

Emmanuel, God with us.

No.1. (Being a continuation of the series entitled “In Adam”). pp. 148 - 152

Angels appear to be separate creations, there being no marriage or giving in marriage in the spirit world, and angels fell from their high and holy position, and there is no guarantee that they will not fall again in ages to come. To make this dread occurrence impossible appears to have been solved as He alone could solve it. The heirs of glory destined to occupy a place even higher than that of angels, were not created as separate entities. They came into existence through “one man” Adam. Every child born into this world has one common father, the race is organically one for good or evil. Into this race, in the fullness of time God became incarnate, the Word was made flesh, a body was prepared for Him, and at His birth He was announced to be Emmanuel “God with us”.

To those who have taken the apostle Paul as the Divinely ordained apostle, teacher and pattern for believers of the present dispensation, it is natural and right that they should place such a text as that of I Cor. xv. 3 near the forefront of their testimony concerning the work of Christ in the great matter of salvation:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. xv. 3).

We meet with this same basic doctrine in Romans where we read:

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8).

The phrases “first of all” and “while we were yet sinners” fully justify the primary importance with which this aspect of the work of Christ is regarded. That which is first in the experimental order, however, is not necessarily the first in the historical order, and a moment’s reflection will reveal that, however fundamental and primary the doctrine that “Christ died for our sins” may be, much had to be done before that death on the cross could be accomplished.

These thoughts arise as a result of pondering the opening of Matthew’s Gospel, for there, at the close of the genealogy, the Saviour is given a twofold name: “Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins”, and, “Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matt. i. 21-23). It is the fact that this child, born at Bethlehem, was “Emmanuel”, “God with us”, that made the glorious doctrine that Christ died for our sins a blessed possibility.

The moment we give expression to these thoughts, passages crowd in upon us from the epistles of Paul which show that this doctrine is by no means absent from their teaching. Before we reach Rom. v. we shall have read the first chapter, where “the

Gospel of God”, to which Paul had been separated, is distinctly declared to be “concerning His Son”, who is presented to us in His twofold nature; “according to the flesh” of the seed of David, and “according to the spirit of holiness”, the Son of God with power (Rom. i. 1-4). If the doctrine of Rom. v. 8 is primarily our *experimental* approach to the gospel, the doctrine of Emmanuel, “God with us”, is *fundamental* and *initial*. If in our experimental approach, the position of I Cor. xv. 3 be primary to the gospel, yet the close of the chapter is not reached without bringing into prominence the doctrine of Emmanuel, “God with us”, for that is incipient in the references to Christ as “the second Man”, Who is nevertheless “the Lord from heaven” (I Cor. xv. 47).

The epistle to the Galatians places great stress on the fact that “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us” (Gal. iii. 13), but it also stresses the Emmanuel aspect by saying that “when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law” (Gal. iv. 4, 5). In like manner the epistle to the Hebrews sums up its doctrinal teaching in the words, “But this man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 12), yet the same chapter stresses the Emmanuel aspect of the truth by the words:

“Wherefore when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hath Thou prepared Me” (Heb. x. 5).

Earlier in this epistle we read, “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil” (Heb. ii. 14). Again, Matthew is not the only one to introduce the great doctrine contained in the name Emmanuel, “God with us”, in the opening page of his record, for Hebrews also opens with an emphasis upon “The Son”, “The first begotten”, Who nevertheless is “the express image of His Person” and Who, not only “made the ages” and “upholds all things by the word of His power” (Heb. i. 2, 3, 5, 6), but is addressed as “God” (i. 8), is to be worshiped by all the angels of God (i. 6) and Who as “Lord” in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth (i. 10). Here then, in Heb. i., ii. and x., we have most gloriously set before us Emmanuel, “God with us”.

When we think of the gospel of eternal life, we immediately call to mind John iii. 16, but we also remember that the “giving” of the only begotten Son is not as in that passage, limited by John to the death of the cross, for in the first chapter he writes:

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (i. 14).

Christ is most surely set forth as Emmanuel, “God with us”, in the opening chapter of John’s Gospel, for “the Word” Who was made flesh, was, “in the beginning, God” (i. 1). If we leave the doctrine of redemption and the gospel of grace, and turn to other phases of the Divine purpose, we shall see that this Emmanuel doctrine is ever present. Take for example the dispensational portion of Romans, chapters ix., x. and xi. There, in the forefront of chapter ix., we read Israel’s privileges, which reach their culmination and crown in the coming of Emmanuel, “God with us”,

“Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, Who is over all, God blessed for ever,
Amen.”

We return to the opening chapter of Matthew’s Gospel and observe the place in the unfolding purpose that this Emmanuel doctrine there holds. The chapter falls into two sections:

The Book of the generation of Jesus Christ. A genealogy commencing with Abraham and ending with Joseph, a descendant of David, the husband of Mary (1-17).

The birth of the Saviour and the prophetic fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, that His name should be Emmanuel, God with us (18-25).

There is a reason why the N.T. opens as it does, but an acquaintance with the order of the books of the O.T. is necessary to appreciate the way in which the twofold theme of Matt. i. 1-25 corresponds both with the genealogy and with the utter need expressed in the closing book of the Hebrew canon.

The reader is aware that, while the English Version of the O.T. contains exactly the same number of books as the Hebrew canon, the grouping in each case, is not the same. In both, the five books of the law are found occupying the opening section of the Scriptures, but with the commencement of the next section, “The Prophets”, a change takes place. While the books of Samuel and of Kings find their place among “The Prophets”, the books of Chronicles are placed at the extreme end of the third section, which is headed by the Psalms. Thus, where the A.V. of the O.T. concludes with the twelve minor prophets, Hosea to Malachi, the Hebrew canon concludes with the two books of The Chronicles. Thus, upon the last page of his Scriptures, the Hebrew reader sees the dreadful words, “No remedy” (II Chron. xxxvi. 16). But the reader of the N.T. is blessedly aware that the very next page contains the record of the coming into this world of God’s one great remedy, the gift of His Son to be our Saviour. Let us see how the record of the first chapter of Matthew follows on from the closing books of the Old Testament.

Without the preparation of mind afforded by the above introductory notes, most readers, if asked where they would turn in the O.T. for the complete genealogy of Adam onward, would naturally refer to the book of Genesis. This of course is right, but no complete, unbroken, genealogy, commencing from Adam and ending with the days of Saul king of Israel, is to be found except in the opening chapters of the book of Chronicles. Thus in the opening verse we read “Adam, Sheth, Enosh”, and in I Chron. ix. 1 is found the summary:

“So all Israel were reckoned by genealogies, and behold they were written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah, who were carried away to Babylon for their transgression.”

It was because of these transgressions that the words “no remedy” were written in the closing chapter:

“And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused the prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, *till there was no remedy*” (II Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16).

The word translated “remedy” is the Hebrew *marpe*, which is derived from the verb *rapha*, “to heal”. It forms one of the Jehovah titles, namely “Jehovah-Ropheka”, “The Lord hath healeth thee” (Exod. xv. 26). Healing is a figure used in the Scriptures to set forth salvation from sin, and the many miracles of healing found in the Gospels and the Acts have a threefold purpose. First, the immediate healing of the body; secondly, the setting forth in type of the greater, spiritual healing of salvation; thirdly, the exhibition of signs and wonders constituting evidence that the Son of God had come. Thus the cleansing of the leper, the restoration of hearing and of speech, the giving of sight to the blind, the feeding of the hungry, and the raising of the dead, all set forth in type the great salvation that the Lord had come to give.

Upon turning the page and opening the N.T. at the first chapter, we again meet with a genealogy. For the immediate purpose of his gospel, Matthew had no need to trace the Saviour’s earthly line back as far as Adam; it was sufficient that he demonstrated that this Child, whose birth at Bethlehem meant so much to His people and to the world, was in direct descent from David and from Abraham.

It is to the companion gospel of Luke that we turn for the Saviour’s unbroken line of descent through David and Abraham to Adam. An examination of these two genealogies cannot be made here: it falls better under the series now running through *The Berean Expositor* entitled “Time and Place”.

The essential contrast between the closing book of the Old and the opening book of the New Testament may be demonstrated thus:

Old Testament failure—

Genealogy. Adam, Abraham, David to Zedekiah.

“No remedy.”

The restoration proclaimed under Cyrus King of Persia.

Yet Israel was about to become *lo ammi*, “not My people”.

New Testament Victory—

Genealogy. Adam, Abraham, David to Christ.

“Save His people from their sins.”

Restoration in the Gospel proclamation, “God with us”.

It is very evident therefore that both in the Gospels and in the Epistles the incarnation, the coming into flesh of Him Who is over all, God blessed for ever, is shown to be at the very foundation of all our hopes.

We must therefore pursue this theme in further studies together, in which we shall discover that in Practical Truth as well as in Gospel, Doctrine and Dispensation, the glory of Him Who alone could bear the name Emmanuel, irradiates all with its glorious influence.

No.2. Emmanuel, and the Virgin Birth.

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We have seen the fundamental importance of the doctrine contained in the name of Christ “Emmanuel”, and must, before proceeding to consider its bearing upon Gospel, doctrine and practice in the N.T., give some attention to the O.T. prophecy which was fulfilled in the birth of Christ.

The section of Isaiah, which gives us the prophetic name Emmanuel, covers chapters vii. to ix. 7, and in these chapters the teaching of the prophet is made to revolve around children who are given as “signs”.

SHEAR-JASHUB “The remnant shall return” (vii. 3). This child accompanied Isaiah when he sought to encourage Ahaz to “Take heed and be quiet”, in face of the evil counsel of Syria, Ephraim and the son of Remaliah (vii. 4-9).

Isaiah appears to have entertained extreme doubt as to Ahaz and expressed his doubt in the words “If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established” (vii. 9).

To encourage Ahaz yet further in resisting the enmity of these confederate kings, he is called upon to ask a sign of the Lord, whether in the depth, or in the height above. He appears, however to have made up his mind, “he had a policy of his own and was determined to pursue it. He insisted on appealing to Assyria” (G. A. Smith).

“So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser, King of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son; come up and save me” (II Kings xvi. 7).

Upon the King’s refusal to ask a sign, the prophet replies with the second great sign of the section, the sign of the Virgin’s Son.

IMMANUEL “God with us” (vii. 14). We must give this sign closer attention, but will continue and record the third of these signs together with Isaiah’s own comment and prophecy.

MAHER-SHALAL-HASH-BAZ “Haste, spoil, speed, prey” (viii. 1-4) which speaks of the coming of the King of Assyria and the spoiling of Damascus and Samaria.

“Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of Hosts which dwelleth in mount Zion” (viii. 18).

Finally, in chapter nine, we have the glorious prophecy of Emmanuel more fully stated:

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace” (ix. 6).

Returning to the Emmanuel sign we observe that like many another Messianic prophecy it had an immediate fulfillment in the life of the hearers, and a fuller and future fulfillment in the Person of Christ. The immediate fulfillment is clearly indicated by the words:

“Before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings” (vii. 16).

This prophecy was fulfilled within two years of its utterance, as II Kings xv. 30 and xvi. 9 will show.

The reader may feel that his faith is subjected to a strain as he reads Isa. vii., “Behold, a virgin”. Are we to believe that on two occasions God miraculously brought about a virgin birth? And if we do so believe, does not this lower the uniqueness of the birth and person of the Redeemer? The answer to this problem is found by examining the actual words employed in the Hebrew O.T. and the Greek of the N.T.

The word translated “virgin” in Isa. vii. 14 is the Hebrew word *almah*, the word translated “virgin” in Matt. i. 23 is the Greek word *parthenos*.

Almah occurs in the Hebrew O.T. seven times: namely in Gen. xxiv. 43; Exod. ii. 8; Psa. lxxviii. 25; Prov. xxx. 19; Song of Sol. i. 3; vi. 8; and Isa. vii. 14. This word, while it may refer to a virgin in the strictest sense of the word, only means a young woman, a maiden, a damsel. There is, however, another word which does indicate a virgin in the strictest sense of the word, and that is *bethulah*. This word occurs also in Gen. xxiv. 16, where Rebekah is said to be a “damsel, very fair to look upon, a virgin”. Isaiah knew the word, and uses it five times in his prophecy. The Hebrew *bethulim* is translated “virginity”. “The Companion Bible” therefore, rightly comments “While every *bethulah* is indeed an *almah*, yet not every *almah* is a *bethulah*”.

The word “Virgin” in the strictest sense is reserved for the great fulfillment of this prophecy at the birth of Christ, there the N.T. reads *parthenos* (Matt. i. 23). “The word may, I think, be best derived from *paratheinai*, to lay up, set apart, and so allude to the retired life of *virgins* in the eastern countries, and among the Greeks” (Parkhurst).

This word is narrower than the Hebrew *almah* used in the seventh chapter of Isaiah and sets the seal of truth upon the miracle of the Virgin birth. This fundamental doctrine of Redemption is not taught by a matter of fact statement, but is forced upon the mind of the reader of the N.T. by a number of converging features.

First, there is the decisive word *parthenos*, a word that was not confined to one sex, but could be used of men as well as of women, the essential point in either case being

chastity, virginity. Then, there are a number of passages that reveal the presence of a miracle, although in themselves and taken separately they may not be considered of sufficient weight to prove the point. Let us note them.

(1) *The Genealogy of Matt. i., and its one departure from the normal.*—In this genealogy the word *gennao* “begat” “was born” occurs some forty times, and follows the course of nature as in any other genealogy—“Abraham *begat* Isaac” right on through the succeeding generations until the birth of Joseph, “Jacob *begat* Joseph”. At this point however a noteworthy departure is made from the ordinary method of notification, because a noteworthy departure from the normal had now to be recorded. Had the Lord Jesus Christ come into this world as every other child has come into this world, the genealogy would have continued “Jacob *begat* Joseph, and Joseph *begat* Jesus, Who is called Christ”, and the Christ of God would have been a man, a holy man, a blessed man, a glorious man, but a man and no more. His name would still have been “Jesus”, but His name could not also have been Emmanuel, “God with us”.

The last line of this genealogy makes a definite break in the natural sequence, “Jacob *begat* Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom (*feminine*) was born (*gennao*) Jesus, Who is called Christ”.

The “begetting” ends with the birth of Joseph. Man then stands aside, and for the first time the Mother stands associated with *gennao* alone and independent of the man. Earlier in this genealogy the names of several mothers are recorded, but they never stand alone, the word *gennao* always being attached to the father who is named, as for example “Booz *begat* Obed of Ruth” (Matt. i. 5). Here therefore is evidence that the birth of Christ was miraculous.

(2) *The natural perturbation of Joseph (Matt. i. 18, 19).*—Although Mary was espoused to Joseph, they had not actually come together as man and wife, consequently when it was discovered that she was with child, Joseph as a righteous man under the law, had no option but to divorce his wife—although being a kindly man he intended to do it privately. All this is perfectly natural, and were it on record that Joseph re-acted differently our suspicions would be justified.

As the words stand in the A.V. of Matt. i. 18, however, they do not make sense. If Joseph had discovered that Mary “was with child of the Holy Ghost” his questionings would have been answered before they arose. The note in “The Companion Bible” is worth recording*.

[* - “Now; or, But, in contrast with those mentioned in verses 2-16. Render: ‘The begetting, then, of Jesus Christ was on this wise (for after His mother was espoused to Joseph, she was found with child) of *pneuma hagion*.’ birth = begetting. Gr, *gennesis*. Occ. Only here and Luke i. 14, used of the Father.”]

(3) *The natural perturbation of Mary (Luke i. 27-37).*—In this record Mary is not only called a virgin, but acts as one. She was “troubled” at the salutation of the angel, and expostulated with the angel in reply to the announcement that she should have a son. “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?”

In both passages, Joseph and Mary are assured that the conception of this child upon which such mighty issues would hang was of the Holy Ghost, and that the “Holy thing Which shall born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke i. 35).

The parties most concerned in this great matter, were perfectly convinced and assured. Their characters, as given in the Scriptures show that they were honest, godly folk, and we are therefore confronted with two alternatives. Either we accept the testimony of the Scriptures, and believe unreservedly in the miracle of the virgin birth, and all the consequent doctrines and blessings that flow from it, or we reject the statements of Scripture, are left with a Saviour, Who being of the fallen line of Adam, *must need a Saviour Himself*, before He could undertake the Salvation of the world. With the rejection of the testimony of the first chapter of Matthew all the subsequent teaching comes to nothing. We are left with ashes and dead sea fruit, the name Emmanuel is a mockery, and we are of all men most miserable.

This “sign” of Isa. vii. 14, was indeed “in the depth” as “in the height”, as verse eleven puts it, for what could be deeper than the Saviour’s condescension when He laid aside His glory to take upon Himself the form and fashion of a man, and become the Virgin’s Son?

We therefore rejoice that in the Person of Christ, the Virgin’s Son, we have the fullest realization of the prophetic Name “God with us”.

No.3. “With us” in our experiences in this world. pp. 218 - 221

There is a world of comfort in the word “with”. Many a time when we have prayed for friends and loved ones in distress and trouble, and not knowing how to frame our petition, we have fallen back on the simple request to the Lord, “be with them”, knowing that this blessing of personal fellowship with the God of all grace, would sanctify the deepest distress and give grace to overcome in every difficulty.

We turn the page of our Bible, and from contemplating the chapter that tells us that “The begetting of Jesus Christ was on this wise” we look at the succeeding chapter that tells us of the actual birth at Bethlehem and the things that happened to the infant even in such tender years, that this child was living up to the great title “Emmanuel” or must we wait until He comes to the cross and becomes the bearer of our sin? We remember that the name Emmanuel is associated with the fulfillment of prophecy, and our eye is caught in Matt. ii. with the recurring phrase, “and it was fulfilled”, as it is associated with the birth at Bethlehem, the departure to Egypt, the massacre of the innocents, and the character and condition of Nazareth (Matt. ii. 5, 6, 15, 17, 18, 23).

Bethlehem is the “city of David” and it was meet that David’s greater Son should be born there, but we observe that lowliness, not greatness is attached to the place of Emmanuel’s birth. In Luke’s record, we find that the infant Christ is laid in a manger, because there was no room in the inn (ii. 7), and in Matthew’s account note is taken of the fact that Bethlehem is “least among the princes of Judah”. The reader may object at this point and point out that Matt. ii. 6 does not say that Bethlehem “was least”, but “art not the least”. If we consult the original passage in Micah v. 2 we shall read:

“But Thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me, that is to be ruler in Israel,”

and will find that the passage quoted in Matt. ii. 6, does not agree verbally with either the Hebrew original or the LXX translation of Micah v. 2. What we must remember here is that Matt. ii. 6 records the immediate response of the chief priests and scribes to the question put by Herod. It is apparently a quotation made off hand and from memory, which true in general, must not be used to set off the original which they failed accurately to quote. “Ephratah” is paraphrased by “in the land of Judah” and this is true. There was another Bethlehem in Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15). In all probability Herod had never heard the ancient name Ephratah, and the Scribes were justified in translating the intention of the prophet into terms understandable by the king. The alteration also of the word “thousands” to “princes” is to be explained in the same way. The word translated “thousand” also meant a family, as the LXX renders Judges vi. 15, where Gideon says “my family (lit. thousand) is poor”; or again in I Sam. x. 19 where Samuel calls upon the people to present themselves “by your thousands”, i.e. families. The scribes therefore were translating again freely for Herod’s benefit.

However, it is in the next quotation from the prophets that the blessed fullness of the idea “God with us” begins to be made manifest. Joseph is warned in a dream that Herod would seek the young child’s life and is instructed to flee to Egypt, where the King’s writ did not run, “And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, out of Egypt have I called My Son” (Matt. ii. 15). This passage is quoted from Hosea xi. 1:

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.”

Unlike the quotation of the Scribes of the prophet Micah, this is a true translation of the words of Hosea xi. 1. The problem attaching to this quotation does not reside in the citation, but in the interpretation or application of the prophet’s words to Christ. As the words stand in Hosea they are not a prophecy of the future but a statement of historical fact. Israel were in Egypt suffering under the bondage imposed by Pharaoh. The Lord looked with love upon this infant nation which He had chosen and called out of Egypt, giving them the title “Son”, saying:

“Israel is My son, even My firstborn, and I say unto thee, Let My son go” (Exod. iv. 22, 23).

It is evident both in the reference before us, and in the other allusions to Egypt made by Hosea, that Egypt is referred to as a type (Hosea ii. 15; vii. 11,16; viii. 13; ix. 3, 6; xi. 1, 5, 11; xii. 1, 9, 13; xiii. 4).

“As in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt” (Hos. ii. 15) links Israel’s first deliverance with his future restoration.

Egypt in Scripture stands for the world in its apparent independence of God. Unlike other lands that depend upon the rain of heaven, Egypt has no rain, but is dependent upon the river Nile (Zech. xiv. 18). The Nile like every other river is fed by the rain of heaven, but it is not manifestly so in the case of Egypt and so becomes a type. Egypt, at the time of the oppression was ruled by “another king who knew not Joseph”, and who made Israel’s lives bitter with hard bondage, and eight times in Egypt called in the law “the house of bondage”. Not only was Egypt a type of the world in its oppressing and persecuting attitude, but it is also set forth as a type of false security that it offers to the vacillating faith of tried believers. Abraham, the father of the faithful felt its attraction (Gen. xii. 10), and Isaiah reprimands the tendency of Israel “to trust in the shadow of Egypt” (Isa. xxx. 3; xxxvi. 9), calling Pharaoh in whom they trusted “a broken reed”. John in the apocalypse calls the city in which the dead bodies of the two witnesses lie “The great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt where our Lord was crucified” (Rev. xi. 8).

Returning to the second chapter of Matthew we observe that the passage from Hosea is not quoted when Joseph responded to the call “Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel” (Matt. ii. 21), the prophet’s words are recorded upon the leaving of the land of Israel and the entry into Egypt. Why is this?

This sojourning of Israel in the land of bondage was prophesied before Israel as a nation existed. It is implied in the terms of the promise made by God to Abraham as recorded in Gen. xv.:

“And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: FOR THE INIQUITY OF THE AMORITES IS NOT YET FULL” (13-16).

Israel’s sojourn in the land of bondage was not simply for their own sakes, or for their own deeds, it was because a period had been set for the filling up of Canaanite iniquity, who in their turn shadow forth the fallen principalities and powers, satanic usurpers, who have yet to be cast out and dispossessed under the true Joshua, the great Captain of the Lord’s Host.

Every “son” finds himself in “Egypt” and his full redemption cannot be entered until the iniquity of the great spiritual Amorite is fulfilled. Into the sorrows and the straitness that such an age purpose must entail, the “Son of God” entered, so that He may be “with” every son that He came to redeem and share with every trial of life’s waiting season.

Another answer is given to the problem set by this quotation from Hosea, by the use of the Greek word *hina*, “in order that it might be fulfilled” (Matt. ii. 15). The infant Christ went down into Egypt “in order that” He might be called out of it! Badly stated thus, the

reason seems inadequate and none too serious, but stated with understanding it yields precious truth.

Why was it necessary that Christ should go down into Egypt? Why necessary that He should be called out of Egypt? The answer is in the name Emmanuel “God with us”. He came in the likeness of sinful flesh into this world of sin and shame, and in the course of His sinless pilgrimage from cradle to cross, He traversed all the roads that the weary feet of His people have walked. Tempted as we are tempted, hated, despised, misunderstood, forsaken, He knows by living sympathy and experience every step of the pathway.

When we read Matt. ii. 15 with anointed eyes, it is seen to be one facet of the glorious jewel exhibited in Heb. iv. 15, “we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was *in all points** tempted as we are, yet without sin”.

[* - See series of articles “Tempted in all points” in *The Berean Expositor*, Volume XXXIII.]

No.4. “With us” in temptations. pp. 231 - 233

A series of articles will be found in Volume XXXIII of *The Berean Expositor* devoted to the exposition of the words of Heb. iv. 15, “Tempted in all points like as we are”. The whole series can be considered as a discussion of one aspect of the glorious purpose enshrined in the title Emmanuel, God with us. It is not our intention to repeat what we have already published, but to draw the attention of the reader to the aspect of the lesson which comes before us in the fourth chapter of Matthew. Christ in sympathy with His people was “called out of Egypt”, Christ in fellowship with His people is tempted in the wilderness.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil.
And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungered.”

There is a closer relationship in the typical teaching of the wilderness as set over against Egypt than at first seems apparent. He Who called His Son *out of* Egypt, called him *into* the wilderness.

“The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee,
three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God”
(Exod. iii. 18).

Many who read the word “wilderness” in the Scriptures conjure up a sandy waterless desert, but this is not the chief meaning of the word wilderness, although of course some wilderness or parts of them, may be sandy waterless wastes.

While Israel were miraculously fed by the manna during their forty years wandering in the wilderness, we read of no such miraculous provision for the flocks and herds that accompanied them, yet they lived and thrived throughout that trying period. Some wilderness were “great and terrible”, some were described as “waste howling” wilderness but the basic meaning of the word wilderness is not that of scorched arid desert, neither is the typical and spiritual meaning to be found in such a condition. The main word translated “wilderness” in the O.T. is *midbar*, which is derived from *dabar* “to lead or to drive” as cattle. Gesenius defines the word as “an uninhabitable plain country, *fit for feeding flocks*, not desert, *a pasture*”.

So we read in Joel ii. 22 “the pastures of the wilderness do spring”, as in Psa. lxxv. 12 we read “Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness; and Thy paths drop fatness. They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness”, and in Isa. xlii. 11 “let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice”.

The English word retains something of the primitive idea as may be seen by examining its composition and origin. It is composed of the word “wilder”, a shortened form of “wild deer”, and our forefathers when laying out a garden often set aside one portion called a wilderness, so that it may grow in unchecked luxuriance—never that it may become a desert.

The Greek word translated “wilderness” is *eremos* which is derived from *eremoo* “to make desolate”. The word however sometimes denotes no more than *uncultivated ground* used as a *common or pasture* in distinction from *arable* and *enclosed land* (“Shaw’s Travels”, and Doddridge on Luke xv. 4).

“The wilderness of Judaea” (Matt. iii. 1) does not mean a country absolutely desert and uninhabited, but only little cultivated and thinly inhabited, as in Josh. xv. 61, 62.

We come now to the passages that provoked this inquiry. The Lord demanded of Pharaoh through Moses saying:

“The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God” (Exod. iii. 18).

The essence of this demand is discovered in the contrast that is intended between the sophistication of Egypt and the primitive uncivilized nature of the wilderness; Egypt famed for its “wisdom” (Acts vii. 22) which Moses had to unlearn in the “desert” or “wilderness” (Exod. iii. 1); Egypt noted for its temples, its pyramids, its sphinx, its gods; Egypt in which even the Israelites trusted sometimes rather than in the Lord, so much so that Isaiah had to say “now the Egyptians are men, and not God” (Isa. xxxi. 3); Egypt the type of the world in its apparent independence of rain from heaven (Zech. xiv. 18, 19). In contrast with Egypt, Scripture places the wilderness, a place unspoiled by the hand of man, a place where one could meet with God undisturbed by the deadening distractions of so called civilization.

It may or may not be waste and howling, it may be a place where sheep could be pastured, the essence of the type lies in the extreme contrast that exists between “the wild” and “the cultivated”, the unspoiled and natural, as over against the sophisticated and the artificial. In the wilderness man soon learns that he does not live by bread alone, but city life spreads a veneer over the curse, blunts its edge, so that man feels less dependent upon God and more likely to trust in civilization.

If we can carry with us the essential meaning of the WILderness and keep it in contrast with the high civilization of Egypt and all that Egypt typifies we shall arrive at a truer conception of the typical meaning of Israel’s wilderness experiences, than if we allow our minds to be dominated by the idea of a desert in the generally accepted sense of the word.

It was into this experience that is the portion of every redeemed child of God, that He Who was Emmanuel, entered at the beginning of His public ministry.

It is well known to every student of the Word that the order of the temptations as found in Matt. iv., differs from the order as found in Luke iv., and moreover, that there are other differences, for example, where Luke speaks of a stone and bread in the singular, Matthew uses both words in the plural.

There are three ways in which this variation in the order of the temptations may be explained:

- (1) That one or the other, and possibly both records are untrustworthy. This is the attitude of the Sceptic, and is only stated here, to be resolutely set aside.
- (2) That both records are true, and that on two occasions during the forty days trial the Devil tempted the Lord with these three temptations, adopting slightly different language and approaching Him in a different order. This is the conclusion of “The Companion Bible” and is fully worked out in Appendix 116.
- (3) There is another point of view however. Any comparison of any two Gospels will bring to light the fact that what we think of as the historical order of events was not so considered by ancient writers, but that the logical order and spiritual significance was of far great importance.

To take an extreme and entirely unconnected example. It is evident by comparing Gen. x. and xi. that the dispersal at Babel must have come before the occupations of the various lands “after his tongue”, for Gen. xi. assures us that “the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech”.

Luke is the only writer who has assured us that he undertook to “set forth in order” the happenings he records, consequently we can easily believe that what we read in Luke’s account is the actual historical sequence of events, but that Matthew, because of the kingdom aspect of his account, places the temptation concerning “the kingdoms of the world” as a climax. While, in the circumstances, it is impossible for any one to

dogmatize in such matters, no essential truth is touch whether we believe the interpretation suggested under (2) or (3).

The essential feature that emerges for us, in our consideration of the bearing of the name Emmanuel, God with us, is that though the Saviour, in the right of His Godhead could have withered Satan at a glance, or blasted him with a word, He used no other weapon in this conflict than the humblest of His followers can use at any time. Three times He is tempted, and three times He met the temptation by the words "It is written". He was indeed "with us" in this unequal strife, and revealed not His own intrinsic omnipotence but the omnipotence of the Word of God.

Adam the first man was similarly tempted, but tempted in a garden of plenty, and miserably failed. Christ Emmanuel the seed of the woman, gloriously triumphed in a wilderness.

Israel were sorely tempted in a wilderness for a period of forty years, but had an unbroken supply of manna throughout their wanderings; Christ had nothing during the forty days yet triumphed. He is "with us" in our Egyptian bondage, He is "with us" in our wilderness temptations. Blessed be God for His unspeakable gift, Emmanuel, God with us.

Emmanuel, God with us.

No.5. “With us.” “He was numbered with the transgressors.” pp. 15 - 17

The fact that the Saviour “bore our griefs and carried our sorrows” long before He ultimately “bore our sins in His Own body on the tree”—in other words lived out the implications of the blessed name Emmanuel, God with us, is warp and woof of the four Gospels. He came to reveal the Father, He came to manifest His love, He came to seek and to save that which was lost, but the first fact to note is that in all these things, “He came”. Had he sent a messenger to reveal the Father, doubtless that revelation would have been glorious, but it could not have partaken of the essential character of that revelation made by Him Who is Emmanuel. We leave this phase of our study to the reader to follow out as time permits, and pass on to other and deeper aspects of this same great theme. The believer’s hope is summed up in the word “with Him”, whether it be expressed in John xiv., I Thess. iv. or Col. iii. The great doctrine of the believer’s identification with the Saviour irradiates the central portion of the epistle to the Romans (chapters v.-viii.) with its wondrous grace, and these blessed fruits of Emmanuel’s land must yet be examined and enjoyed. Before all this, however, one solemn aspect of Emmanuel’s association with us as sinners needing salvation, demands consideration. Before ever we could think of “reckoning” ourselves to have “died with Christ” another reckoning had to be made, a reckoning foreshadowed in the types of the O.T. sacrifices, foretold in the Prophecy of Isa. liii., and fulfilled when Christ died the Just for the unjust that He might bring us to God.

“And with Him they crucify two thieves; the one on His right hand, and the other on His left: And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, And He was numbered with the transgressors” (Mark xv. 27, 28).

“When I sent you without purse lacked ye anything? But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in Me. And He was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning Me have an end” (Luke xxii. 35-37).

The preposition *meta* “with” that is used in Matt. i. 23, is employed here, translated “with” in Mark xv. 28, and “among” in Luke xxii. 37.

It will be seen that the accounts given in Mark and Luke are not identical. One refers to the actual crucifixion; and one to the events leading up to it. One is the comment of Mark, the other the words of the Saviour Himself. Let us consider these two passages in their historical order, and commence with Luke.

The first thing that we observe is that the quotation of Isa. liii. made by Luke is flanked on either side with the word “temptation”.

“Ye are they which have continued with (*meta*) Me in My temptations Satan hath desired to have thee.”

“Pray that ye enter not into temptation” (Luke xxii. 28, 31, 40, 46).

The quotation from Isaiah is introduced in answer to the question put by the Lord concerning “purse” and “scrip” and “sword”. Up till that moment, the Lord’s personal protecting care had been sufficient, but a change was imminent, introduced by the words “but now”. If Christ Himself was to be reckoned among transgressors, His followers would necessarily be reckoned among them too. True, He was to “fulfil” this great prophecy in a sense that no sinful man ever could fulfil it. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and “SEPARATE from sinners”, yet was “reckoned among them”. “He Who KNEW NO sin, was made sin for us”; He “died the JUST for the unjust”.

The gathering point of the age was near. This that is written must yet be accomplished (*teleo*). The things concerning Him have an end (*telos*). Here we have an anticipation of John xix. 28, 30, “all things were now *accomplished* it is *finished* (*teleo*)”.

He Who was born at Bethlehem and given the name Emmanuel, God with us, now faced the cross, and was numbered with us transgressors.

The quotation from Isa. liii., is made in Mark’s Gospel at the crucifixion itself. It comes after a long and dreadful series of indignities, cruel treatment and bitter spite.

How was it that an earthly governor like Pilate could sit in judgment upon the Son of God? The answer is He was numbered with transgressors, and stood in their place.

How was it that the Son of God permitted the Roman soldiers to handle Him, mock Him, spit upon Him, and crucify Him? The same answer will suffice. He, Emmanuel, was numbered with the transgressors. He was treated exactly like any other criminal. The accusation and superscription were put over His sacred head, and on either side of that cross, there were crucified WITH HIM two thieves. The verb *sustauroo* “to crucify with” occurs nowhere else in the N.T. than in the records of the actual crucifixion of Christ (Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark xv. 32; John xix. 32) and in the two great passages of Paul’s epistles:

“I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live” (Gal. ii. 20).
“Our old man is crucified with Him” (Rom. vi. 6).

We shall learn upon examining the epistles of Galatians and Romans, that this crucifixion with Christ, is by “reckoning” and we now perceive the Divine reason why He, the Substitute and Sacrifice, should be “reckoned” with transgressors. At the cross we not only see that Emmanuel means “God with us” in wondrous love, but that by amazing grace, it contains the doctrine expressed in the words “with Him”, with Him in His death right on by a series of steps until manifested with Him in glory.

Our path therefore is indicated, we must follow these steps that link the cradle, the cross and the crown as the great name Emmanuel is fulfilled before our wondering eyes.

No.6. “Reckoning” the link that makes us “One”.
pp. 24, 25

It will now be necessary to pause, and consider what has passed before us and what lies ahead, and to observe any changes that are of importance. At first we may be so overwhelmed by the grace exhibited at the coming of Christ at Bethlehem, as to be ready to endorse the teaching, put forth by some, that at the Incarnation God not only came to be “with us” but that we also came to be joined “with Him”. Before we go further into this line of teaching we must pay attention to the meaning of two Greek prepositions, the use of which in this teaching is of vital importance. The word translated “with” in the name “God with us”, is the Greek preposition *meta*, and this is the word translated “with” and “among” in the two passages that tell us that “He was numbered with the transgressors”.

Meta “with” is a preposition of association, and not of actual oneness. It consequently is sometimes translated “among” and “after” indicating association rather than union. When the angel said “Why seek ye the living *among* the dead?” (Luke xxiv. 5) the word “among” is *meta*. There can be no idea of “union” with the dead being read into this question. When we read that the Lord was “with” the wild beasts while enduring the forty days testing in the wilderness (Mark i. 13) it is “association” not “unity” that is implied. It will be remembered that Aristotle named a treatise “Physics” and followed it by a second which he called “Meta-physics”, those things that follow, and go beyond the range of mere physical science. *Meta* means “with”, but with in association, with in a series, not with in union and oneness.

At the Incarnation God was manifested in the flesh, but even though Christ was perfect MAN, that did not make all mankind “one” with God, for the fact that Christ was PERFECT Man, sinless, holy, harmless, undefiled, made Him, at the same time, “separate from sinners” not “one” with sinners. The very Incarnation that brought Him so near to man, emphasized the gulf that existed, and which could not be bridged by the fact of His human birth. The good Samaritan came where the wounded man was, and he showed what the word “neighbour” implied, but the good Samaritan did not, and could not, take the place of the wounded man, he could not be “wounded for” him, and in this lies the problem which we are now facing. Consequently, we are prepared for a further movement by the God of all grace. In the second chapter of Philippians, we see the Lord coming down from the heights of equality to the “form of a slave” and the “fashion as a man”, down *beyond Incarnation* to “death, even the death of the cross”. It is here, where true union begins, and the exactness of Scripture in its choice of prepositions is demonstrated. In Mark xv. 28, we arrive at the last use of “*meta*” so far as the Person and Work of Christ is concerned, until after His resurrection. He was numbered “with” the transgressors. The verse which precedes this passage in Mark introduces the new preposition, *sun* “together with”, in the statement “and WITH Him they crucify two thieves” (Mark xv. 27).

Meta indicates “proximity”, but *sun* indicates “conjunction”, and implies something in common union, and the compound verb *sustauroo* “to crucify with” meets us for the first time (Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark xv. 32; John xix. 32). Be it noted, this same word *sustauroo* is used by the Apostle Paul to indicate the first of a series of links that unites the believer for ever with His Lord: “I am crucified with Christ” (Gal. ii. 20), “Our old man is crucified with Him” (Rom. vi. 6).

At the birth at Bethlehem Christ became Emmanuel, “God with us”, where *meta* indicates the limits of this blessed proximity of God to man, but at the cross, the believing sinner becomes one “with Christ” and now the preposition of union and oneness is employed, *sun*.

From this initial union there arises a wonderful doctrine, found only in the epistles of Paul, the first rung of the ladder being “crucified with Christ”, the last being “manifest with Him” in glory. The Emmanuel aspect of Christ’s association with man was by “birth”, but the closer union at the cross was by “reckoning”. The same word is translated “numbered” in Mark xv. 28, and “reckoned” in Luke xxii. 37. It is the Greek *logizomai*. The only way in which the Holy Spotless One could be “one” with sinful men was being “reckoned” so. The only way in which corrupted sinful man could be “one” with Christ, was by being “reckoned” so. Apart from James ii. 23, I Pet. v. 12, the Gospels and Acts xix. 27, *logizomai* is found thirty-five times in Paul’s epistles. The epistle of this reckoning is Romans, where *logizomai* occurs nineteen times.

In the fourth of Romans we read “It was *counted* unto him for righteousness”, a reward not being “reckoned of grace” but of debt, and God is seen “imputing” righteousness without works, and “reckoning” faith for righteousness. In the sixth chapter the whole blessed teaching is found expressed in two verses: The new bond of union “crucified WITH” (6) and the link “reckon ye also yourselves to be dead” (11). Because He was sinless, He could only be reckoned with (*meta*) sinners, but inasmuch as His sacrificial death put away our sin, we, the sinners, can be reckoned with (*sun*) Him, not in His birth, but in that new relationship made possible first by reckoning and then by substitution. At present our union with Christ is by reckoning only, for we are still in ourselves mortal and sinful. However, in resurrection, what is ours only by reckoning will be ours in glorious reality. All barriers to complete union will then have gone and we shall indeed be One.

After what we have seen, it will be misleading to pursue this new line of teaching under the heading “Emmanuel, God with us”, we shall have to adopt a new title and commence a new series, but the reader will not forget that had the Lord never condescended to the birth at Bethlehem, He could never have descended further to the death of the Cross. He became “God with us” in order that it might be possible for us to be made one “with God”.