

# The Berean Expositor

Acts xvii. 10, 11

“Study to show thyself approved unto God,  
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing the Word of truth”

II Tim. ii. 15

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DEAR FELLOW-MEMBERS,

If life's activities can be likened to a "walk" and a "way", most truly the recurring preparation of the Index for another annual volume seems like arriving at another "mile-stone" on the road. Remembering also that the term "rightly dividing" – which is our guide – can be likened to a finger-post at the fork of the road (*see* LXX version of Prov. iii. 6: "He shall rightly divide thy paths"), the simile is strengthened.

At times the pathway may be a lonely one, and we are not without temptation to choose a better trod road. At times the pathway may be a difficult one, and we are by no means exempt from weakness and a sense of defeat. Though "faint", however, grace has enabled us to "pursue", and the attaining to yet another annual volume of witness is not only a mile-stone, but becomes an *Ebenezer*, for we can truly say: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

"Therefore having obtained help of God, we continue unto this day."

Yours, because His,

CHARLES H. WELCH  
FREDERICK. P. BRININGER

*1st December, 1935.*

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## The Acts of the Apostles.

### #7. Jerusalem . . . . Antioch . . . . Rome.

#### The geography of the Acts and its witness.

pp. 25 - 29

In the opening article of this series, in which the book of the Acts as a whole was considered, we found that the first fourteen verses formed a preface to the book, in which was gathered up in brief what had been said more fully in the last chapter of Luke, and, therefore, that Acts proper commenced with verse 15. We also discovered that the structure of the book placed Peter and Paul in correspondence, each having his own spiritual equipment (chapters ii. and xiii.), and ministry (iii.-xi. and xiii.-xix.), and both finally suffering imprisonment (xii. and xxviii.). The opening member of the structure was given as:--

#### **A2 | P E T E R.**

B | i. 15 - ii. 13. JERUSALEM.—Holy Spirit.

Enduement of the twelve.

*The reader would be well advised to consult the complete structure given in Volume XXIV, page 3 before proceeding.*

The geography of the Acts is like an index finger pointing out the road which the teaching must inevitably follow. In broadest terms it is Jerusalem, Antioch, Rome; but the intervening movements are important, as showing the manner in which the teaching spread in ever widening circles. Let us make a note of the geography of this important book.

The whole movement is anticipated in i. 8 where we read:--

“Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

There is ambiguity that is evidently intentional in the use of the word translated “earth”. That this Greek work, *ge*, is rightly translated “earth” received confirmation from Acts iv. 24, vii. 49, xiv. 15 and xvii. 26. But that it is also rightly translated “land” is shown by Acts vii. 3, 4, 36; xiii. 19 and xxvii. 44. It is therefore a matter for careful thought that the Lord used a word which might have meant either a worldwide commission, or one embracing only the uttermost parts of the land of Israel, the alternatives depending respectively upon Israel’s repentance and entrance into their true ministry among the nations, or their failure, involving the passing on of their work to others. This view is confirmed when we learn that the only other occurrence in the Acts of the phrase “the uttermost parts of the earth” is in chapter xiii. The reader who has acquainted himself with the structure of the book as a whole will realize that its occurrence there, at the commencement of the second great ministry of the Acts, is, of itself, suggestive. And the passage gains in suggestiveness when read in its context. Paul

had preached in the synagogue of Antioch, following much the same line as that of Peter in Acts ii., but with the distinctiveness peculiar to his ministry, to be noted in due course; the Jews had turned away from his teaching, and he warned them that if they persisted in their gainsaying and unrepentance a judgment would fall upon them which would turn out to the greater blessing of the Gentile:--

“Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets: Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you . . . . It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, *lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us*, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth” (Acts xiii. 40-47).

Here then is a passage that must be kept in mind as we read Acts i. 8. There the Lord gave one commandment, here He gives another; not because of any changeableness on His part, but because of the failure of the people of Israel.

In Acts i. 12 we have mentioned together, the mount called Olivet, and Jerusalem. We have already seen that the ascension from the mount of Olives is intentionally associated with the second coming, as prophesied in Zech. xiv. 4. Jerusalem now becomes the centre, and all that takes place in Acts chapters ii.-v. takes place there. And although in the opening verse of chapter vi. we hear a new note, “the Grecians”, Jerusalem is still the centre as vi. 7 shows:--

“And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

The geography of the Acts is so important a matter that we must refrain from speaking of the nationalities involved, and the sects and philosophies represented, until we are able to give the subject something of the attention it deserves.

Samaria comes into notice in Acts viii., and first in connection with the persecution associated with Saul, which follows the same order as given in i. 8:--

“And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at *Jerusalem*: and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of *Judæa* and *Samaria*, except the apostles” (Acts viii. 1).

As the Lord had said in i. 8, this scattering resulted in the spread of the witness. Nor have we to trust human inference for this information, for in xi. 19 we read:--

“Now they that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but Jews only.”

We must return however to chapter viii., for there we read of another witness, Philip, who went down to Samaria and preached Christ unto them (viii. 5). Jerusalem however remains the centre, for the apostles which were at Jerusalem sent Peter and John down to

them that they might receive the Holy Ghost (viii. 14, 15). With this agrees the account of the Ethiopian eunuch who was brought to a saving knowledge of Christ by Philip's ministry after he had been to Jerusalem to worship (viii. 27). The chapter closes with the statement that Philip preached in all cities, till he came to Cæsarea, a seaport some 70 miles north-west of Jerusalem.

With the opening of chapter ix., Damascus comes into the book. This was a city of Syria. Cæsarea again comes into the record in connection with Cornelius (Acts x.). That Jerusalem maintains its central place in the ministry, however, Acts xi. shows by the necessity that Peter was under to justify, to the leaders of the church there, his visit to Cornelius.

Towards the end of Acts xi. Antioch comes into view, with Barnabas traveling as far as Tarsus to seek Saul (Acts xi. 20, 25). Nevertheless, Jerusalem remains the centre, for:--

“tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch” (Acts xi. 22).

This section of the Acts closes with the return of Barnabas and Saul from Jerusalem (Acts xii. 25). But with the opening of chapter xiii. commences the second part of the Acts, and here the interest centres in Antioch. In this city Saul and Barnabas were commissioned by the Holy Spirit. From Antioch they traveled on their first missionary journey, and to Antioch—not Jerusalem—they returned when the work was done (Acts xiii. 4, xiv. 26). This commission at Antioch was a remarkable foreshadowing of Paul's independent ministry, as we hope to show in its own place: for the present we continue to follow the geographical indication of the book.

Paul's journey took him to Asia Minor *via* Cyprus. It has been shown by *Sir William Ramsay* that Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, were all cities of the Roman Province of Galatia, although they were not parts of the original kingdom of Galatia, for that kingdom did not extend so far south. Consequently, we no longer have to introduce into the history of the Acts imaginary cities which the apostle might have visited when he founded the Galatian church. Instead of this makeshift we realize that in Acts xiii. and xiv. we have mentioned the actual cities of Galatia to which the epistle to the Galatians was subsequently written. Moreover, this discovery removes the difficulty which otherwise exists of placing the epistle, and gives us every reason to believe that the epistle to the Galatians is the first written by Paul.

The accompanying map shows the position of Galatia as it was in the days of Paul.

**--- I l l u s t r a t i o n ---**  
**(BE-XXV.28).**

Details and authorities for the revision of the ancient map will be found in the second of our three larger volumes entitled “*The Apostle of the Reconciliation*” pp. 73-81.

We must now press forward. Chapter xv. finds the apostle at Jerusalem. The moment had not yet come for his independent ministry, and for some time he works in fellowship with the Twelve, without however relinquishing his independence or the peculiar character of his message (Gal. ii., where Jerusalem and Antioch are the two storm centres, *see* verses 1, 7-11).

For the sake of any who may be puzzled by the references to Antioch in the text of page 28, and the name Antioch on the map, we would explain that there was one city named Antioch in Syria, and another of the same name in Pisidia.

Toward the close of Acts xv. Paul proposed a second visit to the churches in Asia Minor, though not then realizing that the Lord was leading on to wider fields of witness. Asia and Bithynia being closed to the apostle by the Spirit of God (Acts xvi. 6 and 7), Paul pressed on to the coast town of Troas. There he had a vision which diverted his course to the mainland, and at Philippi he preached the gospel for the first time in *Europe*, surely an epoch fraught with tremendous issues for us all! From Philippi he traveled to Thessalonica and Berea, and thence on to Athens. When these chapters are before us we shall delight in following out their message, but we cannot here stay to do so. From Corinth the apostle visited Cenchræa, thence on to Ephesus, and so to Jerusalem. The apostle purposed that, after he had once again visited Macedonia and Jerusalem, he must see Rome (Acts xix. 21).

The journey to Jerusalem occupies chapters xix., xx. and xxi., many important incidents occurring on the way. His arrival at Jerusalem ends in his imprisonment at Cæsarea (Acts xxiii. 33-35), and after two years of weary waiting, the apostle is taken by ship to Rome, where he arrives after an eventful voyage, including shipwreck (Acts xxviii.).

While it is easy to overstress this aspect of our study, the geography of the book has its due place, and we trust that our readers are now in possession of the essential movement of the record: Jerusalem – Antioch – Rome.

To endeavour to point out the spiritual significance of these three geographical terms will be part of the work that now lies before us.

**#8. The three R's.**  
**Restoration. Reconciliation. Rejection.**  
**pp. 67 - 70**

In our last article we traced the story of the Acts to its geography. Before proceeding to the detailed study of its several parts we must look at the three outstanding landmarks: Jerusalem . . . . . Antioch . . . . . Rome, in their association with the corresponding three distinctive phases of the Acts. We have devoted the first six articles of this series to the demonstration of the fact that *restoration* is the dominating aspect of the opening section. Noticeably associated with that is the insistence in the narrative on the place of importance which the people of Israel still held. The question, "Wilt Thou at this time *RESTORE* again the kingdom to *ISRAEL*?" (Acts i. 6) indicates an expectation that is maintained throughout the bulk of the Acts. "Ye men of *Israel*"; "Let all the house of *Israel* know"; "Be it known unto all, and unto all the people of *Israel*"; "To give repentance to *Israel*"; "Men of *Israel*", and similar expressions are found throughout the Book, but particularly in the opening section (i. 15 - xii.).

So is it with the title "*Jew*". "There were dwelling at Jerusalem *Jews*." "It is unlawful that is a *Jew*" (said Peter); "The word to none but *Jews* only" (Acts ii.-xii.).

But with chapter xiii. comes a change. The Jew is still present, and for a period covered by many chapters the apostle maintains the practice of going to the synagogues of the Jews before he speaks to the Gentiles: but no longer can it be said "Jews only"; we now read "Jews and Greeks" (xviii. 4; xix. 10; xx. 21).

While Greeks are Gentiles, the Scripture suggests a difference between the two. Mention is made of "Jews and Greeks" in a manner which suggests that they were united in some way which could not equally be said of all Gentiles. The apostle differentiates between Greeks and Barbarians, just as he does between wise and unwise (Rom. i. 14). In I Cor. i. he associates the Greek with the search for wisdom (I Cor. i. 22), and just as righteousness is exhibited in Israel side by side with human failure, so wisdom is exhibited in the Greeks side by side with human failure, and both find a meeting-place in Christ. Consequently, if the key word of the opening section of Acts be restoration, in association with Jerusalem, the Jew, and the ministry of Peter, so, as surely, the keynote of the next division is *reconciliation*, associated with Antioch, the Jew and the Greek together, and the ministry of Paul.

The possibility of the salvation of the Gentiles does not seem to have been entertained by the apostles at Jerusalem. This is evidenced by the surprise with which the news of the salvation of Cornelius was received.

"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life*" (Acts xi. 18).

Peter, by his own mouth, himself confesses that Gentile salvation was never in his thoughts either at Pentecost or after. To the seeking Cornelius he said:--

“You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or to come near to a foreigner, but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts x. 28).

The word “reconciliation”, which it has been suggested is the keynote of this new section of Acts is one of intense significance, and is found only in the epistles of Paul. It is never used by Peter, James or John. It signified that the exclusiveness of Israel’s position among the nations was passing, and that the far-off Gentiles were being brought back again into favour.

This is not the place to make the large digression necessary for an examination of the subject of reconciliation, but two passages will suffice to suggest its importance in the Acts. The first is Acts xvii. 16-30, where the apostle speaks of the long centuries of Gentile darkness during the period of Israel’s ascendancy, but where he also indicates that the time had arrived when the Gentile would come back into favour. Here are his words:--

“God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands . . . . hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation . . . . The times of this ignorance God looked over, BUT NOW commendeth *all men everywhere* to repent” (Acts xvii. 24-30).

The second passage is Rom. xi.:--

“I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fullness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office; if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead” (Rom. xi. 11-15).

Here it is explicitly stated that salvation came to the Gentile through the fall of Israel. Further, it is taught that the fall of Israel enriched the world, the diminishing of Israel enriched the Gentile, and the casting away of Israel brought about the reconciling of the world. In addition, Paul here claims to be the apostle of the Gentiles, and shows that the Gentile was being enriched at that time to provoke Israel to jealousy. But not until we reach Acts xxviii. do we know for certain that Israel would not repent. There, in the very last chapter, we find Paul sending for the chief of the Jews and telling them that “for the hope of Israel” he was bound with a chain (xxviii. 17, 20). Not until the chief of the Jews there had refused his all-day testimony did Paul pronounce the judgment of which he had warned them in Acts xiii. 40, quoting Isa. vi. 10, and declaring that the salvation of God was *sent* to the Gentiles (xxviii. 28).

The last few verses of Acts xxviii. are associated with Rome. The keyword is *rejection*, for Israel now pass off the scene; they become *Lo-ammi*, and salvation is sent to the Gentile, without reference to the Jew. This brings the book to a close.

We can now visualize the Book of the Acts under three R's thus:--

RESTORATION.		<i>Jerusalem.</i>		Jews only. Peter.
RECONCILIATION.		<i>Antioch.</i>		Jews and Gentiles. Paul and others.
REJECTION.		<i>Rome.</i>		Gentiles only. Paul.

With the preparation afforded by this survey we can take up the opening section, and learn its lessons without its being spoiled by the intrusion of matters that had no place during the period of this first section, but belong to subsequent times and commissions.

### #9. The Twelve (i. 15 - ii. 13). pp. 113 - 117

The first section of the Acts proper, viz., i. 15 - ii. 13, is indicated in the structure given in Volume XXIV, page 3. This section must now be given consideration. The construction of the first verse is unusual. The flow of the narrative is abruptly broken by the insertion of the statement: "the number of the names together were about one hundred and twenty." Why should it have been necessary thus to break into the sentence? The answer must be, because in some way the number of those gathered had special significance, and that the very manner of the introduction of the information is intended to arrest attention. When we put one hundred and twenty into figures, 120, we become conscious of the presence of the factor 12. We also notice that the remainder of chapter one is occupied with the bringing of the number of the apostles, once more, up to twelve, Matthias being added to the eleven" (Acts i. 26), and Peter "standing up with the eleven" (Acts ii. 14). Our attention is also drawn to the enumeration of the countries from which the assembled Jews had come (Acts ii. 9-11).

(1) Parthians, (2) Medes, (3) Elamites, (4) Dwellers in Mesopotamia, (5) in Judæa, (6) in Cappadocia, (7) in Pontus, (8) and Asia, (9) Phrygia, (10) Pamphylia, (11) in Egypt, and (12) parts of Libia about Cyrene.

Here are twelve countries, and those that came from them summed up in the worlds that follow as being "strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians". The terms "strangers" and "proselytes" show that we are no longer reading a list of countries represented, but a summary of the characteristics of the crowd of persons assembled.

The recurrence of Israel's number, twelve, is not accidental. Accordingly we take note of the recurring feature as follows:--

The number assembled (Acts i. 15) . . . . .	120
The number of the apostles made up (Acts i. 26) . . .	12
The number of nations represented (Acts ii. 9-11) . . .	12

At first sight, there appears to be little in common with the narrative of the appointment of Matthias and the coming of the spirit on the day of Pentecost; nevertheless a patient study reveals one or two connections. For example, in Acts i. 16 we read: "The Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake", and in Acts ii. 4: "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." Here is an evident parallel, the inspiration of the Psalmist in the past being comparable with the enduement of the apostles at Pentecost. Still closer to Acts ii. 4 is the statement of David himself in II Sam. xxiii. 2: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue." It is moreover important to notice the way in which the Psalms are brought forward as proof, or warrant, or as bring fulfilled in the early Acts. For instance:--

Psa. xli. is quoted as of Judas in Acts i. 16.  
Psa. lxix and cix. are quoted of Judas in Acts i. 20.  
Psa. xvi. is quoted of the resurrection in Acts ii. 25-28.  
Psa. cxxxii. is quoted of the true King in Acts ii. 30.

In Acts xiii., where a new section commences, Paul is found following the same plan:--

Psa. lxxxix. is quoted of David himself in Acts xiii. 22.  
Psa. cxxxii. is quoted of David's seed in Acts xiii. 23.  
Psa. ii. is quoted as of the resurrection in Acts xiii. 33.  
Psa. xvi. is quoted as of the resurrection in Acts xiii. 35.

We shall accordingly be wise if we add to the notes already made the two references Acts i. 6 and ii. 4. At first sight there appears to be no connection between the fate of Judas, as recorded in Acts i. 18, 19, and the record of the gathering at Jerusalem in Acts ii. 5, 6. Yet in spite of the dissimilarity of subject, upon comparison two parallels are discovered. The fate of Judas, we learn, was known to "all the dwellers at Jerusalem", the Greek word used being *katoikousin* (Acts i. 19). The same word is used in Acts ii. 5, "There were dwelling at Jerusalem" (*katoikountes*). Moreover Peter says that the field that Judas purchased was called *Aceldama* "in their proper tongue", which in the Greek reads *te idia dialekto*. Exactly the same words are used by the dwellers at Jerusalem in Acts ii. 6 when they said, "Every man heard them speak in his own language" (*te idia dialekto*). Further, we note that where i. 15 says that the gathering was "together", and in ii. 1 "in one place", the identical Greek phrase (*epi to auto*) is used "upon the same thing". We have therefore before us enough material fully to justify the oneness of the section before us. Let us put the pieces together.

### Acts i. 15 - ii. 13.

- A | i. 15, 16. | a | In those days.  
b | The 120.  
c | Together (*epi to auto*).  
d | The Holy Ghost (*To pneuma To hagion*).  
e | Spoke by mouth of David.
- B | i. 17-19. | f | Dwellers at Jerusalem (*katoikeo*).  
g | In their proper tongue (*Te idia dialekto auton*).
- C | i. 20-26. The appointment of Matthias.  
The 12 Apostles.
- A | ii. 1-4. | a | The day of Pentecost.  
b | All (i.e., the 12).  
c | In one place (*epi to auto*).  
d | Holy Ghost (*pneuma hagion*).  
e | Began to speak.
- B | ii. 5-8. | f | Dwellers at Jerusalem (*katoikeo*).  
g | In his own language (*Te idia dialekto auton*).
- C | ii. 9-13. The representative nations.  
The 12 Countries.

While we may give assent to the evidence of our eyes and agree that there is a verbal connection between the passages, it may not be very evident wherein the deeper connection thus indicated consists. Let us therefore look further. It is very evident that the apostle Peter and those who gathered with him realized that the gap in the number of the apostles occasioned by the fall of Judas was a matter for immediate concern. Of all things that it might have been expected would claim consideration and prayer consequent upon the ascension of the Lord, the last to enter our unassisted minds would have been the matter of Judas and his successor. Not so the apostles. They were to tarry at Jerusalem and once more preach the kingdom. Should Israel repent and the kingdom be set up, the Lord would fulfil His promise that the twelve apostles should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. While, however, the number of the apostles was incomplete it could not be said, "all things are ready" (Matt. xxii. 4), therefore we can appreciate the fact that the apostles were rightly concerned about this matter.

The Jews gathered at Jerusalem to keep the feast were not, so far as is revealed, representative of the complete twelve tribes: all that is said is that they were gathered from the surrounding nations, and an examination reveals that the number of the nations was twelve. That is sufficient for the purpose: the link between Acts i. and ii. is made evident, and the theme of this section, the restoration of Israel is advanced. Whether Israel would repent and the kingdom be set up at that time, none of the apostles knew. It was not for them to know times and seasons. They were witnesses, and fully equipped for their work.

But in spite of the evident fitness of these two sections, there are those who maintain that Matthias was not appointed by God but by man, and that Peter and the rest were prompted by a zeal that was not according to knowledge. The matter is of great

importance and must therefore be considered. Let us give heed to the word as we examine the matter. First of all, can we be certain that Peter was right when he said that the Psalms he quoted referred to Judas? We believe we can. But a few days before the Lord Himself had said:--

“I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against Me. Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am He” (John xiii. 18, 19).

Here the Lord not only quoted the Psalm as of Judas, but emphasized the point that He was informing them before it came to pass in order that their faith might be strengthened at the accomplishment of the event. Now it had come to pass, and they believed.

In addition to this we have recorded in Luke xxiv. 44-48 the fact that the Lord not only passed in review the O.T. Scriptures, including the Psalms, and dealt with those passages that spoke of Himself, but that He also “opened their understanding, that they might *understand* the Scriptures”. When therefore Peter said, “This Scripture must needs have been fulfilled”, he was but repeating the lesson of Luke xxiv. 26 and 46, for the self-same words there, “ought” and “behoved”, are translated “must needs be” in Acts i. 16.

Even though it may be agreed that Peter’s quotation of the Psalm was appropriate, it is possible that some may entertain the suspicion that in selecting but two men the apostles were limiting the Lord. We shall however find upon examination, that there was an important reason for this limitation. Referring once more to our Lord’s own instructions, we read:--

“But when the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father . . . . He shall bear witness of Me, and ye also shall bear witness of Me, because YE HAVE BEEN WITH ME FROM THE BEGINNING” (John xv. 26, 27).

The apostles were evidently acting with this qualification in mind, for Acts i. 21, 22 reads:--

“Wherefore of these men which have companied with us ALL THE TIME that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, BEGINNING AT THE BAPTISM OF JOHN, unto the same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection.”

It was therefore not a matter of piety, learning, or fitness of character: what was essential was capacity to bear personal testimony.

It is generally taught that the words “that he might go to his own place” (Acts i. 25), mean that Judas had been consigned to hell or perdition, but the passage bears another sense and should read:--

“ . . . . show whether of these two Thou hast chosen, that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship (from which Judas by transgression fell) that he might go to his own place . . . . and he was numbered with the eleven.”

The fact that the Holy Spirit made no difference between Matthias and the rest of the apostles should silence all objection. That Paul himself speaks of “The twelve” as separate from himself is eloquent testimony to the accuracy of the inclusion of Matthias among the twelve (I Cor. xv. 5). In face of these facts we believe that the appointment of Matthias was in complete harmony with the will of God, and that of necessity, therefore, Paul was an apostle of an entirely distinct and independent order.

We have now cleared the way for a consideration of the true purport of Pentecost, a subject with which we hope to deal in our next article.

## **#10. Pentecost and Power (ii. 1-13). pp. 161 - 165**

In our last article we found that the company of apostles had been made up to the complete number, twelve, and that there was a purposed connection between this number and the representative gathering of Jews at Jerusalem. All was now ready for the great initiatory work of Pentecost. Something of this thought seems to be in mind in Acts ii. 1 where we read that the day of Pentecost had “*fully* come”. This is a word used only by Luke, and occurs but twice in his Gospel: in the first occurrence it has the ordinary meaning of filling, in that case the filling of a boat with water (Luke viii. 23), and in the second it has the meaning of fulfilling, as of a prophecy (Luke ix. 51). Thus we see that in the choice of this word the writer had in view the thought that everything was ready for the fulfillment of all that Pentecost stands for in the O.T. type. The enduement with power from on high, for which the apostles were instructed to wait, came upon them as cloven tongues of fire:--

“And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts ii. 4).

Here we must pause to observe an important distinction. As the passage stands in the A.V. “The Holy Ghost” and “The Spirit” are indistinguishable from one another. The subject is of importance and must be treated accordingly.

Upon examination of the original we discover that there appears to be a reason why we sometimes read *pneuma hagian*, “holy spirit”, without the article, and sometimes *To pneuma to hagian*, “The Holy Spirit”. The passage before us is a case in point. The first reference to the Holy Ghost is written without the article: it is simply *pneuma hagian*, “holy spirit”, whereas the second reference, “the Spirit”, is written with the article and refers to “the Spirit” Himself. In other words “*The Spirit*” is the Giver, whereas “spirit” is His gift. In Luke xxiv. 49 the Lord bade the disciples wait at Jerusalem until they

should be “endued with power from on high”. The same writer, Luke, when he summarizes his own words in Acts i. 4, 5, refers to this promise of the Father when he speaks of their being “baptized with *pneuma hagion* (holy spirit) not many days hence”. On the day of Pentecost, the Giver, the Holy Spirit, endued the apostles with power from on high, *pneuma hagion*, “holy spirit”, which consisted of the gifts of the Spirit. It will be very necessary, therefore, to distinguish between the Giver and His gifts. The Holy Spirit Himself is seen in Acts i. 16:--

“This scripture must needs have been fulfilled which the Holy Spirit (*To pneuma to hagion*) by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas.”

One or two references will sufficiently illustrate the difference intended in these two expressions:--

- Acts ii. 38: “The gift of *pneuma hagion*” (The gift, not the Giver).
- Acts iv. 8: “Then Peter filled with *pneuma hagion*” (Again the gift).
- Acts v. 3: “Why hath Satan filled thing heart to lie to *To pneuma to hagion*” (The Holy Spirit personally).

There is however need for caution here, lest it be surmised that it is possible, by rule of thumb, thus to classify all occurrences under the two heads and so settle every reading. It is not so possible, because the article, “the”, must sometimes be used by reason of what is “second mention”, which is an indication that the reference concerned looks back to a previous one. The application of a rule of thumb method to determine the point at issue would thus be futile. What can safely said is that *pneuma hagion* without the article is never used of the Holy Spirit Himself, and that, apart from grammatical necessity, the article is not used when the reference is to the gift. Most readers know that Dr. E. W. Bullinger has given an illuminating amount of material in his book “The Giver and His gifts”. The contents of this work is given in Appendix 101 of the Companion Bible, and should be consulted by every interested reader.

The power from on high with which the apostles were endued, took the form of “tongues”, and was immediately made manifest by the fact that they actually spoke in the peculiar dialects that belonged to the assembled multitude “out of every nation under heaven”. This was a “gift of tongues” indeed, and not one of the apostles who received such a gift would have any hesitation regarding his future sphere of witness. It is important also to notice that the power of the *word* is here given before every other manifestation of power. Behind all the miracles that were subsequently wrought by the apostles was the mighty *word*. Peter *spoke* to the lame man *words* of power when he said: “In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” (Acts iii. 6).

The close association between the inspiration of David (Acts i. 16) and the inspiration of the apostles (Acts ii. 4) forced into prominence by the structure, is further emphasized by Peter himself when he wrote his second epistle, the “rushing” wind of Acts ii. 2 finding its echo in II Pet. i. 21, where he says:--

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by *pneuma hagion*” (holy spirit).

Here the word “moved” is the same as is translated “rushing” in Acts ii. 2.

There are many today who feel that the absence of the gift of tongues is a serious handicap to witness, but when the facts are faced we find it is not so. During the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles the church possessed no other Scriptures than the O.T. The New Testament, as we know it, did not exist. Slowly, as years went by, an Epistle here and a “Gospel” there would be written, and when the church finally possessed the prophetic writings now known to us as the New Testament, the need for the gift of tongues and other supernatural endowments ceased. Consequently, today he who faithfully uses the inspired Word of God in its fullness is on the same level of equipment as those of the early church. The fact that physical healing and other phenomena are not now associated with the preaching of the Word is explainable on the ground of the absence of Israel, as a nation, a feature that is of the utmost dispensational importance.

Those who are acquainted with the Jewish mind and Jewish history know that it was the ambition of many Jews who had been born in foreign lands, to spend their last days in Jerusalem. These are described as “dwellers” at Jerusalem. That there were those who had come to keep the feast, other than “dwellers”, is clear from Acts ii. 10, where some are called “strangers of Rome”, and where, in the same verse, the whole company is summed up as “Jews and proselytes”.

At first sight the enumeration of the countries from which the assembled Jews came strikes the reader as somewhat odd, but when we stand with Peter and think of the dispersion of Israel, we shall see definite order and intention. There had been three great dispersions of the Jews and these are indicated in the list of countries given in Acts ii. 9-11.

The first was of the ten tribes into Media and Assyria, and the two tribes to Babylon. At the time of the apostles, the Parthians ruled over a district that extended from the Euphrates to the Jordan and the Oxus to the Persian Gulf. The second took the Jews to Asia Minor, Cappadocia, etc., and as an offshoot of the Assyrian dispersion. The third, or Egyptian dispersion, took place under Ptolemy Lagus. There is also in this list of countries an evident allusion to the prophecy of restoration found in Isa. xi. 11:--

“It shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the second time to recover the remnant of His people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.”

Fuller details of these dispersions are given in *Conybeare and Howson*, Vol. I. 20, 22, and in *Medes' Essays*. We do not further pursue the matter here, but would remark in passing that Peter seems to have kept in touch with the dispersion during his lifetime. He went to Babylon (I Pet. v. 13). He also wrote his two epistles to the dispersion in Asia Minor, and, if Jerome is to be trusted, he provided for the spiritual needs of the Egyptian dispersion by sending John Mark to them.

Returning to the narrative, we find there was a division of opinion among the hearers. Some were amazed and in doubt, saying to one another, “What is the meaning of this?” In this question there is rather unusual use made of *thelo*, to wish, or to will, as though they said to one another: “What is the *intention* of all this?” “What *purpose* does it express?” We have already demonstrated the fact that the Acts of the Apostles places the ministry of Peter and Paul in correspondence. This correspondence is set forth not merely in large parallel sections, but in actual repetition of words, phrases and actions, and the peculiar usage of *thelo*, just noticed, is an example of this minute correspondence. The gathered multitude at Jerusalem say, *Ti an theloi touto einai*. So, also, another assembly, at the great city of wisdom, Athens, say, *Ti an theloi tauta einai*, “What these things mean?” (Acts xvii. 20). It is possible that the word *thelo* is used in a similar sense in II Pet. iii. 5 where the phrase: “For this they willingly are ignorant of”, may mean that the scoffers missed the true meaning or intention that is to be discovered in the record of creation, where, over and over again, it is implied that there has been an interference with the so-called “laws of nature”. Incidentally, this rules out as untenable the objection that the second coming of Christ is “unscientific”.

Many who heard the words of Peter on the day of Pentecost would afterwards read his letter to the dispersion and realize the connection between his spoken and written word. Not all however desired to know the purport of the miracle of Pentecost, for “Others, mocking, said, These men are full of new wine”. There were mockers also at Athens (Acts xvii. 32), and there will be mockers in the last days (II Pet. iii. 3,4), who will ascribe the mighty acts of God to mere natural causes.

Let us draw a practical lesson from the attitude of these scoffers. If even the Saviour’s gracious miracles were attributed by His enemies to power derived from fellowship with Beelzebub, is it not a small thing if His followers, filled with spirit, are alleged to be full of new wine? In our own sphere we can say that there is scarcely an issue of *The Berean Expositor* which does not call forth derision and criticism—and possibly with good cause. What then? Realizing that the highest and the best have been subjected to brutal misunderstanding, let us not fall into the weakness of turning our mole hills into mountains.

The association in the minds of the witnesses of these happenings, of wine with the filling of the spirit (Eph. v. 18) indicates something of the nature of enthusiasm in the department of the subjects of this outpouring, of “being beside oneself” (II Cor. v. 13). Is this a matter for wonder, when mortal man, the earthen vessel (II Cor. iv. 7) is filled with power from on high?

We are now ready for Peter’s inspired explanation of the meaning of the day of Pentecost, and may grace be given us to pay heed to what Scriptures teach that we may be delivered and kept from the error of “Pentecostalism”, which is a system of teaching utterly at variance with the inspired explanation found in Acts ii. 14-36.

**#11. The typical place of Pentecost (ii. 14 - viii. 1).  
pp. 211 - 216**

With Peter's address (Acts ii. 14) we commence a new section of the Acts, which is shown in the structure on p.3 of Volume XXIV as:--

C | ii. 14 - viii. 1. Ministry of PETER and others to the nation of Israel  
in Jerusalem and the land.

As one studies the Word of God, and the wonder of its every part opens out before one's apprehension: as all its intricate beauty of design is revealed, the creature stands impotent. Not space, nor time, nor ability, suffices to set forth more than the barest skeleton of the beautiful whole. The Lord alone can make the dry bones of our presentation live. But we must not refrain from doing what we can, because we cannot do what we would, and so, in the following structure, we draw attention to the inter-relation of the parts that compose the section and indicate the movement of its teaching, without following out its ramifications or pointing out a title of the correspondence of its design.

**C | ii. 14 - viii. 1. The ministry of PETER and others.**

- A1 | ii. 14-47. PENTECOST EXPLAINED.  
Wonders and signs in heaven and earth.  
David's testimony.  
Christ the King.  
All things common.  
Possessions sold.  
The Lord added to the church.
- B1 | iii. 1 - iv. 22. PENTECOST SYMBOLIZED.  
The miracle of healing.  
The gate called 'Beautiful'.  
Moses a type of Christ.  
Prison for Peter.  
We cannot but speak.  
Threatened: Let go.
- A2 | iv. 23 - v. 11. PENTECOST REPEATED.  
Signs and wonders.  
David's testimony.  
The kings of the earth rebel.  
Place shaken.  
Filled with holy spirit.  
All things common.  
Possessions sold (part of price kept back).  
Great fear on the church.
- B2 | v. 12-42. PENTECOST WITHSTOOD.  
Miracles of healing.  
Solomon's Porch.  
Prison for Peter.  
We ought to obey God rather than man.  
Beaten: Let go.
- A3 | vi. 1-7. PENTECOST EXTENDED.  
The ministry of the deacons; "Full of holy spirit."
- B3 | vi. 8 - viii. 1. PENTECOST REJECTED.  
Moses a type of Christ.  
Stephen stoned.  
The introduction of Saul strikes the first note in Israel's rejection.

To attempt a literary structure of these chapters would occupy about one half of the present issue, and is uncalled for, but with the foregoing hints the reader will be able to dig for himself and find more and more treasure.

Let us now return to Peter's explanation of what the happenings on the day of Pentecost really meant. And here we are at a disadvantage. Most of us who know anything at all about Pentecost have received that knowledge through tradition. We were sure that it was a feast of the church; we were convinced that on the day of Pentecost the church was brought into being; we were positive that there were gathered together on that day a multitude of both Jews and Gentiles who, by having all things in common, gave expression to the truth of the One Body and its fellowship. Yet all these fondly held

views vanish in the light of actual truth, for Acts ii. knows nothing of a feast of the church: it knows nothing of that unity in which there is neither Greek nor Jew; it gives no countenance to the idea that a single Gentile, other than a proselyte, listened to Peter on that momentous day:--

“But Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said . . . .” (Acts ii. 14).

We have drawn attention to the peculiar word used here for “said” (*apophtheggomai*), which also occurs in Acts ii. 4 in the phrase “as the Spirit gave them *utterance*”. We are to understand by this that Peter’s explanation of the meaning of Pentecost was an exercise of that recently conferred power from on high. We have already referred to the fact that nearly every important act and word both of Peter and of Paul is echoed later in the Acts. The word *apophtheggomai* occurs but once more, namely in Acts xxvi. 25, this time in the record of Paul’s defence before Agrippa. Others will be noted as we proceed.

The multitude charged the apostles with being drunk with new or sweet wine. “He is sweetened” was a way of saying that person was drunk. The Rabbins speak of a demon, *Cordicus*, who possessed those who were drunk with new wine (Gittin Cap 7). “And Rabba saith a man is bound to make himself so mellow (or sweet) on the feast of Purim, that he shall not be able to distinguish between ‘Cursed be Haman’ and ‘Blessed be Mordecai’ (Lightfoot ‘Hebrew and Talmudical Exercitations’).” Peter’s remark, “It is but the third hour”, has little meaning to us, but it was the teaching of the Rabbins that a man should abstain from eating and drinking on sabbath days and feasts until after morning prayers, the third hour being equivalent to 9a.m. with us. Commenting on this charge against the apostles, *Severian* says, “Behold their folly, convicted by season itself! How could there be new wine at Pentecost? But calumny is blind”. Pentecost was a season of rejoicing:--

“Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee. And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place His name there” (Deut. xvi. 9-11).

The reader may remember that the first epistle to the Corinthians keeps count of several of Israel’s feasts:--

PASSOVER.—“For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us” (I Cor. v. 7).

“The cup of blessing” (I Cor. x. 16).

UNLEAVENED BREAD.—“Therefore let us keep holyday, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (I Cor. v. 8).

FIRSTFRUITS.—“Christ is risen from the dead, and becomes the firstfruits of them that slept” (I Cor. xv. 20).

PENTECOST.—“I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost” (I Cor. xvi. 8).

But there is one more reference to the feasts of Israel that is not so obvious. In I Cor. xvi. 2 we read:--

“Upon the first (*day*) of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”

It will be observed that there is no word for “day” in the original, although it may be implied by the feminine *mia* (one). Literally the passage reads, “On the first of sabbaths”, as in John xx. 1, with the difference that the latter passage has “the sabbaths” and refers to the first day of the feast of weeks. Reference to Lev. xxiii. 15-17 shows that this first day is the day from which the seven weeks leading to Pentecost was reckoned, the day of the firstfruits and of the Lord’s resurrection. On this day—not on every Sunday—the Corinthians were enjoined to lay by “as God hath prospered”, just as Israel were told to do—“according as the Lord hath blessed thee”.

The passage in the Law that best sets out the feasts of the Lord and the place of Pentecost is Lev. xxiii. The passage is too long for quotation here, but the following outline will help to keep the whole festal year before the reader. While the length of Israel’s year was the same as our own, there are only seven months noted in the calendar of their feasts. These feasts are prophetic, and set forth in type and shadow the whole course of Israel’s history from the day that they became a nation (Ex. xii. 2) until the great future day of ingathering at the time of the end. The fact that the Lord has used seven months only in which to show this typical unfolding is but further evidence that the number seven is intimately associated with the purpose of the ages. The fact that creation occupied six days, followed by a Sabbath of rest, indicates that at the very beginning, God had this “rest” in view (Heb. iv. 9).

To save space we will, without comment or detail, briefly indicate this close association of seven with Israel’s typical history:--

SEVEN DAYS.—“The seventh day is a sabbath of rest” (Lev. xxiii. 3).

SEVEN WEEKS.—“Seven sabbaths shall be complete” (Lev. xxiii. 15).

SEVEN MONTHS.—“In the seventh month” (Lev. xxiii. 24).

SEVEN YEARS.—“The seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest” (Lev. xxv. 4).

Seven times seven YEARS.—“It shall be a Jubilee unto you” (Lev. xxv. 8-13).

Seventy times seven YEARS.—“Seventy weeks are determined” (Dan. ix. 24).

At once we realize that Pentecost cannot be understood if it be taken out of its place in this series of typical periods. To attempt to fit Pentecost into the “church” destroys both the typical character of the feast, and the distinctive character of the “church”.

The feasts of the Lord, then, of Lev. xxiii. are as follows:--

- A | REDEMPTION BY BLOOD.
  - a | 5. PASSOVER.
  - b | 6-8. UNLEAVENED BREAD. Seven days. Egypt.
- B | REAPING.
  - c | 9-14. FIRSTFRUITS.
  - d | 15-21. PENTECOST.
  - c | 22. HARVEST.
  - d | 22-25. TRUMPETS.
- A | ATONEMENT BY BLOOD.
  - a | 27-32. DAY OF ATONEMENT.
  - b | 34-44. TABERNACLES. Seven days. Egypt.

The Lord knew that Israel would not repent and be gathered the first time, and that the purpose of the ages would reach out to the trumpets of the Apocalypse and the harvest at the end of the age. Nevertheless the feast of Pentecost was an anticipation of harvest, just as firstfruits was, and the gathering of Israel to Jerusalem at this period was an anticipation of that great gathering at the time of the end.

A peculiar feature of Pentecost is that a new meal offering was commanded:--

“Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals; they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the Lord” (Lev. xxiii. 17).

It had already been commanded that “no meal offering, which ye shall bring unto the Lord, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the Lord made by fire” (Lev. ii. 11). The two leavened loaves of Pentecost cannot therefore typify Christ: they are a firstfruits, and typify His people. The reason why two loaves were specified appears to be that the Lord knew that the kingdom would be delivered, and that at the restoration the ten tribes and the two tribes (commonly spoken of Israel and Judah) would come together again as one before Him. Ezek. xxxvii. 15-28 sets this forth under the figure of the two sticks: “I will make them one nation . . . . they shall be no more two” (Ezek. xxxvii. 22).

The appointment of Matthias to complete the number of the twelve, and the gathering of Jews from twelve of the nations round about, are therefore features that are living and harmonious when Pentecost is seen in the light of God’s purpose to gather Israel again and restore the kingdom. But their import is lost when Pentecost is misinterpreted as of the inception of the “church”, and indeed, those who most strongly advocate the doctrine that the “church” began at Pentecost have among them those who do not hesitate to call the appointment of Matthias an “apostolic mistake”.

What digressions have been necessary before reaching Peter’s explanation of Pentecost! Had every reader as much knowledge of the teaching of the O.T. as Peter and the gathered multitudes, we could have gone straight on to his inspired explanation, but, as it is, we should not have appreciated his reference to Joel if we were not in possession

of facts which to that assembled multitude were a matter of everyday knowledge. These we have now considered and have therefore done what we could to bring back the atmosphere of the original Pentecost. This accomplished we will proceed in our exposition.

**#12. Pentecost explained: “This is that” (ii. 14-40).  
pp. 260 - 265**

Peter, when he stood up to explain the meaning of Pentecost to the assembled multitude, lifted up his voice and said:--

“Ye men of *Judæa*, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem” (Acts ii. 14).

“Ye men of *Israel* . . . . among you . . . . in the midst of you” (Acts ii. 22).

“Therefore let all the house of *Israel* know assuredly” (Acts ii. 36).

“The promise is unto *you*, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts ii. 39).

“Men of *Judæa*”, “the Jews who dwelt at Jerusalem” (Acts ii. 5), “*Israel*”, and then, together, “the whole house of *Israel*”, are those to whom Peter addressed his words. Peter’s own recorded act and word given in Acts x. 28, and the attitude of the apostles and brethren that were in *Judæa* (Acts xi. 18), together with the exclusiveness of Acts xi. 19, are sufficient to prove that the presence of a Gentile at this feast of *Israel* would have been intolerable, while the attitude of the Jews as recorded in Acts xxi. 26-36 shows what is likely to have happened had Gentiles been present at this feast of Pentecost. The nations of the earth shall, one day, go up to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles as Zech. xiv. 16-19 reveals, but that event awaits the time when the Lord descends and his feet once more touch the Mount of Olives. This feast takes place after He had ascended from the Mount of Olives, and the difference is great and far-reaching.

We have already observed that when Peter opened his mouth to speak he was actually “uttering” as power from on high enabled him; the word “said” of verse 14, being the peculiar word “utterance” of verse 4. Yet, in spite of this practical inspiration, Peter’s first words of instruction are a reference to the Scriptures, showing that, much as we may feel the absence of “gifts” to-day, we have equally with Peter the authority of the Scriptures; and we have, too, what he had not, the complete New Testament containing all necessary instruction as to doctrine and practice till the day of glory shall dawn.

There can hardly be found in human language more explicit words than Peter’s “This is that”. Such specific language makes it imperative that we understand, at least in measure, the teaching of the prophecy of Joel, and found our idea of Pentecost upon his teaching. If, as most will admit, the “church” cannot be imported into Joel, then that alone should, if we still hold it, shake our faith in the tradition that the church began at Pentecost. We trust the reader will honour the Holy Spirit at this point, and, leaving the

comments of men, turn to the short prophecy of Joel and read it through. Seven minutes is all the time it will occupy. Upon reading the book through two verses stands out, namely, Joel i. 4 and ii. 25:--

“That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.”

“I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you.”

“I will restore” are words that find their echo in the question of the apostles: “Wilt Thou restore?” (Acts i. 6), and in the testimony of Peter as to “the times of restitution” (Acts iii. 21). Repentance is premised. “Rend your heart and not your garments and turn unto the Lord your God” (Joel ii. 13), and the resulting blessing is not only likened to the restoration of the land from plague and famine, but to the restoring of Israel’s access and acceptable worship under the figure of new wine, and drink offering (Joel i. 13; ii. 14, iii. 18). Prominent also is the “great and terrible day of the Lord”, a prophetic period of no uncertain value, the object of much Old Testament prophecy, and certainly having no connection with the “Church”. The following outline may help the reader:--

### Joel.

- A | a | i. 7. New wine cut off.
  - b | i. 8-13. Israel’s harvest spoiled.
- B | i. 14 - ii. 14. Israel a desolation.
- C | ii. 15-20. The gathering of Israel.
  - D | ii. 21 - iii. 1. I will restore.
- C | iii. 2. The gathering of nations.
  - D | iii. 2-8. I will plead.
- A | b | iii. 9-17. Gentiles harvest.
  - a | iii. 18. New wine restored.
- B | iii. 19-21. Egypt and Edom a desolation.

The whole prophecy deals with *the* nation, and the nations. It looks to the Day of the Lord, and has no room for, or reference to, a church in which there is neither Greek nor Jew.

Peter’s specific reference is to Joel ii. 28-32. Where Joel reads “Afterward” Peter says “in the last days”: the words come to the same thing, and *Kimchi* makes the same observation when dealing with Joel ii. 28. The quotation made by Peter is divided into two parts. The first was actually fulfilled on the day of Pentecost: the second would have followed had Israel repented. They did not repent, and consequently the signs in heaven await the day of the Lord, with which the book of the Revelation is prophetically concerned. What should intervene between the two parts of Joel’s prophecy it was no part of Peter’s ministry to explain. He confessed later, when writing to the same dispersion, that they would find help regarding this interval in the writings of Paul (II Pet. iii. 15, 16).

We must now indicate the relation of the two parts of Joel's prophecy, quoted by Peter, showing the present interval. This of course was not mentioned by Peter, for the times and the seasons which the Father had put in His own power had not been revealed to him. We, too, only know that a new dispensation fills the gap, because Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ, has made known the fact.

**Joel ii. 28-31.**

A | I will POUR out My Spirit  
 (1) Upon all flesh. \  
 (2) Sons. \  
 (3) Daughters. \ The last days.  
 (4) Old Men. } Seven-fold beginning at Pentecost.  
 (5) Young Men. / "The powers of the age to come."  
 (6) Servants. /  
 (7) Handmaids. /  
 B | Present Interval.—Israel not repentant.  
 B | Future Day.—Israel repent and look upon Him whom they pierced.  
 A | I will SHOW wonders  
 (1) Heavens. \  
 (2) Earth. \  
 (3) Blood. \ Seven-fold conclusion.  
 (4) Fire. } Wonders, as spoken of in the Apocalypse,  
 (5) Pillars of smoke. / and Isa. xiii. 9, 10.  
 (6) Sun. /  
 (7) Moon. /

Referring to the structure of Acts ii. 14 - viii. 1 given on pages 211-212, we discover that Peter's explanation of Pentecost occupies Acts ii. 14-47. We now observe that his passage falls into two parts, Acts ii. 14-40 being Peter's address, and Acts ii. 41-47 recording the effect it had upon his hearers. For the moment we must confine ourselves to the address itself. We find that it is a threefold appeal, punctuated by references to Scripture.

**Acts ii. 14-40.**

A1 | 14, 15. Ye men of JUDÆA and all JERUSALEM.  
 B1 | 16-21. JOEL'S WITNESS.  
 Baptism of spirit. \  
 Whosoever call. } The Lord.  
 Shall be saved. /  
 A2 | 22. Ye men of ISRAEL.  
 B2 | 22-35. DAVID'S WITNESS.  
 David speaks of Him (Psa. xvi.). \  
 David dead and buried, \ Jesus of Nazareth.  
 but a prophet and spake of Him (Psa. cxxxii). / This Jesus.  
 David not ascended but spake of Him (Psa. cx.). /  
 A3 | 36. All the HOUSE of ISRAEL.  
 B3 | 37-40. GOD'S WITNESS.  
 Baptism and gift of holy spirit. \  
 The called. } The same Jesus  
 Save yourselves. / both Lord and Christ.

We have spent a considerable time in the endeavour rightly to place Pentecost, and feel that there is no call unduly to lengthen our exposition by analyzing the Psalms quoted, profitable as that would be. The Book of the Acts itself is our theme, and its bulk prohibits excursions that will not directly carry forward the theme.

It is essential to the theme that we notice the statement of verse 30:--

“Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.”

Although to stay here breaks the statement of the apostle, we pause to draw attention to the permanent fact that Pentecost, instead of speaking of Christ as the Head of the Church, focuses attention upon His right to the throne of David. What possible meaning, other than a literal one, can be given to this passage or to the Psalm that is quoted. If Pentecost sets forth Christ as King in connection with the throne of David, in what way can it be connected with the Church?

Continuing our quotation at verse 33 we read:--

“Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.”

“*He hath shed forth THIS*”: “*THIS is that.*”—Peter is still maintaining his theme. He is still explaining Pentecost: it is the evidence that Christ is King and that the kingdom will one day restored. Further proof is given by quoting from Psa. cx. David’s son is David’s Lord (Matt. xxii. 41-46). The Lord is now there at the right hand of God “from henceforth expecting” (Heb. x. 13). The heaven must receive Him until the times of restitution (Acts iii. 21). The first thing that Peter commanded his awakened hearers to do was to “repent”. In this he was continuing the ministry of John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 2) and of the Lord (Matt. iv. 17). As shown above the interval between the two prophecies of Joel is a consequence of Israel non-repentance. Baptism for the remission of sins is not church truth. Not a single passage in any one of Paul’s epistles can be found to countenance such teaching. How can we therefore speak of “continuing stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine” when the very first principles of that doctrine are by us set aside?

“Save thyself” is *Soson seauton*, as in Luke xxiii. 37, but in Acts ii. 40 the Greek reads *Sothete*, “Be ye saved”. The “untoward generation” is but another description given to “that wicked and adulterous generation” to which no sign, but the sign of the prophet Jonah, was to be given. Here that sign is evident. The apostles were witnesses of His resurrection: the signs and wonders were witnesses of His resurrection: Pentecost was a witness that “Jesus of Nazareth, a Man approved of God”, “This Jesus”, “That same Jesus”, This Son, yet Lord, of David, was “Lord and Christ”. The day of the Lord was His day. The name of the Lord, upon which they called, was His name, the miracle

of the next chapter enforcing that “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

The second half of this section, ii. 41-47, cannot be adequately dealt with here, and must await a separate article.

We are conscious, that in spite of the rather heavy material introduced, we have passed by in silence many an interesting feature. But what can we do with such wealth of truth? We must be content if we can point out its main import, leaving our readers the delightful task of exploring its many ramifications, reference to which must, alas, be omitted from these papers.

## The answer of a good conscience.

### #1. A moral principle, not a law. pp. 139 - 141

Someone has said that “conscience was born in the garden of Eden”. Certain it is that the moment that man sinned he became “conscious” of his state, needing no outside condemnation to awaken him as to his condition:--

“Conscience is that secret voice—that moral principle that urges us to act in conformity with our conviction, and condemns us whenever we are in opposition to it; it is, so to speak, the main-spring of morality” (*Dr. Vinet*).

“Remember this plain distinction—a mistake which has ruined thousands—that your conscience is not a law” (*Sterne*).

While our appeal in all things is to the Scriptures and to them alone, the two citations given above are a contribution towards an attempt to define what conscience is, and what it is not.

It is important, in the first place, to realize that conscience is not a law. A Hindoo with a clear conscience could do that which no reader of this magazine would dare to contemplate. A Jesuit could act in a way which would be impossible for one trained in the truth of the gospel. It is not sufficient for any of us that our conscience does not trouble us in certain matters, or that our conscience approves our actions; that of itself does not prove that we are right. *Dr. Vinet's* statement relates conscience to an inside standard, “a moral principle that urges us to act in conformity with our conviction”. For the believer, this “conviction” is that the Word of God is the only rule of faith and practice; and his conscience, being enlightened, will never permit the believer to transgress any portion of Scripture without protest.

It is important that we should appreciate the distinction between the law itself and the monitor that commends or condemns us in relation to that law. If a pair of balances are true, then the index finger will be true also; but if the balance is at fault, then the index finger, though appearing to register equality, will be a false guide. The index finger of a balance does not weigh anything; neither is it the standard of weight. It only registers. If the standard and the balance be true it will be a safe guide, but if they are false it will be a false guide. If the believer misunderstands or is wrongly instructed in the faith, and holds as truth something that is false, his conscience will approve or condemn him in relation to the error just as it would in relation to the truth. First of all we must have a standard, the Word of God; then a conscience void of offence—the index finger upon the balance of righteousness and truth.

We now turn our attention to the meaning of the word translated “conscience”. The Greek work translated “conscience” 32 times in the N.T. is *suneidesis*, a compound of

*sun*, “together with” and *eideo*, “to know”. The following passage show the occurrences and the usage of the verb *suneideo*:--

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also *being privy* to it” (Acts v. 1, 2).

“And when he *had considered* the thing, he came to the house of Mary” (Acts xii. 12).

“They *were ware* of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe” (Acts xiv. 6).

These three references show the primary meaning of the word. In each case the idea is “to know together”, either with someone else (as in Acts v. 1, 2), with oneself (as in Acts xii. 12), or, in a general way (as in Acts xiv. 6). The one occurrence of this verb that we find in the epistles is in the middle perfect, *sunoida*: “I know nothing by myself: yet am I not hereby justified” (I Cor. iv. 4). The A.V. does not make the intention of the apostle very clear. From the first clause we might gather that the apostle was ignorant and depended upon the teaching of others, but the added words, “Yet am I not hereby justified” would correct such an impression, and help to shew the true meaning of the passage. A careful examination of the context will shew considerable light upon the negative side of our subject—“conscience is not a law”:

“Let a man so account of us as subordinate ministers (*huperetes*, literally, an under-rower) and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. But for me it is the very smallest matter, that I should be examined of you, or of man’s day, yea, I do not even examine mine own self. For I am conscious of nothing in myself, but I am not justified by this. But He that examines me is the Lord. So then judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who shall both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and shall make manifest the counsels of hearts: and then shall each have his praise from God” (I Cor. iv. 1-5).

The Corinthians prided themselves on their eloquence and their philosophy, and the apostle, knowing this and knowing their spiritual immaturity, determined to know nothing among them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. This resolve was not made without some inward shrinking on the apostle’s part, for he knew that his attitude would offend them. With the perfect he could go forward and enter into the mysteries of God; but he could not deal with such holy themes just to please his hearers (I Cor. ii. 1-6). He was, after all, one under orders, an under-rower, not the Captain; he was a steward, and the first thing required of a steward is faithfulness. Although the apostle knew that his action with regard to what he taught and what he withheld would be censured, he assured the Corinthians that this was a very small matter; but his conscience was not the standard, it was but a monitor. His own conscious innocence would not of itself justify any of his actions; all judgment belonged to the Lord.

We propose in subsequent articles to examine other scriptures dealing with conscience from various points of view. We pray that they may be a means of blessing to us all, leading us to realize the blessedness of having no more conscience of sins, and helping us always to have the answer of a good conscience toward God.

## #2. No more conscience of sins (Heb. x. 2). pp. 185 - 187

Before any “cases of conscience” can be a fit subject for discussion, and before we can study the meaning of a *good* conscience, or a *pure* conscience, we must settle, from the Scriptures, the possibility and the basis of the removal of guilt from the conscience. This is a deeper question than that of conduct, for it lies at the root of our standing before God. A guilty conscience makes service, access, or worship impossible. The passage that supplies the title of this article and illuminates the whole question is Heb. x. 2: “The worshippers once purged should have had no more *conscience* of sins.”

The reader can see that this quotation is incomplete, being a part only of an argument that occupies a number of verses. We must look back to the preceding verse:--

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect for ever” (Heb. x. 1).

The word translated “continually” in the A.V. of Heb. x. 1 is repeated in x. 14, where it rightly reads with the word “perfected”. It should be so read in x. 1: “perfected for ever.” To be perfected for ever is evidently another way of saying “no more conscience of sins”, as a reading of the two verses will show. The offerings of the law were shadows and, as Heb. xi. 9 says, “they could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience”.

In contrast with these types and shadows that could not thus cleanse the conscience or lift from it the sense of guilt, is the offering of Christ. The argument proceeds:--

“For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, Who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?” (Heb. ix. 13, 14).

Consequently in Heb. x. 2 we read: “The worshippers once purged”; “no more conscience of sins”. Conscience therefore in the first instance is a question of the efficacy of the sacrifice trusted in for cleansing. The offerings made under the law, being shadows and types, could not touch the conscience.

While it was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins, there has been offered “one sacrifice for sins for ever” so effectual, so wondrously complete, that—in contrast with the many sacrifices offered under the law “which can never take away sins”—the sacrifice of Christ will never be repeated:--

“Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin” (Heb. x. 17, 18).

The first great proof that one has no more conscience of sins is “boldness of access” to the Lord.

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an High Priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience” (Heb. x. 19-22).

The connection of the “heart” and the “conscience” is of chief importance. The expression: “hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience”, is striking and somewhat obscure. The apostle John does not use the word “conscience”, but he refers to the same thing when he says: “Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then we have confidence toward God” (I John iii. 21). The “true heart” is a heart “sprinkled from an evil conscience”. The expression is taken from such a passage as Lev. xiv. 7 which deals with the cleansing of the leper, and his access to the Lord. The marks therefore of a conscience freed from the sense of guilt may be summed up as follows:--

(1) *BOLDNESS of entry into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.*—This reveals that the one and only basis for a good conscience is the one all-sufficient offering of Christ, and the cleansing power of His precious blood.

(2) *ASSURANCE of faith.*—This faith, which rests for its whole salvation on the finished work of Christ, is a constant accompaniment of a conscience clear of guilt before God, and gives the necessary assurance to the believer that he need have no fear when he draws near to the throne of grace.

It will be readily seen that until this matter is settled and settled scripturally, service, worship, study, the quiet rest of faith, peace with God, patience and all the fruits of grace will be seriously imperilled.

We therefore rejoice in the fact that conscience can be cleansed, and the heart relieved of the burden of guilt. The true worshipper has been “once purged” and therefore has “no more conscience of sins”. It is as complete and perfect a work as justification. We cannot be justified afresh; such a thought is a contradiction. We cannot be saved afresh; we are saved by grace through the finished work of Christ. Our consciences no more condemn us in the presence of God for sins committed, because we know that they have been righteously dealt with in the person of His beloved Son, and shall be remembered “no more”. While of us it can be said, “no more” remembrance of sins, it may also be said, “no more conscience of sins”, and until it is possible for God to fail in honouring the work of Christ, the believer can have full assurance of faith and a clear conscience in His holy presence.

### **#3. A good conscience and dispensational truth. pp. 233 - 235**

The antithesis of an “evil” conscience must be a “good” one, and as this expression is found in the Scriptures, it seems fitting that we should consider it next.

There are six passages which contain the expression “a good conscience”:

“Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day” (Acts xxiii. 1).

“Now the end of the commandment is love out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned” (I Tim. i. 5).

“Holding faith, and a good conscience” (I Tim. i. 19).

“Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly” (Heb. xiii. 18).

“Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evil-doers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ” (I Pet. iii. 16).

“The answer of a good conscience toward God” (I Pet. iii. 21).

It will not be possible to deal with these six passages in one article. In order to make the study profitable, therefore, we shall concentrate our thoughts upon one aspect and usage. If we examine these references, we shall find that the expression “a good conscience” is sometimes used to refute the charge that the apostle had turned away from the faith of his fathers, or from one dispensation to another, without just reason. This will appear more clearly as we examine the passages in their contexts.

The setting of the first passage, Acts xxiii. 1, is the apostle’s defence before Ananias. The apostle had been severely handled by the Jews, who had accused him of taking Gentiles into the temple, and of polluting the holy place. He had spoken in “the Hebrew tongue” to the multitude, who had heard him in silence until he came to his own commission to the Gentiles, at which point they had shouted, “Away with such a fellow from the earth”. Having been rescued by the Roman soldiers, he is brought before the council of the chief priests—and his opening words refer to the fact that he had lived in all good conscience before God “until this day”.

As the apostle took the same line of defence before Felix, we shall do well to read his statement in the next chapter before going further:

“There are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city. Neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me” (Acts xxiv. 11-13).

Having said so much, the apostle proceeds to a definite statement concerning his own personal convictions:

“But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets . . . . and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men” (Acts xxiv. 14-16).

Another personal testimony of the apostle to the same effect is found in II Tim. i. 3 where he says: “I thank God, Whom I serve from my forefathers with a pure conscience.” Here the word “from” is *apo*, and conveys the thought of “away from”—for the apostle had certainly not continued to worship God in the same way in an unbroken sequence since his boyhood. The change, however, he could contemplate with an easy conscience. “The way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers.” “I thank God, Whom I serve *away from* my forefathers.” He had not turned from the traditions of the fathers or from the law of Moses because of the fear of man or from unbelief. He had not become the Apostle of the Mystery by self-appointment or by self-seeking. In all these changes that had involved him in so much misunderstanding he stood with a “good” conscience, a “pure” conscience and a conscience “void of offence” before God.

To this set of passages may be added the apostle’s words to Timothy in I Tim. i. 5. In the previous verse (verse 4) the revised text reads, instead of “godly edifying”, “a dispensation of God”, which brings the passage into line with those just considered. Timothy was to devote himself to the dispensation that had been committed to him, and to realize that the end of the “charge” thus given included “a good conscience”.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that no change of doctrine or practice should be accepted apart from a good conscience in the matter. We must neither allow ourselves to continue in an undispensational attitude when once we have been convinced of the scriptural necessity for a change, nor must we be persuaded to make any change unless we can do so with a good conscience. When once we do see the truth, let us act upon it, for otherwise the remainder of our days will be clouded by the shadow of a bad conscience, a crippling and terrible thing.

Those who have been led to embrace the truth of the mystery will often suffer as the apostle did. They will be called “heretics”, but this will not move them if their conscience is clear. While conscience, as we saw in our opening paper, is no standard, it is a valuable monitor, and if we have seen the truth of the mystery, conscience will never let us rest until we have “acknowledged” its separating teaching. Happy is the man who is misjudged by others, yet whose conscience is clear. Happy is the man who is called hard names by all, except by his conscience. Happy are they who, though “heretics” in the opinion of men, are “saints and faithful” in the eyes of the Lord.

## Berean Charts.

### #5. The Hope of Israel. pp. 8, 9

#### --- Illustration --- (BE-XXV.8).

This chart is designed to demonstrate the fact that one hope runs throughout the Acts of the Apostles, and that this hope is also that which is before the church ministered to by Paul during the same period.

The epistles of this period are seven. Some there are who do not believe that *Hebrews* was written by Paul. This is no place for the discussion of such a subject: We must be satisfied with the following suggestion:--

- (1) Use of certain phrases such as “under his feet”. Compare I Cor. xv. 27, 28 with Heb. ii. 8.
- (2) Peter’s statement that Paul wrote at least one epistle to the Circumcision (II Pet. iii. 15).
- (3) The “sign manual” in accordance with II Thess. iii. 17. This is peculiar to Paul’s epistles. The reader should test every epistle for this feature.

The three individual epistles are based upon one theme—“The just shall live by faith.” Romans stresses “righteousness”, “the just”. Galatians insists upon “faith”, while Hebrews, looking to “the things that accompany salvation”, stresses “shall live”. The correspondence of the double epistles is self evident.

As to the oneness of the hope. This is obviously true of the Acts it itself. In i. 6 and in xxviii. 20 there is but one hope, viz., “The hope of Israel”.

Upon examination this is found to be the case with regard to the church of the period. Romans, being the last epistle of the series and the most dogmatic, will determine the question once for all. Rom. xv. 12, 13 (“trust” is the same word as “hope”) reveals that the hope before the church was connected with Christ as the “root of Jesse”, who should “reign over the Gentiles”, the reference being to Isa. xi. and the great day of Israel’s restoration. Every reference to the hope of the church found in I and II Corinthians, I & II Thessalonians and Galatians is in perfect harmony with this crowning passage.

We therefore place the symbol of hope—the anchor, with its pendant epistles as links in a chain, in such a way that it shall coincide with the whole of the Acts of the Apostles, including its opening and closing references to “the hope of Israel”.

“The one hope” of the mystery finds no exposition in these early epistles of Paul. It was essential that “the mystery” itself should be revealed before its hope could be expressed.

**#6. Three spheres of blessing---The adoption.**  
**pp. 65 - 67**

**- - - I l l u s t r a t i o n - - -**  
**(BE-XXV.65).**

In this chart the subject of the three spheres of blessing is approached by way of the term “adoption”. *Sir William Ramsay*, in his “Historical Commentary on Galatians”, has made it clear that the word “adoption” indicates the appointing of the heir, and is tantamount to the privileges and prerogatives of the scriptural firstborn. If “adoption” is predicated of three distinct companies, then, the Scriptures being true and trustworthy, this threefold adoption demands three spheres just as surely as three firstborn sons are impossible to one father apart from three different wives.

Adoption is the exclusive possession of Israel according to Rom. ix. 4, yet adoption belongs to the seed of Abraham, whether Jew or Greek, according to Gal. iv. 5, and yet again, adoption is the predestined blessing of the church of the mystery according to Eph. i. 3-5.

This threefold adoption demands a threefold sphere. It will be found that there are parallels in the three spheres. First of all as to the spheres themselves.

*The earth.*—Psa. ii. 8 is all that could be included on the chart, but the reader can find scores of references to prove that there shall be a kingdom on earth.

*The heavenly calling* is referred to by name in Heb. iii. 1, and by referring to Heb. xi. 9, 10, 14-16 and xii. 22, together with Gal. iv. 26, we discover that this second sphere is the heavenly Jerusalem.

*The superheavenlies* is the English equivalent for that position where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, defined as “far above all principality and power”, and “far above all heavens” (Eph. i. 3, 20, 21; ii. 6 and iv. 10).

Three features are repeated in each sphere:--

- (1) A FIRSTBORN'S POSITION.—Israel among nations (Exod. iv. 22). The Seed of Abraham in the heavenly city (Heb. xii. 23), and the Church of the Mystery as one with Christ (Col. i. 18 and Eph. iv. 13).
- (2) A CITIZENSHIP.—Psa. lxxxvii. is given as a specimen of the privilege of the earthly citizenship of Zion. Rev. xxi. 2 speaks of the citizenship of the second sphere, and Eph. ii. 19 & Phil. iii. 20 speak of the citizenship of the third sphere. In connexion with this third sphere, Eph. ii. 12 reminds us that those who are blessed in this highest of spheres had no part in the commonwealth (citizenship) of Israel.
- (3) AN EXALTED POSITION.—In each sphere, the one to whom pertains the adoption has other companies subservient to it. In the case of the nation of Israel, it is the Gentile nations who are to serve them and go up to Jerusalem three times a year. In the case of the heavenly calling it is angels that are subordinate, while in the third sphere angels are not mentioned, nothing less than principalities and powers are ranged beneath the church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

**#7. From glory to glory.  
pp. 137 - 139**

**--- Illustration ---  
(BE-XXV.137).**

The theme of II Cor. iii. and iv. is the exceeding glory of the new covenant. In comparison with this covenant, the glory of the old is nullified. The chart suggests—by the two shaded forms—the tables of stone associated with the old covenant, and the fleshy tables of the heart that belong to the new covenant. Both covenants had their respective “glory”, but

“Even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious” (II Cor. iii. 10, 11).

After considering the balancing members, it becomes very clear that “from glory to glory” (II Cor. iii. 18) can mean nothing else than “from the typical glory of the old covenant, to the antitypical glory of the new covenant”. This we have suggested by the arrow at the base of the two covenant forms.

Much of the teaching of this passage is connected with the use of the word “veil”. Moses veiled his face so that Israel should not see the end of the glory that was transient. Israel wear a veil, not only over their heads when reading the law (as shown in the illustration), but over their hearts. The teaching of the passage is “veiled” to the ordinary reader by the translation “open face” in II Cor. iii. 18, where it should read “unveiled face”, as a direct contrast with the veiled face of Israel. Further, the word “hid” in II Cor. iv. 3 is the word “veiled”, and carries the teaching on to its conclusion.

The new translation of II Cor. iv. 3-6 given at the bottom of the chart reveals the awful truth that Satan fabricates a veil for the spiritual eye out of undispenational truth. Four times in II Cor. iii. it is stressed that the old covenant was “done away” (or “abolished”), and out of this, as the epistle to the Galatians reveals, the Evil One made a veil to hide the fullness of grace that is found in the person and work of Christ. Two faces are seen in contrast, the face of Moses, and the face of Jesus Christ.

We append the structure of the passage as a supplement to the chart.

**II Cor. ii. 17 - iv. 6.**

- A | ii. 17. | a | Not corrupt the Word of God.
  - b | Speak in the sight of God.
- B | iii. 1-16. THE FACE OF MOSES.—The passing glory.
  - C | iii. 17, 18. The unveiled face of the believer.—From glory to glory.
- A | iv. 1, 2. | a | Not handle deceitfully the Word of God.
  - b | Commend in the sight of God.
- C | iv. 3, 4. The veiled face of the unbeliever.—Glory hidden.
- B | iv. 5, 6. THE FACE OF JESUS CHRIST.—The glory of God.

**#8. Where history ceases mystery begins.**  
**pp. 209 - 211**

**- - - I l l u s t r a t i o n - - -**  
**(BE-XXV.209).**

In this chart we endeavour to demonstrate the principle that where HISTORY ceases (so far as Israel is concerned) some element of MYSTERY comes in. It might be the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; it might be the mysteries of God's purpose in appointing Nebuchadnezzar; it might be the introduction of the present dispensation of the mystery, but the sequence is the same. Daniel is the O.T. Paul. He became the prisoner of the Lord for the Gentiles. In the LXX of the O.T. the Greek word *musterion* occurs for the first time in the book of Daniel, where it is translated "secret".

In the chart a series of downward steps is indicated by the passages referred to, commencing with the failure of Hezekiah, which introduces the prophecy concerning Babylon. The times of the Gentiles are coincident with the down-treading of Jerusalem, as Luke xxi. 24 will show. As Israel passed off the scene, the Gentile came into prominence.

The second illustration is taken from the first thirteen chapters of Matthew. The Messiah, Who must be the Son of David and Abraham, is revealed as having come in the person of Jesus Christ, *Emmanuel*, God with us. He also is attested by the witness of divinely equipped forerunner and a voice from heaven. By observing our Lord's words in Matt. xi. 20-24 we understand that one of the objects for which the miracles were wrought was the repentance of Israel. Their non-repentance leads to the threefold rejection of Matt. xii. 6, 41 and 42, where Christ is rejected in His offices of priest, prophet and king. Upon this non-repentance and rejection comes mystery in Matt. xiii. It is suggestive too, that in Matt. xii. 14-21, consequent upon the council of the Pharisees, we find the reference to the blessing of the Gentiles.

The third illustration is the chief purpose of the chart, to prove that the present dispensation of the mystery is consequent upon the rejection of Israel in Acts xxviii. The prophecy of Joel which underlies the teaching of the day of Pentecost is insistent upon repentance (Joel ii. 12-14). The restoration of Israel is set forth in the miracle of the lame man (Acts iii.), and the vision of the sheet that Peter saw (Acts x.) is an indication that Jewish exclusiveness is going.

The twofold ministry of the apostle Paul now comes to light (*see* Acts xx. 17-24 and Acts xxvi. 16-18), revealing that his second ministry would be accompanied with imprisonment, would be related to a second revelation from the Lord, and would be

directed particularly to the Gentiles. The last “signs and wonders” that fulfil the promise of Mark xvi. 17, 18 are recorded (Acts xxviii. 1-10), the last reference to the “hope of Israel” is made (Acts xxviii. 20), the last citation of Isa. vi. 10 is made and Israel become *Lo-ammi* (not My people, Hos. i. 9), the “salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles”, and the dispensation of the mystery is made known.

The way in which Isa. vi. 10 is cited at great crises in Israel’s history is worthy of study.

## **Biblical blessings.**

### **#8. The blessedness of patience continuance. pp. 38 - 40**

The fourth book of the Psalms contains two blessing:--

“Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord,  
And teachest him out of Thy law;  
That Thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity,  
Until the pit be digged for the wicked” (Psa. xciv. 12, 13).  
“Blessed are they that keep judgment,  
And he that doeth righteousness at all times” (Psa. cvi. 3).

This book of the Psalms corresponds to the book of Numbers. Psa. xc. is a Psalm of Moses; and the Rabbinical rule is that all succeeding Psalms, until a new author is named, are from the same pen. Consequently xci. is also a Psalm of Moses; so that all our Lord’s quotations in the temptation in the wilderness were from the writings of Moses. The succeeding Psalms, from xcii. to c., must also be ascribed to Moses.

Psa. xc. deals with the wilderness experiences of those who, being twenty years old and upward, perished during the forty years’ wandering.

Psa. xci. gives the experience of those under twenty, who were preserved during the forty years and led into the land of promise.

Psa. xcii. is entitled, “A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day”.

The theme of this fourth book of the Psalms is that of “rest”—rest lost and found, rest desired, anticipated, celebrated, the rest that remaineth to the people of God. Psa. xciv. 13 speaks of “rest”; Psa. xcv. 11 speaks of “rest”. Psa. cvi. rehearses the history of the Exodus and Israel’s subsequent departures from the Lord; and so balances Psa. xc.

We are therefore prepared to find the blessings of this set of Psalms characterized by chastening, adversity, and endurance. Turning to Psa. xciv., we note that the blessing which we are to consider is set in a time of trouble.

The Psalm opens with a cry for vengeance, and speaks of God as the Judge of the earth and the Rewarder of the proud. The proud seem to triumph and to say, in effect, “The Lord shall not see”. But such a conclusion is “brutish” and lacking in wisdom. He that planted the ear and formed the eye must surely be able to hear and see. He Who chastens the heathen knows full well the vanity of their thoughts.

It is in this setting that the beatitude of chastening is announced: “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest, O Lord.” Quite a number of scriptures come to mind that speak

of chastening. We are warned against “despising the chastening of the Lord” (Job. v. 17; Prov. iii. 1; Heb. xii. 5). We are assured that chastening and love go together (Heb. xii. 6), and that it is indeed a sign of sonship (Deut. viii. 5, Heb. xii. 7). Looking once more at the verse that gives us our theme, we observe that the first and third lines correspond, the first speaking of present chastening, and the third of rest from the days of adversity.

In Heb. xii. there is a “nevertheless afterwards”, and in the verse under consideration there is an “until”: “Until the pit be digged for the wicked” (Psa. xciv. 13). Abraham’s seed had to suffer affliction in Egypt because the iniquity of the Amorite was not yet full. A patient trust in the God of all grace, Who is dealing with iniquity, and training His children for future glory, should enable those of us who are “sons” to realize that it is indeed a blessing to be chastened, disciplined, corrected and warned, while others, left without discipline, tread the road that leads unto death:--

“When we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world” (I Cor. xi. 32).

The epistle to the Hebrews gives a prominent place to the story of Israel’s failure in the wilderness (Heb. iii., iv.), and to the need of chastening (Heb. xii.), and lays great stress upon the grace of “endurance” and of “not drawing back”.

And so we find that the second of the two blessings of this book of the Psalms insists upon endurance:--

“Blessed are they that keep judgment,  
And he that doeth righteousness AT ALL TIMES” (Psa. cvi. 3).

A simplified structure of this Psalm is as follows:--

A | 1-7. HALLELUJAH. Righteousness at all times.  
B | 8-12. Nevertheless.  
C | 13-43. Sin and Deliverance.  
B | 44-46. Nevertheless.  
A | 47, 48. HALLELUJAH. From the age to the age.

The structure places the term “at all times” and “from everlasting to everlasting” (from the age to the age) in correspondence. It seems to suggest the believer’s association by faith with longsuffering and patience of the Lord. He waits to be gracious. Let us wait also and murmur not. It is comparatively easy to do right sometimes, but the great test is to do right at all times, especially when adversity presses, when trials abound, when the wicked appear to triumph, when the Lord hides Himself so that the ungodly say, “The Lord shall not see”. It is then blessed indeed to have received such grace that chastening can be appreciated at its true value. Whether our efforts are attended by outward success or by apparent failure, may we ever seek the blessedness of doing right at *all times*.

## #9. The blessedness of going on unto perfection (Psa. cxix. 1). pp. 74 - 77

There is need for care in sorting out the passages that speak of blessedness in the closing book of the Psalms, by reason of their dispensational character. For example, it would be quite contrary to the calling of the Church to take to itself the blessedness of Psa. cxxxvii. 8, 9. This Psalm is prophetic of the days of vengeance when Babylon shall suffer at the hand of the Lord. Again, when we read concerning children, in Psa. cxxvii.: "Happy (blessed) is the man that hath his quiver full of them", we must remember that the blessings of Israel included "basket and store", whereas in the dispensation now obtaining, the great apostle knew what it was to be homeless, comfortless, hungry and naked. Psa. cxxvii., moreover, is one of Hezekiah's Psalms, wherein he praises God for the added fifteen years of his life and the promise of a son and heir. The whole question, however, of the Songs of the Degrees is too great a subject for a series such as this, so we must pass on, without attempting further explanation.

The blessings of the fifth book of the Psalms, that are true for all time, are five in number, and are found in Psa. cxii. 1; cxix. 1, 2; cxiv. 15 and cxlvi. 5. These passages naturally divide into two groups:--

- (1) The first three speak of blessing in association with the Word.
- (2) The second pair speak of blessing in association with God.

Let us take the first set and consider what is there made a subject of blessing:--

"Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth greatly in His commandments" (Psa. cxii. 1).

"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart" (Psa. cxix. 1, 2).

Psalm cxii. is an alphabetical Psalm, every line beginning with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and in alphabetical order. The following will give the reader some idea of the arrangement, but must not be taken as a literal translation:--

**A** blessing is on the man that feareth the Lord,  
**B**ecause he delighteth in his commandments (verse 1).  
**\*G**reat shall his seed be upon the earth:  
**D**escendants of the upright shall be blessed (verse 2).

[NOTE: \* - *G* is the third letter in the Hebrew and Greek alphabets.]

The subject of fear needs separate consideration. It is sufficient for the moment to draw the reader's attention to the fact that this blessed fear is not to be disassociated from delight: "Blessed is the man that *feareth* . . . . that *delighteth*." This takes us back to Psa. i. where we read: "His delight is in the law of the Lord."

While the Hebrew word *chaphets* is mostly translated by “delight”, “please”, and similar words, it is once rendered “move”, in the passage concerning *Behemoth*: “He *moveth* his tail like a cedar” (Job xl. 17).

It would be easy to follow the example of those who seize upon this passage as an example of slipshod translation, for, one might say, what connection is there between the word “delight” and the “moving” of a tail? Yet if the question be put in a true spirit of enquiry, an interesting lesson awaits us. The radical idea of *chaphets* is to bend, and so to incline, to be favourably disposed, to delight in. A passage in Psa. cxix. brings the word “delight” and the word “incline” together:--

“Make me to go in the path of Thy commandments; for therein do I *delight*. *Incline* my heart unto Thy testimonies and not to covetousness” (Psa. cxix. 35, 36).

This then is the first subject of blessedness: a heart and mind that “bend” or “incline” towards the word and will of God.

We must now pass on to the next subject of blessing:--

“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord” (Psa. cxix. 1).

Psa. cxix. is an alphabetical Psalm, but instead of each verse starting with a fresh letter of the alphabet, as in Psa. cxii., we find that it is divided into twenty-two stanzas, each of eight verses, each line in each stanza commencing with one letter of the alphabet (verses 1-8 begin with A; verses 9-16 with B; and so on).

The first stanza is divided into two parts. Verses 1-4 state truth in general; verses 5-8 give the response of the individual. It will be seen that point answers point in the structure: this we set out in a series of four parts.

/ THE WAY.—Blessedness of those who are undefiled (verse 1).  
 \ MY WAYS.—Prayer that verse 1 may be experienced (verse 5).  
 / BLESSEDNESS.—Those who keep and seek with whole heart (2).  
 \ BLESSEDNESS.—Unashamed as result of having respect unto all commandments (6).  
 / RIGHT.—They also do no iniquity (3).  
 \ RIGHT.—I will praise with uprightness (7).  
 / COMMAND.—To keep precepts diligently (4).  
 \ RESPONSE.—I will keep Thy statutes (8).

Set out in structure form this stanza is as follows:--

A		1.	The way of the Lord.	\	
	B		2. Blessed.	\	General.
	C		3. Upright; no iniquity.	/	
	D		4. Command.	/	
A		5.	My Ways.	\	
	B		6. Unashamed.	\	Individual.
	C		7. Upright; righteous judgments.	/	
	D		8. Response.	/	

The word “undefiled”, the chief word in Psa. cxix. 1, is a translation of the Hebrew *tamim*. The root idea of this word is “to finish”, “to perfect”, “to complete”; the derived sense, “undefiled”, comes from its application to the animals used for sacrifice.

The parallel N.T. conception is conveyed by that great word “perfect” (*teleios*) which comes so prominently in Hebrews and Philippians. It suggests the “finishing” of one’s course, running with patience the race set before us, laying hold of that for which we have been laid hold of by Christ. To appreciate to the full the blessing pronounced in Psa. cxix. 1, we must bear in mind all the associations of the word “perfect”—the history of Noah who was “perfect” regarding his pedigree (Gen. vi. 9); the command of the Lord to Abraham after his justification, “Walk before Me and be thou perfect” (Gen. xvii. 1); the character of the man who shall ascend the hill of the Lord: “He that walketh *uprightly*” (Psa. xv. 2).

Besides all this, the blessedness of Psa. cxix. 1 extends to the very prize of our calling as set forth in Phil. iii., where the words “perfect” and “perfection” are key-thoughts.

The first clause of the verse (Psa. cxix. 1) is immediately followed by references to the Word of God and the believer’s relation thereto. The undefiled or perfect are “in the way”. They are those who “walk in the law of the Lord”, and who “keep His testimonies”.

The blessings that conclude the series in the Psalms we must leave for another paper.

**#10. The blessedness of trust without sight  
(Psa. cxliv. 15; cxlvi. 5).  
pp. 124 - 127**

The two remaining beatitudes of the Psalms are those of Psa. cxliv. 15 and cxlvi. 5. Psa. cxliv. demands a careful examination owing to the peculiar change at verse 12. Some commentators have not hesitated to say that verse 12-15 belong to another period and have no real connection with the earlier verses. Such is the opinion of compilers of the Psalms chronologically arranged. The true explanation will be found in *The Companion Bible*. Verses 12-15 are the boastful words of the “strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity” (verse 11). These say: “Our sons are plants grown up in their youth”, and continue through the whole list, speaking of their daughters, their full garners, their increasing flocks, their labouring oxen, their security and contentment. “Happy”, say they, “is that people, that is in such a case”. The word “happy” is the word “blessed” which we have had before us throughout this series.

The Psalmist however breaks into this realm of contentment in the concluding sentence of the Psalm by saying: “Nay (or Yea rather), blessed is that people, whose God is the Lord.” This is a supreme example of clear sighted faith. On the one hand, all that heart could wish in the shape of peace, prosperity and contentment; on the other, the vision that all is vanity apart from the presence and fellowship of the living God.

The prophet Habakkuk endorses the sentiment of the Psalmist:--

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom,  
Neither shall fruit be in the vines;  
The labour of the olive shall fail,  
And the fields shall yield no meat;  
The flock shall be cut off from the fold,  
And there shall be no herd in the stalls;  
Yet will I rejoice in the Lord,  
I will joy in the God of my salvation” (Hab. iii. 17, 18).

What do we know of this triumphant “Yet” or of that equally wonderful “Nay” of Psa. cxliv. 15? This point of view is only obtained when, like Asaph, we turn our eyes away from envying those who have more than heart can wish, and enter into the sanctuary of God. What we learn there will enable us to come out again into the world where the ungodly seem to prosper, and to say out of a full heart “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee” (Psa. lxxii. 25).

To us, members of the body of Christ, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, this sanctuary experience should be our normal attitude. In that sanctuary on high is our all, and while we look for traveling mercies and pilgrim provisions, we are enjoined to “set our minds on things above” (Col. iii. 2). When we hear others recounting the advantages of fellowship that compromises the truth, when we

hear of success that goes hand in hand with betrayal of fundamentals, let us take a glance at Psa. cxliv., and be enabled to say to all such: “*Nay*, blessed is that people, whose God is the Lord.”

The next and closing beatitude of the Psalms is found in a context that magnifies the Lord in a very full manner. There are but ten verses in the Psalm, and in order to demonstrate the emphatic place occupied in it by the Lord, we will give the entire Psalm, set out according to its structure and emphasis.

### Psalm cxlvi.

- A | 1, 2. Hallelujah.  
Praise the LORD, O my soul.  
While I live will I praise the LORD:  
I will sing praises unto GOD while I have any being.
- B | 3. Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man.
- C | 3. In whom there is no help.
- D | 4. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth;  
In that very day his thoughts perish.
- E | 5. BLESSED IS HE THAT HATH THE GOD OF  
JACOB FOR HIS HELP.
- B | 5. Whose hope is in the LORD his GOD.
- C | 6-9. WHICH made heaven and earth,  
The sea, and all that therein is:  
WHICH keepeth truth for ever:  
WHICH executeth judgment for the oppressed.  
WHICH giveth food to the hungry.  
The LORD looseth the prisoners:  
The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind:  
The LORD raiseth them that are bowed down:  
The LORD loveth the righteous:  
The LORD preserveth the strangers:  
HE relieveth the fatherless and widow:  
But the way of the wicked HE turneth upside down.
- D | 4. The LORD shall reign for ever,  
even Thy GOD, O Zion, unto all generations.
- A | 10. Hallelujah.  
Praise ye the LORD.

In this first of the five “Hallelujah” Psalms that conclude the whole book, we have the Lord Himself as the centre and foundation, the source and the goal of all blessing. Man is set aside, be he prince of the blood, or man of the street. In him there is no help. The reference to his breath: “his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth” and his mortality call to mind a parallel utterance:--

“Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of” (Isa. ii. 22).

In marked contrast with man and his utter inability in the matter of “help” (saving help, salvation) is the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth, the righteous judge of the oppressed, the God of providence and of salvation, the God Who shall reign for ever when the way of the wicked shall have been turned upside down. It is therefore quite in accord with the theme of the Psalm that we find placed in the centre of the structure of the blessedness of having the God of Jacob as our help. The stress upon the name “Jacob” suggests that we are dealing here with the God of all grace, for Jacob represents all that is weak and worthless, yet receiving all that is great and glorious. Not only our “help” but our “hope”.

“Whose hope is in the Lord his God” (Psa. cxlvi. 5).

It is indeed fitting that the climax blessings of the Psalms should be those that set aside all that pertains to the outer world of time and sense (Psa. cxliv. 12-15), and to man in whatever station he may found, and trusts only and completely in the God of all grace. Blessed indeed is a people in such a case.

We have now passed in review the blessings of the Psalms:--

- (1) FORGIVENESS OF SINS (xxxii. 1-5).
- (2) CONFIDENCE (ii. 12; xxxiv. 8; xl. 4).
- (3) CONSISTENCY (i. 1).
- (4) CONSIDERATION (xli. 1).
- (5) SATISFACTION (lxv. 3, 4).
- (6) ANTICIPATED VICTORY (lxxxiv. 4, 5, 12; lxxxix. 15).
- (7) PATIENT CONTINUANCE (xciv. 12; cvi. 3).
- (8) GOING ON UNTO PERFECTION (cxii. 1; cxix. 1, 2).
- (9) TRUST WITHOUT SIGHT (cxliv. 15; cxlvi. 5).

Such is one group of Biblical blessings. We trust that the consideration of them will have been a means of help to many. We hope to pursue this theme in other parts of Scripture as opportunity offers. May the blessing of the Lord that maketh rich be our experimental portion at all times.

**#11. Blessing, and its connection with purpose  
and the obedience of faith.  
pp. 175 - 178**

Among the outstanding figures of the O.T. that are particularly associated with blessing, we must include Abraham. There are four periods in his life linked with the thought of blessing, a study of which will shed some light on the conditions of Biblical blessing and so, we trust, be a help to us all.

The first occasion in Abraham's life on which we hear of blessing comes after his response to the call to leave country, kindred and father's house. Arising out of a consideration of Gen. xi. and xii., the following features appear to have a bearing upon our theme:--

(1) *What was the necessary condition of blessing?*

Let us answer in the words of Scripture:--

“By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went” (Heb. xi. 8).

By comparing Acts vii. 2, 3 with Gen. xii. 1 we discover that Abraham received this call twice; once when he was in Ur of the Chaldees, and once in Haran after the death of his father Terah:--

“The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee” (Acts vii. 2, 3).

It appears that when Abraham prepared to move out of Ur of the Chaldees in response to the call of God, Terah his father, Lot his nephew, and Sarai Abraham's wife journeyed together. At first sight it would appear that Abraham did not fully obey the Lord's command, but by comparing Acts vii. with Gen. xii. it will be seen that at the first call, separation from “country and kindred” was commanded, while after the death of Terah it was separation from “country, kindred *and father's house*”:--

“Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee” (Gen. xii. 1).

In our next article we shall show that the Lord kept His word and that Abraham did not receive the blessing promised until the conditions were fulfilled. This, however, does not come first. While implicit and absolute obedience is the essential condition for blessing, and while Abraham did not receive the full promise until he had fully obeyed, we can contemplate with thanksgiving the fact that the intention of Abraham's heart was

noted by the Lord, just as surely as the halts and the hindrances that for the time prevented complete obedience.

At the end of Gen. xi. we read: "And Terah took Abram his son" (Gen. xi. 31). Perhaps it is impossible for us who live today to realize the authority that a parent had in those patriarchal days over his children, even though they were grown up and married. The Lord, therefore, tempered His command, and did not include "thy father's house" at the beginning. Haran, though 600 miles distant from Ur, was a similar city, and worshipped the same Moon-god. Not until Terah was dead did Abraham cross over Jordan and enter into the land.

We can say without fear of contradiction that the necessary condition of blessing in Abraham's case was obedience of faith. And the same is true of all experimental blessings in relation to all the children of God in all ages.

(2) *What underlies the blessing of God?*

It is evident from the context that Abraham was not called and blessed on merely personal grounds. The nations of the earth had signally failed. The awful rebellion of the builders of Babel is found in the same chapter as the move of Terah to Haran. That rebellion was overruled by the purpose of God:--

"Let us make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth"  
(Gen. xi. 4).

When the Lord blessed Abraham, He said, "I will make thy name great . . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. xii. 2, 3); as though that which had been rebelliously planned by the builders of Babel should be gloriously achieved by the mercy of God. We shall therefore be within the bounds of truth if we say that underlying the blessings of Scripture will be discovered the outworking of the purpose of the ages.

If we turn to Eph. i. 3-14, where that phase of the purpose is introduced which belongs to heavenly places and the mystery, we shall find "blessing" and "purpose" very closely related:--

"Who hath blessed us . . . . according as He hath chosen us . . . . having predestinated us . . . . according to the good pleasure of His will . . . . according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself . . . . according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His Own will."

(3) *An essential characteristic of blessing.*

This fact, that blessings are not merely personal, but are related to a wider purpose than our own immediate salvation and peace, leads us to the next observation. No blessing is given to man for purely personal and selfish ends. He is blessed that he may be a blessing:--

“I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great: and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. xii. 2, 3).

Abraham was to be the father of a “great nation” but, unlike the other great nations of history, that nation’s greatness was not to be used tyrannically, or for personal gratification. Through that great nation “all families of the earth” were to be blessed. The Lord said, “I will bless thee”; but also added, “and thou shalt be a blessing”.

There are several important things yet to be made known to Abraham, and certain further conditions to be fulfilled, before these revelations are possible or fitting, but we have here in this opening of the story three most important features, which it will be profitable for us all to make our own.

(1) Blessings, to be enjoyed and experienced, necessitate the obedience of faith. “By faith . . . . he obeyed.”

(2) Blessings are never to be considered in isolation; they are a part of the outworking of the purpose of God. The nations had failed. God blessed Abraham that he might be the father of a “great nation” through whom blessing might flow.

(3) Blessings are never to be considered as purely personal or to be used selfishly. The reception of blessing constitutes the receiver a channel of blessing to some one else. The failure to see this contributed largely to Israel’s fall. They cursed the Gentiles as dogs, instead of realizing that these nations were yet to be saved and blessed.

## **#12. Separation: an essential to realized blessing. pp. 257 - 260**

One contributory feature in the experience of blessing that we did not emphasize in our last paper is the condition of “separation”. We shall find that this thought is prominent in Abraham’s next experience.

We observe in our last paper that there were four periods in Abraham’s life specially associated with blessing, and found that Heb. xi. spoke most pointedly of the first. It is a confirmation of our investigations that Heb. xi. speaks of the four items in turn. The special feature of “separation” is noted in Heb. xi. 9:--

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.”

“Sojourning in a tent” seems to mark the next stage, and this is focused in Gen. xii.-xiv. in the word “separate”. Although Terah was dead, and Ur of the Chaldees left far behind, Lot still remained with Abraham, and while he did so, complete

separation from his “father’s house” was not yet attained. When obedience is not voluntary, the Lord sometimes allows His children to pass through painful experience, so that what they have not done freely they shall do after being taught by afflictions:--

“Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold” (Gen. xiii. 2).

Famine had found a weak spot in Abraham’s faith (Gen. xii. 10), and now riches and plenty are going to complete the rather bitter lesson that he needed:--

“Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their inheritance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was strife” (Gen. xiii. 5-7).

Abraham, had he insisted upon his rights, could have reminded Lot that the land belonged to him by the promise of God, and that he, Lot, was an intruder. Abraham, however, does no such thing. He appears to have gained some insight into comparative values, and realizes that to get free from Lot even at a great sacrifice to himself would be worth while. Consequently, although the whole land was Abraham’s, he stands aside and allows his nephew first choice. “And Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan.” To follow the history of Lot and to mark its lessons is not our present purpose. We leave him where his choice had taken him, and return to Abraham to see what results follow:--

“And the Lord said unto Abram, AFTER THAT LOT WAS SEPARATED from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever” (Gen. xiii. 14, 15).

Here at last, and for the first time, the promise of Gen. xii. 1 is fulfilled. In Gen. xii. 1 the Lord had spoken of separation from country, kindred, and father’s house, and of a land “that I will show thee”. Here, in Gen. xiii., when the last act of separation has taken place—for Lot was a part of his “father’s house”—the Lord shows Abraham the land. Not only did he see it, but he also received the command:--

“Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it: for I will give it unto thee” (Gen. xiii. 17).

Here, surely, is a lesson for us all. Not until there is separation can there be any real appreciation of the extent of our blessings. We cannot “lift up our eyes” neither can we “arise and walk through the land” while Lot is with us. How many times are we met with the remark, “I do not see it”. Sometimes, of course, the inability to see may be due to our faulty presentation, but sometimes we are fairly certain that the one who confesses inability to see the high calling of Ephesians, is hindered by some spiritual Lot. The Church equivalent of Abraham’s separation from Lot is found in Eph. i. 17, 18.

The apostle prays not only that the believer may have the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him but, as the margin reads, “for the acknowledgment of Him”. This granted, the eyes are opened and the believer knows what is the hope of His calling and the riches of His inheritance. He is shown the land, and he arises and walks

through it. Just as Abraham's *realization* of his inheritance hinged upon separation from Lot, so the *realization* of our hope and inheritance hinges upon our "acknowledging" the truth as we see it.

The principle of separation is taken one stage further in Gen. xiv., and leads us to Abraham's "second blessing". Lot had become involved in the quarrels of the nations and, when Sodom was taken by the confederate kings, Lot and all his possessions were taken captive also. It is suggestive that when news of this calamity is taken to Abraham, he is called "the Hebrew". The word indicates "one who passes over", and so stands for the principle of separation that is in view here. To Abraham, the separated one, the news is brought; and under God he, with his small company of 318 trained servants, rescues Lot and all his possessions, together with all that had been taken from Sodom. Now comes the crisis towards which the events and experiences of chapters xiii. and xiv. have been leading. In verse 17, the king of Sodom goes out to meet Abraham. In verse 21, recognizing the valour and worth of Abraham's action, he asks that the persons who had been thus delivered should be given back to Sodom, but that all that Abraham had rescued should be his own as a reward. On the surface, nothing could appear more generous, or more reasonable, and that, between the meeting of Abraham with the King of Sodom, and the account of the king's offer, come verses 18-20. This parenthesis is the turning-point of the story. Another king meets Abraham, Melchisedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God. He brings forth bread and wine and blesses Abraham, saying:--

"Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the Most High God, Which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he (Abram) gave him (Melchisedek) tithes of all" (Gen. xiv. 19, 20. See Heb. vii. 1-4).

It was this meeting with Melchisedek and his blessing, that caused Abraham to reply to the king of Sodom as he did:--

"And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich. Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre; let them take their portion" (Gen. xiv. 22-24).

Let us observe, not only the faith of Abraham, but also his reasonableness. The young men had eaten food. He has no foolish scruples over that. He has no reason to become extreme in order to show that his faith is real. Again, notice his reasonableness with regard to Aner, Eschol and Mamre. These men had rendered valuable service, and it would have caused them to blaspheme the name of the God of Abraham, had he insisted that what was right for himself, "the Hebrew", the separated one, must also be right for those not in such relationship with the world. We feel sure that believers who attempt to legislate for the world, and how it shall spend its time and opportunities, are more like Lot, who sat in the gate of Sodom and so ineffectively vexed his righteous soul from day to day (II Pet. ii. 7, 8), than Abraham, who, though he himself refused to take the smallest fraction from Sodom, did not impose his faith upon others.

Melchisedek makes us think of the Epistle of the Hebrews. Hebrews leads out thoughts up to the right hand of God where Christ is, as the seated Priest. And this in turn leads us to Ephesians where the church is “seated together” in heavenly places.

The words of Gen. xiv. 20 remind us of Eph. i. 3:--

“He *blessed* him . . . . *Blessed* be Abram . . . . *Blessed* be the Most High God”  
(Gen. xiv. 20).

“*Blessed* be the God and Father . . . . Who hath *blessed* us with all spiritual *blessings*” (Eph. i. 3).

Like Abraham, we have met with One Who directs our hearts upward to where all fullness dwells. We can therefore quite easily repudiate the things of the world that would be our legitimate rights, were we not co called and blessed.

We trust that the second element in blessing is now clear to us all. (1) The first element of blessing, as set forth in the experience of Abraham, is “the obedience of faith”. (2) The second element of blessing, as set forth in the same history, is the position of “separation”.

**Dr. E. W. Bullinger and Universal Reconciliation.**  
**Fact or assumption?**  
**pp. 1 - 5**

In Volume XXIII, pages 205 and 206, we gave an example of fallacious reasoning on the part of one, *Mr. W. Hoste, B.A.*, who inferred—apparently without knowledge of his writings—that the late *Dr. E. W. Bullinger* was a Universalist.

A reader in New Zealand has just sent us the following extract from the July, 1934, issue of “*Unsearchable Riches*”, from which it would appear that *Mr. A. E. Knoch* has, to say the least, made the same unwarranted inference:--

“DR. BULLINGER AND RECONCILIATION.—We have often been asked to publish Dr. Bullinger’s opinion of universal reconciliation. The temptation to do this was strong, for it would tend to break down the prejudice which he himself had created against it. But we were determined that God’s truth should not be based on any man’s opinion. Besides, he evidently did not wish to take a public stand for universal reconciliation until he had fully mastered the doctrine of the eons.”

“The matter came up in this way: I sent an advertisement of *Unsearchable Riches to Things to Come*, but he wrote back that he could not insert it. As it appeared in the next issue, I wrote him a note of thanks. He replied that he deserved no thanks, as it had been inserted by mistake. He said he had heard that I had something on the ‘aiones’, and that he would be glad to see what it was. In response I prepared the chart in which every passage containing the word is arranged in chronological order. In his last letter to me, he made the following statement: ‘It may help to a better understanding between us if you would kindly explain exactly what you mean by ‘universal reconciliation’.’ To an English ear here it savours of what is called ‘Universalism’, in which every one who ever lived will have a second chance. If it refers only to the future and not to the past I have no quarrel with it. But I should like it made clear. And I am sure you can and will do it for me.”

“I remember distinctly the satisfaction that this letter gave me. There could be no doubt whatever that he would accept the truth once he had investigated it, according to his own written statement. But this was not to be, for, soon after, he died. The chart was returned to me long afterward, when the *Companion Bible* was finished. It is easy to prove, from his published works, that Dr. Bullinger denied ‘Universalism’. But it is also true that, at the very last, only his illness and death prevented him from accepting the doctrine of the eons and the universal reconciliation” (*A.E.K.*).

In also transmitting the following extracts from “*Things to Come*”, the Journal edited by *Dr. Bullinger*, our reader, writes: “I have no intention of defending *Dr. Bullinger*. The very best thing to do is to let the lion out, and he will defend himself”:--

“C. H. C.—It is news indeed to hear that we believe in the ‘Universal Fatherhood of God’, ‘Universal restoration, and the purgatorial process’. Such charges must come, not from ignorance, but from malice; and is a clear and open breach of the ninth Commandment.”

“To such, I give no answer. To you, you have an emphatic and flat denial of the false charge. No reader of ‘*Things to Come*’ would entertain it for a moment. May we ask them to ‘nail it to the counter’ at every opportunity; though we fear the lie has got too

good a start even to be overtaken and crushed: and it is too good a weapon for our opponents, to expect them to abandon very readily'. 'The Day will declare it.'" (*Vol. XVI, July, 1910, page 84*).

"A DISCLAIMER.—Re the advertisement of 'Unsearchable Riches' in our last issue, it was entirely due to a mistake between ourselves and our advertising agent."

"Some of our friends have felt aggrieved; but we hope that both they and others will have fuller confidence in us for the future" (*Vol. XVIII, Nov., 1912, page 133*).

"QUESTION No.408. 'RECONCILIATION.'—A.S. (Scotland). Does Christ's work include the angels, *see* Col. i. 20: to reconcile all things to Himself, things on earth and things in heaven?"

"To understand this we must understand the words used. There are two words rendered reconcile."

"(1) *Katallasso*. It occurs only six times (Rom. v. 10; I Cor. vii. 11; II Cor. v. 18, 19, 20); and means conciliation by changing the relation of *one* person or thing towards another; whereas *diallassomai* means that the change is mutual with each of the two parties. This word occurs only once in the New Testament, *viz.*, Matt. v. 24."

"(2) The other word is *apokatallasso*, and denotes that this change of relationship need not affect both (of two) parties, but that the change on the part of the one is complete and absolute. This word occurs only in Eph. ii. 16; Col. i. 20, 21."

"If the word 'destruction' has any meaning (*see* Psa. cxlv. 20), how can what is destroyed be conciliated or reconciled? God can be said to have changed His relationship to the world when He has made an end of all evil. This conciliation or change is in Himself, as in Col. i. 21. The cross changes His attitude toward all things. He can now be 'just' in His judgments, and yet 'the justifier' of all who believe Him."

"'The heavens are not clean in His sight'; but, when Satan is cast out, and the earth purged of all evil, His attitude to 'the things on earth and things in heaven' will be changed, but as to the things themselves that have been destroyed and burned up, how can they be 'reconciled' in any sense of the word?"

"The conciliation is 'unto Himself', and His relation to saved sinners is changed through the death of His Son, so that He can present them holy and unblameable, and unimpeachable in His sight. It is He Who is conciliated by the atonement of Christ, and not ourselves. We are changed from enemies to friends by His grace and power."

"We are convinced that the interpretation of the word 'reconciliation', which connects it with two parties, is a misunderstanding; just as the word 'accept' is almost universally misunderstood and misused. It is God who accepts Christ as the sinners' substitute, as He accepted Abel's lamb (Gen. iv. 4; Heb. xi. 4)."

"He accepted it by consuming it with 'fire from heaven' (Psa. xx. 3) as He accepted all sacrifices (*see* Lev. ix. 24; vi. 12, 13; I Kings viii. 64; xviii. 38; II Chron. vii. 1, etc.). And yet, to-day, sinners are everywhere exhorted to 'accept Christ' for themselves, instead of being exhorted to believe God that He has accepted Christ as His provided substitute for everyone who believes what He has revealed as to their guilt, and as to their need of a Saviour."

"So with what is spoken of as 'reconciliation'. There is no such thing as regards the sinner. There is conciliation on God's part toward the sinner in virtue of the substitute which He has provided and accepted, but there is an 'everlasting destruction', not some future reconciliation, for those who refuse to believe Him" (*Vol. XIX, Jan., 1913, p. 11*).

"QUESTION No.414. 'RECONCILIATION.'—D.J. (Middlesex). What is the force of the preposition *apo* in *apokatallasso*? Does it, as some say, describe the change in us, from enmity to love?"

"In our answer to Question No.408 in the January Number, we gave all the references where the words *katallasso* and *apokatallasso* occur. We add here the occurrences of the noun *katallage*; Rom. v. 11 (translated atonement); xi. 15; II Cor. v. 18, 19. A consideration of all these passages will show that there is no idea in any one of them of

the reconciliation being mutual. In that case, as we pointed out, the word used would have been *diallassomai*, as in Matt. v. 24, which its only occurrence in the New Testament.”

“Mutual reconciliation can only be where each party has wronged the other. What injury has God done to us, that we have to forgive?”

“The enmity in the heart of man against God is due to the fact that man has wronged God, and anyone with a knowledge of human nature will admit that it is the one who has done wrong who seeks to justify his position by blackening the character of him he has wronged. This is one of the awful consequences of man’s fall. Because of sin man is under the wrath of God (Rom. i. 18; Eph. ii. 3; Col. iii. 6). By the death of Christ this wrath is appeased, and God can ‘be just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus’ (Rom. iii. 26). Those who receive this reconciliation (or atonement) (Rom. v. 11) are removed from (*apo*) a condition of being under wrath and condemnation (Rom. viii. 1), to one of acceptance and peace with God. The change is one of position or standing, not of character. That comes afterwards.”

“And here is the mistake that so many make. They are looking for acceptance because of some change in themselves, instead of believing God, and accepting His statement as to reconciliation (II Cor. v. 18-20). Not until the sinner believes in the love of God, does any love to God spring up in his heart (I John iv. 10, 19), driving out the enmity which is there by nature. Reconciliation is a question of pure grace or favour on God’s part, and we are conformed to the image of His Son, by contemplating Him and becoming more and more acquainted with the prefectness of His work. To grow in grace is to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (II Pet. iii. 18, R.V.).”

“Any other view of ‘Reconciliation’ (such as universal reconciliation) does away entirely with the Bible word ‘destruction’, and deprives it of any meaning that can be given to it. There is no place for the two. As ‘destruction’ is a Bible word, and ‘universal reconciliation’ is a human formula, the latter must be abandoned” (*Vol. XIX, April, 1913, page 46*).

“S.S. (Lanarkshire). Of the resurrections in I Cor. xv. 23, 24, the resurrection of Rev. xx. 12, 13, is, as you say, implied in I Cor. xv. 24. When the Son delivers up the kingdom to the Father He will have put down all rule and authority and power. This must be after the judgment of the great white throne, for that deals with some rebellious ones whose doom is to be cast into the lake of fire. This is called the second death, and there is no hint of any resurrection from it. Those who claim that there is should be prepared with some Scripture to that effect. The first death comes to righteous and unrighteous alike, and Scripture is full of testimony to the resurrection from it. The second death comes only to the ungodly, and while it is frequently spoken of as their end (Psa. xxxvii. 38; Prov. xiv. 12; Rom. vi. 21; II Cor. xi. 15; Phil. iii. 19; Heb. vi. 8; I Pet. iv. 17), we are not acquainted with a single passage that speaks of a resurrection from that” (*Vol. XIX, May, 1913, page 60*).

The foregoing extracts—the last of which it will be noted is dated May 1913—and *Dr. Bullinger died but a month later, viz., on 6th June, 1913*—speak for themselves, and inasmuch as the teaching concerning “universal reconciliation” does, of necessity, refer “to the past”, it is pure assumption (to put it mildly) to state that “*only his illness and death prevented him from accepting the doctrine of the eons and the universal reconciliation*”.

We may say that in reply to a recent enquiry of *Dr. Bullinger’s* niece (*Miss E. Dodson*), who was in close attendance on him until the date of his death, she writes:--

“I have never heard my uncle say one word in favour of universal reconciliation.”

Our own personal contact with the late Doctor enables us to most definitely confirm this.

It will be apparent that the statements made in the above quotation from "*Unsearchable Riches*" are pure assumption, and they prompt the pertinent question as to whether the one who dares to make them without a real shred of evidence is a safe guide in things eschatological, for with such individuals there is ever the danger that they will (maybe unconsciously) see things through media of their own colouring. "*The day will declare it.*"

## Studies in Colossians.

### #29. BEWARE.

#### What it means to hold the Head (ii. 19).

pp. 18 - 23

In our last article we were concerned with the false teaching that obtained among the Colossians, which, if persisted in, would rob them of the prize. We now turn our attention to the corrective administered. It is expressed negatively: "and not holding the Head", but its teaching is positive. It is that we *should* "hold the Head", and this in contrast with all the incipient spiritism and the intrusion of angelic mediation about which the apostle has already spoken.

If the apostle had had unbelievers in mind, he would not have used the words "not holding". The words imply that he is speaking to believers, but to believers whose grasp of their true calling, and appreciation of the fullness of Christ, is small or weak. He would point them to the Lord Jesus as the Head, and to living contact with Him as all-sufficient for all the members of the one body. Not only does the apostle exhort the Colossians to hold the Head; he speaks, too, of the knitting together of the members. The balance of thought will be more readily seen if the verse is set out as follows:--

#### Colossians ii. 19.

- A | Head; body; joints (*Emphasis upon unity*).
- B | Nourishment ministered.
- A | Knit together (*Emphasis upon unity*).
- B | Increase with the increase of God.

In the preceding article we referred to Mark vii. 6-8. It is interesting to note that the word "to hold" in Mark vii. 3, where the reference is to the traditions of the elders, is the same as that used in Col. ii. 19 which, in contrast to all such tradition, speaks of holding Christ as the Head. The word "hold" is *krateo*; the related word *kratos* is translated in the A.V. "dominion", "power", "strength", and once, with *kata*, "mightily". The three occurrences in the prison epistles are Eph. i. 19, vi. 10, and Col. i. 11, where it is rendered "power". "To hold with strength" appears to be the true meaning of the word in all its many ramifications. This may explain the wealth of language involving "power", "might", "strength" used in such passages as Eph. i. 19, iii. 16 and vi. 10 in connection with faith in Christ as the Head and the Fullness, the indwelling of Christ by faith, and the conflict with spiritual wickedness.

The Headship of Christ contains within it most, if not all, that is implied in the purpose of the ages. It is a word, however, not used in the O.T. with such frequency and precision as it is used by Paul in the prison epistles.

When the restoration of Israel takes place:--

"Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gather together, and appoint themselves *one head*, and they shall come up out of the land; for great shall be the day of Jezreel" (Hos. i. 11).

"Their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on *the head* of them" (Mic. ii. 13).

In the N.T. we find five references to Christ as "the Head of the corner" (Matt. xxi. 42; Mark xii. 10; Luke xx. 17; Acts iv. 11, and I Pet. ii. 7), each passage dealing with the purpose of God as it pertains to Israel.

In I Cor. xi. 3, the reference is as wide as mankind: "The head of every man is Christ." This is not limited to the believer; just as it is true that the head of every woman is the man, whether they believe or not. The origin and basis of this headship is found in creation.

The Greek word *kephale* (translated "head") occurs seven times in the prison epistles, and as this word stands for so much that is important to the believer to-day, we will give each reference and indicate its relationship to the whole:--

#### **The seven occurrences of "Head".**

- A | Eph. i. 21, 22. Head over all things. Including principality and power.
- B | Eph. iv. 15, 16. Head, even Christ. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth . . . . maketh increase of the body.
- C | Eph. v. 23. Husband is head, even as Christ is Head of the Church.
- C | Col. i. 18. He is the Head of the body, the Church.
- A | Col. ii. 10. Head of all principality and power.
- B | Col. ii. 19. Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

While it would be interesting to take each of the above references both separately and in relation to the corresponding member, our immediate concern is with Col. ii. 19. We shall be helped by considering the parallel passage in Eph. iv. Let us observe its context. Eph. iv. 15 comes in the practical section of the epistle, which opens with an exhortation to a walk that is worthy, and the necessity of true humility (the word "lowliness" in Eph. iv. 2 being translated in Acts xx. 19 "humility of mind"). The goal before the believer is his "perfecting", and his standard "the perfect man, the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ". He is warned against the "sleight of men and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive". They are to "grow up" and "make increase" in relation to Christ, the Head, and to the members of His body.

The reference in Col. ii. 19 likewise comes in a practical section. It, too, opens with an exhortation concerning walk:--

"As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (Col. ii. 6).

This is an exhortation and a principle that really covers all that the apostle has to say in the rest of the chapter regarding true sanctification, Christ's Headship, and the utter repudiation of every attempt of man to dominate the members of His Body.

Col. ii. likewise speaks of humility, but this time a false humility associated with grovelling superstition and vain glory in the flesh. Corresponding to the "perfecting" and the "fullness" of Eph. iv. we have the "completeness" of the believer in Col. ii., the same word underlying both terms. The "truth in Jesus", says the apostle, lies in the fact that the old man has been put off, and the new man put on (Eph. iv. 21-24).

The warning in Col. ii. is clearly parallel with that of Eph. iv. Instead of "the sleight of men" and their deception, we have "vain deceitful philosophy", the "traditions of men", "the rudiments of the word". Where Eph. iv. speaks of the repudiation of the old man with his deeds, Col. ii. speaks of the circumcision made without hands, the putting off of the body of the flesh. Even the blessedness of forgiveness is included in both passages:--

"Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. iv. 32).

"Having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. ii. 13).

The "cunning craftiness" of Eph. iv. is seen in the "voluntary humility and worshipping of angels" that, if followed, would "beguile of the prize" (Col. ii. 18).

The aspect of the truth that is particularly marked in Ephesians is the unity that must obtain between the members of the body. The aspect of the same truth particularly stressed in Colossians is that these same united members must also be closely united to the Lord as the Head.

With these parallels to help us, let us now turn our attention to the actual statement of Col. ii. 19:--

"Joints and bands" (*Haphe* and *sundesmos*).

The word that gives us "joint" comes from *haptomai*, "to touch", and is in the near context—Col. ii. 21: "Touch not." *Sundesmos*, "bond", is found in Eph. iv. 3 and in Col. iii. 14:--

"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the *bond* of peace."

"Put on love, which is the *bond* of perfectness."

There is a similarity in the description of the body here with that given by *Galen*, a Greek physician, born A.D.130 at Pergamos, not very far from Ephesus and Colosse. He also speaks of the structure of the body as of a twofold union, stating that the body owes its compactness partly to *articulation* and partly to the *attachments*. *Aristotle* too speaks of *haphe*, "contact" and *sumphusis*, "cohesion". *Lightfoot's* translation of the two words in Col. ii. 19 is "junctures and ligaments". A knowledge of anatomy is not very wide-spread even in this day of universal encyclopædias, but the slightest acquaintance

with the construction of the human body not only calls forth praise to the Creator, but affords many lessons of a spiritual nature.

The underlying meaning of *haphē* is connected with "touching". The language of common speech: "Keep in touch", "out of touch", etc., and the sanction of Scripture (Matt. ix. 20, etc.) would impress upon us the need for the closest unity between every member of the body. We should be as anxious to get rid of all friction spiritually, as we are to avoid rheumatism physically. A "stiff neck" belongs to both worlds, and can be a serious interference in the healthy functioning of the body.

The meaning of *sumbibazo*, "knit together", was considered in Volume XXIII, page 13, to which the reader is directed for its twofold meaning and its bearing upon the subject here.

"To minister nourishment" is the translation of *epichoregeo*, and originally referred to the *choregos*, a person who supplied the refreshments, ornaments, etc., for the chorus or theatrical entertainment. *Choros* occurs in Luke xv. 25 where it is translated "dancing". Josephus refers to God as the *Choregon trophe*, "The Supplier of food". The verb occurs in II Cor. ix. 10, and I Pet. iv. 11. Combined with *epi*, as in Col. ii. 19, we find the word in II Cor. ix. 10 (first word), Gal. iii. 5, and II Pet. i. 11. In Eph. iv. 16, and Phil. i. 19 the substantive *epichoregia* is translated "supply". The passage in Philippians well illustrates the relationship of member and head:--

"Through *your* prayer and the *supply* of the spirit of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 19).

While, therefore, the believer has nothing to do with "meat and drink" and the feasts that belong to the law, he is by no means cut off from their spiritual equivalents, the very word used, as we have seen, being associated originally with entertainment, ornament, and "things richly to enjoy". This would be felt all the more by those who had been led into a false asceticism, "neglecting the body", "forbidding to marry" and "commanding to abstain from meats". Holiness and increase are not forwarded by such practices. All true increase must be "the increase of God", even though it be through "every joint of the supply" and the "edifying of itself in love".

"Increase" is closely linked with "the knowledge of God" in Col. i. 10. In II Cor. ix. 10 the word *choregeo* and *epichoregeo* ("minister") occur, and we find the word "increase" as a result. Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, but it is God that giveth the increase (I Cor. iii. 6, 7), a lesson that the Colossians had been slow to learn. We find the same word translated "to grow" in Eph. iv. 15, so making another close parallel between the two passages. It comes again in Eph. ii. 21, where the temple that is "fitly framed together" corresponds with the body that is "fitly joined together" in Eph. iv. 16.

One of the fundamental features of sanctification is "union" (see Volume XXIII, page 76), and we find the same truth in Col. ii. Anything that separates the believer from the Lord, by the interposing of anything whatever, is comparable with the dislocation of the body, and "wholeness", which is one phase of "holiness", is thereby

spoiled. To have learned that in Christ is all the treasure of wisdom, and knowledge, and that He Who is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and redemption, has been made unto us sanctification as well, is the lesson we may learn from the trouble of the Colossian Church, a lesson necessary for our peace, our true growth and our sanctification, as it is for the glory of Him Who has been given to be Head *over all things* to the Church.

**#30. BEWARE.**  
**Why are ye subject to ordinances? (ii. 20-23).**  
**pp. 52 - 58**

On reaching the closing section of verses 20-23, one further truth is stated in the corrective administered by the apostle, and that is, "Ye died with Christ". While this is of tremendous importance, we shall, having regard to the limitation of space and the fact that much of the doctrinal teaching conveyed by these four words has already been brought out in the exposition of Rom. vi., feel justified in referring the reader to that series of articles for information, and in the present series proceed direct to the conclusion of Col. ii., taking the above statement of doctrine with us.

The closing section of Col. ii. balances the opening one, and as it is some time since we set out this passage in structural form, it may be of use to repeat the outline of the opening and closing portions of Col. ii. 4-23:--

R | a | 4-8. Plausible speech. Philosophy (*sophos*).  
       b | 8. Traditions of men.  
       c | 8. Rudiments of world.  
 CORRECTIVE. | 8. Not after Christ.  
                   9, 10. Ye are filled full in Him.  
                   \*   \*   \*   \*   \*

R |       c | 20-22. Rudiments of world.  
       b | 22. Teaching of men.  
       a | 23. Wordy show of wisdom (*sophos*).  
 CORRECTIVE. | 23. Not in any honour.  
                   23. Filling the flesh.

Between the believer and all that would impose upon him stands the great fact, that he died with Christ; and that not only to sin, but to the rudiments of the world, to the lordship of men, to the ceremonies and the prohibitions of a carnal religion. From all such the believer is blessedly free.

When writing to the Galatian believers who had been induced to observe days and the like, the apostle associated such observance with their previous service to "them which by nature are no gods", and we must remember that in those days the very elements of the

world were deified and worshipped. To-day, however, the pendulum has swung in the opposite direction. The forces of nature, ignorantly worshipped by the ancients, have been so reduced by "science" to be regarded as "nature" and the "laws of nature", as to set aside a personal Creator, or the necessity for Him by Whom all things consist (Col. i. 17), the exchange from idolatry to godlessness being, equally with pagan teaching, an offence in the eyes of the Lord. The association of observances, ceremonials, and the elements of the world with Christianity, made easy the deception of the Colossians and the introduction of angelic mediation and worship a natural consequence. But the believer has died with Christ, and is completely free from the domination of all these things—whether pagan or Mosaic, whether deceitful philosophy or holy law and covenant. From all and everything that would impose upon the flesh, having sanctification in view, he is separated:--

"Wherefore if ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances?" (Col. ii. 20).

"Subject to ordinances" is the translation of one word in the original, and has been rendered "ordinance-ridden". Then follow specimen prohibitions as "Touch not; taste not; handle not". The apostle, writing to Timothy and referring to the false teaching of the latter times, shows that the doctrine of demons, far from teaching men to be immoral, would veto even those things that God has sanctioned, thus creating a false ground of holiness, and leading away from Christ by some supposed personal merit:--

"Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (I Tim. iv. 3).

I Cor. vii. 1 shows that by the injunction "Touch not" the saints at Colosse were being taught to look upon marriage as something to be shunned. "Taste not" advocates abstinence from various food upon the assumption that some were "common and unclean", a subject upon which the apostle very clearly expressed the mind of God in I Corinthians, Romans and I Timothy:--

"Meat commendeth us not to God. For neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse" (I Cor. viii. 8).

The only real ground for abstinence is the conscience of the weaker brother who may be stumbled by our liberty. Strictly speaking "handle not" means "do not touch, however lightly", and indicates that over scrupulosity which is characteristic of those whose conception of holiness is negative—what one does *not*, rather than what one *is* in Christ.

All this prohibitions and the subjects of them, have one thing in common, they belong to that which is perishing. These things are after the commandments and doctrines of men, and as already stated are given with intent to deceive (Col. ii. 8):--

"Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour, to the satisfying of the flesh" (Col. ii. 23).

"Which things" is *atina* in the Greek, and means "which *sort* of things", i.e., not only the three specified, but all other such-like prohibitions and negations: and each generation has its own. For instance, in our own day sermons have been preached against "Railway Trains", "Chloroform", "Motor Cars", "Wireless" and "Aeroplanes". The spirit of this passage in Col. ii. remains though the outward form change.

*"Have indeed a show of wisdom."*—The word "show" is the translation of *logos*. This word has a wide signification, including not only reason, speech, word, discourse, but also "the cause of" (Matt. v. 29, margin); "thing" (Matt. xxi. 24); "intent" (Acts x. 29). Perhaps the rendering "having a reputation for wisdom" conveys the meaning as well as any. Moffatt's translation is suggestive:--

"These rules are determined by human precepts and tenets; they get the name of 'wisdom' with their self-imposed devotions, with their fasting, with their rigorous discipline of the body, but they are of no value, they simply pamper the flesh."

*"In will worship."*—This is a compound word, *ethelothreskeia*, possessing characteristics not uncommon in Greek literature, in which such compounds are generally, though not always, used in a bad sense.

In Col. iii. 12 the apostle uses the word translated "humility" in a good sense. Where humility arises out of contemplation of the wonders of grace, the putting on of the new man, as the elect of God, nothing can be more fitting. But if it cringe, instead of having boldness of access: if it impose upon the flesh works of supererogation, multiplying mediators, observances, and ordinances, then, it is vain and deceptive.

This "show of wisdom" expresses itself in a threefold way: (1) Will worship; (2) Humility, and (3) Neglecting the body.

The reader of these words, like the writer, is under no illusion regarding the need where there is to "buffet the body, and keep it in subjection". We have been taught by revelation and by experience that "in our flesh dwelleth no good thing". But this knowledge, instead of leading us to "neglect the body" in the hope of making progress in sanctification, compels us to recognize, on the one hand, that nothing done by the body, done to the body, or not done by the body, can, of itself, make us, in ourselves, more condemned than we already are, nor, on the other hand, can it make us more acceptable. The ground of our acceptance is in Another and that without qualification.

These bodies of ours which have been the instrument of sin, can now, by grace, become the instruments of righteousness. The epistle to the Romans emphasized this fact in chapter vi. and says, in chapter xii., that the presenting of our bodies a living sacrifice is but our "logical service". If that be so, "neglecting the body" can be only evil. If by neglecting it we hope to derive spiritual merit, what are we better than the ritualist? Does not the Hindoo the same? If in these bodies we hope to serve God, what warrant have we to "neglect" them? Is the emaciated, unkempt, unwashed fakir, or mediæval "saint", more acceptable in the sight of God than the redeemed child of God "clothed and in his right mind"?

Should we be ever tempted to “neglect” the body”, as in some way making our acceptance more complete, let us never forget that the word so translated comes in that magnificent passage:--

“He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things” (Rom. viii. 32).

and that in that one great “neglect”—the abandonment of the Beloved to the darkness, the shame, the desertion of the cross—all other “neglecting” of ourselves is for ever swallowed up and lost. All such “neglecting” of our bodies insults such overwhelming grace.

The words “not in any honour” have been variously interpreted. It would serve no useful purpose to canvass them, but so far as we can see, the truth they convey seems to be that rather than “neglect the body” the believer should reckon himself, body and spirit, as belonging to the Lord. In I Cor. xii. 23, 24, the apostle uses the word *timê*, “honour”, of the body, and again in I Thess. iv. 4. The apostle knew what it was to go hungry, to be left naked, to suffer the loss of all things, yet never does he make this a ground of acceptance. He knew also what it was to abound; he knew that God had given us “all things richly to enjoy”. The apostle thankfully partook of a good meal when it was provided, but was content to go without when it was withheld: his peace and acceptance depended upon neither state. His spirituality did not depend upon whether he had much or little, whether he was ill or well. A false idea, current among some believers, is that a measure of weakness of body and attacks of the enemy are an indication of sanctity, but this is not so. Weakness of body is often traceable to causes that are not flattering, and we could at times, with advantage, seek the cause of such weakness, and not plume ourselves on our spiritual importance. It is just this evil that the apostle combats in Col. ii. “Christ is all” is true here as it is throughout the realm of grace.

“The satisfying of the flesh” contains a word that brings this section into true structural balance with the opening section, as the structure shows. “Satisfying” is *plesmone*, from the same root as *pleroo*, “complete”, in verse 10, and *pleroma* of verse 9. The word *plesmone* occurs in Exod. xvi. 3 and 8, where it speaks of Israel’s satisfaction in Egypt: “did eat bread to the full.” But what leanness it brought into their soul! “Fullness”, or “satisfaction”, drawn from any source other than that indicated in Col. ii. 9, 10 is not of God and can only lead to spiritual leanness.

The lesson of Col. ii. is of such importance to every member of the body of Christ, that we feel sure no one will regret the space devoted to the following paraphrase of the passage. This is not intended as a translation, but is given in the hope that by incorporating some of the more important adjustments and meaning already brought forward in this series, readers may the better appreciate the “warning” and the “teaching” of the apostle, whose ambition was to “present every man perfect in Christ Jesus”.

This I say, that Christ Himself is the Mystery of God and therefore you need no visionary intruding into the secret things of God. Full assurance comes from

the recognition of the fullness of Christ, and moreover, in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. If this be true, you can be proof against the enticing words of those who would otherwise beguile you. Beware lest any man carry you off, as plunder, by vain deceitful philosophy, which is according to the traditions of men, and the rudiments of the world, but which is not according to Christ. You hear from these philosophers much about attaining unto the *pleroma* by means of ascetic practices, but I tell you that in Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and this is vitally connected with the purpose of the ages, and the church of the One Body. Out of His fullness we all may draw, and ye are already complete (or filled to the full) in Him, Who, in His capacity as the incorporation of the fullness, is not only Head over all things to the church, but is Head also of all principality and power.

Coming now to the matter in hand, all this ill-treatment of the body is valueless. Something more terrible than anything that we can ever accomplish was required to annul the body of the flesh, the old man—nothing less, indeed, than the cross of Christ and His triumphant resurrection.

In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ (the practical and experimental side of which is developed in iii. 5-14). Christ has put off the body of the flesh; you now, in the strength of your new position in Him, put off the old man with his deeds, having been buried with Him in His baptism of suffering and death on the cross, wherein also ye have been raised with Him, through faith in the working of God Who raised Him from the dead. And you being dead to your trespasses and to the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses: having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which was against us, and contrary to us, removing it from the midst, nailing it as a cancelled bond to His cross. Here the true circumcision took place, where He, and we in Him, put off the body, and then and there He made a public show of principalities and powers, leading them in triumph by that very cross which, at first, seemed the symbol of all that was weak and futile.

If this is your assured position “in Christ” and “with Christ” surely you will not allow any man to judge you over such things as meat or drink, feasts or sabbaths, for these are but shadows of good things to come; you have the substance already in Christ. Now all this impinges upon the question of your perfecting. No man can rob you of your membership in the body of Christ, but he may distract you that you will fail in the race and so be cheated of the prized of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Let the peace of God be the umpire in your hearts, and not the fantastic speculations of these visionaries who, in self-willed defiance of truth, pretend to humility and angel worship, intrude into secret things veiled by God from our eyes, and all the time are failing in the one thing that matters, failing to hold the Head. Seeing you are all members of His body, your only means of growth is by vital contact with the Head and with one another, for just as the body is ministered to by joints and ligaments, nerves and arteries, drawing all, finally, from the head that controls every function in the body, so is it with the mystical body of Christ. Introspection is harmful and is destructive of all true progress in grace.

It is not a matter of argument, however; it is not a matter of philosophy, tradition, or the elements of world; it resolves itself into the simple issue, Did you die with Christ from the rudiments of the world? If so, being dead to these

things, why are you submitting yourselves to ordinances such as touch not, taste not, handle not, things which, as they are used, pass away? These things are merely the commands and doctrines of men. The whole thing is the form without the power: a show of wisdom, but really self-imposed systems of worship that cannot prove acceptable. The Father must be worshipped in Spirit and in truth by the true circumcision, who have no confidence in the flesh.

All this harsh treatment of the body and enforced humility is vain. It does not render the honour that the body of the redeemed should have, and, by the fact that it attempts that which Christ alone can accomplish, really ministers to the satisfying of the flesh, in spite of all protestation to the contrary.

We now have to consider the positive aspect of the apostle's teaching, which commences with Col. iii. 1, and shall learn that there is a true "mortifying of the flesh", but that it comes in its true and significant order. This we hope to take up in our next article.

**#31. The only true ground for sanctification.  
"Things above . . . . where Christ sitteth" (iii. 1-4).  
pp. 89 - 94**

With the opening sentence of Col. iii. the apostle turns from "warning every man" to "teaching every man", that he may "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. i. 28). His warning has taken into account philosophy, tradition and the "elements of the world", and has shown them to be vain. All rites and ceremonies give place to union with the risen Christ and must be relegated to the past; they are but shadows of things to come. Neglect of the body and mere asceticism are but a show of wisdom and humility; sanctification is not found in that direction. Sanctification, as Col. ii. reveals, is intimately associated with the fullness of Christ. This we shall see as we proceed. Glancing back to the passage already alluded to (Col. i. 28), we observe that the apostle does something more than "warn" and "teach", he prefaces both with "preaching": "Whom we preach."

True assurance comes from the acknowledgment that Christ fills out the secret purpose of God (Col. ii. 2). Subsequent "walk" is but the everyday apprehension of what Christ is and can be to all His own:--

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus for your Lord, in Him walk" (Col. ii. 6).

In place of philosophy, tradition and the "elements of the world", the apostle places Christ. He meets all their empty claims with the words, "And not after Christ" (Col. ii. 8), stressing His "fullness" as over against the vanity or "emptiness" of all besides. Instead of vainly attempting in the strength of the flesh (religious though that flesh may be, and as unsparing to itself as the most extreme asceticism would demand) the apostle speaks of "putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ"

(Col. ii. 11). This is a work of grace accomplished without hands, and therefore beyond the power of man to accomplish. Throughout the epistle the apostle not only warns and teaches, but he preaches "Christ". So in the opening verses of chapter iii., the believer is directed to the risen Christ, and to where Christ sitteth. His life is hid there with Christ, and his hopes are all bound up in Him. Steadily and surely the apostle moves on to the climax of verse 11, where we read "Christ is all, and in all".

Turning from the false teaching which if followed would "spoil" and "beguile" the Lord's people, the apostle deals positively with practical sanctification and godliness. We must not forget that while he most strenuously opposes the false teaching of gnosticism, he as strongly emphasized the necessity of a walk that is "worthy" (Eph. iv. 1; Col. i. 10). He will not be behind the most fanatical ascetic in urging the believer to "mortify" his earthly members; he most definitely teaches that consistent practice "puts off" the old man with his deeds, and puts on the new. He not only speaks in general terms and of broad principles, but he descends to details, speaking frankly of immorality and uncleanness, of quarreling and forgiveness, and of domestic and business relationships. The essential difference between the apostle's teaching and that which he so strongly condemns concerns the ground upon which it rests, the seed from which the fruit springs. Instead of beginning with the exhortation to "mortify", the apostle points away to the risen Christ, saying: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek . . . . set . . . . mortify." He speaks of "things above" before he speaks of "things on the earth" (Col. iii. 1, 2 and 5). He exhorts the believer to apprehend that which by grace is already his position in Christ and from that starting point to advance experimentally. Col. iii. 1 - iv. 6 is the apostle's exhortation in contrast with the system he has exposed and condemned in Col. ii. 4-23. The sub-division of this section is as follows:--

- 1) The only true ground for all growth in grace is Christ risen and the believer risen with Him (Col. iii. 1-4).
- 2) The exhortations themselves (Col. iii. 5 - iv. 6).

The exhortations may be divided as follows:--

- (a) The putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new—the doctrinal fact (Col. iii. 5-11).
- (b) The putting on and the putting off—the practical outcome (Col. iii. 12-17).
- (c) The outcome of the above as expressed in social duties. Wives, husbands, etc. (Col. iii. 18 - iv. 1).
- (d) The outcome of the above as expressed in prayerful concern for the spread of the truth. "As I ought to speak" (Col. iv. 2-4).
- (e) The outcome of the above, as expressed in walk and witness, "How ye ought to answer" (Col. iv. 5, 6).

Let us now give earnest heed to the teaching upon which the whole of the apostle's exhortation rests—Col. iii. 1-4.

The first thing we observe is that it is resurrection that is placed first. Death with Christ is necessarily assumed, but the power for newness of life is found in union with the risen Lord. We are taught in Rom. vi. not only to reckon ourselves dead to sin, but

also to reckon ourselves alive unto God. Our subsequent experimental death to sin is as much by reason of the new life we have in Christ as by reason of the fact that we are reckoned to have died with Him. Col. ii. 20 says, "If ye died with Christ". Col. iii. 1 says, "If ye were raised with Christ". And both look back to Col. ii. 12, where burial and resurrection are stated as accomplished facts.

The apostle not only directs our attention to the blessed fact of our union with the risen Christ, but adds:--

"Seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God"  
(Col. iii. 1).

He takes us beyond resurrection to ascension, and not to ascension only, but to the seated Christ at God's right hand. What is the apostle's reason for introducing this reference to the seated Christ?

It is the glory of the dispensation of the mystery that every member of the body is not only reckoned to have been crucified with Christ, to have died with Him, to have been buried, quickened and raised with Him, but also to have been "seated together in heavenly places". *The apostle would teach us that our strength to live down here is found in our glorious position up there.* This he sums up in the two words "seek" and "set". Christ is Head over all things to the Church which is His body, in the capacity of the risen, ascended and seated One. If we would more fully appreciate what is involved and implied in the reference to Christ "seated at the right hand of God", we must turn aside for a while to study that epistle which, while it teaches nothing as to the mystery, is *the* epistle of the seated Christ. The epistle to the Hebrews, while it knows nothing of a redeemed company "seated together in heavenly places" (for that is the mystery itself), is a glorious exposition of the fact that Christ is the seated One at the right hand of God, and all its doctrine and practice flow from that one source.

Turning to this epistle, we do not read more than three verses before coming upon this principal theme:--

"When He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. i. 3).

The burial, the resurrection and the ascension are passed over in silence here, so that the climax shall be reached in one step.

In Heb. iv. 14 this great High Priest is said to have passed "through" the heavens (*dierchomai*), and in Heb. vii. 26 He is said to have been made "higher than the heavens"; with which should be compared the passage in Eph. iv. 10, where it is written that Christ "ascended up far above all heavens" (*huperano*).

Summing up what he has said in Heb. i.-vii., the apostle writes in Heb. viii.:--

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum. We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

This seated Priest in risen life and power was the assurance to all believers not only of their salvation, but of their perfecting. This is the goal of the apostle's ministry in Col. i. 28: "that we may present every man *perfect* in Christ Jesus", a fact that we must never lose sight of when estimating the purport of the epistle to the Colossians. Whilst, therefore, we do not use priestly terms when speaking of the mystery, we can say that all that Christ is to His people as great High Priest, He is to His church as Head over all things to them. In contrast with the many priests who could not continue by reason of death, we read:--

"But this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an intransmissible priesthood. Wherefore He is able to save unto all perfection (*perfeles*) them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. vii. 24, 25).

This is much the same teaching (though with its own dispensational characteristics) as is found in Col. iii. 1-4. The fact that the word "uttermost" includes the root of the word "perfect" is of great importance in the interpretation of Heb. vii. 24, 25. Salvation in the initial sense is not in view.

In perfect structural correspondence with Heb. vii. 24, 25 comes Heb. x. 11, 12. Here the many priests are contrasted with Christ, not this time because they died and He ever lives, but because their offerings were shadows and His the substance. Again we are exhorted to consider "this Man":--

"And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. x. 11, 12).

The conclusion of the argument is given in verse 14:--

"For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

"Perfect into perpetuity", as the intensely strong words might be translated. How foolish, and how wrong, to attempt to improve upon such a position by neglecting the body, by abstaining from meats, by anything that merely seeks to improve the flesh.

One other passage in Hebrews that bears upon Col. iii. is Heb. xii. 1, 2:--

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and Perfecter of faith; Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

We must remember that the attack upon the Colossians was not upon their "life", for that was hid with Christ in God; but upon their "perfecting". The word "spoil" (Col. ii. 8) we found to mean "to strip a vanquished foe of his armour", and the phrase "beguile you of your reward" (Col. ii. 18) contains the word that is translated "prize" in Phil. iii. As in the days of Job, so now, Satan has no power over our "life"; he can only interfere with "those things that accompany salvation". He may cheat the believer of his crown. Consequently Heb. xii. 1, 2 is to the point. He endured, He overcame, He sat down, in connection with the "joy set before Him". You too, because He lives and because He is seated, you too may overcome in connection with the "race set before you".

The epistle to the Hebrews not only throws light upon the teaching of Col. iii. 1: it illuminates Col. iii. 2 also. The believer is exhorted not only to "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God", but also to "set the mind on things above, not on things on the earth". A very full illustration of the practical power of this is found in Heb. xi.:--

"By faith he sojourned (*paroikeo*, dwell as a stranger, I Pet. ii. 11) in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. FOR HE LOOKED FOR A CITY which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God . . . . These all died in faith, not having received the promises . . . . and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they SEEK A COUNTRY . . . . they DESIRE A BETTER COUNTRY, that is an HEAVENLY; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a CITY" (Heb. xi. 9-16).

We commend the parallel teaching of Hebrews to the student of Col. iii. 1, 2; for therein we find inspired comment upon what it means to "seek those things which are above, not on things on the earth".

As a supplemental commentary, the reader might turn to Phil. iii., where the prize, perfecting, minding earthly things, and a citizenship in heaven carry the same teaching forward.

The rest of this ground of apostolic exhortation (Col. iii. 1-4) we must leave for the next article. Meanwhile let us keep steadily before the mind the words "risen", "right hand", "set" and "seek", and with the strength that such doctrines supply, grows up into Christ in all things, which is the only true and lasting sanctification.

**#32. Life hidden and manifested (iii. 3, 4).**  
**pp. 144 - 148**

In our last article we considered the exhortation of Col. iii. 1, 2. We must now go on to consider further features of great importance, which are presented in the next two verses.

Verses 1 and 2 open with the word "if, the "if" of argument. Verses 3 and 4 open with the word "for". It is obvious that any of whom it can be said, "Ye are risen" must have previously died. The new life presupposes a death to the old life. This death has been before us in Col. ii. "Circumcision", which puts off the body of the flesh, implies death and resurrection. "Burial", too, is the sequel of death, and is immediately followed by the operation of God Who raised Christ and His believing people from the dead. Death with Christ from the rudiments of the world not only means exemption from their dominion, but a new life in a new sphere. The apostle does not elaborate the thought of the death of the believer with Christ in Col. iii. 3. He states it, in order that he may proceed immediately to life—life that is at the moment "hid", but soon to be manifested:--

"For ye died and your life hath been hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3).

The A.V. translation, "For ye are dead" seems to suggest, to a modern ear, that such are still dead. But the word *apethanete* refers to what has already taken place: "Ye died"—which leaves room for the newness of life which is the sphere of all spiritual growth and activity.

In our study of Col. iii. 1, 2 we found the Epistle to the Hebrews a useful commentary. In our present study we shall find similar help in Rom. vi. and vii., which provides a commentary upon the words "For ye died". We will not take it for granted that every reader is familiar with these fundamental chapters, and we therefore draw attention to their emphatic statements concerning the doctrine of death with Christ to sin, its sphere and dominion:--

"How shall we, that died to sin (*apethanomen*), live any longer therein?" (Rom. vi. 2).

"For he that dieth (*apothanon*) is freed (Gk. justified) from sin" (Rom. vi. 7).

"If we died with Christ (*apethanomen*), we believe that we shall also live with Him . . . . for in that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God" (Rom. vi. 8-10).

But there is something further and deeper yet to be seen in these statements. Look at Rom. vi. 10 once more, and observe that the words "He died to sin" are a translation of the dative case. It is utterly impossible that these words could be rendered "He died *in* sin". Yet, when we come to the A.V. of Eph. ii. 1 and Col. ii. 13, the same dative case is so rendered as applied to the Lord's believing people: "And you hath He quickened, who were dead *in* trespasses and sins."

The words "who were" here are incorrect; *ontas* is the present participle of the verb "to be", and must be translated "being" (compare the singular word *ontas* in Eph. ii. 20: "Jesus Christ Himself *being* the chief corner-stone"). It is the present condition of the members of the church that is in view in Eph. ii. 1, not their past condition. And this at once raises an obvious difficulty. How can we say that the *present* condition of any member of the church is that he is "dead *in* sins"? The answer is that the Scripture, rightly translated, does not teach this. The words translated "in trespasses and sins" are in the dative case, exactly as we find it in Rom. vi. 10. The preposition *en* is not used in either passage. Parallel with Rom. vi. 10 and Eph. ii. 1 is I Pet. ii. 24, where the fact of having died *to* sins is at once followed by living *to* righteousness. Eph. ii. 1 therefore declares that the members of the body of Christ are dead to sins, but alive to God. And in verse 5, where the theme is renewed, it is immediately followed by the words: "He hath quickened (made alive) together with Christ."

Colossians traverses the same ground as Ephesians. In Col. ii. the believer is seen complete in Him, that completeness involving true circumcision and true baptism. In other words: "And you, being dead *to* your trespasses and *to* the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He made alive together with Him" (Col. ii. 13). All this wonderful truth is in mind when the apostle says in Col. iii. 3, "For ye died". Some readers may remember that we covered much the same ground when dealing with Col. ii. 13. We believe the teaching to be so important that no apology is necessary for a re-statement. Besides which, new readers must be thought of in these matters of faith. We must now follow the teaching of the apostle further.

*"Your life hath been hid with Christ in God."*—There seem to be at least two reasons for the use of the expression "hid" in this verse:--

(1) There is the association of the life which the believer has in Christ, with the mystery which also had been hid in God, from the ages and from the generations. That mystery had its own particular time of manifestation (Col. i. 26), closely linked with "the hope of glory" (Col. i. 26, 27). Before the mystery was revealed to and through Paul, no one had any knowledge of its existence. So too, says the apostle, others looking at you have no knowledge of that equally hidden life which is nevertheless yours. The very fact that Christ was now preached among the Gentiles was their "hope of glory"; and this preaching coincided with the mystery being "made manifest to His saints" (Col. i. 26, 27). In like manner, the manifestation (the word "appear") of Christ would synchronize with the manifestation of the saints with Him in glory.

(2) The fact that his life was hid with Christ in God would be a blessed assurance to the believer when contemplating the attempts of the enemy to spoil and beguile of his reward. He would remember Col. ii. 3, 4: "In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words."

The power of "that blessed hope" is next made evident:--

"When Christ, Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" (Col. iii. 4).

While the hope of all the redeemed is Christ, and His glorious coming, we must remember that this coming has several aspects. The redeemed will find their inheritance in at least three spheres—the earth, the "heavenly city" and in "heavenly places". So that we are not surprised to discover that the Second Coming of Christ has three aspects, corresponding with these three spheres.

### **First Sphere.**

"His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives" (Zech. xiv. 4).

"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall also come in like manner . . . . Then returned they . . . . from Olivet" (Acts i. 11, 12).

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . . . shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven" (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30).

These passages have reference to the earth and the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. They have no immediate reference to the Church.

### **Second Sphere.**

"So that ye come behind in no gift, waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. i. 7).

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all" (Gal. iv. 26).

"For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. x. 37).

"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout" (I Thess. iv. 16).

"Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him . . . . that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (II Thess. ii. 1-3).

These passages refer to the second sphere of blessing. They do not refer to the earth and Israel's kingdom, and most certainly not to the Body and the "heavenly places". There are too many associations with prophecy for this aspect of the Coming to be the hope of the Mystery, apart from the fact that the epistles quoted above (Corinthians, Thessalonians, Galatians and Hebrews) were all written before the dispensation of the Mystery was committed to Paul, the prisoner.

### **Third Sphere.**

To be manifested in glory is the hope of the Church of the One Body. Its members are already seated there in the Divine purpose, and their hope when realized will place them there in fact. The epistle to Titus, written between the two imprisonments of Paul, speaks of this phase of the hope:--

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the manifesting of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus ii. 13).

For the time being, He is hidden. His glory is not manifest; and so, as the apostle says in another context, "We walk by faith, not by sight" (II Cor. v. 7).

Summing up the apostle's argument in these opening verses of Col. iii., we may say: "Risen with Christ"--"Hidden with Christ"--"Manifested with Christ". A threefold cord, not easily broken, a pledge of life, security and future glory. While these things that are above occupy the mind, there will be little upon which the "old man" can seize, and true scriptural sanctification will be manifest.

Not until this groundwork has been laid does the apostle go on to speak of "mortifying" and "putting off". We, too, must abide by the Divine order and draw our strength from risen life rather than from death.

### **#33. Christ is all, and in all (iii. 5-11). pp. 187 - 192**

The first practical outworking of the position set forth in Col. iii. 1-4 is expressed in the solemn word "mortify". We can see at once that this springs from the statement: "For ye died", and is the putting into practical effect of the death in which the believer died with Christ. Two words are possible here, each of which can be translated "mortify"—*thanatoo* and *nekroo*. In this passage the apostle chooses the latter. In Rom. viii. 13 he chose the former. *Thanatoo* means "to put to death", "to kill". In Rom. viii. it is the "deeds" of the body that are to be thus treated. In Col. iii. 5 it is the "members which are upon the earth" that are to be mortified. The word *nekroo* differs from *thanatoo* in that it stresses the fact that the thing thus treated is "corpse-like". It is used twice of Abraham who, though as good as dead so far as parenthood was concerned, nevertheless became the father of many nations (Rom. iv. 19; Heb. xi. 12).

The fact of dying with Christ must necessarily leave a dead body or corpse. This must now be accepted as true and the new life regulated accordingly. Already much the same thing has been said with regard to the world:--

"If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, *as though living* in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" (Col. ii. 20).

So we might paraphrase Col. iii.:--

"If ye died with Christ to trespasses and sins, and have been quickened with Him, your life being hid with Christ in God, why, *as though still living* to sins, do you allow your members to rule and sway your manner of life?"

We found that Rom. vi. shed light upon the earlier verses of this chapter; and we shall find that Rom. vii. is a help to the understanding of the passage now before us.

It appears that "the members" are so intimately associated with the sinful acts which they implement, that the apostle in Col. iii. 5 uses the figure *Catachresis*\* (\* - See articles of Figures of Speech in the series entitled "With all thy getting, get

understanding"). He does not follow up his statement by specifying the separate members, as hands, feet, eyes, but by the evil things which these members do: "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind" (Rom. vii. 23).

It is a humbling thought, that in epistles of such high spiritual standing as Ephesians and Colossians, the apostle does not refrain from warning against sins of the deepest dye. We generally feel a slight hesitation in public reading when we come to such a list of uncleanness as is set out in Gal. v. 19, Eph. v. 3-5, or Col. iii. 5; yet He Who knows the heart of man and the power of the flesh in us all has made no mistake. We must "deaden" or "treat as a corpse" all that belongs to the "flesh" or the "old man". Otherwise our state will by no means correspond with our standing. Seeing that our life is hid with Christ in God, our mind should be set on things above, to the mortifying of the members on the earth.

It may be useful, in spite of a natural reticence, to give a few words of guidance as to what is intended by the Holy Spirit in these forbidden acts of the old man.

*Fornication.*—The word so translated comes from *pernao*, "to sell", and so focuses the mind on the prostitution of one of the highest of God's gifts to man.

*"Uncleanness."*—This word needs no explanation, yet no one can realize the horror resident in it who has not read through the loathsome details of the Levitical law of uncleanness, and the eighteen references to unclean spirits found in the Gospels.

*"Inordinate affection."*—This is the translation of *pathos*, a word which, when used in a good sense outside the Scriptures, means "to suffer", but whenever it is used in the N.T. it indicates an overbearing passion. There are but two other occurrences of the word, viz., Rom. i. 26 and I Thess. iv. 5, supplying contexts that settle the apostle's meaning here.

*"Evil concupiscence."*—This word is seldom used outside theology, and to the average person does not convey a very clear-cut idea. It is derived from the Latin *cupere*, "to long for", and indicates intense desire. Now desire is the mainspring of action, and where desire is dead activity ceases. The desire here reprov'd, however, is evil, and is a fruitful source of trouble. The Greek word is *epithumia*. That the word does not in itself mean anything evil, may be seen from such a passage as Matt. xiii. 17: "Righteous men *have desired* to see (*See also* Luke xxii. 15; I Tim. iii. 1; Phil. i. 23). On the other hand such passages as Matt. v. 28 and Rom. vii. 7 show how easily desire can become sinful. It is this that is in view in Col. iii.

*"Covetousness."*—This is the translation of *pleonexia*, a word which literally means, "to have a fullness". Here we are at the extreme antipodes of the truth of Col. ii. 9, 10, for there the believer "has a fullness" in Christ Himself. To "have a fullness" outside of Christ is nothing less than spiritual idolatry, which is the word the apostle uses both here in Col. iii. and in Eph. v. 5.

At the close of this list of evil things the apostle adds as a deterrent:--

"For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the sons of disobedience. In the which ye also walked in times past, when ye lived in them" (Col. iii. 6, 7).

We have, in the previous article, drawn attention to the connection between Eph. ii. 1 and Col. iii. 1-4 with reference to the glorious doctrine of death to sin and sins. There is also a close connection between the verses that follow Col. iii. 1-4 and the verses that follow Eph. ii. 1:--

"Wherein *in times past ye walked* according to the age of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in *the sons of disobedience*. Among whom also we all had our conversation *in times past* in *the lusts* of our flesh, doing the wishes of the flesh and of the mind; and were children of *wrath*, even as others" (Eph. ii. 2, 3).

The words of Col. iii. 7: "Ye walked in them, when ye lived in them" may be contrasted with Col. ii. 6: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him."

The apostle seeks to deter the believer in Col. iii. by speaking of the wrath of God. In Eph. v. he uses a double argument to the same end—first a warning concerning the inheritance, and then a warning concerning the wrath of God. The first of these is in verse 5:--

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. v. 5).

This is a statement similar to that of Gal. v. 19-21, where a similar list of the works of the flesh concludes with the words:--

"Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in the time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. v. 21).

The fact that these works of the flesh merit the wrath of God, and that, if persisted in, they will result in forfeiture of the inheritance of the kingdom of Christ and of God, should be sufficient warning to any who may have been tempted to think of liberty as though it meant license.

Before concluding our examination of this section, we must correct a possible misunderstanding. It is true that we are to mortify our members which are on the earth and consider them as good as dead. But this by itself may be misunderstood. The members of the body that we possessed in the days when we were without Christ, are the same members that we possess to-day. And they can and should be used in the service of the Lord. Scripture is very clear on this point:--

"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but

yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" (Rom. vi. 12, 13).

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. xii. 1).

The same truth is expressed in a very practical way in Ephesians:--

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Eph. iv. 28).

While, therefore, death is stressed in Col. iii. 5, life is ever in mind. Putting off must be followed by putting on. Sanctification does not consist in dying, but in living; not in putting off, but in putting on; not in burial, but in rising to walk in newness of life.

The section we are considering extends to verse 11. The last four verses amplify the thought of the mortifying of the members with their deeds:--

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him; where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all" (Col. iii. 8-11).

Just as we have seen that death to sin is followed by life to righteousness, so putting off must be followed by putting on before the statement of truth is complete. The mere putting off by itself may rise no higher than the commandments of men with their "Touch not, taste not, handle not".

No human comment on this passage can be a substitute for the parallel found in Eph. iv., which we now quote, so that it may be read together with Col. iii. 8-11:--

"But ye have not so learned Christ; if so be that ye have heard Him, and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind: and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 20-24).

The "old man" was dealt with at the cross (Rom. vi. 6). The body of sin (the "members which are on the earth" of Col. iii. 5) has been rendered inoperative. And the object is that henceforth we should not serve sin, but that, in virtue of newness of life, we should be free to serve God. We can only repudiate the old man with his deeds, because of the finished work of Christ. Without that cross and that finished work, our efforts to repudiate the old man would only end in the cry of the "wretched man" of Rom. vii. 24.

A new creation is involved in this putting off and putting on. This is clearly seen in the use of such expressions as "being renewed" and "after the image of Him that created him". This reference back to Gen. i. 26 is important. The first man was created a living

soul, but we are told in I Cor. xv. 46 that the first man, quite apart from the fall, was not spiritual. We have all borne the image of the earthly. The message of Col. iii. and Eph. iv. is that we may now bear the image of the heavenly. The renewal in knowledge of Col. iii. is explained as the renewal of the "spirit of your mind" in Eph. iv. The reference in Col. iii. to being created in the image of the Creator is explained in Eph. iv. as being "after God created in righteousness and holiness of truth" (Eph. iv. 24). In perfect line with these passages we find in Rom. xii. 1, 2 that the presenting of the body, now delivered from bondage, is intimately associated with "the renewing of your mind", without which the mere outward act is shorn of power and acceptance.

Finally, in this new creation all fleshly distinctions vanish. In reading Col. iii. 11 it is the word "where" that should be stressed, not the word "neither": "*Where* there is neither Greek nor Jew." Strictly speaking, the passage reads: "Where there is not Greek and Jew." Further, the words "But Christ is all, and in all" are for emphasis put in reverse order in the original: "But the all and in all Christ."

This utter repudiation of self, with all its distinctions, and all its failures, this discovery that Christ alone supplies and satisfies, is the "be-all and end-all" of true scriptural sanctification.

In conclusion, we suggest that the reader should consider the article in Volume XVIII, page 138, where consecration is seen to be the filling of the hands with the fullness of Christ, and then the receiving back by the Lord in loving service of that same fullness. This is but the teaching in type of what is here taught in doctrine, that "Christ is all".

### **#34. Filled to the full (iii. 12 - iv. 18). pp. 235 - 241**

Before proceeding to the section that is before us we would notice one item that belongs to the passage considered in our last paper. We there learned that everything was finished so far as the old man was concerned, and that now, for the believer, Christ is all.

It is interesting to notice that in the Greek of Col. iii. 8: "But now ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, etc.", the expression used is *ta panta*, not all things universally but the all things that belong to the old creation. We are therefore glad to discover that in verse 11 this same expression recurs, *Ta panta kai en pasin Christos*, "Christ is all". It is thus that provision is made in the new creation for every item that had been repudiated in the old.

The section before us, namely, Col. iii. 12-17, is the practical expression of the position already laid down in verses 5-11. It is of the utmost importance to observe that in this practical outworking it is the positive that is stressed: "put on", "even as Christ

forgave, so also do ye”, “above all put on charity”, “be ye thankful”, “do all in the name of the Lord Jesus”.

What a title is given to the church in this section: “The elect of God, holy and beloved”, a reminder of Eph. i. 3-6 where the words “choice”, “without blemish”, “in love”, and “in the beloved”, revealed the high calling of the Church of the Mystery. When the apostle besought the saints at Ephesus to walk worthy of the calling wherewith they had been called, his first thought was, “with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love”, and he spoke in the context of the “bond of peace”. So in Col. iii. 12, 13 his first thought in practical outworking was

“bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

The context, moreover, speaks of the “bond of perfectness”. To a mind trained in the study of Hebrew, the transition from “peace” to “perfection” is a natural one. *Shalom*, the Hebrew word for “peace”, is also translated in the O.T. by “finished”, “restore”, “pay”, “recompense”, “make good”, and “perfect”.

That which binds together, the unity of the spirit, and the new man, is that which denotes a perfect settlement of all dues. This is peace indeed; all else is but a patching up until the occurrence of a further, inevitable outbreak of hostilities. The creation of the “one new man, so making peace”, of Eph. ii. 15 is the doctrinal and dispensational basis of all the practical sanctification of Eph. iv. and Col. iii. It is a new man in two senses. It is a new man doctrinally, inasmuch as the old man has been crucified with Christ (Rom. vi. 6), and it is a new man dispensationally, inasmuch as Jew and Greek are gone, and in their place a new man has been created “of the twain”.

Consequently in Col. iii. we have references to both aspects of the truth. The mortifying of the members is the putting off of the old man with his deeds. This is the doctrinal aspect. The new man, in which there is neither Greek nor Jew, is the dispensational aspect. This is borne out in verse 15: “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called *in one body*”, a passage to be compared with Eph. iv. 25: “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: *for we are members one of another.*”

It is helpful to realize that the word translated “rule” is a link with Col. ii. 18. In ii. 18, 19 we read: “Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility . . . . and not holding the head.” Here the words “beguile of your reward” are the translation of the Greek *katabrabeuo*. The word “rule” is the translation of the Greek *brabeuo*, to act as umpire at the Greek games, while “prize” in Phil. iii. 14 is *brabeion*.

What was Paul’s purpose in writing Colossians? He preached Christ the hope of glory, and warned every man and taught every man *that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus* (Col. i. 28). The object of the whole of the warning and teaching of Col. ii. was to save the believer from being sidetracked and spoiled of his armour

(Col. ii. 8), or cheated of his prize (Col. ii. 18). In Col. iii. he again preaches Christ, the hope of glory (Col. iii. 1-4), he still warns (Col. iii. 6), he still teaches (Col. iii. 5-17). His great objective and positive word was "The fullness of Christ". With this he met all the specious claims of philosophy and tradition, and with this he concluded his doctrinal presentation of the truth of the new man, saying: "Christ is all" (Col. iii. 11). In verse 16, the apostle brings together two passages in Ephesians and helps us to understand their import:--

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. iii. 16).

The corresponding passage in Ephesians reads:--

"Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord" (Eph. v. 18, 19).

We have already drawn attention, when dealing with Ephesians, to the fact that the grammar of this passage necessitates the idea that it is *the Spirit that is the Filler*. We now see, by the parallel passage, that He, the Spirit, fills the heart of the believer with the *word of Christ*. This, however, is not all. While Col. iii. says, "Let the *word* of Christ dwell in you", Eph. iii. prays that "*Christ* may dwell in your hearts by faith", and we are enabled to see that He, Christ, will dwell in our hearts by faith, as He, the Spirit, fills us with His word.

We must not forget, moreover, that the goal before the apostle in the prayer of Eph. iii. is "that ye might be filled up to all the fullness of God", which is but another way of saying what the apostle has been teaching in Col. ii. and iii. As we have seen in our opening paragraph, the fullness of Christ for His people more than takes the place of "the all things" that are put aside. Whatsoever we do, therefore, "in word or deed" we should do "in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by Him" (Col. iii. 17). This simple exhortation is so far reaching that compliance with it would solve every problem of conscience, settle all questions of right and wrong, and infallibly indicate the walk that is worthy. If "whatsoever" we did, whether by word or deed, was done in the name of the Lord, all question of sanctification would be over; it would be an accomplished fact. If, however, we each one have to confess that conformity to Col. iii. 17 is not wholly true of either our words or deeds, we may, nevertheless, be thankful that at least we know the pathway.

In the next nine verses the apostle applies the truth already enunciated to the "daily round and common task", where are no heroics to enable the soul to surmount difficulty, but where the grace of God will more definitely be seen than in any other sphere of service. In writing to the Ephesians the apostle expatiates at greater length than here on the subject of the relationships of wives and husbands, children and parents, servants and masters. In Ephesians it is to the relationship of husband and wife that the greatest space is devoted, and Eph. v. 21-33 should be read in this connection in conjunction with the epistle to the Colossians. In Colossians the greatest space is reserved for admonition to

the servant, and as this evidently in accord with the apostle's motive, let us quote the passage:--

“Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons” (Col. iii. 22-25).

“*The reward of the inheritance.*”—In this phrase is the key to the apostle's object in writing the epistle. The Colossian believers, being members of the body of Christ, were already “seated together in heavenly places in Christ”; already “accepted in the Beloved”; already sure of their presentation “holy and unblameable and unreprieveable” in the sight of God. Already the apostle had said: “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light” (Col. i. 12). Words not make clearer the assured position of the believer nor the completeness of his acceptance. Nevertheless, before the chapter is finished we have found Paul “warning” and “teaching”, that he may “present every man perfect in Christ Jesus”, and also at the close of the epistle we find Epaphras praying for the selfsame thing (Col. iv. 12). The reader should here refer to the chart in Volume XXIV, page 121. As it is evident that neither Paul nor Epaphras have any doubt that what has already been written of the saints, as to standing, in Col. i. 12, 13 and 22 remains unalterably true, it becomes necessary to distinguish between the common “inheritance of the saints in light”, for which all believers have been made meet, and “the reward” attaching to that inheritance, which was associated to the high calling” which, as in Phil. iii., is associated with “perfecting” (Col. i. 28; iv. 12).

We must distinguish between that “holy, and unblameable, and unreprieveable” position which is ours “in the body of His flesh through death”, and the possibility of being *blamed and reprov'd* for the things done in service. If we “try the things that differ”, we shall see that “hope” is on a basis of pure, unalloyed, grace, which excludes all possibility of either gain or loss, running or serving; and that the “prize” is on a basis of reward, given only to those who strive lawfully. Knowing these distinctions we shall be saved a multitude of vexations, and moreover not be found false witnesses of God, for without doubt, He teaches us that membership of the one body and participation in its one hope is entirely outside the range of attainment on our part. And with equal certainty He assures us that the *prize* of the high calling, the *reward* of the inheritance, and the *crown* of righteousness, fall within the category of attainment. True, nothing but grace will avail, but it is grace *used*. The reason for the apostle's assurance that our life is hid with Christ in God, is that we might know that life is not in question. He does not say in Col. ii. 18, Let no man beguile you of your *life*, or *membership*, or *position*: These are never in question. But he does echo the words of another dispensation and say: “Take heed, that no man take your *crown*.”

The concluding exhortation of the apostle is twofold. First he asks for prayer for himself, that he may speak and make manifest the mystery “as I ought to speak”, and

secondly, he enjoins a walk in wisdom, redeeming the time, speaking with grace, so that the words spoken shall not be contradicted by the life lived, and that they may know how to answer every man “as they ought” (Col. iv. 2-6). This exhortation covers much the same ground as Eph. vi., with which it should be read.

The remaining verses of the epistle speak for themselves, yet the subject of the friends and fellow-servants of the devoted apostle merits a separate study itself. Look at the material: Tychicus, a beloved brother, a faithful minister and a fellow-servant in the Lord. Onesimus, a faithful and beloved brother, and Aristarchus his fellow-prisoner. Marcus, sister’s son to Barnabas, who is to be received. Jesus, which is called Justus. Only these two latter were of the circumcision: they were Paul’s fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, and had been a comfort to him. When he speaks here of “the kingdom of God” the apostle does not intend anything different from the mystery. These two fellow-workers of the circumcision were engaged with Paul in the work of the one ministry left to him. It should be noted that the term “the kingdom of God” was used after Israel were set aside (Acts xxviii. 31), as it was before (Acts xxviii. 23). The designation “The kingdom of Christ and of God” occurs in Eph. v. 5, and the statement that the saints have been translated into the “kingdom of the Son of His love” is made in Col. i. 13. His appearing and “His kingdom” are in view in II Tim. iv. 1, as also “His heavenly kingdom” in II Tim. iv. 18. “His kingdom ruleth over all”, and every calling and every sphere of blessing, whether of Israel, Body, or Bride, must come within the all-embracing sovereignty of God.

Continuing, the apostle next mentions Epaphras, a Colossian believer, a servant of Christ; one whose prayers coincide with Paul’s ministry to the saints (Col. iv. 12 and i. 28), and whose zeal is commended by the apostle. Finally, “Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas”. What a picture of faithful friendship is presented by the manner of Paul’s reference to the former of these two: “Luke the beloved physician”, he who was faithful to the end, for the apostle wrote in view martyrdom, “only Luke is with me” (II Tim. iv. 11).

But what of Demas? He is included among those who join with the apostle in sending greetings, but his name stand alone: “and Demas.” There is no word of commendation, no reference to a faithful ministry, or to his attachment to the apostle, or love to the Lord. We are certain that the apostle would not thus have isolated Demas had he found it possible to say anything in his favour, and this is confirmed by the mention made of him in II Tim. iv. (where Luke’s fidelity stands out so brightly), and where we realize that the apostle’s fears are verified: “Demas hath forsaken me.” When writing to the Colossians the apostle could find nothing good to say of him, but he refrained from saying anything evil.

Proceeding, the apostle salutes Nymphas, whose house entertained the church in his day. What an honour! The reading of this epistle and that from the Laodicean Church is then enjoined; Archippus is encouraged to “fill full” his ministry, in which connection may be noted the last of five occurrences in Colossians. These five occurrences so carry forward the teaching of the epistle that we will set them out here.

### ***Pleroo in Colossians.***

- A | i. 9, 10. Prayer. Knowledge of His will. That ye might walk worthy.
- B | i. 25. Ministry. Paul's ministry "filled up" the Word of God.
- C | ii. 10. Position. The believer "filled full" in Christ.
- A | iv. 12. Prayer. The will of God. That ye may stand perfect.
- B | iv. 17. Ministry. Archippus enjoined to "fill up" his ministry,  
evidently by making known the mystery.

With this we conclude our survey of the epistle, only too conscious of depths unplumbed and heights unscaled. Of this we are sure, that not until the day when the Lord bids us cease, shall we for long be able to refrain from turning to these great stores of truth seeking fresh light and teaching, both for ourselves and for all the members of this glorious fellowship. "Remember my bonds" said Paul in closing. We do, and while we exalt his Lord, as the apostle would have us do, we are certain that the Lord's smile will be upon any who, realizing, as he may, all the evident earthliness of the vessel, spares a moment to thank God and take courage as he remembers the life and witness of the Lord's prisoner.

## **Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth. (Second Series).**

### **JOSHUA.**

#### **#2. Good success and the Book of the Law. pp. 14 - 18**

Before pursuing the typical teaching of the book of Joshua further, we must endeavour to get some idea of its teaching as a whole. The great subject is the possession of the land of promise, and everything bears upon this one theme.

The death of Moses leaves the way clear for Joshua, and he is commanded to lead the children of Israel across the Jordan and on to victory. The history of this advance is a chequered one. Defeat and failure are chronicled, as well as victory and success. The presence of failure, and the fact that the children of Israel did not entirely drive out the inhabitants of the land, preclude the idea that the crossing of the Jordan can symbolize actual death and resurrection, or the entry into Canaan the entry into heaven itself. We shall discover in the history of this people a full-length portrait of ourselves—our failures and their causes, our victories and their causes—and if we are simple and truly wise, we shall, as a result of the study of these historical events that have been recorded for our learning, be the better prepared for the pursuit of the prize of the high calling.

#### **The Book of Joshua as a whole.**

The purpose of the record:--

"And the Lord gave unto Israel all the LAND which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them REST round about, according to all that He sware unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass" (Josh. xxi. 43-45).

## The Structure of the Record.

A | i. 1. THE DEATH OF MOSES.

B | i. 2 - vii. ENTRY INTO THE LAND.

The land.--To be divided (i. 2-18). | Be strong and very courageous.

Observe law of Moses.

Turn neither to right nor left.

The land.--Espied (ii.).

| Rahab. The Scarlet Thread.

The land.--Entered (iii.-vii.).

| Jordan, Circumcision.

Jericho and Victory.

Achan and Defeat.

C | viii.-xii. CONQUEST OF THE LAND. | Ai, Ebal and Gerizim.

The Thirty-one Kings.

"So Joshua took the whole land according to all that the Lord said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land had rest from war" (xi. 23).

B | xiii. - xxiv. 28. | POSSESSION OF THE LAND.

The land.--To be possessed (xiii.-xxii.) | Much left to possess.

Caleb the Overcomer.

Seven Tribes still without Inheritance.

Cities of Refuge.

Two and half tribes' inheritance.

The land.--"I have divided" (xxiii.). | Be very courageous.

Keep the law of Moses.

Turn neither to right nor left.

The land.--Of the Amorites (xxiv. 1-28). | Promises to fathers fulfilled.

A | xxiv. 29-33. THE DEATH OF JOSHUA AND ELEAZAR.

As will be seen in the structure, there are certain features common to the Lord's command to Joshua in chapter i. and Joshua's command to the people in chapter xxiii. The parallel we set out below so that its significance may be understood:--

"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses My servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest" (Josh. i. 7).

"Be ye, therefore, very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses, that ye turn not aside there from, to the right hand or to the left" (Josh. xxiii. 6).

The words "courage" and "be courageous" we naturally associate with the leader of an expedition, and principally in connection with the execution of the attack and the conquest of the foe. Courage, however, in the book of Joshua has more to do with resolution of heart to keep God's Word than with fighting and conquest. So we find the word "courage" used once of actual conflict and victory, and four times of faithful adherence to the Word of God (Josh. x. 25, and i. 6, 7, 9, 18).

There is in the original of the word "courage" an element of obstinacy, as may be seen, for instance, in Deut. ii. 30: "Made his heart obstinate." And the servant of God needs this element of obstinacy in his spiritual make-up, so that he may not be easily turned aside from the teaching of the Word of God. This can be seen very clearly in the character and example of the apostle Paul, who combined the tenderness of a nursing mother (I Thess. ii. 7) with an inflexible resolution (I Cor. ii. 1, 2; Acts xx. 24).

In Josh. xxiii. 6, the words "Be courageous" are the translation of another word in the Hebrew, meaning "to bind tight". This idea may be seen in II Sam. xviii. 9 where the reference is to Absalom whose hair "caught" in an oak (Septuagint: "entwined"). It appears again in Isa. xxviii. 22, where the idea is that of "tightening bands", and in Isa. xxii. 21, "girding with a girdle". It is used in opposition to "relax", a literal rendering of Isa. xxxv. 3 being: "Tighten the relaxed hands, make them tense" (*see Parkhurst*). Joshua, and all who would follow in his steps, need resolution and girding. We must "gird up the loins of our mind" (I Pet. i. 13); and have the "loins girt about with truth" (Eph. vi. 14).

In spiritual conflict there is but one weapon--"the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God" (Eph. vi. 17). Joshua's equipment resembles our own, in that he was enjoined to utter faithfulness regarding the Word of God. We are at times tempted to relax regarding some phase of the truth, in order to win an apparent victory, to retain a fellow-servant's sympathy or fellowship, or to advance in some way the cause we have at heart. This, however, must be resisted as of the Devil. No apparent success can ever justify departure from what is written. I Tim. ii. 12 is an instance of a case where the difficulties of service and the state of the times make loyal obedience sometimes appear a definite hindrance. Nevertheless we all acknowledge, when in the presence of the Lord, that no departure from His explicit commands can ever be blessed with "good success".

The "courage" of verse 7 was to be exhibited in "turning not from the law, to the right hand or to the left" (Josh. i. 7). This, we submit, is at the root of obedience and of success:--

"Then thou shalt have good success" (Josh. i. 8).

In Josh. i. 7 and 8 the one word *sakal* is translated "prosper" and "have good success". The root idea of the word is "to act wisely", "to be wise". It occurs in Gen. iii. 6, and is variously translated by words indicating wisdom, prudence, understanding and skill. True prosperity and good success are the outcome of wisdom, and wisdom that leads to good success is found in adherence to the Word of God. The failures that are recorded in the book of Joshua may all be traced to one source—disobedience to the Word of God. This is a lesson that is not peculiar to one age or dispensation; it is inherent in Gen. iii., in Josh. i., in Ephesians and in the Revelation.

Let us take to heart the language of Josh. i. 2-9. The Lord promised that He would not fail Joshua, but that put no premium upon disobedience. The same Lord Who said, "I will not fail thee nor forsake thee", also said:--

"Every place *that the sole of your feet shall tread upon*, that have I given unto you" (Josh. i. 3).

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do all that is written therein; for *then* thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and *then* thou shalt have good success" (Josh. i. 8).

In Joshua's day there were no Scriptures other than the law of Moses, called the "book of the law" (Josh. i. 8). Moses is named fifty-seven times in Joshua, and the law nine times (the references to Moses being fairly evenly distributed throughout the record from chapter i. to chapter xxiv.). To-day we possess "all Scripture", including the record of the coming of the Saviour, His death, resurrection and ascension, together with the revelation of the mystery that is so peculiarly our own. As we stand upon the threshold of Ephesians, and contemplate "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places", let us remember that to "possess our possessions" it is necessary that we hold fast the faithful Word. Above all, let us resist the dreamer of dreams, the man who "feels" certain things, or has had certain things "revealed" to him. Nothing can take the place of the Word of God, and all substitutes are ultimately, as they are originally, antichristian.

## JOSHUA.

### **#3. Faith, the substance of things hoped for (ii). pp. 47 - 52**

The story of the spies and Rahab the harlot recorded in Josh. ii. reverts to a period prior to Josh. i. 1-9. This is evident if we compare the statements of i. 11 and ii. 16.

In i. 11 we read that "within three days" Israel were to pass over Jordan; and in ii. 16 that the spies were lying hid for three days, apart from the time occupied in going and returning. This agrees with the marginal reading of Josh. ii. 1:--

"And Joshua the son of Nun *had sent* out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho."

One of the many evidences of the different authorship of Joshua from that of the books of Moses is found in the spelling of the name Jericho. In the law it is spelt *Yarecho*, but in Joshua it is spelt *Yericho*. The interest, however, of this chapter centres around the faith and deliverance of Rahab.

Some commentators have sought to soften the description of Rahab's character given here by observing that the word *zanah* might possibly be rendered "innkeeper". Alas, the testimony of over 90 occurrences removes all doubt as to Rahab's evil character, and if this were not enough, the references to her in Heb. xi. 31 and James ii. 25 use the word *porne*, which cannot be translated other than "harlot". Rahab, however, was not saved by her moral character; she was saved, as all are saved, by grace through faith. The name

Jericho is derived from a word meaning the moon, probably because it was worshipped here under the form of Ashtoreth; if this is so, it would explain why Rahab was a harlot, and lived in such a prominent place on the wall.

When Rahab received the spies with peace, and sent them out another way, she acted by faith, as Heb. xi. 31 and James ii. 25 make clear. Yet even though she believed God, and acted accordingly, she told falsehoods. This is not mentioned against her in the N.T. any more than the failures, sins and mistakes of countless millions of believers since her day will be remembered against them. Nevertheless we must be careful to differentiate between that which was of faith in Rahab and that which was of the flesh: the one we are enjoined to follow, the other we should seek grace to avoid.

The grounds of Rahab's faith are worthy of note for they are fundamental:--

"And she said, I KNOW that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have HEARD how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you; for the Lord your God, HE IS GOD in heaven above, and in earth beneath . . . . give me a true token . . . . thou shalt bind this line of SCARLET thread in the window which thou didst let us down by . . . . and she bound the scarlet line in the window" (Josh. ii. 9-21).

*"I know . . . . for we have heard."*—This is faith's conclusion. Notice, however, the change of person, "I" and "we". Not all who hear believe, but all who believe must have heard:--

"How shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? . . . . So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 14-17).

The mighty deeds of the Lord that accompanied the exodus of Israel could not be kept from the ears of the surrounding nations. Indeed it was a part of the Lord's purpose that this should be so:--

"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power; and that My Name may be declared throughout all the earth" (Exod. ix. 16).

Rahab knew the name of the Lord, for she said: "I know that the Lord hath given you the land" (the title Lord here is Jehovah). Moreover, Rahab acknowledged the Lord as God: "For the Lord your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (Josh. ii. 11).

Similar statements are recorded of Nebuchadnezzar:--

"Your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings" (Dan. ii. 47).  
"Ye servants of the Most High . . . ." "Blessed be the God of Shadrach . . . ."  
(Dan. iii. 26-28).

"I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honoured Him that liveth for ever . . . . .  
He doeth according to His will in the army of *heaven*, and among the inhabitants of the  
earth" (Dan. iv. 34, 35).

(See also the proclamation of Darius and Cyrus: Dan. vi. 26, 27 and Ezra i. 1-3).

Moses had sung at the Red Sea, some forty years before the incident of Josh. ii.,  
these words:--

"The people shall hear and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of  
Palestina . . . . all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away" (Exod. xv. 14-18).

The confession of Rahab shews their fulfillment. Two of the wonders mentioned by  
Rahab are the drying up of the Red Sea, and the destruction of Sihon and Og. She was  
thoroughly convinced that the Lord was God, that the land was given to Israel and that  
her own people were under sentence of destruction. Realizing this, she had but one  
thought—"What must I do to be saved?" We hear no theological disputation with the  
spies as to the rights and wrongs of the case. Rahab is a true type of the sinner seeking  
salvation.

"*Give me a true token.*"—It is important to remember that it was the same cord that  
was used to let down the spies to safety that become the token of Rahab's salvation:--

"Thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window *which thou didst let us down  
by*" (Josh. ii. 18).

It is as though the spies were acting out Paul's statement that the gospel that saved him  
was the gospel that must save all. The preacher must always point to the means of his  
own salvation as the only way of salvation for all the world. Scarlet is used repeatedly in  
the law to set forth redemption by the shedding of blood (*see* for example Lev. xiv. 4, 6,  
etc.). The scarlet thread in Rahab's window which saved her and her house from  
destruction, and the sprinkled blood on the doorpost and lintel at the time of Passover  
were both "tokens" of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:--

"Give me a true token . . . . this line of scarlet thread in the window" (Josh. ii. 12, 18).  
"And the blood shall be to you for a token" (Exod. xii. 13).

Rahab, moreover, manifests a true spirit in that she does not merely ask her own  
safety; in fact she only mentions herself incidentally:--

"Since I have showed you kindness, swear that ye will also show kindness unto my  
father's house, and give me a true token. And that ye will save alive my father, and my  
mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives  
from death" (Josh. ii. 12, 13).

"And she bound the scarlet line in her window" (Josh. ii. 21).

It is impossible to believe without acting upon that belief. Faith without works is  
dead. Rahab's trust was not in her kindness to the spies, nor in the mere possession of the  
scarlet thread. "She bound it in her window." It is idle to speculate as to what would  
have become of her if she had failed to exhibit this token; it is sufficient that she obeyed

and was saved. This is sound doctrine; anything else is but vain jangling of words to no profit.

The word translated "line" (*tiqvah*) in Josh. ii. 18 and 21 occurs here for the first time in the Scriptures. Although it occurs in the O.T. some 34 times, it is never translated "line" again; but "hope" 23 times, "expectation" 7 times, "thing that I longed for" once, and "expected" once. In Joshua, *tiqvah* is used figuratively, the figure called *Metonymy*, where one name is used instead of another, to which it stands in some relation. In this case, it is the Metonymy of the adjunct, where something pertaining to the subject is put for the subject itself. Without the figure being translated, Josh. ii. 18 and 21 would read:--

"Thou shalt bind this HOPE of scarlet thread in the window" (Josh. ii. 18).

"And she bound the scarlet HOPE in the window" (Josh. ii. 21).

She had asked for a "true token" and she received it. Rahab figures in Heb. xi. as an example of those who had faith such as is explained in Heb. x. 1: "Now faith is the substance of things *hoped for*."

The scarlet line in Rahab's window thus become a type of the faith which confidently expects God to honour His Word.

The reader will doubtless expect some reference to be made to the presence of Rahab in the genealogy of the Saviour. Matt. i. 5 reads: "And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab." The only other references to Rahab in the N.T. are found in Heb. xi. 31 and James ii. 25, and in both these cases she is called "Rahab the harlot" even though at the time of which these writers spoke Rahab was a woman of faith. The only references to Rahab in the O.T. are in Joshua (ii. 1 and 3; vi. 17, 23 and 25); and in these five references she is three times called "the harlot", even though there could be no possibility of confusion. There is no record in the O.T. that Salmon married Rahab the harlot. We have simply assumed that the Rahab mentioned in Matt. i. 5 must be the same person as is mentioned in Joshua, Hebrews and James. If the reader consult *Young's Analytical Concordance*, he will find that there are seven entries under Rahab, divided into two sections:--

"(1) A woman of Jericho who received and concealed the two spies, B.C.1452.

(2) The wife of Salmon, and mother of Booz."

It is evident, therefore, that Dr. Young felt it wise to keep the two references separate.

In the Babylonian Gemara\* (\* - See articles on "The Volume of the Book", *Volume XXI, pp. 127, 128*), the tradition is preserved that Rahab "being made a proselytess, was married to Joshua". This is also asserted by *Kimchi* when speaking of Josh. vi. Some scruples, however, were entertained as to how Joshua could marry Rahab, when it was not lawful for any Israelite to contract marriages with the Canaanites, even though they became proselytes. If it would have been sinful for Joshua to have married a Canaanite, would it have been less sinful for Salmon to have done so? It seems best

where the Scripture is silent that we should remain silent too. Had the reference in Matt. i. 5 followed the other references and said plainly, "Rahab the harlot", all doubt would have been removed. As it is, there is no necessity to explain the presence of a Canaanite in the genealogy of the Saviour, unless we are to assume that only one person ever bore the name of Rahab, which would be absurd.

Rahab the harlot stands out for all time as a type of the sinner who, realizing the truth and the fact of destruction, flees for refuge to the only hope that is set before us, the precious blood of Christ.

## **JOSHUA.**

### **#4. The significance of the crossing of Jordan (iii. 1 - v. 1). pp. 98 - 103**

After the interlude of the visit of the spies to Rahab, we return to the time at which the Book of Joshua opens. In chapter i. we read the command:--

"Arise, go over this Jordan . . . .within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan"  
(Josh. i. 2, 11).

In chapter iii., in obedience to this command, we read:--

"And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. And it came to pass after three days, that the officers went through the host" (Josh. iii. 1, 2).

The passage of the Jordan is dealt with in iii. 1 to v. 12, but the subject is too great to be dealt with as a whole. In this article we shall devote our attention to that section which deals with the actual crossing of the Jordan, leaving the teaching of chapter v. to be considered separately.



This command implies a resumption of the relationship that had been broken by the disobedience and failure of Israel in the wilderness:--

"And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days' journey: and the *ark* of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days' journey, to search out a resting place for them" (Numb. x. 33).

This happy condition was interrupted by the failure so quickly manifested (*see* Num. xi.) and the last reference to the ark in the book of Numbers is that of xiv. 43, 44:--

"Ye are turned away from the Lord, therefore the Lord will not be with you. But they presumed to go up unto the hill top: nevertheless the *ark* of the covenant of the Lord, and Moses, departed not out of the camp."

A glance at the verses shews the intimate association of the presence of the Lord with the ark: "The Lord will not be with you . . . . the ark . . . . departed not out of the camp" (Num. xiv. 43, 44).

From this time until the close of the wilderness wandering we find no mention of the ark of the covenant. The resumption of favour is indicated in Deut. xxxi. where Moses, at one hundred and twenty years of age, speaks these words to Israel:--

"The Lord thy God, He will go over before thee, and He will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them; and Joshua, he shall go over before thee, as the Lord hath said" (Deut. xxxi. 3).

Continuing the account in Deuteronomy, we read:--

"And Moses called unto Joshua, and said unto him in the sight of all Israel, Be strong and of a good courage; for thou must go with this people unto the land which the Lord hath sworn unto their fathers to give them; and thou shalt cause them to inherit it. And the Lord, He it is that doth go before thee: He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed. And Moses wrote this law and delivered it unto the priests, the sons of Levi, *which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord*, and unto all the elders of Israel" (Deut. xxxi. 7-9).

"Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of *the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God*, that it may be there for a witness against thee" (Deut. xxxi. 26).

When Israel, therefore, were called upon to follow the ark, they had the consciousness that it contained the covenant engagement of the Lord to lead them triumphantly into the land of promise. All inheritance, whether enjoyed on earth or in the heavenlies, is by promise, and cannot be disassociated from the great propitiation for which the Mercy Seat stands. Moreover, the Mercy Seat was made of one piece with the Cherubim, and the Cherubim link the purpose of grace here with the promise made at Eden's gate (Gen. iii.) and the fall of the anointed Cherub\* (\* - *See Index to Volumes I-XX for a series of notes under the heading CHERUBIM*) before Adam was created (Ezek. xxviii.). The crossing of the Jordan, and the fall of Jericho take upon them fuller and deeper meanings as we see them in the light of the great purpose of the ages.

There are ten references in Josh. iii. and iv. to the "ark of the covenant"; and seven other references in which it is described either simply as "the ark" or by some title other than the "ark of the covenant". It may be useful to tabulate these seven references in which the "covenant" is not referred to:--

- "The ark" (iii. 15 twice and iv. 10).
- "The ark of the Lord, the Lord of the whole earth" (iii. 13).
- "The ark of the Lord your God" (iv. 5).
- "The ark of the Lord" (iv. 11).
- "The ark of the testimony" (iv. 16).

There is an undoubted reference in Heb. xiii. to the confidence that the presence of the ark of the covenant inspired, and the promise of the Lord never to leave or forsake. The chapter also emphasizes death and resurrection, which the crossing of the Jordan typified:--

"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee . . . . Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant . . . ." (Heb. xiii. 5, 20).

A space of two thousand cubits was to separate the ark and the people following. The reason for this is given: "That ye may know the way by which ye must go; for ye have not passed this way heretofore" (Josh. iii. 4). The student of Scripture will immediately think of the words of John xiv.: "I go to prepare a place for . . . . How can we know the way? . . . . Arise, let us go hence."

The Lord Jesus fulfils all that the ark, the priests and Joshua enacted on that triumphant day.

Among the significant words spoken to or about the priests that bare the ark are the following:--

- "Ye shall *stand still* in Jordan" (iii. 8).
- "And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord *stood firm* on dry ground in the midst of Jordan" (iii. 17).
- "The priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan until *everything was finished*" (iv. 10).
- "When all the people *were clean passed over*, the ark of the Lord passed over" (iv. 11).
- "Command the priests that bear the ark of the testimony, that they *come up out of* Jordan" (iv. 16).
- "When the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, the waters of Jordan returned unto their place" (iv. 18).

The words "stand still" and "stood firm" are translations of the same word. To us, who look back upon the great work of Christ, the significance of words "Stood firm . . . . until everything was finished . . . . all were clean passed over" needs no explanation. We rejoice that in the finished work of Christ, we have a sure and safe passage through Jordan to the other side, where all the promises of God await fulfillment.

The command "to come up out of Jordan" is also significant. The people, as well as the priests with the ark, "came up out of Jordan" (iv. 19). And the next occurrence of the word is descriptive of victory: "And the people shall ascend up" (vi. 15). It is the same triumphant word that is used in such passages as:--

"God is *gone up* with a shout" (Psa. xlvii. 5);  
"Thou hast *ascended* on high" (Psa. lxxviii. 18).

And also in that tragedy of presumption when the ark was not with the people and "they presumed to *go up* unto the hill top" (Num. xiv. 44).

With Christ, we stand firm, we ascend, we triumph. Without Christ, all is vanity, failure and destruction.

Of all the significant features, however, that are associated with the crossing of the Jordan, the one that we must now consider is surely of the first importance:--

"And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped ('baptized', LXX) in the brim of the water (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest), that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap *very far from the city Adam*, that is beside Zaretan; and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho" (Josh. iii. 15, 16).

There is marginal reading here of the Massorettes that suggests as the true meaning: "Very far off, at the city called Adam." As a piece of topographical information the passage has little value, for the site of the city called Adam is unknown, and the site of Zaretan is only a conjecture. Its significance lies in its typical teaching, which becomes clear when we read it in the light of such passages as I Cor. xv. 22, Rom. v. 12, and the passage in Col. ii. 12 which refers to baptism (closely associated with circumcision, as we find also in Josh. iv.). Here is set forth in wonderful type, the canceling of the condemnation that comes down to us from Adam. This condemnation has one natural end, the death and destruction so vividly set forth by the Dead Sea into which the waters of Jordan run. The passage sets forth in type the burial and the resurrection of the saints by virtue of union with the Son of God. The priests are a type of Christ, the ark is a type of Christ, and Joshua is a type of Christ. Each sets forth one special aspect of that great work wherein the old man is reckoned dead and buried, and the new man put on.

We had hoped to have dealt with the four sections contained in the structure. We have found, however, that one alone has been of sufficient fullness to demand all the space at our disposal. We commend this section dealing with the ark and with Adam to the people of God, believing that a prayerful study will yield rich food for the spirit, and provide new matter for praise and thanksgiving.

## JOSHUA.

### #5. The twelve stones for a Memorial (iii., iv.). pp. 171 - 175

It may be remembered that the structure of Josh. iii. and iv. threw into prominence four main subjects. We have already considered the first of these, the ark, and with it the third, the reference to the priests. The second subject, the magnifying of Joshua, speaks for itself. At that same river God began to magnify the Lord Jesus, saying: "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased." The magnifying of the Son of God was completed at the resurrection when He was declared "Son of God with power" (Rom. i. 4). The word *archomai* that is used in the LXX of Josh. iii. 7: "I will *begin* to magnify thee", is also used by Luke in the passage that should be translated:--

"Jesus was about thirty years of age when He *was beginning*" (Luke iii. 23).

We take up for our present study the fourth subdivision of the structure:--

"Testimony to Canaanites and to Israel" (D | iii. 10 - iv. 9 and D | iv. 18 - v. 1).

The miracle of Jordan had two opposite effects on the people concerned. In the Canaanite it produced terror; in the Israelite assurance:--

"And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither and hear the words of the Lord your God. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Gircashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites" (Josh. iii. 9, 10).

"And it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over, that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more, because of the children of Israel" (Josh. v. 1).

Something of the same effect upon the spiritual Amorites and Canaanites is revealed in Col. ii. 15:--

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it."

The testimony to Israel in this miracle of the crossing of Jordan is contained in the twelve memorial stones that were set up in Gilgal and in the midst of Jordan itself. We naturally associate the number twelve with Israel, and we are right in doing so here:--

"Now, therefore, take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, out of every tribe a man" (Josh. iii. 12).

"Take you twelve men out of the people, and of every tribe a man" (Josh. iv. 2).

"Then Joshua called the twelve men, whom he had prepared of the children of Israel, out of every tribe a man. And Joshua said unto them, Pass over before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take ye up every man of you a stone upon his shoulder, according unto the number of the tribes of the children of Israel" (Josh. iv. 4, 5).

"And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the Lord spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there" (Josh. iv. 8).

The above passages reiterate the association of the twelve stones with the twelve tribes. Two other passages complete the record, making six references to the number twelve in this section:--

"Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night" (Josh. iv. 3).

"And Joshua set up twelve stones ('other twelve stones' LXX) in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day" (Josh. iv. 9).

Several points call for notice in the above account. First of all, observe that what the twelve representative men did, is said to have been done by "the children of Israel" (Josh. iv. 8). We find the same principle at work in the record of the Passover, where, although the head of the house was the one who actually killed the passover lamb, yet, as it was a representative act, we read: "And the *whole assembly* of the congregation of Israel shall kill *it* in the evening" (Exod. xii. 6). Not only is the representative principle manifest in the reference to Israel, but also in the fact that the many passover lambs slain that night are spoken of as "it", plainly looking forward to the great Antitype. It is well to see this fact clearly, for there are some who would rob us of this glorious ground of acceptance.

We next observe that the twelve stones were not gathered from any part of the river bed that was most accessible, but had to be taken "out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm". Moreover Joshua set up twelve more stones in the midst of Jordan, in exactly the place from which the first twelve were taken. When we are dealing with stones, it is not possible for them to be in two places at once, but when we consider God's people, we learn that they are buried with Christ, and also raised together with him.

Again, we observe that it was *Joshua*, not the twelve men, who placed the twelve stones in the river bed, and it was *Joshua*, and not the twelve men who pitched them in Gilgal. We have symbolized in these two sets of stones a twofold work, that remained unexplained until Paul wrote the epistle to the Romans.

The special significance of Gilgal where the rescued twelve stones were pitched by Joshua will become apparent on reading Joshua. This chapter forms the second half of the crossing of Jordan, and is to be considered in our next article.

We can, however, deal with one point at once—the meaning of the word "pitch" in the passage: "Did Joshua *pitch* in Gilgal" (Josh. iv. 20). The word does not mean "pitch" as in "pitching a camp". For the pitching of a camp the word is *chanah*, or *natah*; but the word here is *qum*, which means to "stand up", "arise"—see the article "Joshua #1", on the words: "Moses is dead; now therefore *arise*" (Josh. i. 2). The stones brought from the depths of the waters of judgment now "stand up" as monuments of grace.

The typical character of the stones is indicated by the fact that provision is twice made for the time when the children should ask "What mean ye by these stones?" (Josh. iv. 6, 21).

On twelve different occasions we read of certain things or events being "for a memorial" to Israel. Eleven are found during the administration of Moses and Joshua, the twelfth appearing at the restoration of Israel described in the prophet Zechariah. All in their measure look forward to Christ.

#### 1. THE PASSOVER.

"This day shall be unto you *for a memorial*" (Exod. xii. 14).

#### 2. THE UNLEAVENED BREAD.

"This is done because of that which the Lord did unto me when I came forth out of Egypt. And it shall be for a sign . . . . and *for a memorial* . . . ." (Exod. xiii. 8, 9).

#### 3. THE DESTRUCTION OF AMALEK.

"Write this *for a memorial* in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (Exod. xvii. 14).

#### 4. THE STONES ON AARON'S SHOULDERS.

"And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod for stones of memorial unto the children of Israel; and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders *for a memorial*" (Exod. xxviii. 12).

#### 5. THE STONES OF AARON'S HEART.

"And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy place *for a memorial* before the Lord continually" (Exod. xxviii. 29).

#### 6. THE ATONEMENT MONEY.

"And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be *for a memorial* unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls" (Exod. xxx. 16).

#### 7. THE BLOWING OF TRUMPETS.

"In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, *a memorial* of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation" (Lev. xxiii. 24; Num. x. 10).

#### 8. THE OFFERING OF JEALOUSY.

"He shall put no oil upon it, nor put frankincense thereon; for it is an offering of jealousy, an *offering of memorial*, bringing iniquity to remembrance" (Num. v. 15, 18).

#### 9. THE BRAZEN CENSERS.

"The brazen censers . . . . and they were made broad plates for a covering of the altar, *to be a memorial* unto the children of Israel before the Lord" (Num. xvi. 39, 40).

#### 10. THE CAPTAINS' OFFERING.

"And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it unto the tabernacle of the congregation, *for a memorial* for the children of Israel before the Lord" (Num. xxxi. 54).

#### 11. THE TWELVE STONES.

"These stones *shall be for a memorial* unto the children of Israel for ever" (Josh. iv. 7).

#### 12. THE CROWNS OF SILVER AND GOLD.

"And the crowns shall be . . . . *for a memorial* in the temple of the Lord" (Zech. vi. 14).

Here we have memorials of redemption, atonement, intercession, acceptance, joy, victory, sin, death, resurrection and glory. The last but one of these memorials is that of the twelve stones raised up at Gilgal by Joshua. The twelfth and last is the pledge of the coming of the great King-Priest, Who shall bear the glory, as He once bore sin, and shall sit as a priest upon a throne, in Whom all the hopes of all men are centred.

### JOSHUA.

#### #6. The essentials of victory (v.). pp. 221 - 226

We have seen something of the typical teaching that is inherent in the name of "the city Adam" (Josh. iii. 16), also the symbolic meaning of the twelve stones in Gilgal and in the river bed. We now learn the reason why the place was named Gilgal, and its significance as a type of good things to come.

A problem that now seems beyond our power to solve is whether the name Gilgal, that occurs some thirteen times in Joshua, refers to one or more places of the same name. We know that Gilgal of Josh. iv. was not so named until the act of circumcision took place there, and therefore the passages in Deut. xi. 30 and Josh. xii. 23 cannot refer to the same site. Moses speaks of Gilgal as being in the vicinity of Ebal and Gerizim, and so thirty miles from the Gilgal of Josh. iv. The word is sometimes rendered in the LXX by "Galilee", and is comparable with the term "Galilee of the nations". We could bring forward a number of authorities ancient and modern, Josephus, the Maccabees, Lightfoot and others, with reference to this problem, but for us the strict geography of the narrative is not so important as its significance. So that, with the obvious exception of

Josh. xii. 23 which speaks of the "king of the nations of Gilgal", we shall take the name Gilgal throughout the book of Joshua to indicate the truth made known in chapters iv. and v., the rolling away of the reproach of Egypt in the rite of circumcision. Whether we are dealing with the same place always, or possibly another of the same name near Antipatris, and now called Jidjulah, is a matter which is difficult to decide, and is not for our purpose very important.

It is quite in keeping with the typical nature of the book of Joshua, and of Gilgal in particular, that the references of Gilgal in this book, so far as Israel is concerned, are exactly twelve in number. Further, it is the opinion of some authorities that "Gilgal" and "Golgotha" are both derived from the same Hebrew root. This would add to the symbolism of the name and the circumcision that took place there.

We have discussed the true significance of circumcision in Volume XIX, page 156, and also in Volume XXIV in the series on Colossians (Col. ii. 11-13), which the reader should consult if information on this matter is needed. It will suffice here to say that circumcision implies "no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 3) and "the putting off of the body of the flesh" (Col. ii. 11), and is closely associated with burial, baptism, and resurrection union with Christ, much as we have seen set forth in Josh. iii. and iv.

*"The second time."*—We must not suppose from Josh. v. 2 that the same persons submitted to the rite a second time; but rather, as is explained in verses 4-7, that it refers to the children that had been born in the wilderness "by the way as they came forth out of Egypt" and had not been circumcised. "The second time" is balanced by the words of verse 7: "Their children, whom He raised up in their stead." There had been "a breach of promise" (Num. xiv. 34). The carcasses of the murmurers fell in the wilderness—"but your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised" (Num. xiv. 29-31). This was fulfilled when Joshua led the people into the land.

The lesson for us is that conquest, victory, growth, the possessing of our possessions, are impossible apart from the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new. It is surely not without significance that it was at Gilgal that Samuel hacked Agag the Amalekite to pieces—another symbol of the utter repudiation of the flesh (For notes on "Amalek" see Volume XV, page 177).

"The second time" also suggests the attainment of God's purpose for Israel:--

"And it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord shall set His hand again the *second* time to recover the remnant of His people, which are left, from Assyria and from Egypt . . . ." (Isa. xi. 11).

This element is characteristic of Israel's typical history. Joseph was at first rejected by his brethren, but received the second time: "And at the *second* time Joseph was made known to his brethren" (Acts xvii. 13). Moses was rejected the first time: "This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer" (Acts vii. 35).

The same principle is seen in Israel's attitude to Christ. At His first coming they rejected Him; at His second coming, they shall look on Him Whom they pierced and mourn for Him:--

"And unto them that look for Him shall He appear the *second* time without sin unto salvation" (Heb. ix. 28).

Thus this "second time" of Josh.v. is typical of Israel's final entry into her possessions.

We have already observed that when Joshua "pitched" the stones in Gilgal, the Hebrew word *qum* (meaning "rising in resurrection") is used, so emphasizing the typical teaching of the passage. We notice in the chapter now before us that the word translated "were whole" is *chayah*, "to live", "to be made alive", "to revive": "They abode in their places in the camp until they *were whole*" (Josh. v. 8).

This word in one of its forms is nine times rendered "quicken" in Psa. cxix. In other forms it is translated "save alive" (Josh. ii. 13; vi. 25), and "restore" (II Kings viii. 1, 5, where a dead body is restored to life). This further emphasizes the fact that Israel, brought up from the depths of Jordan, set forth in type the believer in newness of life. This, then, is the first principle that we may learn from the typical history of this typical people.

The reproach of Egypt has now been rolled away. God's people are free, not only from Egypt and its bondage, but from its reproach that clung to many even in the wilderness. While that reproach of Egypt clung to them, they were even willing to follow a captain back to their bondage (Num. xiv. 4). But now they are ready to follow their true Captain, Joshua, who is himself a type of the Lord, the Captain of our salvation (Heb. ii. 10), Who leads many sons, not into Canaan, but to glory. Before the chapter ends, this true Captain reveals Himself to the worshipping presence of Joshua (Josh. v. 13-15).

We have, therefore, in this chapter, four great principles that underlie all true success and victory:--

- (1) The repudiation of the flesh . . . . . CIRCUMCISION (v. 9).
- (2) The blood of Christ . . . . . PASSOVER (v. 10).
- (3) The Word of God . . . . . FOOD (v. 11, 12).
- (4) Christ as Lord . . . . . THE CAPTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOST  
(v. 13-15).

There was only one Passover—which took place in Egypt. All others have been memorial feasts looking back to that wonderful night, and celebrating the covenant that the Lord had made (Exod. vi. 3-8; Jer. xxxi. 31, 32). The first memorial passover feast was kept by Israel under Moses in the wilderness of Sinai (Num. ix. 1, 2). The second was observed under Joshua after the circumcision at Gilgal. The first baptism of Israel was unto Moses at the Red Sea; the second was in the waters of Jordan. The first

baptism was followed by the gift of manna; at the second, the manna was discontinued. While the typical teaching of Joshua is not primarily concerned with salvation from sin—this was already set forth in type when Israel were redeemed out of the bondage of Egypt—it nevertheless unscriptural to imagine that those who are blessed in heavenly places have no need to be reminded of Christ their Passover. It is sufficient to glance at Eph. i. to discover in verse 7 a very full recognition of "redemption through His blood". This is parallel with the observance of the Passover by the victorious nation, newly come up out of Jordan.

On the morrow after the Passover, the unleavened cakes were made of the old corn of the land, and the day after, the manna ceased. The barley harvest began with the Passover (and it will be remembered that "Jordan overflows all its banks all the time of harvest" [Josh. iii. 15]), and not until the morrow after the Paschal Sabbath, and when the sheaf of the firstfruits had been waved, could Israel partake of the new corn. The Companion Bible draws attention to the fact that at the conclusion of the feast on the 21st day of Abib at even, exactly forty years had passed since the night of Exod. xii. 41, 42. During those forty years Israel had failed and wandered in the wilderness; but now in the plains of Jericho, a fresh start is made. Some thirty-eight years earlier Joshua and Caleb had brought back the bunch of grapes from Eshcol and reported upon the fruit of the land. At last their faith and loyalty are rewarded: "They did eat the fruit of the land of Canaan that year."

The cessation of the manna emphasized the fact that it was a miraculous gift. If we may draw an analogy between the experiences of Josh. iv. & v. and those of the believer who has passed through Rom. vi. and stands now in Col. ii., we may learn from the cessation of the manna that the miraculous elements that abound in the "forty years" interval of the Acts period, while the Lord stretched forth His hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people, must not be expected in the present dispensation. We would interpose a word here lest any reader should feel that the typical teaching of Joshua in any sense nullifies the statements of the prison epistles as to the exclusive character of the mystery.

We have taught over and over again that the mystery does not consist in the doctrines of redemption and justification, nor even of spiritual circumcision and newness of life with Christ. These are fundamental to the mystery, but do not constitute the mystery. They are all found in the epistle to the Romans, and are vital doctrines. But the mystery is not the doctrinal teaching even of Ephesians or Colossians. It is that exclusive revelation of the purpose of the ages concerning the Church which is the Body of Christ, which was chosen in Him before the overthrow of the world, and which is seated with Him at the right hand of God far above all principality and power. This phase of truth is not to be discovered in the typical teaching of Joshua, nor in any other O.T. book. But the underlying doctrine and its accompanying manner of life are illustrated by type and shadow throughout the history of the chosen people.

Joshua now has a vision. He was "by Jericho", and the thought is suggested that he was meditating upon the task before him of taking this stronghold, when, lifting up his eyes, he sees a Man standing over against him, with a drawn sword in His hand. He

reveals Himself as the Captain of the Lord's host. Joshua falls on his face in worship, and the Captain of the Lord's host says to him: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy" (Josh.v. 15).

The Lord had promised that as He had been with Moses, so would He be with Joshua. Moses saw a burning bush that was not consumed, and was told to take off his shoes (Exod. iii. 5). Moses' need was not so much a Captain to lead to victory, as a power that would endure. In Exod. iii. "the Angel of the Lord" appeared; in Joshua we read that "there stood a Man". There are some who are confident that in both cases we have a theophany of the Lord Jesus Christ. Others believe that the Angel of the Lord was Michael (*see* Dan. xii. 1). The whole of Israel's history is accompanied by angelic ministry:--

"The Angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them" (Exod. xiv. 19).

"Behold, I send an Angel . . . . to bring thee in the way which I have prepared. Beware of him, obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for My Name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak, then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. For Mine angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites . . . . and I will cut them off" (Exod. xxiii. 20-23).

This second quotation is, we trust, explicit enough to settle the matter for us. It so exactly fits the circumstances of Josh. v. that we cannot but conclude that Josh. v. is the fulfillment of this promise.

Angelic hosts led by Michael shall yet war in heaven (Rev. xii. 7), and there shall be an overthrow of Satan's power in that day, of which the overthrow of Jericho will prove to be a type, in all of its essential features. This theme now lies before us. With the preparation of Josh. iii.-v. now complete, we can go on to consider the victory of faith.

## **JOSHUA.**

### **#7. The taking of Jericho (vi). pp. 270 - 274**

The section of the book of Joshua which now lies before us is twofold, viz., (1) The taking of Jericho and (2) The trespass of Achan. The two subjects are interrelated, as are the crossing of Jordan and the subsequent circumcision at Gilgal.

In this article we must limit ourselves to the account of the taking of Jericho. This again may be divided into two parts: first, the actual investment and taking of the city, and secondly, the devotion of all to the Lord. In the case of the inhabitants and their cattle this devotion to the Lord meant utter destruction; but the gold and silver, brass and iron, were saved and placed in the treasury of the Lord. Rahab, also, and her household were spared from destruction on account of her faith. The twofold division of the subject may be exhibited in the structure:--

#### **Joshua vi. The taking of Jericho.**

- i. vi. 2-16. The city given.
- ii. vi. 17-26. The city devoted and cursed.

A consideration of the following outline impresses one with the fact that this is no private and personal conquest by Joshua or Israel, no sacking and looting of a city without discrimination. The city was devoted to the Lord. The city was given to Joshua by the Lord, and He alone had the disposal of all within its walls.

- A | THE CITY GIVEN. |
  - A | 2. I have given into thine hand Jericho.
  - B | 3. Compass the city six days.
  - C | 4. Compass the city on the seventh day.
  - D | 5. Shout.
  - B | 6-14. Compass the city six days.
  - C | 15. Compass the city on the seventh day.
  - D | 16. Shout.
  - A | 16. The Lord hath given you the city.
- A | THE CITY DEVOTED AND CURSED. |
  - E1 | 17. Only Rahab and her house shall live.
  - F1 | 18, 19. Devoted things, as gold, not to be kept privately.
  - FI | 20, 21. Utter destruction of all else.
  - E1 | 22, 23. Rahab and her house brought out.
  - E2 | 24. The city burned with fire.
  - F2 | 24. Devoted things placed in treasury.
  - F2 | 25. Rahab saved and dwelling in Israel.
  - E2 | 26. The city. Cursed be the builder.

The solemn encompassing of the walls of the city for the six days must have been a severe test of the people's faith; and had they not had the crossing of the Jordan fresh in their minds, their hearts might have failed them.

The sounding of the trumpets on the seventh day at the completion of the seventh time of encircling the city by the seven priests is prophetic. The fulfillment of the type is found in the Revelation:--

"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets" (Rev. x. 7).

"And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever . . . . The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come . . . . there was seen in His temple the ark of His testimony" (Rev. xi. 15-19).

Another and important point is the special type of trumpet which the priests were commanded to blow. The trumpets used here must not be confused with the *chatsotserah*, the straight trumpets used of war:--

"Make thee two trumpets of silver . . . . for the calling of the assembly . . . . if ye go to war in your land against the enemy . . . ." (Num. x. 1-9).

The trumpets used at the fall of Jericho are called trumpets of rams' horns, or better, "trumpets of Jubilee". They were used for announcing the Jubilee, and it is the typical fulfillment of Israel's Jubilee that is impressed upon us here at the fall of Jericho.

The word "Jubilee" is a translation of the Hebrew word *Yobel*. Its first occurrence is in Exod. xix. 13, and the last in Josh. vi. 4-13. The remaining occurrences are all found in Leviticus and Numbers, and are all translated "Jubilee".

"And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month . . . . ye shall proclaim liberty . . . . ye shall return every man unto his possession . . . ." (Lev. xxv. 8-19).

The fall of Jericho at the end of the seventh day and at the sounding of the seven trumpets, looks forward to the day when the seventy times seven years shall eventuate in the overthrow of Babylon and Satanic opposition, and the final restoration of Israel to their rightful place in the purpose of God (Dan. ix. 24-27). The sounding of the trumpet on the tenth day of the seventh month is the "last trump" of Israel's typical year. "The last trump" in I Cor. xv. 50-57, the "trump of God" and "voice of the Archangel" in I Thess. iv. 16, and the sounding of the seventh angel in Rev. x., xi. all belong to the same period, and fulfil the type of the Jubilee. Only those who endeavour to adjust I Cor. xv. and I Thess. iv. to the hope of the Mystery will find any difficulty in accepting this as truth.

This is not the place to introduce archæology. Much work of great interest has been done on the site of Jericho, and when the details are complete, we may be able to pass on some of them to the reader. We believe what God has said in Josh. vi., however, without having to await archæological confirmation. We pass on, therefore, to the second division of the subject: "The city devoted and cursed":--

"And the city shall be accursed, even it, and all that are therein, to the Lord . . . . And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the Lord: they shall come into the treasury of the Lord" (Josh. vi. 17-19).

The English reader is likely to be misled by the words "curse" and "accursed". The Hebrew *cherem* means "to devote", whether it be to destruction or to holy uses. To translate *cherem* "accursed" is to decide at once which of the two purposes of "devotion" is implied in the context.

Let the reader ponder the use of the word *cherem* in the law.

"But the field, when it goeth out in the Jubilee, shall be holy unto the Lord, as a field *devoted*" (Lev. xxvii. 21).

"Notwithstanding no *devoted* thing, that a man shall *devote* unto the Lord of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every *devoted* thing is most holy unto the Lord" (Lev. xxvii. 28).

"None *devoted*, which shall be *devoted* of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death" (Lev. xxvii. 29).

"*Devoted*" (Num. xviii. 14).

"*Cursed* thing" (Deut. vii. 26; xiii. 17).

When we examine the references in Lev. xxvii., we are struck by the close association between the Jubilee and this "devoting" of things to the Lord; and the "devotion" of Jericho and its possessions falls into line.

If we continue our examination, and are not content with mere references, we shall be rewarded with full and positive teaching. We are all too prone to be impressed with a string of references, and yield to the temptation of "taking them as read". To do so with the above references to Deuteronomy is to lose valuable help. We have purposely adopted this method of arrangement, to stimulate the true Berean spirit of "Search and see" for which this magazine stands:--

"Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword. And thou shalt gather all the spoil of it into the midst of the street thereof, and shalt burn with fire the city, and all the spoil thereof of every whit, for the Lord thy God: and it shall be a heap for ever; it shall not be built again. And there shall cleave nought of the *cursed thing* (i.e. devoted thing) to thine hand" (Deut. xiii. 15-17).

The city of Jericho had been "devoted" to the Lord. Apart from the specified exemptions (the silver and gold, etc., and Rahab and her household) nothing was to be spared. The warning given in Deut. xiii. 17: "There shall cleave nought of the *cursed*

thing to thine hand" is echoed by the words of Joshua: "And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the *devoted* thing . . . . when ye take of the *devoted* thing" (Josh. vi. 18).

Jericho was a kind of firstfruits, and belonged wholly to the Lord. The words of Moses: "It shall be a heap for ever; it shall not be built again" are echoed in the words of Joshua:--

"Cursed (*arar*, quite different from *cherem*) be the man before the Lord (contrast, 'devoted' to the Lord in verse 17), that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho. He shall lay the foundation thereof in his firstborn, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it" (Josh. vi. 26).

The word "build" implies fortification, for the city was given to Benjamin, and had been partially restored (compare Judges iii. 13 with Deut. xxxiv. 3).

What is the lesson of this chapter of Joshua? We learn that God at His own appointed time will fulfil the prophecy of the Jubilee, and at the sounding of the seventh trumpet accomplish both the overthrow of the citadel of evil, and the setting up of the kingdom of the Lord. We learn that this will never be accomplished by human strength. Soldiers marched round Jericho, but the Jubilee trumpets of the priests and the shout of the people were the only external agents in its overthrow. To the believer comes a solemn warning against letting his hand "cleave" to any of the things of this world, which are surely devoted to destruction. As with Abraham and the spoils of Sodom, we must rather forego even our legitimate dues, so that no advantage be given to the enemy over us.

In the sad story of Achan and his trespass, we shall learn something of the effect upon the overcoming life of the Lord's people of complicity in these devoted things. May the Lord keep us from "troubling" His people, and from reaping "trouble" for ourselves (Josh. vi. 18; vii. 25).

## Notes and jottings from an old Bible.

### #1. Seven distinctions between saved and unsaved. pp. 23, 24

The Bible that we use at our desk is one that has seen so much service as to look almost like some ancient papyrus.

In the course of years odd notes have accumulated, some of them bearing upon the gospel, some on doctrine, and some on practice. We have no idea as to the source of many of these notes, so that it is impossible for us to render the authors their due, but we pass on certain of them in the hope that they will be of service to those who minister to others, or to those who by quiet meditation may extract comfort and cheer from their consideration.

One of these sets is a list of seven differences that Scripture indicates are observable between the *saved* and *unsaved*. The scripture references take no heed to dispensational distinctions, as the notes were written some years before the claims of II Tim. ii. 15 were recognized by us. Allowing a margin for this, the following may nevertheless lead our hearts out in praise unto Him Whose grace has "made us to differ", and in greater sympathy with those who are yet "out of the way".

#### Seven distinctions between saved and unsaved.

(1) AN UNDENIABLE DIFFERENCE.

"Appointed once to die" (Heb. ix. 27).

"God hath not *appointed* us to wrath" (I Thess. v. 9).

"Reserve the unjust . . . . to be punished" (II Pet. ii. 9).

"Inheritance . . . . *reserved* in heaven for you" (I Pet. i. 4).

(2) AN UNAMBIGUOUS DISTINTION.

"When we are judged, we are *chastened* of the Lord, that we should not be *condemned* with the world" (I Cor. xi. 32).

(3) AN UNAPPROACHABLE SPHERE.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are *in Christ Jesus*" (Rom. viii. 1).

(4) AN UNQUALIFIED ASSURANCE.

"He that believeth on Him is *not condemned*: but he that believeth not *is condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 18).

(5) AN UNMISTAKABLE PROMISE.

“He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from *death* unto *life*” (John v. 24).

(6) AN UNSPEAKABLE PRIVILEGES.

“Herein is love with us made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world” (I John iv. 17).

(7) AN UNRIVALLED QUESTION.

“Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. viii. 34).

**#2. Unto the Lord.**

**p. 43**

CLEAVING UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF FAITH (Acts xi. 23).

LIVING UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF LIFE (Rom. xiv. 8).

MELODY UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF WORSHIP (Eph. v. 19).

SERVICE UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF WORK (Col. iii. 23).

MINISTERING UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF SERVICE (Acts xiii. 2).

COMMENDING UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF SYMPATHY (Acts xiv. 23).

GIVING UNTO THE LORD, THE LAW OF FELLOWSHIP (II Cor. viii. 5).

### #3. Hope.

p. 44

#### (i.) THE SUBSTANCE OF HOPE.

- (1) Christ (I Tim. i. 1).
- (2) Salvation (I Thess. v. 8).
- (3) Grace (I Pet. i. 13).
- (4) Resurrection (Acts xxiii. 6).
- (5) Eternal Life (Titus i. 2; iii. 7).
- (6) Righteousness (Gal. v. 5).
- (7) Glory (Col. i. 27).

#### (ii.) THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HOPE.

- (1) Personal (Phil. i. 20; Rom. xv. 4; II Cor. iii. 12; I John iii. 3).
- (2) Indwelling (I Pet. iii. 15).
- (3) Living (I Pet. i. 3).
- (4) Good (II Thess. ii. 16).
- (5) Blessed (Titus ii. 13).
- (6) Joyous (Rom. xii. 12).
- (7) Emboldening (Rom. v. 5).

#### (iii.) THE CLAIMS OF HOPE.

- (1) Confession (Heb. x. 23\*).
- (2) Boasting (Heb. iii. 6).
- (3) Explanation (I Pet. iii. 15).
- (4) Purity (I John iii. 3).
- (5) Endurance (I Thess. i. 3).
- (6) Assurance (Heb. vi. 11).
- (7) Abundance (Rom. xv. 13).

#### (iv.) THE CONDITIONS OF HOPE.

- (1) GOD is its AUTHOR (Rom. xv. 13; Eph. i. 18).  
GOD as OBJECT (*eis* II Cor. i. 10\*; Acts xxiv. 15; I Pet. i. 21).  
GOD as FOUNDATION (*epi* I Tim. iv. 10\*; v. 5\*; vi. 17\*;  
I Pet. i. 13; iii. 5\*).
- GOD as SPHERE (*en* I Cor. xv. 19).
- (2) GOSPEL its REVELATION (Col. i. 23).
- (3) SCRIPTURE its WARRANT (Acts xxvi. 6; Rom. xv. 4).
- (4) CHRIST its SUSTENANCE (Col. i. 27).
- (5) HOLY SPIRIT its SUPPLY (Rom. xv. 13).
- (6) HEAVEN its INCENTIVE (Col. i. 5).
- (7) FAITH its BASIS (Heb. xi. 1).

[\* - The words "faith" and "trust" in these passages are translations of the word usually rendered "hope".]

**#4. “I go to prepare a place for you” (John xiv. 2).  
p. 88**

The Lord Jesus went to the places mentioned below that we might be saved:--

THE PLACE OF BETRAYAL . . . . .

“Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the *place*” (John xviii. 2).

THE PLACE OF JUDGMENT . . . . .

“A *place* called . . . . . Gabbatha” (John xix. 13).

THE PLACE OF CONDEMNATION . . . . .

“A *place* called . . . . . Golgotha” (John xix. 17).

THE PLACE OF BURIAL AND TRIUMPH . . . . .

“In the *place* . . . . . was a garden” (John xix. 41).

**#5. Meditation.**  
**p. 151**

(A) ITS OBJECT.

- (1) GOD'S WORD . . . . . Josh. i. 8; Psa. i. 2; cxix. 15, 23, 48, 78.
- (2) GOD'S WORK . . . . . Psa. lxxvii. 12; cxliii. 5.
- (3) GOD HIMSELF . . . . . Psa. lxiii. 6; civ. 34 (Never self or sin).

(B) ITS NATURE

- (1) PERSONAL . . . Psa. civ. 34. \ (\*Psa. lxxi. 24; \*lxxvii. 12; \*cxix. 27;
- (2) REAL . . . . . Psa. xlix. 3. } \*Prov. vi. 22).
- (3) VERBAL . . . . . Psa. v. 1 / [\* - *Talk*].

(C) ITS TIMES.

- (1) DAY . . . . . Psa. cxix. 97 . . . . . That is to say God first.
- (2) EVENING . . . Gen. xxiv. 63 . . . . . After work is done.
- (3) NIGHT . . . . . Psa. lxiii. 6 . . . . . That is to say God last.

(D) ITS ELEMENTS.

- (1) REMEMBRANCE OF THE PAST . . . . . Psa. cxix. 23.
- (2) REALIZATION OF THE PRESENT . . . . . Psa. cxix. 97.
- (3) RESOLVES FOR THE FUTURE . . . . . Psa. cxix. 15.

(E) ITS BLESSINGS.

- (1) SPIRITUAL STRENGTH . . . . . Psa. i. 2 . . . . . Power to resist.
- (2) SPIRITUAL SUCCESS . . . . . Josh. i. 8, 9 . . . . . Power to bless.
- (3) SPIRITUAL SATISFACTION . . . . . Psa. civ. 34 . . . . . Power to enjoy.

(F) ITS APPLICATION.

“Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all” (I Tim. iv. 15).

## #6. Pleasing God. pp. 198, 199

### I. THE STANDARD.

- (1) God (I Thess. iv. 1).
- (2) Not man (Gal. i. 10; I Thess ii. 4; Eph. vi. 6; Col. iii. 22).
- (3) Neighbour (Rom. xv. 2).
- (4) Not self (Rom. xv. 1).
- (5) *Theo enopion*. To God. In presence of God (Heb. xiii. 21; I John iii. 22).
- (6) Unsaved cannot please God (I Thess. ii. 15; Rom. viii. 8).

### II. THE POSSIBILITY.

- (1) Our Lord realized it (Rom. xv. 3; John viii. 29).
- (2) So did Enoch (Heb. xi. 5).

### III. THE AIM.

Whether present or absent (II Cor. v. 9).

### IV. THE SCOPE.

Everything (John viii. 29).

### V. THE MANIFESTATION.

- (1) Surrender (“acceptable”, Rom. xii. 1).
- (2) Obedience (I John iii. 22; Col. iii. 20).
- (3) Worship (Heb. xii. 28 “acceptably” same as xiii. 21).
- (4) Self sacrifice (Heb. xiii. 16; Phil. iv. 18).
- (5) Service (Rom. xiv. 18: “acceptable” same as Heb. xiii. 21).
- (6) Walk (Eph. v. 8, 10; Col. i. 10; I Thess. iv. 1).

### VI. THE RESULTS.

- (1) God’s testimony (Heb. xi. 5).
- (2) Answer to prayer (I John iii. 22).
- (3) Personal experience (Rom. xii. 2; Eph. v. 10: proving and approving).

### VII. THE SECRET--HOW.

- (1) The Divine side. A work within (Heb. xiii. 21).
- (2) The Human side. Faith (Heb. xi. 6). Surrender (II Tim. ii. 4).

As we have already explained, we have no record of the author of these outlines—neither do we know how far they are the result of our own studies; we pass them on in the hope that they may be used afresh in the service of Him Who was ever well pleasing in the eyes of Him that sent Him.

**#7. Saul, who also is called Paul.**  
**p. 208**

- PAUL A PHARISEE . . . . . Phil. iii. 5 . . .  
“The straitest of his religion” (Acts xxvi. 5).
- PAUL A PERSECUTOR . . . . . I Tim. i. 13 . . .  
“Exceeding mad . . . . . I persecuted ” (Acts xxvi. 11).
- PAUL A PATTERN . . . . . I Tim. i. 16 . . .  
“For this cause I obtained mercy” (I Tim. i. 16).
- PAUL A PREACHER . . . . . I Tim. ii. 7 . . .  
“By me the preaching . . . . . fully known” (II Tim. iv. 17).
- PAUL A PIONEER . . . . . Rom. xv. 20 . . .  
“Paul’s measure and rule” (II Cor. x. 12-16).
- PAUL A PROPHET . . . . . Acts xiii. 1 . . .  
“Is Saul also among the prophets?” (I Sam. x. 11).
- PAUL A PRISONER . . . . . Eph. iii. 1 . . .  
“An ambassador in bonds” (Eph. vi. 20).

## The Epistle to the Romans.

### #51. The two natures and the law (vii. 13-25). pp. 30 - 37

We now have before us one of the most controversial passages in the Scriptures. The greatest commentators differ as to the true meaning of the passage. Is it the experience of the believer? Is it the experience of the unsaved? Is it to be limited to the Jew under law? Why is this experience recorded? How far was it personally true of the apostle? These questions demand an answer, but an answer that is given merely "out of our own heart" will be valueless and probably wrong. We must have first a scriptural preparation. We shall, therefore, pursue our usual course. First the structure, in order to perceive the subject-matter and scope; next the individual expression, the actual material of which the structure is composed; and then, the purpose for which the experience is recorded.

Rom. vii. 13-25, though in one sense complete in itself, is part of an argument and essentially connected with all that has gone before:--

- Rom. vi. 1-14 . . . . . deals with the dominion of sin and death.
- Rom. vi. 15 - vii. 6 . . . . . deals with the dominion of law.
- Rom. vii. 7-12 . . . . . rectifies any possible misinterpretation of the apostle's argument, and shows that the law is holy.
- Rom. vii. 13-25 . . . . . reveals that because the law is holy, or spiritual, and because the flesh is carnal, it is vain for any one to look to the law and its observance for deliverance; and this is proved by the experience of the apostle himself.

We may see this more clearly if the relationship of these two sections dealing with the nature of the law are set out as follows:--

#### Rom. vii. 6-25.

- A | 6. STATEMENT.—We were delivered from the law.
- B | 7. QUESTION.—Is the law sin?
- C | 7. REPUDIATION.—God forbid (*me genoito*).
- D | 7-12. ANSWER.—
  - | The law of God and the law of sin.
  - | The conflict.
  - | I died; unto death; slew me.
- A | 12. STATEMENT.—The law is holy . . . . just and good.
- B | 13. QUESTION.—Was that which is good made death unto me?
- C | 13. REPUDIATION.—God forbid (*me genoito*).
- D | 13-25. ANSWER.—
  - | The law of God and the law of sin.
  - | The deliverance.
  - | The body of this death.

Many expositors seem to lose sight of the fact that the primary object of the apostle is to defend the law against the charge of any complicity with evil, and to show that, just as the stirring up of dormant sin by the law could not by any means be made to prove that the law itself was sin, so the law is still “good”, even though the flesh is utterly unable to get good from it. This necessitates a further exposition of the relation of indwelling sin to the flesh, and leads to the conclusion that nothing can enable the believer to rise above its dominion other than a complete abandonment of all efforts by the flesh or in the law, and a complete standing in Christ and in the Spirit. The sequel, which contains this latter truth, is reserved for Rom. viii., and flows, legitimately, straight out of Rom. v., without reference to the four parenthetical questions of vi. and vii.

The developments of the answer in Rom. vii. 13-25 is not by any means easy to discover, but the following outline will be of some service by showing the salient features and their inter-relation.

### **Romans vii. 13-25.**

- A | 13. Sin manifested, working in me death.
- B | 14. | a | The law is spiritual.
  - b | I am carnal, sold under sin.
- C | 15-20. Sin in the flesh.
  - c | What I do I allow not, I hate.
  - d | No more I, but sin that dwelleth in me.
  - c | What I would I do not; I find not.
  - d | No more I, but sin that dwelleth in me.
- C | 21-23. The law of sin in the members.
  - e | I find then a law.
  - f | I delight in the law of God after the inward man.
  - e | I see another law.
  - f | Bringing me captive to the law of sin in my members.
- B | 24, 25. | b | Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?
  - a | I myself serve the law of God with the mind.
- A | 25. Law of sin served by the flesh.

Let us not lose sight of the main proposition, for if we do, we shall become involved in a never-ending debate as to the nature of the man whose conflict is here described, which is subsidiary to the main theme. The main theme is the character of the law.

To the possible objection, “Is that which is good made death unto me?” the apostle replies, “No, it is the abuse of the commandment that leads to death, and this but reveals the exceeding sinfulness of sin that thus abuse it”.

“Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful” (Rom. vii. 13).

This “exceeding sinfulness of sin” is now shown in its relation to the law: “For we know that the law is spiritual” (Rom. vii. 14). This has already been demonstrated. The law is not merely occupied with external acts, but with internal motives: “Thou shalt not

desire.” A law that extends to the most secret desires of the heart, demands something more than a Pharisee’s obedience. By its prohibition, it reveals the presence of unsuspected sin. And the presence of this sin demands an explanation. The explanation is given in verse 14: “But I am carnal, having been sold under sin.”

It is important to adhere strictly to the tense of the verb here:--

“I am carnal (*present*), having been sold” (*perfect*).

This is true of all men, saved and unsaved; it goes back to Adam and the fall. The question as to whether this particular verse refers to the saved or the unsaved will be discussed after the whole passage has been surveyed.

The carnal state which is the result of having been sold as a slave is manifested by the service that is rendered:--

“For that which I work out, I know not; for that which I will not, I practice; but that which I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I do not will, I consent unto the law that it is good” (Rom. vii. 15, 16).

Whether the state of affairs here be taken as true of the believer, or of the unbeliever (*see* Rom. ii. 14, 15) it is important to see that, in spite of its failure as a means of righteousness and life, the law itself is recognized as “good”. This is one of the points the apostle intends to make clear:--

“Now then it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. vii. 17).

Here we begin to meet another great problem, the problem of the *ego* (“I”). One cannot read the statements made by the apostle in these verses without arriving at the conclusion that the man under consideration has two *egos*. Too many opposing statements are made for the “I” to be considered as always conveying the same meaning. In verse 18 we read:--

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.”

Here the word “me” is identified with “the flesh”. Yet we also read in verse 22:--

“I delight in the law of God after the inward man.”

To delight in the law of God is a characteristic of the new man, not of the old. We must, therefore, recognize the presence of two natures in the one person. There are seven references in this section to the “will”, and every reference shews it to be on the side of good and against evil. This is a factor in the evidence as to whether the person here considered is a believer or not.

### Thelo, “I will”.

- A | vii. 15. “For what I *would*, that do I not.”
  - B | vii. 16, 17. “If then I do that which I *would* not . . . . sin indwelling.”
  - C | vii. 18. “For to *will* is present with me.”
  - D | vii. 19. “For the good that I *would*, I do not.”
  - A | vii. 19. “The evil which I *would* not, that I do.”
  - B | vii. 20. “If I do that I *would* not . . . . sin indwelling.”
  - C | vii. 21. “When i *would* do good, evil is present with me.”
- “I find then a law . . . . I see another law” (Rom. vii. 21-23).

What law is this? It is not given a specific name until we reach Rom. viii. 2, and there it is revealed as “the law of sin and death”. The cry of the wretched man for deliverance from “this body of death” will only be answered completely at the resurrection:--

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. viii. 23).

There are eight references to the “body” in Rom. v. 12 - viii. 39, and they are arranged in two sets of four. The last reference in the first set is the cry: “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (vii. 24). The last reference in the second set gives the answer: “Waiting for the adoption, the redemption of the body” (viii. 23).

The conclusion reached in Rom. vii. 25 is:--

“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.”

Is there any reasonable doubt as to whom “I myself” represents? This “I” delights in the law of God after the inner man; it is the true “self” that serves the law of God.

While there is much that still requires investigation, we must not defer the question any longer as to the nature of the man who is passing through the experience of Rom. vii. 14-25. One of the strong objections to the suggestion that this experience can be true of a believer, loses its power when we realize that the doctrine of “death to sin” does not relate to *character* or *conduct*, but to *state* before God. Character grows out of this new state, but must not be confused with it. And again, we must distinguish between death to the *guilt* of sin, and death to its *power*.

The reader may perhaps suggest that the man described in this section of Rom. vii. is surely not free from the dominion of sin. Yet we must agree that, even though the members of his body and his flesh cause him great conflict, his mind, his will, his delight, the service of “I myself”, are always Godward, and in spite of his wretchedness, he looks forward with thankfulness to his deliverance. Should the objection be raised, that no one who is saved is “carnal”, it is enough to refer to the “saints” at Corinth (I Cor. iii. 3).

Reviewing the statements of verses 16 and 17 in his book on Sanctification, *Fraser* writes:--

“What here would strike any mind free from bias is that this ‘I’ on the side of holiness against sin, is the most prevailing.”

The words of verse 22: “I delight in the law of God after the inward man”, demand the presence of the new life, for “the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom. viii. 7).

In verses 7-12 the apostle speaks of his unregenerate days when, in his fancied security, he could say, “I was alive without the law once”. But with verse 14, the tense of the verb changes from the past to the present. The revelation here of the exceeding sinfulness of sin is in agreement with the apostle’s instructions in other epistles. The Colossians saints who were “made meet” and were to be presented “holy and without blame” were taught, nevertheless, the need of mortifying their members on the earth. The Ephesian saints, while “accepted in the Beloved” and “seated together in the heavenlies” were, nevertheless, warned against some of the grossest sins of the flesh (Eph. v.).

In three ways the language of the apostle in Rom. vii. 14-25 is seen to be the language of the saint:--

- (1) He “hates” sin.—This no unsaved man can really do.
- (2) He “delights” in the law of God.—All such are “blessed” (Psa. i. 2).
- (3) “He looks for deliverance to Christ alone through grace.”

“Blessed be God”, says *Romaine*, “for the seventh chapter of Romans.

There is a passage in Galatians that covers the whole ground in Rom. vii. and viii., and shews where the experiences of Rom. vii. fall short and, how Rom. viii. brings in completion:--

“Walk in the Spirit (*see* Rom. viii.) and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh (Rom. vii. 15-23): and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would (Rom. vii. 15-19). But if ye be led of the Spirit (Rom. viii. 14), ye are not under law” (Gal. v. 16-18).

As we have said before, the true sequel to Rom. v. is Rom. viii., but the ideal often outruns the experimental. The ideal in the case of Israel at the Exodus was that they should pass out of Egypt, cross the Red Sea, and within a comparatively short time enter the land of promise. The actual fact was that they wandered for forty years in the wilderness. The ideal experience would be for the believer, who is delivered as in Rom. v. 12-21, to pass straight on to the sphere of the Spirit and resurrection power “more than conqueror”. The actual experience, however, is that some lean towards the licence so strongly censured in Rom. vi., while others, failing to discern that so long as they possess mortal bodies they still possess that which at any time can be the instrument

of sin which dwells in their flesh, pass through a severe conflict which does not issue in the complete deliverance of Rom. viii. until the necessary lesson has been learned with much agony of mind and spirit. While they could have passed straight away to the deliverance from the law of sin and death by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom. viii. 2), they learn, for a time, by experience what that law of sin and death is (Rom. vii. 23). They are led to rejoice more completely in the liberty of the children of God (Rom. viii. 21) by experiencing something of the captivity to the law of sin that is in the members of the body (Rom. vii. 23).

While, therefore, Paul's experience may primarily set forth the vain endeavour of a Jew to perform that law which has "enlightened his eyes and converted his soul" (Psa. xix. 7-9), and so show to all mankind that the law can neither save, justify nor sanctify, the passage also sets forth in clear characters the warfare that must ever go on between flesh and spirit, until the day of complete deliverance and the redemption of the body.

"The warfare between the flesh and the spirit, described in this chapter, has greatly exercised the ingenuity of men not practically acquainted with its truth. Few are willing to believe that all mankind are naturally so bad as they are here represented, and it is fondly imagined that the best of men are much better than this description would prove them to be. Every effort of ingenuity has accordingly been resorted to, to divert the apostle's statements from the obvious conclusion to which they lead, and so to modify his doctrine as to make it worthy of acceptance by human wisdom. But they have laboured in vain . . . . Every Christian has in his own breast a commentary on the apostle's language. If there be anything of which he is fully assured, it is that Paul has in this passage described his experience; and the more the believer advances in knowledge and holiness, the more does he loathe himself as by nature a child of corruption which still so closely cleaves to him" (*Haldane*).

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"Thus does the Holy Spirit lay bare to our view His own explanation of the origin and nature of the experience possessed by every soul which is the subject of the grace of God, and which has the gift of the new nature as the result and sign of God's justifying . . . . Those who fail to learn this lesson as to the conflict of the law, first with the old nature (vii. 7-12), and afterwards (21-25) with the new nature, will not only be in constant perplexity themselves, but will fall into that error of doctrine which is corrected in the epistle to the Galatians chapter iii. 3. Having begun with the truth as to the new nature (called 'spirit') they will, if they depart from it, seek to improve the old nature. This is the error which Gal. iii. 3 corrects, 'Are ye so senseless? having begun in the spirit (in the new nature) are ye now being perfected in flesh?' (i.e. in the old nature). This is what thousands are doing everywhere around us. They are seeking to perfect, or, at least improve, the old nature. Not seeing the truth or reality of the two natures, they are seeking to improve the only one which they are acquainted with. This is ever the work of all who are ignorant of what the Spirit is saying to the churches. Be they Buddhists, Romanists, Perfectionists, they are all alike endeavouring to convert the 'flesh' into 'spirit', to subdue the 'flesh', and by all kinds of arts, and artifices, and rules and regulations, pledges, and badges, to improve the old nature. All alike formulate 'rules for holy living, ignorant of the fact which lies before us in this scripture that the old nature

knows no rules, and that the new nature needs no rules. Instead of reckoning the old nature to have died with Christ, they are ever seeking *to put it to death!* Instead of reckoning that it was crucified with Christ upon the cross, they are exhorting us to crucify it for ourselves. When God crucified it with Christ, He did it once and for all. But those who know nothing of this, tell us to crucify it. They do not tell us how we are to do it; but knowing how futile is the effort, they tell us we must do it every day. But, no! once would be enough if it could be done at all. And, thank God, it has been done. HE has done it Himself on Calvary; and now, we, in spite of all our conflict, in spite of the flesh (the old nature) lusting against the spirit (the new nature) and the spirit against the flesh; in spite of the fact that these are contrary the one to the other, so that we cannot do the evil which the flesh would have us do, and we cannot do the good that the spirit would have us do; in spite of this conflict, we find ‘peace with God’ and rest in the truth—that the child of God has his old nature, which can produce no good thing—and he has a new nature, which ‘doth not commit sin’ (I John iii. 9), ‘sinneth not’ (I John v. 18). And, further, that God reckons the old nature as having died with Christ, and as having therefore no dominion over us, though the conflict in actual experience is ever present with us. Those who learn this lesson have learned that the old nature is so bad that nothing can ever improve it, and that the new nature *is so perfect* that it needs no improvement. It is ‘spirit’, and its life cannot be ‘deepened’. It is ‘newness of life’, and cannot be made ‘higher’.” (Dr. E. W. Bullinger—*Church Epistles*).

We make no apology for this lengthy quotation from the witness of that doughty warrior, *Dr. Bullinger*, and only wish that there were more to-day to testify to the reality of the two natures in the child of God.

We must now close this somewhat lengthy article; the supreme importance of the subject must be our justification for the space occupied. We are now ready to enter into the liberty and blessedness of Rom. viii. May our studies be abundantly blessed to us all.

## **#52. The spirit of Sonship (viii. 1-39). pp. 70 - 74**

Our earlier studies have taught us that Rom. v. 12 - viii. 39, the inner portion of this epistle, has its own special significance. It is concerned not so much with sins as with *sin*; not so much with the fruit as with the *root*; not so much with individual and multiplied transgression as with one initial sin that brought condemnation to the race; not so much with faith and believing as with the thought of being transferred from the headship of Adam to that of Christ. The emphasis is upon *sphere*—“in Adam”, “in Christ Jesus”; and *atmosphere*—“in the flesh”, “in the spirit”. We have also seen that chapters vi. and vii. are parenthetical. They take up and dispose of a series of problems arising out of superabounding grace. They reveal the utter inability of the most enlightened conscience to free itself from the dominion of sin, and from the law of sin that is in the members.

As there are so many of God’s children who go through the experiences described in Rom. vii., it is blessedly true to speak of “stepping out of Rom. vii. into Rom. viii.”; but, while this may be true to the experience of many, experience is not the rule of our faith. It has been said that experience is like the tail-light of a ship; it can only illumine the past. The *experience* of Israel was a wandering in the wilderness for forty years before entry into the promised land; but a true conception of God’s purpose would have seen only the shortest possible interval between the exodus from Egypt and the entry into rest. While, therefore, we most gladly agree that the glorious words of Rom. viii. 1 do often follow as God’s answer of peace to the wretched man of Rom. vii. 24 (and, indeed, they could just as well follow on from Rom. vii. 6 or vi. 14), the real transition is from Rom. v. 21. The key-word is “condemnation”, which in the Greek is *katakrima*. While the verb *katakrino* occurs elsewhere in the N.T., God has used the noun *katakrima* only three times—twice in Rom. v. to tell us how condemnation came in, and once in Rom. viii. to assure us that in Christ it has passed away. The following will illustrate the relation of the four chapters:--

CONDEMNATION (Rom. v. 16, 18).	THE FOUR QUESTIONS of ROM. VI. and VII.	NO CONDEMNATION (Rom. viii. 1).
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The question here is so important that we must set out each passage in full:--

“And not as through one that sinned, is the free gift. For indeed the judgment was by one unto *condemnation*, but the gift by grace is of many offences unto justification” (Rom. v. 16).

“Therefore, indeed, as through one offence judgment came unto all men unto *condemnation*, so also through one righteousness the free gift came upon all men unto a justification of life” (Rom. v. 18).

Before quoting Rom. viii. 1, we draw attention to the fact that in each case the alternative to condemnation is a “justification”, and that the word so translated is *dikaioma*. What this involves we must leave for the moment; we just wish to ensure here that the fact is noticed and recorded:--

“There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus . . . . that the righteousness (*dikaioma*) of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit” (Rom. viii. 1-4).

Before we proceed, however, we must look at Rom. viii. as a whole, and discover, if possible, the underlying structure. At this point the reader may interject: Why spend time over this when it has already been done by others? We would assure the reader that we have considered most carefully everything on this subject that has come to our notice. The pressure under which these articles are written makes us jealous of minutes, to say nothing of the hours that the structure of a passage like Rom. viii. might cost us. We seldom speak about ourselves in this magazine, but we desire that every reader should appreciate the help that a true understanding of the trend of a passage is to its fullest unfolding.

Most of us have probably noted the opening and closing themes of Rom. viii.: “No condemnation” and “No separation”: and it would have been easy to have adopted this view of the passage without further investigation. One feature, however, has always presented itself as central to the teaching of Rom. viii., and that is the prominence given to “adoption”. In verse 15 we have the “spirit of adoption”; and in verse 23 we have the “adoption” itself, “to wit, the redemption of the body”. Then, too, we have the “spirit of bondage again to fear”, the deliverance from “the bondage of corruption”, and the “liberty of the glory of the children of God”. (In considering this chapter, the reader must remember that the word “adoption” is a compound in which *huios*, meaning “son”, stands first. It means literally “placing as a son”). The earlier part of Rom. viii. is full of references to “the Spirit”, which seem to reach their climax in this “sonship spirit” of Rom. viii. 15. The cry “Abba, Father” is evidently crucial too. And so, to cut a long story short, with these facts as guides, the following sevenfold outline based upon the recurrence of the word “Son” is the result:--

### Romans viii. 1-39.

- A | 1-4. No condemnation. God sent His own SON (*huios*).
- B | 5-15. Led by Spirit of God. SONS now (*huios*).
- C | 15-17. Spirit Itself bears witness. SONSHIP (*huiosthesia*).
- D | 17-21. Suffering and Glory. Manifestation of SONS (*huios*).
- C | 22-28. Spirit Itself intercedes. SONSHIP (*huiosthesia*).
- B | 29, 30. Conformed to the image of His SON then (*huios*).
- A | 31-39. Who condemns? He spared not His own SON (*huios*).

Just as the chapter opens with a statement concerning the believer’s immunity from condemnation, so it closes with the same fact, and upon the same ground, namely, the gift of God’s Son:--

“There is, therefore, now no CONDEMNATION to them which are in Christ Jesus . . . . God sending his Son . . . . CONDEMNED sin in the flesh” (Rom. viii. 1-3).  
 “He that spared not His own Son . . . . Who is he that CONDEMNETH? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. viii. 32-34).

This, then, is the beginning and end of the matter, even as it is the beginning and end of the structure—“His own Son”.

The next fact that emerges is that all who are thus blessed are “sons of God” too. The member marked B | 5-15 is full of references to the Spirit, the spirit of resurrection anticipating now in this life and in these mortal bodies that glorious consummation when we shall in actual fact be “conformed to the image of His Son” in resurrection glory. And so the two corresponding members read:--

- B | 5-15. “Led by Spirit of God. SONS now (*huios*).”
- B | 29, 30. “Conformed to the image of His SON then (*huios*).”

Added to this leading by the Spirit of God is His “witness” and His “intercession”:--

“The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God”  
(Rom. viii. 16).

“The Spirit Itself . . . . maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of  
God” (Rom. viii. 26, 27).

This “witness” and intercession” are closely associated with the fact that these sons of God are not yet in glory, but here in the midst of a groaning creation. They are strengthened to suffer because of the glory that is to come; they are “saved by hope”; and while they often know not what to pray for, they do know that all things work together for good. It is in this realm that the witness and intercession of the Spirit have their place. In the structure it will be seen that the word SON gives place to SONSHIP, which is the word “adoption” in the A.V.:--

C | 15-17. Spirit Itself bears witness. SONSHIP (*huiosthesia*).

C | 22-28. Spirit Itself intercedes. SONSHIP (*huiosthesia*).

This brings us to the centre of the structure:--

D | 17-21. Suffering and Glory. Manifestation of SONS (*huios*).

Until the reign of sin and death actually ceases, until creation itself emerges into the liberty of the glory of the children of God, the day of complete emancipation for the believer must be future. For the present, it is enough that we have passed from Adam to Christ, that there is now no condemnation, that during this pilgrimage we have the witness and the intercession of the Spirit, and that with all our ignorance of what to pray for, we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.

We commend this outline to the prayerful interest of the reader, believing that, as it is based upon the occurrence of words used by the Holy Spirit and not upon headings of our own devising, it does “divide aright” this precious portion of truth. It shews us the seven great sections into which the subject-matter falls, and provides us with well-defined bounds for our subsequent studies. We hope to deal with the opening section A | 1-4 in our next article.

**#53. The Law of the Spirit of Life (viii. 1-4).**  
**pp. 117 - 124**

In the preceding study we surveyed the whole of chapter viii., and discovered its sevenfold division of theme, based upon the emphasis given to the idea of “sonship”. Sonship is the antithesis in Scripture of slavery. The coming in of sin and death and their subsequent dominion over man, robbed Adam and his seed of their “place as sons”.

There are some of God’s children who do not speak of Adam as a “son of God”, for fear lest some unscriptural deductions should follow. While we must emulate their desire to preserve the truth of God, we must not “put out our hand to stay the ark of God” by veiling any portion of His truth. Luke iii. 23-38 gives the genealogy of Christ, and traces it back through David, “which was the son of Jesse”, Abraham, which was the son of Terah”, Shem, “which was the son of Noah”, and Adam, “which was the son of God”. Adam was made in the image of God, though that image was subsequently marred through sin. It is yet to be restored in resurrection, as Rom. viii. 29 reveals: “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.”

The creation, when Adam sinned, became subjected to vanity (Rom. viii. 20), and the redeemed share its groaning until the day of redemption. Spiritual powers intervened in Eden to separate man from his Maker, but his position “in Christ” is far more secure than that of unfallen Adam could ever have been, and “neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers” shall be able to separate from the love of God those who are restored in Christ. The alternating references to “flesh” and “spirit” that occupy so large a place in the first half of Rom. viii. deal with these two spheres; the spirit of bondage being that of the flesh, and the spirit of adoption whereby we cry “Abba, Father”, being the sonship spirit of resurrection, which is the dominant note of this section.

The section before us is that covered by Rom. viii. 1-4, and there we meet the first and most wonderful definition of the spirit in which we live, move and have our renewed being. Most editors of the Greek Text agree that the words of Rom. viii. 1: “Who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit” are an interpolation introduced into the text from verse 4. It may be that some felt that the statement of Rom. viii. 1 needed some modifying, that freedom from condemnation, if proclaimed without some limits and qualifications, would be harmful. This is exactly the opposition to free grace that the apostle anticipated and met in Rom. vi. 1 and 15. *Bloomfield* expresses this uneasiness by rendering the words “Who walk” by “If they do walk”; and he quotes other writers who suggest “So that they do but walk”, “showing that *justification* through Christ’s *death* can only be made *effectual* by sanctification through His Spirit”. With all due regard to this wholesome association of “doctrine” and “manner of life”, the introduction of conditions and qualifying terms here is unscriptural and subversive. Freedom from condemnation is not conditional upon the *walk of the believer*; it is entirely conditional upon the *work of God’s Son*. We must be *free*, before we can think of walking according to the spirit. While we were in slavery, we were in the flesh, and could not please God.

The reader may remember that we drew attention in the preceding article to the fact that it is “justification” that is set over against “condemnation” in Rom. v. 16, 18 and viii. 1-4, and not “sanctification”. In all this, of course, we have no word to say against sanctification—as the reader will see from the articles under that heading. What we seek to do is to keep each truth in its appointed place, and thus to be unashamed of our work.

The structure of Rom. viii. 1-4 shows most clearly the one and only ground of our exemption from condemnation:--

### **Romans viii. 1-4.**

A | 1. NO CONDEMNATION. In Christ Jesus.  
 B | a | 2. The two laws. |  
           The law of the spirit of life.  
           The law of sin and death.  
       b | 3. What the law could not do. |  
           The law, weak through the flesh.  
           God, sending His Son in the flesh.  
 A | 3. CONDEMNATION. In the flesh.  
 B |    b | 4. What has been done. |  
           The righteousness of the law.  
           Fulfilled in us.  
       a | 4. The two walks. |  
           Who walk not after the flesh.  
           But after the spirit.

We are saved by hope (viii. 24), we are waiting for the adoption (viii. 23), we groan within ourselves together with the whole creation (viii. 23), but we do not have to await the day of glory to be sure that condemnation is for ever past. “There is, therefore, *now* no condemnation.” Let us not miss this blessed fact:--

“But NOW the righteousness of God without the law is manifested” (Rom. iii. 21).  
 “Being NOW justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath” (Rom. v. 9).  
 “By Whom we have NOW received the reconciliation” (Rom. v. 11).  
 “But NOW being made free from sin . . . ye have your fruit unto holiness” (Rom. vi. 22).  
 “The life I NOW live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God” (Gal. ii. 20).

We are acquitted *now*, we are free from condemnation *now*. Without the assurance of a present position of acceptance before God, sanctification, growth in grace, service and walk would be impossible. We should still be “in the flesh” and so unable to please God. The passage in Rom. vi. 22 quoted above gives us the true sequence:--

- (1) Now made free from sin.
- (2) Become servants to God.
- (3) Fruit unto holiness.
- (4) The end, everlasting life.

The words, “In Christ Jesus”, belong not only to the statement of verse 1; they are equally necessary when revealing the power that accomplishes this deliverance, as

revealed in verse 2: “For the law of the spirit of life *in Christ Jesus* hath made free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. viii. 2). What is this “law of the spirit of life”? Many understand it as referring to the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit on the believer:--

“The dictate of or inclination imparted by the Spirit, Who quickens those that once were dead in trespasses and sins, and gives them the predominant inclination to live in Christ” (*Moses Stuart*).

But surely this interpretation is seriously at fault. In what way can it possibly be taught that our *subsequent* growth in grace or “inclination imparted by the Spirit” is the effectual cause of our freedom from condemnation? We are not freed from condemnation because we are sanctified. We are freed because of the finished work of Christ, accomplished on our behalf while we were “yet sinners”, and in order that we might be sanctified. Let us not intrude anything of ourselves, not even the new life given by God, into this solemn transaction, in which Christ alone must be the one great Worker.

In considering the expressions, “the law of the spirit of life” and “the law of sin and death”, we must remember that the word “law” is often used in the Scriptures in a sense that is fuller and deeper than implied in the law of Moses. In the epistle to the Romans, while the earlier references to “law” (chapters ii.-vii.) are mainly concerned with the law of Moses, at verse 21 of chapter vii. we pass on to the discovery of another law, a law that works within: “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.” This is a reference to the “law of sin and death” from which those who are “in Christ Jesus” are now freed. Under this head may be included several other passages in Rom. vii.:--

“I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members” (Rom. vii. 23).

“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Rom. vii. 25).

The working of the law of the spirit of life is also seen in this chapter:--

“Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. vii. 17).

“To will is present with me” (Rom. vii. 18).

“I delight in the law of God after the inward man” (Rom. vii. 22).

“With the mind I myself serve the law of God” (Rom. vii. 25).

It is one of the attributes of “law” that it “has dominion”, and, as Rom. vii. 1 makes clear, “dominion as long as man lives”. The dominion of the law of sin and death is implied in Rom. v. and in Rom. vi., as the following passages shew:--

“By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin” (Rom. v. 2).

“Death reigned” (Rom. v. 14).

“By one offence death reigned by one” (Rom. v. 17).

“By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation” (Rom. v. 18).

“By one man’s disobedience many were made sinners” (Rom. v. 19).

“Sin hath reigned unto death” (Rom. v. 21).

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him” (Rom. vi. 9).

“Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body” (Rom. vi. 12).  
“Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace”  
(Rom. vi. 14).

In these passages we have the operation of the law of sin and death, a law that has dominion over every one that is “in Adam”, a law that reigns in the “mortal body”, a law that is “in the members”. Until “this mortal puts on immortality”, the presence of that law of sin and death will be felt. We are not yet freed from its presence or its influence, but we are freed *now* from its condemnation. This present freedom is a blessed anticipation of that future “freedom of the glory of the children of God” when the spirit of adoption shall give place to actuality, and the members of this mortal body, which have been the seat and medium of sin, shall be laid aside for ever.

If the “law of sin and death” is that dominion and reign of sin brought in by the offence and disobedience of Adam, the “law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus” which sets us free is that reign of grace made possible by the “one righteousness” and the “obedience of One” Who bears the titles of “The Last Adam” and “The Second Man”. We have already set out the references in Rom. v. and vi. to the law of sin and death that issued in our condemnation; we must now set out, in contrast to this, the glorious law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, that issues in our freedom from condemnation:--

“The judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification” (Rom. v. 16).

“By obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Rom. v. 19).

“Even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. v. 21).

In I Cor. xv., where death and immortality are in view, we read: “The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a *life-giving Spirit*” (verse 45).

Here, in the risen Christ, we find the “law of the spirit of life”. “In Adam” all die; the law of sin and death operates, and condemnation is inevitable. “In Christ” all are made alive; the law of the spirit of life operates, and acquittal from condemnation must follow.

It almost seems that God has so worded Rom. viii. 1-4 that there shall be no possibility of intruding the thought of the believer’s sanctification, for the apostle immediately follows with another explanation. Verses 2 and 3 both commence with the word “for”:

“FOR the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Rom. viii. 2).

“FOR . . . . God sending His Son . . . . condemned sin in the flesh” (Rom. viii. 3).

We are not left in doubt as to the meaning attached to the word “free” in Rom. viii. 2. In various forms, the word occurs in Romans seven times:--

“Being made *free* from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom. vi. 18).

“When ye were the servants of sin, ye were *free* from righteousness” (Rom. vi. 20).

“But now being made *free* from sin” (Rom. vi. 22).

“But if her husband be dead, she is *free* from that law” (Rom. vii. 3).

“The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me *free* from the law of sin and death” (Rom. viii. 2).

“Because the creature itself also shall be *set free* from the bondage of corruption into the *freedom* of the glory of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 21).

Each of these passages illuminates viii. 2, but perhaps vii. 3 is most to the point. Nothing that a wife could do, could save her from being called an adulteress should she marry another man, except one thing, and that beyond her control—the death of her husband, and with him, the death of the law to her. Nothing that we can do or that can be done in us, can ever set us free from condemnation, except the death of the law to us, and our death to it. This, as we rejoice to know, is what has actually taken place. We are called upon to reckon as God has reckoned. By virtue of our union with Christ, when He died, we died with Him; when He arose, we arose with Him; and we are free.

This, however, does not contradict the fact that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing. Our freedom from condemnation and the dominion of sin, does not mean sinless perfection in the flesh. Experimental sanctification and unqualified acquittal must not be confused. Full freedom still awaits the glory, when mortality shall be swallowed up and the spirit of adoption, which is the earnest we now possess, gives place to the adoption itself, the redemption of the body. We live in the power of the risen life, but not yet in its actuality. The law, however, could not give this freedom. It spoke only of complete obedience or death. God’s remedy was the gift of His Son, Who took upon Himself flesh and blood, was made like unto His brethren, and was made sin for us, Who knew no sin. Hence the remarkable words used in Rom. viii. 3: “God sending His own Son in the likeness of sin’s flesh.” The flesh was real, but it was “*in the likeness* of sin’s flesh”; for He knew no sin. In that flesh, God condemned sin. “In the body of His flesh through death” we find our freedom, our justification, our newness of life.

There is one further point that demands attention, and we must ask the reader’s patience a little longer, as the subject is so vital:--

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit” (Rom. viii. 4).

Most commentators see in this verse the resulting sanctification of the believer, now set free by the death of Christ. It is true that the whole law is summed up in “love” (*see* Rom. xiii. 8; Gal. v. 13, 14), and that the believer can now begin to obey that law which previously proved too much for his weak and sinful nature. All this is true, but we believe it is not the primary truth set forth here. The primary truth is not that we are set free from the law that we might fulfil the law, but rather that we are set free from the law to stand upon a higher plane altogether. Our justification is by “a righteousness of God apart from law”. We learn that sin shall have no more dominion over us, for we “are not under the law, but under grace”. Christ is “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”. Let us, therefore, not be too eager to fasten the yoke of the law upon the liberated children of God.

The word “righteousness” in Rom. viii. 4 is *dikaioma*, and means “the requirement of the law”, “the law’s right”, the thing the law demanded, its “sentence”. The first occurrence in Romans has nothing to do with endeavouring to obey the law, but with recognizing the fact that where the law is broken, *the law requires death*: “Who knowing the *dikaioma* (the just requirement) of God, that they which commit such things *are worthy of death*” (Rom. i. 32). The law, however, in the first place *requires obedience*, as the second reference indicates: “If the uncircumcision keep the *just requirement* of the law” (Rom. ii. 26). The important point, however, for us to remember, is that when once we have broken the law, the *just requirement* of the law is not then some future obedience on our part, but “death” and “condemnation”. For the sinner, law-keeping is at an end; condemnation is all that is left.

Both senses of the word are found blended in the work of Christ in Rom. v. 16, 18, where *dikaioma* is twice rendered “justification”. In all cases, the word carries with it the idea of a “sentence”, a sentence either of death or of life.

The just requirement or sentence of the law has been fulfilled in us, for the Son of God was condemned for the sin under which we stood condemned. By this glorious redemption we are set free. And the fact that we who once lay under sentence of death are now no longer under law, but under grace, no longer walking after the flesh, but after the spirit, shows that the law’s claims have been satisfied, and we are righteously free.

The full significance of the expression “fulfilled in us” we must leave for our next article, as the subsequent section (verses 5-15) is largely an exposition of the apostle’s meaning. Meanwhile, may we give all the glory for our deliverance to Him Who was delivered up because of our offences, and was raised again because of our justification.

#### **#54. The spirit of Christ (viii. 5-15). pp. 165 - 171**

The opening section of Rom. viii. sounds the jubilee for all those who were slaves of sin and are now “in Christ Jesus”. Outside of Christ, there is no emancipation. To refuse the protection of the blood of the Passover Lamb is to remain in bondage worse than that of Egypt. “No condemnation” is true of us, because “condemnation” was true of Him the Son of God. The righteous sentence of the law has been fulfilled in the redeemed in the Person of their Saviour. “By His stripes we are healed.”

The sphere of condemnation is the flesh, and unites us with Adam. The sphere of emancipation is the spirit, and unites us with Christ. The possession of life is indicated by activity. We rise from our shackles to “walk in newness of life”, and to “serve in newness of spirit”.

We now come to the section Rom. viii. 5-15. We must spare no pains and use all legitimate means to seek a true understanding of this important passage. Everything in it revolves round the “flesh” and the “spirit”:-

<b>The flesh.</b>	<b>The spirit.</b>
For they that are after the flesh do <i>mind</i> the things of the flesh;	but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit;
<i>Here (in the passage above) the emphasis is upon the mind.</i>	
For to be carnally minded is death;  Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.	but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.
<i>Here we have death and enmity over against life and peace.</i>	
But ye are not in the flesh,  Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.	but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you.  but the spirit is life because of righteousness.
<i>Here we see the distinction between being in the flesh and in the spirit.</i>	
	But if the spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, because of His spirit that dwelleth in you.
<i>“Jesus” refers to the Lord Himself, “Christ” associates His people with Him, and the quickening of the mortal body shows the foretaste of the resurrection enjoyed now, the “spirit of adoption”.</i>	
Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die.	but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.
<i>Once again the issues of life and death are brought before us.</i>	
For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.	For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.
<i>The flesh is enslaved, but the spirit is the free spirit of sonship.</i>	

Before we attempt an exposition of these words, which are full of meaning for us all, let us see the general disposition of the subject-matter in the structural form.

**Romans viii. 5-15.**  
**Flesh and Bondage. Spirit and Sonship.**

- A | Flesh v. spirit (5-8).
  - a1 | Flesh. Its mind.
  - b1 | Spirit. Its mind.
  - a2 | Flesh and its mind is death.
  - b2 | Spirit and its mind is life and peace.
  - a3 | Flesh and its mind is enmity against God and cannot please Him
- B | The IF of the indwelling spirit (9-13)
  - c | IF spirit indwell: not in flesh.
  - d | IF any man have not the spirit of Christ.
  - e | IF Christ be in you; body dead; spirit life.
  - e | IF spirit dwell in you; body quickened.
  - d | IF live after the flesh; die.
  - c | IF mortify by the spirit; live.
- A | Slave v. sons (14, 15).
  - a | Sons of God are led by the Spirit of God.
  - b | Spirit of slavery and fear.

The closing verses of Rom. vii. have already acquainted us with what the apostle calls the “law of my mind”, which is in conflict with the law of sin in the members. The renewed child of God allies himself with this new mind:--

“So then with the mind I MYSELF serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin” (Rom. vii. 25).

“If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. vii. 16, 17).

“Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. vii. 20).

“I delight in the law of God after the inward man” (Rom. vii. 22).

The reader will have observed that in both chapter vii. and chapter viii., we have references to some thing or some power “indwelling”. If we accept the reading of the Vatican MS we shall find that the words *enoikeo en* (“indwell in”) occur in vii. 17 and viii. 11, and *oikeo* followed by *en* in vii. 18, 20 and viii. 9, 11:--

“It is no more I that do it, but sin that *indwells* in me” (Rom. vii. 17).

“He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His spirit that *indwelleth* in you” (Rom. viii. 11).

These, then, are the two “indwellers”: sin in the flesh, as the active agent dominating life and all its outgoings, and the spirit of Him Who raised up Christ from the dead indwelling in us. We are “in the spirit”, if it can be said of us that the spirit of God dwells in us:--

“Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you” (Rom. viii. 9).

The apostle had learned that in his flesh dwelt no good thing, so that he did not look to the flesh to accomplish anything that would be acceptable to God. What is said of the flesh indwelt by sin, is said also of the mind of the flesh. It is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God. It cannot please God. It seems, therefore, that the flesh indwelt by sin, the members dominated by the law of sin, and the mind of the flesh which cannot please God, are associated together as closely as the spirit, soul and body of one person.

We await the redemption of the body, which will take place at the resurrection, when the sons of God shall be manifested, and we shall enter into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. This is the adoption. We receive now the “*spirit* of adoption”. We are led by the spirit of God, and are thus indicated as sons of God here and now. And just as we look for a literal and physical resurrection in the future, so the indwelling of the spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead, gives us now the “spirit of adoption”, and quickens our mortal bodies. That this refers to “the life I now live in the flesh” the apostle makes clear in Gal. ii. 20.

It is the blessed privilege of the believer in Eph. ii. 5 to be “quickened together with Christ”. This precedes the thought of being “raised together” and must be considered separately. This does not, of course, exempt the saint from death—“the body is dead because of sin”. But without this quickening, “life unto God” before resurrection would be impossible. “Walk in newness of life” follows being “raised up from the dead” (Rom. vi. 4):--

“Yield yourselves unto God, *as those that are alive from the dead*, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. vi. 13).

We would refer the reader back to #36 of this series where the key-word “Spirit” is dealt with. The sphere of the new life is there seen to be “in spirit”, its nature is seen to be “resurrection”, and its expression “sonship”.

It is well for us to remember that, just as the law has no more claim upon us, so of the flesh it can be said: “We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh” (Rom. viii. 12).

Let us now look at the two sections of Rom. viii. *A* | 1-4 and *B* | 5-15. We observe that, in the first section, freedom from condemnation is associated with the “law of the spirit of life”; and in the second section we read: “The spirit is life because of righteousness.” The positional teaching of Rom. viii. 1 and 2 is “In Christ Jesus”, while the positional teaching of the subsequent section is “The spirit of God dwelling in you”. Freedom from the “law of sin and death” permits the indwelling of the spirit of Him “Who raised up Christ from the dead”, to quicken even the mortal bodies of the saints. The inability of the law because of the flesh (Section *A*) is linked up with the incorrigible character of the mind of the flesh: “It is not subject to the law of God (Section *B*). Walk according to the flesh and according to the spirit is seen to be largely a result of the “mind”, the mind of the flesh leading to death, the mind of the spirit leading to life and peace.

Once again let us sound out the note of freedom that the apostle strikes here:--

“The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me FREE” (Rom. viii. 2).

“For ye have not received the spirit of BONDAGE” (Rom. viii. 15).

How have we been made free?:--

“If her husband be dead, she is FREE from the law . . . . Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ . . . . We are delivered from the law, having died to that wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in oldness of the letter” (Rom. vii. 2-6).

The close association of the spirit with freedom finds an exposition in II Cor. iii., where the ministration of death and condemnation is contrasted with the ministration of the spirit and righteousness. The conclusion reached is that “where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Cor. iii. 17).

Written plainly across Rom. viii. are the words: “The flesh profiteth nothing.” Let us rejoice that condemnation is past and that the law under which we live is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The life we now live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, and only as indwelt by the spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead can we hope to live well pleasing to Him, to suffer without shame, and to rise more than conquerors.

The expressions found in Rom. viii. 5-15 to denote “the spirit” are full and varied. Among them we have *pneuma Theou* and *pneuma Christou* (viii. 9). The words *Theou* and *Christou*, “of God” and “of Christ”, are examples of the “Genitive of Character”, and mean Divine *pneuma* (or Divine spirit) and Christ *pneuma* (or Christ spirit). This refers to the new nature, and is set in contrast with the flesh which we derive from Adam. This Christ *pneuma* is the “sonship *pneuma*”; and as many as are led by the Divine *pneuma*, this new nature, are sons of God.

The first occurrence of “spirit” in Romans (Rom. i. 4) is important, as it refers to the nature of the Lord Jesus. As regards His flesh, He was “of the seed of David”. As regards His *spirit*, He was “the Son of God”. Here we have the Christ *pneuma* of Rom. viii., without which we cannot be “sons”.

The spirit of Christ, in Rom. i. 4, is associated with resurrection and holiness. The word translated “holiness” here is unknown outside the Scriptures. The word is *hagiosune* and occurs three times: II Cor. vii. 1, I Thess. iii. 13, and Rom. i. 4. *Hagiosune* means something more than being holy as to character. It denotes the nature of holiness itself:--

“Hence *pneuma hagiosune*, a *pneuma* of holiness, being the Genitive of Apposition, means a *pneuma which is holiness itself*. This agrees with Luke i. 35 where it is distinctly stated to Mary that ‘that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God . . . .’ accordingly, at His birth He was declared to be ‘the Son of God’.

And being the Son of God 'it was not possible that he should be holden of death, therefore God raised Him from the dead' (Acts ii. 24); and by His resurrection He was thus by Divine power declared to be the Son of God" (The Giver and His gifts by Dr. E. W. Bullinger).

The spirit of Christ was not antagonistic to the flesh He bore, for that flesh knew no sin. In our case it is different. In our flesh dwells no good thing, and consequently the spirit of sonship, which partakes of His holiness, must for ever be diametrically opposed to the flesh. It is this antagonism that we see in Rom. viii., and wherever flesh is contrasted with spirit in the believer. The "spirit" of Rom. viii. 5-15 refers to the new nature in the child of God. It is a Divine spirit, being of God. It is Christ-spirit, since it is ours by union with Christ. And it is the spirit of sonship. Not until verse 16 do we read of the Holy Spirit.

It is good for us to get a clear conception of "the spirit we are of". We must not confuse the new nature, which is spirit, with either the Holy Spirit, or His gifts as at Pentecost. As Eph. i. 19, 20 teaches, the power that is to usward that believe is the power of His resurrection. And Rom. viii. would impress us with the fact that the spirit according to which we now walk is the free spirit of sonship, the spirit of Him that raised up Christ from the dead. Holiness or sanctification, therefore, is implicit in our justification and our acquittal, and its outworking in life and practice is the outworking of the spirit of sonship that we have received.

### **#55. The witness of the Spirit Himself (viii. 15-17). pp. 216 - 221**

The section before us contains the key-word of the chapter, "*adoption*"—a word of great importance and worthy of the closest attention. The "spirit of adoption" sums up all that has been said in the earlier verses of chapter viii. It is the spirit of life that is set over against sin and death. It is essentially "free"; for it is in contrast with the spirit of bondage and fear. It is not only the spirit of sonship, but includes also the conception of inheritance.

The following is the structural outline of the passage:--

#### **Romans viii. 15-17.**

- A | SONS. | a | Ye have received.
  - b | The sonship spirit.
- a | We cry.
  - b | Abba, Father.
- B | Spirit Itself bears witness with our spirits.
- A | HEIRS. | a | We are the children of God.
  - b | And if children.
  - b | Then heirs.
  - a | Heirs of God.

It is common knowledge that the epistle to the Galatians traverses a good deal of the ground that is more systematically dealt with in Romans; and it is in this epistle (to the Galatians) that we learn the true meaning of the term “adoption”. If we examine Rom. viii., with this doctrine of adoption before us, we observe the following facts:--

- (1) We receive now the *spirit* of adoption, but look forward to the adoption itself in resurrection (Rom. viii. 15 and 23).
- (2) The spirit of adoption is placed in opposition to the spirit of bondage. As this bondage is called the “bondage of corruption”, it follows that the spirit of adoption anticipates resurrection.
- (3) This is manifested in present sonship, whereby we cry, “Abba, Father”. While we are sons of God now, the day of our “manifestation” awaits the resurrection (verse 19). The freedom experienced by the children of God now is a foretaste of “the liberty of the *glory*”, which is to come.
- (4) What we have, therefore, are the “firstfruits of the Spirit” (viii. 23); and while we are “saved by hope” (viii. 24), this does not exempt us at the moment from “groaning within ourselves”, as we wait for the adoption (viii. 23).
- (5) The word “adoption” in the Greek is *huiothesia*, “to place as a son”. It means something more than being a son by birth.

The testimony of Gal. iv. 1-6 as to the meaning of “adoption” is important:--

“Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: but when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. iv. 1-6).

Instead of the bondage of corruption, as in Rom. viii., we have here the bondage of worldly elements. Instead of the “manifestation of the sons of God”, we have “the time appointed of the father”. Deliverance is effected by Christ as Redeemer both in Rom. viii. and Gal. iv. And the sequel, “Walk in the spirit” of Rom. viii. 4, is found in Gal. iv. 21-31.

Sir William Ramsay, D.C.L., writing concerning Gal. iii. and iv., says:--

“Adoption was a kind of embryo will; the adopted son became owner of the property, and the property could pass to a person that was naturally outside the family only by his being adopted. The adoption was a sort of will-making; and this ancient form of will was irrevocable and public. The terms ‘son’ and ‘heir’ are interchangeable. An illustration from the ordinary facts of society, as it existed in Galatian cities, is here stated; ‘I speak after the manner of men’. The Will (*diatheke*) of a human being is irrevocable when once duly executed. Such irrevocability was a characteristic of Greek law. The Roman-Syrian Law Book will illustrate this passage of the epistle. It actually lays down the principle that a man can never put away an *adopted son*, and that he cannot put away a real son without good ground. It is remarkable that the adopted son should have a stronger position than the son by birth; yet it is so.”

“Adoption” is made up of two Greek words, *huios*, meaning “son” and *thesia*, meaning “to place”. We quote the following comment upon the distinction between “sons” and “children” from the writings of *Bishop Westcott*:--

“There is the position of ‘sonship’ (characteristic of the teaching of St. Paul), which suggests thoughts of privilege, of inheritance, of dignity: and there is also the position of ‘childship’ (characteristic of the teaching of St. John), which suggests the thoughts of community of nature, of dependence, of tender relationship. Sons may be adopted; children can only be born. The two conceptions are evidently complementary; but they must be realized separately before the full force of the whole idea which they combine to give can be felt. Two or three illustrations will be sufficient to indicate the gain to the student of Scripture from the faithful preservation of this distinction between the general conceptions of a Divine inheritance and a Divine nature. Thus we now read (in the R.V.) that the Lord gave them that received Him the right to become *children* (A.V. ‘sons’) of God, ‘which were born . . . . of God’ (John i. 12). And again: “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called *children* (A.V. ‘sons’) of God; and such we are’ (I John iii. 1).”

So, conversely, in other places the title of privilege is restored to the English text. “They that are accounted worthy to attain that world . . . . are equal to the angels; and are *sons* (A.V. ‘children’) of God, being *sons* of the resurrection” (Luke xx. 35):--

“We have received the spirit of adoption (the placing as sons, involving the thought of an inheritance), whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are (or, because we are) the children of God: and if children, then heirs, heirs of God” (Rom. viii. 15-17).

We do not include the succeeding words, “And joint-heirs with Christ”, for that takes us into the realm of suffering in view of glory. This would be additional to the subject before us, which is simply the fact of sonship, childhood and inheritance.

We have seen that under the Greek law that obtained in Asia Minor at the time of Galatians was written, a man could “adopt” as his heir one who was not his child by birth. We are assured, however, that all who have the spirit of adoption or sonship in the fullest sense, are the children of God. And it is at this point that the Holy Spirit is introduced:--

“The Spirit Itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. viii. 16).

It must be remembered that while the English language has rid itself of almost all genders in words, other languages, like French for example, have retained them. With us the word “table” is neuter. With the French, it is feminine, *la table*. Obviously, however, it would not be a correct translation into English to refer to a table as “she”. In other words, the gender of a word has no relation to the sex of the thing signified. The Greek word for “head” is *kephale*, and is feminine, but it would make strange doctrine if this grammatical fact obtruded itself into the thought of Christ as the Head of the church. The word *pneuma*, “spirit”, is neuter and consequently is followed by the neuter pronoun “it”, just as *kephale* would be followed by the feminine pronoun “she”. The neuter pronoun does not in any way suggest the impersonality of the Holy Spirit; just as the feminine

gender of the word “head” has no possible connection with the person of Christ, the Man at God’s right hand. When, therefore, the word *pneuma* is followed by the neuter pronoun “it”, the grammatical construction has no bearing upon the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. If the grammatical rule were broken, and the masculine pronoun used with the neuter word *pneuma*, then this departure from the normal sequence would have a special meaning. The reader may not know that such a departure does occur in John’s Gospel, where the speaker is the Son of God. In John xiv. 26 and John xvi. 13 we have two passages where the word *ekeinos*, emphatic and masculine, is used, contrary to the grammatical rule. If the antecedent in the second passage is *parakletos*, the Comforter, then it is clearly a testimony to the personality of the Holy Spirit that the Lord should go back seventy words in order to find a word in the masculine gender rather than use the simple neuter.

The word *ekeinos* is used in John’s Gospel quite frequently, and in many passages emphasis upon the person spoken of is intended. Take, for example, the following:--

“He hath declared Him” (John i. 18).  
“He it is that loveth Me” (John xiv. 21).

Or the passage in John iv. (very similar to that in John xvi. 13):--

“When He (*ekeinos*) is come, He will tell us all things” (iv. 25).  
“When He (*ekeinos*), the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth” (xvi. 13).

It is quite clear that personality is intended by this usage of *ekeinos*, and every lover of the truth would do well to test the faithfulness of any literal translation of the Greek N.T. on these passages.

Coming back to Rom. viii. it is evident that, if we are not going to mislead, we must translate the passage: “The Spirit Himself.”

The word “to bear witness” in the original is *summartureo* and occurs also in Rom. ii. 15 and ix. 1, where the conscience is referred to. Although it would require pages of writing to analyse what takes place when the conscience “bears witness”, every reader must be familiar with it as a fact of experience. If, then, the conscience can bear witness, how much more may the Holy Spirit Himself impress with unquestionable conviction the truth that “we are the children of God”.

In the physical realm, children can trace some measure of likeness with their parents, and discover certain family characteristics. These things are true also in the spiritual realm. The “children of God” have “received” and “believed” (John i. 12), and exhibit marked family characteristics (John viii. 39; I John iii. 1, 2, 10).

Moreover, fellowship with the Father is in itself an ever-abiding witness, though impossible of demonstration.

A comparison of Rom. viii. 14-17 with Gal. iv. 5-7 would lead us to place side by side, as parallel experiences, the receiving of the spirit of adoption, the witness of the Holy Spirit Himself, and the reception of the spirit of His Son:--

“To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant but a son; and if a son, an heir of God through Jesus Christ” (Gal. iv. 5-7).

Where Romans speaks of the witness of the Spirit Who testifies that we are the children of God, Galatians tells us that God sent the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba, Father”. The spirit of His Son, therefore, is the spirit of adoption, for both lead to the same cry, “Abba, Father”. “Children” of God in one case, and “sons” of God in the other, are heirs. What a confirmation of our glorious acceptance, relationship, and standing.

“*Abba, Father.*”—One word is Chaldee, and the other Greek. Some commentators think that these two words are used to indicate the union in one family of Jew and Gentile. Their use, however, by our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 36) makes it impossible to accept this suggestion. The Syriac Version reads, “Abba, my Father” or “Abba, our Father”. *Bishop Middleton* says:--

“The article has here, or elsewhere, the force of a possessive pronoun. Abba was the Oriental term, by which children *familiarly* addressed their parents; the addition of “my Father” was requisite to give solemnity and force.”

The only places where these words occur together are in the record of Gethsemane, and in the record of the gift of the spirit of adoption to the redeemed. The Redeemer in His agony, the redeemed in their joy; suffering and glory inter-related. If we are soon to hear of sharing His sufferings, of joining in creation’s groan, let us remember that we have the spirit of Christ, the spirit of sonship, whereby we cry, “Abba, my Father”.

**#56. Heirs, and Joint-heirs (viii. 17-21).**  
**pp. 265 - 270**

The epistle to the Ephesians reveals the “hope of our calling”, while the epistle to the Philippians reveals the “prize of the high calling”. Hope is associated with grace; the Prize with reward. Hope is ours because we are in Christ; the Prize will be ours, “if so be we suffer with Him”. From this it follows that an heir of God is not, necessarily, also a joint-heir with Christ. It was “to him that overcometh” that the promise was made that he should sit upon the throne (Rev. iii. 21). “If we suffer”, said the apostle Paul, “we shall also reign with Him” (II Tim. ii. 12). The doctrine has changed from “in Christ Jesus” to “with Christ”. We do not meet the preposition *sun*, “with”, in Rom. viii. until verse 16, where it occurs in the word *summartureo*, “bear witness together”. After that we have *sugkleronomos*, “joint-heirs”; *sumpascho*, “jointly suffer”; *sundoxazomai*, “jointly glorified”. The next occurrences are in verse 22, *sustenazo*, “groan together”, and *sunodino*, “travail together”, and in the latter half of the chapter, there are two or three more compounds of *sun*.

This use of the words “heir”, and “joint-heir”, the one a standing in pure grace, the other associated with faithfulness and possible suffering, is found in the epistle to the Colossians:--

“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance (*kleros*, the allotment) of the saints in the light” (Col. i. 12).

“Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance (*kleronomia*, the allotted portion); for ye serve the Lord Christ” (Col. iii. 24).

In the first instance the child of God has been “made meet”, in the second there is introduced “reward”, “service”, and even “receiving wrong”, showing that the two subjects are on different grounds, the one being followed by reference to the forgiveness of sins, the other by a reference to what the servant has done. So in Rom. viii., “If children, then heirs, heirs of God” is parallel with Col. i. 12. “Joint-heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him”, is parallel with Col. iii. 24, or as the apostle wrote to Timothy:--

“If we died with Him, we shall also live with Him, If we endure, we shall also reign with Him” (II Tim. ii. 11, 12).

The structure emphasizes the glory, and associates with it present suffering and future liberty. Moreover, it shows that the revelation of the sons of God and the revelation of the glory synchronize. Much of the present suffering will be found to be a sharing in the patience of Christ, Who himself awaits the day of His revelation and coronation. We share His rejection as those of old shared the rejection of David at Adullam, and we shall share His glory when He reigns. Just as there were some who attained to the “first three” or the “thirty” (II Sam. xxiii.), and just as one star differs from another star, though both “in glory”, so is it with the “heirs” and the “joint-heirs”, that is with those made meet for

the inheritance, and those who not only were made meet, but who will, additionally, receive a reward of the inheritance.

The structure of the section before us is as follows:--

**Romans viii. 17-21.  
Suffering and Glory.**

- A | 17. SUFFERING AND GLORY.
  - a | Joint-heirs (*sun*).
  - b | Suffer together (*sun*).
  - a | Glorified together (*sun*).
- B | 18. REVELATION OF GLORY.
  - c | Reckoning.
  - d | Present Suffering.
  - c | Comparing.
  - d | Future glory (*apokalupto*).
- B | 19. REVELATION OF SONS.
  - c | Expectation.
  - d | Of creature.
  - c | Revelation (*apokalupsis*).
  - d | Of sons.
- A | 20, 21. LIBERTY AND GLORY.
  - a | Subjection of the creature.
  - b | In hope.
  - a | Emancipation of the creature (*eleutheria*).
  - b | From bondage.
  - a | Liberty of children (*eleutheros*).

We have stated our belief as to the meaning of the apostle when he used the two words “heirs” and “heirs together”; but in order that none shall feel that we have spoken without investigation, we refer to the other passages where *sugkleronomos* occurs. The next reference in order to Rom. viii. is that found in Eph. iii. 6, “That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs”.

We can imagine the criticism, This reference nullifies the idea expressed above on Rom. viii. 17. To this we would reply, The truth revealed in Eph. iii. 6 was unknown at the time the apostle wrote to the Romans; that it reveals the constitution of the mystery, making known the glorious equality that exists between all members of the One Body, whereas Rom. viii. 17 is a revelation concerning “fellow-heirs” of Christ in connection with suffering. No such qualification is to be found in Eph. iii. The next reference, Heb. xi. 9, 10, is more in line with Rom. viii. 17:--

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the *heirs with* him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

“The land of promise” was Abraham’s by gift. No suffering could win it or make it more secure. The promise of the land made by God, and recorded in Genesis, is

unconditional. It balances the passage in Rom. viii. 17, "heirs with God". But Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived only as pilgrims in the land of promise, and looked for something beyond and above, even the New Jerusalem, the heavenly city. Unmentioned in the O.T., this comes to light only in the N.T. Heb. xi. deals with overcoming faith; faith that endures; faith that has a recompense of reward; faith that avoids Esau's bartering of the birthright for the present mess of pottage. Its whole teaching falls into line with the second part of Rom. viii. 17, "Fellow-heirs with Christ, if so be we suffer with Him". The last reference, I Pet. iii. 7, brings us back again to the simpler conception of equality:--

"Likewise ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being *heirs together* of the grace of life."

Fellow-heirs of the grace of life can have no comparison with fellow-heirs with Christ if so be they suffer:--

- A | Rom. viii. 17. Fellow-heirs. The PRIZE.
- B | Eph. iii. 6. Fellow-heirs. The HOPE.
- A | Heb. xi. 9. Fellow-heirs. The PRIZE.
- B | I Pet. iii. 7. Fellow-heirs. The HOPE.

The hope of the church as expressed in the Epistle to the Romans was millennial (Rom. xv. 12, 13), consequently the joint-heirs with Christ who are in any sense overcomers will find much that illuminates their position in Rev. ii., iii. There, addressing Himself to the seven churches of Asia, the Lord makes certain promises "to him that overcometh": "The tree of life" (Rev. ii. 7), "The crown of life", and "The second death" (Rev. ii. 10, 11): "The hidden manna", "white stone", and "new name" (Rev. ii. 17): "Power over the nations . . . . . even as I received of my Father" (Rev. ii. 26-28): "White raiment", "Book of life", and "Name confessed" (Rev. iii. 5): "A Pillar", "A new name", the name of the "New Jerusalem" (Rev. iii. 12): and finally, "A grant to sit with Christ in His throne, even as He overcame, and sat with His Father in His throne" (Rev. iii. 21). To sit down with Christ in His throne as an overcomer, to reign with Him, because one has endured, to be a joint-heir of Christ, if so be we suffer with Him, are all expositions of the same truth, though it operates in different spheres, whether the dispensation of the mystery, or the Acts period.

Having stated the relation that God has made to exist between present suffering and future glory, the apostle proceeds to encourage the believer by comparing the present with the future, and by showing inexpressibly grand is the prospect of glory, both to the individual and to all creation:--

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compare with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. viii. 18).

Throughout the remainder of the chapter this estimate of the apostle is substantiated by many and wonderful arguments. Let us see this for ourselves.

There is no comparison between our present sufferings and future glory for:--

- (1) These sufferings are comparatively insignificant (verses 18-23).
- (2) There is abundant provision made by the Lord for our sustenance under the sufferings, which includes the intercession of the Holy Spirit (verses 24-28).
- (3) There is the most complete assurance that glory shall be ours, for it is a part of the divine purpose, and cannot fail of accomplishment (verses 29, 30).
- (4) God being so evidently “for us”, even to the sparing not of His own Son, it follows that neither condemnation nor separation shall ever be known by us (verses 31-35).
- (5) We may pass through many and varied trials, but in the midst of them all we shall remain more than conquerors (verse 37).
- (6) The apostle’s opening words, “For I reckon”, are now exchanged for his closing conviction, “For I am persuaded” that nothing in earth, hell, or heaven shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (verses 38, 39).

We trust the reader enjoys something of this “strong consolation”. If he does, he will already have reviewed some of his own “sufferings”, which had appeared as “mountains”, and seen them in their true perspective as mole-hills. Nothing so marks the believer’s state as his attitude to suffering, irritations, vexatious waiting, and the need for long drawn out endurance. We need to keep Rom. viii. 17-39 continually in heart and mind, that we may lay hold of the hope set before us.

Unless the exposition of the remaining verses, 19-21, of this section be compressed into a short compass, and thus much that demands attention be missed, we must accept this introductory article for what it is worth, and be prepared, without more ado, to take up the examination of the remainder on resumption. This, we are sure, is the only wise course, and consequently we commend to the conscience of all what has been shown, praying that the glory that is yet to be may be our continual guide and incentive.

## **A review, and sign of the times.**

### **New Eden.**

*(From the "News Chronicle", 14/1/1935).*

**p. 103**

The traditional site of the Garden of Eden, now a barren, arid desert waste with only an occasional oasis, will, it is hoped, within three years become once more fertile and habitable.

This change is to be effected at a cost of over a million pounds by Messrs. Balfour and Beatty, of London, who were selected by the Iraqi Government, from many foreign rivals, to carry out this work.

They will construct a barrage across the Tigris at Kut, then dig a canal connecting the Tigris with a smaller river, the Shatt-el Gharraf, which runs down through the heart of Iraq, the traditional "Garden", almost as far as Ur of the Chaldees, the cradle city of civilization.

### **Faith Healing.**

*(From the News Chronicle, 4/4/1935).*

**p. 105**

"As one who has been a lay pastor of the Elim Four Square Movement, I would like to say that although I have met many supposed faith-healing cures I have never met a case where a doctor's certificate could be produced before or after the supposed cure. They may exist, but I have never met them."

"If faith-healing is a fact, how comes it one of their pastors attended a spa for personal healing yet would practice faith-healing upon others? If it is not deception what is it? E. W. H....L, *Birghton, 6.*"

**Ethiopia.**  
**p. 280**

Among the most important signs of the times that point to the close of the age, must be reckoned the movement of nations that will eventuate in the confederacy of kings under the Beast at the time of the end. The focal spot naturally is Jerusalem, and the central nation, Israel. Yet no one, untaught by the prophetic Scriptures, anticipated that the Great War which commenced in 1914 could not end until Jerusalem passed from under Turkish rule, but so it was.

The country of Abyssinia is not mentioned by that name in Scripture, but is nevertheless frequently referred to under the name Ethiopia. The Ethiopians are descendants of Ham, through his eldest son Cush. The words "Cush" and "Ethiopia" are interchangeable, and where we read in the A.V. the word Ethiopia, the reader should remember that the Hebrew word is always the name Cush.

A month or two ago, few would have given Abyssinia a moment's thought when compiling a list of the nations destined to play a part at the time of the end, yet the student of prophecy has always known that Ethiopia is to be in league, at least for a time, with Antichrist. Just before he "comes to his end", the willful king "shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape . . . . and the Lybyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps" (Dan. xi. 43). That Ethiopia will form part of the unholy alliance of nations at the time of the end, Ezekiel testifies. The land of Israel is to be invaded by "Gog, the chief prince (or prince of Rosh) of Meshech and Tubal" (Ezek. xxxviii. 1-5), and confederate with them will be "Persia, Ethiopia and Lybia". This confederacy will be overthrown, and numbers will perish, yet we find at the end Ethiopia numbered among the nations that will submit to the reign of the King of kings. Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Sing unto God, ye kingdoms of the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord" (Psa. lxxviii. 31, 32).

The reader would be well advised to study for His own edification the prophetic references to other nations, such as Greece, Persia, Egypt, etc., so that instead of having a failing of heart as these terrible signs begin to appear, he will realize how complete is the foreknowledge and the control of the Lord, and safely lean upon His faithfulness.

## **“This God is our God.”**

### **#13. The only wise God.**

**pp. 5 - 7**

There are some attributes of God that are specially singled out in the Scriptures as being His own peculiar possession. For example, we read, “Thou only art holy” (Rev. xv. 4) and “There is none good but One, that is God” (Matt. xix. 17). This exclusiveness is specially noticeable in connection with wisdom, and finds expression in three passages of Scripture.

We find it in Romans in connection with the hiding of certain of God’s purposes as a secret or “mystery”:

“To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen” (Rom. xvi. 27).

In direct and structural\* (*\*We do not give the structure here, but hope to do so in a series of articles dealing with Pastoral Epistles.*) relationship with the “mystery of godliness” in I Timothy we have the passage:

“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen” (I Tim. i. 17).

In Jude 25 we have this title for the third time; and although there is no definite reference to a mystery in the epistle, there is a reference to that spiritual foe whose presence and activities seem always to be in sight where the mysteries of God are concerned. It is in Jude that we read of the conflict between the Devil and Michael over the body of Moses, and that epistle ends with the words:

“To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

Although Rom. xi. does not use the actual words, “the only wise God”, the passage inspires the fact:

“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counselor? Or who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of Him, and through Him, and to Him, are all things: to Whom be glory for ever. Amen” (Rom. xi. 33-36).

Here once again a mystery is in view—the mystery of Israel’s blindness (Rom. xi. 25). It is to this blindness and its sequel that verse 32 refers; and this leads on to the ascription of wisdom.

One other feature has probably attracted the reader's attention—that each of the four passages cited are doxologies. It is perhaps obvious that sinners saved by grace should be grateful for salvation, for mercy, for life, for blessing. It is not so obvious that we should render unceasing praise to God “only wise”. It may be of service, therefore, to consider the wisdom of God together, so that we may praise Him as is His due.

Let us begin with the fact that God is “only wise”. There are passages of Scripture that speak of the wisdom of men. Solomon is an outstanding example; and Daniel shines, too, in this respect. Others also could be named, but we need not go further, for all the wisdom of Solomon and Daniel is but as a drop in an ocean. Every atom of it was derived from the Lord Himself. He alone is wise, and the fountain of wisdom.

So infinitely above all human wisdom is the wisdom of God, that the Scripture uses in this connection the strange figure *Catachresis*, or Incongruity:--

“The foolishness of God is wiser than men” (I Cor. i. 25).

With man, wisdom is the fruit of experience, of knowledge, of discipline, of time, and often the result of mistakes and failures. The wisdom of God is underived. It is His because He is God:--

“Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counselor hath taught Him?  
With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding?”  
(Isa. xl. 13, 14).

It would be well for us to keep steadily in mind that when we speak of the attributes of God, such as wisdom, power, righteousness, etc., we use a human device. There are in actuality no such attributes in the sense that God is compounded of so much substance and so many qualities. It would be truer to fact if we said that God Himself is wisdom, is power, is righteousness, and that when we speak of the wisdom of God, we really mean *God* acting wisely, or when we speak of the righteousness of God, we mean *God* acting justly.

Wisdom enters into the work of creation, for it is written:--

“To Him that by *wisdom* made the heavens” (Psa. cxxxvi. 5).  
“The Lord by *wisdom* hath founded the earth; by *understanding* He established the heavens” (Prov. iii. 19).  
“He hath made the earth by His *power*, He hath established the world by His *wisdom*, and hath stretched out the heavens by His *understanding*” (Jer. li. 15).

The three items of related truth presented in Jer. li. 15 cannot be considered in this article with the care they demand. We may be able to devote space to this passage later.

It seems almost foolish to continue. The wisdom of God is so profound and altogether wonderful. Think of the variety of the works of the Lord. As the Psalmist says, “O Lord, how manifold are Thy works; *in wisdom* hast Thou made them all” (Psa. civ. 24). Apart

from infinite wisdom, the very variety of created things would produce hopeless and inextricable confusion. But the wisdom of the Lord has adjusted each part.

Again, see the perfect fitness of each created thing. Observe how wonderfully it is adapted to its environment. The colouring of birds, beasts and insects is a study in itself. The stripes on the tiger, the spots on the leopard, all serve their purpose. The whole of Psa. civ. should be studied with this in mind. The recurring seasons, as well as the alternation of day and night, are all perfectly adapted to their purpose; and if we but examine ourselves, the body that is so fearfully and wonderfully made, the senses, the intellect, the marvels of speech, memory, ratiocination (logical reasoning), what a witness to the only wise God we should discover.

Perhaps one of the reasons why the wisdom of God is stressed in connection with His secret purposes, is that the enemy of God and man is also wise. His symbol is the serpent; his bait in the garden of Eden was that the forbidden fruit would make “wise” and “like God”. He himself as the anointed Cherub had been “full of wisdom”, but had “corrupted his wisdom by reason of his brightness” (Exek. xxviii. 12-19). However wise the god of this age may be, his wisdom is but folly in the presence of “the only wise God”. Let us rejoice that “this God is our God”.

#### **#14. “His understanding is infinite” (Psa. cxlvii. 5). pp. 45 - 47**

In this Psalm the speaker calls upon his hearers to praise the Lord, as he views with prophetic vision the re-gathering of scattered Israel and the re-establishing of their kingdom:--

“The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: He gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power; His understanding is infinite” (Psa. cxlvii. 2-5).

Lest any of the outcasts of Israel should feel that restoration was impossible, that God would forget, or that He would not have the necessary power, the Psalmist turns from the subject of Israel’s restoration to the fact that the number and names of all the stars are known to the Lord. The number of stars that can be seen with the naked eye is about 6,000. By the aid of powerful telescopes and photography some hundreds of millions become visible. Astronomers, when speaking of the *Milky Way*, tell us that it is made up of “innumerable” stars. Innumerable they are to man; but we are assured that He Who made the stars know both their number and their names. No wonder the Psalmist says, “His understanding is infinite”. It is interesting to note that the word “infinite” in verse 5 is *en mispar*, “without number”. Infinite indeed is the understanding and knowledge of the only wise God. Another statement to the same effect is found in Isa. xl. 28: “There

is no searching of His understanding.” In Job, we have associated together the ideas of unsearchableness and of being without number:--

“Which doeth great things and *unsearchable*; marvelous things *without number*” (Job v. 9).

“Behold, God is great, and we know Him not, neither can the *number* of His years be *searched out*” (Job xxxvi. 26).

David, in Psa. cxxxix., speaks of the knowledge of God that takes cognizance of his down-sitting and uprising, his path and his ways, his words and his circumstances, and exclaims: “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it” (Psa. cxxxix. 6).

Again, in another Psalm, he looks back to the horrible pit in which he had sunk, and the miry clay that threatened to engulf him. He looks back to the deliverance that set his feet upon a rock, established his goings and put a new song into his mouth. And as he ponders with grateful heart the outworkings of grace he says:--

“Many, O Lord, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to usward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered” (Psa. xl. 5).

Further on in the same Psalm, David speaks of “*innumerable* evils . . . . iniquities . . . . more than the hairs of mine head” (verse 12).

It is perfectly true that no man can enumerate the wonderful works and purposes of the God of all grace, and no man knows the number of his sins or of the hairs of his head, but *the Lord does*, for He has said: “The very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore” (Matt. x. 30, 31).

Coming back to Psa. cxxxix., we find the Psalmist, after speaking of the omniscience of God and the wonders of His creative purpose in man, exclaiming:--

“How precious also are Thy thoughts unto Me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand” (Psa. cxxxix. 17, 18).

And then follow words that at first seem to have no real connection: “When I awake I am still with Thee” (Psa. cxxxix. 18).

Just as the Psalmist could comfort the outcasts of Israel by speaking of the infinite understanding of the Lord, so he could himself repose in perfect confidence in the Lord Who, though He knew his shortcomings so minutely, had nevertheless such marvelous thoughts of grace toward him. If this mighty God saw his substance when it was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth (verse 15), and had “covered” with His protecting care the unborn child (verse 13); then, when the time came for him to lie down and sleep until the resurrection morning, he could do so in perfect peace. His power and His understanding are infinite, and they are both ranged on

our side and on our behalf. Well may we echo the words of the Psalmist: “How great is the sum of them!”

We do well, also, to remember that it is not wise for us to judge the thoughts of the Lord by our own standards:--

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. lv. 8, 9).

There are doubtless many ways in which the thoughts of the Lord differ from the thoughts of men; one of these that is in view in Isa. lv. is that, whereas many of the thoughts of men never mature, the “thoughts” of the Lord, manifested in His “word”, do not “return unto Him void”.

While the contemplation of this unsearchable knowledge is overwhelming and humbling, it is surely comforting also when we remember that “this God is our God”. Is it not a subject for praise, to be able to say with David, “Thou hast known my soul in adversaries” (Psa. xxxi. 7)? The sons of Korah found comfort in this knowledge of God:--

“If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; shall not God search this out? for He knoweth the secrets of the heart” (Psa. xlv. 20, 21).

Again, how blessed, even though it cover us with shame, to be able to say: “O God, Thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from Thee” (Psa. lxix. 5). And who is there that has never fled for refuge to that precious passage:--

“Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. For He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust” (Psa. ciii. 13, 14).

“His understanding is infinite.” “This God is our God.”

## #15. The goodness of God. pp. 127 - 130

While it is a mere fancy unsupported by fact, that the English word “God” is derived from the word “good”, there is nevertheless much truth behind the suggestion. For “God” is essentially “good”. To the young man who addressed Him as “Good Master”, the Lord replied, “There is none good but One, that is God” (Matt. xix. 17). And speaking of man, the apostle says in Romans, “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Rom. iii. 12).

What a wide range of application the word “good” has in our own language. If an argument is valid, it is called “good”. If a claim is legally sound, it is “good”. If food is wholesome, it is “good”. If a post is lucrative and pleasant, it is “good”. And so we might go on for scores of instances. When we consult the Scriptures we find that the goodness of the Lord ramifies through all His ways and acts. When Moses said, “I beseech Thee, show me Thy glory”, the Lord replied:--

“I will make all My *goodness* pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee” (Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19).

“And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in *goodness* and truth” (Ex. xxxiv. 6).

What might not ensue from infinite power and infinite knowledge, without infinite goodness? It is terrible to contemplate. But we need have no fear; it is impossible for any act of the Lord to be conceived or accomplished apart from His goodness. Moses learned that the glory of the Lord was inconceivable apart from His goodness, and that His very name, The Lord God, implied His goodness. His mercy, His grace and His longsuffering were but an expression of His “abounding goodness”.

The Psalmist, too, in Psa. cxlv., realizes that the Lord’s greatness and goodness are inseparable:--

“Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable . . . . .  
Thy mighty acts . . . . . glorious holiness of Thy majesty . . . . . wondrous works . . . . .  
Thy terrible acts . . . . . Thy greatness. They shall abundantly utter the memory of Thy  
great *goodness*, and shall sing of Thy righteousness . . . . . The Lord is *good* to all: and  
His tender mercies are over all His works” (Psa. cxlv. 3-9).

The fact that the Lord is good to all is the teaching of other parts of Scripture also. The apostle taught this truth to the idolatrous men of Lystra:--

“Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did *good*, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts xiv. 16, 17).

These nations were sinful, dark, idolatrous; yet the goodness of the Lord was over all. As the Lord said in the sermon on the Mount: “He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good” (Matt. v. 45).

God is not only good, but He *does* good; and He expects His children to do likewise: “Thou are *good*, and doest *good*; teach me Thy statutes” (Psa. cxix. 68). It would appear from this verse that the statutes of the Lord are “good”, and that they will teach the servant of the Lord to “do good” also.

Praise for the Lord’s goodness, and a feeling that this goodness pervades all the history of His people is expressed in Psa. cvi. and cvii.:--

“Praise ye the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is *good*; for His mercy endureth for ever” (Psa. cvi. 1).

The Psalm surveys the history of Israel from their bondage in Egypt to the time of their captivity, which the Psalmist speaks of prophetically. Throughout their career, whether in favour or out of favour, the goodness of God remained unchanged and unchangeable. In Psa. cvii. this goodness punctuates the Psalm as by a chorus:--

“Oh that men would praise the Lord for His *goodness*, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!” (Psa. cvii. 8, 15, 21, 31).

The goodness of God can be “shown” and “tasted”:--

“There be many that say, Who will show us any *good*? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us” (Psa. iv. 6).

“O taste and see that the Lord is *good*: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him” (Psa. xxxiv. 8).

Again, the Scriptures speak of the blessings of goodness (Psa. xxi. 3), the crowning of the year with goodness (Psa. lxxv. 11), goodness that is laid up (Psa. xxxi. 19), goodness that satisfies (Psa. lxxv. 4), and goodness that follows (Psa. xxiii. 6).

If the goodness of God is over all His works, we shall easily discern that the same goodness is found in all His ways. What is grace, but goodness shown to the undeserving? Or what is mercy, but goodness going out to misery? Is not love the quintessence of all goodness? And are not judgment, punishment, lawgiving and other operations of God as much a part of His goodness as the more obvious attributes? The Psalmist utters a profound truth when he says:--

“And slew famous kings; for His mercy endureth for ever. Sihon, King of the Amorites, for His mercy endureth for ever” (Psa. cxxxvi. 18, 19).

Is it not good to rid the earth of that which defiles and destroys physically? And shall it not be good to rid the world of all that defiles and destroys morally and spiritually? In a world of sin, the idea of “goodness” has sometimes acquired a sentimental character, and has become something that is mawkish, weakly benevolent, or “goody-goody”. Such

a conception finds no counterpart in the goodness of God. The goodness of God is spoken of in the same breath as His greatness, His holiness and His righteousness.

Some of the attributes of God are raised by the figure *Metonymy*, and made to stand as titles for God Himself. Thus we read: “Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the FEAR of Isaac, had been with me” (Gen. xxxi. 42). So it is with this all-pervading attribute of goodness: “Blessed be the Lord . . . . My *goodness*, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and He in Whom I trust” (Psa. cxliv. 1, 2).

“Thou art good, and doest good.” “*This God is our God.*”

## **The volume of the Book.**

### **#29. The Apocrypha. Passages parallel with Rom. i. pp. 40 - 43**

In an earlier article (Volume XXI, page 75) we gave a passing glance at the Apocryphal Books of the O.T., and expressed the hope that at some future time we might be able to show the value of these writings, and the way that their phraseology has influenced some of the writings of the N.T. When we remember that the bulk of the Apocrypha was written in Greek and that, next to the Scripture itself, it had a tremendous influence on life, thought and doctrine, we must also realize that its use of words, its peculiarities of expression, and its sententious statements would inevitably colour all theological discussion. Unless the N.T. writers were going to invent a new language, it would be almost impossible for them to use the *Koine*, the common Greek of the day, without incorporating countless reminiscences from the Apocrypha. It will surely be a piece of added knowledge that should prove useful, if we can trace any of these references to their source, for at any moment, through some simple comparison, new light may break in.

In the days preceding the last century, the Apocrypha was usually bound up with the Scriptures, and the English reader was familiar with its contents. To-day *Bel and The Dragon*, *Judith*, *Tobit* and other books are practically unknown except by name. How many of our readers would recognize the source of Shakespeare's words in the mouth of Shylock:--

“A Daniel come to judgment. Yea, a Daniel.”  
“O wise young judge, how I do honour thee?”

When was Daniel, as a young man, a judge? We may read the incident in the book called “*The History of Susanna*”, which was “set apart from the beginning of Daniel, because it was not in the Hebrew”.

However, we are not concerned in these articles with mere literary side of the subject, but with the possible help a comparative study of the Apocrypha may be to the interpretation of the N.T., and particularly the epistles of Paul.

As a result of comparing passage with passage it soon becomes evident that of all the books of the Apocrypha, the one that influenced the phraseology of the apostle Paul most was that entitled: “*The Wisdom of Solomon*.” This is a book of nineteen chapters, containing 436 verses; in bulk, therefore, it is approximately the same as that of the Epistle to the Romans, which in the Authorized Version contains 433 verses.

We must now examine some of the parallels that may be discovered by comparing the Epistle to the Romans and the Book of Wisdom. The apostle, in Rom. i. 19-23 speaks of the heathen world as without excuse:--

“Because that which may be know of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse . . . . they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image . . . .”

The thirteenth chapter of the Book of Wisdom reads as follows:--

“Surely vain are all men by nature who are ignorant of God, and could not out of good things that are seen know Him that is; neither considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster” (Verses 1 and 2).

“For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures, proportionably the Maker of them is seen” (Verse 5).

“Howbeit neither are they to be pardoned, for it they were able to know so much that they could aim at the world; How did they not sooner find out the Lord thereof? But miserable are they, and in dead things is their hope, who call them gods, which are the works of men’s hands, gold and silver to show art in” (Verse 8-10).

This testimony, written two centuries before Paul’s epistle to the Romans, is most helpful, showing that the witness of Paul must not be limited to the closing days of the Roman power, but is true from the beginning.

The many parallels between the passages are evident. The word “workmaster” is to be compared with the word “builder” of Heb. xi. 10. The expression, “They could aim at the world” means to “guess at the meaning of, or form an opinion about the world”.

A little further on in Rom. i. the apostle writes:--

“Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful; who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them” (Rom. i. 28-32).

With this terrible description let us compare some verses of Wisdom xiv.:--

“Howbeit for both causes they shall be justly punished: both because they thought not well of God, giving heed unto idols, and also unjustly swore in deceit, despising holiness” (Wisdom xiv. 30).

The awful catalogue of crimes in Rom. i. finds a parallel in this chapter of Wisdom:--

“For whilst they slew their children in sacrifices, or used secret ceremonies, or made revellings of strange rites; they kept neither lives nor marriages any longer undefiled: but either one slew another traitorously, or grieved him by adultery. So that there reigned in all men without exception, blood, manslaughter, theft, and dissimulation, corruption, unfaithfulness, tumults, perjury, disquieting of good men, forgetfulness of good turns, defiling of souls, changing of kind (or sex—Compare Rom. i. 26), disorder in marriages, adultery and shameless uncleanness. For the worshipping of idols not to be named is the beginning, the cause, the end of all evil” (Wisdom xiv. 23-27).

The writer of the Book of Wisdom traces all evils back to idolatry, as in Rom. i. 19-32. As soon as man degraded God, his own degradation followed. This is plainly stated earlier in chapter xiv., and the reference brings together idolatry, immorality and inventions of evil, just as in Rom. i. 19-32:--

“For the devising of idols was the beginning of (spiritual) fornication, and the invention of them the corruption of life . . . . for by vain glory of men they entered into the world” (Wisdom xiv. 12, 14).

The reader will also be struck by the phrase, “entered into the world”, as he thinks of Rom. v. 12 and remembers that the sin that entered into the world was incipient idolatry: “Ye shall be as God.” And this led to the “corruption of life”.

There is a great deal in common between Romans and the Book of Wisdom, chapters xii.-xiv., which cannot be realized by piecemeal quotation. The reader will doubtless perceive that the following, though not so close as the other passages cited, still keep pace with the teaching of Rom. i. 19-32:--

“They held them for gods, which even among the beasts of their enemies were despised” (Wisdom xii. 24).

“Shall feel a judgment worthy of God” (Wisdom xii. 26).

“Being corruptible, it was called god” (Wisdom xiv. 8).

We do not wish to take up too much space with this subject, and will therefore defer further comparisons until another time. We trust that what has been demonstrated will enable the reader to appreciate the value of these old writings. Although their teaching does not come with the authority of the inspired Scriptures, they surely have as just a claim to be considered as much that passes to-day for exposition.

**#30. The Apocrypha.**  
**Further parallel with the Epistles and the Gospel of Matthew.**  
**pp. 94 - 98**

The reader may have observed that the parallels already brought forward, between the Book of Wisdom and the epistle to the Romans, have been confined to that part of Rom. i. that makes no revelation of the grace of God or of the great plan of justification by faith. We find no obvious parallels in the Apocrypha to the doctrinal parts of Romans, and this we can readily understand; but upon reaching chapters ix.-ix., we do find some similarity. For example, compare the apostle's argument in Rom. ix. 20, 21 with Wisdom xii. 11, 12 and xv. 7:--

“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing that formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?” (Rom. ix. 20, 21).

“For it was a cursed seed from the beginning; neither didst Thou for fear of any man, give them pardon for those things wherein they sinned. For who shall say, What hast Thou done? Or who shall withstand Thy judgment? Or who shall accuse Thee in respect of the perdition of nations, which Thou Thyself madest? Or who shall state a case against Thee, as advocate in respect of unjust men?” (Wisdom xii. 11, 12).

“For the potter tempering soft earth, fashioneth every vessel with much labour for our service. Yea, of the same clay he maketh both the vessels that serve for clean uses, and likewise also such as serve to the contrary. But what is the use of either sort the potter himself is the judge” (Wisdom xv. 7).

The apostle's words, “If some of the branches be broken off” (Rom. xi. 17) and the words of Wisdom, “The imperfect branches shall be broken off” (iv. 5) are similar. There are one or two more instances, but as they also appear to be reflections of O.T. passages they will not be cited here as examples.

When the apostle counseled the Romans in xiii. 1 to be subject to the higher powers, adding:--

“For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God . . . . for he is the minister of God to thee” (Rom. xiii. 1-4).

the Jews in that church would remember the words of Wisdom in the address to kings and judges:--

“For power is given you of the Lord, and sovereignty from the Highest, Who shall try your works, and search out your counsels” (Wisdom vi. 3).

There is a further parallel between these two chapters in Wisdom vi. 18 and Rom. xiii. 10: “Love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom. xiii.) and “Love is the keeping of her laws” (Wisdom vi.).

We shall not attempt a systematic survey of the parallels, but those that follow are sufficiently important to call for something more than a passing glance. Their cumulative effect is to leave the student with the impression that some of these apocryphal works had left their mark upon the language and the arguments employed by the apostle. They therefore merit attention as a means to the end of more clearly understanding his meaning. Can anyone, for example, read the following words in praise of wisdom, without immediately thinking of the apostle's ode to love in I Cor. xiii.?

“Holy, one only, manifold, subtil, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure, free from care, having all power, overseeing all things, and going through all understanding, pure and most subtil” (Wisdom vii. 22, 23).

The words “free from care” that occurs here, are literally “without carefulness”, and remind us of I Cor. vii. 32, “But I would have you without carefulness”. In the same chapter, we have that said of Wisdom which reminds us of what is predicted by the apostle of Christ:--

“For she is the *brightness* of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness” (Wisdom vii. 26).

The apostle's use of the words “depart” and “departure” in Phil. i. 23 and II Tim. iv. 6 should be read with the words:--

“In the sight of the universe they seemed to be dead and their departure was accounted a calamity . . . . yet is their hope full of immortality . . . . they shall judge the nations, and have dominion over the people, and the Lord shall reign for ever” (Wisdom iii. 1-8).

The association, moreover, with the thought of a “crown” or “prize” will not, we trust, pass unnoticed. While we are speaking of this subject of the “crown”, we might read on in Wisdom until we reach chapter iv. where we read (concerning wisdom):--

“It weareth a crown (that is, the wreath or garland used in athletic contests), and triumpheth for ever, having gotten the victory striving for undefiled rewards” (Wisdom iv. 2).

Can anyone read the following reference to “complete armour” without its calling to mind Eph. vi. 13-17?

“He shall take to Him His jealousy for complete armour, and make the creature His weapon for revenge of His enemies. He shall put on righteousness as a breastplate, and true judgment instead of a helmet, He shall take holiness for an invincible shield, His severe wrath shall He sharpen for a sword” (Wisdom v. 17-20).

In Wisdom xi. 23 we read:--

“But Thou hast mercy upon all; for Thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because they should amend (literally, ‘overlooked the sins of all men, with a view to repentance’).”

We are forcibly reminded in this passage of Paul's words to the Athenians in Acts xvii. 30: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

Again, compare "the earthly house of this tabernacle" in II Cor. v. 1-4 with the following passage in the Book of Wisdom:--

"For the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the *earthly tabernacle* weighted down the mind" (Wisdom ix. 15).

Many of us, if we were asked the question, would probably say that we read of the translation of Enoch in the Book of Genesis. This is not strictly true, for the word does not occur in the Hebrew. It does, however, occur in the LXX and in the Book of Wisdom:--

"He pleased God, and was beloved of Him: so that living among sinners he was translated" (Wisdom iv. 10).

Perhaps the most interesting of all comparisons connected with the Apocrypha are three evident references to it made by the Lord Jesus Himself in Matt. xxiii. and xxiv.:--

"Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify . . . . that upon you may come all the righteous blood . . . ." (Matt. xxiii. 34, 35).

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. xxiii. 37, 38).

"All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matt. xxiv. 8).

In the second book of Esdras we read these words:--

"Thus saith the Almighty Lord, Have I not prayed you as a father his sons, as a mother her daughters, and a nurse her young babies, that ye would be My people, and I should be your God; that ye would be My children, and I should be your Father? *I gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings*; but now, what shall I do unto you? I will cast you out from My Face. When ye offer unto Me, I will turn My Face from you: for your solemn feast days, your new moons, and your circumcisions, have I forsaken. *I sent unto you My servants the prophets, whom ye have taken and slain*, and torn their bodies in pieces, *whose blood I will require* of your hands, saith the Lord. Thus saith the Almighty Lord, *Your house is desolate*" (II Esdras i. 28-33).

"*The beginning of sorrows* and great mournings: the beginning of *famine* and great dearth, the beginning of *wars* and the powers shall stand in fear, the beginning of evils" (II Esdras xvi. 18).

From these quotations it is evident that our Saviour had read and referred to the writings of Esdras, and if this is so, their interest to us is heightened.

Whether a careful collation of the writings of the Apocrypha with the N.T. has been made, we do not know. If any reader knows of such a work we shall be glad to hear, as

we do not wish to spend time in vain; but what little we have seen by a casual reading convinces us that much more awaits the careful searcher. We trust the reader has received some help from these articles, and that the Apocryphal books of the O.T. have assumed a more kindly appearance. Another useful office filled by the Apocrypha is that of bridging the gulf between Malachi and Matthew, so supplying material that enable us to understand the changed conditions that we find upon opening the pages of the N.T. This, however, hardly falls under our title, "The Volume of the Book" and must await another series.

## **“What manner of persons ought ye to be.”**

### **#12. Symbols of Service. Interpreters and Intercessors. pp. 10 - 12**

The two symbols that are before us in this study are not only linked together by similarity of sound, but also—and this is far more important—by a common basic idea. The office of the interpreter and that of the intercessor merge into the idea of mediation, the mediation of the interpreter being manward, and the mediation of the intercessor being Godward.

THE INTERPRETER.—Even the church with all its gifts of tongues, miracles and prophecy was not complete without the gift of interpretation. The gift of tongues, so much coveted by the Corinthian church, was emptied of most of its value without the gift of interpretation also:--

“Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying . . . . For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle? . . . . Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret . . . . but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church” (I Cor. xiv. 5, 8, 13, 28).

We have given the above quotation, not because our readers belong to assemblies that have gift of tongues, but just to show how great a value was placed upon the gift of interpretation in the days when supernatural gifts were possessed by the church.

We do not feel called upon in this series to speak of the necessary qualifications for the interpreting of Scripture. That office is so distinct and rare; and if it is truly possessed, its possessor needs no help such as these articles could afford. There is, however, a ministry of interpretation that may be entered by us all, that is no less important than that of interpreting the Scriptures. It is the wonderful privilege of interpreting God to man.

This office was filled to the full by the Lord Himself. As the Word, and as the Image, He set forth God to men:--

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath interpreted Him” (John i. 18).  
“He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” (John xiv. 9).

Job was told of this great Interpreter who would show to poor, sinful man His righteousness and point to the Ransom (Job xxxiii. 23, 24).

We remember, too, that Joseph and Daniel stand out prominently in the Scriptures as interpreters. Both were captives in a foreign land; both were used to reveal the will of

the living God to heathen kings (Gen. xl., xli.; Dan. ii., iv., v., vii.). What sort of God do we reveal to those among whom we minister? Let us come down to the simpler issues. What of our high-sounding words concerning the purpose of the ages, and the fact that God is over all, and that habit of saying, "O bother it!" when we are vexed or disappointed? What sort of interpreters are we when we fail in longsuffering, patience, forgiveness and love? Interpretation has less to do with nouns and verbs than with thoughts and deeds. In the "Sermon on the Mount" we read:--

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven . . . . Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. v. 16, 44, 45).

"Pray for them"—this is the link between the interpreter of God to man and the intercessor for man with God.

THE INTERCESSOR.—The most unspiritual person would realize the incongruity of three believers kneeling in prayer, and beseeching the Lord to give the victory at a political election to three different and opposing parties. What the believer is to do and how he is to intercede is plainly revealed in I Tim. ii.:--

"I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour" (I Tim. ii. 1-3).

It is evident that intercessory prayer covers a much wider sphere than that occupied by the Church. "All men", "kings", "all in authority" come within the scope. Wide, however, as is the scope of intercession, its purpose is limited. Kings and those in authority may be beneficent or tyrannical. Our prayer must not be debased into something political; it is to be directed to one end: "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

This twofold ministry of mediation, permitted to the believer, brings him very near to the Lord Himself, the one Mediator, the great Interpreter and Intercessor. It is a ministry that calls for no outstanding gifts; it makes no parade, and can go on in silence. It is a ministry, however, that is vital, and blessed are they who can, with unfeigned thanks, realize that in this respect they are following in the footsteps of the Son of God.

**#13. Symbols of Service.**  
**Joints and bands.**  
**pp. 59 - 61**

It is written of the Good Samaritan that “he came where he (the injured man) was”. There is need for us to remember that all true service is blended with sympathy. Because this sympathy has, alas, sometimes been missing from charitable schemes, we find that the word “charity”, which in the days of the A.V. could stand for love in its fullest sense, has now been set apart and is often viewed with suspicion. We even have the common phrase “as cold as charity”. We therefore feel no hesitation in giving prominence to that aspect of service that is likened to a “joint” in the human body, a figure that demands unity as a first necessity.

Of all the tribes of Israel one, namely, Levi, was chosen to serve the tabernacle. The name Levi means “Joined”. The origin of the name, speaking humanly, is pathetic. Leah, who was married to Jacob by an act of deception, must have felt her position badly. The Lord saw that Leah was hated, and to compensate, He granted to Leah that she should have several children, while Rachel, the beloved wife, remained barren. Leah’s first child she called *Reuben*: “See a son”, for she said, “Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction: now therefore my husband will love me.” Again, she had another son, and called his name *Simeon* (that is, “Hearing”) “Because”, said she, “the Lord hath heard that I was hated”. Again she had another son and called his name *Levi*, that is “Joined”, saying, “Now this time will my husband be joined unto me”. Her hopes do not appear to have materialized, for upon the birth of her fourth son, Leah said, “Now will I praise the Lord”, and called his name *Judah*, meaning “Praise”, and ceased bearing children (Gen. xxix. 31-35). It is not our purpose to pursue this theme; we have considered it only in so far as it throws light upon the name *Levi*. The tribe whose name means “Joined” is the tribe that stands for the service of God and man. That we are not drawing upon our imagination a reference to Numb. xviii. will show:--

“Thy brethren also of the tribe of Levi, the tribe of thy father, bring also unto thee, that they may be joined (Heb. *lavah* as in Gen. xxix. 34) unto thee, and minister unto thee . . . . before the tabernacle of witness . . . . and a stranger shall not come nigh unto thee” (Numb. xviii. 2-4).

Here we not only see that the two phrases “joined unto thee” and “minister unto thee” are used together, but that the reverse is true—“a stranger” shall not come nigh. The word “stranger” is in the Hebrew *zar*, from *zarah*, “to sow, to scatter, to disperse”; so that it is just the reverse of the word “join”. We do not feel that our readers require any elaboration of this point; it is obvious enough. We turn therefore to the N.T. parallel:--

“The Head, even Christ: from Whom the whole body *fitly joined together* and compacted by that which every *joint* supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. iv. 15, 16).

“Holding the Head, from Which all the body by *joints* and bands having nourishment ministered, and *knit together*, increaseth with the increase of God” (Col. ii. 19).

The unity here is twofold. First the whole body is joined to the Head. And secondly, every member is joined to some other member. Without the first union, there can be no life. Without the second, there can be no growth. Dislocation means disease, and without unity service is impeded, if not rendered impossible.

Barnabas gives us an example of what is right and what is wrong in the matter of fellowship in service. When the converted Saul of Tarsus assayed to join himself to the disciples at Jerusalem, they were afraid of him and believed not that he was a disciple. It was the good office of Barnabas, to lead the new disciple Saul by the hand, and to enable him to join the disciples as a brother and fellow-saint (Acts ix. 26, 27). On the other hand, it was Barnabas' determination to take John Mark with him on the visit to the churches of Asia Minor that caused the cleavage between himself and Paul (Acts xv. 36-41). We must be sure of those with whom we join; otherwise our very tenacity may prove our undoing.

There is also need to remember that fellowship in service does not cover the same ground as does fellowship in salvation. Many are under a wrong impression here. We ourselves have been criticized because of an apparent inconsistency in attitude. We do not make agreement in doctrine a basis for our fellowship, so far as the recognition of life in Christ and the hope of glory is concerned. But fellowship in service, and standing together on the same platform, with a believer who holds some doctrine that is unscriptural would not be an act of faith, but of compromise, and this we must avoid. We have said before that our "pew" is as wide as redemption itself; but our "platform" must be as narrow as the truth rightly divided.

The many references in which the apostle speaks of some beloved servant of Christ as a fellow-worker are helpful. One is graced with the title, "true yokefellow" (Phil. iv. 3); others in the same verse are called "fellow-labourers". Aristarchus had the honoured title "fellow-prisoner" (Col. iv. 10), while Epaphroditus bears the double title, "my fellow-worker and fellow-soldier" (Phil. ii. 25). The reader will be able to add to the examples here given, particularly if he can use the Greek concordance, for quite a number of examples appear that do not lend themselves as easily as those cited above to English translation.

Let us remember, then, that one essential in all service is unity; and one important symbol of service is that of Eph. iv. and Col. ii.: "Joints and bands."

**#14. Symbols of Service.**  
**The Keeper.**  
**pp. 141 - 144**

“None of us”, said the apostle, “liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself” (Rom. xiv. 7). The context shews that the believer has a twofold responsibility: first to the Lord, and secondly to his brother. It is all too easy to say: “It is corban”, to shirk our responsibility to our brethren under the plea that all is unto the Lord. It is also easy to put the service of our fellows on a plane higher than service to the Lord. We need the well-balanced presentation of the Word, that links together holiness and natural affection (II Tim. iii. 2, 3) as parts of one whole. The sad story of Cain is a record of double failure. We immediately call to mind his reply, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” And we must also remember that he had already grievously failed in rendering to the Lord His due.

An important symbol of service is that of the “keeper”, or “watchman” as the word is also translated.

Adam is described as a “keeper” in Gen. ii. 15: “And the Lord God took the man, and put him in the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” We must avoid confusing the two words here. “To dress it” refers to the ordinary work of the garden; the same Hebrew word occurs in Gen. ii. 5: “There was no man to *till* the ground.” “To keep it”, on the other hand, refers to the need for watchfulness as though the attack of an enemy were a possibility. How Adam failed to “keep” the charge entrusted to him, we all know to our grief. That the “keeping” had a direct connection with the tree of knowledge and the tree of life, Gen. ii. 16, 17 and iii. 24 bear witness:--

“So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to *keep* the way of the tree of life” (Gen. iii. 24).

At the end of the O.T. in the Book of Malachi we find the words:--

“The priest’s lips should *keep* knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts” (Mal. ii. 7).

The Levitical priesthood, while primarily a sacrificing priesthood, was also the “keeper” of the law, the “keeper”, not only in the sense of one who obeys and observes its precepts, but of one who watches over, guards and preserves inviolate the trust committed. This is a phase of ministry that is solemnly referred to by the apostle Paul in his last epistles:--

“That good thing which was committed unto thee *keep* by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us” (II Tim. i. 14).

“O Timothy, *keep* that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called” (I Tim. vi. 20).

It is good to know that He Who looks to us to keep the trust committed to us, will Himself be our constant support. It was this that was the apostle's own stay, for he says in the context of the passage above:--

“I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to *keep* that which has been entrusted against that day” (II Tim. i. 12).

There are suggestions in these passages as to the evils against which the “keeper” should be on his guard, evils that spring from the same source as that which ruined Adam in the beginning. In referring to “profane and vain babblings and the antitheses of knowledge falsely so called”, the apostle alludes to that specious system known as Gnosticism which, under different forms and names, still survives to-day.

“Be not ashamed.” “God hath not given us the spirit of cowardice.” “Nevertheless I am not ashamed.” — These words from II Timothy suggest another avenue along which the sacred trust may be attacked. We are all “keepers”; and have our own particular gardens “to dress and to keep”. Some good thing has been entrusted to us that we are expected to keep, and not all the refined opposition of “science falsely so called”, nor the more brutal opposition of persecution must cause us to relinquish our post.

The title of “keeper” is employed in Scripture to define the work of a shepherd—“Abel was a *keeper* of sheep.” In this connection David stands out prominently as one who was taken from the keeping of sheep to be ruler over the people of Israel (II Sam. vii. 8). What the keeping of sheep involved, let David tell us:--

“Thy servant *kept* his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock. And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth” (I Sam. xvii. 34, 35).

Young as he was, David had the true “keeper” spirit, for we read that when Jesse told him to go and visit his brethren at the battle front, he did not, with youthful forgetfulness, hurry off unmindful of his responsibility as a shepherd, but “rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a *keeper*” (I Sam. xvii. 20). His eldest brother taunted him in vain when he said: “With whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?” (I Sam. xvii. 28).

This same spirit is manifested by David on his arrival at the battle-field. He did not drop his baggage and run off to see what was going on, but first “left his carriage in the hand of the keeper of the carriage”—or, as Rotherham renders the passage: “Then David entrusted the provisions that were upon him to the care of the keeper of the stores” (I Sam. xvii. 22).

How many times have we left one part of service unprotected and unprovided for because of the claims of another. Yet true service is watchful of all responsibilities.

The Lord Himself, as the good Shepherd, entered into the “keeper” spirit of His office, and could say:--

“While I was with them in the word, I *kept* them in Thy Name; those that Thou gavest Me I have *kept*, and none of them is lost . . . . *keep* them from the evil” (John xvii. 12, 15).

The reader will be aware of the many passages that enjoin the believer to *keep* the Word of God, to *keep* the way, to *keep* the faith, to *keep* the unity. These should be found and added to the list, so that we may appreciate in some degree of fullness the fact that one great symbol of service is that of “the keeper”.

### **#15. Symbols of Service. The Labourer. pp. 196 - 198**

There are some who appear to look upon Christian service as though it were a matter of book knowledge and detailed examination of words, scarcely to be described as a piece of work at all. II Tim. ii. 15 opens with the word “study” (which actually means “endeavour”, and has nothing necessarily to do with the “studious”) but goes on to speak of a “workman”; and the same chapter speaks of service under the robust figures of athlete, soldier and farmer. True Christian service is labour. Let us see what Scripture says under this head. First, as to the different words so translated:--

*Ergon*.—Usually translated “work”:--

“I must work the works of Him that sent Me” (John ix. 4).  
“Always abounding in the work of the Lord” (I Cor. xv. 58).

This is the word used by the apostle in Philippians: “This is the fruit of my *labour*” (Phil. i. 22).

*Kopos*.—The word is derived from *kopto* = to strike, and means “a beating”; then, as if a beating of the breast, it means “wailing”, “grief”; and carrying the idea still further, “wearisome effort”, “toilsome labour”, something that cannot be accomplished apart from toil and possibly tears. As an example we may take the words of the Lord in John iv. 38: “Other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.”

*Agonizomai*.—This word belongs to the arena and the stadium. The substantive is translated “race”, “fight”, “contention” and “conflict”. The verb is translated “strive”, “fight” and “labour fervently”. The cognate is translated “agony”. The solemn association of this word with Gethsemane reveals an aspect of ministry that is far removed from anything merely scholastic or respectable. This word is used by the

apostle in writing to the Colossians: “Always labouring fervently for you in prayer” (Col. iv. 12).

Closely allied with this the word translated “labour together” in Phil. iv. 3, where the original uses the word *sunathleo*, the latter half of which will be recognized as the origin of our word “athlete”.

Christian service is, therefore, a work, a wearying labour and a conflict. Let us take a few specimen passages, which will show the usage of these words:--

SERVICE IS WORK.—“As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the *work* whereunto I have called them” (Acts xiii. 2).

SERVICE IS LABOUR.—“In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in *labours*, in watchings, in fastings” (II Cor. vi. 5).

Every word in this verse speaks of suffering and endurance, harmonizing with the primary meaning of the word “labour”. The same association is found in II Cor. xi. 23:--

“Are they ministers of Christ? . . . . I am more: in labours more abundant, in stripes above measures, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.”

The next five verses fill out a list of sufferings that are almost unbelievable—all an expansion of “ministry”, weary labour indeed.

The apostle links together “labour and travail” in II Thess. iii. 8, yet we know that in all this labour, weary *in* it though he may have been, he was never weary *of* it, for as he wrote to the Thessalonians in the first epistle, his ministry was a “labour of love”.

*Service is Conflict.*—The word *agonizomai* occurs only seven times in the N.T., and it may be helpful to see all the references together. We therefore give them without comment, to avoid occupying too much space:--

“*Strive* to enter into the strait gate” (Luke xiii. 24).

“If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants *fight*” (John xviii. 36).

“Every man that *striveth for the mastery* is temperate in all things” (I Cor. ix. 25).

“Wherein I also labour (*kopiao*) *striving* according to His working, which worketh in me mightily” (Col. i. 29).

“Always *labouring* fervently for you in prayers” (Col. iv. 12).

“*Fight* the good fight of faith” (I Tim. vi. 12).

“I have *fought* a good fight” (II Tim. iv. 7).

To return to the words that most literally mean “labour”, namely, *kopos* and *kopiao*, we cannot but rejoice to know that there is provision made for “all that labour and are heavy laden” in fellowship with One Who knew what it was to be despised and rejected and yet could at the same time look up to His Father with true submissiveness, and say: “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight.”

We rejoice also to realize that though the apostle could, without boasting, say that he laboured “more abundantly than they all”, yet he could add: “Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me” (I Cor. xv. 10). In spite of a weariness sometimes overshadowed by death itself, we can rejoice that in the risen Christ, and by the power of His resurrection, no labour however wearisome can be “in vain”, for such is “in the Lord” (I Cor. xv. 58).

## **#16. Symbols of Service. Messengers and Ministers. pp. 246 - 248**

In the days of our ignorance, many of us have sung: “I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand.” We have since learned that the redeemed of the Lord will never be angels, although some, in resurrection glory, will be made like the angels in some respects. Some of us are rejoicing in a position, given by grace, that places us far above principalities and powers.

Angels, we are told, are “ministering spirits”. Although the saint will never be an angel, yet in the wider sense of the word, all the redeemed may be “angels”, for both the Hebrew *malak* and the Greek *aggelos* are translated “messenger”. To be a messenger does not require learning or skill. It may call for expedition, but even a slow messenger is better than none. To be a messenger for the Lord is within the power of all.

A most important aspect of this form of service is expressed by Haggai:--

“Then spake Haggai, the Lord’s messenger in the Lord’s message” (Hag. i. 13).

The messenger and the message should be closely associated, so that the one is but the outward expression of the other.

The words of Haggai might well be applied to dispensational truth, for one cannot dissociate Peter from the message to the circumcision, nor Paul from the grace of God to the Gentiles. And what is true of such messengers as Peter and Paul and Haggai should be true of us all. The man and his message should be closely united as possible. This, of course, involves practice as well as doctrine. As Paul puts it concerning himself: “Thou hast fully known my *doctrine, manner of life*” (II Tim. iii. 10).

The Book of Proverbs uses a striking figure when speaking of the messenger:--

“As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters” (Prov. xxv. 13).

It is a blessed thought that the faithful messenger, even though his message be unpalatable to those who receive it, is a delight to the One who sent him. The figure is

reversed further on in the same chapter of Proverbs, for in verse 25 we read: “As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.”

Thus the faithful messenger and the good news he brings refresh the heart of God and man. To be a messenger of the Lord, therefore, is no small privilege.

Heb. i. 14 has already shown us that messengers can be ministers. Let us look at this aspect of service. The words that are most frequently translated “minister” and “to minister” in the N.T. are *diakonos* and *diskoneo*. Some derive the word from the Greek, “Through the dust”, indicating a runner in the hot dusty lands of the Bible. Whether or not this is true we cannot say, but the first thought associated with this form of service is lowliness. It is the sort of service that waits on others. In the narrowest sense, it is a “waiting at table”. The essence of this aspect of ministry is seen in Christ Himself:--

“Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your *minister* . . . . Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Matt. xx. 26, 28).

The Lord’s own example in John xiii. fills out the words just quoted:--

“If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you” (John xiii. 14, 15).

The reader will hardly need reminding that the word “deacon” is the Anglicized form of the Greek word *diakonos*.

Another aspect of ministry is found in the word used by Paul of himself in Rom. xv. 16: “That I should be the *minister* of Jesus Christ.”

Here the word is *leitourgos*, and its verbal form *leitourgeo*. Its meaning is “public service”, derived from *leitos*, “public” (which comes from *laos*, “people”) and *ergon*, “a work”. At Athens, the *leitourgoi* were people of substance, who were obliged to assume certain responsibilities at their own expense. The word is used in the LXX of the ministry of the priests, and this aspect is evidently in view in the N.T. usage. It is so used in Luke i. 23 of the priest Zachariah, and in Heb. x. 11.

A reference to “public ministry” in the Athenian sense of the term is found in Rom. xiii. 4, 6, where the “powers that be” are in view. The word also occurs in Rom. xv. 27, in reference to the contribution made by the Gentiles for the poor saints at Jerusalem. “It is their duty”, says the apostle, with an evident allusion to the obligation resting upon the men of substance at Athens.

One other word must be considered before we conclude our study, and that is *huperetes*, literally “an under-rower”. It indicates a subordinate position, and may refer either to the relationship between the Lord’s servant and the Lord Himself, or the

relationship between one servant of the Lord and another. Paul was an “under-rower”, and gladly accepted the office:--

“I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a *minister* and a witness”  
(Acts xxvi. 16).

The lowest office is mentioned first. He could only be a witness, and an apostle, as he recognized the Lordship of Christ.

John Mark was given to Saul and Barnabas as their “under-rower”. But he failed, and left them when the course was set for Pamphylia (Acts xiii. 5, 13; xv. 38). It is extremely difficult to find those engaged in Christian service who are willing to occupy this lowly place of “under-rower”. Yet unless one is recognized as director and leader and another as subordinate and a helper, how can the work go forward?

When we remember that Paul himself so gladly took this lowly place, both at his commission (Acts xxvi. 16) as we have seen, and in his own voluntary submission—“These hands have *ministered* unto my necessities, and to them that were with me” (Acts xx. 34) we cannot but feel it a privilege to be entrusted with the same “under-rower’s” place.

It was the glory of the Son of God that He was like a man “under authority” (Luke vii. 8), and the servant is not greater than his Lord. We bless the Lord for the ministry of humble hands and hearts, known by few on earth but treasured in heaven. Surely the believer whose doctrine includes the words, “Not I, but Christ”, can be given no office, however lowly, that cannot be accepted gratefully as a means of glorifying the Lord and of following in His steps.

## **“When the commandment came”**

*(Being a series of articles based upon the testimony of readers as to the particular passage of Scripture that was used to enlighten them as to the unique character of the Dispensation of the Mystery).*

### **#7. The Hope of the calling. pp. 111, 112**

We have chronicled in this series different passages of Scripture which have been used to bring conviction of the truth of the mystery, and, enlightenment to the mind as to its unique character. We have found that no two persons are alike in their approach to Scripture, and no two persons seem to be influenced in exactly the same way. Certain passages that have been brought forward may have appeared to some as rather remote from the subject; the one we are now to record, however, is a passage that is quite to the point. The reader whose experience we draw upon here was puzzled at the passage in Acts xiii. 46, which records the apostle as saying “Lo, we turn to the Gentiles”. Did this mean that the dispensation changed at that time and place? Were the Jews set aside from Acts xiii. onward? Did the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles then commence?

The opening verse of Acts xiv. prevents us from believing that the words of Acts xiii. 46 were addressed to the whole nation, for we find Paul once more following his custom and going to the synagogue of the Jews. After meditating upon the subject and searching the Scriptures further, our reader realized that the words of the apostle in Acts xxviii. 20 indicated that the hope of Israel covered the period of the Acts from beginning to end, and that the nation-wide rejection of Israel did not take place until the apostle had so solemnly spoken to the leaders of the Jews in Rome. What had been foreshadowed in Acts xiii. 40-46 now took place. The essential point that our brother realized was that “hope” and “calling” are allied. The “one hope” of the calling of the dispensation of the mystery could not possibly be connected with the hope of Israel. While the one remained in force, the other was not revealed. As soon as he saw this relation of “hope” and “calling”, and its bearing upon the dispensational character of the Acts, and of the epistles written during that period, all was clear, and the joy of a clearly understood position before the Lord was his.

We commend to every reader this line of approach, both for their own enlightenment and confirmation, and for the help of enquirers. Bring together every passage of Scripture written during the Acts and in the epistles of the period (Galatians, I and II Thessalonians, Hebrews, I and II Corinthians and Romans) that deals with the hope before Israel and the church at that time, and the issue will be clear. Seek from Scripture the answer to the question, “What is the hope of the calling” that is in view, and this answer will lead to clearer views of dispensational truth.



**“With all thy getting, get understanding” (Prov. iv. 7).**

**#16. Figures of Speech.**

**An examination of the scope of the subject.**

**pp. 12 - 14**

The first examination in scriptural subjects taken by the writer after his conversion was in the subject of the “figurative language of the Bible”, following a course of lectures given by the *Rev. Jas. Neil, M.A.* His little book, entitled “Strange Figures”, consisting of only 96 pages, is a treasure, and every reader is urged to secure a copy whenever the opportunity occurs. The larger and more complete work on the subject is, of course, “Figures of speech used in the Bible” by *Dr. E. W. Bullinger*, which has become a classic. In that work two hundred and seventeen figures of speech are tabulated, explained and illustrated by Scripture, these illustrations amounting to nearly 8,000 references.

The Companion Bible, in Appendix 6, gives a list of 181 figures of speech, arranged in alphabetical order with their classical and English names, a short explanation, and several scriptural references. A patient examination of this Appendix alone would provide a very useful acquaintance with the figures of speech used in the Bible. The alphabetical order, however, although suitable for easy reference, does not provide the best way of learning the subject. The first figure given in this Appendix is *Accismus* or Apparent Refusal (Matt. xv. 22-26). Now this is starting the subject in the middle. We have to learn that *Accismus* is a figure of speech involving change; and further, that change affects the meaning, the arrangement, and the application of words. We discover, further, that *Accismus* involves change of application. In general, application may affect sense, person, subject-matter, feeling, and argumentation; and in the particular case of *Accismus*, it is a change in the application of its argumentation. Now this cannot be appreciated merely by reading lists of words. We must approach the subject, as we must approach all other lines of study, by seeing it first as a whole, then in its primary subdivisions, and then gradually descending until we arrive at the individual figures.

Figures of speech are a part of the subject “Language”, and “Language” includes Grammar and Rhetoric. Grammar has to do with words in their constructive arrangements; Rhetoric is concerned with the art of speaking with persuasion. Another branch of the science of Language is Etymology, or a study of the derivation and pedigree of words. These three branches of the science of language cover the range of figures of speech. These may be grouped as follows:--

- i. FIGURES OF ETYMOLOGY.—These are departures from the ordinary *spelling* of words; for example, the poetic use of “o’er” for “over”, or the romantic use of the old-fashioned spelling “olde” for “old”. With these we shall have little to do, as they are not many in number and do not appear in the Scriptures.

- ii. FIGURES OF SYNTAX OR GRAMMAR.—These are figures of speech that alter the *arrangement* of words in a sentence, or alter the *meaning* of words for emphasis or effect.
- iii. FIGURES OF RHETORIC.—These are figures that use words with an unusual *application*.

This threefold division is based upon the nature of the subject, and seems the most useful.

*Dr. Bullinger* arranged his treatise under the three following heads:--

- i. Figures which depend for their peculiarity on OMISSION.
- ii. Figures which depend upon ADDITION by REPETITION.
- iii. Figures which depend upon CHANGE, or alteration in the usage or application of words.

The reader who, “in all his getting”, desires to “get understanding”, will probably appreciate the following remarks from *Dr. Bullinger’s* Introductory Note to the subject:--

“How are we to know, then, when words are to be taken in their simple, original form (i.e. literally), and when they are to be taken in some other and peculiar form (i.e. as a figure)? The answer is, that, whenever and wherever it is possible, the words of Scripture are to be understood *literally*, but when a statement appears to be contrary to our experience, or to known fact, or revealed truth; or seems to be at variance with the general teaching of Scriptures, then we may reasonably expect that some figure is employed.”

We shall, therefore, watch carefully for any departure from the usual in Scripture, believing that all such departures are intentional and for a specific purpose. On the other hand, we shall be careful to keep to the literal truth of the Scriptures. God has spoken concerning Jew, Gentile and Church, concerning heaven, earth, and the sphere that is “far above all heavens” (Eph. iv. 10). We are not at liberty to interpret Zion as meaning the Church, or the 144,000 of the twelve tribes of Israel as meaning saved Gentiles. The specific promises made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning a land and a seed cannot be spiritualized and made to refer to a Church consisting of saved Gentiles, with no hope in Palestine, but a hope in heaven. With a true understanding of the significance of figures of speech, we shall not fall into the Romish error concerning the word of Christ, “This is My body”; neither shall we confuse symbolic titles such as the “Bride” and the “Body”.

In our next article, we hope to take this study a step further, and deal with some important examples of Figures of Speech in the Bible.

**#17. Figures of Speech.**  
**Ellipsis, or Omission, as it affects words.**  
**pp. 61 - 64**

We saw in our last paper that Figures of Speech, so far as the Scriptures are concerned, are distributed under three heads: (i) *Omission* (ii) *Addition* (iii) *Change*.

The Figures that relate to Omission are eleven in number, and are divided as follows:--

**Figures involving Omission.**

**(i) Affecting words.**

- 1) *Ellipsis* : or Omission.
- 2) *Zeugma* : or Unequal yoke.
- 3) *Asyndeton* : or No ands.
- 4) *Aphaeresis* : or Front cut.
- 5) *Apocopo* : or End cut.

**(ii) Affecting the sense.**

- 6) *Aposiopesis* : or Sudden silence.
- 7) *Meiosis* : or Belittling.
- 8) *Tapeinosis* : or Demeaning.
- 9) *Catabasis* : or Gradual descent.
- 10) *Syllogismus* : or Omission of the conclusion.
- 11) *Enthymema* : or Omission of the premise.

The word “Ellipsis” is from the Greek, and means “a leaving in”. From our point of view, we call it “a leaving out”, as the gap that is “left in” suggests that words have been “left out”. The following is an every-day example of Ellipsis from the advertisement columns of a daily newspaper, dealing with holiday apartments:--

“Brd.-Res. Bed-bkfst., excel. cuis. mod. 5 min. pier.”

This, of course, is not a specimen of the literary figure, but is given to show that “Omission” is by no means merely academic.

Again, when one has to frame a telegram, the figure of “Omission” is nearly always employed, if only for the sake of economy.

In many cases, the Ellipsis is correctly supplied in the A.V. and R.V. by the use of italic type. In some cases, however, the italic additions of the versions are not true; each addition should be scrutinized before acceptance.

Ellipsis is of three kinds:--

- (1) *Absolute*.—Here the omitted word or words are to be supplied from the nature of the subject alone.
- (2) *Relative*.—Here the omission is suggested by the context.
- (3) *Repetitive*.—Here the omitted word or words are to be supplied from a clause which precedes or follows.

The original of Eph. iv. 9, “Now that He ascended”, reads as in the R.V., “Now this, He ascended”. We must supply the Ellipsis and say: “Now this *fact*” or “Now this *expression*, He ascended, what is it (or what does it imply) if not this, that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?”

In Phil. iii. 12 the apostle says that he was not already “perfect”; yet in verse 15 he is represented as saying, “Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded”. As there is no verb in the original, we are at liberty to substitute the words “desire to be” before “perfect”, and so keep the passage in harmony with the context.

A most important passage in connection with our subject is II Tim. iii. 16. The A.V. reads: “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.” The R.V. reads: “Every scripture inspired by God is also profitable.”

The following passages are identical in their construction with II Tim. iii. 16: “All things *are* naked and opened” (Heb. iv. 13). According to the principle of II Tim. iii. 16 R.V. this would read: “All naked things *are* also opened” (which does not make sense).

“Many *are* weak and sickly” (I Cor. xi. 30). This would read: “Many weak ones *are* also sickly” (which tells us nothing).

There are altogether nine passages of this sort in the N.T., all of similar construction: Rom. vii. 12; I Cor. xi. 30; II Cor. x. 10; I Tim. i. 15, iv. 9; I Tim. ii. 3; I Tim. iv. 4; Heb. iv. 13; and II Tim. iii. 16. In all except II Tim. iii. 16, the Revisers follow the A.V. They single out II Tim. iii. 16, and supply a wrong ellipsis, thus robbing the passage of its point, and the epistle of its testimony to the inspiration of Scripture.

The reader will realize that we cannot attempt in these pages anything beyond the most superficial analysis of this great theme of Figures of Speech. *Dr. Bullinger* found 1104 pages none too many, and our complete output for one year’s *Berean Expositor* is but 240. The examination of Ellipsis alone occupies 130 pages in *Dr. Bullinger’s* work. The reader will see, therefore, that anything more than indication is beyond us.

Let us pass on for a moment to the second figure. *Zeugma*.—This means a “yoke”, and the figure is so called because one verb is yoked on to two subjects, while strictly it refers only to one of them. The second verb is omitted:--

“And Adah bare Jabal; he was the father of such as dwell in tents and . . . . cattle”  
(Gen. iv. 20).

The A.V. supplies the missing verb by putting in italics “*such as have*”.

*Asyndeton* (or “No ands”).—There is something dramatic in the use of this figure. We are not allowed to pause, but are hurried on to the climax:--

“Now if any build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made manifest” (I Cor. iii. 12, 13).

We do not pause to consider each item, but are hurried on to the day when “every man’s work shall be made manifest”, declared by fire.

The figure opposite to this is called *Polysyndeton*, or “Many ands”, and has just the opposite effect, causing one to stop and linger over each word or phrase.

*Aphaeresis* (or “Front cut”) is seen in the change of name of the king who once was known as “Jeconiah” (“Let Jehovah establish”) to “Coniah”, of whom it was said, “Write this man childless” (Jer. xxii. 30).

Of the figures we have looked at, Ellipsis is by far the most important, and to enable the reader to appreciate this, we will conclude by a further analysis of Relative Ellipsis.

### **Relative Ellipsis.**

- (1) WHERE THE OMITTED WORD IS SUPPLIED FROM A *cognate* WORD, OCCURRING IN THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT.—A good example is found in the italic type supplied by the A.V. in Rom. xii. 6-8.
- (2) WHERE THE OMITTED WORD IS SUPPLIED FROM A *contrary* WORD.—Rom. vi. 17 must not be read as though the apostle thanked God that any were the servants of sin. The word “though” must be supplied: “*Though* ye were the servants of sin, *yet* ye have obeyed.”
- (3) WHERE THE OMITTED WORD IS SUPPLIED FROM *analogous* OR *related* WORDS.—Rom. xvi. 16 does not give sanction for men and women to kiss one another indiscriminately. The Ellipsis to be supplied is, “Salute one another (men and women respectively) with a holy kiss”.

We trust none will allow themselves to be deterred by the strange names of these figures, or the apparent difficulties attending their study. No pains are too great that enable us to grow in knowledge of the Word, and as we proceed, further and fuller advantages attending this study will become apparent.

**#18. Figures of Speech.**  
**Ellipsis, or Omission, as it affects sense.**  
**pp. 148 - 150**

The Figures of Omission that affect sense are six in number.

*Aposiopesis*.—We sometimes find that “words fail us”, or that silence is even more eloquent than speech. An example occurs in Gen. iii. 22:--

“And now, lest he put forth his hand, take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever—Therefore the Lord God sent him forth.”

We are conscious that something is left unsaid. It would seem that the consequences attending the immortality of Adam after his fall are two awful for speech. The blank is eloquent. This is an example of *Aposiopesis* or “sudden silence”; a figure used in connection with a promise, anger, grief, etc.

*Meiosis*, or “a belittling”, is a figure that is used when one thing is belittled in order to magnify another. The following are examples:--

“And we were in our own sight as grasshoppers” (Numb. xiii. 33).  
“Who am less than the least of all saints” (Eph. iii. 8).

*Tapeinosis*, or “demeaning”, differs from *Meiosis* in that *Meiosis* belittles one thing that it may magnify another, while *Tapeinosis* demeans a thing in order that it may increase or magnify it. When the apostle said that he was a citizen of “no mean city”, he really held Tarsus in high esteem. And when he said he was “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ”, we know that he really valued it beyond life itself.

*Catabasis*, or “gradual descent”, emphasizes humiliation, sorrow, etc. Two examples will suffice; one from the O.T. and one from the N.T.:--

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength:  
They shall mount up with wings as eagles;  
They shall run and not be weary;  
They shall walk and not faint” (Isa. xl. 31).

Here the descent is manifest in the transition from “mounting with wings” to “running” and so to “walking”.

“Who, being in the form of God,  
Thought it not robbery to be equal with God:  
But made Himself of no reputation,  
And took upon Him the form of a servant,  
And was made in the likeness of men.  
And being found in fashion as a man,  
He humbled Himself,  
And became obedient unto death,  
Even the death of the cross” (Phil. ii. 6-8).

This figure is balanced by *Anabasis* or “gradual ascent”, which comes under the Figure of Addition, to be considered later.

*Syllogismus*, or “omission of the conclusion”, is a departure from the regular form of logical argument, partly for the sake of emphasis, and partly because it is often unnecessary, in conversation or writing, to follow to a logical conclusion. This leaves room for the imagination which fills up the gap far more vividly than a great deal of writing:--

“But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the sabbath day” (Matt. xxiv. 20).

These words leave the reader to “draw his own conclusions”. No Jew, resident in Palestine, knowing the condition of the roads, the fanaticism of the inhabitants, the effect of the weather on travel, needed a word to be added; his imagination would supply all the rest, and be a sufficient urge for him to make this prayer his own.

A similar figure to *Syllogismus*, which omits the conclusion of an argument, is *Enthymeme*, or the “omission of the premise”. This is an everyday figure of speech, in spite of its learned appearance. We rarely present a complete argument, and the two Greek words that give us the name of this figure suggest that something is “held in the mind” but unspoken.

The omission of part of an argument may occur in three ways:--

FIRST ORDER.—*The major premise understood:*

John is a coward; for John is a liar.

SECOND ORDER.—*The minor premise understood:*

John is a coward; for all liars are cowards.

THIRD ORDER.—*The conclusion understood:*

All liars are cowards, and John is a liar.

This third order has already been presented under the heading *Syllogismus*.

Such everyday expressions as “Draw your own conclusion” and “It goes without saying” show how usual it is for our reasoning to run in the form of the *Enthymeme*, and not the complete and formal Syllogism. Compare any formal presentation of the argument with the agitation, fear, and concern of Pilate’s wife, and her mode of reasoning when she said: “Have thou nothing to do with that just man” (Matt. xxvii. 19). The first would be quenched, and her appeal fall flat, if it were presented with major and minor premise, followed by “Therefore” and the conclusion.

The reader will find the *Enthymeme* used very effectively when the suggestion of the writer is ironical, and if he cares to read the speech that Mark Anthony made over the dead body of Cæsar, he will find several interesting examples.

We have now surveyed the Figures of Omission that are found in Scripture. This is the smallest group, and perhaps the least in importance and interest. *Dr. Bullinger* has devoted considerable space to this subject and the interested reader should refer to "Figures of Speech" or the "Companion Bible" for further information. Our space will not permit further notes here. We are but surveying this great subject, and trust that the little help we may be able to give on such a theme may not be too elementary or disjointed.

**#19. Figures of Speech.**  
**Figures involving addition.**  
**pp. 192 - 196**

The figures that involve omission are comparatively few in number and importance. Those that involve addition and repetition are much greater in number, interest and importance, and it will not be possible in these pages to deal with all that have been enumerated. We can give but a representative selection.

Before we deal with any one figure, it will be helpful to see the set of figures as a whole.

**Figures involving Addition.**

**(i) Affecting words. (ii) Affecting the sense.**

The figures that affect words are sub-divided as follows:--

- (1) Repetition or addition of the same letters, e.g. *Alliteration*.
- (2) Repetition or addition of different letters, e.g. *Acrostic*.
- (3) Repetition or addition of the same word in the same sense. In this section there are sixteen varieties.
- (4) Repetition or addition of the same word in a different sense. In this section there are four varieties.
- (5) Repetition or addition of different words in similar order and sense. One example here is the figure *Symploce* or intertwining.
- (6) Repetition or addition of different words in a different order but the same sense. There are two cases here, one being the well-known *Inversion*.
- (7) Repetition or addition of different words similar in sound, but different in sense. Of this the common "pun" or play upon words is a familiar example.
- (8) Repetition or addition of different words different in sound, but similar in sense. Of this the well-known *Synonym* is an example.
- (9) Repetition of sentences or phrases. Five varieties are given.
- (10) Repetition of subjects. This heading covers *Parallelism*, both simple and complex, and *Correspondence*, whether alternate, introverted or complex.

Figures of Addition that affect words, are distributed as follows: (1) By repetition. (2) By amplification. (3) By description. (4) By way of conclusion. (5) By interposition. (6) By way of reasoning.

Under these six headings, we find fifty-three different varieties, so that it will be readily seen that, however lightly we touch upon this subject, it is by no means an easy task, and the necessity to be brief adds to the difficulty. We therefore ask the indulgence of the reader, his prayerful sympathy and close attention.

The figure of *Alliteration* is difficult to set out in English, as the examples concern are written in Hebrew and in Greek. We therefore pass on to the *Acrostic*, which is of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament Scriptures, but even this will require translating into English equivalents.

Quite a number of passages of the O.T. stand out to the eye and impress the memory, by the fact that they are arranged so that each line begins with a letter of the alphabet, and in alphabetical order. Psalm cxix. is a familiar example, and with very slight modification we can use the A.V. of one stanza as it is, to set forth the effect upon the eye, of the original.

#### **Teth (T).---Verses 65-72.**

“Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according unto Thy word.  
Teach me good judgment and knowledge: for I have believed Thy commandments.  
'Till I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept Thy word.  
Thou art good, and doest good; teach me Thy statutes.  
The proud have forged a lie against me: but I keep Thy precepts with my whole heart.  
Their heart is as fat as grease: but I delight in Thy law.  
'Tis good for me that I have been afflicted: that I might learn Thy statutes.  
The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.”

Perhaps the most wonderful Acrostic in the O.T. is the Book of the Lamentations of Jeremiah. There are 22 letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and the five chapters of the Lamentations will be found to have 22 verses each, except the third, which contains 66 verses. The first two chapters present two perfect Acrostics of the Hebrew alphabet, each verse commencing with a letter of the alphabet in its correct order. The central chapter of 66 verses has a peculiar variety of Acrostic—the first three verses open with *Aleph*, the next three with *Beth*, and so on right through the alphabet. Let us make this clear to the English reader. Our attempt must not, of course, be regarded in the light of a translation. Moreover, the third letter in the Hebrew alphabet is equivalent to G, and not C.

### Lamentations iii. 1-9.

(Freely translated in order that the Acrostic may be seen).

Affliction I have seen, a man am I who has passed under the rod of His wrath.  
Away from the light and into darkness He brought me.  
Against me, surely, is He turned; He turneth His hand against me all day long.  
**B**roken are my bones, my skin and my flesh made old.  
**B**uilt in, and encompassed as with gall and travail.  
**B**uried as in a tomb in darkness and with the dead.  
Chained and hedged about so that I cannot go out.  
Cry as I will and shout, He shutteth out my prayer.  
Crooked hath He made my paths, and enclosed as with hewn stone.

For a very remarkable Acrostic that lies buried in the Book of Esther, the reader is referred to “Figures of Speech” (Dr. E. W. Bullinger), “The Companion Bible”, or Dr. Bullinger’s pamphlet: “The Name of Jehovah in the Book of Esther.”

The figure *Anaphora*, or “Like beginnings”, repeats a word several times at the beginning of successive phrases and so impresses us with its importance. Here are two examples, one from the O.T. (Hosea iii. 4) and one from the N.T. (Eph. vi. 12):--

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days  
WITHOUT a king, and \ i.e. neither a king of their own,  
WITHOUT a prince, and / nor a foreign ruler.  
WITHOUT a sacrifice, and \ i.e. neither Mosaic sacrifices,  
WITHOUT an image, and / nor idolatrous ones.  
WITHOUT an ephod, and \ i.e. neither Aaronic priests,  
WITHOUT teraphim.” / nor idolatrous ones.

“For we wrestle not  
AGAINST flesh and blood, but  
AGAINST principalities,  
AGAINST powers,  
AGAINST the rulers of the darkness of this world,  
AGAINST spiritual wickedness in high places.”

The figure *Polysyndeton*, or “Many Ands”, is the opposite of *Asyndeton*, or “No Ands”, referred to on page 64. The use of *Polysyndeton* is a call to pause, to consider, to weigh each step and clause. We select a short example, but to get the full thought the reader should turn up the examples given in “Figures of Speech” and the examples noted in “The Companion Bible”. Many of these are of great length, and it is the length that impresses.

“My sheep hear My voice  
AND I know them  
AND they follow me  
AND I give unto them eternal life;  
AND they shall never perish,  
AND not any one shall pluck them out of My hand” (John x. 27, 28).

**#20. Figures of Speech.**  
**Figures involving addition (*continued*).**  
**pp. 241 - 245**

The figure called *Epanadiplosis*, or “Encircling”, was known not only to the Greeks, but to the Jews, for the Massorah contains two lists of its use (*See* Dr. Ginsburg’s *Massorah*). We give one example from the N.T. in an amended version. It must be explained that in the A.V. the word *pneuma* is translated both “wind” and “spirit” in this verse, but never translated “wind” elsewhere. Also, the word for “sound” is literally “voice”; and “listeth” is “willeth”. Thus we read:--

“THE SPIRIT breatheth where He willeth, and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh or whither He goeth: so is every one that is born of THE SPIRIT” (John iii. 8).

The figure is called “Encircling”, because the word with which the sentence opens is repeated at the close.

*Climax*, or “Gradation”, is the name given to that figure of speech by which the mind is conducted by a series of upward steps to a conclusion. The Greek word *klímax* means a ladder. We cannot, very easily, print passages so that the eye shall ascend, but that is the mental picture we should have of this figure:--

“We glory also in  
TRIBULATIONS: knowing that  
TRIBULATION worketh  
PATIENCE: and  
PATIENCE (worketh)  
EXPERIENCE; and  
EXPERIENCE (worketh)  
HOPE: and  
HOPE maketh not ashamed” (Rom. v. 3-5).

*Symploce*, or “Intertwining”, is the name given to the figure of speech in which there is a repetition of different words in successive sentences, without change of either order or sense:--

“IT IS SOWN in corruption;  
IT IS RAISED in incorruption.  
IT IS SOWN in dishonour;  
IT IS RAISED in glory.  
IT IS SOWN in weakness;  
IT IS RAISED in power.  
IT IS SOWN a natural body;  
IT IS RAISED a spiritual body” (I Cor. xv. 42-44).

*Epanodos*, or “Inversion”, employs repetition, but the words are used, while retaining the same sense, in inverse order:--

“Make the HEART of this people fat, and make their EARS heavy, and shut their EYES; lest they see with their EYES, and hear with their EARS, and understand with their HEART” (Isa. vi. 10).

The reader will recognize that this and similar figures of speech underlie the “structures” that are such an important feature of the inspired composition of the Scriptures. To present this more clearly, it has been found useful to employ certain devices such as letters and indentation. Thus, the structure of the above citation from Isa. vi. would necessitate a framework as follows:--

A | HEART.  
B | EARS.  
C | EYES.  
C | EYES.  
B | EARS.  
A | HEART.

While this is a very obvious case, and almost too simple to need setting out, we commend it to any who are at all puzzled by the more elaborate structural forms that are used. They can all be resolved into the most simple basic types.

When *Epanodos* (or “Inversion”) opposes words one to the other it is called *Antimetabole*, or “Counterchange”. Another name for this figure is *Metathesis*, or “Transposition”. The following is an example, viz., Gal. v. 17:--

A | The FLESH lusteth.  
B | Against the SPIRIT.  
B | And the SPIRIT.  
A | Against the FLESH.

*Paronomasia*, or “Rhyming Words”: this is a figure that repeats words of the same sound, but not of the same sense. The dictionary definition of a “pun” is “a play on words that resemble each other in sound, but differ in sense”: so that the figure *Paronomasia* is no stranger to most of us. It is difficult to represent the scriptural figure in English, for we are obviously dealing with Hebrew and Greek, and the play upon words disappears when translated.

However, many readers will be acquainted with the figure in Gen. i. 2:--

“And the earth became *tohu* and *bohu* (“without form and void”).”

Another example, which is possibly familiar to many, occurs in Jer. i. 11:--

“What seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree (*shaked*). Then said the Lord unto me, Thou hast well seen; for I will watch over it (*shoked*)” (See R.V. and A.V. margin).

*Synonymia*, or “Synonymous words”: the repetition of words similar in sense, but different in sound. The synonym and its selection is a subject in itself. The right choice of synonyms is a matter which requires care, and much truth may be distorted or veiled by carelessness. We hope to devote a special series to this subject later. Meanwhile we give an example of the figure from the epistle to the Philippians:--

“Those things, which ye have both  
LEARNED, and  
RECEIVED, and  
HEARD, and  
SEEN  
in me, do” (Phil. iv. 9).

*Amoebaion*, or “Refrain”, is the repetition of the same phrase at the end of successive paragraphs. It was the observation of this feature in Eph. i. 3-14 that led us to discover the structure of the passage, which is as follows:--

### **Eph. i. 3-14.**

A1 | 3-6-. The WILL of the FATHER.  
B1 | -6. *The Refrain*: “Praise of the *glory* of His grace.”  
A2 | 7-12-. The WORK of the SON.  
B2 | -12. *The Refrain*: “Praise of the *glory*.”  
A3 | 13,14-. The WITNESS of the SPIRIT.  
B3 | -14. *The Refrain*: “Praise of the *glory*.”

*Parallelism* is a figure that employs the repetition of subjects instead of individual words. It is a form of the figure *Synonymia*, and has seven different varieties:--

- I. SIMPLE: (1) *Gradational*. (2) *Opposite*. (3) *Constructive*.
- II. COMPLEX: (1) *Alternate*. (2) *Repeated Alternation*.  
(3) *Extended Alternation*. (4) *Introverted*.

The figure has been noted from the earliest times, but the names of Bishop Lowth and Bishop Jebb will always be gratefully remembered as pioneers in its modern presentation. We give one example of each of the seven kinds of Parallelism.

### **I. SIMPLE.**

#### **(1) Synonymous or Gradational.**

“My *soul* doth *magnify* the *Lord*; And my *spirit* hath *rejoiced* in *God* my *Saviour*”  
(Luke i. 46, 47).

Here the lines are parallel in thought, and the words used are synonymous: “soul” and “spirit”, “magnify” and “rejoice”, “Lord” and “God my Saviour”.

## (2) Antithetic or Opposite.

“A wise son maketh a glad father; But a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother”  
(Prov. x. 1).

## (3) Synthetic or Constructive.

“The *law* of the Lord . . . . .  
The *testimony* of the Lord . . . . .  
The *statutes* of the Lord . . . . .  
The *commandment* of the Lord . . . . .  
The *fear* of the Lord . . . . .  
The *judgments* of the Lord . . . . .” (Psa. xix. 7-9).

## II. COMPLEX.

### (1) Alternate.

A | “The Egyptians are *men*,  
B | And not *God*:  
A | And their horses are *flesh*,  
B | And not *Spirit*” (Isa. xxxi. 3).

### (2) Repeated Alternation.

A1 | “If any man love the *world*,  
B1 | The love of the *Father* is not in him.  
A2 | For all that is in the *world* . . . . .  
B2 | Is not of the *Father*,  
A2 | But is of the *world*” (I John ii. 15, 16).

### (3) Extended Alternation.

A | “Lay not up for yourselves *treasures* upon earth,  
B | Where *moth* and *rust* doth corrupt,  
C | And where *thieves* break through and steal.  
A | But lay up for yourselves *treasures* in heaven,  
B | Where neither *moth* nor *rust* doth corrupt,  
C | And where *thieves* do not break through and steal” (Matt. vi. 19, 20).

### (4) Introverted Parallelism.

A | POWER.—Christ is the *power* of God.  
B | WISDOM.—And the *wisdom* of God.  
B | WISDOM.—The foolishness of God is *wiser* than men.  
A | POWER.—The weakness of God is *stronger* than men” (I Cor. i. 24, 25).

Here we must leave this interesting subject, and in our next article take up the figure of Correspondence, which is based on parallelism of theme rather than of lines or words or propositions.

