unless you allow that it is possible for a saved soul to be lost again. With such suggestions Satan shakes the confidence of thousands of God's dear children, and robs them of the joy of their salvation.

Lost again! The doubting Christian's terrible nightmare. But what saith the Scriptures? The Scriptures teach that the moment a man places faith in the Lord Jesus Christ he is born again; born of the Spirit; begotten of God (1 John 5. 1). He becomes a new creature in Christ, the old things pass away, and behold they become new (2 Cor. 5. 17). He instantly becomes a spiritual man, a partaker of divine nature (2 Pet. 1. 4).

To believe that it is possible for a truly born-again one to be lost again, we must allow, first, that it is possible for a man born of the Spirit to be unborn spiritually, or, second, that it is possible for that which is begotten of God to die. The first is too absurd for argument, and the second does not need any. Nicodemus realised the impossibility of being unborn (we do not know of a better word) physically when he asked: "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's

womb and be born ? ” (John 3. 4). A man who is truly born again of the Spirit is as much a spiritual man as he is a physical man ; for “ that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit ” (John 3. 6). A Christian, therefore, can no more be unborn spiritually than he can be physically. And that which is begotten of God cannot die, for we read : “ Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible ” (1 Pet. 1. 23). Incorruptible seed ! Of such is the true child of God. How then can he be lost again ?

Moreover, the child of God is a priest by birth (Rev. 1. 5-6). A priest, not after the order of the Aaronic priesthood, in which death removed the priest from office, but a priest for ever, like the Great High Priest ; after the order of Melchizedek ; after the power of an endless life. Priests for ever ! We may enter upon our priestly service here below, if we comply with the conditions laid down in God’s precious Word ; but whether we serve as priests or not through the wilderness, we shall serve as priests with our Great High Priest for ever when we reach the promised land.

“ And having been made perfect, He became unto all them that obey Him the author of eternal salvation ; named of God a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek ” (Heb. 5. 9-10).

“ Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them ” (Heb. 7. 25).

H. W. WATERS.

## Question and Answer.

*Please explain the meaning of the words in 1 Cor. 15. 22, “ For as in Adam all die so also in the Christ shall all be made alive.”*

**Answer.** We suggest that the word “ all ” in this scrip-

ture must be read in connexion with the whole chapter, and especially with verse 12. "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" The application is therefore to the whole of Adam's fallen race. See Acts 24. 15, "There shall be a resurrection both of the just and unjust." This is by virtue of Christ, who becoming incarnate and passing through death destroyed the power of death and rose again from the dead. All therefore will rise in a body condition because of Him. The word "*ἐν*, en," translated in this passage "in," is used here of the instrument or means.<sup>1</sup>

The expression "in Christ" here has not at all the same meaning as in Ephesians 1. 3; for example, where it refers to those who are participators with Christ in every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. In the latter passage the word "*ἐν*, en, in," refers to the position of relationship of those spoken of.

Again the expression "made alive" in 1 Corinthians 15. 22 is not at all in the sense of the life which the believer now has in Christ; for example, "Christ is our life" (Col. 3. 4), or again, "He that hath the Son hath the life" (1 John 5. 12). This is clearly shown by the fact that the life is unalterable to those who are in Christ, even when out of a body state:—"I knew a man in Christ . . . whether in the body I know not, or whether out of the body I know not, God knoweth" (2 Cor. 12. 2). We see that even if he was out of the body he was still "in Christ." So, too, the words "the dead in Christ shall rise first" in 1 Thessalonians 4. 16, prove that the "in Christ" of 1 Corinthians 15. 22 has a very different meaning from that which it has in the other passages quoted.

J. C. R.

<sup>1</sup> As it also is elsewhere, for instance in Luke 22, 49, "smite with (*ἐν*, en) the sword."

It must be clearly and definitely understood that the **15th** chapter of 1 Corinthians deals with the resurrection of the dead, as the statement of some was "There is no resurrection of the dead," though at the same time they fully believed in the resurrection of Christ (v. 11). Of this the apostle makes the greatest use, he uses what they do believe to convince them of the truth of what they deny. Having cited the divinely appointed and sufficient witness of Christ's resurrection, he says, "Now if Christ be preached . . ." (v. 12), reasoning that it is unthinkable and utterly contrary to their faith in Christ's resurrection to say that there is no resurrection of the dead; since the resurrection of the dead, and the resurrection of the Christ, stand and fall together; the resurrection of the race being plainly grounded not on faith, but on the resurrection of Christ, faith or no faith. For since the witnesses are true, the fact of resurrection is valid and real, and so also its effects; Christ's resurrection being the basis of resurrection to the race, as Adam's sin was of death; since through man came death, through man came the resurrection of the dead. Hence verse 22 is perfectly clear and is but a re-statement of verse 21, but more explicit and definite. Verses 21 and 22 must not be separated but taken together, when they show that physical death was not a law of man's finite being but was subsequently brought about at a definite point in man's history by the act of the Adam himself. So also by the Christ shall all be made alive. The words "made alive" are equivalent in range and meaning to "resurrection of the dead." As therefore death was grounded in the first Adam, so resurrection of the dead is grounded in the second.

This opens up the question as to what resurrection life involves to the impenitent; and clearly it does not involve moral change. But surely it involves bodily transformation, especially in the light of the words "so also is the resurrection of the dead." Into these further questions we do not now enter.



# THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

## NOTES OF AN ADDRESS IN TORONTO.

THE value of any testimony depends upon the truthfulness of the witness, and upon the opportunities he has had of obtaining information.

The testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ is unimpeachable, for a twofold reason :—firstly, because He is all-knowing ; secondly, because He is all-truthful. He knows all things, all wisdom is His, and He is the faithful and true Witness. As it is impossible for God to lie, so it is impossible for the Son of God to err, either from ignorance or intention. But we shall not be content to say these things ; we shall bring definite evidence from New Testament Scriptures to show the inerrancy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And first, as it should be first, we give His own testimony as to His knowledge :—

“ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that We do know, and bear witness of that We have seen ” (John **3. 11**).

“ Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He who is from God, He hath seen the Father ” (John **6. 46**).

“ I know whence I came, and whither I go ; . . . He that sent Me is true ; and the things which I heard from Him, these speak I unto the world . . . I do nothing of Myself, but as the Father taught Me, I speak these things. . . . I speak the things which I have seen with My Father ” (John **8. 14, 26, 28, 38**).

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, ‘ Before Abraham was born, I am ’ ” (John **8. 58**).

“ All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father : and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father ; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him ” (Matt. **11. 27** and compare Luke **10. 22**, which is almost identical in wording).

“ For I spake not from Myself ; but the Father who sent Me, He hath given Me a commandment what I should

say and what I should speak. . . the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father hath said unto Me, so I speak " (John 12. 49, 50).

These passages give us the record of what the Lord Jesus Christ said about Himself, as to His knowledge of the things of which He spake ; and they are quite clear and definite. You cannot read these passages carefully and come away with a half-belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. He must be all or nothing ; you must believe all He says or else account His testimony to be worthless and throw Him over altogether.

Then we have the testimony of John the Baptist :—" He that cometh from above. . . . He that cometh from heaven is above all. What He hath seen and heard, of that He beareth witness " (John 3. 31, 32).

We shall next read the testimony of John the apostle in the gospel that bears his name :—" All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made." And yet, forsooth, people think that He by whom all things were made is not very competent to express an opinion on the truthfulness of Genesis 1. 2. ! See in this connexion Proverbs 8.

Other testimony of a like character is not difficult to find in the New Testament ; but we will be content at present to call attention to the words that came from heaven when the three apostles were with the Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Mount :—" This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye Him " (Matt. 17. 5, and see Mark 9. 7 and Luke 9. 35, and also very specially 2 Peter 1. 16-18). " Hear ye Him." What weighty all-important words are these ! There is nothing the Lord Jesus Christ ever said, but what it is worthy of undivided attention, but what it is deserving of implicit belief.

With all this before us, then, let us enquire what the Lord Jesus Christ said about the Old Testament ; and first, if you please, we will read what He said about marriage ;

we will not trouble to read the question of the Pharisees that called forth the Lord's words, nor will we read the Lord's answer in its entirety ; it will suffice for our purpose to hear what He said as to what was in the beginning :—“ Have ye not read,” said He, “ that He who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘ For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife ; and the twain shall become one flesh ’ ” (Matt. 19. 4, 5, and compare the record in Mark 10. 4. 5).

Now on turning back to the Old Testament record we find that the first part of what the Lord said is taken by Him from the account of the creation of man given in what we call Genesis 1. The words used by the Lord whether as recorded in Matthew or as in Mark agree very closely with the Septuagint rendering of the words given in our English Bible thus :—“ male and female created He them.” The latter part of the quotation we have given of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, namely what, as He tells us, God said to Adam, this is taken from the account in what we call Genesis 2. Here again the wording of the Septuagint version is closely followed by the Lord.

I directed your attention last night to the fact that we have in these two chapters of Genesis two accounts of what is commonly called the Creation. The two records differ in certain very important features ; and whilst, as I shall show you most positively, both accounts are absolutely authentic and reliable, the difference of form suggests to me that they have passed through different hands.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ by blending the two accounts together in the way He has done most clearly shows that to Him they were both on the same footing as divinely inspired records of what God had revealed to Adam. In the account given of the sixth day's work in Genesis 1, we are told that when God created man in His own image He created them male and female. In the Septuagint Greek version, the

word "created" is translated "ἐποίησεν, epoiēsen," "made," and the Lord quotes from this version, which accounts for the slight discrepancy between the words He used, and the words we find in Genesis 1, 27. In the story of the sixth day, however, that we find in this chapter there is no record of what God said to Adam as given in Genesis 2, 24:—"Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh." These two passages are blended in one by the Lord in His words to the Pharisees, evidently as being equally authentic and reliable records of the deeds and words of those early days.

Now man has sought to discover from various sources the origin of the monogamous marriage relation as recognised amongst civilised (so-called Christian) peoples; and it has been conjectured that as a result of certain causes which are imperfectly understood it has been evolved or developed from an earlier and more primitive custom of polygamy or polyandry. There may seem to be a measure of force in the arguments used to prove that man has gradually reached the monogamous marriage relationship from a different order of social and family life. But in direct contradiction of this it is a matter of revelation that God in the beginning made man male and female, that is, a single pair; and in the presence of the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ to the fact that this was so, those who have respect to the divine command "Hear ye Him" are bound to recognise that the sanctity of the marriage tie is bound up with the will of God for His creatures and is not at all dependent on man's approval of its propriety.

*(To be continued.)*

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## OUR DAILY BURDEN.

Blessed be the Lord, who daily beareth our burden.  
Even the God who is our salvation. Selah (Ps. 68. 19).

ALL whose eyes have been opened and whose spirits have been stirred by the Lord to the truth of the House of God, and to build therein, have a burden to bear ; some greater and some less, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. The burden He never intended we should bear apart from the grace and strength which He supplies. If we do endeavour to bear a divine burden apart from divine strength, then human weakness will instantly be seen and failure will be the result.

During the journey of Israel in the wilderness they had all their burdens. The most precious were those of the Kohathites. As they shouldered their burdens of the vessels of the sanctuary, to bear them onward from Sinai to Canaan, Moses was wont to repeat words such as we find at the beginning of this psalm.

Again, when the Remnant went up from Babylon, the king numbered the vessels of the House of God, unto Sheshbazzar, and the Remnant bore them up to Jerusalem. After they arrived at the place where God had chosen to cause His Name to dwell, it was no easy thing to continue there, the burden of reproach, the disappointments, the heartbreaks and the strength of their foes, all combined to make a daily burden which only daily grace could enable them to bear. Such reproach greatly diminished the strength of the bearers of burdens in Nehemiah's time.

Strong foes have always looked down at the weak testimony, for comparatively it has always been weak. Even in the days of David the high mountains eyed with scorn the little Mount Zion.

“Why look ye askance, ye high mountains,  
At the mountain which God hath desired for His abode?  
Yea, Jehovah will dwell in it for ever” (Ps. 68. 16).

Greatly despised and very much looked down upon, yet after all it was the choice of the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy. Just a height suitable for the poor, weak and needy to arise to, and just that which will break the proud heart and the haughty looks of the lofty and arrogant ; such is the hill of the Lord in all ages.

The defence of the testimony is ever in the Lord Himself.

“The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands.

The Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the Sanctuary.”

He came from ten thousands of His holy ones at Sinai (Deut. **33**. 2).

The Lord once opened the eyes of a young man and showed him—at Elisha's request—the mountain where they were, full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha, and Elisha said, “Fear not ; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them” (2 Kings **6**. 16). Therefore “If God be for us, who is against us ?” (Rom. **8**. 31).

David, in the conscious enjoyment of the divine presence, wrote and sang, as also sang the Remnant who were delivered from Babylon :

“If it had not been Jehovah who was on our side,  
When men rose up against us,  
Then they had swallowed us up alive,  
When their wrath was kindled against us” (Psa. **124**. 2, 3).

Have we learned, and can we say, “Jehovah of Hosts is with us” ?

When God took His place in Zion at the bringing up of the ark, David said :

“Thou hast ascended on high ; Thou hast led Thy captivity captive ;  
Thou hast received gifts among men,  
Yea, among the rebellious also, that Jah God might dwell with them.”

These gifts were seen in their various courses for service in the House. Priests and Levites, singers and doorkeepers, and all this in order that God might dwell among them. David did not forget to mention the rebellious character of many of those amongst whom God dwelt.

This passage is quoted by the apostle in Eph. 4. as referring to the ascension of Christ in victory and of His giving gifts to men. The bringing up of the ark to Zion, the city of David, was typical of this. The existence of the House of God in any age depends on the ministration of the gifts. The perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering unto the building up of the Body of Christ must go on continually, for it is to the end that we may all come to the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. All this is the opposite to what follows, "That ye may be no longer children tossed to and fro." Thus gifts were given to make full-grown men out of children, who would, when grown, bear the burden of the Lord. Happy is the people whose sons are as plants grown up in their youth (Ps. 144. 12-15). The object of growth is service. Remember David, who had the projected scheme of building a house for God in his mind; remember how he first fed Israel according to the integrity of his heart. Yes! according to the integrity of his heart, for the great object of his heart was to feed them and to bring them into that state of soul, prosperity and enlightenment to see what he saw—a dwelling place for God; for, however zealous he might be, he could not build the House of God apart from the fellowship of others. He guided Israel by the skilfulness of his hands, even as all men of God do guide the flock, to God and His holy habitation. Thus it was in the measure in which he experienced being fed and guided himself by the Lord his Shepherd, and expressing as the result, "I will dwell in the House of Jehovah for length of days"; even so he led Israel, proving the truth of the Lord's words, that

he was a man after his own heart, who in his own generation served the counsel of God and fell on sleep. How different all this is from those of whom Paul spoke prophetically at Miletus, as recorded in Acts 20. Their ministry and all else had only themselves as the objective.

Timothy was exhorted by the apostle Paul to take heed to himself and to his teaching, and to continue in these things, for in so doing he would save himself and those who heard him. Continual ministry and continual growth are essential to continual salvation.

We read that Samuel, while a child, grew in the House of Jehovah in Shiloh; and we cannot forget Him who was destined to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows, who grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon Him.

The measure of growth and development in divine things will be the measure of the burden given by the Lord to bear. A bearer of burdens once said :

“ Besides those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak and I am not weak ? ” (2 Cor 11. 28 and 29.)

“ He hath said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee ; for My power is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly will I glory in my weaknesses that the power of Christ may rest upon me. . . . For when I am weak, then am I strong ” (2 Cor. 12. 9 and 10).

Jacob's blessing on Issachar was in keeping with the meaning of his name, for Leah said, “ My hire.” His name means “ Reward.”

“ Issachar is a strong ass  
Couching down between the sheepfolds.  
And he saw a resting place that it was good,  
And a land that it was pleasant,  
And he bowed his shoulder to bear,  
And became a servant under task work.”

(Gen. 49. 14, 15).



“Thou, therefore, my child, be strengthened in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. . . . Take thy part in suffering hardship as a good soldier of Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2. 1, 3. R.V. Margin).

JOHN MILLER.

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AMBITION.

III.

1 Thess. 4. 10-12.

HAVING digressed that we might briefly scan  
The life and aims of the Apostle Paul,  
Attention to his words again we'll give;  
Conscious that in them breathes the Living God.  
No words of some philosopher long dead;  
Or utterance of wild enthusiast;  
But sound and healthy words of soberness  
To all whose ears and heart the Lord has oped.  
Thrice in his letters is our subject named.  
In exhortation once, and twice found in  
Sincere expressions, truly setting forth  
The ends he strove ambitiously to reach.

We start, then, first with that which nearest lies,  
The words that closely bear upon ourselves;  
Enjoining on us such deportment here  
Among our neighbours, as shall well become  
Those upon whom the worthy name is called.  
“We you exhort . . . that ye ambitious be,  
To”—what?—“be quiet, your own business do;  
And labour with your hands that so ye may  
Walk honestly towards them that are without,  
And nothing need yourselves.”  
Oh, can we say that our ambitions have  
This lowly, simple, God-directed trend?  
That, as regards the place we occupy  
Here among men (whose restless wills are seen  
Engaged in conflict fierce, themselves to thrust

Before the public eye, its plaudits gain)  
We've fixed our minds on this the true ideal,  
On such a walk 'fore men, as beautiful ;  
Yea, garnished with a beauty that's divine.  
Aspiring not to do some startling thing  
To win men's admiration and applause ;  
But all content in quietness to work  
And earn our bread by means we're fitted for.

As in our daily avocation, so  
Should our behaviour be in things of God.  
Not seeking to impress upon the minds  
Of fellow-servants our important claims  
To be regarded as of consequence ;  
Nor strive to do some work of high degree  
When God intended us for humbler tasks.  
Nor should we, with a restless, changing mood,  
Try here and there to work unskilfully  
In service that belongs to other hands.  
But first, with lowly mind, let's seek to know  
What place for us in His economy  
The risen Lord in wisdom has assigned.  
Then understanding what He'd have us do,  
Perform that work with quiet earnestness,  
And satisfied the place He gives is best.  
“ What grand ideals ! What lofty, soaring aims ! ”  
With scornful irony the world will say.  
Oh, may this find no echo in our hearts ;  
A feeling that the heavenly-given path  
Is hum-drum, common-place, and passing dull ;  
But may we gladly put our energies  
Into the task, however small it seems.  
Maybe the Lord Himself will graciously  
(Cognisant of the faithful labour done)  
Enlarge our field of service and bestow  
For greater work, the greater power to do.

*(To be continued.)*

## Words of Holy Writ.

(Continued from page 105)

THE weak or first aorist stem of the verb “ὑποτάσσω, hupotassō,” occurs rather often. We get the active indicative aorist about four times ; and remarkably enough in every case the reference is to the subjection of all things to the Son of Man ; so that while the past tense is used it is the future of which each passage prophetically speaks :—“Thou didst put all things in subjection under His feet” (Heb. 2. 8), “ὑπέταξας hupetaxas,” the second person singular ; and in the same verse the infinitive is used, that is the aorist infinitive, like the Latin gerund governed by a preposition, “ἐν τῷ ὑποτάξει, en tō hupotaxai,” “in subjecting.” Clearly the aorist is used to indicate that the action of God (or shall we say His decree ?) is, once for all, an act or decree that is not to be thought of as gradual or progressive. For before the Son of Man came into the world God had thus spoken ; like as it is written in another connexion, “I will tell of the decree.”

Similarly in 1 Corinthians 15. 27, and Ephesians 1. 22, the words used in these two passages are identical, “πάντα ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ, panta hupetaxen hupo tous podas autou,” “He put all things in subjection,” or “He subjected all things, under His feet.” That is, it was done once for all by divine decree.

Then the active participle first aorist is used to describe God, naming Him as the Subjecting One : “τοῦ ὑποτάξαντος αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, tou hupotaxantos autō ta panta” (the genitive being used), “τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, tō hupotaxanti autō ta panta” (dative case), these instances being found in verses 27 and 28 of 1 Corinthians 15. respectively.

(To be continued.)

## THE BOOK OF LIFE.

### THY BOOK.

“ Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin . . . ; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written ” (Exod. 33. 32).

THIS appears to be the first mention in the Holy Scriptures of God keeping a book to record the names of His saints. Moses, on account of Israel's sin, makes confession to God and pleads for their forgiveness. So intense was his love for God's people that if God would not forgive them, he asks for his own name to be blotted out of God's book. God's reply is, “ Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My book.” Thus we see from this the possibility of those who sin having their names blotted out of God's book. At the outset, we desire to make clear, that eternal life and the book of life are not the same. To be a possessor of eternal life, means that such a one shall never perish, neither can any snatch them out of the hands of the Father and the Son (John 10.). Concerning those who have embraced the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, He says, “ I kept them in Thy name, . . . I guarded them and not one of them is perished ” (John 17.). Further we have the testimony of the Spirit, through Paul, that nothing in the heavens or upon earth, or under the earth, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (see things enumerated in Romans 8.). Not one member will be missing, when “ He shall present to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ” (Eph. 5.). We confess we see but dimly the things whereof we write, and we ask our readers to examine the scriptures we refer to for themselves, in order to get fuller light upon so interesting, yet so solemn, a subject.

David also makes reference to God's book when he says—

Thou tellest my wanderings :  
Put Thou my tears into Thy bottle ;  
Are they not in Thy book ? (Ps. 56. 8.)

He was conscious that God kept a record of his wanderings, his sorrows and trials. His life on earth was recorded in heaven.

Then again, in the wonderful foreknowledge of God, we have the words—

Thine eyes did see Mine unperfect substance,  
And in Thy book were all My members written,  
Which day by day were fashioned,  
When as yet there was none of them (Ps. 139. 16).

We do not say that “Thy book” is the same as “the book of life,” but if it is not, it has close affinity, and it may be the same.

#### THE BOOK OF LIFE.

We now refer to Psalm 69. 28.

Let them be blotted out of the book of life,  
And not be written with the righteous.

Here is the prophetic utterance of the Psalmist, concerning the Lord Jesus on the Cross. From this we see that the righteous continue to have a place in the book of the living, whilst others who were also of the seed of Abraham and professed to be children of God, believers in Him and the sacred Scriptures, yet they crucified Him of whom the Scriptures spake, and He was to such as it is written, “A stranger unto His brethren, and an alien unto His mother’s children.” He calls upon God for their names to be blotted out of the book of life (or the book of the living).

#### THE BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE.

We speak of this in passing, to show that it is not the book of life, because it was not written before this time. God, in His compassion and mercy, stooped to take knowledge of the special circumstances in which the faithful remnant found themselves. “Then they that feared Jehovah spake one with another, and Jehovah hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before

Him, for them that feared Jehovah and that thought upon His Name" (Mal. 3.). These few were as a peculiar treasure, a jewel unto Him, and He loved to stoop and listen to their goodly words concerning Him and His things, in that day of lawlessness and departure. The days were dark before the first Advent of our Lord, who was manifested in flesh ; to-day they are dark, and darker will they grow before His second Advent. But it is very cheering and encouraging, to know that in these remnant days, when a few have returned to the place of the Name, seeking to do things according as it is written, the Lord still listens to the words concerning Him that fall from the lips of those that fear the Lord, that think upon His name. Special reward was theirs in Malachi's day ; great reward is held out to us in our day as over-comers, as seen from the Book of the Revelation.

### NAMES WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.

We now come to the New Testament Scriptures, and find seventy disciples chosen, to go into every city and place, whither He Himself would come. They went and fulfilled their mission, and so elated were they with joy at the success of their service, that when they returned they said, " Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through Thy name." The Lord answers, " In this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you ; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven " (Luke 10.). Thus did He teach them and ourselves not to be too much elated with our service, if, with God-given power and energy, everything appears to fall before His name, and success seems to crown the efforts, lest at other times we should be cast down when we labour and see no fruits therefrom, and others reap what we have sown. But let us rather rejoice at the electing grace of God that has saved us, according to His mercy, registering our names in the scroll of the living in heaven, as living ones active in the service of our

Lord Jesus Christ, being found ready for service, or ready for sacrifice. Oh, that it were more so in very truth !

We now come to a more direct reference to the book of life in Philippians 4. 2. Here Paul exhorts Euodia and Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. "Yea, I beseech thee . . . help these women, for they laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life." Does it not appear, that on account of the spiritual vitality manifested by these, Paul could discern that their names were in the book of the living ? We have previously shown that to have eternal life is one thing, and to have our names in the book of life is another. The former is an act of God in His grace to us, the latter depends upon ourselves, as to whether we continue to live as saints, to serve as servants. Note that in mentioning the above names Paul says, "they laboured with me," and again, "the rest of my fellow-workers." The privilege and responsibility of every born-again one is, to live out the life of the In-living One (Gal. 2. 20). "The life which I now live in the flesh." We shall presently see what a bearing this has on the subject before us.

We are now to confess Christ before men (Matt. 10. 33). To serve the living and true God (1 Thess. 1. 9). To attain to the out-resurrection from amongst dead ones (Phil. 3. 11). To walk in newness of life (Rom. 6. 4). To present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God (Rom. 12. 1, 2). To yield ourselves to God as those that are alive from among the dead (Rom. 6. 13). For as Hezekiah says—

The dead cannot praise Thee. . . .

The living, the living they shall praise Thee.

When we are so, our condition in likeness to our Heavenly Father as sons of God, living, faithful, loyal, true, serving with reverence and godly fear, confessing Christ by life and lip, it may be said of us by the Great Searcher of hearts, that our names are in the book of life.

Now we come to the passage of God's word that perhaps gives us a clearer hint than any of what it is to have our names in "the book of life," the reward it brings with it, and what it also means to have our names blotted out.

"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white garments; and I will not in any wise blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels" (Rev. 3. 5).

We see that this special promise is to the overcomer, and of course, the opposite to this, is to be overcome. The overcomer is the one who has his name in the book of life, and the Lord will not by any means blot out his name.

And the reward for such is—

- (1) To be arrayed in white garments, to walk with Him;
- (2) His name never to be erased from the scroll of life;
- (3) The Lord Jesus will confess his name before His Father, and the holy angels.

We will take them briefly in their order. We can only hint at what it may mean to be arrayed in white garments. We gather this hint from Revelation 19., where we read of some arrayed in fine linen, which is the righteous acts of the saints. This may show us that these overcomers (this may be the blessed portion of each of us) were righteous ones. We are not now dealing with the righteousness of God, which is unto all them that believe, but with saints being righteous in their actions upon earth, as were Zacharias and his wife " . . . they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless" (Luke 1. 6). For all eternity, the fine linen of the saints will be seen, as they walk with Him. We know that sinners can only stand before Him on the ground of the shedding of the precious blood—the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. But we are dealing with rewards as the outcome of the life of the saint and the service of the servant, and not their standing through grace. Therefore the purity of their life and ways, their righteous acts, will all then be



known at their proper value and rewarded before admiring throngs. They walked with God upon earth, they walk with the Lord Jesus in heaven. They have fitted themselves, not for heaven (grace and mercy alone can do this upon righteous grounds, the death of the Cross), but to walk with Him in heaven.

Secondly, the overcomer's name, as we have said, will never be erased from the scroll of life. Whilst he lived upon earth, he worked out his salvation in fear and trembling, for there was a solemn possibility then of his name being blotted out. But now the scene of conflict is past; the name remains indelibly written there. Ah, fellow-saints, our life on earth is a solemn reality, our actions now will reflect for all eternity, to be held up before heaven's admiring throng, unto the praise and glory of Him who wrought in us for His good pleasure, or to be consumed as wood, hay or stubble, whilst we shed tears of shame. We are working out now what we shall be, more or less, in eternity.

Thirdly, our Lord Jesus will confess the overcomer who has his name in the book of life before His Father and His holy angels. With what joy the Lord will bring such before His Father's throne, point to his name written in the scroll, telling God of his righteous acts and ways, review his life upon earth, telling of his love to Him, his devotion, his loyalty, his life service! "Confessed before His Father." How much may it not mean! Then for that name to be sounded aloud throughout the courts of heaven, "confessed before the holy angels"—what a review, what a day of joy! What blessed eternal realities these are!—who can describe them?—and all will be to His eternal praise. All this and much more does it mean to have our names written in the book of life.

But how shall we describe what it means to have our names blotted out? How solemn, how searching! Instead of being overcomers we may allow ourselves to be overcome. May we not rightly infer, that those who allow Satan and

this present evil age, with its many allurements, to overcome them, will not be arrayed in white garments, but will have their names blotted out of the book of life, and will be denied before His Father and the holy angels ?

This is so intensely solemn, and far-reaching, that we have to ask ourselves, Can it be so ? We refer our reader to Matthew **10. 33** ; 2 Timothy **2. 12** ; Mark **8. 38**. Here we have the warning, that He will be ashamed of us, that He will deny us before His Father, if we are ashamed of Him, and deny Him before men.

The following scriptures show what it means for a child of God to be spiritually dead to God whilst living upon the earth, and help us not a little to understand the meaning of the words, “ the book of the living ” :—

She that liveth in pleasure is dead whilst she liveth (1 Tim. **5. 6**) ;

To be carnally minded is death (Rom. **8. 6**) ;

Thou hast a name that thou livest, but art dead (Rev. **3. 1**) ;

This my son was dead, but is alive again (Luke **15. 24**).

J. DORRICOTT.

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## UNITY IN ADMINISTRATION.

THE fact that God has on earth to-day a house, where His will can be carried out, deserves the most earnest consideration, not only of those who in the mercy and grace of our God are privileged to be therein, but of all those who are truly born again.

God's desire concerning every child of His is that they should come to a knowledge of the truth. In the Epistle to Timothy the House of God is spoken of as pillar and stay of the Truth.

Not only has God given us a house wherein He can dwell, He has also given legislation, so that His house may be judged and His courts kept.

It is very helpful to follow God's ways in a past dispensation, and see how He delivered a people out of Egypt, and expressed His will concerning them in the words of Exodus 25. 8: "Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."

God gave to Moses the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all its furniture, with definite strictness. "See that thou make them after their pattern which hath been showed thee in the mount." (See Exod. 25. 40; 26. 30; 27. 8.)

"Moreover thou shalt make the curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, with cherubim the work of the cunning workman shalt thou make them."

We suggest the various colours speak of Christ Jesus "who was made unto us wisdom from God, both righteousness and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1. 30).

"The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the breadth of each curtain four cubits. All the curtains shall have one measure. Five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and the other five curtains shall be coupled one to another. And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; and likewise shalt thou make in the edge of

the curtain that is outmost in the second coupling. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that is in the second coupling ; the loops shall be opposite one to another. And thou shalt make fifty clasps of gold, and couple the curtains one to another with the clasps ; and the Tabernacle shall be one " (Exod. 26. 1, 6).

The Tabernacle speaks of that unique concrete thing upon earth, called the Fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (See 1 Cor. 1. 9 ; Acts 2. 42.)

The several curtains remind us of the churches of God of which it is said " Each several building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord " (Eph. 2. 21).

In Numbers 1. God again speaks to Moses in the Wilderness of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting :—" Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, by their families, by their houses, every male by their polls ; from twenty years old and upwards all that are able to go forth to war in Israel, thou and Aaron shall number them by their host. And with you there shall be a man of every tribe ; every one head of his father's house."

Twelve men are appointed, each representing his tribe in Israel. These are they that were called of the congregation, the princes of the tribes of their fathers ; they were the heads of the thousands of Israel. Moses, Aaron, and twelve princes number Israel, as Jehovah gave commandment.

What unity of action is here displayed ! No independency, no lawlessness, no self-will.

What a sight for the eye of God to rest upon, brethren dwelling together in unity !

In chapter 2. God again speaks unto Moses and unto Aaron. Each time God speaks He gives a fuller revelation of His will concerning His purposes for His people. We never get God unfolding His purposes all at once, but rather on the principle of Isaiah 28. 10.

Now then, chapter 2. gives us the order how the advancing host of Israel is to pitch, and as to the order of the march. Here it is not individual tribes that are seen ; but four camps, each camp composed of three tribes ; and in each camp three princes ; a prince for each tribe.

Then again we have the tribe of Levi taken, and they also are divided into three. The Gershonites, Kohathites, Merarites, each of them also have a prince over them ; and again, Ithamar is prince over the princes of the Gershonites and the Merarites ; and yet again, we have Eleazar over the whole, for we read, " Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest shall be prince of the princes of the Levites, and have the oversight of them that keep the charge of the sanctuary."

In Joshua 14. to 22., we have the dividing of the land ; each tribe gets its portion, made up of cities and villages ; each city has its own elders, yet they are linked together in giving the Levites their portion, for the tribe of Levi got none inheritance in the land ; Jehovah the God of Israel is their inheritance. All that we have been looking at in the Old Testament beautifully portrays the one thing for God upon earth.

The threads in the curtains, the curtains in the couplings, the couplings clasped together, making one Tabernacle, all suggest the way in which the churches of God are linked together for administrative purposes.

It being impossible for all those who compose the Fellowship of God's Son to meet together, in any given place, because of distance geographically, God as an all-wise legislator has given us legislation, whereby we can be together in the same thing, though sundered far, by perhaps thousands of miles.

God told Moses that the curtains were to be one measure. This would suggest that what was binding upon one assembly was binding upon all. For instance, Paul's first and second letters to Corinth prove this beyond dispute, for there he reminds them that they are part of a greater whole.

In chapter 5. the assembly of God in Corinth is called upon as God's executive to act in putting away the wicked person from among themselves.

The discipline carried out by the church in Corinth is owned by all that call upon the name of the Lord everywhere (1 Cor. 1. 2).

The churches in Galatia are addressed as a whole, and the evil existing in these many assemblies require the attention of the elders of the whole province to remedy it. Had these failed, there were further circles spoken of in the Scriptures. For instance, we have in Peter's first letter five provinces, linked together as a corporate whole, Galatia being one of the number.

The golden clasps that coupled the curtains together in the Tabernacle would suggest the divinely appointed elders or overseers spoken of in the Scriptures. This we believe to be the circle in which the administration of the House of God finds its expression, and the link that binds all the assemblies together in the Fellowship of God's Son.

In each assembly there are those on whom the care and responsibility of the church devolves, and their united action is indispensable to the assembly's welfare. The rulers of the church in its earliest stage show a very good example before saints in acting together. For instance, what Peter did he did in full fellowship with his co-workers, the eleven. No isolated or independent conduct was displayed here before saints.

What is true of the local assembly is equally true of the province.

In Acts 16. 2 Paul desires Timothy to travel with him on his missionary journeys, he is commended by the elders of the district or province, as one fitted to accompany Paul. Here we have the elders of a province or district acting together as a corporate whole. So also Rom. 15. 26 and 2 Cor. 8. 19 show us the churches of two large provinces, Macedonia and Achaia, acting unitedly by their elders.

Then again we have Peter writing to five provinces, exhorting the elders to "tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly according unto God ; nor yet for filthy lucre sake, but of a ready mind ; neither as lording it over the charges allotted to you, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear (*or be manifested*), ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger, be subject unto the elder. Yea, all of you, gird yourselves with humility, to serve one another ; for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble " (1 Pet. 5. 2-6).

It is quite evident from these scriptures we have looked at, that not only have we those whose care is for a church, or a province, but we have those whose oversight extends over a much wider area.

We have heard it said over and over again, that the assembly is the only executive that God has upon earth. As far as the final act of excommunication is concerned, we believe it is, but there are others also.

Timothy is commended by the province to travel with Paul. Is it then within the competence of a local circle of, overseers to deal with such an one, whose responsibility extended over a wider area than that of an assembly ? According to the Scriptures, we believe not ; of course the local circle with which he is identified may largely contribute evidence for or against.

The local circle is subject to the district or province, the province to the country, and they who are gifted and graced of God to serve in wider areas are subject one to another.

How beautiful, how perfect, how harmonious, are all God's arrangements for His people, who are endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace !

ALEXANDER MACDONALD.

## Five-and-Twenty Years ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME I, NUMBER 3.

How is it with us to-day? We know of companies of those whom God has called out from systems of human religion and gathered unto the Name of Him to whom all authority has been given—companies who acknowledge no Lord save Him, who own no creed but that which the Word of God contains, . . . but is it manifest regarding such that they at once uphold and confirm the truth to which they seek to bear testimony? And if not, is not the reason oftentimes this, that there is little knowledge and less appreciation of what the expression “house of God” is intended to convey? For where God dwells and God rules will there not be stability? yea; and will there not be earnest proclamation of the Faith once delivered to the saints? And if it be asked, “Where does God dwell?” let the word of the Unchanging One as spoken of old to Isaiah cause us to understand, that concern for the disobedience of beloved saints still in the sects and humiliation for our own many failures may work in us, as godly sorrow ever does, repentance not to be repented of:—“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 ones, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”



## THE ONE THING FOR GOD IN A DAY OF APOSTASY.

“I follow the thing that is good” (David in Psalm 38. 20).

ON coming to an examination of the one thing for God, chiefly in connexion with that comprehensive portion of Scripture concerning the seven churches in Asia (Rev. 1., 2., 3.), we do well to bear in mind that, like all other portions of the divine word—how unlike the writings of men—it is inexhaustible; like a diamond of the first water, always flashing on its facets, receiving each ray of the sunlight; for it is living and active and proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Consequently that which at one time may have been passed by unnoticed by an earnest searcher, on another occasion may throw a flood of light on the pages of holy writ. If this is true of any one individual, how much more obvious it becomes when we contemplate different individuals with different temperaments looking at the same scriptures from different standpoints; yet all their discoveries may be quite compatible and consistent with the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

What we have said seems to be fully borne out by many verses in the wonderful 119th Psalm, for example:—

“I have seen an end of all perfection;  
But Thy commandment is exceeding broad.”  
(v. 96).

Again:

“Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold,  
Wondrous things out of Thy law” (v. 18).

Apparently something like this Cowper had in his mind when he penned those beautiful words:—

“A glory gilds the sacred page,  
Majestic like the sun,  
It gives a light to every age;  
It gives but borrows none.”

In writing upon this subject we do not purpose, at least more than is necessary, to travel over ground which has already been covered in the earlier numbers of this magazine

in excellent articles from others. However, at the same time, it is well sometimes to be put in remembrance of things *even though we know them* (see 2 Peter 1. 12, 13).

Very much is said in connexion with these churches which may to many be still difficult to understand; what we have said already may partly account for this, remembering that we know nothing yet as we ought to know (1 Cor. 8. 2). It is absolutely vital, however, always to bear in mind that *what is written can by no possible means contradict, annul or modify the faith once for all given to us in the earlier portions of apostolic writings.*

For the sake of clearness we propose to bring before the reader, first of all, four facts about these seven churches which were in Asia :—

1. They were seven churches actually existing at the time John wrote ;
2. They had a divine origin ;
3. They were not seven churches independent of one another ;
4. They were a small remnant saved from apostasy.

In regard to the first point we have in these letters that which is exactly suitable to meet the condition and need of each several church of the seven in the first instance. That condition was not necessarily known, if known at all, to them, but known to the One whose eyes are as a flame of fire, that walketh in the midst of the seven golden lampstands. Notice the words so oft repeated “I know,” and read chapter 3. 1.

With respect to the second point it is pretty generally conceded that gold speaks of that which is divine in character; this is seen in the types in the Tabernacle, and so forth. “Seven golden lampstands.” These churches had a divine origin; they were not brought into being by the will of man, or mere human effort. This makes all the difference possible. A collective company can no more give God pleasure, if not having its birth from Him,

than can an individual who has never been born anew of the Holy Spirit. Ishmaelites are possible in a collective sense, as well as in an individual sense. There is a "whatsoever" born or begotten of God as well as a "whosoever" (see 1 John 5.).

Such companies are, consequently, designated in those letters which lay down the principles of the faith once for all delivered to the saints, "churches of God"—individuals who are born anew being designated "children of God."

What we have said above accounts for the fact that though most of these churches were in a very poor condition God still owns them as His; He being slow to anger and of great mercy. He is loath to leave that which has had its origin from Himself.

We now arrive at the third point, which we feel to be one of great importance, for it brings us to the truth which characterises the present testimony and causes it to be distinct from anything else in a collective sense. We state that the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testaments, teach that God owned only one thing for Himself upon the earth in a collective sense at any given time. Should any one say that they believe they are belonging to that one thing, even though what they hold may be subversive of the faith in almost everything, well and good, for in taking up that position there is a measure of consistency, and for such there is a measure of hope that being led to the Scriptures and instructed therein their eyes may yet be opened and ultimately they may be given repentance to the knowledge of the truth. On the other hand, one has very little hope of those, who, if not in so many words, at any rate by their actions, deny that God has given any legislation in order that His children may please Him in a collective sense in this day of grace. If one might so put it, some play fast and loose with the things of God, and to use language spoken in connexion with those who in olden time had broken away from the place of the name, it may be said of them likewise:—"Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone" (Hosea 4. 17).

This absolute oneness of the assemblies is proved in the opening chapter of Revelation by many things. Firstly there is one book, not seven books. "What thou seest write in a book and send it to the seven churches." There is not the slightest hint (Rev. 1. 11) that the book might not have an entrance into all the churches—this is taken as granted—for this was not merely a fellowship of assemblies, but rather the fellowship was expressed locally by each assembly. Fellowship was not merely permissive, but mandatory. Then again each assembly was to hear that written to every other assembly respectively. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." This is seven times repeated. "And all the churches shall know that I am He which searcheth the reins and hearts" (Rev. 2. 23).

There is no independency of churches here—quite the contrary to that—and any one being conversant with, say, the letters to the church of God in Corinth would not expect it at this late period of the first century.

Indeed, although independency is naturally in the heart of all men of Adam's fallen race—as witness Cain of old (see also Isaiah 53. 6), yet it is a question if it was ever made the basis of a collective religious system until post-reformation times.

Whether the ecclesiastical form of government of one or more of the many sects of the early centuries of our era was based upon what is called "congregational" lines it is difficult to tell. Certainly there is not a trace of independency (in this collective sense we mean) in those forms of ecclesiastical government which have been perpetuated down the centuries until after the Reformation.

As far as one has learned of the movement of the early part of the last century, there appears to the writer to have been, at the first, a recognition of the fact that God would have one people collectively for Himself; but the light at that early day on the Word was meagre, especially in con-

nexion with rule and government. All was well so long as no serious difficulties arose, but when man's self-will became manifest in sinful acts and ways, division soon came in and two hostile camps were formed ; neither of which, we believe, had the truth, which God has revealed since to some, concerning His Kingdom and House.

Doubtless through personalities and prejudices the breach became wider in time. " A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city ; and such contentions are like the bars of a castle " (Prov. 18. 19). Those who at this time followed Mr. J. N. Darby had especially no thought of independency, but their collective oneness being based upon what they called " the ground of the One Body " was bound sooner or later to manifest itself in failure. Then in matters of doctrine such as baptism and reception they lamentably missed the mark.

On the other hand, the church government and rule of those known as " open brethren " (we do not use this term opprobriously, but in order to be better understood ; besides it appears now to be the name by which they designate themselves) was more or less based upon independent lines. To a certain degree this may perhaps be accounted for by the fact that some of the leading men seceded from so-called " baptists " and " congregationalists " ; the ecclesiastical form of government of both of these systems being that the individual churches are independent one of another—fellowship being permissible, but not mandatory.

In a city in the West of England which the writer visited, now about a quarter of a century ago, the meeting-places are still called " chapels." This to some may appear a small matter, but it indicates the source from which they sprang. The writer has still happy memories of the many kindnesses and courtesies received from those dear brethren at that time ; indeed, if it were not for the fact that we must obey God rather than man one could never have separated from the association of such estimable persons, who then held and

practised much that was excellent and lovely. "Let him that nameth the Name of the Lord" (2 Tim. 2. 19; not "Christ" be it well noted), is emphatic on this point. If merely gathered to persons, nice, kind, courteous, affable though they be, it is sure to end in failure sooner or later.

It must be to that peerless, glorious Name of Lord Jesus Christ alone; nothing less than this will stand the test. "Principles, not men" is a saying that has come down to us as a wise saying of the ancient Romans. With us it must be divine principles associated and bound up with that glorious Name and Person. It will be perceived that in those things where one party, as above mentioned, were more in keeping with the Scriptures the other party were further therefrom. Perhaps in the endeavour for a united testimony the so-called "exclusives" aimed at being nearer the mark, whereas "open brethren" were in some other details nearer the teaching of the Word of God.

*(To be continued.)*

## Words of Holy Writ.

*(Concluded from page 179.)*

THE subjection of all things to the Son of Man is mentioned twice more, but in the passive voice, and the stem used is what is called the strong passive stem. Thus in 1 Corinthians 15. 28 we get "ὅταν ὑποταγῇ αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, hotan hupotagē autō ta panta," "when all things are subjected to Him," this is the subjunctive aorist, evidently with a future meaning, but the use of an aorist tense shows that the action of subjugation is viewed as a whole done at once, and not gradually. The other occurrence to which we refer is in the same verse, "τότε καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται, tote kai autos ho huios hupotagēsetai," "then shall the Son also Himself be subjected," and it is important that the word used here is passive, not middle voice, as the R.V. correctly renders, "be subjected."

The strong passive stem of ὑποτάσσω, hupotassō, is used

in some other places :—the indicative aorist in Romans 10. 3, “they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.” Alford says, “they were not subjected; the passive . . . expresses the result only; . . . the historical fact was that they were not subjected to the righteousness of God.” The imperative aorist is used twice, James 4. 7, “Be subject therefore unto God”; 1 Peter 5. 5, “Ye younger be subject unto the elder.” The indicative future in Hebrews 12. 9, “shall we not be in subjection unto the Father of spirits?”

Then we refer to the use of the aorist indicative of the passive (strong passive stem) in Romans 8. 20: “For the creation was subjected (*ὑπετάγη*, *hupetagē*), to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who subjected it (“*διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα*, *dia ton hupotaxanta*,” the weak aorist active participle accusative masculine singular).

One more use of the weak aorist stem of *hupotasso* we will mention. Philippians 3. 21 tells us of one able “*ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα*, *hupotaxai autō ta panta*,” to “subject all things to Himself.”

The perfect stem of “*ὑποτάσσω*, *hupotassō*,” is used in 1 Corinthians 15. 27, “*πάντα ὑποτέτακται*, *panta hupotetaktai*,” “all things have been put in subjection”; this is passive (or middle) indicative mood, perfect tense, third person singular. In Hebrews 2. 8 we have the passive (or middle) participle perfect accusative neuter plural, “But now we see not yet all things having been subjected to Him,” “*αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ὑποτεταγμένα*, *autō ta panta hupotetagmena*.” It is interesting to notice the aorist used for the positive once-for-all decree of God; but the perfect for that which is visible to us, that is, which is not yet so visible or manifest.

We conclude with just mentioning a few more occurrences of the simple verb *τάσσω*, *tassō*:—perfect stem middle or passive voice, in Acts 22. 10 (indicative), Acts 13. 4 and Romans 13. 1 (participle). Weak aorist indicative (active) Acts 15. 2; 1 Corinthians 16. 15; weak aorist participle middle, Acts 28. 23.

## AMBITION.

### IV.

Rom. 15. 18-21.

THUS far we've viewed ambition that concerns  
 Itself with personal behaviour here ;  
 But what of that which is connected with  
 The world at large and its inhabitants ?  
 Is it our fond desire to give to men  
 Something that will material blessing prove ?  
 To leave behind, when this brief life is done,  
 A legacy for human benefit ?  
 Should this be our ambition toward the world ?  
 Well, let the Apostle speak again to us :—  
 “ I've fully preached the Gospel of the Christ,  
 Ambitious being so to preach good news  
 In places where He's not already named ;  
 That I may build not on another's base ;  
 For they shall see to whom no tidings came,  
 And they who have not heard shall understand.”

Once, as the persecutor, forth he went  
 From one distressful scene his zeal had made  
 To carry havoc in the train of those  
 Who in far distant cities refuge sought.  
 Armed with a band, and full authority  
 To bring them captive to Jerusalem.  
 Ill were the tidings then his mission bore  
 Fraught with imprisonment, with suff'ring, death.  
 But soon he found th' authority conferred  
 Demanded greater powers than he possessed  
 To give its mandates weight and full effect ;  
 Though arms and men and iron will were his.  
 'Twas not against the feeble Nazarenes,  
 The bitter conflict raged unequally ;  
 The war was levied 'gainst the Lord Himself.



A Might Invincible his course withstood,  
His plans frustrated, crushed down all his hopes  
And laid them with him prostrate in the dust.

He rose with fresh vitality endued;  
They, stricken mortally, there found a grave,  
Where Saul of Tarsus felt the stroke of God.  
Henceforth it is another service claims  
His energy, devotedness and zeal;  
And in the words we've paraphrased above  
The preacher shows the mark at which he aims.  
The herald of good tidings, now he bears  
A message full of life and liberty :  
A message vested with authority,  
And backed by power its word to carry through.  
So Paul goes forth commissioned and empowered,  
Not now by ineffectual human will,  
But by Omnipotence—the Living God.  
In confidence in this he spreads the Word  
From Salem e'en to far Illyricum ;  
And, pressing on, intends the news to tell  
To Europe's western bound, Hispania ;  
Bearing the story of the love of God,  
With all its light and life-inspiring powers,  
To Satan's groaning captives sin-bound in  
The dark recesses of this sorrowing earth ;  
Leaving behind at every step he took  
Sure proofs of God's triumphant grace and love,  
In lives freed from a gross idolatry  
And lived for God, enlightened, loving, pure ;  
And in self-sacrificing service, too,  
For those who once in subtler thralldom lay ;  
(Though not less binding) that which bound the Jew  
To the traditions of his ancestors.  
Seen, too, in rich and noble sons of men  
Devoting all—position, wealth, yea, life,  
In grateful service to the Lord as slaves

Bought for Himself with His own precious blood ;  
And in the slave down-trodden and oppressed,  
Bound to his owner's proud, capricious mood,  
Yielding, as Christ's freed-man, in cheerfulness,  
Unfeign'd obedience to his earthly lord.  
Man's wisdom here confounded hopelessly ;  
There human ignorance made truly wise :  
Here powers of earth reduced to impotence ;  
There weak and feeble clothed with power divine.  
So the ambition of th' Apostle Paul,  
Wrought to fruition, yielded such a crop,  
Worthy of all the labour it entailed.  
He toiled and laid up age-abiding fruit ;  
A heav'nly treasure nothing can corrupt ;  
A precious store for God, resplendent with  
Unfading glory for the age to come.

Long centuries have fled since home he went,  
But still his bright example calls to us  
To stir ourselves, be up and doing now.  
There still is scope for like ambition here.  
Still millions groan in abject slavery,  
And grope for light 'mid ignorance and doubt.  
Dark superstition and idolatry  
Have still their multitudes of votaries ;  
Though 'tis not Moloch, Astarte, Tammuz, Baal ;  
Jupiter, Venus ; Thor and Odin now.  
For idol-names and objects now are changed  
To suit a twentieth century's ideas.  
Now Reason, Science and Religion stand,  
With all their multi-coloured progeny  
As offshoots, venerated, deified,  
Of that superb, all-worshipped idol—MAN.  
Though cultured, intellectual, refined  
Its worship is, 'tis still idolatry  
Which wraps its devotees in hell-born mists,

That nought but God Almighty can dispel.  
 Still in the Gospel lies the power of God  
 Which can the soul-benighting vapours lift,  
 Can open blinded eyes ; break captive chains,  
 And meet the veriest need of fallen man.  
 That which alone can bring each idol down  
 (On intellect or sentiment enthroned),  
 And lay them shattered, Dagon-like, before  
 The awful presence of Jehovah God.  
 Britain, though fondly called a Christian land,  
 Has full her share of needy places yet ;  
 Where ignorance of Christ envelopes men  
 In darkness deep as that of heathendom.  
 A darkness not less real because a spark  
 Of spurious religion flickers there,  
 That masquerades as Christianity,  
 And claims to light the heavenly road to man.  
 Whose feeble glimmer but intensifies  
 The darkness of man's path ; obscures the Way  
 To life and light ; and lures its dupes to hell.  
 Each hamlet, village, town and city still  
 Presents its piteous, heart-appealing tale  
 Of souls, unconscious of impending doom,  
 And knowing not the message of the Cross,  
 Lulled by a false security to sleep  
 Upon the very brink of the abyss.  
 Britain possesses still her sordid haunts,  
 Where human vice and misery hold sway ;  
 From whence protrudes man's deep depravity  
 In all its hideous reality.  
 Up, then, each heart by true ambition fired,  
 And let this so-called Christian country hear  
 God's blessed Gospel, which alone can wake  
 Her torpid sons, and cleanse her festering sores.  
 The call comes, too, from other lands wherein  
 The name of Christ is still a stranger-word.

From Africa where dusky millions lie  
 Steeped deeply in degraded savagery.  
 Where fetish rites of blood and cruelty  
 Proclaim how low can sink humanity.  
 There, as in Asia, o'er vast districts spreads  
 Mahomet's teaching like a deadly spell  
 That in a blind fanaticism binds  
 Races in chains, part sensual, part austere.  
 Then there are India, China, far Japan,—but, stay !  
 What need to mention more ? The harvest's great.  
 Pray that the Lord may thrust His labourers forth  
 Girded with strength to reap the whitening fields.  
 Oh, that God-bred, God-fed ambition may  
 With fervour burn within some earnest hearts ;  
 That from the Fellowship may yet sound forth  
 The Word of Life to earth's remotest bound.

*(To be continued.)*

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## HIGH PLACES AND GOD'S PLACE.

UNITY is of God and disunity is not of God, for God is One.

The truth of the unity of God has an importance which cannot be exaggerated. This fact is the guarantee for the unity of the universe. A plurality of gods would mean a plurality of governments and of necessity, diversity and opposition in working. That there are subordinate intelligences we know, but such act not on their own initiative, but as subject to one Superior Authority. The importance of this truth must be evident to all, and further, we can understand how necessary it is that practical expression should be given to it.

Idolatry is firstly occasioned by setting aside this truth of Oneness, and deifying some of the more manifest attributes or works of God. This proceeds from the natural aversion of man's fallen nature which desires not to be brought near to the Most High.

At a very early period we hear of idolatry. We know that Abraham's progenitors were worshippers of other gods, and it was to the end that the truth concerning God might be preserved that God called him out from country, kindred, and father's house unto Himself. Eventually the time arrived when, in accordance with the promise to Abraham, the tribes of Israel were brought out of Egypt that they might serve God. We follow them to Sinai, and the first of the ten words of commandment was, "I am Jehovah thy God, thou shalt have none other gods before My face," and in order to guard against any infringement of this fundamental law, the second is added prohibiting the making of any graven image of anything above or below. All the rest of the Decalogue is based on this great requirement. Later we are told that the first and great commandment is this, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah thy God, Jehovah is One and thou shalt love Jehovah thy God, with all thy heart. . . ." Because God is One He requires the undivided love of the heart; no partial regard can be accepted. If there were two Gods, then indeed it might be so, but God demands all our devotion. We know how this appealed to the Lord Jesus in the temptation—"It is written 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.'"

We may thus learn that everything relating to acceptable service is dependent on the cordial recognition of the great truth that God is One.

Further, we observe that the nature and character of God are to be displayed in all His works and specially in His people and in their service. The principle is seen in the words in 1 Peter 1., where holiness in God's people is required because of what God is, thus—"As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living, because it is written, 'Ye shall be holy, for I am holy.'"<sup>1</sup> Consequently if God is one, so should His people be one, His service one, His house one.

The history of Israel proves how very prone they were

to be influenced by the example of the nations around, how ready to relapse into idolatry.

In order to guard against this natural tendency and to preserve the all-important truth of God's oneness, they had enjoined upon them the words of Deuteronomy 12., which we shall do well to consider :—

First Israel is commanded to throw down the altars and places in the land, where the nations served their gods. Plurality in regard to the object, means and manner of their service is here indicated and condemned. Then over against that we have the emphatic statement, "Ye shall not do so unto Jehovah your God," and then follows the declaration that when in the land the will of God would be exercised in the choosing and appointing a place out of all the cities of Israel, where He would establish His name; and instructions follow that to that place they should come, and thither they should bring their offerings. Such obligation imposed on them is put into marked contrast with their natural tendency to do what was right in their own eyes.

It cannot be doubted that the carrying out of such an arrangement meant a great deal of trouble and occupied much time. Viewed from the personal and mercantile standpoint, it appeared to be unnecessary and a waste of time and energy; even from a domestic standpoint it was a sacrifice. The gain from a national point of view was indeed great, but not so apparent to selfish minds. It meant first, a healthful recognition of God as the Only One; the unity of the people, the unity of worship and service. It fostered national sympathy and enthusiasm; it delivered from the pettiness of parochial ideas; it overcame provincial prejudice and encouraged a love of the fatherland.

What a delight to a godly soul, after months of village life, to betake himself to the place of the name, a treat which he had long looked forward to, on the way joining other little companies and thus going from strength to strength, at last appearing before God. What an elevation

of spirit, what love and joy, what overflowing sympathy with his brethren, what confirmation in the faith, what enlargement of view, and what renewed and strengthened devotion to the God of Israel ! Under such circumstances it would be felt that God was too great to be limited to one little corner or to one city, but they would say, "The God of Israel is their Lord and our Lord."

We do not propose to trace in great detail the history of God's place as given in the Old Testament, but will refer to one or two incidents. We ask attention to Joshua 22., from which we may learn how seriously a suspected case of setting up another place was viewed in the early days of Israel's history. The two and a half tribes who departed from Shiloh to take their possession on the other side of Jordan set up a great altar near by Jordan. Tidings coming to their brethren, the whole congregation prepare to go up against them to battle. First, however, they send a deputation consisting of Phineas the priest and ten chief men, one from each tribe, and they demand an explanation. Happily things were not as they supposed ; there was no intention to set up a place beside the altar of the Lord at Shiloh.

How significant is the reply of the two and half tribes ! They do not claim liberty to do as they think well ; they do not challenge the right of their brethren to interfere, but they utter words which deserve to live and which it is well for all to bear in mind. "Jehovah, the God of gods. Jehovah, the God of gods, He knoweth, and Israel he shall know : if it be in rebellion or if in trespass against Jehovah, spare us not this day." Israel as a whole exercised their responsibility to guard the unity of God's name and service, and happily the two and a half tribes recognised their right to do so and responded in a straightforward and proper manner. Well would it have been if such unity of action had continued to characterise the people, but alas ! it was not so.

The book of Judges shows disunion in Israel, tribal instead of national action, and there are indications of other altars beside God's altar and other places beside His place. It is particularly to be noted that all the time Jehovah's tabernacle was at Shiloh there was a high place of idols at Dan. Sadly did Israel degenerate from the early days of zeal that they should allow such a thing to continue. Such tolerance doubtless hastened the final rejection of Shiloh itself.

We pass on and are at last confronted by the fact that in consequence of sin in the priesthood and in the people God's service was despised and His sanctuary neglected, until at last the great catastrophe came in God forsaking Shiloh, never more to acknowledge it as His place—the place of the name.

It is worthy of remark that as the birthright belonged to Joseph, it appeared to be both natural and proper for the tabernacle to be set up in the allotment of Ephraim, but nevertheless (according to the principle "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterward that which is spiritual") it was not the place of God's ultimate choice, and eventually Jerusalem was indicated as that place where God desired to dwell.

On Shiloh being refused, a dark, dark period followed ere God re-established the place for His name. That period was abnormal, and correspondingly God's dealings and the means He employed during that time were abnormal. In view of the failure of Israel under responsibility, God now intervenes on behalf of the penitent on the principle of grace. Shiloh having been abandoned and apparently no other place as yet appointed meant that devout souls who would seek God must do so apart from a place of divine appointment. The priesthood being set aside meant that some other priestly provision must be available, and if sacrifices were offered, they had to be on other altars than that which heretofore had been the only recognised one.

*(To be continued.)*



## Five and Twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME I, NUMBER 3.

“NOT knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance,” (Rom. 2. 4). Whether it be with an individual or a nation ; in the present dispensation or in the dispensations past, the restoration of fellowship between the Creator and the created, or between the Father and the child is on the ground of repentance, and this the result of godly sorrow, inwrought by the Spirit of God producing conviction of sin. This must not be confounded with the sorrow of the world which worketh death, that remorse which, as with Judas, brought him to his just reward, and that which the lost will, we doubt not, be filled with in hell. The goodness of God did not lead Esau to repentance, although he sought it diligently with tears (Heb. 12. 17). It did lead the inhabitants of Nineveh, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah ; then their rebellious hearts were subdued, and they were subjected to the will of God.

Like the clay in the hand of the potter, which has been wrought into that plastic condition in which his ready fingers can mould and fashion it as is pleasing in his sight, so the person or the people that have come under the operation of the Spirit are in such a broken and contrite condition that they can be again fashioned according to the will of God.

If we are to be workers together with Him it is to the accomplishment of His purposes we must ever strive. Tens of thousands are working for God, but, never having learnt His will for themselves, they are busy hurrying unrepentant sinners to an outward position of profession, hoping that they will one day become the subjects of divine grace. While others we fear, in equal ignorance of the will of God, are busy gathering unrepentant saints into a church position, expecting that when so gathered they will have repentance given them to the acknowledgment of the

truth (2 Tim. 2. 25). In doing this they forget the solemn word "peradventure"; for it may not be the will of God to give to such repentance any more than to Esau; and if not, then they will remain in a position of profession, yet in no condition in which the will of God can be done, either in them or by them. Gathered into church position "on the ground of the one body," or, what is almost identical, gathered simply because they are believers, around a table to which all the Father's children can be welcomed irrespective of their condition, there will be the immediate reproduction of all the works of the flesh, instead of the fruit of the Spirit. Thus sectarianism will be reproduced in all its worst and most God-dishonouring forms, as it is to-day manifested in Christendom. Man ever glorying in position and putting it first, as in the past so in the present, forgets that it is with the broken and contrite spirit that God can accomplish His purposes. Such, being moulded to His will, will bring forth the fruit of that light in which they dwell, while the unrepentant can but bring forth the fruit of that darkness as to the will of God in which they abide.

And this is equally true whether the darkness be that of a sinner unsaved from the power of the world, the flesh and the Devil, or of a saint unsaved from the power of sectarianism, and undelivered from the snare of the Devil (2 Tim. 2. 26). The will of God is that we should be turned from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and thus do works meet for repentance (Acts 26. 20).

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# THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS IN TORONTO.

*(Continued from page 172.)*

WE will now refer to some other matters of early history of which the Lord Jesus Christ spake in the days of His flesh. The murder of Abel may be mentioned first (see Matt. **23**. 35, Luke **11**. 51), and with this we may couple the destruction of men by the flood (see Matt. **24**. 37-39, Luke **17**. 26, 27). In both these cases the Lord spoke to persons who believed the divine records of these two events, and so far from throwing any doubt on the narrative in either the one case or the other He used the known facts of the past to set forth that which He was predicting of the future. Friends, which will you hear and which will you believe, the modern learned men who throw doubt and even ridicule on these records, or the One who came from God, knowing all things and testifying to what He had seen? "Hear ye Him."

The escape of Lot from Sodom, the destruction of that city and the judgment that befel Lot's wife are also confirmed by the Lord as recorded in the chapter of Luke just referred to (Luke **17**. 28-32).

What the Lord said in reference to the matter of circumcision is worthy of special notice for more reasons than one. It will be remembered that in Genesis **17**. we have an interesting narrative of the way in which God gave to Abraham the covenant of circumcision; and it seems unquestionable that the practice of circumcision then went on among the descendants of Abraham. But when we reach the time of Moses there seems some ground perhaps for thinking that the practice had fallen into abeyance. At any rate one of the sons of Moses was not circumcised on the eighth day. I base this statement on the narrative in Exodus **4**. 24-26. We find but little further mention of circumcision in the Book of Moses. In Lev. **12**. 3 the commandment to circumcise on the eighth day is given, and

in Exodus 12. 43-51 we read the ordinance of the passover, that it was not to be eaten by an alien ; and side by side with this that a purchased servant or a stranger might keep the passover on condition of his entering into the covenant by circumcision. Except for a mention of heart circumcision in Deut. 10. 16, and 30. 6 this is all we read on the subject in the latter part of the Book of Moses.

Now as the Lord said that Moses had given circumcision to the people of Israel (John 7. 22) we may, I think, ask if the mention of the subject in Exodus 12. and Leviticus 12. is all to which He referred in making that statement. It seems to me clear that it is not. The account of the giving of circumcision to Abram that we have in Genesis 17. is a very different thing, and it is to this, I doubt not, that the Lord was referring. For this account was written, or at least it was re-written, by Moses. By this we mean to say that while Moses made use of written documents which came into his hands in the wisdom of God, yet the writing was his in a real and true sense. And to me it seems clear that the Lord's expression in John 7. 22 "Moses hath given you circumcision" is proof of this. You will notice that the Lord adds that circumcision was not of Moses ; in the sense, for instance, in which the passover was of Moses. But though not of Moses in this sense, it was a part of the Law of Moses, as the Lord distinctly states ; and by so speaking the All-knowing One binds the Book of Moses together again for us, making the part we call Genesis an integral part of the whole.

I might, perhaps, here stop for a moment to refer to the fact that whatever records might have been in the hand of Moses (as I was saying last night) would of course have been written in an earlier form of the Hebrew language than Moses himself used. For it is likely that some of my younger hearers may not know that languages, like men, have their early days of growth and development leading up to maturity and vigour, and followed later on by a time

of decay and often death. Now the language that was used by Moses was a language that had had a history ; it was not at all a language in its earliest stages. I have the greatest esteem for the sayings of the late Thomas Newberry, but in the statement that I heard him once make to the effect that the Hebrew tongue was a language created by God, I am sure he was in error. There can be no doubt that when Moses wrote, the Hebrew language had been through such vicissitudes as all the languages of the human race have undergone. And no doubt it was one of the great services that Moses did for the people of Israel that he wrote for them in the tongue that they were actually using at the time that which had been put on record at an earlier date in an earlier form of the language. To illustrate this I might suppose that some of you wished to read the poetry of the poet Chaucer, and I am sure that many people on trying to do so would find that the changes that the English tongue has undergone in the years that have elapsed since his day would make it very difficult to read his "Canterbury Tales" with any ease, so that one would be very thankful for the services of an interpreter, if not a translator.

In the days when the Lord Jesus was on earth there was a sect of Jews who were the sceptics of the day ; and they came to Him with their sceptical question endeavouring to throw doubt on the resurrection of the dead. In doing this, however, they bore testimony to their belief that Moses wrote what we call Deuteronomy, as may be readily seen by comparing Matthew 22. 23, 24 ; Mark 12. 18, 19 ; Luke 20. 27, 28 (for we have the testimony of three evangelists to the fact) with Deuteronomy 25. 5-10. In His reply to them it perhaps scarcely needs to be said that the Lord said nothing to qualify their faith in the Mosaic authorship of the passage to which they referred. But His reply is very notable, and you should carefully compare the words used by the Master as recorded by the three evangelists in verses immediately following those I have already mentioned : "Have ye not

read that which was spoken unto you by God" (Matthew); "Is it not for this cause that ye err that ye know not the Scriptures nor the power of God? . . . have ye not read in the Book of Moses in the place concerning the Bush" (Mark); "That the dead are raised even Moses shewed in the place concerning the Bush . . ." (Luke). Thus we learn, if we hear Him, that Moses wrote the Book that bears his name, and that what is written there is what God has spoken. "Hear ye Him."

We will now come to something which is of a more general character. Those who have read the gospels carefully know that the Lord not infrequently referred to the Scriptures in general as the Word of God, as in the quotation from Mark 12. 24-26. I wish to refer you now to the narrative of the two who went to Emmaus on the day of the Resurrection; to whom, it is said, "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." I should very much like to know exactly what is meant by all the Scriptures here. There is so much about the Christ in the Old Testament Scriptures that we wonder at the rich feast they must have enjoyed on that first Lordly day. But one thing is certain, that He began from the beginning, and therefore He must have begun in Genesis, and where in the first two chapters He did begin I will not venture to say. But I suppose you will see that if He began at the beginning He must have begun in Genesis, for certainly we cannot conceive of His making no reference to the promise to the seed of the woman, and therefore, if He began from Moses, it follows, as I have sought to shew you from other reasons, that Moses was the writer of that portion of the Book.

The point of my argument is this, that as the Lord began from Moses, it is clear that He made no reference to any earlier writer. Therefore, either Moses was the writer of Genesis or the Lord made no reference to anything in Genesis.

*(To be concluded.)*

## “LOOK NOW TOWARD HEAVEN.”

How beautifully the principle of faith is exemplified in the life of the patriarch Abram. “Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto God.” (Heb. 11. 6). Faith exercised a dominating influence upon his whole life, and whether it at times reached the crest of the wave or anon fell somewhat, still look at his life as we may, we cannot but observe its power and presence spread over those eventful years dating from his call in Mesopotamia until his death. Thus he is called “faithful Abraham” (Gal. 3. 9).

It was this influence that prevented him from acting as Lot did when he made his momentous choice (Gen. 12. 9, 11). Lot’s choice was a perfectly natural one. Both had hearts alike by nature. Lot grasped things seen and temporal. Abram’s faith soared above these, grasping things unseen and eternal.

When nature ceases her work faith begins to operate, and when Lot was separated from him God speaks, not till then. God could speak no earlier in this case. Faith will ever be rewarded. “A faithful man shall abound with blessings, but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be unpunished” (Prov. 28. 20). Mark the words: “Lot was separated from him.” It was unnecessary to take Abram from this spot; his range of vision determines his inheritance. “All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it” (Verse 15). God’s directions to Abram at this juncture caused him to focus his gaze upon the earth, to the inheritance, the promised possession; he stands within its bounds, howbeit as a sojourner in the land of promise; still, his foot was upon it, and that meant much; he could see, walk through, and dwell in, the land of promise, faith dominating all, for although he died in faith, not having received the promises, he had seen them and greeted them from afar.

But what of the seed to inherit the land? To the earth he had looked for the inheritance. Faith can find no answer

there as to the promised seed. No, not even Abram's body, being as good as dead, could supply the answer. Outward from self, from earth, from the things of earth, he must look, if faith was to triumph and the promise be implemented. God speaks, having brought him forth abroad: "Look now toward heaven." What hope fills that aged man's breast. There he realises is the origin of life—the God of resurrection—for Abram's dead body is exactly suited to God's purpose. If the earthly inheritance has to be peopled God must act; and to this end Abram's eyes are directed heavenwards; and as he gazes up at that star-spangled canopy, who can tell his thoughts, or who conceive the faith that held him in its grip; and he who later rejoiced, as the Son of God said, "to see My day" (John 8. 56), yea, who looked down through the ages for the city which hath the foundations (Heb. 11. 10) as he gazed heavenward, believed in God, and Sarah conceived and bare Abraham a son in his old age at the set time of which God had spoken to him (Gen. 21. 2). And so "there sprang of one, and him as good as dead, as many as the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea-shore innumerable" (Heb. 11. 12).

Beloved fellow-sojourners, let us ponder well the sacred words, "Every good gift and every perfect boon is from above" (James 1. 17); for except the heaven give rain, the earth can bring forth no fruit (James 5. 18). Even so the Creator and Upholder of all, when in the world, desiring to find an answer to His petitions, turned not to earth, but lifted up His eyes to heaven (John 17. 1). He hath left us an example; and if we would find blessing while as pilgrims we wend our way home, let us seek the things that are above, and set our mind on things above (Col. 3. 12). Look up! For not from earth shall deliverance come. "The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout" (1 Thess. 4. 16). Then shall our salvation be accomplished, which is now nearer than when we believed.



## THE TESTIMONY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES.

*(Concluded from page 214.)*

BUT we pass from Moses, for in this same passage Luke 24. 27, we read that from all the prophets also He interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Please note the expression "all the prophets" here. For Samuel was a prophet and so was David; and therefore all the inspired writings are here included. Moses first, then all the other prophets whose writings were on record; for they all spake of Him. Then please link with this the passage later on in the same chapter, verses 44 to 49, which deserve very careful reading in this connexion. The Law of Moses, the Prophets, the Psalms, these speak of the three main divisions into which for convenience the Old Testament was in those days divided. No one can read these passages with a fair and honest mind and doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ treated the Old Testament as divine revelation and as a true record of the facts that it chronicles. It is quite certain that the Scriptures to which the Lord referred were the Old Testament Scriptures as we have them, without the Apocrypha.

Some of you may have heard something of a doctrine professedly based on the words in Phil. 2. 7: "He emptied Himself," and parallel passages, according to which doctrine the Lord in becoming a man actually emptied Himself of His divine knowledge, and therefore what He said on such matters as I have been speaking about is of no special value, because He was liable to make the same mistakes as His purely human contemporaries. To me this idea is quite unthinkable, and I count the doctrine one of the most wicked that has ever been propounded. But it may be a help to some if I make a few remarks about it.

First, I ask you to observe that it is distinctly asserted

in the New Testament Scripture that the Lord Jesus Christ spoke from God, as see the passages I quoted at the beginning of my address. And especially note what He said Himself.

Secondly, it is taught that the Lord spake in (or by, or through) the Holy Spirit ; see, for example, Acts **1. 2** ; and compare the solemn warning that the Lord Himself gives to those who attributed His signs to the Evil one, that they were sinning not against Him as the Son of Man only, for this might be forgiven ; but against the Holy Spirit, a sin that never hath forgiveness (Matt. **12. 22-37** ; Mark **3. 20-30** ; Luke **12. 10, 11**).

But, thirdly, it is to be noted that the passages that I have been quoting to you from Luke **24.** do not refer to what the Lord said when He was in the likeness of sinful flesh, but when He was in His glorified resurrection body. When He had been through death and conquered it, and was the Raised One, the Beginning of God's New Creation, the First-Begotten from among the dead, He spake these things and bore this testimony to the Sacred Writings.

I wish, in conclusion, to call your attention to some of the specific references that the Lord Jesus makes to writers of the Old Testament other than Moses. I should perhaps explain more fully the division of the Old Testament into Law, Psalms and Prophets that was current in the days of the Lord's being on earth, so far as this is known to us. The Psalms were the first in order of a number of books which were often bound together, and called Hagiographia ; but often designated as " the Psalms," apparently because this was the first part of the volume. This group included all that was not part of " the Law " or of " the Prophets " in the sense in which these two expressions were used to designate the other two sections of the Old Testament.

In Matthew **22. 41 to 46** we find the Lord referring to Psalm **110.** as written by David (see also Mark **12. 35-37** ;

Luke **20.** 41-44 ; for all three Evangelists agree in recording these words of the Lord).

In Matthew **13.** 14, 15, He ascribes to the prophet Isaiah what we call chapter **6.** verses 9, 10. With this we may connect the testimony of the apostle John, who quotes the same passage in a similar connexion, and not only says that Isaiah was the writer, but further asserts that Isaiah wrote it when he saw the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. "I saw the Lord" are Isaiah's words in the beginning of the chapter, and John's comment on the words he quotes are, "These things said Isaiah, because he saw His glory, and he spake of Him."

In Matthew **15.** 7 to 9, Mark **7.** 6, 7 we read of another such word of the All-knowing One, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you, hypocrites," said He, then quoting the words Isaiah **29.** 13. But, as we may mention in passing, the Lord did not in this case follow at all closely the wording of the Septuagint. We do not presume at present to discuss the reason for the variation in reading ; but we do not wish you to suppose that because in the use the Lord made of Genesis **1.** and **2.** He adopted the Septuagint rendering in spite of its using the word for "make" where the original has "create" that therefore the Septuagint is always followed, whether it gives a good or an indifferent or even a bad rendering. The subject is a difficult one, but it may be worth while to mention what has been said by S. P. Tregelles ; and no man has ever lived who was more competent than he to form and express an opinion on the subject. Tregelles is not speaking of any use of the Old Testament made by the Lord Himself, but is referring to Peter's quotation or application in chapter **3.** verse 15, of his first letter of Isaiah **8.** 12, 13. This is what he says :—"In this citation the apostle shows how independent the New Testament writers can be of the Septuagint when needful ; indeed in some part of the passage the Septuagint so reads as utterly to contradict both the Hebrew text and the New Testament

use of the facts previously revealed . . . . On such points, and all that relate to the godhead of Christ and in doctrinal statements the Septuagint is continually at variance with both the New Testament and the Hebrew text."

We now come to the Lord's reference to Daniel to be found on record in Matthew **24. 15**, and Mark **13. 14**. Whilst we are not attempting to enumerate all the citations made from the Old Testament, which would be a long task indeed, we specially turn your attention to the fact that when speaking of the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, He says "Daniel the prophet." Why Daniel the prophet? *There seem to me at least two reasons why importance attaches to this.* Firstly, it may be mentioned that Daniel was included among the Hagiographia and not as we should have expected among the Prophets. I think we may safely say that the division of the Old Testament Scriptures into the three sections Law, Psalms (that is Hagiographia) and Prophets had not in itself any importance. But the use by the Lord of the words "the prophet" after the name of Daniel prevents any supposition in the minds of reverent readers of the Old Testament that Daniel's writings had any less prophetic value than the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, with which they are now rightly associated. But in addition we may put the use by the Lord of this title "Daniel the prophet" over against the comparatively modern attack on Daniel which seeks to make out that the book of Daniel was written at a late date, because what is written therein so closely fits in with events that happened in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes for example.

Simple readers of the Holy Scriptures have no idea of the malice of the Enemy and of the manifold ways in which he has sought to undermine the authority of the divine book. I have endeavoured to show you that the Lord Jesus Christ, the All-knowing and the All-truthful One, bore testimony to the veracity and the authority of the Old Testament Scriptures. He declared Moses to be

the writer of the Pentateuch, and said plainly that belief in the writings of Moses was indissolubly connected with belief in His own words (John 5: 46, 47). He testified His faith in the historic truth of the Murder of Abel, the Flood, the Destruction of Sodom and other ancient narratives. He bore testimony too to David, Isaiah, Daniel, being truly the writers of portions of Holy Scripture that bear their names. He ascribed the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament most definitely to a divine origin; identifying what is written therein with the Word of God. What more could we want to confirm and establish our faith in those most excellent Writings wherein God was pleased in olden days to cause to be written down His revelation for generation after generation still unborn? May God grant us grace rightly to value these precious records, for His Testimonies are righteous for ever.

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## HIGH PLACES AND GOD'S PLACE.

*(Continued from page 208.)*

AT such a time God raised up Samuel, the man of God, who was not of the house of Aaron, but who was established to be a prophet of Jehovah, and as such could and did fill the further offices of ruler and priest, and by means of such a one God condescended to meet His people at certain high places and accepted sacrifices at several altars. So we find Samuel the Prophet associated in this way with high places at Ramah, Bethel, Mizpah and Gilgal.

We must not think from this that God's instructions in Deuteronomy 12, were abrogated. It is but an evidence of God's ability to act in grace in view of man's evident failure, and must not be regarded as the permanent and proper order of things.

The above mentioned low condition did not last for ever. A day of revival came, "after so long a time as the Holy Spirit said in David, 'To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden

not your heart.' ” David on being established in his kingdom is moved to bring up the ark and pitch a tent for it in Jerusalem. Later, he desired to build a permanent house for it ; but while God commended him because of such a desire being in his heart, he was not permitted to build himself, but God promised that the work should be done by his son Solomon. Nevertheless three things were permitted to him : (1) he might collect material in preparation ; (2) to him was given in writing by the Spirit the plan of the buildings ; (3) and furthermore it was plainly indicated that the place was to be Mount Moriah, where God accepted his offering in the threshing floor of Araunah.

So at length after a long period God again condescended to sanctify a place for His name—even in Jerusalem.

In the meantime those who sought God resorted to high places, which failed to express the will of God as to the unity of His name and service. The reason why the people resorted to these high places is explicitly given in 1 Kings 3. 2, “ The people sacrificed in the high places because there was no house built for the name of Jehovah until those days.”

We find Solomon himself at the beginning of his reign going to Gibeon the great high place, and there God appeared to him in a dream and granted him his desire for wisdom.

Whatever venerable associations clustered around such a place, whatever experiences of blessing may have been known in former times, yet the time came when the better thing was established and the truth of the unity of God and His service superseded the makeshift provision. Then it became the duty of the faithful to abandon the high places and even to destroy them and betake themselves (according to the original command in Deut. 12.) to God's place.

This was indeed done by many ; yet not completely, for even in the reigns of the best kings, we read that the high places were not taken away, implying a reproach, inasmuch as they should have been taken away. So it continued

to the Captivity : God's place, the true centre, ever so recognised by the godly, at times suffering neglect as the people got away from God, and cared for and resorted to as the people repented and turned to God. Their regard for the place of the name was a sort of barometer by which their true spiritual condition could be gauged.

Now let us turn aside and consider a dark and awful picture. In consequence of Solomon's sin, the ten tribes are broken off from David's house, a schism which was never healed. The ungodly king Jeroboam (chosen by the revolting tribes), in order to prevent any return to their former allegiance, established a system of idolatry by which he made Israel to sin in casting off Jehovah.

He took counsel with men of like evil-mindedness, and made two calves of gold, and said, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem ; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan, and this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one even unto Dan."

To perfect his scheme he made a house or temple in each high place ; he appointed priests from among the people who were not of the sons of Levi, and made various feasts in imitation of the Lord's feasts, but upon such days and according to such order as he devised in his own heart. What an appalling picture of self-will ! How subtle an arrangement, devised surely by Satan, calculated to deceive ignorant people and keep them away from God.

There was Bethel, the king's sanctuary, where the higher classes went, doubtless having fine surroundings, an elaborate ritual, everything in fact which would minister to the more refined among the people. On the other hand there was the grosser thing, associated with sensuousness and evil, celebrated at Dan—that infamous place where for so long a time idolatry had been established. Thus a choice lay before the people, God was no longer One in their thought,

and He was such a God as harmonised with their own carnal and depraved thoughts. We need hardly say how great a gulf lay between such high places as these and those high places where God was truly worshipped, albeit not according to His revealed will.

This worship of the golden calf was no new thing—it was an ancient thing, and at least one name of great worth was associated with it. Aaron, one of the leading fathers and a saint of Jehovah, had taken a leading part in it. Further it was not suggested that in the calf service there was a rejection of God, for Aaron had made proclamation before it in the words, “To-morrow is a feast to Jehovah.” Oh, what a fatal precedent was thereby made, and how eagerly did Jeroboam seize upon it and use it for his own wicked purposes!

Another interesting incident, but very different in character, invites our attention, as occurring during the period above referred to. Things in Israel had gone from bad to worse. The worship of the calves assorted well with the more avowed idolatry of Baalim. At such a time Elijah the man of God appears and inflicts on Israel the judgment of God by famine. When this had broken down the indifference of the people, the time was favourable to demonstrate who was the true God.

Behold Elijah, God’s prophet, on Carmel. There he finds an altar of Jehovah. It had not been used for a long time, for persecution had raged, but at that altar in times gone by some of the poor distressed servants of Jehovah, who would have nothing to do with the mixed worship of Bethel and Dan, nor with the foreign imported worship of Baal, and yet who did not go up to the place of the name, either through inability or ignorance, had brought their offerings to God. When Elijah found it, it was broken down, and he repaired it and established a testimony to God’s thought of an undivided Israel, and it was upon that altar that the testing offering was placed; beside that altar Jehovah’s



name as the God of Abraham and Isaac and Israel was invoked, and upon it the fire from heaven fell, consuming the sacrifice. Truly a memorable place and time suggesting again the matchless grace of God in meeting the actual condition of His repentant people. It is well to see how thus, in ways lying outside God's own legislation and under conditions when the people could plead no deservings on their part, God could and did act in grace. That God may and does so act even now we can entertain no doubt, but we must still remember that Carmel is not the place of the name and that the legislation of God in respect of that still remains.

At this point it may be well to pause in the narrative and see if we cannot make certain deductions. May we not conclude (1) that in the worship and service of God the truth of unity, as that which is essential to the Divine nature, should be expressed, that this can only be done as God's will and legislation are observed, and that consequently man's will must be excluded; (2) that disunity is a practical denial of the oneness of God, and has a distinct tendency to idolatry. That its aim is to accommodate the will of man—his pleasure and convenience, and is therefore opposed to the will of God.

*(To be continued.)*

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# AMBITION.

## V.

2 Cor. 5. 9.

SEE how th' enthusiastic mountaineer,  
 Whose one ambition is the height to scale  
 Of Switzer's loftiest peak, climbs, and yet climbs,  
 With mind fixed on the mountain's towering crest.  
 The yawning crevasse, dizzy precipice,  
 The rugged crags, the dreaded avalanche,  
 The slipp'ry glacier, each present a new  
 And oft appalling danger to his path ;  
 Yet undeterred he presses onward still,  
 Intent upon the lofty goal he seeks ;  
 Conscious that he, by ev'ry upward step,  
 Grasps bit by bit the summit of his hopes.  
 The lesser eminences, one by one,  
 Are passed, and sink beneath th' ascending path.  
 Others may count the day that saw their feet  
 Exulting planted on their snow-clad crowns  
 The proudest of their lives ; and therewith rest,  
 Full satisfied with that they have achieved.  
 But higher aims are his. He pauses not ;  
 He plants his feet where few have dared to tread ;  
 Nor will relax until he stands upon  
 The apex of the highest pinnacle.

“ We are ambitious, whether here we stay  
 Or hence depart, that we may please Him well.”  
 Thus, in few words and simple, is disclosed  
 The height of Paul's ambition here in life :  
 The crowning pinnacle for which he strove ;  
 Towards which, with joy, untiringly he climbed.  
 Compared with which, the highest place and fame,  
 The richest prize that Earth holds tempting forth  
 (To spur her sons to Titan-effort that  
 Fields hitherto unreached may be attained),

Seemed weak, and poor, and nothing worth the toil  
Expended on their full accomplishment.

“That I may please Him.” All-absorbing aim !  
For which were earthly things, so dear to men,  
Surrendered, and the outcasts place embraced.  
For which wealth, friendship, home were forfeited ;  
And in their stead life, limb and liberty  
Were risked in journeys long and arduous.

Although for long his journey lay where men  
With fickle minds, incessant changes sought,  
He onward, upward pressed toward the mark,  
With zeal unflagging and with purpose fixed.  
Inconstancy and vacillation oft  
Frustrated many in their weak life-aims,  
While others swung, like stroke of pendulum,  
From one ambition to another choice,  
Pursuing vig'rously one thing awhile ;  
Then, tiring in the struggle, fell away  
And turned their efforts in direction new  
To forward lurch and then again relapse.  
So on through life with nothing e'er attained,  
No purpose persevered in, nothing won.  
Not so the Apostle, he with firm resolve  
And steady constancy made for the goal,  
Undaunted, true, and never yielding to  
The things cast luringly across his path  
To turn him from the Way and heavenly prize ;  
But, like a faithful soldier on campaign,  
He no entanglement of earth would have  
To hamper his desire to please the One  
Who in His service had enrolled his name.

Thus, on through many years the course he ran,  
With heart and mind on one objective fixed,  
Until at last he saw swift drawing nigh  
The end long coveted—the wished-for goal.  
Then could he truly say, “ I’ve fought the fight,

The course is finished. I have kept the Faith.  
Henceforth I see a crown of righteousness  
Laid up for me ; and not for me alone,  
But eke for all who with expectant love  
Await the glad appearing of the Lord."

Behold the bright example here for us  
Who've been redeemed by Christ's own precious blood ;  
Who own His peerless name ; who call Him Lord.  
Who long to hear the " Well done ! " from His lips.

Oh, may like fierce ambition fill each soul,  
Stirring the flagging energies of some ;  
And others wake from ease and lethargy.  
Kindling in all a self-consuming zeal,  
And stimulating on to valiant deeds !  
The thought supreme engaging heart and mind,  
That " We may be well-pleasing unto Him."

Soon, ay ! full soon, will end our journey here,  
Our opportunity for service cease,  
Such service as we now are privileged  
To give in token of our grateful love.  
The Day is drawing nigh, how soon He knows,  
That hails the coming of our Master Lord.

What joy to meet Him ! But will joy be mixed  
With shame and sorrow in His presence when,  
Upon the bema seated, He reviews  
Our works and purposes—our hopes and aims ?  
Then shall we find our motives justly weighed ;  
Then see true value placed upon our deeds.  
The Righteous One will judge and mete reward,  
And all shall say, " He doeth all things well."

Shall we—shall I—His joy then enter in ?  
Or see, with tearful eye, our work destroyed ?  
That which we fondly spent much labour on ;  
That seemed on earth to make so fair a show,  
And gained the plaudits of admiring man

(Who only sees the things that now appeal,  
And cannot by inherent power he has—  
Refusing heav'nly salving for the eyes—  
Judge th' eternal worth or worthlessness  
Of our ambitions and our labours here).

Have we felt satisfied and sat content  
To hear our doings trumpeted abroad  
For men to hail as worthy of renown ?  
If so, the Lord Himself has long since said,  
"Reward in that, already ye've received."

Or have we laboured in obscurity  
(Despised, unheeded by a scornful world)  
To gather for Him in this fleeting time  
Perhaps a handful of th' unvalued gems  
That He as precious jewels will esteem,  
And give a place in His regalia ?

How great and full the recompense will be,  
To see His joy and take a share therein ;  
To hear His voice in approbation speak .  
Of time and labour spent in love for Him.  
To know our works of age-abiding worth,  
Eternal lustre giving to His name.

Say, is not this reward worth striving for !  
A compensation true for all the loss,  
The pain, misunderstanding, shame and scorn  
Incurred in seeking here to do His will ?  
Is not this, then, Ambition's highest height,  
The crown, the summit, climax of all aims ?

God grant no lower hopes inspire our work ;  
But that He may fill, permeate, consume  
Us with this loftiest ambition here,  
To please Him well.

C. BELTON.

## THE ONE THING FOR GOD IN A DAY OF APOSTASY.

*(Continued from page 198.)*

IN the mercy of God, about a quarter of a century ago, God put into the hearts of some of His children a desire for that to be definitely brought about which we believe had not in a strictly scriptural sense been given effect to up to that time.

### “ONE THING FOR GOD UPON THE EARTH.”

Something was brought about at that time which did not exist before—designated in 1 Corinthians 1. as the Fellowship and in chapter 5. of the same letter the “Within.”

The writer a short time ago read a remark in a magazine published in America as to the failure of what he called “The Needed Truth movement.” Doubtless these general statements serve the purpose for which they are written, for there is no one to contradict them. But we might ask—Wherein is the failure?

Is it that some who led the van in early days have given up the fight? or is it that numbers perhaps have not multiplied very much?

We gladly own that it is a fight and sometimes may appear a very desperate one, so as to make us cry out, “Who is sufficient for these things?” (2 Cor. 2. 16); but if there were no conflict it would cause us to question the position; for if Scripture means what it says, the carrying out of God’s will upon the earth will be, at all times, desperately opposed by Satan and the natural mind. History has repeated itself here. Will those who write such words dare to say that Scripture truth was, or ever will be, popular? The fact of the comparative smallness of numbers ought not to discourage us in the least degree. See the Old Testament principle as given in Deut. 7. 7 and Psalm 68. 15, 16. Surely, if we are answering in any little measure to the divine pattern and requirements, we must be prepared for similar results to those that followed even ere the apostles were off the scene.

No careful reader of the Scriptures can fail to see that that which was of and for God upon the earth in later apostolic days was becoming smaller and smaller. We have already suggested this and purpose to go a little more fully into it. It has been said with much truth, "the further men get away from the Word of God the greater apparent success they have in the eyes of the world."

If this is often true, and we think few readers will question it, we have from this standpoint somewhat of a confirmation, to say the least of it, that we are not a great way off from being in the mind of God. In saying this we do not forget, but are fully conscious of much—yea, very much—weakness and failure, both individually and collectively.

How encouraging are the words spoken by the Lord to David: "Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house for My name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart" (1 Kings 8. 18).

"Blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee ;  
In whose heart are the high ways to Zion." (Ps. 84. 5).

We come now to our last point, which we believe, if once grasped, to be most helpful indeed, giving a solution to some things which otherwise would remain a profound mystery. At this stage it may be asked when was the book of Revelation written? The evidence is very strong in favour of John being a prisoner in Patmos towards the close of the first century. It is very clear from the Scriptures that it must have been after the second letter to Timothy was written, which was about the year 68 A.D. It is the apostle Paul's last letter just before his martyrdom (2 Timothy 4. 7 and 8 are no words of mere sentiment). Irenæus, who lived during most of the second century and, it is said, until the second year of the third, writes thus: "Nor was the Apocalypse seen long ago, but almost within our generation, towards the end of the reign of Domitian." Many are the confirmations of this during the second and third centuries. Another so-called early father, Victorinus by name, asserts

repeatedly that John was banished to Patmos by Domitian. Now Domitian, Emperor of Rome, died A.D. 95, so that the date of the Revelation is probably towards the close of the first century. As far as I have ascertained the late date of the Apocalypse (this is the Greek name by which it is called by many old writers, the word Revelation being in Greek *Ἀποκαλύψις*, *apokalupsis*) was not questioned until the fourth century or thereabouts. Many writers, to try to make their own theory good in connexion with those things which are spoken of in the book of the Revelation, which we know to be yet future, have tried to settle an early date.

Towards the close of the first century, then, we are brought face to face with a condition of things which has very much its counterpart at the present day. But it may be well to go further into this matter from Scripture. As we proceed it will become more patent.

It is almost inconceivable how any one with even the smallest acquaintance with the epistles can fail to see the very general falling away from the faith, and this even during the life of the apostles. We see indications of this in the letters to Corinth; more clearly perhaps in the letter to the Philippians. Take, for example, the following scriptures:—

“Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife” (Phil. 1. 15).

“For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 2. 21).

“For many walk, of whom I told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ” (Phil. 3. 18).

Be it noted not enemies of Christ—“the cross” has a very different teaching in connexion with it from that of the title “Christ.” If any one might have a difficulty in connexion with the next verse, “whose end is perdition,” let us merely add that this is the word translated “waste” in Matthew 26. 8.



When we come to the later letters, especially 1 and 2 Timothy, this apostasy has still further developed, as spoken of by the apostle Paul to elders from this very province of Asia (see Acts 20. 17 and 18): "I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock: and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20. 29, 30).

The word "the" here is important, for it indicates that it was not merely a handful, but the great majority who were drawn away. The mention of Ephesus in Acts 20. 17 and then again in 1 Timothy 1. 3, together with what we read in connexion with Ephesus in Revelation 2., the first of the seven churches, is deeply instructive and important. "I know thy works, and thy toil and patience, and that thou canst not bear evil men, and didst try them which call themselves apostles, and they are not, and didst find them false: and thou hast patience and didst bear for My name's sake, and hast not grown weary." Notice the frequent repetition of the word "didst," which signifies that it was a rounded off action in the past. Then when we read the apostolic injunction to Timothy what a light it throws upon the whole! "This charge I commit unto thee, my child Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that by them thou mayest war the good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience, which some having thrust from them made shipwreck concerning the faith (see Jude 3), of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander, whom I delivered unto Satan that they might be taught not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1. 18, 19).

Then again we have two more names in 2 Timothy 1. 15 among those who turned away from the apostle Paul (and in doing that they turned away from apostolic teaching and the faith, for he kept it until the end, see 2 Tim. 4. 7). This is a very important scripture in connexion with our subject, for not only do we see that these men belonged

to the very province we are dealing with, but that all in that province turned away from Paul: "This thou knowest that all that are in Asia turned away from me; of whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes."

In the second chapter we have another name brought before us linked with Hymenæus (which we take refers to the same person as mentioned in the first letter; the name is not a common one in Scripture). "But shun profane babblings: for they will proceed further in ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a gangrene, of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus; men who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some" (2 Tim. 2. 16, 17).

Lastly we have "Demas forsook me, having loved this present world" ("age" it should read). Read in connexion with this Galatians 1. 4, where also the word "world" should read "age." Of course it is not stated that he belonged to Asia.

*(To be continued.)*

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## THE BOOK OF LIFE.

*(Concluded from page 186.)*

WE will now refer to the closing chapters of the Revelation, where we find the book of life referred to. And then we shall come back to other parts of the Revelation, where we find mentioned the Lamb's book of life.

Turn to Revelation 20. 12, 15: "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne; and books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And if any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire."

We have here shown to us the final scene in judgment so far as this earth is concerned. The thousand years'

millennial reign of Christ has expired : man has been tried in every way and found to be a failure. In innocence he failed, under a time of conscience he failed, again under law, and then under grace the same. Man has had his last sunshine, like Sodom before its judgment, in the millennial reign of Christ.

Now this is over, and Satan is loosed from his prison, and goes forth to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, to stir them up to battle, and brings them against the camp of the saints, the beloved city of Jerusalem, then the metropolis of the earth. With what result ? Fire comes down out of heaven and devours them ; the Devil is cast into the lake of fire, meeting with his final doom and judgment. The great white throne is set, the dead, the great and small, stand before the throne, the books are opened, and another book, which is the book of life.

Let us note carefully the words " books " and " book." Those that have lived from Adam to Moses will be judged according to their God-given responsibilities and privileges ; those from Moses to Christ, according to God-given laws, so far as the children of Israel are concerned (Rom. 2. 12). Those that have heard the glorious gospel of God's grace will be judged according to this further God-given revelation. God is righteous, and will judge each one according to God-given light, whether it be gospel grace, law or conscience. See for example Romans 1. 20, where we read : " The invisible things of Him which since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, His everlasting power and divinity, that they may be without excuse."

It may be that a consideration of the latter class will give us some help in understanding who they are who will be saved at this throne of judgment. There have been, and now are, myriads who have never had the privilege of reading God's Word, who have never heard of the

Lord Jesus Christ and the gospel of God's grace, who have only the things of creation to guide them to the Invisible One. Out of this mass of mankind no doubt will be found those "who by patience in well-doing, seek for glory and honour and incorruption," to whom God will give eternal life. Such a man was Cornelius the Gentile, a centurion of the Italian band. Prior to hearing the gospel message he was a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always (Acts 10. 1, 2). We know God takes knowledge of such men. "God is no respecter of persons, He that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him" (verse 35). This is quite different from being accepted in the Beloved, and can only apply to those who have not heard the sweet call of the gospel, to whom it has not reached.

We must not confuse such with Israel, nor yet with the Church which is His Body. For it is when we have accepted Him of whom the gospel speaks that we become united to Him, the living Head in the glory.

But as we have said, no doubt there are many, who, learning from the things of creation His eternal power and godhead, as devout men prostrate themselves before the true and living God, rising superior to the idolatry, superstition and error with which they are surrounded.

We have seen that the book of life has to do with our lives and service, and may it not be that devout men, such as we have described out of the nations will find their names enrolled therein, though they will form no part of Israel nor of the Church? Then "on that day when God shall judge the secrets of men . . . by Jesus Christ," according to their works, when the books are opened, and the other book, which is the book of life, is also opened, there will be found those whose names are written therein, who will therefore escape the judgment of the lake of fire. What place such will have in the glory we do not know,

but we can leave to Him of whom it is written, " Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? " We know that whether it is the saved of Israel, or those of the Church which is His Body, or others who are saved at the great white throne, all will find their place in the eternal future on the ground of the shed blood of Him, who as the Lamb of God bore the sin of the world, so that God could in righteousness save and bless.

We now come to something that is different in name, and it may be in reality, from what has gone before, that is " the Lamb's book of life." Concerning this book, we read of no blotting out of the names of those enrolled therein. The Spirit of God may have omitted this for a purpose. " And all that dwell on the earth shall worship him (the beast), every one whose name hath not been written in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world " (Rev. 13. 8, margin of R.V., and compare Rev. 17. 8).

With this also agree the words of Daniel 12. 1, " There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time ; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Here lies before us the scene of the great tribulation, the refusal to worship the beast or his image, by those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. In this shines out the electing grace and mercy of God. Compare this with what is written concerning the Church, " He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world " (Eph. 1. 4). The scene on earth so far as the churches of God in testimony are concerned closes with the 3rd chapter of Revelation, and the angel then shows John what shall be after these things. At the time of the great tribulation through which the Jewish people shall pass there will be found those who will not worship the beast ; these are they whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, the elect of God

mentioned in Matthew **24. 22, 24, 31.** We therefore may perceive in this why the Holy Spirit omits any mention of names being blotted out of the Lamb's book of life; it would not be in keeping with those names being written therein from the foundation of the world, or with the words "the elect" of Matthew **24.** or Daniel **12. 1.** Besides the saved Jewish remnant, there will be a great multitude, which no man can number, out of nations, kindreds, and people, and tongues, who ascribe their salvation unto God and to the Lamb, who would not worship the beast, and are slain for their testimony. "These are they who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (Rev. **7.**). Contrast this with the song of the saved of this dispensation (Rev. **1. 5.**).

There will be many out of the nations who will be saved by God on various grounds (after the rapture of the Church). An instance of this is seen in Matthew **25.** where those who treat His brethren kindly will be the sheep on His right hand, to whom He says, "Come, ye blessed of My Father." So great will be the sway of the beast and his worshippers, that at the time of the end, when the beast has reached his zenith of power, salvation will come to men through believing the everlasting gospel preached by an angel in mid-heaven, which belief consists in fearing God, giving Him glory, and worshipping Him as Creator (Rev. **14. 6, 7.**). The resurrection and reward of those who worshipped not the beast are seen from Revelation **20. 4-6.** They are made priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. Therefore none of these stand before the great white throne.

But the chief thought before us is, that whether they be the Jewish remnant, or whether they be the saved out of the nations who refuse to worship the beast or receive his mark, they will be those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life, fore-ordained from the foundation of the world, in the wondrous electing grace and mercy of

God, who knoweth the end from the beginning. We can only bow and adore before His Omniscience.

“Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out! . . . To Him be the glory for ever. Amen.” (Rom. 11. 33, 36).

We now come to Revelation 21., where is seen the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. Is this not the bride, the Lamb's wife, the Church, His Body, who will be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing? The twelve gates, the wall of the city with its twelve foundations, are these not the saved of Israel according to their twelve tribes? The saved nations outside shall walk in the light of the city, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it. But who shall have access into the city, who shall walk about and behold its glory; are they not those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life? They are not part of it, but they have the blessed privilege of entering in to behold it. They see this wondrous mystery, Christ and the Church, and adoringly learn the wisdom and grace of God, even as it is written, “That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 1. 7). And again, “Unto Him be the glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.” (Eph. 3. 2). These who enter in and behold the city having the glory of God upon it, are they not those who have acknowledged God and His Christ during the greatest time of tribulation the saints of God have ever known, because they would not bow down to the Antichrist? Hence they are rewarded according to the sufferings they have borne for His sake; and as subjects of the electing love and mercy of God, their names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.

J. DORRICOTT.

## Five and Twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4.

. . . . It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the only sanctification, the only separation which is pleasing to God, is that which He has commanded in the Holy Scriptures.

And here a word of caution may be in place where teaching would surely be superfluous. Let it never be forgotten that Christendom, as it now is, with all the intricacies and labyrinths of its subtle grades of evil, was definitely in the mind and purview of the Eternal One when the Scriptures were inspired. It is no question (need we say it ?) of what Paul or John may have contemplated when 2 Timothy 2. or Revelations 3. was written ; God was the Author of those epistles, and it is God's will which they express,<sup>1</sup> in fullest view of to-day, even as foreknown by Him who sees the end from the beginning. In the light of which fact, how solemn, how pregnant to all who have ears to hear, that there is not in the Scripture the least countenance whatever given to a Christian being in any religious organisation of any kind or sort that has not a distinctly and entirely divine origin.

The separation of a saint from that which is contrary to God by means of the word of truth is the work of the Spirit of truth. It is He who separates those who are separated by, to and for God. This work ever begins within. The entangled believer has brought home to his heart and conscience by the Holy Spirit that which is written in the Scriptures concerning the system in which he is. He grieves about, he repents of his share in it, and he leaves it. He leaves it entirely, and he leaves it for ever.<sup>2</sup> Why ? Because his action is not the result of fleshly feeling ; not of human opinion, nor of worldly wisdom ; but of the direct operation of the Spirit of God within him.

<sup>1</sup> Note, for instance, 2 Tim. 2. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Eccles. 3. 14.



## THE TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES TO THE UNIQUE PERSONALITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

OUR subject is the testimony of the Holy Scriptures to the unique personality of the Lord Jesus Christ, and firstly we will consider what the New Testament Scriptures say on this subject. We may observe to commence with, that we are dependent on the Scriptures for any knowledge we have of the birth and life and death and resurrection of that Blessed Person. The history of Him given in the four gospel narratives is confirmed in the Acts of the Apostles, in the letters of Paul and others, and in the Apocalypse. But outside these books there is very little historical record (we will not say there is none) of those infinitely important events, of that mighty person, of which we there read a full account. It seems to me to follow from this that even from a common-sense human standpoint it is to the oracles of God that we must go to learn who the Lord Jesus Christ was. However, I shall not dwell on this point now, nor shall I spend time in showing the agreement of the different narratives that we have in the four gospels. I speak to and for those who believe in the historical reliability of the New Testament Scriptures, and propose to show you from that source who and what He was to whom belongs the fragrant and worthy name Lord Jesus Christ.

The birth of the Lord Jesus Christ is recorded by Matthew and Luke, and from the early chapters of their gospels we learn that He was a descendant of David and Abraham, but that His mother was a virgin, and that He was begotten in her of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1. 20). The angel that appeared to her said, "That which is to be born shall be called Holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35). The testimony of Matthew and Luke to the miraculous conception of the Lord Jesus Christ is precise and unmistakable. The many details of the history that I do not now stay to read are well worthy of your careful attention.

Of the early life of the Lord Jesus Christ upon earth we are told very little, and it is not necessary to refer to it now, except to quote the words, "And Jesus advanced in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and men."

When the Lord Jesus began to teach, we are told, He was about thirty years of age ; and it seems to have been almost immediately before that, that He was baptised by John in the river Jordan. This dipping of the Lord Jesus Christ in the waters by John, the son of Zacharias, is one of the comparatively few things that are recorded in all the four gospels. John came preaching a baptism of repentance, that is to say, he preached that men should repent of their sins, and that doing so and receiving baptism from him they should receive remission of their sins and salvation ; for such was the divine message of that day. It is worthy of remark by the way that God raised up one who was, as we are told by the Lord Himself, the greatest of the sons of men to preach this message ; surely this makes repentance a very important thing as God reckons the value of things, when He puts this commission into the hands of so great a man.

But this greatness of the Immerser, his high status among the sons of men, should also direct our attention very particularly to the testimony that he bore to the immensely superior dignity of the One whose forerunner he was.

We know by comparing Matthew 3. 7-12 with Luke 7. 30, that the Pharisees, whilst willing to be immersed when this was a popular and fashionable thing to do, were not willing truly to take the place of sinners, though indeed they were sinners of no ordinary degree. But how different was the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom Luke says that when all the people were immersed He also was immersed (Luke 3. 21)! Was it surprising that John said to Him, "I have need to be baptised of Thee, and comest Thou to me?" for he had just been saying of Him, "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear." "Suffer it now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteous-

ness" was the Lord's reply to him. But when the sinless Lord Jesus Christ had been dipped under the waters of Jordan by John, just as so many of the sinful people of Israel had been, it did not need that John the Baptist should bear testimony to the sinless and thrice holy character of the One whom he had immersed. According to his ability and the charge committed to him, John had borne witness; and indeed as John the apostle says, "This man (John the Immerser) came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light." His witness too was of great value, not only the testimony we have quoted above, but also the other things he said, such as, "Behold the Lamb of God, who beareth the sin of the world," itself in very truth a testimony to the unique personality of the Lord Jesus Christ on which we ought to lay stress.

I desire, however, to direct your very special attention to the fact that it was not left to John the Baptist to explain or testify that this One whom he had been baptising was unlike the people of Israel in His perfect sinlessness and holiness. The testimony to this came from the One who above all others was able to speak from perfect and unimpeachable knowledge. The testimony, moreover, was borne by word and by deed.

By deed, for the heavens were opened unto Him, and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily form as a dove upon Him.

By word, for a voice came out of heaven, "This is My Son, My well-beloved, in whom I am well pleased."

It would be extremely interesting to compare the accounts given by Matthew and Mark and Luke and John of the words that were spoken; for I am sure that the variations that we find there are very helpful and instructive (Matt. 3. 16, 17; Mark 1. 10, 11; Luke 3. 21, 22; John 1. 29-34). But my business now is to point out to you that God Himself opened the heavens to bear witness to the fact that, so far from the Lord Jesus Christ having any misdeeds of His own to confess, He had given the Father most perfect joy and

pleasure, as He Himself says elsewhere; "I do always the things that are pleasing to Him" (John 8. 29).

I think that as this witness was borne from heaven before the Lord began His public ministry, we may reasonably conclude that the reference is to the pleasure that His God and Father had had in His early days as child and boy and man in private life. In this most important respect the Lord Jesus Christ was quite different from all the human race. He never thought or spoke or did amiss. From the earliest days of His childhood His life was ever ordered according to the law of God. He had no desire at any time for either thoughts or words or deeds contrary in the least degree to the requirements of the holy will of God. Of Him alone in the fullest sense could the words of the Psalmist be truly said :—

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked,  
And standeth not in the way of sinners,  
And sitteth not in the seat of the scornful.  
But his delight is in the law of Jehovah,  
And in His law doth he meditate day and night."

Having seen that the Lord Jesus Christ was marked out in His private life by such perfect conformity to the revealed will of God, we turn to the records of His public ministry to ascertain what is there set down about Him and His words and His deeds.

We may note, to start with, that when He was teaching the people, He taught them as One having authority, and not as the scribes. We do not regard this as any reproach against the scribes. As successors of Ezra their business was to study the written word of God that they might be able to expound it to the unlearned. And though in our Lord's day there were scribes who were Pharisees and others who were Sadducees, and these were permeated with the heresies of their respective sects, yet there were others who were disciplined into the kingdom and thus enabled to bring forth precious things both new and old.

But far higher was the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, who came with a message from God which, while perfectly in harmony with the previously revealed will of God, was altogether new in its character, and especially in the completeness of the revelation which it made of God from whom it came. This is made very clear in some of the portions of the three chapters in which in our Bibles we have Matthew's account of what the Lord said in His discourse on the Mount. (See Matt. 5. 17-48, "Ye have heard that it was said . . . but I say . . ." noting verses 17-20 particularly.)

We shall find that the Lord by His own words closely associated that which was unique in His revelation of God with that which was unique in His relation to God. Thus we read in Matthew 11. 25-30, that the Lord Jesus thanked His Father as Lord of heaven and earth for hiding from the wise and understanding that which He had revealed to infants. He then goes on to say, "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him. Come unto Me . . ."

From these words we learn that the truth of God has been committed to the Lord Jesus in a manner and to an extent far transcending previous revelation. Further this full and perfect committal of the things of God to the Lord Jesus is associated with His personal relationship to the Father. The Father committed the truth to the Son, whom He alone knew perfectly. None could know as the Father knew how fully competent the Son was to hold and reveal these divine realities. The thought expressed in the beginning of the letter to Hebrews is similar: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers by the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son" (Greek, a Son).

There are not wanting those who freely admit that the Lord Jesus was Son of God, but who do not by any means

give to such passages as I have been quoting their full and true meaning. It must be remembered that men have at different times been spoken of as sons of God, both rightly and wrongly ; and therefore it is of the utmost importance to have clear ideas as to what is meant when we speak of the blessed Lord Jesus as the Son of God. The passage from which we have already quoted (Matt. 11. 25-30) shows without doubt that He Himself described His relationship to the Father in words that could not possibly apply to one who was a mere man.

In addition to the words that speak of what the Father committed to Him, we have the further statement that He, the Son, was only known to the Father.

“No one knoweth the Son save the Father.” What do these words mean ? Surely they indicate that His was no mere human nature, for the assertion is that He was beyond the possibility of human understanding. This disposes, too, of the idea that the divine Sonship of the Lord Jesus was something that He acquired by His life. It was by nature that He was Son of God, and therefore His being was and is above and beyond the comprehension of men.

“Neither doth any one know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him.” Note, then, that the incomprehensibility of the Son and that of the Father are put side by side as on the same footing. It is as impossible for man as man to know the Lord Jesus Christ, as it is for him to know God the Father. Knowledge of the Father can only come through the Son and at His will ; and we learn from another passage in this gospel that knowledge of the Son must be a matter of revelation from the Father. (See Matt. 16. 13-20.) All this goes to demonstrate the unique personality of the Lord Jesus, that He is a person quite different from the sons of men and far transcending them in His nature, though He was pleased, as we shall see presently, to become truly man.

The evidence in the Gospels for the unique personality of

the Redeemer is of a very varied character, and I shall not attempt to follow any special order in bringing it before you. I now ask you to turn to the narrative of the Transfiguration which is to be found in Matthew **17**. 1-13 ; Mark **9**. 2-13 ; Luke **9**. 28-36 ; and to which Peter refers in his second letter, 2 Peter **1**. 16-21.

From these passages we learn that the Lord Jesus Christ took three of the apostles, namely Peter and James and John, with Him when He went up into a certain high mountain which seems to have been situated in the extreme north of Galilee. Here as He was praying, His countenance was changed and shone like the sun in its brightness ; His very garments became so dazzlingly white, that it is evident that they were not shining by reflected light, but by the light from the glorious Being whom they apparelled ; as when the sun shines through the clouds and gives them a whiteness of glistening light that they never have when it merely shines on them. Then, we are told, two men appeared and conversed with Him ; these two were Moses and Elijah, and they spoke with Him about the terrible death which lay before Him. Peter and the other two were heavy with sleep, but when they were fully awake they saw His glory and the two men that stood with Him ; and not knowing what to say, Peter made a very foolish speech, for which we may be very thankful. His idea of making three booths for the Lord Jesus, Moses and Elijah respectively, seems to indicate that He recognised the Lord Jesus as a successor of those mighty men of God, and as of higher rank than they ; and this is perhaps the length that many have gone who, like Peter at the moment, have lost sight of the divine revelation as to the person of the Son. For surely Peter here had quite forgotten what he had said as recorded in Matthew **16**. 13-17. Indeed, as Mark says, " He wist not what to answer." I am very anxious to make you see that the speech of Peter's which is thus described, was one in which he set the Lord Jesus Christ above and before the two men who held such

a distinguished place in the history of God's people and in the history of God's revelation of Himself to His people. Yet Peter's proposal was so utterly and hopelessly inadequate, so lacking in true appreciation of the dignity of the person and the greatness of the work He had come to do ; for when the Lord Jesus Christ and Moses and Elijah were before Him, he just put the Lord Jesus as *primus inter pares*, first amongst equals. But for this we must be thankful, as it gave occasion for the Father Himself again to speak from heaven.

The words that were brought were the same as those which had come at the baptism as He came out of the Jordan waters, but with a most important addition. They were the same words in that they testified to the eternal relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, " This is My beloved Son," and to the perfect satisfaction that the Father had in His doings, " In whom I am well pleased." The pleasure that the Lord Jesus had given to His heavenly Father in His childhood and the private life of His early manhood He continued to give in the days of His public ministry. Still as ever He did the things that were well-pleasing to the Father. Indeed it is said elsewhere of the blessed Master that He is the same yesterday and to-day, yea, and for ever.

But in these words brought, as Peter says, by the majestic glory when they were with Him in the holy mount, there was something added that we do not find in the words heard on the banks of Jordan. Here we have two words of command that may be said to sum up the purposes of God for His people ; and they are these :—

#### HEAR HIM.

Doubtless it was this to which the Lord referred when the hour was come and He lifted up His eyes into heaven and spake the wonderful words that we have on record in John **17**, where we find this set down to the credit of the men that God had given Him out of the world :—



## THEY HAVE KEPT THY WORD.

It is a matter of life and death to the sons of men to give due heed to the person and words of the Lord Jesus Christ. We must listen to what God said through Moses and to the manifestation of His amazing grace as seen in the work of Elijah, but the place which belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ is infinitely higher than the place that belongs to Moses or Elijah. That the servants of the Most High God might know this, He opened the heaven and spake as we have seen in the passages quoted from Matthew, Mark, Luke, Peter.

One thing that follows from these words of the Father brought by the majestic glory, is that whatever was said by the prophets of old must be seen and understood as illumined by the words and deeds of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father.

We might here therefore turn to an Old Testament testimony to which the Lord Himself made reference as recorded in Matthew 22. 41-45 ; Mark 12, 35-37 ; Luke 20, 41-44. Reading from our English Revised Version of the Old Testament, but with the divine title as in the Hebrew of Psalm 110 :—

Jehovah saith unto My Lord :

“Sit Thou at My right hand

Until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool.”

The Lord Himself quoted from the Septuagint :—

The Lord said unto my Lord :

“Sit Thou on My right hand

Till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet,”

except that Matthew's record gives a slight variation of the last line. But none of these variations have any importance in reference to the main subject. The essential point is that David calls the Messiah his Lord, though He was to be his Son according to human generation. This the learned and religious men of the day could not understand nor explain ; but we are told that when the Lord Jesus

Christ was speaking of these divine mysteries, "the common people heard Him gladly." For comment on this you may turn back to the passage I quoted from Matthew 11; and further you might refer at leisure to 1 Corinthians 1. 18-31. For our present purpose it is sufficient to observe very carefully the reverence and worship paid by David to the Coming One, who was to be born of his seed according to the flesh, but whom he, speaking by the Spirit of God, calls his Lord.

*(To be continued.)*

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## Fragmentary Notes on the Psalms.

"SEND NOW PROSPERITY."

SURELY the disciples were never wiser than when they said to the Lord: "Teach us to pray." For we know not what to pray for as we ought. And it seems as if the book of Psalms was given to us partly for this very purpose, namely, to teach us how to pray and what we ought to ask for in our prayers. Let us then, as we look at the words at the head of this note, read the context in the psalm in which they occur, in the hope that this may help us to know when to expect an answer to prayer for prosperity.

The inspired psalmist says "Send now prosperity" in an inspired prayer, and if we look at the context we may learn when it is that prosperity may be expected. The previous verse says "This is the day which Jehovah hath made." This it will be observed is not a grumble over the bad times; it is not a lamentation after days for ever past. This is no whining child's cry after a supposed golden age of yesterday. Jehovah has made To-day.

What follows this statement of fact? "We will rejoice and be glad in it." Such a resolve must ever follow a real appreciation of Jehovah's work. For if God has given this day to us, and has also given us to this day in which we

live, what an inspiring thought it is! Surely we will rejoice and be glad in it. A day made for us, made for us to live in, to serve God in. A day in which to serve our own generation by the will of God!

What a gift To-day is! Not yesterday nor yet to-morrow, but To-day is the day that is given to us to use.

This is the day, Jehovah made it, Let us rejoice and be glad in it. If so, I think we may look for an answer to our prayer, if we seek prosperity from God. He is willing to do for us more than we can ask or think; but of course it is in His own way that He will work, and we must be on the look-out for that. May we then know as in the past we have not known what it is to rejoice in the present day that He hath made.

Then we may look for a present coming of our Lord. Perhaps we need to be in a right spirit to know Him when He comes. He will not come in His own person in this day of opportunity. When He comes in His own person, He will rise from the seat He now occupies with a shout of gladness, and we shall go to meet Him with answering joy. But this day of opportunity will then be at an end. It will be another and a very different day that will then dawn on us. Now He may come in the person of such as He may send, disciples of His whom hitherto we have not known, whom we may bless out of the House of Jehovah. Some who will come from far, and some perhaps from not so far, who will come to build with us in the Temple of Jehovah.

May we learn seasonably to pray "Send now prosperity."

## THE ONE THING FOR GOD IN A DAY OF APOSTASY.

*(Continued from page 234.)*

PASSING over many scriptures that might help us in 2 Peter, John's epistles, and Jude, we come to look at these seven churches themselves as depicted in Revelation, and as we do we find that no two of them are alike. Notwithstanding this fact, however, we find the Lord Jesus in a governmental and authoritative sense walking in the midst of these seven churches. Along with this we find that the seven stars, which we are told are the angels of the seven churches, are in and upon His right hand (Rev. 1. 16-20).

All this shows the absolute oneness of the assemblies and the nearness of that One to each and all of the seven churches alike. He is brought before us in awful majesty, at whose feet even the now aged, much-loved disciple John falls down as dead.

If on the first of the week on being gathered together we only remembered that He is still the same as when He appeared to John (also on the Lordly day) what awe and reverence it would create in us all!

This disparity between the churches suggests that there is a very marked falling away from the ideal. The more the divine archetype is adhered to, the more similarity there must be amongst all the churches of God; that is, each local expression of the one thing will correspond one with the other. But this is a very high ideal; indeed it is, and thence the failure. Not that we believe the divine ideal was ever fully attained, except very imperfectly, and that for a very short period when the Fellowship and the Church of God in Jerusalem were co-extensive and co-existent, and possibly for a short time after the Fellowship came to be expressed in other churches of God beside Jerusalem in the immediate vicinity thereof.

At the same time there was a recognition of the divine pattern and an effort to give effect to it. Philippians 3. 15 and 16 may be helpful here. There was no denial of this,

no discrediting the apostolic teaching; if there had been it would have been presumptuous sin (see Ps. **19. 15**, also Deuteronomy **17. 12** and **18. 20**), which is an altogether different thing from failure in the endeavour to give effect to that which is always perfect (see Ps. **19. 7** and **18. 30**), whether in respect to the individual (see 1 Pet. **2. 22, 23** and 1 John **2. 56**) or to the collective testimony.

The one teaching, if given heed to, will bring about like results. "My ways which be in Christ even as I teach every where in every church" (1 Cor. **4. 17**); "And so ordain I in all the churches" (1 Cor. **2. 17**); "We have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (1 Cor. **11. 16**),—are scriptures that we do well to ponder in this connexion. One teaching, One Spirit, One Lord.

God works through human instrumentality in all this. For instance, we see this province of Asia joined together with four other provinces in 1 Peter **1. 1**, forming a large area. How are these churches linked together? The answer we find in the fifth chapter of 1 Peter: "The elders therefore among you . . . tend the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly according unto God; nor yet for filthy lucre but of a ready mind, neither as lording it over the charges allotted to you (or the allotted portions), but making yourselves ensamples to the flock."

God takes up the provinces of the Roman Empire as they are found and uses them for the purpose of the administration of His rule and government. Hence we find the churches of God which are in Judæa (a province in itself) spoken of very early (1 Thess. **2. 14**). Compare Acts **11. 29, 30** with this: "And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa; which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul." Here we see the elders in and of this one province acting together, the churches of the province being bound together by them.

Similarly we find the churches of Galatia, an adjoining province to Asia, treated as one, for a letter is written to them, the elders of that province doubtless being held responsible for the circulation of the letter throughout the whole.

Again, how often do we find the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia linked together in a similar way ! This is very beautifully brought before us in 2 Corinthians 8., 9., in connexion with their ministering to the needy saints. We might cite many more scriptures, but these will suffice to show that what was true of the five provinces of Peter was true of each one of them separately. Consequently the province of Asia had its circle of elders or overseeing men.

Doubtless much failure was creeping in in connexion with these divine principles : gradually man's self-will exerted itself ; on the other hand, more indifference and less vigilance : less tending of the flock, more of filthy lucre probably, less counsel, less conference, consequently less oneness of mind ; ultimately ending in confusion, independency, and disintegration. It is a melancholy fact that professing Christianity was broken up into fragmentary sects before the second century had well commenced, and until the so-called orthodox church with the world's power at its back made them submit, or else persecuted them out of existence. Indeed, in one respect there is a great resemblance at the present time to those early centuries, for most of those multifarious sects held very erroneous teaching concerning the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work, as most of those sects do to-day which are not attached to the state churches.

It will have been noticed that in the case of Ephesus the lampstand is threatened to be removed out of its place. Of course this had taken place in connexion with many other churches long before this. This brings us to ask a question. Were these seven the only churches that God owned as His in Asia at this time ? We believe they were, for the word seems definite, " John to the seven churches which are in

Asia" (Revelation 1. 4). But it might be urged, we know there were other churches in Asia, for we find there was one in Colossæ, unto which church a letter was written by the apostle Paul, and in the fourth chapter we find another place where there was an assembly, namely Hierapolis. This is true, and there is much, yea, very much, to learn in connexion with it. Here we have a little group of three churches. One of them is "Laodicea," the last of the seven under review. If the reader will look at his map he will find that these three places are, comparatively speaking, very close together. The seven churches in Asia formed a sort of V turned upside down, commencing with Ephesus to the west, running north through Smyrna to Pergamum, then turning in a southeasterly direction, ending with Laodicea, which was the most eastern of the seven. Colossæ lay a few miles further east, with Hierapolis six miles to the north. It may interest some readers to know that nothing remains of many of these famous places now but interesting ruins. A village appears to cover the site of Colossæ.

Beautiful and lovely is what we read of Epaphras in connexion with this little trio of churches. "Epaphras, who is one of you (Colossæ), a servant of Christ Jesus, saluteth you, always striving together for you in his prayers, that ye may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. For I bear him witness, that he hath much labour for you (Colossians) and for them in Laodicea and for them in Hierapolis" (Col. 4. 12, 13).

The word "*πονός*, *ponos*," translated "labour" here, is only found four times in the New Testament. In the three other places where it occurs in the Revelation we have it translated by the word "pain."

Could it possibly be—does the word suggest the thought?—that Epaphras at this early time, about A.D. 63, had fears and misgivings about these churches, somewhat in the same way that Paul had misgivings in regard to the Corinthian church? (see 2 Cor. 12. 19–21); or is it just in an ordinary

way, his heart yearning after and longing for the welfare of these churches, more especially seeing that originally he belonged to one of them? However this may be, Colossians 2. 16-23 suggests that in this church, at any rate, there was enough to give cause for pain—an indication of future apostasy.

Of course there were originally, in all probability, more churches in Asia than the nine we read of in Scripture as being. The churches mentioned in Scripture are doubtless intentionally selected by the Holy Spirit, and what we read of and about them is for our good upon whom the ends of the ages are come. The principle of intentional selection we have clearly brought before us in John 20. 20 and 21. 25. Indeed, if it were not for what we read in Revelation 1., 2., 3., we should never have known that churches existed in five places out of the seven. In three of the provinces mentioned in 1 Peter, where we know there were assemblies, no cities or towns are mentioned in Scripture as places where assemblies of God were situated. This clearly proves that the early assemblies were far more numerous than we might at first sight suppose.

From all that we have seen one is forced to no other conclusion than that Colossæ, Hierapolis and many other assemblies had ceased to be such collective local companies as God owns as His churches, expressive of and joined to the One Thing. In other words the lampstands had been removed.

In our next we purpose to look at the condition of things in these places themselves, more especially in connexion with Philadelphia and Laodicea.

*(To be continued.)*

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## Five and Twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME I, NUMBER 4.

DEATH in the physical kingdom beyond all question implies total inability to perform the actions done in life, and this equally whether we speak of the death of a plant, of an animal, or of a man.

Similarly in spiritual things. The death in which the whole human race was involved when Adam, their federal head, ate of the forbidden fruit, and died to God, means a state in which man cannot hold intercourse with God nor please Him. He is utterly incapable of understanding God's dealings ; he is equally unfit to carry out God's will.

Now the giving of life to the dead is in itself a miracle, which can neither be explained nor yet understood by natural laws. For according to natural laws, it is an impossibility. We do well, therefore, to seek light on the subject from the word of God. In the gospel of the Son of God, according to John 5. 25, we read in His own words, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God ; and they that hear shall live." Thus a dead one, naturally unable to hear, is made to hear, though dead. As indeed is illustrated in the case of Lazarus, who was dead as to the body, who could neither hear nor do anything else. Had Martha or Mary spoken to him it would have been in vain. His ears were closed to every human sound. But the Divine One speaks, "Lazarus, come forth," and the dead one hears the voice of the Son of God, and hearing, lives and comes forth. And so it is with the dead sinner, who is made to hear, not the words merely, but the voice of the Son of God. The word must be received as from Himself ; this implies that which is elsewhere spoken of as believing (John 5. 24).

## HIGH PLACES AND GOD'S PLACE.

*(Continued from page 225.)*

WE resume our examination of the history of God's place. We know that in consequence of the rebelliousness of Judah, and their departure from God and His sanctuary, He, after much warning and entreaty, forsook His house and the people were carried to Babylon, there to learn by bitter experience the grossness of idolatry. This captivity to Babylon was a more serious matter than the earlier abandonment of Shiloh. Then the people were left in the land, but now they are actually carried away. In Babylon they were not only deprived of the place of the name, but all collective worship seems to have ceased—not even the possibility of a high place was known. Individual saints knew what prayer was, as Daniel knew, but collective worship and service they did not know.

In Babylon most were lost to God and His place. Indeed it would appear they found the life there sufficiently congenial to hold them even when God visited them in the first year of Cyrus, and gave them an opportunity to return. Some, however, responded and went up from Babylon to the place of the name. Their hearts had ever longed after it; their joys were bound up in it; away from it they had no heart to sing the songs of Zion, and so when the moment came, when God bestirred Himself and opened up the way, they responded and went up, and having so arrived they established the order of God's house. They went back to "It is written," and they observed all things whatsoever had been commanded. Again as of old we find them leaving their cities at the times of the feasts and gathering together as one man to Jerusalem, and serving God according to His ordinances, so expressing afresh the unity of His person and service.

We know how this was followed up by the establishment

of God's word in their understanding and observance as taught by Ezra, and we further know how Nehemiah restored the city itself with its walls and gates, so establishing effective government.

May we now turn to the New Testament ? We are struck with the fact that the circumstances are different from those we have looked at. We have contemplated a certain country, Canaan ; a city, Jerusalem ; a material house erected therein with which were connected material things such as an altar and a laver and other furniture, and in connexion with which fleshy sacrifices were offered, and so forth. Many of the details are different, but the underlying obligation of unity remains. God is the same, and what He is should still find expression among His people.

In John 4. the Lord plainly declared that a change as to worship was to take place, that neither in that mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, should the Father be worshipped, but that in contradistinction to the ignorant worship of Samaritans and to the more intelligent worship of the Jews, the hour was coming for true worshippers to worship the Father in Spirit and truth—in Spirit and not like the Jew in outward form ; in truth and not like the Samaritan in ignorant superstition. The worship should be in the power of the indwelling Spirit of God and in accord with the truth of God.

In Matthew 18. 20 the Lord gave other words in view of the same soon-coming time. In dealing with the question of judgment as between brethren, He did not tell them to take the matter up to Jerusalem (see Deut. 17. 8) but decreed that the sentence of the assembly should be final on the ground that "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

The above of course must be viewed in the light of the obligations of Matthew 23. 18-20, for it is as His will is followed that there can be the being together in His name.

We proceed to the book of Acts, to see the development

of the above things. In Acts 1. and 2. the work begins. A company are found together in obedience to the Lord's will, the Holy Spirit descends, and then through the preaching of the word 3000 are savingly reached.

Now let us proceed with care, because what we read here has an important bearing upon the name, and upon being in that name. Here we learn how the Lord's servants interpreted the Lord's will, and the Spirit has been pleased to record the same for our guidance. Acts 2. 41, 42: (1) the word preached was received; (2) those who received the word were baptised; (3) such were then added to those who were together before.

Then, these discipled, baptised and added ones continued in certain exercises as follows:—

- (1) The teaching of the Apostles;
- (2) The Fellowship;
- (3) The breaking of the bread;
- (4) The prayers.

Now we ask at this point, Is this recorded for us, and if so is it generally followed? We hear of children being baptised in early life when they have no knowledge of good or evil, afterwards perhaps hearing the word and being added. Does this accord with the teaching?

Or, we hear of people receiving the word and then being added, and, it may be or may not be, being baptised later on. Is this right?

Or again, we hear of people who may have believed and been baptised, but who have never been added, yet claiming the privileges of those who are together in the name. Can this be justified?

After thus glancing at the beginning of the work in Jerusalem, let us move on a step or so. The work extends. Chapter 8. tells of Samaria being reached by one who had gone from Jerusalem, apparently driven forth by persecution. Tidings come to Jerusalem and the apostles send forth Peter and John to investigate. They are satisfied that

the work is of God, and link it up with Jerusalem. So the unity of the work is secured.

Again in chapter 11. Antioch is reached and Barnabas in like manner is sent forth from Jerusalem to see and judge, and on being satisfied renders them much help as being in the same thing ; still was the unity secured.

Acts 15. is helpful in this connexion. Some persons had gone out from Jerusalem and Judea with a strange doctrine, and had reached Antioch to the unsettling of the saints there. Did Antioch settle the matter by themselves and for themselves ? No, but they appointed certain to go up to Jerusalem and there confer with those from whom these teachers purported to have come, so that a united understanding might be reached. And the decrees of the apostles and elders in Jerusalem were carried forth to the churches of Syria and Cilicia for their obedient observance. The unity of the whole thus triumphed over the division between Jews and Gentiles.

We would now turn to a very important scripture as bearing on this subject. 1 Corinthians 1. "To the assembly of God in Corinth . . . with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours." And with this we connect verse 9, "God is faithful through whom ye were called into the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

What should we learn from these scriptures ? We see here what is the invariable rule. One assembly in the one city. It is no answer to this to suggest that all may have met in one building. Whether such were the case or not in no way affects the matter, for we know that in Scripture the expression is always "assembly" in reference to a city, whether the city contained thousands of disciples or perhaps only a score. We have in it an expression of unity which cuts at the root of independency in the area of a city.

Neither may it be supposed that the language used is

loose, and signifies no more than all believers living in the given place, whether gathered or not, for it is evident that the assembly of God is an entity capable of acting and fulfilling certain functions in reference to the Lord's will. To employ such a term as "the assembly of God" to describe all the believers in a city, whether baptised or not, whether added or not, and all those associated with sects, is to abuse the term shamefully.

But we further observe that Corinth did not stand alone. In the address it is specifically associated with all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now this means to acknowledge Him as Lord, and is descriptive of the assembly in Corinth and of all others who are together similarly to Corinth, but in other places. It does not mean that the assembly of God in Corinth described a certain kind of thing, and that the further expression "who call upon the name . . ." described a different kind of thing. It clearly and plainly shows that the only difference between Corinth and the others was a difference of locality; that in principle and fact they were the same, subject to the same Lord, their Lord and our Lord.

This is a proper development of the truth of Matthew 18. If gathered into His name locally there must be a practical recognition of being associated in the one will of the Lord with others so gathered elsewhere. Independency cannot be justified.

Then see verse 9. See what God is concerned about. "He is faithful." Believers say, we may trust God, for He is faithful. That is true, but here it is rather with regard to His Son. God calls into a fellowship, a partnership which is of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and, we may unhesitatingly say, He calls into no other. We must consider the associations of this fellowship before hastily assuming that it refers to the possession of life merely. Observe the character of the epistle where it is found; that it is associated with God's assembly; bears the impress

of the Lord's authority ; involves those in it in responsibility to the Lord and to one another, and that it is distinctly opposed to sectarianism. It appears clear that the sphere of the assembly of God is where the principles of that fellowship are to be carried out, embracing the privileges and responsibilities of those who are together in the within. It is not limited to a local assembly, but applies to all who in every place call upon the name.

Then by way of contrast, let us observe the beginnings of a very different condition of things. Hitherto we have seen only one thing—no independency, but here we have presented in an incipient form the same thing as the high places of old time, God's service still professedly before the mind, but accommodated to human preferences. Man's choice is being exercised ; they are doing what is right in their own eyes ; they say " I am of Paul " and " I of Apollos." Excellent names are these, but to hold them in this way was opposed to the truth of the unity of God's service and a substitution of men for the One whom God has exalted, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In what way did the apostle endeavour to check this wrong—this incipient sectarianism ? " Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus it is evident that this sectarian choosing was a trespass against the Lord.

How greatly has the evil leaven of 1 Corinthians 1. 12, increased, so that now we are surrounded by many companies known by many names, yet all professedly owning the Lord Jesus ! True it is that attempts are made to unite believers and bring them on to one common ground at certain seasons and for certain limited purposes, but this can only be effected by shutting out the truth of God concerning those matters which relate to His name and His will, His kingdom and the name of the Lord Jesus ; consequently such unions are more sectarian in fact than the avowed sects.

A sad feature about sectarianism is that while many

of its evil effects are sometimes deplored, yet the grievous dishonour done to the Lord is but lightly regarded.

Sectarianism has its root in self-will and self-choosing, but after its establishment it is oftentimes supported by ignorance and a limitation of God's will. Want of knowledge in greater or less degree we all suffer from, but it behoves us the more to keep our minds open to the truth which God may have to teach us, and to be ready to follow it.

Sectarianism is very accommodating to carnal men. It says in effect, "Let me interpret God's will for myself, let me do what I please, and I will extend the same liberty to you." How seemingly kind and liberal is all this! but where does the Lord come in?

Then as to doctrine sectarianism says, "Let me believe what I please, and even in my own circle teach what I please, and you may do the same"; but what then of earnestly contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints?

Surely sectarianism has apparently achieved a notable triumph when it can combine with the above mentioned "please yourself" principle, a kind of fellowship between such diverse elements; but such fellowship can only succeed by sacrificing everything which is fundamental to the Faith.

Our consideration of the history of high places as in the Old Testament, and of sectarianism as seen in its early form in the New, with the later development which history affords, will lead us to the conclusion that sects now answer in a sense to the high places, and are a departure from the will of God as seen in His one place.

*(To be concluded.)*



## THE WAR.

“O earth, hear the word of Jehovah!”

“To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and that trembleth at My word.”

THE hour of conflict has come, the battle-flag flies in the breeze, and the heart of Europe throbs to the roll of the war-drum. Britain is yielding her sons—

To the mine-strewn sea where the grey ships glide,  
And the gore of the stricken field.

Horrors past imagination fill the actual theatre of war, the green sod reeks with blood, and the air is rent with a wail of agony, heart-rending and awful. Undoubtedly war brings much suffering in its train, and already this is being acutely felt. Abroad are destruction and desolation; at home difficulty and distress.

From many quarters the question comes: What is the cause of the present war? Admittedly the question is one of great complexity, moreover the present writer is deeply conscious of his limitations, “We are but of yesterday, and know nothing,” nevertheless he would venture to make a suggestion.

In considering the cause of the present war we must distinguish between the human side of things and the divine. In the former we must also distinguish between the political and the moral aspects. In each several instance there are, so the writer thinks, certain great underlying reasons which account for the present crisis.

But this paper must of necessity be brief, and for this cause, to say nothing of any other, no allusion will be made to the political aspect, and we shall only touch on the moral as connected with the divine, the latter being, of course, the aspect of supreme importance.

Viewing the matter then, from the divine point of view, three things may here be mentioned:—

The Righteousness of God;

The Sovereignty of God;

The Application of these to the rise and fall of Nations.

It will be well to cite a few scriptures by way of example on the points named. **RIGHTEOUSNESS**: "A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and right is He" (Deut. **32**. 4); "Jehovah is righteous in all His ways" (Psa. **145**. 17). **SOVEREIGNTY**: "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Daniel **4**. 35); "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His will" (Eph. **1**. 11). **THE APPLICATION TO NATIONS**: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck it up and to break it down and to destroy it; if that nation concerning which I have spoken turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them (Jer. **18**. 7 to 10).

In view of all the foregoing we may safely say that the present terrible war has not happened apart from the divine permission, and that, in accordance with perfect righteousness. Then arises the question: Can we discern any particular reason for such permission, or must we leave this as something hidden and inscrutable? Again we remember our limitations; how insignificant is our insight into divine ways and dealings, and how prone we are to err. We therefore speak, we trust, with all modesty; nevertheless it seems clear to us that the Most High has permitted this war in judgment, yet in mercy, in order to awaken the nations involved from the sleep of spiritual death into which they had fallen; to recall men from their infidelity and their apostasy from the God-breathed Scriptures; to humble those who have proudly turned from the Gospel of Christ to the opposing theories of "Modern Thought:"

and here we own with deep humiliation and sorrow that England and Germany are especially guilty, they have corrupted each other, and we believe they will both suffer for their guilt.

Doubtless there are specific reasons why the mighty chastening hand of God should be laid upon each of the nations involved in this war, but we must confine ourselves to the country in which our own lot is cast, in which, if true to our heavenly calling, we shall remember that we are sojourners and pilgrims (1 Pet. 2. 11).

In reference then, to this country, we penned in December, 1910, in an article entitled "A voice to the Nation and to the Individual," the following words:—

"If space permitted we might speak of various things which call for national humiliation and repentance, but in our lack of space to speak diffusively we concentrate on what we believe to be the most serious thing, viz., the large measure in which the British Nation has turned away from the Word of the Living God. Aforetime the Bible was revered, but to-day it is criticised and denied on almost every hand. The Universities and Colleges teem with men who are more or less infidel in regard to the God-breathed character and divine authority of the Bible. The 'New Theology' is openly propagated from the Pulpit all over the land. The deity and atoning sacrifice of Christ are learnedly explained away. The Gospel is displaced by scientific theories. Agnosticism and Spiritism are rife, and the effect is seen in the ever-increasing fulfilment of 2 Timothy 4.: 'And (men) will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside to fables.' Is not this a serious state of things? . . . Men may turn a deaf ear to our suggestion now, and some may deride our idea, but once let the storm-clouds of war gather over Europe, let a crisis arise that will threaten Britain with the most disastrous war she has ever known, then men will begin to realise. . . ."

Since we penned the above, things have waxed worse and worse, so that 1914 revealed a worse condition than 1910, and up to the beginning of the present war the great majority of the people were immersed in scepticism and indifference on the one hand, or in pleasure on the other; the unbelieving lecturer, very often a "Reverend," being

listened to with approbation ; the picture palace and such like being crowded also, while the preacher of Christ and Him crucified was derided or ignored, and places known to be devoted to such preaching wellnigh forsaken.

Can we suppose that God has taken no account of these things ? Has He looked on with indifference while His word has been denied and ridiculed, His Son insulted, and His grace trampled under foot ? Surely He has marked these things, and we cannot but think that the calamity of this fearful war should be regarded both as a chastisement and as a call to repentance. Shall the call remain unanswered ? We pray that it may not be so. Oh, that in this hour of trial, men may turn to the Living God, seeking mercy at His hands through Jesus Christ the only Lord and Saviour ! Oh, that multitudes may return to the Holy Scriptures bowing to them as the Word of God, and may embrace with the heart the glad tidings " Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

And, further, we pray that many who are born again, yet have been living in worldliness and self-pleasing, backsliders in heart from God and the Word of His grace, for these we pray that they may be awakened and truly restored, and still further we pray that every child of God in the realm may bow before God in confession of the evil that has been so widespread. At the same time engaging in supplication and intercession for all men, and especially for kings and all that are in high place, praying withal that every lesson God would teach by means of this fearful war may be laid to heart by all, and that in the infinite mercy of God peace may be restored to Europe, and the gospel go forth unhindered.

In regard to the remnant of His people who fear the Lord and think upon His Name, may they emerge from this crisis purified and quickened ; to serve Him with heart and soul, advancing the kingdom of God and waiting for the coming of our adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

HENRY ELSON.

# THE ONE THING FOR GOD IN A DAY OF APOSTASY.

*(Continued from page 256.)*

WE have already stated that the seven churches in Asia were actually existing just in the condition we find them when John was a prisoner in the lonely Isle of Patmos. Much has been said as to these churches being typical of seven distinct successive periods of the present dispensation. We do not see anything to warrant this teaching. We suggest, rather, that in these churches we have a condition of things which will have its counterpart in a greater or less degree until the close of this day of grace. It may be that to-day, in some churches, there is a condition of things answering in some respects to a combination of the characteristics then obtaining in many of these churches: whereas, in the mercy of God, in others there may be that which had its prototype in Philadelphia; on the other hand, alas! there may be in some a pronounced Laodicean spirit.

If the present writer is not mistaken, the movement of about eighty years ago, when many men holding leading positions and in some cases receiving large emoluments came out from all in order to carry out the mind of God, in so far as it was then known, has been called the Philadelphian stage. This idea has been based upon the fact that "Philadelphia" means "brotherly love," the words "love of the brethren" (Heb. 13. 1), being a translation of the same word in the original. According to this theory we are now in the Laodicean period, and it is assumed, I suppose, that there is little of "love of the brethren" to-day.<sup>1</sup> When this theory is examined more closely, it falls to pieces like a house of cards. For example, if Laodicea speaks of the present time, how is it that there is not a word of any opposition from without? Neither is there the merest suggestion of any false doctrine within? Surely the very opposite to that which we might expect. We speak thus in a

<sup>1</sup> See N.T., vol. xxi. pp. 103, 104.

suggestive way. On the other hand, one cannot think, or believe, that those dear brethren of eighty years ago had all the good things, though we are free to admit that on first sight, at all events, there was much that might suggest the "brotherly love" stage. To suggest, however, that to them alone was "the love of the brethren" is going a little too far.

At that early time love of the brethren may have had a manifestation different from that of to-day; "Love of the brethren" is none the less real, we say to-day, than it was in the early times of eighty years ago.

Then again it is good for us ever to remember that we have not come to our place by accident. The time and the place have been ordered by Him who makes no mistakes; it is the day and the place that God has made for us. "David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell on sleep." Those who are ever harping on the good old times, are sinning against God. "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this." In order to be happy and to be useful in the service of our God it is absolutely imperative to forget the things which are behind. On the other hand, it is an equally grand mistake to think that when we arrive at a certain point, on before, it will be better then. If I remember correctly it was the writer of the beautiful hymn 99 in *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, who remarked that persons are always shortening their lives, as it were, by looking on to some certain future point in their lives. How often one hears a remark like this "Oh, I wish it was such and such a day." Of course in speaking thus we refer to our earthly pilgrimage, not to the moment, for which we patiently wait, when we shall be with Him and like Him; it will indeed be better then.

The happy and successful Christian, be assured, is the one who grasps God's purpose at the present moment, the eye of faith piercing through all this present evil age, endur-

ing the cross in view of the coming joy like his Master who has gone before.

What we have said seems to be suggested by the names that Joseph gave to his sons in Egypt—"the firstborn Manasseh: For, said he, God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father's house. And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath made me fruitful in the land of my affliction" (Gen. 41. 51, 52).

As mentioned before, it is in connexion with Philadelphia and Laodicea chiefly that we propose to write at this time. These churches, it appears to the writer, are rather distinct in character from the rest, more especially is this the case in the latter; indeed, it stands out unique in various features. We desire to point out some striking contrasts between the two.

Probably the reader will have already noticed that if there is anything, however slight, that is worthy of commendation by Him who walketh in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, it is not passed over unnoticed. How like a faithful and loving God—how very unlike ourselves! This word of commendation is given before a word of reproof is spoken. We have a notable exception in the case of Laodicea. There is nothing for commendation here. Even in the case of Sardis, though having a name to live and yet dead, they have some things that remain which they are enjoined to strengthen (Rev. 3. 1, 2).

There is one word<sup>1</sup> in connexion with these churches to which we desire very specially to call the attention of the reader: a word which is not found in connexion with Laodicea. This is important. This word is found in the letters addressed to most of the others and found no less than three times in connexion with Philadelphia. We refer to the word "didst." This speaks of a point in the past. Philadelphia had a history. Laodicea had none, we mean in a special

<sup>1</sup> That is an English word representing the occurrence of the aorist tense in the Greek.

sense. It has been well said by an eminent writer, "In the enquiry of divine truth, the pride of men hath ever inclined them to leave the oracles of God, for a mixture of their own invention." Nowhere in Scripture, perhaps, have we a better illustration of this fact than in the divine history of these seven churches. In earnestly contending for divine principles against the pride of man, leaving the oracles of God and introducing a mixture of their own inventions. Philadelphia has had a sore time and has been reduced to small dimensions.

It will have been noticed that it is in connexion with this church, as well as that of Smyrna that we have mention of the synagogue of Satan. It is worthy of notice too, that these two churches are the only ones to which there is not spoken one word of reproof. On the other hand two beautiful promises are given, both connected with a crown. In one case SMYRNA, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life"; in the other PHILADELPHIA, "I come quickly; hold fast that which thou hast that no one take thy crown."

Perhaps it will be best for the reader to think out for himself in an attitude of reverence and prayer what the expression "the synagogue of Satan" means. With a view to this, we suggest a very careful perusal of 2 Timothy 2. 14-26, especially noting well the last verse, where unfortunately our translations appear to be a little involved. May we suggest the following way of reading this verse: "If peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and that they may recover themselves unto the doing of the will of God out of the snare of the Devil, having been taken captive by him" (that is the Devil).

The remaining part of this verse—"of them which say they are Jews, and they are not, but do lie"—may have an explanation in the fact (but here we speak more suggestively) that the falling away from the faith in early times seems to



have been very much on the lines of going back to the works of the law—Judaism. For example, in the church in Colossæ—which we have already noticed was one of those in Asia in earlier apostolic times—we see this clearly (read Col. 2. 16, 23). But it is in the letter to the Galatians, perhaps, that this is seen most clearly. It cannot be too much emphasised that here we have not merely one assembly addressed, but a group of assemblies in the province of Galatia. It is of the greatest importance to bear this in mind. Moreover this was an adjoining province to that of Asia, and one of the five mentioned in 1 Peter. Consequently we see that it was a whole province—Iconium, Lystra and Derbe were churches of this province—which was disaffected by the false teachers and teaching. It is most difficult to select any one portion of the letter to illustrate what we wish to point out. The whole letter ought to be read, for it bears upon the same subject throughout. We quote, however, a few verses of the third chapter in full :—

“ O foolish Galatians, who did bewitch you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was openly set forth crucified ? This only would I learn from you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith ? Are ye so foolish ? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now perfected in the flesh ? ”

Indeed apostate Christianity seems to be composed of a tangled skein of Judaism and pagan superstition, and what mixture of Christianity there may be linked up with it, is mainly in the shape of arrogating to themselves and simulating that which is foretold in the Old Testament concerning Christ and His coming Kingdom connected with His ancient people.

It was this that led to the incongruity of a state Church by those who still nationally are held guilty of the murder of God's Son. The fact of the Son being on the right hand of God at the present time is evidence of this—

“ Sit Thou on My right hand

Till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.”

He said Himself, “ Of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold Me no more.”

Oh, the iniquities ! the persecutions ! the barbarities and cruelties ! which this ultimately led to, all in the name of the rejected Nazarene, the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief—the Babe of Bethlehem—the lowly Carpenter—He who had not where to lay His head—and, more than all, the Man upon the Cross of Golgotha.

On the other hand God hath said :—

“ Yet I have set My King

Upon My holy hill of Zion ” (Ps. 2. 6).

The time is yet future when—

“ . . . all kings shall fall down before Him :

All nations shall serve Him ” (Ps. 72. 11).

In closing our remarks, mostly in connexion with Philadelphia, we suggest that we have here a church that has come to be comparatively small—the large nominal Christian thing being, of course, outside of it ; something very precious to God, however, having passed in a collective sense through the purifying furnaces of trial, through keeping the Word, and not denying the Name.

In our next we propose to consider in detail some points in connexion with Laodicea.

*(To be continued.)*

## THE WILL OF GOD.

THE Christian in circumstances like those at present existing is very liable to be sadly confused as to the line of conduct that is becoming to him, unless he has a clear grasp of the principles of Holy Scripture that bear on the subject.

It is easy to see on the one hand that war is a very terrible thing, and that it involves mankind in many disastrous consequences. Men are hurried out of the world into eternity unprepared in every way, to meet One of whom in life they have thought little or nothing in many cases; and though many of those who die on the battlefield might in any case pass out of this life without God, yet we cannot but bitterly regret the loss of the opportunity that is otherwise often afforded in the evening of life to hear of God's salvation and turn to Him.

Again, we think of the distress that comes to the wives and young children and other dependents through the loss of the breadwinner of the family. Many also who do not suffer the pangs of death themselves nor actually lose husbands or fathers yet suffer acutely in many ways, and indeed in more ways than it is easy to conceive. If dire famine does not come upon this favoured land, it can scarcely fail to visit other parts of God's fair earth, and accentuate the misery of the poor.

On the other hand it would be unjust to the last degree to fail to recognise the difference between the responsibilities of those monarchs and statesmen who in their respective capacities have brought about the present struggle. Common fairness compels one to acknowledge the earnest endeavours that have been made by the British King and his advisers in the interests of international peace. And it is easy to believe that they have drawn the sword with extreme reluctance, though now that it is drawn they will be compelled to fight with the same energy, we had almost said ruthlessness, that warfare always demands.

Most of our readers will be British by human generation, and our sympathies will doubtless be with the land in which we live, and to a certain extent rightly so. For every sentiment of gratitude demands that we should recognise the many favours we have for long received in these British Isles. Here we can serve God according to His will, none daring to make us afraid ; here for many a long year the open Bible has been in the hands of the people ; here the gospel can be preached to all who will listen ; here in short we enjoy privileges second to none elsewhere enjoyed.

We should therefore pray for the peace of this land, and seek its welfare all the days of our lives (see Jeremiah 29. 7). But let us be careful that this sympathy does not carry us too far and make us disloyal to the higher claims of our Master. We do not wish to think of Christian young men keeping out of the army or navy from fear of death or even from a natural or sentimental abhorrence of war ; for we would prefer to be able to count them as both brave and hardy. Besides, if we were really British citizens in the true sense of the word, every claim of duty and devotion would demand even life itself to be offered on the altar of patriotism. And in days gone by and in another dispensation nothing was more honourable than to die for the fatherland, and especially when, as in this case, the justice of the war seems beyond question.

But what is the place of a Christian in the world ? For that is the question that requires an answer, and only from the inspired oracles can the answer be obtained. Now the Scriptures clearly teach us that our citizenship is in heaven (Phil. 3. 20). We are strangers here, we are not of the world, though we are in it (John 17. 6-18 ; 18. 36).

When the world committed the murder of the Son of God, and virtually said, " We will not have this Man to reign over us," He set His people apart by His own blood, that is His death, suffering without the gate for that purpose (Hebrews 13. 12). But if the world has rejected Him and

hence sees Him no more, God has exalted Him to the place at His own right hand where He now sits, and where He will sit till His enemies are made a footstool for His feet. When He comes again He will come to reign, He will take to Him His great power, and the kingdom of this world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Messiah (Rev. 11. 15). That is the true hope for this poor earth. He will come to bring salvation as none other can (Psalm 72.); and for that coming of His it is for us to wait, for we are powerless and can do nothing (as we are required to do nothing) to put things right in regard to the governance of this world.

If we truly appreciate the place of pilgrims and strangers that it is our privilege to occupy down here we certainly shall not be found taking part in the politics nor in the warfare of the peoples (Psa. 27. 5; 31. 19. 20). We shall seek to know our place in spirit in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty (Psa. 91.). This was what Abraham did when the four kings fought against five in his day and time; and when the time came he was able to do what God had for him to do; and deliver his poor brother Lot. For it is to be observed that the fighting of righteous Lot was of no value to those for whom he warred; whilst when Abraham came the power of God was with him. Let us be ready as Abraham was, to do what God has for us to do; and this will not be to fight with a human enemy as it was with him, for our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph. 6. 12).

History records many a valiant struggle that has been waged by Christians in defence of their lives or of their liberties, and in this we may find much, yea very much, to admire. But nothing can unsay the word of the Lord to Peter (who was the first and should have been the last to

fight the battles of the Prince of peace with carnal weapons) : “ All they that take the sword shall perish with the sword ” (John **18.** 10, 11 ; Matt. **26.** 51, 52). When the Lord Jesus came to earth He came as the great protagonist against the forces of evil. The powers of Sin, of Satan, of Death were ranged against Him. He fought them all, and conquered them by blood. But it was by His own blood that He won the great victory. And that victory was complete ; none can add to it, and none can take from it. When He comes again He will fight with the sword that goes forth out of His mouth ; then His great victory will be consummated ; and that will be all His own doing also (Rev. **18.** 11–21). We too have to fight, and Christian young men ought to be and need to be the bravest of the brave ; but not to kill nor to injure others ; that were far too unlike the Master for us to behave ourselves in such a manner. Let us set the Master Himself before us as our example, and not those of His people, how brave so ever they may have been, who have failed to follow in His steps in this respect. Well may we honour the courage of the Huguenots and others who have fought bravely for their lives and their religion, but it were a great mistake indeed to think that their courage and other virtues could make right that which is fundamentally contrary to the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ as to the conduct of His disciples in this our day and the dispensation of the grace of God.

We desire to emphasise by repetition that we earnestly desire to see the young men who are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ brave to the last degree. There is every scope for courage and devotion in the battles of the Lord ; there is a clamant need for earnest and zealous workers who in the cause of the King of kings and Lord of lords will not count even their lives dear unto them. And what a cause ! and what a reward awaits the conquerors ! Rewards that no earthly potentate can bestow are waiting for those who serve our Master with courage and devotion (see Rev. **2.** 7,

10, 17, 26-28, 3. 5, 12, 21). But in the army of the Lord there must be discipline and obedience. There must be no divided loyalty. His servants must know Him as their only Lord, and they must keep themselves unspotted from the world (James 1. 27). If it be otherwise and they are found playing their parts as men of the world, fighting its battles, and seeking its aims, as if the Son of God had never died, then they will assuredly find that they have lost the opportunities of their lives, and the defilement of spirit that will inevitably ensue will unfit them for the high and holy service of the Almighty King of the ages.

It may be well to remind ourselves here of how much there is that we can do in the present state of affairs that will be strictly within the bounds of that which becomes us and is at the same time honourable on our part as sojourners in these British Isles. First and chiefest of all, we can obey the mandatory exhortation of 1 Timothy 2. for the house of God, and be instant in prayer for kings, emperors, presidents, and their ministers according to the healthful words of that most excellent passage of the Holy Scriptures.

Secondly, we can seek to have renewed and enlarged sympathies for the sorrows of those we meet with, and take what opportunities we may have of speaking of the Lord to those in distress. Thirdly, we can seek to do the little things that are required of good citizens and may be fittingly imitated by us; for instance, we can avoid the foolish and hurtful practice of hoarding gold (if we have any); we can content ourselves with plain fare; we can bear any inconveniences with a cheerful mind; and super-added to all this we can seek to trust our God in reality and in fact.

Finally we can seek God in prayer that the issue of the present terrible war may be to open more fully for the gospel some of the darker places in so-called Christian Europe; and that such opportunities as may thus accrue may not be

neglected by us as God's people when the time comes. Perhaps we ought not to forget that we have something to confess to God of remissness in the time gone by as to making His gospel known in the ends of the earth.

C. M. LUXMOORE.

## Question and Answer.

**QUESTION 2.**—*And ye shall know my breach of promise (see Numbers 14. 34). Do you understand these words to mean that God changed His mind as to His intention with the greater part of that people?*

The text that you refer to is to me a most important one, as I understand it to be connected with a line of truth that runs throughout the Bible. I prefer the marginal reading which you get both in the Revised and Authorised Versions, "My change of purpose." God had, I believe, a purpose with regard to man from the commencement (see Genesis 1. 28), "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it." This was spoken to man in innocency and was never fulfilled. The Fall brought about an alteration of God's purpose. So in the verse you refer to there was a change in God's purpose or rather, as I understand it, in the mode of its being carried out. Israel was brought into the land but not in the person of those who fell in the wilderness.

Again Genesis 6. 6, "And it repented Jehovah that He had made man on the earth." This is another passage, you see, for God now destroys the earth with the exception of Noah and his family. This passage also points to an alteration of God's purpose and plan. In chapter 9. verse 1, God repeats to fallen man what was said to him in innocency, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." The words "subdue it" are here omitted, for earth has subdued man, for he has dropped and died upon its surface from pole to pole. This earth is a great cemetery and God's purposes for the time being are altered.



Were we to go further into the subject it would occupy too much space ; but to me it is a deeply interesting one which I have thought upon for many years, and I understand it to be a key to the understanding of much of Scripture.

The verse you refer to comes in as a very characteristic one, but you will notice the same principle with the nation of Israel in the land. They never accomplished God's purposes for which He brought them out of Egypt, and His conditional promises were set aside because of failure on the part of His people. But His unconditional covenant with Abraham has stood and in Christ the blessing has flowed out to the nations.

Ultimately God will triumph in His grace in the time of the restoration of all things of which God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets. Till then man is being shown out as an utter failure, and through man's failure God's purposes have been continually thwarted.

J. A. B.

Further contributions on this subject we hope will follow.

**QUESTION 3.**—*How may Hebrews 6. 1-7 be reconciled with the doctrine of the eternal safety of the believer? The difficulty is that the people spoken of "were made partakers of the Holy Spirit."*

The difficulty with this scripture seems to vanish when we bear in mind not only the immediate connexion, but the whole teaching of the letter to the Hebrews. If the closing verses of chapter 5. are read along with these verses it will help, the whole subject being one of pressing on unto perfection, "full growth" (see verses 7, 8).

"Not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God"—these words are important in connexion with verse 6, "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance"; that is in the sense the word is used in the second verse.

Presumably there were some amongst the Hebrew Christians who believed, or were liable to fall into the error of believing, that this could take place again and again, after the example of those Old Testament sacrifices which were offered again and again, which could never make the offerer perfect. The whole book shows the very opposite to this—the contrast between those sacrifices, which could never take away sin, and the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (see chapter 10. 1–18, especially verses 10, 11, 14 and 18). The words “seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame” would be better read “crucifying for themselves the Son of God and putting Him to an open shame” (there is no word for “seeing” as in our bibles and the verb is the present participle)—that is if such a thing were possible. To the one who has once for all believed on Jesus as the Christ in his heart (for God knoweth all hearts) there never can be a repetition of this. Such have come to the Cross and seen the Christ of God there for them, and this can never by any possible means be repeated.

The words “made partakers of the Holy Spirit,” not to speak of the other things mentioned in verse 4, seem to me to preclude the idea of mere profession; besides, it is very improbable that in a day when faith in Jesus the Nazarene meant an entire severance of all that made life worth living to a Hebrew, that any should then make a mere profession of faith in Jesus without belief in the heart that He was the Messiah. At the present time Gentile believers know little or nothing of what it is for a Jew to become a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an undeniable fact that such are looked upon by their kith and kin as dead and buried.

On the other hand there was a very real danger of these believing Hebrews apostatising or falling away. The words “then fell away” cannot mean falling away from grace and losing eternal life. Those who quote this scripture to show that such is possible, quote the very scripture that is absolutely destructive to the theory; to such this

scripture proves far too much, for if it were possible for a real believer to fall away from grace then there cannot be the remotest chance of such ever being 'saved again—"it is impossible." As regards what the words mean—"and then fell away"—many passages in the book might be cited (see chapter 2. 1, 4; chapters 3. and 4., especially noticing verses 6, 12-14; again, chapter 10. 39, "But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition; but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul.") If it is remembered that the word perdition here is the word for "waste" in Matthew 26. 8, it will help also, remembering that the "soul" means the "life." This verse is somewhat similar to verse 9 of chapter 6., "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation though we thus speak."

J. C. R.

We propose to print further contributions on this subject. Whilst it is quite clear that nothing in this passage is contrary to the doctrine of the believer's eternal security, there are real difficulties in connexion with the interpretation of Hebrews 6. 1-7 itself.

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## Five and Twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME II., NUMBER 1.

As in Nature so also in the things of grace ; the watcher on the mountain-top, who has spent, it may be, many a cold, weary hour waiting for the sunrise, first sees the break of day, is the first to be bathed in the sunlight and to feel its genial glow ; then, as he stands and looks from that height, he sees the day breaking in the far depths beneath him until the valleys are lit up with the sunshine, and the chill of night has passed away. Thus with the redeemed of the Lamb : we wait and watch for the morning, and that morning will break on us whilst the chill hours of night are still upon the world—the most chilling hour, for this is often just before the daybreak—*The Great Tribulation*. Not only tribulation, for that is ours, and all who will live righteous in Christ Jesus shall suffer it.

But some will say : What of worldly saints ? Can they be said to be on the mountain-top and watching there ?

Yes ; grace gives them their place there. Their practical experience may be an earthly walk, darkness of soul, worldliness of heart, and yet they, as the Lord's, will be caught up to meet Him in the air when He returns. Will they then be no losers ? Will they have equal glory with those whose life and walk correspond with their heavenly place ? Oh, no ; they will be sad losers, losers of reward, losers of glory. Some will be saved so as by fire : they will have to look at their life labour burnt up ; busy builders, and yet they have never learned the divine pattern to build by ; earnest strivers, but they have not striven lawfully ; it may be hinderers of the present kingdom, to be accounted little in the kingdom to come.

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## THE TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES TO THE UNIQUE PERSONALITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

*(Continued from page 250.)*

HAVING referred more particularly so far to the divine records in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and only incidentally to the gospel according to John, I will ask your attention to a few verses more in the so-called synoptic gospels before we turn to John's testimony.

We learn from Matthew 26. 62-66, Mark 14. 60-64, Luke 22. 66-71, that when the Lord stood before Caiaphas and the council, the witnesses who were brought forward failed to agree in the evidence they gave against Him ; and that when the high priest adjured Him to tell them who He was, whether He was the Christ, the Son of God, He not only gave an unqualified answer to this question, but added memorable words, saying :

“ From henceforth shall the Son of Man be seated at the right hand of the power of God ” ; and “ Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

The words of those who heard these sayings of the Lord leave no doubt as to the meaning that they attached to them and that they were evidently intended to attach to them. He was and is the Son of the Blessed as here and elsewhere in Matthew, Mark, and Luke He is represented to be.

The words of the Lord Jesus recorded by John, in which He speaks of Himself, do not differ in any essential characteristic from those recorded by the three evangelists whose writings we have been looking at so far ; and indeed nothing could be more definite and plain than the passages I have quoted from Matthew, Mark and Luke. As there is an idea in the minds of some that we need to go to John to get clear proof of the Lord's divine nature, I have been more particular to draw your attention to the passages I have mentioned

already in the so-called synoptical gospels ; but we will now look more particularly at John, merely referring very briefly to the scriptures in which he quotes some of the things the Lord said of Himself.

In His interview with Nathanael the Lord takes the title of Son of God (John 1. 47-51). In purging the temple He speaks of it as His Father's house (John 2. 13-22). In His interview with Nicodemus He speaks of Himself as God's only begotten Son, and as One who, though on earth, had come from heaven and was in heaven (John 3. 13, 16-18).

The words that follow the healing of the sick man on the sabbath are very important. Having spoken of God as His Father in the words "My Father worketh even until now, and I work," the Jews sought to kill Him, because He not only brake the sabbath, but also called God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. These words expound with perfect clearness the words of the Lord. He called God His own Father (*πατέρα ἰδίου*, *patera idion*). He made Himself equal with God. This is confirmed in the verses next following (John 5. 19-47).

We shall pass over intervening chapters and come to the Lord's words to the blind man to whom He had given sight, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God ?" and "Thou hast both seen Him and it is He that speaketh with thee" (John 9. 35-37).

It is perhaps not generally noticed that the 10th chapter of John gives us a continuation of the discussion that commenced in connexion with the healing of the blind man. In other words, there is no break of the sense between the 9th and 10th chapters. As we go on in the latter, then, we come to the point where we read that it was the feast of the dedication and it was winter. The Jews asking the Lord to tell them plainly if He were the Christ, He makes a reply ending with the remarkable words, "I and the Father are one." That is to say one in nature, for the word "one" in the Greek is in the neuter gender. Following on the narrative

a few verses further we find that the Jews said that the Lord, being a man, made Himself God. Now we have here a very clear issue, for the Jews were right in stating that the Lord said that He was God. The point is—Which was right? He said that He was one with God the Father; they said that He was only a man. If we believe Him we cannot go wrong; and it is impossible to believe Him and doubt what He said of Himself, “I and the Father are one.” Observe, please, that this word “one” is printed with a small “o” as its initial letter; for it tells of unity of nature. It is not as when we say, “Thou Sacred One,” for here the word “One” stands for the Divine Being viewed in His unity, just as “Almighty Three” speaks of the Three Persons in the Godhead.

If we now turn to the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead we must do so without altogether confining our attention to what John tells us. For here it is a convenient place to call attention to the clear and repeated statement of Paul, that the divine sonship of the Lord Jesus was evidenced by the resurrection of dead ones; for so he writes in the beginning of the letter he wrote to the disciples in Rome. So, too, in his defence before Festus and Agrippa, Paul said that, in testifying as he did to small and great, he said nothing but what Moses and the prophets had foretold, namely that the Messiah was to suffer and to proclaim light both to the people of Israel and to the heathen by the resurrection of dead persons. Festus thought the resurrection of dead persons an impossibility, being, as he doubtless was, virtually a sceptic (perhaps an Epicurean), and Paul therefore a man who had been driven to madness. But Agrippa knew better, and Paul appealed to him as one who knew that dead persons had been raised to life. It is clear from the gospels that in addition to the case of Lazarus and that of the son of the widow of Nain, and others of whom we do not know any particulars, whom the Lord raised during His lifetime before the cross, many were raised at the time of His own

resurrection (Matt. 28. 51-53). It is not quite clear to me to which of these cases Paul refers when he speaks to Agrippa in the words recorded in Acts 26. 26. Perhaps he refers to them all in general.

But not to stop to speak of this further we might turn to John 11. to notice the dignity of the Eternal Son on this memorable day, the entire lack of any of that display that a man could hardly have avoided showing in connexion with such a display of power. But to the Lord the miracle or sign of raising Lazarus was a small thing. He had only to speak, and in His words there was power. No mere son of Adam could have made Lazarus hear, but the Lord's voice gave life to the dead one just because He willed that it should do so. Rightly viewed, this manner of the Lord is most valuable evidence of His supreme excellency, of His greatness beyond compare.

The words of the Lord to Philip recorded in John 14. should be carefully pondered. Read from verse 6. Note specially verses 10, 11. The words in verse 28 of this chapter, "The Father is greater than I," offer a difficulty to some. But the fact is that for the exercise of His mediatorial work the Son took a place of subjection and thus He could truly say that the Father was greater ; but in essence and nature Father and Son and Holy Spirit are equal.

Indeed when we were reading earlier of the Father committing or delivering truth to the Son, this is in connexion with the Son's mediatorial work. For apart from this He has, as the Eternal Son, the same original omniscience as the Father ; He knows all things, the end from the beginning ; as the Father knows all things and the Spirit knows all things.

*(To be continued.)*



# THE TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES TO THE UNIQUE PERSONALITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

*(Concluded from page 288.)*

WE shall now look at the doctrine of the Logos as expounded for us in the gospel according to John. He commences by telling us that the Person whom he calls the Word (Greek, ὁ λόγος Ho Logos) was in the beginning. You must please note that this is the exact opposite to what we get, for example, in Genesis 1. 1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The latter passage means that the heavens began to be at the time indicated. But we are told "In the beginning was the Word," that is to say, if you carry back your mind to the time when everything else had a beginning, then He was. The Greek word here is, perhaps I ought to say, rightly and literally rendered "was" (ἦν ēn). This might be otherwise expressed by saying that He was before all time ; or to quote words of Paul, "He is before all things" (Col. 1. 17).

We are further told that the Word was with God, and that He was in the beginning with God. The word "God" here has the article and means the Person whom we call "God the Father." Moreover we are told that the Word was God. This is a statement as to the nature of the Word. There is no article before God here. It is not that the Word is identical with the One called just before "the God." On the contrary there is no confusion of the Divine Persons in the Holy Scriptures. The statement is that the Word was God, being of the same nature as God the Father, with whom He was in the beginning. Let me set forth these statements again :

In the beginning was the Word.

The Word was with the God.

The Word was God.

He was with the God in the beginning.

As I understand, John does not here tell us anything new,

but he puts the all-important facts in a clear and unmistakable light. Before passing on, I might ask you to contrast the statement that the Word was in beginning with the contrasted statement that there became a man sent from God whose name was John. The R.V. says, "there came a man;" which is better than the incorrect A.V. "there was a man." But the fact is indisputable, that John had a beginning, whereas the Word had none. The Word was; John the Immerser became or came into being.

But how do we know who this was who is called the Logos or the Word? We are told a few verses lower down that He became flesh, and dwelt among men, full of grace and truth. There can be no mistake as to who this was. Blind shall we be indeed if we do not recognise the portrait of the One full of grace and truth. Now you will note that while as to His eternal existence and deity He was; it is also true that He became, for He became flesh in order to tabernacle amongst the sons of men.

I think, perhaps, that the statement here that He became flesh, is one of the most illuminating, if not the most illuminating in the realm of revelation. It was not a question of appearance, it was a matter of reality. He became flesh. He was truly man. To this agree the words of Paul in his letter to the people of God at Philippi, "Christ Jesus; who being originally in the form of God counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross" (Phil. 2. 5-8). But Paul's words to Timothy confirm the statement of John as to the true humanity of the Word, for Paul says, "one Mediator between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus."

So too we read in the letter to the Hebrews. In what we call the 1st chapter indeed we get the strongest possible confirmation of **all** we have elsewhere learnt as to the supreme

dignity of the Lord Jesus and His true, proper and original deity. But as we pursue the 2nd chapter we learn that the Eternal Son took part of the blood and flesh of which we are sharers in common.

We had better look more closely at the teaching of Hebrews 2. We read in verse 5 that the age to come is not to be in subjection to angels. But the following verses give a quotation from a psalm of David to show that He to whom all is to be brought into subjection is man and son of man. We shall be getting at the heart of our subject if we can clearly see who He is as to His original nature of whom these things are thus said, and what is the meaning of His being spoken of as son of man and also as Himself being man.

As to the former, it is clear from verse 9 (whatever other difficulties there may be in that verse) that the man and son of man of verses 6, 7 is none other than the Lord Jesus. And of Him we have learnt from other testimony in the Scriptures of truth, as we may learn from chapter 1. of Hebrews, that He is the Son of God, eternal and almighty as to His own original and unchangeable nature. See in particular, in addition to passages of Scripture already quoted, verses 10 to 12 of Hebrews 1.

“Thou, Lord, in the beginning didst lay the foundation of the earth,  
And the heavens are the works of Thine hands ;  
They shall perish ; but Thou continuest :  
And they all shall wax old as doth a garment ;  
And as a mantle shalt Thou roll them up,  
As a garment, and they shall be changed ;  
But Thou art the same,  
And Thy years shall not fail.”

These words, we are distinctly told, are addressed by God the Father to His blessed Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. They are absolutely meaningless if they do not convey the meaning that the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, is eternal and unchangeable in His divine nature ; and that He is the One who made the heavens and the earth.

We want now to understand what is meant by the Lord Jesus being called man and son of man. In the Old Testament we read on different occasions of angelic beings appearing to man in what to human eyes seemed to be a human form and one of the Hebrew words usually translated "man" is applied from time to time to these angelic visitors. But the attentive reader of the Old Testament knows that these angels are not represented as being in any real sense of the word human in their nature. We never read of one of them being born, or growing up, or being weary or faint, nor of one of them dying.

On the other hand, when the Lord Jesus came into this world He was born; He grew in wisdom and stature; He became wearied with a journey; He suffered; He died.

The explanation of all this, divinely given in Hebrews 2. 17, is that it behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make atonement for the sins of the people. Evidently His brethren here are the people, that is the people of Israel, His brethren according to the flesh.

This is what I understand to be meant in verse 16—"He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham" is the literal translation given by the Revisers. Evidently this means that when God had prepared for Him a body in the Virgin Mary's womb, He coming down took that body and took therewith the nature of man.

Paul says in his letter to Philippians (2. 6, 7, 8) "taking the form of a slave, becoming in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man." It is quite certain that this does not mean that the incarnation was only a manifestation in human form, that is in appearance. We may profitably mention some of the definite proofs that Scripture affords as to the reality of the Lord Jesus Christ's humanity, though we have already done so in part.

First, then we will draw attention to the life of the Lord

Jesus Christ, wherein He behaved Himself so perfectly as a man from infancy at least up to, let us say, His baptism by John, that none of His associates suspected that He was aught more than man. Indeed at a later date such are heard saying :—

“ Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these powers ? Is not this the carpenter’s son ? Is not his mother called Mary ? and his brethren, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas ? and his sisters, are they not all with us ? ”

“ Whence hath this man these things ? and, What is the wisdom that is given unto this man, and what mean such powers wrought by his hands ? Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon ? and are not his sisters here with us ? ”

“ Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know ? how doth he now say ‘ I am come down out of heaven ’ ? ”

—as recorded respectively in Matthew **13.** 54–56 ; Mark **6.** 2, 3 ; John **6.** 42.

Secondly, we have such statements as that of Paul in 1 Timothy **2.** 6, “ *ἄνθρωπος Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς* (anthrōpos Christos Iēsous) ” ; as the Revisers very happily render it, “ Himself man, Christ Jesus.”

Thirdly, whereas man is described for us in Scripture as being of a threefold nature, consisting of spirit and soul and body, we also read of the Lord Jesus Christ that as man He had spirit and soul and body, as we will show briefly by scriptural quotation :—

When He was upon the cross and all things had been accomplished He yielded up His spirit (Matt. **27.** 50), He said, “ Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit ” (Luke **23.** 46) ; He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit (John **19.** 30). All of which is in agreement with the teaching of the Old Testament that when man dies the spirit returns to God who gave it (Eccles. **12.** 7). But it must

be remembered that the Lord's yielding up of His spirit was a voluntary act ; as the language used in the Gospels clearly shows. There are other passages that speak of the Lord's human spirit ; but it is often difficult to distinguish whether this is meant or the Holy Spirit, so perfectly were they in unison continually.

The prophetic Scriptures teach us that at His death the soul of the Lord Jesus descended into the nether world, that is Sheol or Hades (the words are synonymous). Peter, quoting David's Golden Psalm (16.), explains that David, foreseeing the resurrection of the Messiah, said that His soul would not be left in Sheol or Hades (Acts 2. 25-31). When in Gethsemane also the Lord spoke of His soul as being exceedingly sorrowful even unto death (Matt. 26. 38 ; Mark 14. 34 ; and see John 12. 27, which refers to a different occasion).

When we come to speak of the body of the Lord Jesus we must distinguish between that which was prepared for Him in Mary's womb and that with which He was raised from the dead.

As to the former we are told that He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh ; that is to say that though He was Himself absolutely free from sin (both as to His nature and His acts He was sinless, spotless, undefiled) yet He had a body such that He could die ; sharing to this extent with His brethren in the blood and flesh that is their nature.

As to the latter we are told that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more ; that it is a body of glory that is now His.

Even in the body that was prepared for Him in Mary's womb Death could have no power over Him ; but His glorified body is the witness that He has conquered Death. He has the keys of Death and of Hades.

While the body with which the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead differs in very important respects from that in which He had tabernacled on earth as the

Man of Sorrows, it is truly a human body, and He is as truly Man to-day as when He travelled to and fro the roads of Palestine in the days of His earthly pilgrimage.

In evidence of this it is sufficient to mention that when the Saviour comes from heaven (for whom all citizens of heaven daily wait) and changes, as He surely will, these bodies of ours, He will fashion them so that they may be conformed to the body of His glory, as Paul told the saints in Philippi (3. 20). John similarly tells us in his first letter (3. 2) that we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. Yet again we are distinctly told that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever (Heb. 13. 8).

We have given three definite lines of evidence, each going to prove the reality of the manhood of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He truly became man; and we may say that wherein He differed as man from the men to whom He came His was the true and perfect manhood. He was in the highest and noblest sense, the Man of God's right hand, the Son of man whom God made strong for Himself.

But we now proceed to give what is perhaps the strongest argument of all in favour of the true and essential humanity of the adorable Lord Jesus Christ. Most of you will remember the cry of the ancient Job, when he was oppressed with the dread majesty of God:—

For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him,  
That we should come together in judgment.  
There is no daysman betwixt us,  
That might lay his hand upon us both.

That is exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ is. He came to this world, and partook of manhood that He might be a daysman who could lay His hand upon God and upon man also.

This carries us back to what we have already said, indeed to what is stated in Hebrews 2. and elsewhere that it was necessary for the accomplishment of His work that He

should become like unto those whom He came to save. Perhaps as we are now drawing to a close we should be content to draw attention to one or two other passages of Scripture in this connexion. And first we will again quote the well-known words of Paul to Timothy (1 Tim. 2. 5), "There is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." It is evident from this passage that the manhood of the Lord Jesus was necessary to His exercise of His work as Mediator.

Then some brief mention should surely be made of the story of the redemption of the parcel of land that had been Elimelech's. There can be no doubt that the Law given to the people of Israel by Moses was destined by God to illustrate truths of vital importance in the purposes of God; and this is certainly so with the laws of inheritance. Very well then, a study of the Book of Ruth shows that in order to be able to redeem a portion of land that had been pledged in a time of poverty or misfortune it was needful that the redeemer should be akin to the living representative of the original owner; and moreover that it was not every kinsman who could or would so redeem his kinsman's property. The Lord Jesus Christ is our Kinsman, near enough in kinship to redeem, and not prevented as the nameless "such a one" of the Ruth story was either by inability to redeem, or by unwillingness to pay the price or to take the consequences of the act.

In our consideration of what the Scriptures testify as to the personality of the Lord Jesus Christ we have learnt that He is truly divine, and this as His eternal and unalterable nature. We have also learnt that He became man, of spirit and soul and body subsisting. We have learnt that His manhood was real and not a mere appearance, but that His nature as man was spotless and perfect; so that in it He pleased God every moment of His life.

It must be further said that the reality of His manhood



never derogated from the dignity of His godhood. And again the eternal and unchanging divine nature that was His never hindered Him from the full exercise of that which belonged to His humanity. He was the All-knowing God, but as man He grew in wisdom and stature. All things were made by Him and in Him all things consist, yet He lay as a babe in Mary's arms, and died in weakness on Golgotha's cross.

We cannot understand this, of course we cannot. Even angels are at a loss to understand it. But here is the Mystery of godliness—

He who was manifested in the flesh ;  
justified in the spirit ;  
seen of angels ;  
preached among the nations ;  
believed on in the world ;  
received up in glory.

It is ours to believe, though we cannot understand ; and well we may believe and bow in worship, for only such an one could be Saviour for man.

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## HIGH PLACES AND GOD'S PLACE.

*(Concluded from page 264.)*

IN Israel the quality of the high places varied very greatly. There is also a great variety among the sects of Christendom. For whilst there is much that is excellent in connexion with some of them, there are others which evidently bear the marks of an apostate imitation of God's one place, an imitation of God's assembly, substituting human authority for divine, a worldly material building for God's building of living stones ; a man-made priesthood instead of the holy priesthood of God's choice ; feasts of human arrangement instead of the one great comprehensive memorial of the Lord's appointment, and so forth.

All sects, whether better or worse as compared with one another, are a departure from God's ideal ; some are so

far removed as to be identified with that which is both of the world and Satan; others are of a much purer kind, but all are the result of a limiting of God, a choosing in His one will, an exalting of one thing at the expense of others. Such limitations are ever dangerous, but in the sects they have become systematised. A standard has been adopted, less extensive in most respects than the will of God, but broadened by the additions of man's will.

The way for individual saints who would reach God's one place—His house, and there carry out His will, must ever begin with true exercise of heart as to the wrong. They must be clear that such diversity and disunity as are evidenced in sects are wrong, that God has one will for His people and one ground of gathering. The sect, the high place, can never be converted into God's place. God's place is where the whole of God's will can be done, as it is learnt; a sect is a place where only that part of God's will that has been adopted can be done, where the doctrine is systematically limited and stereotyped. To get to God's place the sect must be left. Then there must be the distinct purpose to go in for the whole truth, for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. The Scriptures must be searched, not merely as relating to the privileges and blessings of believers, but such as are concerned with the collective, responsible character of the people of God. The fact of the lordship of Christ; the imperativeness of His will; the need of discipleship by the reception of the word, of baptism as following, of the association of such in the Fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, as expressed in the assemblies of God, of the grouping together of such assemblies in provinces as the churches in Asia, and of the united responsibility, of all to one another and the Lord, all these things must be clearly seen.

In the earlier part of this paper it was suggested that over a long period of time from the rejection of Shiloh to the recognition of Jerusalem there was no place of the name,

and that until God interposed and appointed a place, there was no possibility of His people fulfilling His word in that respect. The utmost they could do was to pray for the time to come and to be on the alert to respond when it did.

Similarly we believe that in consequence of the unfaithfulness of God's people in this dispensation many hundreds of years passed without it being possible to be together in that unity which is of God, and so to give expression to His will as to His house. What with the great apostasy of Rome and national churches, together with the many sects (high places) which have been established, there has been a falling short of God's purpose in His place, His house.

Has no attempt been made to get back to the true principle of gathering? It must be owned that in connexion with many sects no such profession was made. Their existence is the result of a revolt from some unscriptural authority or of contending for some doctrine or line of truth which had been lost sight of, or for the adoption of a certain form of church government. We admit that when the greater denominations came into existence, very little light was given as to the nature of the church as an out-called thing, and if they left the national church it was not because they thought that such a thing was wrong, but because its government was oppressive.

Undoubtedly light from God has greatly and constantly increased, and within a comparatively short period (say a century) many believers who had before been associated with the national establishment or with other sects, have left them to exercise the privileges of the breaking of the bread, liberty of ministry and so forth, and such have made discovery of much precious truth relating to the heavenly calling of the saints; the person of the Lord and His coming.

But while acknowledging all this we are still bound to draw attention to certain matters which have been overlooked by such and which we judge to be necessarily associ-

ated with the place of the name. To these attention has already been drawn, but in order to avoid misunderstanding we repeat them :—

(1) The authority of the Lord Jesus. (2) Discipleship by the word being received. (3) Baptism on confession. (4) The adding of such in assembly. (5) Such only eligible for the privileges and responsibilities of the assembly. (6) The unity of the assembly in the city. (7) The unity of assemblies in the province. (8) The unity of the Fellowship throughout the world.

As to the means to be employed to bring about and maintain such a condition, we do not now attempt to set them forth, but we record the fact that until very recent times we have not known of any holding and giving effect to these things.

We have heard of being gathered on the ground of the One Body, but whatever that may mean, we cannot find such a principle of gathering in the Word.

We have heard of the church being in ruins, but whatever that may mean, we know that the will of God as to His place remains, and we know that even after being carried to Babylon, the remnant came back to the place He had chosen.

We know that many (and their number increases) claim liberty to do what is right in their own eyes without any regard to the one will of God for His people—to such we have nothing to say, except that independence is unthinkable in the things of God.

We hope we have not wearied the reader who may have followed us thus far. We have attempted to give a broad view, so that the word “unity” as connected with God’s holy name, people and service may be plainly seen. We trust that the application of the great truth to New Testament times will be readily appreciated, and as to the application to our own times, we entreat the candid and honest consideration of the reader.

S. J. HILL.

## Five-and-twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME II., NUMBER 1.

THEY who enjoyed the love of the Lord Jesus Christ during the days of His flesh were comforted by Him when the hour of His departure drew near with the sweet promise, "If I go, . . . I come again, and I will receive you unto Myself" (John 14. 3). And we who in later times have believed on Him have become partakers of the same precious hope (Eph. 4. 4)—the hope of His personal coming for those who are in Christ. For this too He looks, joyfully anticipating the moment when He shall present to Himself glorious the Church which He loved and for which He gave Himself (Eph. 5. 25, 27).

But besides this, we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now (Rom. 8. 22), and that the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God (Rom. 8. 19). How as we look around to-day we can echo the cry of Asaph, "The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty" (Psalm 74. 20). And does not the bitter wail of human woe, does not the deep murmur of brute suffering, reach the ears of our Saviour God? We trow it does. Social reformers may cry out in indignation at cruelty to children or cruelty to animals; they may expose the infamy of "sweating" or denounce the atrocities of the Turks. All their efforts can but fail, or at the most have but a very partial and insignificant success; but there sits to-day upon the throne of God the Man of Sorrows, with a feeling, human heart. He waits, He longs for the coming day of God's good time, when Himself shall save the children of the needy, when Himself shall break in pieces the oppressors. For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper; . . . and precious shall their blood be in His sight (Psalm 72.).

## THE ONE THING FOR GOD IN A DAY OF APOSTASY.

*(Concluded from page 274.)*

WE now come to examine more closely the last church of the seven, namely, Laodicea, and first of all we wish to point out a few contrasts causing this church to be distinct from the rest, at least so it seems to the mind of the present writer.

(1) There is no commendation given to this church whatever.

(2) There are no heresies mentioned as being within, or opposition mentioned as being without.

(3) There is nothing said as to a past history expressive of trials and separations such as we find mentioned in connexion with, for example, Philadelphia and Sardis, and other churches of the seven.

Notwithstanding all this, it is well to be reminded of the fact once again that the Lord Jesus, walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, is near to this church just as He is near to the others. The importance of remembering this will be seen later on.

It may be as well in order to be explicit to consider some of the above points a little more fully before we proceed.

As regards the second point, we find, for example, that in Pergamum they had there some who held the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit fornication; also some that held the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like manner (Rev. 2. 14, 15).

Likewise in Thyatira: "But I have this against thee, that thou sufferest the woman Jezebel which calleth herself a prophetess; and she teacheth and seduceth My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols" (Rev. 2. 20).

As to heresies and opposition without, we find, as already

pointed out, that we have a synagogue of Satan both in Smyrna and in Philadelphia.

Then as regards the third point, we read in connexion with PHILADELPHIA: "I know thy works (behold I have set before thee a door opened, which none can shut) that thou hast a little power, and didst keep My word, and didst not deny My name. . . . Because thou didst keep the word of My patience. . . ."

In connexion with SARDIS: "Remember therefore how thou hast received and didst hear. . . ."

We might easily multiply instances of the occurrence in connexion with the other churches of the word "didst," which is expressive in English of the Greek aorist, indicating a point in the past; but we think these instances will suffice.

We have already noticed as fairly suggested in Scripture that Philadelphia was small, the great bulk of God's children in that place being outside the collective testimony for Him.

From the three facts mentioned above (unique to Laodicea) the presumption seems to be very strong that in Laodicea it was just the reverse of this, that here probably nearly all, not to say all, were together.

The words of verses 15-17 are quite distinct also from anything spoken to any one of the others.

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spue thee out of My mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Of course these words have reference to the state of this church as existing in the closing years of the first century, when the Revelation was written, and in connexion with this time, as well as for some time previous, it does not require a great flight of imagination to picture Laodicea disdainfully

pointing a finger of scorn at the sister assembly of Philadelphia, which because of faithfulness to the Word and Name had become small and insignificant in the sight of men. We can imagine we hear such words as these: "You have divided the saints by your hair-splitting controversies over minor points." "You are for ever making trouble over non-essentials." "You ought to have more love amongst yourselves." "Look at us, we are flourishing as an assembly. Behold us, what numbers we have—large and prospering. We have all the saints with us in Laodicea." As given in the inspired words, they were rich in their own eyes and needing nothing; but in the eyes and words of the Amen the faithful and true Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God, they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked.

The following few lines we give more suggestively. To the writer's mind this assembly may well be a prototype of what ultimately came to be the so-called orthodox or state church, where eventually one man of outstanding ability and force of character could easily dominate the whole; the rest being merely passive, having no interest, energy, heart, and, as they might say, no time to look into such matters for themselves. Doubtless in the early centuries this kind of indolence and state developed with great rapidity, culminating in that spirit of self-ease and indifference expressed in a later day by one who said that he "rejoiced in the security of an infallible church, for it saved the toil of inquiry and the torment of doubt."

It is an historical fact that one of the Councils at which the canon of Scripture was considered was held in Laodicea A.D. 361. We do not lay any stress upon this, much less imply that it was then an assembly of God, "a golden lampstand." Long before this the lampstand had been removed. But we simply suggest that it was at this time a leading ecclesiastical centre of the so-called orthodox church. This at all events is suggestive. It may interest some, especially



at this time when the Greek Church is brought into prominence through the war, to learn that there was no rupture between the Eastern and Western churches (Greek and Roman) until A.D. 1053.

It is apparent that in Laodicea there was little interest and life in the things of God, and where such a state of things exists there is not that element conducive to a multiplication of heterogeneous sects such as possibly arose in, for instance, Philadelphia, and which so-called Protestantism has generated in later times. As we have suggested, there was, as far as we can see, nothing like this in Laodicea—not enough energy or life for this.

In our own day many of the smaller sects have been brought into existence through a rebound from the formality and coldness of so-called orthodox Christianity, and probably in some cases, in the first instance, from a sincere desire for more spiritual life. On the other hand, where this life and energy exist there is ever a danger of failing to keep rank (see 2 John 9). Therefore the necessity of everything being brought to the test of the Word of God—if not, sectarianism must increase very rapidly.

In saying this we do not forget that the words “prove all things” (1 Thess. 5. 21) are indubitably addressed to overseeing men: compare verses 12 and 14: even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil.

In a suggestive and non-expository article such as this we could not pretend to deal with every verse, although so pregnant with teaching. We cannot pass by, however, verse 18. Briefly the verse can be subdivided into three parts, speaking of “*gold*,” “*white garments*,” and “*eye-salve*.”

We suggest that we have in the first that which will stand the test of the judgment seat of Christ (compare 1 Peter 1. 7).

To-day, as in Laodicea, it is quite possible for a Christian to shirk the fiery trials with which, more or less, the path

of every faithful one is beset—to make the way as easy for oneself as possible. It seems to the present writer that the teaching of Laodicea in this connexion has much for us in the present day. How many of our difficulties could we banish to the winds if there was a little compromise on this and on that. May God in His great mercy deliver us from that spirit, which we see is hateful to God, “neither hot nor cold”; that spirit which seems to be characteristic of the present time, “peace at any price,” peace which is indeed dearly bought if at the expense of truth: truth must be bought, and it is an expensive commodity. “Buy the truth and sell it not” (Proverbs **23. 23**). Perhaps it is in the fact that so many see in Laodicea that which apparently is characteristic of the present day, that the theory before mentioned of this being the Laodicean era is so generally adopted. If it were not for more weighty considerations over against this, the writer himself might have some temptation to adopt it.

The white garments would appear to suggest “the righteous acts of the saints” (see Rev. **19. 8**). True Christianity is not merely negative, but positive. Perhaps herein lies much of our failure and weakness.

Might not the eyesalve suggest to us those wonderful words of Ephesians **1.**, “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him; having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe.”

Herein we may learn the miserable, poor state of this church. Any church which is void of this growing knowledge of God is in a poor condition indeed (compare Philippians **3. 10**). This, however, has to be bought as well, for the three statements of the verse are linked with the word “and” (Greek; *καὶ*, kai).

We now come to verse 19, which in connexion with what we have been considering is most instructive.

“As many as I love I reprove and chasten: be zealous therefore and repent.” Surely the compassions of God are great. “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” (Lamentations 3. 22). In the midst of all that was so hateful to Himself in this church, the Lord was dealing with His own in love, watching tenderly and assiduously over the crucible, not of him who is a refiner of gold and silver, but of the hearts of men. “The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but Jehovah trieth the hearts” (Prov. 17. 3). “Gold is tried by fire, man by affliction.”

It has been said by one of old, “The night brings out stars, as sorrow shows us truths.” Things down here are so seductive and Satan’s arguments so specious that if it were not for the chastening hand of our God upon us many of us would be soon drawn away into the allurements of this present evil age. It has been said, “Corn is cleansed with wind and the soul by chastisements.” Thus being kept in the path we increasingly grow into further knowledge of His mind and will.

The following beautiful lines are suggested by what we have been saying; the name of the writer I have never learned:—

“’Tis easy to trust when the sky is clear,  
And the tide in our favour flowing,  
When our barque is sailing o’er placid seas,  
With balmy breezes blowing.  
But oh! to trust when the adverse gales  
Seem ever to rise and bear us  
Away from the haven where we would be,  
Just when its shores seem near us.

“’Tis easy to trust when the brilliant stars  
Their friendly rays are shedding,  
Or the full-orb’d moon with flood of light  
Illumines the path we’re treading.

But oh ! to trust when the fogs' are thick,  
 Each well-known way-mark hiding,  
 When we see not the steps before our feet,  
 And feel not the strong Hand guiding.

“ 'Tis easy to trust when our friends are near,  
 And we look on their pleasant faces,  
 When a goodly heritage is ours,  
 And the lines in pleasant places.  
 But oh ! to trust in the time of need,  
 In the hour of lonely sorrow,  
 When our brightest day is dark at noon,  
 And we dread each coming morrow.”

It possibly may be that some of us to-day would not have the inestimable privilege of giving effect to the will of God in the Fellowship of His Son if it had not been for many days when neither sun nor stars shone upon us and no small tempest lay upon us as well.

We do well to have a clear understanding as to verse 20, and what we have before mentioned as to the Lord Jesus walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands, being near to each, will help us here. “ 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.”

The one who has his heart right with God, it matters not in what condition the assembly of God may be, where he is, even though it may be like Laodicea, he will never be left desolate and without that friendship which is closer far than all earthly ties. What wondrous words, blessed reciprocation : “ I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.”

Let us be very clear upon this point, however, that these words are addressed to those in an assembly of God and to those only ; they are not addressed to those who have run away from the collective position because of failure and disappointment. This is important, for surely there was much in Laodicea which must have been extremely trying.

We have heard it said that this is a day of individual testimony, indeed this idea has been very much based on this verse. Never was there a greater blunder made, as we have seen, and though many do not take up this position wilfully, we are at the same time reminded of Cowper's forceful words :—

“ Of all arts ingenious dupes invent  
To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent,  
The worst is Scripture warped from its intent.”

How often we have heard such words as these given expression to, “ I can have communion with God at my own fireside ; I believe the day of collective testimony is past.” Not to such is the promise of this beautiful verse.

If there is one thing clearer than another in the New Testament, it is the fact that this day of opportunity and accompanying responsibility is a day also of collective testimony. By all means read carefully 2 Timothy 2. 22, and notice the word “ with.” Of course, in saying this, let it be clearly understood that we do not imply that an individual consistent Christian life is not of very great importance, but remember that the injunction in respect to such is given to those, and those only, in the collective thing for and of God, and maintaining the collective position, notwithstanding the many difficulties and sore disappointments resulting at times, perhaps from being in an assembly of the Laodicean character, which is possible even in the Fellowship of the Son of God.

In conclusion, we briefly notice what at least seems to be most suggestive, that the words of verse 21 are written to those who were not enduring persecution in the shape of physical suffering, but rather that worst of all suffering affecting the inner and higher nature of man. “ He that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father in His throne.”

We close with the lines of the hymn familiar to some of us :—

“ Alone with Thee, O Master, where  
The light of earthly glory dies,  
Misunderstood by all, I dare  
To do what Thine own heart will prize.”

J. CROSTHWAITE RADCLIFFE.

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## THE CALL OF GOD.

It being our purpose later to write on the words of 1 Corinthians 1. 9, “ God is faithful through whom ye were called into the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,” we should like first to go back to the book of God’s beginnings (Genesis), to find therein that which will help us in the consideration of the passage in 1 Corinthians 1. 9.

Turn therefore, please, to Genesis 12. “ Now Jehovah said unto Abram, ‘ Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto the land that I will shew thee.’ ” He was to come away from all the associations so highly prized on earth, for doubtless he was a citizen of no mean city and country ; Ur of the Chaldees in Mesopotamia, even in those far off days, being no unimportant place, and his father’s house and his native city and country contained all the ties that are counted sacred, and indeed that are valued so highly by Christians to-day. Yet, as we read, “ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place which he was to receive for an inheritance ; and he went out, not knowing whither he went ” (Hebrews 11. 8).

One very important point here is worthy of note, that then, as now, it was an individual matter, the hearing of the call of God. True that was a day of individual testimony, and this is a day for collective testimony. But it is of great importance to-day as it was then, that each one hear the call of God for himself. We read in Isaiah 51. 2, “ When he

(Abraham) was but one I called him, and I blessed him, and made him many." It was Abram God called, not Terah, nor yet Lot, though both Terah and Lot left Ur of the Chaldees with him. Similarly many Christians that have never heard God's call themselves have come with those who have heard the call of God. Terah, however, never reached the land of promise, and though Lot did get there, yet he was soon separated from Abram and departed from the place of fellowship with God, pitching his tent towards Sodom first, and finally sitting with its elders in the gate, for there the angels found him when they came to Sodom to save him from its doom.

The call of God has its definite purpose. In Abram's case it was firstly to a land that he was afterwards to inherit. Then the God of glory that had appeared to him in Mesopotamia purposed to reveal Himself to His servant and to make known to Him His character and attributes in a way that was impossible in Ur of the Chaldees. For there Abram had been surrounded with earthly associations and relationships. But here in the land of promise God tried and proved the quality of that faith which He had found in His servant; and having manifested the quality of Abram's faith He has made him the example for those who are of like faith; he is the father of the faithful.

Now in our consideration of first principles first, the Fellowship into which we have been called corresponds for us, a spiritual people, to what the land was to them, an earthly people. For it is in the Fellowship into which we have been called that we may enjoy in a very special manner fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. Let us reflect for a moment that Lot is called "righteous Lot" in 2 Peter **2. 7** (and who shall condemn him whom God calls righteous?), yet not to him was it given to know the Most High God as Possessor of heaven and earth, and to be blessed in His name. Nor was it to him that were spoken the lofty words, "Fear not, I am thy Shield and

thy exceeding great Reward." Again, when the doom of Sodom was determined Lot was not in the place of power like Abram, who was able to intercede with God on behalf of that guilty city until if there had been ten righteous men found in it God would have spared it for His servant's pleading.

Think also of Jehovah's word as in Genesis 18. 17, "Shall I hide from Abraham that which I do?" Truly the secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him (Psalm 25. 14). How highly we also have been graced of God to know His ways and purposes for the time that is now present!

Abraham was called the friend of God as James tells us (James 2. 22, 23), and this reminds us of words in John 15. 14-16, "Ye are My friends, if ye do the things which I command you. No longer do I call you slaves; for the slave knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known unto you. Ye did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that ye should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide."

Thus we learn from the consideration of the first part of this important theme that Abraham heard the call of the God of glory and promptly obeyed; and that the glory of the God of glory so filled his eye and heart that like one at a later day he esteemed all things that were gain to him to be but dross for the excellency of the knowledge of the Most High God, Possessor of heaven and earth; and that he came forth to enjoy communion with God and friendship with God. Truly, as we have said, the secret of Jehovah is with them that fear Him, for not only did God reveal to Abraham the doom of Sodom, but as we learn from Galatians 3. 8, the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the nations by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed."



## THE PERSONAL RETURN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND HIS REIGN ON EARTH.

**THERE** is a widespread opinion and belief amongst real and professing Christians that the passages of Scripture that speak of the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ upon earth are to be understood in what is called a spiritual sense ; that His kingdom is always and altogether a spiritual one. This is not a very new or recently acquired view, and if it cannot be traced back to what are called the dark ages, it is at any rate of some considerable antiquity. It has long been an incentive to many in their preaching of the Gospel, that they have hoped and believed that in time this glorious message of God's grace will win for itself acceptance universally or almost universally. Thus Heber wrote in a verse of his beautiful missionary hymn :—

Waft, waft, ye winds, His story,  
And you, ye waters, roll,  
Till like a sea of glory  
It spreads from pole to pole ;  
Till o'er our ransomed nature  
The Lamb for sinners slain,  
Redeemer, King, Creator,  
In bliss returns to reign.

Evidently the thought here is that when the world has been won for Christ by the preaching of the Gospel He will return to reign. But this idea, itself sufficiently inaccurate and contrary to the Scripture, has further degenerated in the minds of Christians and others in what we may call the religious world, so that the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ upon earth has no place either in their hopes or in their expectations. It is not worth our while, at the present at any rate, to examine further the views of men, be they believers or unbelievers ; rather is it our business to set forth with such clearness as we may be able the revelation given to us by God in the inerrant Scriptures.

Our subject is the personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ and His reign on earth. And we must say at once that this subject naturally divides itself into two parts; for the return of the Blessed One is spoken of in the Holy Scriptures in a dual manner, inasmuch as He will first return to the air, and gather to Himself there those whom He has made and sealed as His own; and at a later time He will descend to the earth with those whom He has previously gathered to Himself, and having destroyed His enemies the Lord will enter upon His personal earthly reign a thousand years.

The return of the Lord Jesus to reign is that of which we now wish to speak more particularly; but it is essential for a right understanding of the Holy Scriptures not only to recognise that the Lord's second advent is pre-millennial, but that it consists of two well-marked stages.

Typical passages of Holy Writ dealing with the first stage of the second advent are to be found in the chapters of the Gospel according to John where we have a record of what the Lord said to His disciples in the confidential privacy of the upper room on the night of His betrayal (John **13.** to **16.**):—"In My Father's House are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The early disciples, taught by the divine Paraclete, lived in daily hope and expectation of this personal coming of the Lord; and they rightly thought that He might come at any moment. For be it noted that this coming is not dependent on the prior fulfilment of any prophecy or prediction whatsoever. So frequently is this hope referred to in the apostolic writings that it is difficult to make a selection of passages; but we will attempt to choose a few most likely to be helpful.

In writing the first letter that we possess of his in the

inspired volume, Paul reminds the Thessalonian disciples that when they turned to God from idols it was not only to serve a living and true God as slaves, but also to wait for the Son of God from heaven. Later on, in the same letter, he comforts them about their friends and fellow-disciples who had been slain in the persecution that had arisen ; who, as they thought, would miss the benefits of the Lord's return. He tells them that when the Lord comes, when He descends from heaven with a shout, with archangel voice and with a trump of God, the very first thing that will happen as a result of that shout will be the raising of those who have died in Christ. We might render the passage "and firstly the dead in Christ shall rise" (that is to say, rise from their graves), "then we (those that are alive, that are left) shall together with them be caught up in clouds to meet the Lord in the air ; and so shall we ever be with the Lord." In writing a little later to the church in Corinth he tells them a mystery in connexion with the resurrection of those who in this dispensation become believers in Christ : "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump ; for the trumpet shall sound" (that is, God's trumpet as in 1 Thess. 4. 16) "and the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (that is, the dead in Christ), "and we" (that is, those that are alive, that are in Christ) "shall be changed."

In writing to Hebrews the apostle evidently refers to a well-known hope when he says : "For yet a very little while, and the Coming One shall come." Surely this carries us back to the Lord's own words already quoted : "If I go I come again" ; and it is evident that the disciples were taught to regard the return of the Lord as imminent : "He will not tarry." That well-nigh two thousand years have elapsed since then has no bearing on the subject. It simply shows that we cannot tell when He is coming. His return was imminent in the days of the apostles ; it is imminent

now. We are told to count this longsuffering of our Lord as salvation, for every year that elapses before His return *is full of precious opportunities for speaking that word by which we may both save ourselves and those who hear us.* But more than this we can scarcely say, since God is not pleased to tell us when the Lord His Son will come. He may not come even yet for years or centuries ; He may come before this day has drawn to a close. But one thing is certain, He will not tarry, for He will come at the right time. That is for Him ; as for us we are to look for Him at any moment ; for He has charged us by the mouth of His holy apostles to be in constant expectation of His return. This is His will for us ; and His true disciples are bound by their allegiance to their Lord to be ever on the look-out for Him. So then, let us not sleep, but let us watch and be sober, since we are sons of the light, and sons of the day, and He is the bright, the morning Star. As John tells us, “ Every one that hath this hope set on Him ” (on the Lord Jesus, the Coming One) “ purifieth himself.”

In the passages of Scripture quoted, and in others that speak of this return of the Lord Jesus Christ for us, it will be observed that the personal note is always very emphatically expressed, and the imminence of the Coming is generally clearly indicated.

It is quite otherwise with the return of the Lord to reign upon earth. So much has to happen first, so many great and terrible things must first take place that we rightly sing :—

From far we see the glorious day  
When He who bore our sins away  
Will all His majesty display.

We do not know how many years may be required after the saints of this present dispensation have been caught up to meet the Lord in the air, before the set time shall come when His enemies shall be made a footstool for His feet. But the magnitude of those events, by the side of

which all previous upheavals of the nations shall be as nothing, fully justify us in speaking of the Coming of the Son of Man to sit on the throne of His glory as a distant event compared with the Coming of the Lord for His own, which is very near ; near in fact, because there is nothing set before us to happen first ; near to our heart's perception if we look for Him as we should do :—

I can almost hear His footfall  
On the threshold of the door ;  
And my heart, my heart is longing  
To be with Him evermore.

Now as to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to reign in person over Israel and the world—our expectation of this must be based on the Scriptures of truth. We might first refer to Old Testament Scripture and point out passages thereof that have not yet had a fulfilment that they yet must have.

When God sent Nathan to David in reference to the desire that the king had expressed that he might build a house for Jehovah, He made certain promises in reference to the seed of David that did not find their fulfilment with Solomon, and far less with any of the descendants of Solomon of whom we read in the Old Testament Scriptures, for instance :—  
“ I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever . . .  
thine house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever  
before thee : thy throne shall be established for ever ”  
(2 Sam. 7. 8–17 ; 1 Chron. 17. 6–15 ; see also Psalm 89.  
especially verses 3, 4, 19–37). We may follow the example  
of Peter as recorded in Acts 2. 29–31, and say that these  
things spake of Christ, that it is His kingdom and His  
throne to which these promises refer.

It is written in the prophecy of Isaiah that in a certain day, to which Isaiah makes frequent reference, the nations shall seek unto One who is called the Root of Jesse, that standeth for an ensign for the peoples. This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled, and clearly points to the personal

reign of Him who is called the Root and the Offspring of David (Isa. **11.** 10 ; Rev. **21.** 16). Another word spoken through Isaiah referring to the personal reign of the Incarnate Word of God is to be found in Isaiah **40.** 9-11. The Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty one. He shall feed His flock as a shepherd. Again in Isaiah **60.** 1-3 we have a prophecy that the Lord Himself said began to be fulfilled in the days when He was upon earth as a Man of Sorrows, which will have more complete fulfilment when He comes again.

Again the very word through Micah that was used by the chief priests to show that the Christ must be born in Bethlehem states quite distinctly that He was to be Ruler in Israel (compare Micah **5.** 2 with Matt. **2.** 5, 6).

Then we have the prophecies of Daniel to help us, though we can now only touch on them lightly. Let us then read in Daniel **7.** of the One like unto a Son of man who came with the clouds of heaven to the Ancient of Days ; to whom was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all the people's nations and languages should serve Him.

But we will conclude our references to the Old Testament Scriptures by quoting from the prophecy of Zechariah (chapter **14.**) in which he speaks of the awful time called in Scripture the Day of Jehovah. Then all nations will be gathered against Jerusalem to battle (this has never happened yet), and when things are at the last extremity Jehovah shall go forth and fight against those who have come up against Jerusalem. His feet, we are told, shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which shall split into two along an east and west line. And we are further told that the Incarnate One whose name is Jehovah shall be King over all the earth.

I suppose that all who have carefully read these passages that I have quoted and many like passages that I have not quoted, and yet do not look for a personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to reign, have some way or

method of explaining away these scriptures to themselves so as to give them some kind of so-called spiritual sense. But I think that no candid mind can avoid the conclusion that a personal return and reign are to be expected, who looks also at the New Testament passages that we will now consider. Let it be remembered that any method of spiritualising the Old Testament Scriptures that would do away with the necessity of looking for a second coming of the Lord to reign would equally have prevented the readers of those Scriptures in early days from expecting any personal appearance of Messiah at all ; whereas we know for certain that the Christ did come, that He was rejected and slain, and that after His resurrection He went back to heaven. And we may as well at once quote Peter's use of Psalm **110**. which he definitely applies to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is now sitting on the right hand of God the Father, waiting till His enemies be made a footstool for His feet (compare the Lord's own reference to this Psalm in Matt. **22**. 41-45, Mark **12**. 35-37, Luke **20**. 41-44). Then with this we may associate the words still more definite, if possible, that Peter uttered a few days later : " Repent, . . . that He may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus ; whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things. . . ."

But we will turn to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself in which He refers to His return to the earth as Son of man. Much of what the Lord said on this subject was in reply to the words of His disciples recorded in Matthew **24**. 1-3. When they heard that the temple which they so much admired was to be demolished, they thought this must be closely connected with the presence of the Lord and the consummation of the age. The Lord corrects them as to their idea that the consummation of the age and His return as Son of man was imminent or immediately to be expected, and particularly warns them against being too readily persuaded that the time of the end has arrived

(compare Acts 1. 6, 7). There is no small amount of difficulty to me in the interpretation of much that is to be found in these chapters **24., 25.** of Matthew and the parallel portions of Mark and Luke ; but it is quite clear, firstly, that some of the prophecies therein contained have had a partial fulfilment ; secondly, that much of what is predicted is yet future. As to the first, we know that Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus and the temple utterly demolished ; and that Jews and Christians in those days suffered very grievous persecution. As to the second, we know that the Son of man has not yet come, that His presence is still in the future.

Let us content ourselves then with this for the present. We learn that the presence of the Son of man, though preceded by signs (Matt. **24.** 15-21, 29, 30 ; Mark, **13.** 14-19, 24, 25, 28, 29 ; Luke **21.** 20-28), will be sudden and instantaneous. It will be like the lightning seen in the east and in the west simultaneously, so swift will be His advent.

Further we learn that when the Son of man comes He will come attended by angels and accompanied by saints (for the former see Matt. **24.** 31, and for the latter see Jude 14, and Rev. **19.** 11-14). Moreover, He will sit upon a throne and the apostles will sit on thrones with Him (Matt. **24.** 31, and see verses 34, 40, where the Son of man is called the King ; Matt. **19.** 28, compare also 2 Tim. **2.** 11-13).

We have already referred to Revelation **19.**, but we may yet direct closer attention to verses 13 and 16, showing as they do that He whose name is called the Word of God has also as His name " King of kings and Lord of lords." Then in the next chapter we read again with the utmost definiteness that the Devil will be shut up in the abyss for a period of one thousand years, during which time saints of God live and reign with Christ. Note, please, the expression used " they reign with Christ."

Here we will stop, having given abundant proof that it is taught in the Holy Scriptures, wherein God has given us



a revelation of things that must shortly come to pass, that His Blessed Son is coming to earth again, and that He will reign on earth personally for a thousand years. God has spoken, it is ours to believe.

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“MARANATHA.”

(“Our Lord comes,” 1 Cor. 16. 22.)

MID squalid scenes of earth  
And deepening human night,  
Resplendent gleams the Hope  
Aglow with heavenly light.  
No earth-born shimmer, that  
Allures, then flits away ;  
This steadfast shines ; for God  
Himself has lit the ray—  
A glad harbinger of eternal day.

C. B.

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## HE THAT OVERCOMETH.

It is somewhat remarkable that the special promise to the overcomers appears in the message to each of the seven churches; the Lord has things to say to each suited to their peculiar conditions and surroundings, but the promise to the overcomer is common to all.

We may learn from this that however circumstanced or whatever our condition may be, there is overcoming to be done, and we may rest assured that if we are not overcoming we are being overcome.

There is no easy path to the divine goal, although some no doubt find it easier than others; but all who desire to be disciples of our Lord and Master have something to overcome.

A study of the several messages sent to the seven churches would no doubt reveal some of the things which opposed the will of the Lord and therefore required to be overcome by the faithful ones in each church; for be it noted overcoming is not a collective thing but intensely individual, "He that overcometh," "To him that overcometh"—similar to the inspired word, "each one of us shall give account of himself to God." It behoves us therefore to be earnestly exercised as to whether we are experiencing the conflict which overcoming implies, or are shunning it and finding a path of less resistance where there is little to be overcome.

Although we are charged with the responsibility of overcoming, we cannot possibly do so in our own strength. Let us be very conscious of this, otherwise we shall surely fail. The great thing to lay hold of is that One has overcome, and that He lives "to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him."

He is "the Son of man whom Thou hast made strong for Thyself;" and we too shall be made strong for God if, knowing our own weakness, we rely on His strength.

It is witnessed in Hebrews 11. of some that "from weakness they were made strong"; and Paul testified of himself "when I am weak then am I strong." May it be ours to know ourselves weak in order that we may also know ourselves strong, and thus be able to overcome.

To overcome the world, the flesh and the Devil, is a task that requires a consciousness of weakness on our part to which the natural man is an entire stranger; and a corresponding realisation of the power of God in Christ which can only be known in the new creation, in which we by exceeding grace are.

We may overcome the world, because He could say "I have overcome the world." We may overcome the flesh because our old man was crucified with Him. And we may overcome the Devil like those of whom it is said in Revelation 12. 11, "and they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony."

The Lord Jesus has made it possible for us to overcome, whether it be the world in its various forms pressing us from without, the flesh seeking the mastery within, or the Devil acting through both these, or making direct attacks on us with his fiery darts.

May it be ours to experience the power referred to in Colossians 1. 29, "His working which worketh in me mightily," enabling us to overcome, and let us remember that it is power, force, energy, irresistible if only our own strength does not cause it to be inoperative.

As electricity, one of the chief forces in nature, cannot flow through a non-conductor, so the power of Christ cannot act through our fleshly strength, and thus we are hindered from overcoming. May it not be so.

## Five and Twenty Years Ago.

AN EXTRACT FROM *NEEDED TRUTH*, VOLUME II, NUMBER I.

. . . . IN the accounts of the coming of the Christ contained in the gospel of the Son of David (according to Matthew), chapter 24., and the gospel of the Son of man (according to Luke), chapter 21., there are definite and repeated allusions to signs which must precede that coming, signs of a most distinct and unmistakable character, tribulation of unparalleled severity, darkening of the sun and moon. . . .

Again, when we read the detailed information as to the coming of the Lord for which we look, we learn that we shall meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4. 17). Whereas we are told distinctly in regard to His coming to fulfil the Israelitish prophecies that His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof (Zech. 14. 3, 4). Thus of necessity it follows that we are first caught up to meet Him, as 1 Thessalonians 4. 16, 17 has it, and that afterwards He comes to the earth. What may intervene between these two events we have so far but hinted at; but this we hold to have already proved, and proved beyond all doubt, that the coming of the Lord is twofold. First He comes to mid-air and meets His Church. Later, He comes to the earth with His Church to fulfil the prophecies concerning Him. Moreover, we have shown that the coming to mid-air for the Church is set before us in Scripture as a present hope. Whereas the coming of the Son of man to the earth is to be preceded by clear and unmistakable signs.

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## THE ARBITER BETWEEN THE NATIONS.

He shall judge between the nations,  
 And shall reprove many peoples ;  
 And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,  
 And their spears into pruning-hooks.  
 Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
 Neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 2. 4.

SINCE the time when man departed from allegiance to his Maker, strife and contention have taken possession of this world : strife between individuals, and strife between groups of persons such as nations. Selfishness lies at the root of the trouble, and so long as man is what he is, there will be strife. Happily the good institution of government and law checks such excesses as between individuals, for while men continue to find many occasions of disagreement, they are compelled by law to submit their causes to an established authority. This is indeed a great blessing, for although mistakes may be made, and judgment is not always according to truth, yet on the whole all must acknowledge the great advantage of being compelled to submit private quarrels to an authorised judge. It is evident, of course, that the judge needs to be supported by adequate power, so that his decisions may be respected.

We need not, however, go far to discover a sphere in which the primitive idea of private judgment in cases of disagreement still obtains. In the industrial world war still rages with unabated fury and determination, and there seems no immediate prospect of a better course being adopted. Capital and labour, so mutually dependent as they are, are brought into conflict, and loss to both results. Man, in fact, loves contention and strife, and is reluctant to relinquish his supposed right of fighting his cause.

But there is a sphere beyond these, namely, that of the nations, where the idea of war as the arbitrator still obtains. Many deplore the resort to this barbaric principle, and are anxious to establish an international court of appeal. If

we see the advantage of an impartial tribunal in private and small matters of difference, we must favourably view such efforts towards establishing the same principle as between nations ; but there are several things to be considered both in reference to God and man in this matter. As to man, while nations may be willing to submit trifling causes to such a court, they will not do so in weighty matters in which their interest or honour (real or supposed) is involved. Then we must recognise the fact that war is often God's scourge wherewith He chastises the nations ; it is His bitter medicine which, while it causes much distress, is intended to work a beneficial result. War, in spite of its horrors, may be, and often is, a blessing in disguise.

Who can judge of the obscure causes of wars ? Our attention is drawn to some immediate cause, some comparatively trifling thing, but we are persuaded that a determined and bitter conflict has a more deeply rooted cause. As we consider national aspirations, race prejudices, economic causes, commercial rivalry and so forth, we are faced with occasions which will produce wars so long as man is left to himself.

It is by no means our business to attempt to adjust the differences between nations, nor in the case of territorial claims to reconstruct the map of the world, apportioning to each family of people that which is proper to it. We doubt not that even now that principle operates in connexion with nations as well as with individuals :—"to him that hath shall be given, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath." Nations as well as persons can use or can abuse their privileges and opportunities, can use their power for the good of men or tyrannically, and accordingly are they judged.

But we turn to our scripture in Isaiah 2. 4, and there we get the sure word of promise that He who is the King, God's anointed Ruler, will some day decide on the conflicting claims of nations and adjust them. Before that time

arrives, the nations, as Psalm 2. shows, will gather together against the Lord and His Christ. Private rivalries will then be covered up, and the kings of the earth will fight against Heaven. That confederacy will be crushed by the Rider on the white horse, and the earth thus subdued by judgment will be taken in hand by the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord's Anointed. Then how much will need adjustment, what long-standing oppression to be overthrown, what restorations of territory to be made! Then the Lord will sit down to deal with the matter, and will bring to bear upon the differences between nations those same principles of righteousness which should obtain with individuals. Then some long down-trodden races, which have suffered at the hands of the stronger, will be reinstated according to their due. Some peoples will need rebuke and will get it, and all, whether they approve the decisions of the righteous Judge or not, will be compelled to submit. The decision will be according to equity, and will be supported by unquestionable power.

Yea all kings shall fall down before Him.

All nations shall serve Him.

For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth

And the poor that hath no helper.

Psalm 72.

The occasions of strife removed, righteous judgment established, and power held by the central supreme government, there will be no need for the antiquated and horrible method of war to settle real or supposed wrong. Then the swords shall be beaten into ploughshares, and the spears into pruning-hooks, or as we may read it in the light of modern things, the vast sums of money and the much labour expended on warlike armaments will be restored to their own legitimate and useful end.

We cannot conceive the vast and beneficial change which will take place, even though man's nature remain as it is, when Satan is locked up and He who is the King of kings apportioned to each nation and people a place

according to right. Then there will be one government instead of many, and although many nations differing widely from one another in many particulars, they will all find equal protection under the one King, our blessed and glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

If, as we are inclined to think, the empire under which we live has attained unto some true knowledge in the art of governing subject races, having in view not the aggrandisement of the central power so much as the welfare of the people ; if this be so, and in some measure it is, how much more blessed will it be when, in that golden age that is coming, the art of government will find its high and complete expression under God's anointed King, His well beloved Son ! Well may we pray :—"Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done as in heaven so on earth,"

S. J. HILL.

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### A SONG, SET TO ALAMOTH.

SUCH is the forty-sixth Psalm, and it comes to the soul at such a time as this with peculiar sweetness and power. The present generation of men upon earth has never known such a critical and solemn time in European and world history. It may be, as has already been suggested in these pages, that He that planted the ear and formed the eye, who hears and sees as man cannot, is chastising the nations and correcting them, because of their attitude toward His Son Jesus Christ, and His Word, the God-breathed Scriptures. That may well be. But on the other hand, the war is only, it would seem, beginning, and who knows the end ? Only God. There is none else . . . declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done ; saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure." Statesmen of earth seem to think that the map of Europe will be very materially altered when all is finished. Is it therefore altogether outside the range of possibility, that, should Turkey adven-



ture herself at last within the struggle, Great Britain might ultimately, when all is settled, find herself, by agreement among the Powers, with the control of that territory which embraces the land upon which the eyes of Jehovah are ever fixed from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year? Might not this, perhaps, be agreeable to Jehovah's unsearchable judgments, and His ways which are past tracing out, thus to bring about in His own time, and when His purpose is fully ripe, the Controversy of Zion? With permission, we only speak of what is not, we think, an impossible contingency, and we leave it there.

Before touching very briefly upon the Psalm itself, there are one or two scriptures of which, though ye know them, I would stir you up by putting you in remembrance:—

The Lord Jesus Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence. . . . To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice" (John 18. 36, 37). And, to Peter in Gethsemane, "Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26. 52).

Then, as recorded in His wondrous prayer, "I manifested Thy name unto the men whom Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them to Me. . . . I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom Thou hast given Me . . . they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17. 6, 9, 16).

Then again, through Peter, God says, "Be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as sent by him. . . . Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king" (1 Pet. 2. 13, 17).

And, through His servant Paul, He exhorts first of all

that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, be made for all men, for kings and all that are in high place ; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2. 1, 4). " For our citizenship is in Heaven ; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ " (Phil. 3. 20). " So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God " (Eph. 2. 19).

These scriptures, among many others, clearly define our position through God's abounding grace. Let us hope that they are true of us experimentally, and that we act accordingly. But while not of the world, we are in the world. " I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I come to Thee " (John 17. 11). Therefore, being in the world, and exhorted to pray for kings and all that are in high place, we must, when we pray, pray with the understanding. Now there never was a time when this exhortation was more needed ; a time of calamity which is overspreading and enveloping the nations. The Lord has said, " He that is glad at calamity shall not be unpunished " (Prov. 17. 5), and we only hope that with regard to the apparent lightheartedness and continued gaiety of some of the unthinking masses particularly, in these British Islands, there is not just something bordering upon such gladness.

" No king is saved by the multitude of an host." " The horse is prepared against the day of battle : but victory is of the Lord." For what mention of His Name we have heard, and seen recorded within the land of our sojourning—not uttered and expressed in arrogance, but in sincerity—we are thankful. It is not a little remarkable, that in raising up the British Empire and permitting her to spread out her Dominions as God has done, He should, in His unspeakable grace, raise up within her territory a

testimony to the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ—churches of God in these and other lands. Hence the peculiar force with which the exhortation of 1 Timothy comes to us. As one has reminded us, "Britain is a country which has treated us well," yet in our praying, it may be specially for the realm in which our lot is cast, we must seek to think of all men.

Now before asking attention to one other scripture in particular we are turning to Psalm 46., the reference to king Cyrus in Isaiah 45. is well worth noting at such a time as the present. "Thus saith Jehovah to His anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him. . . . I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known Me. I am Jehovah, and there is none else ; beside Me there is no God : I will gird thee, though thou hast not known Me : that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside Me : I am Jehovah, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness ; I make peace, and create evil ; I am Jehovah that doeth all these things " (vers. 1-7).

Here we have God speaking in His sovereignty ; and it was indeed wonderful how, in that far distant day, He raised up Cyrus ; though Cyrus, it would seem, knew Him not, that through his instrumentality and by his permission, Jehovah's House might be rebuilt. How marvelously since that time has the knowledge of God spread abroad. Here then in this portion we have strange and striking words. "I make peace, and create evil." And now, in this our day, peace among the nations is for the time being at an end, and the dread evil of war has broken out. And Britain is not merely a spectator : she is deeply involved. For us, although our calling is heavenly, yet to be uninterested is out of the question. The great danger for some is to become engrossed with war news rather than with heavenly truth. We need, beloved, to take firmer hold upon God, and a tighter grip of His precious Word.

His Word is for ever true. "The Law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the soul: the testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple." You remember what is said in Proverbs **36. 33**—

"The churning of milk bringeth forth butter,  
And the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood:  
So the forcing of wrath bringeth forth strife."

How true this is!

And equally true is Proverbs **24. 23, 25**. It is to this scripture that I wish for a moment to point, as it seems to the writer to have a direct bearing upon the present situation. It is written that righteousness exalteth a nation, and looking for the present to the human side of things, public opinion (not always to be trusted, it is true) among neutrals seems well-nigh unanimous that the attitude of Britain is righteous. We cite the following words from a speech just delivered by one whose opinion is at all times eagerly sought after and listened to.

"The German Chancellor, when he vindicated this policy in Parliament, said—'We knew we were doing wrong in infringing the neutrality of Belgium; but we were compelled to do wrong.' A nation that begins a great war by declaring that its foundation is wrong and that it is obliged to do wrong is likely to fare badly if there be a God in Heaven."

The "if" here, we trow, is not the "if" of doubt. And it does seem to the writer, and doubtless to our readers, that this awful strife is the result of the forcing of wrath upon this great nation, and that by one man in particular—guided and goaded by others it may be—who bulks largely in the public eye. Well now, the Word declares—

"These also are sayings of the wise.

To have respect of persons in judgment is not good.

He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous;

Peoples shall curse him, nations shall abhor him:

But to them that rebuke him shall be delight,

And a good blessing shall come upon them."

Is there not something very appropriate here? This does not refer to "the man in the street"—to one practi-

cally unknown. It refers to one whose influence extends to peoples and to nations, one of world-wide reputation. And, rightly or wrongly, this scripture seems to present itself to the writer in a new light since this crisis began. Surely one above all others is being cursed and abhorred at the present time, and if he has said of a wicked and unrighteous cause, "It is righteous," as it seems too evident he has, then we need not wonder that peoples are cursing him and that nations abhor him ; and, we need not be surprised, if ultimately, in the Providence of God to them that rebuke him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall come upon them.

So much for the war. Now for the Psalm which is set to Alamoth. Primarily it points and is suited to the time of Jacob's trouble (see Isa. **34**. 8 ; Jer. **30**. 7 ; Dan. **12**. 1, etc.). Alamoth, we have heard, means "girls," the soprano or female voice ("the maidens' choir," as one has rendered it), in contrast to the male voice. Is there not something suggestively precious in the female voice, the maidens, giving utterance to such glorious words ? Not the armed warriors, the mighty men of war, but rather the gentle and naturally timid maidens. And if they can give expression to such words with such confidence at such a time, so assuredly will all others who are naturally stronger, whose hearts in that day are divinely touched.

"God is our refuge and strength,  
A very present help in trouble."

Let that trouble be even as is depicted in the scriptures we have quoted. God fills their vision. "Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God . . . say unto the cities of Judah, 'Behold, your God !' In His sight the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance : behold He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. . . . It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers" (Isa. **40**.).

*(To be continued.)*

## ACCEPTABLE SERVICE.

WE cannot serve the Lord according to the will of the flesh (see Rom. **8.**). Saul of Tarsus thought he was doing God service in persecuting the church (Acts **26.** 9 and Gal. **1.** 13-16). No flesh shall glory in His presence (1 Cor. **1.** 29). Saul was brought low, and became blind, before ever he could do or speak for the Lord. We think the first acceptable words from his mouth were "Who art Thou, Lord?" (Acts **9.** 5); and next, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" As in King Saul's days so in ours, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (1 Sam. **15.** 22). We might profitably apply the words of David in this connexion, "But who am I?" (1 Chron. **29.** 14).

A Christian once, while concerned about what to pray for, was told to say, "Lord, show me myself." This he did for some time, but on becoming miserable as the result, (the Spirit had made such revelations to him), he was told to change the last word to "Thyself"—"Lord, show me Thyself." Then he realised the truth of the words, "Our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. **3.** 5).

Why do I wish to serve the Lord? Because He loved me and gave Himself up for me (Gal. **2.** 20). My motive is love to Him. How do I know He will accept my service? Because He hath said, "I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John **15.** 16).

We have to guard against desiring to serve in the presence of our brethren, in other words, to be seen of men (Matt. **6.**). Example before precept. Am I a child? "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord" (Col. **3.** 20). We are apt to overlook what we might call small things, but if we wish Him to have our best we must begin with ourselves. "Cease to do evil." "Learn to do well" (Isa. **1.** 16). Where is one, as guided by the Spirit, likely to detect evil? Is it not in that which is nearest to him—him-

self? Am I faithfully dealing with myself every day? Am I a parent? What is my home life? If a servant amongst others, what is my behaviour? It is written of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men" (Luke 2. 52). "Ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3. 24). May we not forget, however, that "He needeth not to be served with men's hands as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all life and breath and all things" (Acts 17. 25).

We believe that what is contained in Psalm 19. 14 must both precede and accompany acceptable service. We have a good example of individual service in John the Baptist. Note well the contrast he makes between himself and the One whose way he was sent to prepare. (See Luke 3. 15, 16.)

We are told of God's Sent One in 1 Peter 2. 21 that He left us an example that we should follow His steps. He is the Way and the Truth and the Life. What saith He of Himself? "I do always those things that please Him" (John 8. 29). "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to accomplish His work" (John 4. 34). "My teaching is not Mine but His" (John 7. 16). "As the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do" (John 14. 31). He was doing God's will continually, night and day, unreservedly. Never a moment out of God's hand. He had respect to all Jehovah's commandments. He never made the slightest attempt to alter or lower the Divine standard. "He became obedient even unto death, yea the death of the cross" (Phil. 2. 8).

Why do we think it is written of Him "Never man so spake" (John 7. 46), "He spake with authority, and not as the scribes"? (Matt. 7. 29). We answer: Because never man so walked. Never before and never since. Our attention was drawn some years ago to Caleb as the Evergreen. The writer said, "Let us look long and well; we shall see few men like him." I am wondering whether with us who in the mercy of God are in His House

to-day there is anything more needed than a minute investigation of His life on earth as recorded in the four Gospels.

Shut in with Thee, O Master, where  
The light of earthly glory dies,  
Misunderstood by all, I dare  
To do what Thine own heart would prize.

Much our God and Father has given us as a free gift, far more than our minds can grasp; but there are certain things which can only belong to those who pay the price.

What about our service as a community? (1 Peter 2. 9). How can we show forth His excellencies? How forcibly these words come to one's mind at this point, "We preach not ourselves" (2 Cor. 4. 5). We ought to spare no pains in order that we may be able in a way that will command the people's interest, to tell them intelligently and from the Scriptures both of man's ruin and God's remedy, but this is not all. Are results lacking of this service? What is the cause or causes, if so? Might we suggest that we have sought too easy a path. The path of prayer is the path of power. Pray that we may be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord; that with one mouth and one heart we may glorify God.

The two lines

Were the whole realm of nature ours  
That were an offering far too small

suggest that which is impossible to us as too small an offering in return for such a sacrifice, but what about that which is possible according to the provision made in 1 John 1. 6-10?

Love that transcends our highest powers  
Demands our heart, our life, our all.

In concluding we would remind ourselves of Romans 12. 1 and 2.

No service of itself is small,  
None great though earth it fill;  
But that is small that seeks its own,  
And great that does God's will.

J. C. CAMPBELL,



## “ CREATION GROANETH.”

AT the present moment dull indeed are the ears which cannot hear that groan. Sensitive ears at all times have been tortured by the ever-present moan and groan of a sin-burdened creation ; but at special times like the one which, alas ! has fallen to us such sensitiveness is unnecessary.

The words in Romans 8. from which we quote take on fresh meaning as we read them once again with the war news harrowing our very inwards ; truly “ this day is this scripture fulfilled.”

We said to a somewhat sceptical friend a few days since, “ What about the words of the Old Book now regarding the wars and rumours of wars ? ” and he was constrained to admit that they compel attention ; these particular words and those that follow them will no doubt fit in more perfectly when their own day comes, but they have a present application surely.

What a comment on all the day dreams of those who have been talking about universal peace, how true to the situation was the cartoon on the peace conference held in New York, which depicted the delegates sitting at the great round table with a constable between each two keeping the peace—keeping the peace at the peace conference !

We who are disciples of the Prince of Peace and who worship the God of Peace would be the last to discourage any movement which has for its aim the bringing about of peace, but we know from the unerring word of truth that universal lasting peace will not result from any effort, however great, which is put forth on present lines and therefore we cannot be enthusiastic about such efforts, although we are glad and thankful when temporary peace is secured.

No doubt, although the universal peace palace has been battered and shaken to its foundations it will be restored again, for already the dreamers have begun to dream anew, believing that when the present disturbers of the world's

peace are rendered harmless a police force will suffice to keep the world in order. Thoughtful men, who do not even read their Bibles, will see in this somewhat large and mixed police force potential elements of future trouble, and no doubt the cartoonist will not be amongst the unemployed.

That a peace, perhaps universal and of considerable duration, will be secured after the present lamentable war we most sincerely trust and pray, but we cannot allow ourselves to be deluded by any idea of a universal lasting peace, whilst the Prince of Peace is not here, He having been compelled to leave through unrighteousness; even as He testified:—"Of righteousness because I go to the Father and ye see Me no more."

We are indeed glad to think that this country had a large measure of right on its side on entering this fearful struggle, and therefore that the brave men who are sacrificing their lives are not doing so in vain, or in an unrighteous or merely selfish cause.

But whilst this is so we must not hide from ourselves the truth that deeper springs must be touched and higher issues raised before this groaning creation can experience such blessings as are indicated by words like those in Isaiah **32. 16-18.** "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness shall abide in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever. And My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."

For this consummation we who have the first fruits of the Spirit wait in glad anticipation and we never can be satisfied with anything less for this troubled scene, although thankful for temporary relief for the world, for our country and for ourselves.

It is remarkable that creation is evidently expecting something, as indicated in Romans **8. 19,** "For the earnest

expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God.” This may account in part for aspirations after international and world-wide peace, combined with the various humanitarian movements, and societies for the promotion of kindness to dumb animals, all of which are laudable in themselves. But we must not be under any illusion as to the ultimate result, for until the fearful reckoning with men because of the rejection of the Son of God has taken place and He returns to reign, earth’s glad morning cannot break.

That peace movements will appear to succeed is plain from the word of the Lord in 1 Thess. 5. 3 ; “ When they are saying peace and safety then sudden destruction cometh upon them.” Disregarding what is written they will try to bring about peace without the Prince of Peace and when they have reached a stage at which they will be able to say, “ peace and safety,” to say it loudly and universally no doubt, then sudden destruction will overtake them.

One cannot but be struck by the suddenness of the present catastrophe, it came almost like an avalanche and was upon us before we had time to turn round. But some one may ask, “ Has God been the Author of this war ? ” We reply that wars have been one of God’s means of scourging men, and it may well be that He has a controversy with more than one, and perhaps with all the nations engaged, and this apart from the particular guilt of the nation or nations immediately responsible for it.

Earthquakes and famines have been used by Him to punish men and to bring them to recognise their dependence on Him who is not only the Author of nature and its forces, but who also has the immediate and present control of them in His hands.

Wars and famines have co-operated at times to bring men low, but before the Day of the Lord comes, earthquakes, wars and famines will be found acting together as strong allies against proud mankind, according to the solemn and

prophetic words of our Lord in Mark **13**. "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there shall be earthquakes in divers places; there shall be famines; these things are the beginning of travail." "Kingdom against kingdom" seems to indicate that a world-empire such as the Prussians now dream of will not then exist, neither two nor three very large empires; but kingdoms, agreeing with the Daniel prophecy "In the day of these kings will the God of Heaven set up a kingdom."

There will be earthquakes in divers places, not one but many, and also famines, notwithstanding the security that men think they have in world supplies, with swift means of transit and chemical resources for the destruction of disease germs and so forth. In upon that whole "peace and safety" condition of things will suddenly burst the righteous judgment of God, and out of it will emerge that which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, even a blessed state prepared by God for those that love Him, or something answering thereto as promised in Isaiah. "So shall He sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider."

This dreadful war will leave the mark of its heavy tread upon us all, in one way or another; and if, in addition to humbling men and teaching us all the lessons which we need to learn, it purchase a time of respite and comparative peace, let us be ready to return thanks to our God. Meantime our prayer should be that the humbling may soon be accomplished, the lessons quickly learned, and peace restored.

Much reaches our ears that causes us to fear for the people with whom we are more immediately bound up; but we trust that such confident boastings are on the part of the few and the more irresponsible, and that great disasters may not be necessary to teach us that if God so will, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong . . . but time and chance happeneth to them all" (Eccl. **9**. 11).

We need to remember that in 1 Tim. 2. we are exhorted to make supplications and intercessions, as well as prayers and thanksgivings, for all men.

As we thus think of all men before the throne and supplicate and intercede, let us put first the place where we dwell, and dwell so safely, with so much liberty.

W. J. LENNOX.

### PSALM 144.

THE first part of this psalm shows the perfect way in which David laid hold upon Jehovah—my Rock, my Teacher, my Lovingkindness, my Fortress, my High Tower, my Deliverer, and my Shield. This presents Jehovah in a sevenfold way to complete the salvation of the saint who feareth Him.

With our feet firm upon the age-abiding Rock, our ears open to the divine Teacher, our eyes awake to the lovingkindness of Jehovah, to appreciate Him as a fortress whose bulwarks the battering-rams of our great adversary cannot move; to experience Him as a high tower into which we can ascend, from which we can watch; and to know Him as our Deliverer and Shield, is indeed to be strong and of a good courage, not affrighted, neither dismayed; for Jehovah our God is with us whithersoever we go.

The central part of the Psalm contrasts the great and glorious Jehovah with insignificant man, who is like to vanity. The outstretched arm of Jehovah with its smoke and lightning and arrows is strong in judgments against the great waters. He giveth salvation unto kings; He rescueth David His servant from the hurtful sword.

Whilst the first part of our Psalm shows seven things which Jehovah is for His people, the last part shows seven things which His people can be for Jehovah:—

Our sons as plants grown up in their youth;  
Our daughters as corner stones hewn after the fashion of a palace;  
Our garners full, affording all manner of store;

And our sheep bringing forth thousands and ten thousands in our fields ;  
 Our oxen well laden, or strong to labour ;  
 No breaking in and no going forth,  
 And no outcry in our streets.

The consideration that the sons and daughters of to-day will be the men and women of the near future is an intensely solemn one, because what we are now will largely determine what we will be then.

Early last Spring some bulbs were bought and duly potted. But they had not been planted in time—a fault due no doubt to the inexperience of the attendants. When the neighbours' bulbs were full-grown and blooming, these were only some three inches high. At length one grew up to about the usual height of its species, but never produced its blossom, while the other withered and died when it was only half grown.

These, beloved, were plants which had not grown up in their youth. So will it be with us if our youthful spiritual days are frittered away. Be it not so, however ; but may God grant us so to feed upon His word, and draw our waters therefrom, that as sons we may grow up in our youth, and bring forth fruit—even to old age (Psalm **92**. 14), and that as daughters the palace-like grace and beauty may shine out from the hidden man (1 Pet. **3**. 1, 4), the adornment which God truly loves.

The garners are the storehouses into which the increase from the fields is gathered, and from which the Community gets its daily portion of bread. Perhaps these would picture the teachers whom God has given to the assemblies. As faithful and wise stewards it is yours to give to His household their portion of food in due season. Every scripture is inspired of God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness ; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work (2 Tim. **3**. 16, 17). Holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he

may be able to exhort in the healthful doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers (Titus 1. 9). In these passages Timothy and Titus are instructed how the granaries may be filled and kept full.

Barrenness in this flock is unknown. The sheep bring forth not thousands only, but ten thousands in the fields.

Pastors, here is the ideal state of the flock. The divine principle is "bearing fruit after its kind." There is, we believe, an increasing desire to see more of this in the homes of the members of the little flock. Alas! that so many therefrom go to increase the flocks of others (Song of Songs 1. 7). We shall, however, leave this with youthful David's burning question, "Is there not a cause?"

The oxen were the ruminating cloven-footed labourers. We think of their toils connected with the breaking of the ground, the sowing of the seed, and remember that in addition to teachers and pastors, God has given evangelists. Oh! that these may be strong to labour, that they may do the work of an evangelist in the spirit and power of Paul, who as he laboured was ready to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of the faith of those Philippians of old (Phil. 2. 17, R. margin), and who later could say "I am already being poured out as a drink offering" (2 Tim. 4. 6, R. margin).

The wall here speaks of safety in separation. It has always its gates, with their locks and bars—fit semblances of rule and government. For this people should dwell alone and should not be reckoned among the nations (Numb. 23. 9).

"No outcry in our streets." This is peaceable living. A tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour (1 Tim. 2. 2, 3). Of the great Example, the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, it is written :

He shall not strive, nor cry aloud ;

Neither shall any one hear His voice in the streets.

## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

BETWEEN seventeen and eighteen millions of men are computed to be engaged at the present time in the titanic struggle of the nations: about seven times the number engaged at any previous time in the history of the world, the nearest approach to the present numbers being when Xerxes crossed the Hellespont with, it is said, 'about two and a half millions of men. God alone who knows the end from the beginning can tell what the ultimate results will be, or whether yet Italy, Roumania, Bulgaria and Greece may be drawn into the vortex of this truly awful war.

One occasionally hears gravely irreverent remarks drawn out by the war from well-educated, sober-minded men. Admittedly the present time of horrible strife presents mysteries which would be insoluble apart from revelation.

It is said, "If there is a God why has He permitted such a dreadful carnage to take place?" Again, "What a reproach to Christianity." These are samples of what some men are saying which only betray man's ignorance of God, whose judgments are unsearchable and His ways past tracing out.<sup>1</sup>

First of all men will not believe what God says concerning sin and its consequences—man being puffed up with pride and self-sufficiency.

Instead of the present war being a reproach on Christianity it is the very opposite, for the nations engaged in the same, although nominally Christian, are not, as we know, Christian at all, for there cannot be any such thing as national Christianity, and there will be no national worship acceptable to God until He comes—even the King who is rejected. "We will not have this Man to reign over us."

What goes by the name of Christianity is not the Christian

<sup>1</sup> At the same time we gladly and thankfully acknowledge that at the present juncture the nation is more sober and less thoughtless than it has been in the recent past.



faith at all, but simply a mixture of heathenism and Judaism with a very thin veneer of Christianity. Certain it is that the leaders of this nominal Christianity are not actuated by the principles of New Testament teaching, and the Book of books is not taken as the sole authority and last appeal in all actions of this life.

The first remark is one which immediately raises the question of the sovereignty of God, but before we pass on to deal a little with the same, we think it well to clear up what may cause a certain amount of confusion in the minds of some. The Sovereignty of God should be carefully distinguished from what we read in certain of the Psalms, "Jehovah reigneth"; this expression will be found for instance in Psalms **93.**, **96.**, **97.**, and refers to the personal reign of the Lord on earth, to the time which through the rejection of God's King ("Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion") is postponed but not abandoned by God, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, that is, change of mind.

This glorious time is yet future, "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall the Lord be one, and His name one" (Zech. **14.** 9).

Then "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

What we read in the Revelation will then come to pass. "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

In the meantime, however, there is One who is ruling and overruling all things, who doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, "What doest Thou?" (Daniel **4.** 35).

We desire to make it very plain that with the rejection of God's Man well nigh nineteen centuries ago, the world powers in Him rejected that righteous government for the

earth which would have brought about a glorious time of peace. "We will not have this Man to reign over us," is expressive of what is in the heart of all men ; consequently the time is not now when "He shall judge between the nations, and shall reprove many peoples : and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks : nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more " (Isa. 2. 4), but rather until He comes "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears : let the weak say, I am strong " (Joel 3. 10).

At a solemn time like this we are more and more driven to the glorious fact that God is a Sovereign :

God sits as Sovereign on the throne,  
And ruleth all things well.

There are many things, indeed very many, that we cannot understand now. "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God : but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever " (Deut. 29. 29). Admittedly there are some things which are revealed in Holy Writ, but because of lack of spiritual discernment we may not have had our eyes open to see them (1 Cor. 2. 14), and perhaps we have excused ourselves and cloaked over our lack of spirituality by referring to this scripture in Deuteronomy. At the same time the words of Job hold good to-day :—

Lo, these are but the outskirts of His ways :  
And how small a whisper do we hear of Him,  
But the thunder of His power who can understand ?

Job 26. 14.

It is possible to name many subjects upon which one may traverse a certain length, but only go back far enough and one comes to an absolute block—we are at length cast upon that glorious first statement of all, "In beginning God," and we cannot get back of that.

We are here reminded of the place concerning the Bush

—when the angel of Jehovah appeared unto Moses in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush, and the bush burned with fire and the bush was not consumed. Moses turned aside to see this great sight why the bush was not burnt. When Jehovah saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said “Moses, Moses.” And he said, “Here am I.” And He said, “Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.”

How often we, too, would fain, out of curiosity or the like, peer into the deep mysterious things of God, and, alas! how often we too forget to put the shoes from off our feet—the place whereon we stand being holy ground—when it should be ours simply to look on with wonder, awe and reverence.

Stand and adore! how glorious He  
That dwells in bright eternity:  
We gaze and we confound our sight,  
Plunged in th’ abyss of dazzling light.

How many to-day in the blindness of their pride and ignorance think that they can attain unto the knowledge of God. *How to Master the Bible* was the title of a book that I once saw advertised. What an index to the thoughts of many at the present day! Poor, puny man in his folly thinking that he can master the Book of God, and the God of the Book! I suppose man has been always the same (we know the heart of man is ever the same). Cowper more than one hundred years ago seems to have summed up some in his day in the following scathing words:—

So man the moth is not afraid, it seems,  
To span omnipotence and measure might  
That knows no measure, by the scanty rule  
And standard of his own, that is to-day,  
And is not ere to-morrow’s sun go down.

We must ever bear in mind that the supreme government of all things belongs unto God, and although His ways at

times are so mysterious, allowing events to take such a strange course so that it requires living faith to believe that God is behind it all, yet on closer inspection we soon discover that God controls all things, bringing out of the vast confusion of the world order and beauty.

We are reminded of Cowper's grand old hymn :—

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform ;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.

Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs  
And works His sovereign will.

Some years ago it was my privilege to be shown through a large carpet factory ; there I saw the slowly unrolling warp threads, as well as the weft threads, shot across the range of the web ; all seemed to be confusion and disorder—rough threads and coarse material ; nevertheless a beautiful pattern was being worked out, eventuating in a beautiful carpet of fine material and gorgeous hues, beautiful to behold.

The writer of the following remarkable lines, for which I am indebted to a friend, appears to carry out the above thought :—

This world which clouds thy soul with doubt,  
Is but a carpet inside out ;  
As when we view those shreds and ends  
We know not what the whole intends ;  
So when on earth things seem but odd,  
They're working out some scheme of GOD.  
What here seem random strokes will there  
In order and design appear.  
Then shall we praise what here we spurned,  
For then the carpet shall be turned.

J. CROSTHWAITE RADCLIFFE.

## MODERN THEOLOGY AND ITS DOOM.

By theology is to be understood the knowledge of God, and it might therefore be supposed that "Modern Theology" was concerned with some recent increase or development in this most important subject. Alas ! it is not so. "Modern Theology" is a name that has been given to a system of doctrine which is not concerned with the knowledge of God, or indeed with any true knowledge at all ; and which, though it has been furbished up and decorated in a modern style, is really very old indeed.

When the subtle serpent insinuated into the mind of Eve in the garden of Eden the doubt implied in the words, "Yea, hath God said ?" he was propounding the sceptical question that has now come to be called "Modern Theology." Does God mean what He says ? Is God really so particular as the Book of God seems to say ? Is there no way out of it ? Can we not soften His word a little here, or take a little from it there ? May we not in a small measure accommodate the word of God to the needs of the moment or to the fashion of the day ? These questions and questions such as these are the very essence of what is called "Modern Theology." Indeed, in some cases it goes beyond question, as with Satan himself when he went on to say to the woman, "Ye shall not surely die." We have here a distinct contradiction of what God has said ; and this is the natural development and sequence of the question of unbelief, "Hath God said ?"

These words that I have been quoting from Genesis 3. give us God's account of Satan's lie in all its baldness. It is not unlikely that the lie as spoken to the woman was dressed with much ornament of which God has not been pleased to tell us anything at all. The record given is of the lie in its essential character, and evidently it was not the purpose of God to give a long narrative of all that passed between the woman and the Tempter.

But we who have heard the lie in one or another of its more modern guises know full well how attractive it can be made to any one whose ears are open to hear what the Evil one may say. One of the modern guises, and that perhaps more specially associated with the name of "Modern Theology," goes under the name of "Higher Criticism." I have already given reasons—good and substantial reasons<sup>1</sup>—for confidence in the historical truth of the Holy Scriptures; and their truly divine origin is abundantly evidenced by what was said of them by the Blessed Lord Jesus Christ. Now it is the time to point out that the objections that are raised are not to be thought of as mere honest difficulties that may arise in thoughtful minds. The attack on the veracity of the inspired record is part of a definite plan of campaign that has emanated from beneath. It is in definite relation to other movements that are all calculated with the one great aim of the Adversary of God and men, to frustrate God's purposes of beneficence to His creatures, and to effect the eternal loss of as many as the Devil can ensnare in his toils.

We may anticipate, therefore, that there can be no question as to the ultimate doom of what is called "Modern Theology." But we have the word of revelation; we have that which was spoken to the Serpent on the occasion to which we have already referred: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." How many of us have any adequate conception of what these words mean in their fulness? He who was the Seed of the woman was bruised indeed by the Serpent at Golgotha. But it was there that He, by His death of weakness, obtained the victory; and He shall yet put down utterly and crush beneath His feet everything that exalteth itself against God and God's truth.

It is well for us to remember that He who is spoken of

<sup>1</sup> See this volume, pp. 116, 133, 145, 169, 211, 217.

here as the Seed of the woman, whose coming was the sure pledge that the seed of the Serpent would be crushed, that His name is the Truth. If we had this before us in lively remembrance it might, in God's mercy and with His blessing, save us from that willingness to compromise which so often is the undoing of a fair Christian career.

All manner of evils of doctrine and practice might be avoided if there were in the hearts of God's children more earnest and hearty devotion to the truth. The truth is to be held in love, and it is not true zeal for the truth that leads to unkindly thoughts of others. But on the other hand no good purpose is served by dallying with the mildest form that the Satanic lie may take. If we would be overcomers we must be imitators of Him who is the Truth, and we must maintain at any cost our unhesitating faith in the divine revelation.

We have spoken of that tampering with faith in the Holy Scriptures which bears the name of the "Higher Criticism." It is well to understand clearly that the Author of lies, in his endeavour to instil into the minds of men doubt as to the reality of the Holy Scriptures, does so in order to support and reinforce the attacks that he makes in other directions. It is not a mere coincidence that concurrently with the progress of this so-called "Higher Criticism" which would deny the authority of the Book of God, we have an immense development of pleasure-seeking on the part of the great masses of the people. A disregard of God and His word is a natural result of the doubt thrown on the latter, though the two things may not be logically connected in the minds of all. Again, we have an increasing impatience on the part of many of any kind of restraint; an increasing desire on the part of old and young to have their way, and to reject the control of superiors.

These tendencies have not at all developed to the same extent; and there have been and are restraining influences

of a powerful character. These show themselves, for instance, in various organisations of varying degrees of excellence which have this at least in common, that, however little their promoters may be prepared to accept the teaching of the Bible as a whole, they at any rate are very conscious of the great value of many principles of conduct that are to be found therein.

But although these powerful restraining influences are at work, and the progress of mankind on the evil path is hindered thereby, it is certain that the various forces set in motion by Satan are in active operation, and that they are working together for the purpose of effecting his evil designs.

It is, therefore, important for the child of God to be careful that he is wholly and altogether on the side of God and God's truth, and that he lends no support to the enemy's forces. The Scriptures indeed themselves testify to the dangers of these days, for Paul wrote to Timothy that in the last days grievous times should come. "For men," he said, "shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof." Let the thoughtful man look around and he will see the fulfilment of this word on every hand.

If the characteristics of more obvious evil as it shows itself so as to be displeasing even to man are to be seen in the world at large, is not the last-named feature "having a form of godliness, but having denied the power thereof" very manifest in much that bears the name of Christianity? In the days that immediately preceded the Reformation the so-called "Roman Catholic Church" answered to this in the most flagrant way; for it was to a considerable extent the abominations that he saw at Rome that opened



the eyes of Luther, for example. But is there not a denial of the power of godliness to be recognised in many of the smaller sects that are quite free from the more flagrant evils that corrupt the larger denominations? In the latter, indeed, you will scarcely find what Luther found. But that a form of godliness with a denial of its power is to be seen is beyond all doubt. Look at the numbers of people who, week in and week out, cry "Lord, be merciful to us, miserable sinners," and yet they have no sense of sinnership whatever. Look at the clergymen, as they are called, who subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles or recite the Athanasian Creed, and yet have by their own confession little or no faith in the one or the other. Look at the ministers of various denominations who would fain be regarded as the inheritors of the traditions of the noble men who preceded them, and yet they utterly decry the very things that their forebears thought worth more than life itself. The things that are taught by the U.F. Presbyterians in Scotland, for example, are such as would have horrified their ancestors if they could have known that such views could ever be propounded.

In all these and a thousand cases besides the form is retained, and it is only a form. I saw a petrified fern the other day; the form was perfect, it was a pleasure to look at; but it was dead, it was no fern at all. There was no life. It was but a petrified representation of what was once a living thing.

As we have said already, there is a certain amount of restraint exercised on the part of many worthy men who see clearly the danger of the pleasure-seeking that has taken hold of the populace; and this critical time in the British national history is well calculated to assist the efforts of the more sober leaders of public opinion. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the most hopeful and earnest efforts of the leaders to whom we are referring are entirely or almost entirely confined to that which concerns man

as man, and his relation to his fellows. It may be said with the saddest truth—

### GOD IS NOT IN ALL THEIR THOUGHTS.

It is not, alas ! the leaders of political thought alone who seem to think of God only as One who will judge between right and wrong. The leaders of what by a sad misnomer is called the religious world seem equally oblivious to the claims that God has to the worship and love of His creatures. Man is the end and object in all the most popular and flourishing of the movements of the day. God is not in all their thoughts.

We have, therefore, before us the terrible spectacle of a world which practically denies to God all share or place in the Creation which He has brought into being.

It will be remembered that Paul told the Athenians that God is not far from the sons of men ; that in Him we live and move and are. “ Modern Theology ” in its career of contradiction of God’s truth encourages man to believe that God is far off, and at its worst it teaches men that they can do without God altogether. This worst phase is too glaring to go down with intelligent men at present, and therefore a milder form of the heresy is the more popular. According to the milder form of modern thought there is a God in heaven, and He does judge men, rewarding the righteous and punishing the wicked. But all the same it is denied tacitly or explicitly that He has the claims on men that are put forward on His behalf in the inerrant Scriptures that He has given.

We have said that man is taught by the religious leaders of the day a kind of “ religion ” so-called—“ Modern Theology ” that puts God at a distance. It is not surprising that in such a system of doctrine there is no place for the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Of course they name His name, and they speak of Him in terms of admiration. But they deny Him the right to speak of Himself, and they

render nugatory the revelation that He has made of God, His Father. I say that they deny Him the right to speak of Himself, for they contradict the plain statements that He made as to His eternal Sonship, and reduce Him in their vain reasonings to the level of a super-man. I say, further, that they render His revelation of His Father nugatory, for they utterly deny the need of atonement and reduce His death to the level of mere martyrdom.

But the germ of "Modern Theology" is to be found in quarters where such things as we have just mentioned would be unsparingly denounced. For is it not the same spirit which at its worst proceeds to the lengths of denying the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures and the Eternal Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is seen in a much milder form when Christians who accept the Scriptures as the rule of life hesitate practically to accept its teaching when it would lead them in the path of separation and give them a place of shame with Him who suffered outside the gate?

It has been shown, for instance, that the Feast of Remembrance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Breaking of the Loaf is an ordinance that the Lord has committed corporately to such companies of His people as are gathered unto His name; that certain persons must be excluded from such companies either for moral delinquencies or on account of doctrinal unsoundness; that such companies are required by the teaching and example of Holy Scripture to be and to act together as parts of a whole—the Fellowship of the Son of God. What we have just stated has been admitted in whole or in part by many children of God, who have, however, refused to go further, chiefly as we judge for such reasons as the following:—

It is thought that all who profess to belong to Christ have an indisputable right to the privileges of the breaking of the loaf, and to question this or to bring it to the test of Scripture is unkind; it is thought that to refuse a person

for any error of doctrine, that may be held with an honest mind and heart, is equally objectionable ;

It is maintained that the circumstances contemplated in the Scripture are so different from those of the present day that it is not proper to argue from them, and hence, of course, it is implied that the Scripture leaves us without guidance as to corporate testimony ;

It is contended generally that any course of action that is based on the supposition that many Christians are out of the way is lacking in what is called charity, and it is implied, but not baldly said, that it is not consistent with the broad principles of toleration that characterise our enlightened days.

Now we suggest that all these arguments, and reasons such as these, are in nature and essence identical with the evil thing called " Modern Theology " ; though those who speak and write as we have quoted are, we gladly own, far indeed from any sympathy with the scepticism and worldliness that characterise " Modern Theology " as generally understood.

But we find that the objections that are raised to the principles we have briefly set forth chiefly consist in setting a regard for man and his feelings in opposition to God's claims ; in reducing to a minimum the place that the Word of God has in directing us in these matters ; in thus diminishing in practice the authority of the Scriptures, though the persons themselves do not deny that the Scripture is an authoritative revelation from God.

Whether in its milder or in its more virulent forms, the essence of " Modern Theology " is found in this, that it denies God's claims ; that it sets man above God ; that it lowers or denies the authority of what God has said in the Holy Scriptures.

And what of its doom ? Its doom is destruction, its end is foretold. It is, alas ! possible for Christians to build wood, hay, stubble where they might be building gold,

silver, precious stones. The builders will be saved, if truly regenerate persons, but their works will be burned, if they are of the former character. How much the spirit of "Modern Theology" has taken possession of children of God it is not possible for us to say. But we are sure that there is need for a very solemn warning, lest those who love God and fear His name be found in league with His enemies. For it is only too easy, if we once start on the dangerous path, to render unwitting aid to the destructive campaign of the Evil Serpent. And let us be well assured that, whatever the grace of God, and great are His mercies, His Blessed Son will certainly bring to naught everything that exalts itself against His word. God is not mocked, what we sow we shall reap.

If we endure, we shall also reign with Him.

If we shall deny Him, He also will deny us.

How terrible the thought that God's own children may be found helping the Devil, and will see their works (or some of their works) burnt up, because they are works of the Evil one. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

## A SONG, SET TO ALÁMOTH.

*(Continued from page 333.)*

"WHO would not fear Thee, O King of the nations?  
 . . . Jehovah is the true God; He is the living God, and  
 an everlasting King: at His wrath the earth trembleth,  
 and the nations are not able to abide His indignation. . . .  
 He hath made the earth by His power, He hath established  
 the world by His wisdom, and by His understanding hath  
 He stretched out the heavens . . . He maketh lightnings  
 for the rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of His trea-  
 suries" (Jer. 10. 7-13). "He doeth according to His will  
 in the Army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the  
 earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what

doest Thou ? ” (Dan. 4. 35). “ In His hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind ” (Job 12. 10).

Well saith the Psalm—

“ Be still, and know that I am God.”

And, say the maidens of the feeble remnant of His ancient people in that future day—

“ God is our refuge and strength,  
A very present help in trouble,  
Therefore will we not fear.”

Their view here is prospective. Come what may, their trust is in God. Let the waters roar and the mountains shake with the pride thereof—let the nations rage and the kingdoms be moved—yet God is their safe retreat.

Verses 4 to 7 give us the second stanza of this beautiful song ; and here their deliverance is seen to be an accomplished fact. The storm is succeeded by the calm. It begins—

“ There is a River, the streams whereof make glad the city of God,  
The Holy Place of the Tabernacles of the Most High.”

No troubled waters roaring now, but peace and tranquillity. Wondrous river ! Waters issuing out from under the threshold of the House . . . waters that were to the ankles . . . waters that were to the knees . . . waters that were to the loins . . . waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed through. With its very many trees upon either bank, whose leaf shall not wither, neither shall the fruit thereof fail (Ezek. 47.). That will be the dawning of morning indeed, as the margin of the Psalm says. It is now the retrospective view, and the triumphant note.

“ The nations raged, the kingdoms were moved :  
He uttered His voice, the earth melted.  
Jehovah of Hosts is with us ;  
The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”

Inspiring words ! which speak loudly of beautiful Grace.

Jehovah of Hosts in association with the remnant of poor worm Jacob. In the days of Jacob's pilgrimage, you remember, the angels of God met him, and he at once recognised God's host (Gen. **32. 1**). Here it is not the hosts that are prominent. It is the God who owns the hosts.

"Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help,  
Whose hope is in Jehovah his God." (Ps. **46.**)

Then we come to the third division of the psalm, a call :

"Come, behold the works of Jehovah,  
What desolations He hath made in the earth."

The seventieth week of the prophecy of Daniel will then have been fulfilled. The real Har-Magedon (Armageddon) will then have been fought and won ; and millennial peace will be ushered in to succeed tribulation woes.

At the present time men speak of "Armageddon" and apply it to the war now raging ; but terrible as this war is, it is nothing to what shall yet be. At the moment our minds are directed to the Continent—to "poor" or rather "brave little Belgium," to a great extent devastated and destroyed : to the marshalling of men : to deadly artillery belching forth destruction and death : to the cold steel of infantry : to the maddening charges of infuriated horsemen : to the fearsome bombs thrown down from mid-heaven, and the unceasing cry and groan from the blood-stained sod ; not to speak of the great waters where go the ships, which, like Sheol itself, are never satisfied and seem ever to be crying, "Give, give." And when all is said, the issue may be doubtful. But when He comes forth, whose absolute right it is to wield a universal sceptre, then never for a moment will the issue be in doubt. Behold Him going forth to the battle (Zech. **14. 3** ; Isa. **46. 15, 16** ; Rev. **19. 11-16**). Behold His victorious return (Isa. **63. 1-6**). Psalm **45.**, that love-song "touching the King," which precedes the Psalm we are considering, presents the glorious and exalted person of our almighty Chief.

“Come, behold the works of Jehovah,  
 What desolations He hath made in the earth.  
 He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth;  
 He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder;  
 He burneth the chariots in the fire.  
 Be still, and know that I am God:  
 I will be exalted among the Nations,  
 I will be exalted in the earth,  
 Jehovah of Hosts is with us;  
 The God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.”

Desolations in the earth there will be indeed when Jehovah whets His glittering sword. Such will be the slaughter, that when all is over “Israel shall go forth, and shall make fires of the weapons and burn them . . . and they shall make fires of them seven years. . . . And seven months shall the House of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land” (Ezek. 39.).

Much more might be said concerning that time with which the forty-sixth Psalm specially deals; but rather would we apply it to ourselves amid present surroundings. It is well to guard against becoming pessimistic. And at the same time, it is prudent, while exercising confidence in God, to beware of undue optimism. Whatever be the outlook, and whatever be the end, let us lean hard upon God. Come what may, we need not fear; yea, we will not fear. For—

“God is our refuge and strength,  
 A very present help in trouble.”

It is He who hath established His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all.

By His side sits enthroned “the Ruler of the kings of the earth,” and Himself hath said, “I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee.” So that with good courage we say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear: what shall man do unto me?” (Heb. 13. 6). Let God fill the scene, and all must be well. In the shadow of His wings let us take refuge until these calamities be overpast.

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