

# 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,

When we contemplate the tremendous nature of Paul's prison ministry, the well-nigh overwhelming odds against its testimony, and the feebleness of the witness associated with *The Berean Expositor*, nothing but the fact that we are in the hands of the God of all-sufficient grace gives the needed assurance to go forward. This we do despite the fact that as an organization we are negligible, our circulation not large, and our position outside the camp.

We rejoice however to record that at last, certain periodicals once fast closed against this truth have opened their pages, some for positive testimony and others for tentative correspondence. Whilst not having taken any part in the correspondence, we are encouraged by the fact that the Word is going forth and that in this country, in U.S.A. and on the Continent the seed so long sown in loneliness is at length bearing fruit.

With thankfulness for the practical fellowship of saints, and a desire that every issue shall increasingly magnify the Lord Jesus Christ,

We remain, by grace,

Yours for the truth,

CHARLES H. WELCH  
FREDK. P. BRININGER

*December, 1929.*

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## All spiritual blessings.

### #1. A criticism of the term “super-heavenly”. pp. 29 - 31

The reason for which *The Berean Expositor* exists is to make known the special revelation of God’s grace to the Gentiles during this dispensation of the mystery, and, in harmony with this intention, is the fact that, during a period of fourteen years, the epistles to the Ephesians has been given a systematic study. Its words have been examined, its structure discovered, and some of its heights and depths acknowledged, though they remain unscaled and unfathomed. The fact that we have brought this serial exposition to a close does not mean that henceforth the epistle to the Ephesians is a shelved book, but rather that now the analytical study has been concluded the more spiritual study may begin. There are many wondrous and mighty themes that have been dealt with verbally that need a closer consideration now that the spade work has been done. The house is built, the furniture is in place, and we must now move in and take possession.

A question that lies at the very threshold, and one that seriously colours the whole of our present life here on earth, is, In what way are “all spiritual blessings” a present possession? Is Satan, together with Principalities and Powers, at this moment, actually and merely potentially, beneath the feet of the believer? Are we now, at this moment, actually “seated together in the heavenly places”? Is the new creation already our present, personal enjoyment? Can we, by virtue of union with Christ, Who is at the right hand of God, and by the operation of the law of the spirit of life, can we command the withdrawal from our sphere of disease, the curse, and the limitations associated with the presence here of sin and death? Is our attitude to be one of “reigning”? Should we speak of our position as “on the throne”? These, and such like questions, are not inventions of the writer; they are actually propounded by many earnest believers, and in many cases the answer has been, that all these things are ours here and now.

It has been the aim and the prayer of those responsible for this magazine to stand for all the truth of God for His saints, and therefore these questions challenge the very object for which we exist. It is our intention, by the grace of God, to consider these and similar points in this series to which we have given the title, “All spiritual blessings”.

Closely allied with “all spiritual blessings” is its sphere, “heavenly places”. This sphere we have considered in its place, and have seen that there is a threefold sphere of blessing in the purpose of God: (1) the earth, (2) the heavens, and (3) the heavenly places, far above all. For this third sphere we have used the term “super-heavenlies” in recognition of certain scriptural facts connected with it. While we believe most readers appreciate the fitness of this expression as embracing in itself the scripturally-revealed features belonging to it, some have nevertheless challenged its appropriateness. We therefore feel that in this introductory article the true meaning of “in heavenly places” and the suitability of the term “super-heavenlies” should be considered.

## Super-heavenly.

This term seems to one to be a straining of words to the subverting of those who hear. This is a sufficiently serious charge to require refutation and brings us into line with the apostle who although he took with becoming meekness the criticism of his “contemptible speech” and his “mean appearance”, yet when his apostleship or his doctrine was attacked threw himself into the breach and yielded subjection “no not for an hour” that the truth of the gospel might continue right through to ourselves. The criticism in question begins by stating the following fact, and this fact is the basis of our teaching on the subject.

“*En tois epouraniois*. This expression is peculiar in its form to the Ephesian epistle, where it occurs five times; i. 3 and 20; ii. 6; iii. 10; vi. 12.”

After having made this statement the critic opens up his view on the subject by a quotation from John iii. 12, and says, following the quotation, “(lit., heavenlies, as in Ephesians)”.

Now there is something amiss here. If “in heavenly places” is *peculiar in this form* to Ephesians, it cannot also occur in John iii. 12. The word “heavenly” is used all over the N.T., a fact that it would be foolish to deny, and which has no bearing on the subject. Our contention has been that *this peculiar form*, “in heavenly places”, has been used by God in Ephesians alone, because Ephesians reveals the mystery which, alone in all departments in the purpose of the ages, makes it known that a company of the redeemed shall one day enter into their inheritance “in the heavenly places far above all principalities and powers”.

That the significance of the peculiar form found only in Ephesians is seriously questioned by our critic is revealed by the second item of criticism. Speaking of the term “super-heavenly” it is stated that:--

“There is no such word in the New Testament as *huper-ouranios*, that is ‘above or beyond the heavens’.”

To this the obvious answer is that in Eph. iv. 10 we have the words, *huper ano panton ton ouranon*, “far above all heavens”. This shows that while the actual term “super-heavenlies” may not be found, “super-heavens” is in the very heart of the self-same epistle associated with the self-same ascension, “far above all”, with which the church of the one body is inseparably connected.

Can the logic of these two passages be denied?

“The Lord Jesus ascended to the *heavenly places*” (Eph. i. 19-21).

“The Lord Jesus at the same time ascended *far above all heavens*” (Eph. iv. 10).

The word used in Eph. iv. 10 is *hyper-ouranon*; therefore “heavenly places” are “super-heavenly”.

We really feel grateful for this criticism, for its investigation has proved, up to the hilt, the reality of the peculiarity of the position in Ephesians.

The problem that is connected with the fact that the throne of God, Principalities and Powers, even wicked ones, are alike spoken of as “in heavenly places” has been dealt with in Volume II & III, new edition, page 105 (Volume III original edition, page 56), and a difficulty connected with the usage of *ouranos* in Col. i. 5 is dealt with in Volume XVI, page 126.

We rejoice that God in His grace has not given us a place in the “heavenly city” that *comes down from God out of heaven*, but that, with fullness of thanksgiving, we can say:-

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“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. i. 3).

## **#2. “Spiritual blessings in heavenly places.”**

**pp. 72 - 75**

The expression “heavenly places” occupied our attention in the first paper of this series; in this we turn to the equally important item, “All spiritual blessings”. These blessings are “in heavenly places”—a definite locality “far above all”; but while we are there, in spirit, we are nevertheless still waiting for the redemption of the purchased possession, so that the enquiry as to whether these spiritual blessings can be enjoyed, in their full meaning, until the whole church enters into its glorious inheritance is a very real one.

If these blessings are enjoyed now by members of the One Body, and if these blessings are their everyday experience, it would be reasonable to expect that throughout the epistles of Paul written for this company, there would be references to them. The fact is that whatever the reason, the words “to bless” and “blessing” (*eulogeo* and *eulogia*) occur nowhere else in the prison epistles other than in Eph. i. 3.

The section in which they occur has to do with the plan and purpose of the Father made before the overthrow of the world. There is no mention of sin and death, redemption or forgiveness, and the “acceptance” which is ours in the Beloved is, strictly speaking, “high favour”. Here in fact is the Father’s will. Until we reach the time appointed by the Father, we must not presume that we are of age or have entered into our title. This is the lesson of Gal. iv. 1-10, which has a bearing on the point as we shall see by the reference to the “adoption”. Those blessings that are ours by *purpose* (Eph. i. 3-6)

become ours by *purchase* (Eph. i. 7 and 14). Until we reach the day of redemption, the “seal” and the “earnest” must be our blessed portion.

### **Spiritual.**

Have we been led astray by the present-day use of the word “spiritual”? If this means a state of mind that combines the qualities of piety, unworldliness, and Christ-likeness, a mind and walk that is in harmony with Scripture and pleasing unto the Lord, how comes it that the whole of the O.T. could be written, such characters as Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph and Daniel described, and the word “spiritual” never be necessary? Only once do we find the word in the O.T. Hosea says, “The prophet is a fool, the spiritual man is mad” (Hos. ix. 7). The correspondence here between “the prophet” and “spiritual” shows that Hosea refers to those who, under the influence of the Spirit, spoke to the people. This means that the word “spiritual” is virtually absent from the O.T.

It is never wise to omit a reference to the LXX version when dealing with the O.T. Accordingly we look to see whether *pneumatikos* (spiritual) is used, and, if so, how. There is no need for search; the word never occurs. Instead of translating Hos. ix. 7 by this word, another is used, which in Zeph. iii.4 stands for “light and treacherous persons”. It is clear therefore that “spiritual” blessings and “spiritual” persons mean something very different from that usually intended by those who use the word to-day. Such expressions as “the deepening of the spiritual life” and “spirituality” are not in accord with the scriptural meaning of the word.

The epistle to the Ephesians uses the word of “blessings”, but also of “wickedness” (i. 3 and vi. 12). These expressions moreover coincide with the first and the last occurrences of the phrase “in the heavenlies” that are to be found in Scripture. It is therefore folly to omit their comparison. If the believer has blessings in heavenly places, which are described by the same word as that which describes “wickedness”, it is evident that the word does not mean piety, godliness, unworldliness, or Christ-likeness, but has reference to nature or condition. These beings are “spiritual” though “wicked”.

The meaning of the word is made clearer when we discover its opposite or alternative. Take for example the “light” in II Cor. iv. In verse 6 its opposite is “darkness”, but in verse 17 its opposite is “weight”, which settles any ambiguity that might have existed. In Eph. vi. 12 the opposite to “spiritual” is “flesh and blood”. Our foes are not human, but belong to a higher order, which for the moment we might call “angelic”. All spiritual blessings therefore must be interpreted in the light of the usage of that term and not “spiritualized” away. The use of the word in Rev. xi. 8: “spiritually called Sodom and Egypt”, shows that it can have no reference to “spirituality”, for these cities were notoriously wicked, but indicates to us that “spiritual” blessings are “real”, whereas present pilgrim blessings—like the manna in the wilderness—are but “figures of the true”, but “earnests” and foretastes of the glory that awaits us at the right hand of God.

In Rom. xv. 27 the word “spiritual” is used in opposition to the necessities of life. “If the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (Rom. xv. 27; *see also* I Cor. ix. 11). In I Cor. ii. 13-15 and xv. 44-46, spiritual things are placed over against natural things. These natural things have to do with the “soul”, and Adam as he was created. It is the risen Christ, as the last Adam, Who as the “life-giving spirit” introduces “spirituality”.

It is opposed to a “fleshly” condition in Rom. vii. 14, and used of “gifts” in Rom. i. 11; I Cor. xii. 1; xiv. 1; the wilderness provision in I Cor. x. 3, 4; “songs” and “understanding” in Eph. v. 19; Col. iii. 10, and i. 9; and of “persons” in Gal. vi. 1; and I Cor. xiv. 37.

The Corinthians were carnal, divided, and to them the apostle said: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ” (I Cor. iii. 1). Here “spiritual” is opposed not only to “carnal”, but to the condition of being “babes”. By comparing Heb. v. 8 - vi. 1 with I Cor. ii. and iii. we find “spiritual” used as a parallel with “perfect” and opposed to “babes”. A babe in Christ may be very godly, very Christ-like, but, according to this usage, would not be “spiritual”. One more comparison with Heb. v., vi. and I Cor. ii., iii. makes us see that when the Church does reach the “perfect man” with its measure of the “full age of the fullness of Christ”, it will be then, and then only, able to enjoy “spiritual” blessings.

### **Spiritual and heavenly.**

There is one other passage that throws light upon Eph. i. 3. I Cor. xv., a chapter that is devoted to the theme of resurrection, we read: “There are heavenly bodies (*epourania*), and earthly bodies (*epigeia*) . . . . there is a natural body (*psuchikon*), there is also a spiritual body (*pneumatikon*) (I Cor. xv. 40-44). Here we learn that a “spiritual body” and a “heavenly body” are parallel terms, which leads to the conclusion that “spiritual” blessings in “heavenly” places can only be enjoyed when we possess a “spiritual” and a “heavenly” body. This appears upon the surface of Eph. i., as we believe we shall be able to show when considering the references to the words “adoption”, and “earnest”.

Our conclusion is that the spiritual blessings that are ours according to the Will of the Father, and ours by reason of the redemption of Christ, and ours by reason of the earnest and the seal of the Spirit, will be ours in actual personal possession in that day when we shall attain unto the “purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory” (Eph. i. 14).

In another paper we must give attention to the other side of the question, namely, What are our possessions while here on earth?

### **#3. A guiding principle discovered by the analogy of Scripture. pp. 186 - 191**

In our former papers we sought to show that “super-heavenly” was warranted as a translation of *epouraniois* in Eph. i. 3, in the light of i. 20, 21 and iv. 10. We suggested that while all spiritual blessings were most truly ours “in Christ”, they were not yet ours “in heavenly places”, for the good reason that we were not actually there; but that what we did possess here, while we walked by faith yet still held by mortality, was the earnest of our inheritance, “until the redemption of the purchased possession”, “unto the day of redemption”.

In this connection a passage in Rom. viii. is sometimes quoted: “For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God” (Rom. viii. 19). This must not read as though the sons of God were manifested now, for verse 23 shows that not only does the creature wait, but “ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body”. The sons of God will be manifested, as such, at the resurrection, but till then they, too, must “groan” and “wait”.

Ephesians tells us that we have “the earnest”, not the full inheritance at present; Rom. viii. 23 repeats the thought by describing us as having “the *firstfruits* of the Spirit”. Now the firstfruits were by no means the harvest, but a small pledge or earnest of the harvest yet to be. Christ Himself is the “Firstfruits of them that slept” (I Cor. xv. 20). Their resurrection is *assured*, and they may, even now, rise and walk in newness of life, but they dare not teach that “the resurrection is past already”, for such would be serious untruth (II Tim. ii. 17, 18). The word “manifestation” in Rom. viii. 19 is *apokalupsis*, and it can easily be seen that just as the Lord Jesus is not yet “revealed”, but is “expecting” (Heb. x. 13), so also must we, though sons of God, wait with earnest “expectation” for that day of revelation (Rom. viii. 23). Not only so, but Rom. viii. 24, 25 proceeds to remove any idea that the “revelation of the sons of God”, or “the redemption of the body” obtains now, by saying:--

“For we are saved by hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, *why doth he yet hope for?* But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience WAIT FOR (expect) it.”

#### **An O.T. illustration.**

It may throw light upon the subject if we refer to a notable illustration of the principle underlying the scriptural answer to the question before us. It is provided by Abraham. Heb. xi. 8 tells us that when Abraham was called to leave Ur of the Chaldees, he knew that the place to which his steps were directed was to be his inheritance, yet he was an

old man and his wife an old woman by the time they received the promise of a seed. Rom. iv. and Heb. xi. 12 tells us that so far as parenthood was concerned Abraham and Sarah were “as good as dead”, and Abraham’s faith is most definitely declared to be faith in God that “quickeneth the dead”. Abraham knew most intimately the meaning of the words of Rom. viii. 11, in the quickening of the mortal body even before the actual and literal resurrection.

### **Quickened, but not raised and ruling.**

But though Abraham got thus far, farther even than most of us can truthfully claim to have reached, yet observe the remarkable sequel. He had actually entered into the land of his inheritance, he had walked through the length and breadth of it, he had lifted up his eyes northward, southward, eastward, and westward (Gen. xiii. 14-17), and, as a direct sequel to this anticipatory possession, had refused “from a thread even to a shoelatchet” from the hand of the king of Sodom who was under heavy obligations to him (Gen. xiv. 21-23). He had met another king, even Melchisedec, and the truth associated with that typical king-priest, as taught in the epistle to the Hebrews, prevented Abraham from accepting “dominion” over the Canaanite or the king of Sodom. It rather led him to refuse all such anticipation, in the light of a deeper revelation made known to him.

### **The faith that awaits God’s time.**

Stephen draws attention to the deeply significant fact that although Abraham entered the land of promise in faith, nevertheless God “gave him *none inheritance*, no, not so much as to set his foot on, *yet* He promised that He would give it to him for a possession” (Acts vii. 5). The only piece of land that Abraham actually possessed was the field of Ephron and the cave of Macphelah, which he bought and paid for with 400 shekels of silver as a burial place for his wife (Gen. xxiii. 3-20). His own description of himself in that transaction was: “I am a stranger and a sojourner with you” (Gen. xxiii. 4). The reply of the Canaanite was: “Thou art a prince of God among us . . . . none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre” (Gen. xxiii. 6). Who spoke the truth for the dispensation then obtaining? Abraham or Heth?

Some of our friends would have taken Abraham very seriously to task for his attitude. They would have demanded the operation of the law of the spirit of life over against the law of sin and death, and claimed the field of Ephron as a rightful possession. They would have considered the payment of the 400 shekels of silver as much a betrayal as the receiving of the shekels later by Judas himself. Yet Abraham was right. Hear the inspired comment:--

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, *as in a strange country*, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same possession . . . . These all died in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims in the land” (Heb. xi. 9 and 13).

### **Two reasons for waiting.**

Two reasons are given for this renunciation; one in Heb. xi. and the other in Gen. xv. The first is that the Lord revealed to Abraham the glory of the heavenly city: "For he looked for a city . . . . they desire a better country, that is an heavenly . . . . He hath prepared for them a city" (Heb. xi. 10-16). This was something more than the inheritance originally promised. It became, to Abraham, what the prize of the out-resurrection becomes to the members of the One Body, which is also vitally associated with a heavenly citizenship (Phil. iii. 14-20). Abraham was well content to wait, to let his moderation be known to all men, to live as a pilgrim and a stranger in the land of his inheritance that he might reach out unto the prize made known to him.

Would it not be a steadying thought if members of the One Body realized that this present life is a blessed opportunity of suffering and enduring with and for Christ, "if by any means" a larger share in the glorious ministry soon to be set up may be entered upon? When you are tempted to ask, "What is the purpose for which I am here?" do not omit the possibility of qualifying for the highest of all service, that which is associated with the prize of our high calling. Those who see in Phil. iii. nothing more than a spiritual attainment in this life, differ essentially from our interpretation; the prize will never be attained apart from real conformity to the death of Christ; to such the literal and special resurrection will come as a very blessed event.

The second reason why Abraham was not, in his own lifetime, to inherit the land of promise was revealed to him as recorded in Gen. xv. 16: "The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full." Abraham knew that he would die (though the Lord blessedly adds, "in peace"), and be buried in a good old age. He knew that his seed would go into bondage, and that they could not enter their inheritance for at least another 400 years. By consulting Deut. ii. 12-37 we see the beginning of the movement that ended in the possession of part, at least, of the land of promise. For us, the Amorite living in Canaan is but a type of the principalities and powers, the spiritual wickednesses that are in heavenly places, that still retain a hold upon their forfeited place. The iniquity of these spiritual Amorites is not yet full, and so we too must patiently await the day of redemption, which shall deliver us from a bondage worse than that of Egypt (Rom. viii. 19-25).

Had Abraham walked seven times round the walls of Jericho, the walls would not have fallen down flat; he would simply have exposed himself to ridicule, and the name of God to blasphemy. In Gen. xiv. 13 we find Abraham at peace with the Amorite, and his only battle for the rescue of his nephew Lot. When Joshua entered the land, however, nothing less than the utter destruction of the Amorite was required. Abraham was blessed by Melchisedec, king of Salem, when he returned from the slaughter of the four kings that had attacked Sodom. Joshua numbered among his enemies Adonizedec, king of Jerusalem, who, joined by four other kings, was put to death. No miracle is recorded when Abraham rescued Lot, but a stupendous miracle, a veritable "sign in heaven" is recorded in Josh. x. 1-14. It was enough that Abraham delivered Lot from the hand of the enemy; but Joshua bade the captains of Israel come and put their feet upon the necks of the captive Canaanite kings.

The conquest of the land under Joshua has a place in the typical teaching of Scripture for the believer now, and in so far as he enters by faith into his position with Christ, so will his realization of victory be more complete. But to act and to pray as though the day of redemption had come, and the redemption of the body were an accomplished fact, is to be under the spell of a falsehood, and must lead to disaster. “We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us” (Rom. viii. 37) is an incomplete quotation, and is often made to mean the very opposite of the truth. The full quotation is as follows:--

“For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, IN ALL THESE THINGS we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.”

The burden of the passage is that none shall separate us from the love of Christ, neither “tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, or sword”, “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. viii. 35-39). It is in this sense that we are more than conquerors, not in the sense of making a conquest over our enemies, Some take the stand, that seeing they are in Christ, and a part of a new creation, members of His body, and “far above all” it would be a sign of lack of faith ever to feel the stress of persecution, the shame of nakedness or the peril of the sword. Not so the apostle. It was the carnal Corinthians that made the boast that they “reigned as kings”. The apostle said: “I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you” (I Cor. iv. 8). Then follows that unparalleled list of suffering for Christ:--

“God, I think, displayed us last as condemned criminals, a theatrical spectacle to the world, both to angels and men. We are fools for Christ’s sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye strong; ye glorious, but we dishonoured. Up to this very hour we both hunger and thirst, and are ill-clad, and are buffeted, and are hustled from place to place, and toil, working with our own hands; being abused, we bless; being persecuted, we endure; being reviled, we entreat; as refuse of all things are we become the offscouring of all things till now” (I Cor. iv. 9-13).

The true dominion is seen here. Not in boastful and carnal “reigning”, as the Corinthians, but as the apostle in meek enduring. Paul reveals the spirit of the conqueror, the true king, the real dominion. When being reviled, he can *intreat*, when abused, he can *bless*. “In all these things” he is “more than conquerors” through Christ. During this present life dominion of the character of reigning on a throne is not experienced. Rather are we left as pilgrims and strangers, though joint-heirs with Christ. The position is that of those graciously allowed (Phil. i. 29, Gk.) to share the sufferings of Christ, while confidently looking forward to the glory. When we triumphantly exclaim (I Cor. xv. 55-57), “O grave, where is thy victory? . . . thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ”, we do not delude ourselves with the idea that we are no longer mortal, neither do we act as though death is for ever removed from us. It would help us if we remembered that Christ did not die to save us from *dying*, but to save us from *death*, and to apply this fact to the two phases of experimental redemption, the present, with its limitations, and the future, with its “liberty and glory”.

Let us ponder the two reasons given in Heb. xi. and Gen. xv. as to why Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the seed of promise could all die *in faith* NOT HAVING RECEIVED.

# **The Coming of the Lord.**

## **#1. The O.T. foundation.**

### **The prophecy of Enoch.**

**pp. 33 - 40**

The reader may remember that in a previous number we touched upon the reason why the testimony of the second coming of the Lord does not figure in our pages so prominently as some may have been led to expect. We trust that what we then said will have allayed any suspicion of unfaithfulness. We do not wish, however, to let such a subject remain in a negative position, but would rather take our stand upon positive truth; therefore we ask the reader to come with us to the Word to search and see what has been written for our learning upon this important subject.

#### **The O.T. basis.**

To commence our study with the testimony of the Gospel according to Matthew is to attempt to build without a foundation. The teaching of Matthew and the bulk of the New Testament rests upon the teaching of the Old Testament, not only for the fulfillment of prophecy in the coming of the Lord as redeemer, but also for His coming again as the hope of His people.

It would not be difficult to prove that the very terms of Adam's creation look forward to the second coming of the Lord. For example, the reference to the dominion given to man, in Psa. viii., Psa. lxxii., Dan. ii. & vii., and Heb. ii., &c., seems to look forward to the coming reign of Christ. The description of the garden of Eden looks forward to Rev. xxii., and the promise that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head awaits the second coming of the Lord for its fulfillment.

These passages, however, are too indirect for our present purpose, so the first point to which we call attention is

#### **The prophecy of Enoch.**

The words that constitute Enoch's prophecy are not recorded in Gen. v., but it matters not who it is that has preserved his utterance so long as it is found within the pages of Scripture. We are indebted to Jude for the record. He writes:--

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (Jude 14, 15).

Before we can understand the import of this prophecy, we must observe the general trend of the epistle in order to see the appositeness of Enoch's witness. If we glance at the earlier verses of Jude we shall see not only a reference to human sin of a deep dye in the mention of Sodom and Gomorrah, but a reference also to angels who kept not their first estate, and are therefore reserved for judgment.

Looking to the end of the epistle, such outstanding apostates as Cain, Balaam and Korah are brought forward as examples of the mockers who shall come in the last times. It is time, therefore, that we consider the structure of the epistle to see just where Enoch's prophecy comes.

### **Jude.**

- A | 1, 2. Benediction.
- B | 3. Exhortation. Beloved. Earnestly contend for faith.
- C | 4. Ungodly men "of old".
- D | 5. Remembrance. The Lord's act.
- E | 5-16. Judgment.
  - a | 5-8. Three examples, Israel, angels, and Sodom.
  - b | 9, 10. Michael the archangel.
    - Unrecorded elsewhere.
    - References to Satan.
  - a | 11-13. Three examples, Cain, Balaam, and Korah.
  - b | 14-16. The Lord and holy myriads.
    - Unrecorded elsewhere.
    - Allusion to Satan.
- D | 17. Remembrance. The Lord's word.
- C | 18, 19. Ungodly of "last time".
- B | 20-23. Exhortation. Beloved. Build up on faith.
- A | 24, 25. Doxology.

It will be seen that Jude's testimony is directed to one point, viz., the judgment of the Lord upon ungodliness. Yet he ranges the whole ground of Scripture, and, by bringing forward the angels that sinned, and Michael's rebuke of Satan, penetrates into depths beyond our understanding. It is also evident that to lift Jude 14 and 15 out of its context, and generalize thereupon, will not help us to understand truth.

Enoch's prophecy is connected with a sin in which not only men, but Satan and fallen angels are involved. There is no reticence on Jude's part to indicate something of its evil character. The sin of the angels is likened to that of Sodom and Gomorrah, and those who follow in their evil train are likened to brute beasts that corrupt themselves, being called "spots in their feasts of love". Of both angels and men it is written that they have been "reserved" in darkness for judgment (verses 6 and 13).

### **Ungodliness.**

We have long seen that the words "ungodliness" and "godliness", by reason of their antithesis in the epistles, and the expression "the mystery of godliness", must have a far

deeper meaning than “piety” or the lack of this virtue. This depth of meaning is evident in Jude’s epistle where the three words *asebeia*, *asebeo* and *asebes* are found six times.

“Ungodly men, who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness” (verse 4).

“To convict all that are ungodly, of their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, by ungodly sinners” (verse 15).

“Mockers who walk after their ungodly lusts” (verse 18).

The sin of angels, Sodom and Satan, together with the sin that shall be judged at the coming of the Lord, is denominated ungodliness. Peter confirms this, for in his second epistle he speaks of the angels that sinned in the time of Noah, and of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Balaam, and speaks of the flood coming upon the world of the *ungodly*. Sodom and Gomorrah are examples of those that live *ungodly*; Lot is an example of the deliverance of the *godly*, and of the fire reserved by the Lord for the day of judgment and perdition of *ungodly* men (II Pet. ii., iii.).

We must refer to II Peter again after we have pointed out the necessity of an important revision of Jude 14, 15. A literal rendering of the words of Enoch must read: “Behold, the Lord *came*.” While the true rendering of the aorist of the Greek verb is still somewhat of a moot point, the rightness of the above rendering is confirmed by the general usage and rendering of the A.V. The interested student may test this by noting the occurrences of *elthe* (part of the verb *erchomai*, “to come”), which is usually translated “came”. If Enoch said, “Behold, the Lord *came*”, he must have been referring back to some judgment that was past when he spoke. To what could he refer? The judgment of the flood had not then taken place, neither had judgment fallen upon Babel. The description given of the judgment could not refer to Gen. iii. or iv. To what then could it refer?

The reader will probably have traveled back in mind to Gen. i. 2, to the *katabole kosmou*, “the overthrow of the world”. This connection is more than countenanced by Peter in his second epistle which we have already found to be parallel with that of Jude.

### **The second coming and the overthrow (Gen. i. 2).**

Jude says:--

“Remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should not walk after their own ungodly lusts” (verses 17 and 18).

Peter says:--

“I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by . . . . the apostles of the Lord and Saviour . . . . there shall come in the last day mockers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue right through as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens are of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished” (II Pet. iii. 1-6).

The mockers denied that there had been any interference in the form of judgment ever since the creation. They therefore denied the overthrow of the world in Gen. i. 2.

Enoch took up this line of teaching. He, too, uttered the solemn word: “Behold, the Lord *came*”, and his reference to angels and Satan, as well as to man, removes any sense of disproportion. Enoch named his son *Methuselah*, which means, “At his death it (namely, the flood) shall be”, and in the year that Methuselah died the flood came.

Jude now takes up Enoch’s witness, coupled with Peter’s words (II Pet. ii., iii.), and links together (1) the overthrow of the world that then was (Gen. i. 2), (2) the flood (Gen. vi., vii.), and (3) the second coming of the Lord, which shall be accompanied by a deluge of fire. This is indeed a solemn aspect of the coming of the Lord.

Two items of importance now demand our attention:--

1. The statement that this Enoch was “the seventh from Adam”.
2. The reference to “ten thousands of His saints”.

“*The seventh from Adam.*”—Why should it be necessary for Jude to pause in the midst of his utterance to make this remark? The reason is that there is a great need to be on our guard against deception and false prophets, and as there are two named Enoch in the book of Genesis (the one being the true seed of Adam, the other being in the line of Cain), this warning becomes necessary. It may be that the warning should not be passed by without due consideration. Let us go back to the early chapters of Genesis and learn the lesson contained in the note, “Enoch, the seventh from Adam”.

Adam’s true line omits Cain and his seed. This may be tested by consulting the genealogies given in Gen. v., I Chron. i. 1, and Luke iii. 38, where the order is always the same. Cain was of that wicked one, and his seed are prophetic of the seed of the serpent. The two lines are given in Genesis with the following close parallels emphasized:--

<b>Adam’s line (Gen. v.).</b>	<b>Cain’s line (Gen. iv. 17-24).</b>
Seth.	ENOCH.
Enos.	Irak.
Cainan.	Mehujael.
Mahalaleel.	METHUSAEL.
Jared.	LAMECH (70*7 vengeance).
ENOCH.	Jabel.
METHUSELAH.	Jubal.
LAMECH (777 years).	Tubal-cain
Noah.	

It will be seen that there is evidently some kind of anticipation and counterfeit in some of the names given to Cain’s seed. Their likeness, however, is limited to their names only. Enoch, the son of Cain, is connected with the founding of a city in the land of

Cain's wanderings, whereas the true Enoch is taken from the earth and its ungodliness. Methusael and Methuselah both name their sons Lamech! Lamech's sons in the line of Cain are concerned in a further attempt to cover with a veneer the earth that is cursed, whereas the true Lamech names his son Noah, looking away to the rest that God alone can give.

The first words of the Lord's answer to the disciples' question concerning the sign of His coming were:--

"Take heed that no man deceived you, for many shall come in My name, saying, I am the Christ; and shall deceive many" (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5).

Peter gives this warning in II Pet. ii.; so also does Jude whose citation of Enoch's prophecy we are studying. He says:--

"There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men . . . . woe unto them, they have gone in the way of Cain . . . . Enoch prophesied of these . . . ."

Scripture has given us warning that the teaching concerning the coming of the Lord will not escape corruption.

"*Ten thousands of His saints.*"—These words are quoted by Moses in the blessing of Israel:--

"The Lord came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; He shined forth from Mount Paran, and He came with ten thousands of His saints: from His right hand went a fiery law for them" (Deut. xxxiii. 2).

There can be no doubt as to the meaning of the word "saints" here. The law of Sinai we know from various Scriptures was mediated by angels (Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 9; Heb. ii. 2).

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them as in Sinai" (Psa. lxxviii. 17).

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him; thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him" (Dan. vii. 10).

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels" (Matt. xvi. 27; xxv. 31).

"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels" (II Thess. i. 7).

These quotations are sufficient to prove that the "saints" or "holy ones" of Enoch's prophecy are "angels" and not the redeemed. This also is the meaning of Zech. xiv. 5: "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee", and of Joel iii. 11: "Thither cause Thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord"; also of I Thess. iii. 13: "The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints."

We can imagine that though there has been agreement so far, some of our readers will dissent from this last reference being included in the list.

### Coming “for” and “with” His saints.

There is quite a school of prophetic thought that stresses the coming of the Lord “for” and the coming of the Lord “with” His saints. Supposing for the purpose of argument we accept this view, how does it stand examination? The Thessalonians were waiting for God’s Son from heaven (i. 10), and exercising the patience of hope (i. 3). They were told that their loved ones who had died would not meet the Lord earlier or later than those living at the time, but that both living and dead would be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air (iv. 15, 16). Well then, what are we to make of I Thess. iii. 13:--

“To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, *with all His saints.*”

If these “saints” are His redeemed people, and if the Thessalonians were to wait for the Lord to come *with* all His redeemed people, then what place do the Thessalonians occupy? They were redeemed, they certainly were not the unwatchful who might have been left behind, for they were to be established “unblameable in holiness”, and if such can be left behind, who then shall go? The distinction between “coming for” and “coming with” excludes those to whom the apostle wrote, and contradicts the express statements of I Thess. iv. 15, 16, and v. 10. If we take I Thess. iii. 13 to speak of the “holy ones”, the “saints” of Deut. xxxiii. and of Enoch’s prophecy, we have the coming of the Lord *with His angels* and *for His people* set before us with clearness and without contradictory statements.

It is interesting to note that the Sinaitic MS reads: “ten thousand of His holy angels.” The angels that shall come at the end of the age are doubtless the same that were instrumental in bringing about the overthrow of Gen. i. and all the divine interpositions through the ages.

“And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean . . . . and the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet . . . . These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with fire and brimstone” (Rev. xix. 14-20).

When once we are clear as to the fact that “the saints” of Enoch’s prophecy are the *holy* angels, we begin to realize their relation in the context with the *fallen* angels. Moreover, the structure shows that Michael the *archangel* is placed in correspondence with the Lord and His angels, and both in conflict with Satan. Enoch’s prophecy with its reference to Gen. i. 2, taken in conjunction with II Pet. iii., where it is stated that ‘the world that then was’ was destroyed by water, and the heavens and earth which are now shall be destroyed by fire, lifts the doctrine of the second coming into its true place in the purpose of the ages. There has been a tendency to look upon the second coming as a kind of afterthought, the next best thing that could be done in the circumstances. What we call “the second coming” was demanded by the purpose of the ages, whether Israel had

received their Messiah and His prior presentation or not. Let the scoffers say what they will.

“Behold, the Lord CAME” (Jude 14), and  
“He that SHALL COME will come, and will not tarry” (Heb. x. 37).

## **#2. The patience of Job. pp. 69 - 72**

“Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever!” (Job xix. 23, 24).

What was it that was of such consequence that Job wished a permanent record of it to be kept, comparable to a granite monument with its leaded letters? A Cenotaph, indeed, for the meaning of the word Cenotaph is “An empty tomb”, and that is what came before the eye of Job in his distress. He said that He was a stranger to his wife and children, his friends abhorred him, and they whom he had loved turned from him. His bones clave to his skin, and he had escaped by the skin of his teeth. As we read this chapter we get some sense of Job’s utter extremity, and then it is that he utters the words that he wished could be graven in the rock for ever. What were they?

“For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth: and (following the margin) after I shall awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God, Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. My reins within me are consumed with earnest desire (for that day)” (Job xix. 25-27).

The marginal reading treats the word *or*, “my skin”, as part of the verb *ur*; “to awake”, both of these words are expressed by the same letters in the Hebrew, namely, *ayin*, *vav*, and *resh*. It is difficult for unaided reasoning to come to a conclusion here, and we therefore felt it was an opportunity for the Word to prove itself. Consequently we collected all the occurrences in Job of the verb *ur*, to awake, and noted what happened when we added Job xix. 26 to the list. The moment we did so we saw the shaping together of the living Word, and this was confirmed by a most strange rendering.

When comparing the first and the last occurrences together, at first sight there did not appear any connection, and we have made it a rule in seeking the structure of Scripture to avoid the invention of headings lest we lead ourselves astray. Then suddenly these two passages took their place; the correspondence can be seen by consulting the margin of Job iii. 8, for there we find the word “leviathan”. Into the meaning of the expression “to raise up leviathan” we will not enter, as it has served its purpose by fixing the structure and the inclusion of Job xix. 25-27 seems necessary to avoid breaking that which appears to be an inspired design.

### The Hebrew *ur*, to raise, in Job.

A | iii. 8. Raise up leviathan.

B | viii. 6. Bildad's challenge.

C | xiv. 12-14.

“So man lieth down, and riseth not, till the heavens be no more they shall not awake, nor *be raised* out of sleep . . . . all the days of my appointed time will I wait until my change come.”

D | xvii. 8. The innocent raise up against the hypocrite.

C | xix. 26, 27.

“After *I shall* awake, though this body be destroyed, yet out of my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself.”

B | xxx. 29. Job's answer.

A | xli. 10. None dare raise him up (leviathan, verse 1).

The parallel is complete, and as the whole matter turns upon whether we read the Hebrew word as “skin”, or part of the verb “to raise”, the balance of thought seems clearly to point the way to a solution. The LXX appears to have attempted something in the nature of a compromise. It has accepted the idea as we have stated it and translated *ur* by *anastesai*, “to raise up”, but it slips in the word *derma*, “skin”, to supply the ellipsis. The Alexandrian version reads *soma*, “body”, instead of *derma*. We have therefore the added testimony of this most ancient translation to help us.

Our special enquiry, however, is connected with the coming of the Lord. We therefore pass over the title *Redeemer*, merely drawing attention to the articles on *Redemption* for its meaning and fulness. Job was not limiting his vision to the truth of the Saviour at Bethlehem, but looked on to “the latter day”, a term parallel with “the last day” of the prophets. Moreover, he looked to see his Redeemer standing in the latter day “upon the earth”. The parallel passage (Job xiv. 12) tells us that this shall not take place “till the heavens be no more”, which refers to the same period as II Pet. iii. 7, 10, 11, Rev. xx. 11, and Isa. li. 6. Job entertained no hope of “going to heaven”. He belonged to that company who will wake after the Millennium, when “the heavens be no more”.

If Job must be numbered with those who shall stand before the great white throne, and if Job be mentioned in Scripture as an example of patience (James v. 11), and righteousness (Ezek. xiv. 14), it but adds to the problem of those who maintain that all who stand before the great white throne are necessarily doomed. It may be objected that no mention is made in Job xix. of the “coming” of the Lord, and that this passage is not relevant to the subject of this series. The references to the latter day speak of Job's Redeemer at a period far removed from the period of His earthly life. Its close association also with the resurrection necessitates the second coming. Job had a foretaste of this hope even during his life. He could say: “now mine eye seeth Thee” (xlii. 5). “So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning” (xlii. 12).

The proverbial beauty of his daughters, one of whom was named, “A horn for paint” or “Paint box” (verses 14, 15), and the words of xxxiii. 25, viz., “His flesh shall be fresher than a child's; he shall return to the days of his youth”, are consistent with the

fact that Job was completely restored to health, and furnish a picture of the resurrection of that company wider than either Israel or the Church, whose place in Scripture has not been given the consideration that its importance warrants.

Thus far we have seen the testimony of men who lived before Israel's day. Apart from Balaam's prophetic allusion to the second coming, under the figure of the star and the sceptre, the remaining passages must of necessity be taken from the prophecies and psalms of Israel, but while Jerusalem and the Land, together with the nation of Israel, are central in this great section, we remember that, after all, the blessings that are to follow.

### **#3. The Prayers of David.** **pp. 97 - 101**

The song of Moses (Exod. xv. 1-19), uttered at the overthrow of Pharaoh, necessitates the second coming for its true fulfillment, and it can never be complete until it is coupled with the song of the Lamb, sung, not upon the shores of the Red Sea, but of a sea of glass mingled with fire, celebrating a victory, not over Pharaoh, but over the beast and his image (Rev. xv. 1-3). The song of Moses, just before his death (Deut. xxxii. 36-42), equally looks forward to the second coming for its fulfillment. These passages, however, may be considered too vague to stand alone, and can be better appreciated when the more precise statements of other Scriptures have been read. Traversing the history of Israel to the time of the kingdom, we find embedded in the Psalms several testimonies to the second coming of the Lord.

When "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together" (Acts iv. 27), there was a germinal fulfillment of the opening of Psalm ii. "The kings of the earth", however, are to gather again, with a mightier front: "And I saw the beast; and the *kings of the earth*, and their armies *gathered together* to make war against Him that sat on the horse" (Rev. xix. 19).

The answer of the Lord to this rebellion is: "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion" (Psa. ii. 6). When this takes place, the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Anointed (Rev. xi. 15); "the nations are angry" (Rev. xi. 18), and the wrath of the Son has come (Rev. xi. 18; Psa. ii. 12). Then it is that the request of Psa. ii. 8 will be made and answered: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession."

Except in a very figurative way, this passage can receive no fulfillment during this dispensation. It is bounded on either side by conditions that are foreign to the church of the mystery, viz.: (1) The Lord must be set as King upon Zion. (2) This inheritance is not explained in the terms of converts and missions, but as the administration of justice and judgment: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in

pieces like a potter's vessel." The time for the fulfillment of this passage is the day of the Lord (Rev. ii. 27, xii. 5, xix. 15), when the Lord's Anointed shall ride forth from heaven as King of kings and Lord of lords. Psa. ii., then, must be included in our survey of the O.T. witness to the second coming.

A whole set of Psalms may be said to assume the fact of the second coming of the Lord. This applies to Psalms that speak of the Lord reigning as king in their midst, or over all the earth, as Psa. xlv., xlvi., xlvii., and also Psa. xlviii. where Jerusalem is seen as the city of the great King.

Psa. l. is more positive in its references to the second coming:--

"The mighty God, even the Lord, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people. Gather My saints together unto Me."

There are many features here that underlie statements in the N.T. The world-wide address reminds us of Matt. xxiv. 27, the fire and the tempest at His coming reminds us of Matt. xxiv. 29, 30, while the call to the heavens seems to refer to "angels" who gather "together His elect from the four winds" (Matt. xxiv. 31). "His saints" are evidently "Israel" (Psa. l. 7).

In his Psalms David looks forward to the coming of the Lord as the great goal of his desire. At the end of Psa. lxxii. he says: "The prayers (or praises) of David the son of Jesse are ended", and this climax is the Psalm of the King's Son. There we read of this great King as the Judge and Deliverer of the poor and needy. Peace and prosperity are the result of His reign. His dominion is from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. All kings fall down before Him, all nations serve Him, and bless Him. The whole earth is full of His glory.

The figure used in verse 6 is apt to be misunderstood: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass." There is no word for "grass" in this verse, the word translated "mown grass" being *gez*, which is also rendered by the word "fleece" and "mowings". To the farmer it is a disaster, not a blessing, for rain to fall upon his new mown grass. What the passage really refers to is the fall of the rain upon the parched earth after the grass has been cut and removed, as expressed in Amos vii. 1: "The beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth: and lo, it was the latter growth after the king's mowings." The figure of Psa. lxxii. is that the coming of the Lord will be like the latter rain. Israel shall grow and flourish a second time, there shall be a blessed aftermath, they shall revive and their end shall be glorious.

II Sam. xxiii. 1-5 should be read in conjunction with Psa. lxxii.: "Now these be the last words of David . . . . this is all my desire." These words are in much the same spirit as Psa. lxxii. 20. Both passages look forward to "The Kings' Son"; "He that ruleth over

men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.” The figure, however, is changed from that of refreshing rain upon the grass that has been cut, to the beneficent sunshine after the rain has fallen: “And He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.”

These passages help us to answer the question: “What will it be when the King comes?”

Psa. lxxxii. is prophetic of Israel’s day of trouble: ‘They said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.’ In this extremity they cry to the Lord: “Keep not silence, O God: hold not Thy peace, and be not still, O God.” The tumult of the enemies, and the “crafty counsel” taken against the Lord’s hidden ones, turn the mind back to Psa. ii. Moreover, remembering that Moab and Ammom are the children of Lot, it is interesting to note that “ten nations” are mentioned in Psa. lxxxiii. 6-8, and these are raised to be “confederate” against the Lord. These foreshadow the ten kings of Rev. xvii. 12.

Coming to Psa. xcvi. we read of millennial conditions. All the earth is called upon to “Sing unto the Lord as new song”. His glory is to be declared among the nations, and the Gentiles are called upon to bring an offering and to come into His courts.

“Say among the heathen, The Lord reigneth . . . . let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, let the sea roar and the fulness thereof . . . . FOR HE COMETH, for He cometh to judge the earth.”

This coming is further described in the next Psalm:--

“The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about Him . . . . a fire goeth before Him . . . . The hills melt like wax AT THE PRESENCE of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth.”

Psa. xcviii. ends with the words “For He cometh”, &c., and gives additional details of that day. Psa. cx. anticipates the coming of the Lord:--

“The Lord said unto My Lord, Sit Thou at My right hand until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of Thy strength out of Zion . . . . the Lord at Thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath.”

The closing words of Psa. cl.: “Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord, Praise ye the Lord”, look forward to Rev. v. 13 for the time of their fulfillment.

The witness of the Psalms to the second coming of the Lord shews Israel to be the people, Zion the city, and the Lord’s coming like rain and sunshine on the one hand, and like fire and tempest on the other. It is a day of wrath as well as of blessing. The nations of the earth are vitally connected with this coming, and its central idea is that of a coming King. The hope of the church, as such, is not expressed in these Psalms, and however

they may minister to our comfort and help, their prophetic burden looks away to a blessed time on the earth, and not to the blessed hope of the manifestation in glory for which the church waits (Col. iii. 4; Titus ii. 11-14).

Enoch's prophecy, Job's patience, Moses' song and David's prayer, all bear their testimony that the Lord is coming to this earth once again. Coming in judgment upon the ungodly (Enoch), coming with resurrection life for those who own Him as Redeemer (Job), coming to lead a mightier exodus than that through the Red Sea (Moses), coming to reign as the greater than Solomon, David's Son and David's Lord.

#### **#4. The Vision of Isaiah. pp. 136 - 139**

We have seen in another series that the burden of all the prophets is the restoration of Israel. This being so, it is impossible for the prophets to be silent upon the second coming of the Lord, for Peter shews the restoration and the coming to be inseparable.

“The times of refreshing . . . . and He shall send Jesus Christ . . . . Whom the heavens must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts iii. 19-21).

If we read Acts iii. 21 and I Thess. iv. 16 together:--

“Whom the heavens must receive until . . . .”  
“The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven . . . .”

--it seems clear that the latter passage must refer to this hope of Israel and, seeing that years after I Thess. iv. was written Paul still entertained the hope of Israel (Acts xxviii. 20), the conclusion becomes practically certain.

In chapter xi. 4 is a passage which, taken alone, may not be said to speak of the Lord's coming, yet no N.T. reader who has read II Thess. i. and ii. can avoid the evident connection:--

“He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked” (Isa. xi. 4).  
“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance” (II Thess. i. 7, 8).  
“Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming” (II Thess. ii. 8).

It is, then, fairly evident that II Thess. and Isa. xi. both deal with the same coming, but we shall see fuller corroborative detail when examining N.T. passages.

The results upon earth that follow this coming are set out in the well-known passage that speaks of the wolf and the lamb dwelling together, and of this blessing being intimately connected with the holy mountain of God (Isa. xi. 9). In verse 11 the words “the second time” are used, and we cannot separate these words from the second coming of the Lord:--

“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.”

This feature was impressed by Stephen upon his hearers, when he spoke of Joseph and of Moses:--

“And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren” (Acts vii. 13).

“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).

“His citizens hated Him, and sent a message after Him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when He was returned, having received the kingdom . . . .” (Luke xix. 14, 15).

“Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation” (Heb. ix. 28).

Isa. xxxiv. and xxxv. deal with “The day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion” (Isa. xxxiv. 8). “Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you” (Isa. xxxv. 4).

Owing to the events that are revealed as accompanying it, there can be but one period when this day of vengeance takes place:--

“All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from a fig tree” (Isa. xxxiv. 4).

“The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (II Pet. iii. 10).

Not only must Isa. xxxiv. and xxxv. refer to the day of the Lord yet future, but they must refer to the period covered by the sixth seal, for Rev. vi. 12-17 reads:--

“And I behold when He had opened the sixth seal; and, lo, there was a great earthquake: and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together . . . . for the great day of His wrath is come.”

“Vengeance” and “recompense” are shown equally divided between Isa. xxxiv. and xxxv. The former chapter speaks of the Lord’s sword being filled with blood, streams being turned into pitch, and the dust into brimstone; the latter of the day when the blind shall see, the deaf hear, the lame leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; when

the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

“Vengeance” and “recompense” are apparent again in Isa. lix. 16-21 where we read: “The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord” (verse 20). This verse, quoted by Paul in Rom. xi. 26 as taking place when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, prevents acceptance of the interpretation that this coming to Zion took place during the earthly life of Christ.

Isa. lxiii. 1-5 takes up the same theme. In Isa. xxxiv. the scene is laid in “Bozrah and Edom”; In Isa. lxiii. it is for Edom; the chapters refer to identical places. Isa. lxiii. moreover, speaks of the same dual object: “The day of vengeance” and “The year of My redeemed” (verse 4).

The reference to the garments of the Lord being stained with blood connects the passage with Rev. xix.:--

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and He that sat upon him . . . . He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called the Word of God . . . . and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (verses 11-16).

Isa. lxiii. 3 says, “I have trodden the winepress alone”, and its contexts and parallels forbid the poetic interpretation put upon it in the hymn that associates this passage with the Lord’s sufferings on the cross.

The last reference we shall make to Isaiah is that of lxiv. 1: “Oh that Thou wouldest rend heavens, that Thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence.” Israel recognizes at last that they are the clay, and the Lord the Potter (verse 8): they beseech for mercy on the ground of being the Lord’s people (verse 9). Zion and Jerusalem are called the holy cities of the Lord, and they are described as being a wilderness and a desolation (verse 10): the holy and beautiful house, where their fathers had praised the Lord, had been burned with fire (verse 11): and then comes the cry corresponding to that with which the chapter opened: “Wilt Thou refrain Thyself for these things, O Lord? Wilt Thou hold Thy peace, and afflict us sore?”

Isaiah ends on the same note as does John in the Revelation, “Even so, come”. The wide creation makes the same appeal, while the church of the mystery is exhorted to “live . . . . looking for that blessed hope”.

There can be no cry to Israel and Jerusalem of, “Comfort ye, comfort ye”, without the accompanying “voice of him that crieth in the wilderness,. Prepare ye the way of the Lord”. What John the Baptist did at the first coming of the Lord, Elijah is destined to do at the second coming. *Restoration* and *Return* are inseparable.

## #5. Daniel's Dream. pp. 177 - 179

Strictly speaking Daniel's dream is recorded in chapter vii. of his prophecy, but under our heading we must include Nebuchadnezzar's dream recorded in Dan. ii. The general outline of the latter is fairly generally known by students of the Word, and until we arrive at the prophecy as a part of our systematic study, the consideration of controversial features must be deferred. Without therefore going beyond what is actually written in Dan. ii., we may say with confidence that at the close of Gentile dominion on this earth, when it shall have passed through the several phases symbolized by gold, silver, brass, iron and clay, this dominion shall be suddenly and violently shattered, and in its place God shall establish a kingdom that shall never be destroyed (*see* Dan. ii. 44).

Daniel's dream, given in chapter vii., shows that the setting up of this kingdom takes place at the second coming of the Lord. Once more we adhere to the one theme before us, deferring the question as to whether the four beasts are parallel with the metals of Nebuchadnezzar's image, or whether they have a different time period both for commencement and for fulfillment. The theme of the second coming is found in verses 9-14. In these verses we have the apocalypse of the O.T.:--

"I beheld till the thrones were set, and the Ancient of days did sit, Whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head like the pure wool: His throne was like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him: thousand thousands ministered unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened . . . . I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (Dan. vii. 9-14).

Daniel, desiring fuller information concerning the dream, asked one of them that stood by concerning it. He was told that the saints of the Most High would take the kingdom, and in answer to a yet closer questioning concerning the fourth beast and the ten horns, he was told the condition of things that would obtain at the end, when the beast would blaspheme God, and "wear out the saints of the Most High". This, however, was for a time; oppression would at length give place to judgment.

"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, Whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Dan. vii. 27).

The sphere of the dream, as also of Nebuchadnezzar's is limited to the kingdoms of this world. It is "under the whole heaven" (vii 27), it fills "the whole earth" (ii. 35), it takes the place of kingdoms ruled by man, and its dominion includes peoples, nations and languages. A reference to Dan. iii. 4 will show that this was the language of

Nebuchadnezzar's proclamation when the herald called upon all in his dominion to bow down to the golden image in the plain of Dura. There is moreover a parallel with this in the dominion of Babylon at the time of the end; "The waters which thou sawest . . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (Rev. xvii. 15). It is also the description of the dominion of the beast: "Power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations" (Rev. xiii. 7). At the sounding of the seventh trumpet "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign unto the ages of the ages" (Rev. xi. 15). There is no necessity to labour the proof of the identity of the dreams of Daniel and the visions of John. Both refer to the Son of man at His coming to the earth to rule and reign.

A feature that we omitted in the quotation of Dan. vii. 9-14 deals with the beast, his blasphemy and his doom in the burning flame. This is delineated in the latter chapters of Daniel, and is also given prominence in the Revelation. The time of the second coming, referred to by Daniel as the "day of the Lord", is fixed by reference to II Thess. ii.; and it is definitely related to the end of the age in its close association with Israel and the earthly kingdom.

Many items of deep interest that are found in Daniel are necessarily omitted in this survey, but the references in it to the second coming of the Lord are clear and unambiguous. The coming, as depicted here, can have no reference to the church of the mystery and the spiritual blessings in the super-heavenlies. On the contrary, it refers to kingdoms under the whole heaven, and to God's "people" Israel, and "city" Jerusalem (Dan. ix.).

# Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth.

## #66. The knowledge of the Lord.

pp. 1 - 4

Before we continue our studies in the closing chapters of Exodus, it seems necessary that the subject opened in the previous paper should not be left without the sequel supplied by the N.T.

In Exodus we have seen the knowledge of the Lord, commencing in redemption, progressing through separation and pilgrim supply, and culminating in sanctification. If we gather up some of the teaching of the N.T. upon the subject of knowledge, we shall have before us the same truth in terms applicable to ourselves. No one who realizes the truth of Eph. iv. 18 can ever speak slightly either of ignorance or knowledge:--

“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the IGNORANCE that is in them.”

This ignorance alienates from the very life of God! It does not mean merely a little less culture. The passage speaks of the Gentiles, and Rom. i. contains the genesis of their defection:--

“Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind” (Rom. i. 28).

Israel likewise failed in connection with knowledge:--

“They have a zeal of God, but not according to *knowledge*, for they being *ignorant* of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God” (Rom. x. 2, 3).

The great prayers of the prison epistles give a high place to knowledge:--

“The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the *knowledge* of Him . . . . that ye may *know* . . . .” (Eph. i. 17, 18).

“And to *know* the love of Christ, which passeth *knowledge*” (Eph. iii. 19).

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in *knowledge* and in all judgment” (Phil. i. 9).

“That I may *know* Him, and the power of His resurrection” (Phil. iii. 10).

“That ye might be filled with the *knowledge* of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding” (Col. i. 9).

The results of the true application of this knowledge must be considered also. Looking again at these great prayers, we find that this knowledge is for a very high and holy purpose. The Ephesian prayers lead on to “fullness”:--

“The fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 23).

“That ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God” (Eph. iii. 19).

and the path to this goal is pointed out as a result of knowing the exceeding greatness of resurrection power to us-ward who believe, and of the comprehension with all saints of that which really passes all knowledge—the love of Christ. This same knowledge is to enable us to

“approve things that are excellent (try the things that differ), so that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ” (Phil. i. 10).

This is a goal that must commend itself to every renewed mind, and if “knowledge” can help towards it, it is indeed of supreme value. The acquisition of knowledge for its own sake is nowhere taught in Scripture. The Colossian prayer seeks knowledge: “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing” (Col. i. 10). What Paul thought of this glorious knowledge is seen in Phil. iii. 8: “Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the *knowledge* of Christ Jesus my Lord”, and the prayer of the Colossian epistle leads on to “increasing in the knowledge of God”.

Sin entered into the world in connection with the tree of knowledge, and the new man “is renewed in *knowledge* after the image of Him that created him” (Col. iii. 10). The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is the very “gospel of the glory of Christ” that the god of this age seeks to veil.

The climax and crown of the perfect man is expressed in the words: “Then shall I *know* even as also I am known” (I Cor. xiii. 12). The sophistry and the intolerance of the Pharisees could not stand before the simple testimony of the man born blind: “One thing I *know*, that, whereas I was blind, now I see” (John ix. 25). How much service will fail to stand the test of that day, because the deep lesson learned by Paul and expressed in the words of Rom. vii. 18 has never been learned: “For *I know* that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing.”

What a comfort resides in the blessed words: “*We know* that all things work together for good to them that love God” (Rom. viii. 28). Think of the repeated phrase—“we know”—in John’s epistle with its blessed assurance:--

“*We know* that when He shall appear we shall be like Him.”  
“*We know* that He was manifested to take away our sins.”  
“*We know* that we have passed from death unto life.”  
“*We know* that the Son of God is come”,

Think, too, upon the wealth of doctrine, practice and consolation that is hung upon the one word “knowing”: “*knowing* that tribulation worketh patience” (Rom. v. 3). Without this knowledge glorying in tribulations would be impossible.

“*Knowing* this, that our old man is crucified with Christ” (Rom. vi. 6).  
“*Knowing* that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more” (Rom. vi. 9).

Without this knowledge who would contemplate the reckoning of self as dead without shrinking back with dread? So Rom. xiii. 11; II Cor. iv. 14; Gal. ii. 16; Eph. vi. 8, 9;

I Thess. i. 4; II Pet. i. 20, iii. 3, and other places. What was Paul's great stay when all Asia left him? when no man stood by him? when the truth for which he had lived, suffered and was about to die was forsaken and betrayed?

"Nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I KNOW Whom I have believed" (II Tim. i. 12).

While it is perfectly true that there is a knowledge that puffeth up, a knowledge that is nothing worth, a knowledge that is proud, selfish and false, is this any reason why we should renounce the true because of the counterfeit? "I would not have you ignorant" is still written. "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" is still true. "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge" is still a divine command. As with Israel of old so now. Redemption, separation, pilgrimage, sanctification are all stages in the knowledge of the Lord, and the glorious goal is foreshadowed in Israel's prophetic history:--

"After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people, And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; *for they shall all know Me*, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord; *for I will forgive* their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34).

## **#67. The altar of incense, or acceptance through Christ. pp. 53 - 57**

The first article of furniture for the tabernacle that is specified is the ark of the testimony; the last is the golden altar of incense. The ark, together with the mercy-seat, speak of righteousness and atonement; the altar of incense speaks of intercession and acceptance.

Prayer is likened to incense in Psa. cxli. 2: "Let my prayer be set forth as incense, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." In Psa. lxvi. 15 the word "incense" is used in a way that at first appears somewhat strange: "I will offer unto Thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings with the incense of rams." We find, however, that this word is translated "perfume" in Exod. xxx. 35, and in its verbal form (*qatar*) not only means "to burn incense" (as in Exod. xxx. 7), but to burn "fat" (Exod. xxix. 13), and "the bullock" of the burnt offering (Lev. i. 9).

The N.T. references to incense associate it with prayer:--

"The people were praying without at the time of incense" (Luke i. 10).

"And another angel came and stood by the altar, having a golden censer; and to him much incense was given, that he should give it to the prayers of all the saints on that golden altar which is before the throne. And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the angel before God" (Rev. viii. 3, 4).

The expression, “give it to the prayers”—a somewhat clumsy rendering of the dative case—is perhaps best explained, with *Vitringa* and others, as: “that he might give the effect of incense to the prayers of the saints.” *His* intercession makes *our* prayers possible.

This incense is variously described in Scripture. It is called “*perpetual* incense before the Lord” (Exod. xxx. 8). Like the shewbread that was to be before the Lord “*alway*” (Exod. xxv. 30), or the breastplate upon the High Priest’s breast “*continually*” (Exod. xxviii. 30), or the cloud by day and fire by night that guaranteed the presence of the Lord with Israel “*alway*” (Numb. ix. 16), the symbol of Christ’s intercession and perfect acceptance was to be “*alway*” before the Lord”. “He *ever* liveth to make intercession for us.”

Many times it is called “sweet incense”. The margin of Exod. xxx. 7 gives it as “incense of *spices*”. This is the correct rendering, and refers to the special composition of the incense given by the Lord, as we read in Exod. xxxvii. 29: “And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary.” The ingredients of this incense are given in Exod. xxx. 34, 35:--

“Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte (*netaph*, a drop, a gum), and onycha (*shecheleph*, shell of the perfume crab), and galbanum (*chelbenah*, an aromatic gum); these sweet spices with pure frankincense; of each shall there be a like weight. And thou shalt make it a perfume (incense), a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered (Heb. salted) together, pure and holy.”

*The Companion Bible* states that there are five ingredients in the incense, evidently counting “sweet spices” as one. Its repetition after the three cited by name, however, would lead one to read: “Take unto thee sweet spices, namely, stacte”, etc. The word “tempered” (*malach*) literally means “salted”, and some, including *Maimonides*, maintain that salt was actually an ingredient. This, however, does not seem to be the truth. Both the Chaldee and Greek versions render the word “mix” or “temper”, as though the various spices were mixed together, as salt is mixed with the food over which it is sprinkled. Salt was, of course, offered with every offering on the altar.

The figurative meaning of the word “salt” may be gathered from other usages. Salt was valuable, and stood for the whole of one’s keep. We still use the phrase, “He is not worth his salt”. So, when we read in Ezra iv. 14: “We have maintenance from the king’s palace”, the margin tells us that the Chaldee reads: “We are seated with the salt of the palace.” There is a suggestion that these men were in a covenant with the kings of Persia, as we read in Numb. xviii. 19 of a “covenant of salt”. Be this as it may, the one thing we do not understand when reading Ezra iv. 14 is that these men were actually “salted”. Let us, however, not miss the truth because of inability to decide the literal meaning of the language that describes the type. *Ainsworth* says:--

“If our speech is to be always with grace, seasoned with salt, as the apostle teaches (Col. iv. 6), how much more should our incense, our prayers unto God, be therewith seasoned?”

## The lessons of the incense.

The first feature that strikes one when reading Exod. xxx. 1-10 is the intimate association between the position of the altar of incense and the purpose of the mercy-seat:--

“And thou shalt put it before the vail that is by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the testimony, *where I will meet with thee*” (Exod. xxx. 6).

Fellowship with God commences with the death of Christ, but continues through His ever-present intercession at the right hand of God. He has entered with His own blood, and that offering is ever remembered.

The second feature is found in verses 7 and 8:--

“And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning, *when* he dresseth the lamps . . . . and when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.”

The lamps stand for testimony. Among the duties of the priest was the “dressing” of the lamps. This would include “snuffing”, for “snuffers” are mentioned in Exod. xxxvii. 23. Is it not a cause for real gratitude to remember that, whenever the Lord is obliged to “snuff” our lamps of testimony, He not only does it with “snuffers of gold”, but the sweet savour of His own acceptableness ascends before the Father, canceling and covering the offensiveness of our failure, even as the sweet-smelling incense overcame the smell of the badly burning lamp?

The third feature is found in verse 9:--

“Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon.”

We read elsewhere of “strange fire” (Lev. x. 1), and of a “strange god” (Psa. lxxxii. 9). The holy oil was never to be put upon a “stranger” (Exod. xxx. 33). All this testifies to the preciousness of that sweet-smelling savour that ascends on our behalf through the work of Christ *alone*.

When we really weigh over the two expressions, “strange incense” and “strange fire”, we begin to realize something of the abomination that Christendom must be with its religious flesh, its empty ritual and its parade of human wisdom and merit. To the professing church, even as to Israel, the Lord could truly say:--

“Bring Me no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto Me . . . . when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear” (Isa. i. 10-15).

Unless Christ be “all” in our worship, God cannot be well pleased.

Perhaps the most solemn references to the symbolism of the incense are the following:--

“And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the Lord, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil; And he shall put the incense upon the fire before the Lord, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, THAT HE DIE NOT” (Lev. xvi. 12, 13).

“Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them . . . . And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stayed” (Numb. xvi. 46-48).

At first it may seem a strange thing that incense should be used “lest he die” and “to make an atonement”, but it will be observed in both cases that the fire is specified as “from off the altar”. Sacrifice has been made, blood has been shed, and even the horns of the golden altar of incense have been touched with atoning blood (Exod. xxx. 10). Translated into the truth of the person and work of Christ, if we have been reconciled by His death, we shall be saved by His life. If our initial salvation is found in His blood, we remember with joy that “He is able to save them to the full end that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth *to make intercession* for them . . . . now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. vii. 25; ix. 24). The blood of Christ is not only effectual for our initial justification—it is remembered by God in every act of daily cleansing (I John i. 7). He Who gave Himself for His church, will cleanse it and present it blameless before the Lord.

There is no more sacrifice for sin. The Christ Who died, dieth no more, but the fragrance of that offering and its sweet savour ascend as incense before the throne. There, like Aaron, under the cloud of that fragrance, we draw near and meet with God. There our prayers find “the effect of incense” given to them. No prayer should be offered to God that is not presented “for Christ’s sake”. It is the incense of His blessed Name that accompanies our prayers and makes them acceptable. We often have felt, even when “grace” has been said before a meal, that the omission of the words “for the sake of Christ” has robbed it of its sweet-smelling savour. At our altar of incense our lamps may be trimmed and lighted with acceptableness, for our service is rendered “for the sake of His name”.

We saw in a previous study that the true meaning of consecration was to come before the Lord with hands filled with the fullness of Christ; so we see here, that all our acceptableness in prayer and worship is because of that blessed One at the right hand of God, far above all.

“Accepted in the Beloved” (Eph. i. 6).

“Unto you therefore which believe IS THE PRECIOUSNESS” (I Pet. ii. 7).

**#68. The atonement money (Exod. xxx. 11-16).**  
**pp. 85 - 88**

The institution of the half shekel of silver as atonement money in this passage is associated with numbering the children of Israel and with the possibility of plague. At first sight there is no apparent connection between these items, but a consciousness that all Scripture is inspired and profitable is a great help forward in its understanding. The association of these features evidently meant something to Moses and Israel, and it will to us as we allow the Word to enter and give us light.

“When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest. This shall they give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is twenty gerahs): an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord” (Exod. xxx. 12, 13).

What is the association between numbering, plague and the ransom of half a shekel? And why are we told just here that the shekel is equal to twenty gerahs? It is evident that each person paid ten gerahs, and if we took our stand with this people we should not be long before we saw some association between the ten gerahs and the ten plagues that fell upon Egypt, from which Israel were spared and delivered by redeeming blood. This is no play of imagination, as a reference to Exod. xiii. will show. There we find that by reason of the fact that Israel were spared, while the tenth plague were enjoined to wear the phylacteries as “a sign and a memorial”, and to sanctify every firstborn, whether of man or beast, unto the Lord.

“The males shall be the Lord’s. And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb . . . . and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem . . . . when Pharaoh would not let us go, the Lord slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the Lord all that openeth the matrix, being males; but all the firstborn of my sons I redeem” (Exod. xiii. 12-15).

Later on another phase of substitution was introduced whereby the whole tribe of Levi was set apart instead of every firstborn of the whole nation.

“And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of all the firstborn . . . . because all the firstborn are Mine: for on the day that I smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto Me all the firstborn of Israel, both man and beast: Mine shall they be: I am the Lord” (Numb. iii. 12, 13).

Then comes the numbering of the Levites in verses 14-39, and the numbering of the firstborn of Israel in verses 40-43. It so transpired that there were 22,273 firstborn males of Israel and 22,000 Levites of one month old and upward, leaving 273 to be specially redeemed by the payment of five shekels apiece. This sum of 1,365 shekels was given to Aaron and his sons (Numb. iii. 45-51).

There is evidently some similar principle at work in Exod. xxx. In this case the numbering is of all who are twenty years old and upward, and the ransom money is appointed for the service of the tabernacle as a memorial (xxx. 16). The number of those who thus paid their half shekel was 603,550 men, and of the total sum 100 talents were used to make the sockets of silver on which the tabernacle rested, while some, at least, of the remainder were used in the making of the silver hooks, chapters and fillets that were specified.

No distinction was made between rich and poor in the matter of this atonement money: "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less" (Exod. xxx. 15). Whilst we have a recognition of "each one's several ability" in the distribution of the talents, one receiving five, another two, and another only one, whilst reward for service will be in some measure proportionate to faithfulness, yet, when we deal with such matters as redemption and atonement, "there is no difference", all alike are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, all alike pay their half shekel, neither more nor less.

It is a blessed thought, that every time an Israelite looked at his own firstborn son, he had a "memorial" of substitution before him. Every time he looked at a Levite accomplishing the service of God, every firstborn male could say: There is one who hath taken my place. Every time he considered the foundations upon which the tabernacle rested, they spoke of his atonement.

What of the spiritual realities of which these are but shadows? Does our conception of service, worship and the present position of Christ at the right hand of God bring vividly to our mind and heart the consciousness that we are not our own; that we are bought with a price?

There is one occasion in the history of David, in which "numbering", "plague" and "ransom" figure, that should be considered as a contrast to this ordinance. David was moved to number Israel and Judah. Even Joab realized that the spirit that prompted this numbering was not good (II Sam. xxiv. 3), and David subsequently confessed that he had sinned greatly (verse 10). The result was judgment, in the form either of famine, defeat, or pestilence, and the sequel was the erection of an altar and the offering of sacrifice. The words of Exod. xxx. 12 come to mind as one reads this tragic chapter:--

"Then shall he give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; *that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them.*"

The numbering of Israel by David was evidently done either in pride, or in unbelief of the power of God. The grace of God that chose Israel for His own ignored their numerical inferiority as compared with other nations (Deut. vii. 7, 8). While Israel remained true, "one should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight" (Deut. xxxii. 30), but when they were unfaithful "a small company of men" was sufficient to conquer "a very great host", for the Lord would not be with them.

The solemn numbering of Israel with the accompanying emphasis upon atonement would impress upon them the truth concerning both their own shortcomings and the Lord's grace.

The depths of love were sounded when the spotless Son of God was "*numbered* with the transgressors". Whenever we think of that, the only numbering that matters to us is that we have been numbered with His saints, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

### **#69. The brazen laver (Exod. xxx. 17-21). pp. 117 - 122**

Immediately following the record of the atonement money, we have the command to make "a laver of brass to wash withal", and upon examination we discover that there is a closer connection between the two statements than appears on the surface.

Before proceeding to this closer study we would allude to yet a third item, which will be found to add one more example of a similar nature: we refer to the brazen altar. When Korah, Dathan and Abiram died for their sin, we learn that:--

"Eleazar the priest took the brazen censers, wherewith they that were burnt had offered; and they were made plates for a covering of the altar; to be a memorial unto the children of Israel, that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron, come near to offer incense before the Lord" (Numb. xvi. 39, 40).

This was done at the commandment of the Lord, Who also said: "They shall be a sign unto the children of Israel" (verse 38).

We have, therefore, the brazen altar, closely associated with the sign and memorial of Korah's sin; we have the two silver sockets of the tabernacle made of the atonement money paid by every Israelite over twenty years of age for the ransom of his soul, and now we are to find that the brazen laver is connected with another sinful association with the true worship of God.

Immediately following the record of the making of the altar of brass in Exod. xxxviii., we read:--

"And he made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation" (Exod. xxxviii. 8).

At first sight we are inclined to look upon this as a free-will offering to the Lord given by a company of godly women, but the note in the margin, "Heb. assembling by troops, as I Sam. ii. 22", sets one thinking. To speak of women "assembling by troops" at the door of the tabernacle has an unpleasant sound, and the dreadful purpose of their

assembling is revealed in all its hideousness by a reference to I Sam. ii. 22. The margin of *The Companion Bible* very gently comments on the word “assembling” in Exod. xxxviii. 8: “doing service, or worshipping according to Egyptian practice.” By using the mirrors, therefore, for the construction of the laver, this practice was abolished.

It is not for us to enlarge upon immorality. The teaching of “that woman Jezebel” is associated with what is false worship right down the ages, and Babylon is well called, “the Mother of Harlots”. It is common knowledge that many of the temples of Astarte or Venus were famous (or rather infamous) for the practice of the same uncleanness. The brazen mirrors of these women, which possibly symbolized their sensual vanity, were confiscated, and from the metal thus acquired the laver “to worship withal” was made.

Three witnesses, therefore, to human failure, in close association with divine worship, were ever before the eyes of Israel:--

1. The silver sockets made of their ransom money, telling of their need of atonement.
2. The brass covering of the altar, as “a sign” and “a memorial” to all that they stood in need of a true Priest whose offering should be acceptable before the Lord.
3. The brazen laver, a standing witness against all uncleanness, and to the utmost need for care lest the flesh, or earthly beauty, should intrude into that which after all is alone spiritual.

It comes as a shock to the lover of Art, to learn that, lovely as old stained glass may be, ravishing as some Gothic Cathedrals truly are, yet that all this beauty is merely upon the natural or soul-plane, and cannot enter into the worship of God Who is Spirit. Lovers of music also need to remember that the delights of harmony and the soul-exalting strains of beautiful music rise no higher than this self-same plane. God looks for the “ornament” of a meek and quiet spirit, and the “adorning” of the doctrine of God our Saviour. He listens for the “melody” of hearts, and the “songs” of thanksgiving that may at times escape even from the “inmost prison”.

### **The emphasis upon cleansing.**

In an Eastern land, where the temperature is high, where sandals are worn, and where food is eaten with the fingers, constant washing would be necessary for cleanliness and health alone, but in addition to this we find (in the commandments of the law) washings of persons, sacrifices, articles, and buildings at every turn. Before Aaron and his sons were invested with the priestly robes, they were washed with water (Lev. viii. 6). Before Israel received the law from Mount Sinai, both their persons and their clothing were washed (Exod. xix. 10-15). No priest was suffered to approach the altar of God, on pain of death, without washing both hands and feet (Exod. xxx. 19, 20), and to this the Psalmist refers when he says: “I will wash my hands in innocency; so will I compass Thine altar” (Psa. xxvi. 6).

Uncleanness could be contracted not only in the ordinary course of life and nature, but in several ways that had something of a ceremonial and typical character. Lev. xii.-xv. details a series.

After childbirth: for a man child 7 days; for a maid child 14 days, and a further period of either 33 or 66 days until the days of purifying be fulfilled. At the end of this time a sin offering was made and atonement accomplished—“and she shall be clean” (Lev. xii. 1-8).

Uncleanness arising from leprosy might be in a man, in his garment, or in a house, and cleansing was effected after the leprosy had departed, or, in the case of a person, if it had covered the whole skin and turned white. Garments were burned or washed in water, houses were demolished, or scraped, and a very elaborate ceremonial cleansing (to which a special paper must be devoted) is described in Lev. xiv.: “The law of the leper in the day of his cleansing.”

Other cases of uncleanness are specified in Lev. xv., and the chapter concludes:--

“Thus shall ye separate the children of Israel from their uncleanness; that they die not in their uncleanness, when they defile My tabernacle that is among them” (Lev. xv. 31).

Certain animals were set aside as unclean, and defilement was contracted even by touching them, to say nothing of eating them. To touch a grave rendered a person unclean; hence arose the custom of *whitening sepulchres* to make them easily visible. To touch a dead body, or to enter a tent where the dead lay, rendered a person unclean. The scrupulous sanitation of the law of Moses must be studied to be appreciated. For example, the destruction of vessels upon which the carcass of a mouse had fallen was commanded without a reason being given. Modern sanitation warns against mice and rats as carriers of plague, and endorses the teaching of the law. Some commands concerning personal cleanliness are too intimate for our pages, but we believe every one would be at least physically the better for a little more of this “law” in their daily routine.

### **Spiritual application of this truth.**

Taking the great mass of detail concerning uncleanness as read, we must consider the spiritual application which Scripture makes of this matter.

“Wash thine heart from wickedness”, says Jer. iv. 14; nevertheless, though nitre and much soap be used, Israel’s iniquity would still be marked before the Lord (*An opportunity here for a lesson to children, with a handkerchief, marking ink, soap, soda and water*).

“Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings”, says Isa. i. 16, yet in i. 18 it is added: “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow.” This will be accomplished by the Lord Himself, for “in that day there shall be a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness:” (Zech. xiii. 1), of which Psa. li. supplies a prophetic anticipation: “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin . . . . wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.”

The N.T. is replete with references to the necessity for cleansing, and for the perfect provision that has been made. We read of the cleansing power of the Word in Eph. v. 26, when the church is presented in glory, having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, but being holy and without blemish. And again:--

“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoke unto you” (John xv. 3).

“Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth” (John xvii. 17).

“Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth” (I Pet. i. 22).

In II Cor. vi. 14-16 we have a series of circumstances that bring about spiritual defilement: being yoked with unbelievers, having fellowship with unrighteousness or with darkness, mixing up Christ and Belial, faith and infidelity, the temple of God and idols.

Cleansing is expressed in such terms as, “Come out from among them . . . .”, “Be ye separate . . . .”, “Touch not the unclean thing”, and is fully explained in plain language to the church in II Cor. vii. 1: “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”

Writing to the Hebrews, who knew full well the “diverse washings” which they were called upon to make, the apostle says:--

“For if the blood of bulls and of 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).

The graves, the bones, the dead that defiled Israel are here seen as types of the dead works that defile the conscience.

“Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. x. 22).

Cleansing has much to do with service, as is illustrated by the following passages:--

“Purge your conscience . . . . to serve the living God” (Heb. ix. 14).

“As ye have yielded your membership servants to uncleanness . . . . even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom. vi. 19).

“A vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master’s use” (II Tim. ii. 21).

Redemption is for sinners, and releases from their bondage. Atonement is for saints, and makes them nigh. Cleansing is for service, and keeps the vessel meet.

We have seen that cleansing is through the blood of Christ, and by the Word of God. Hearts are purified by faith (Acts xv. 9), and souls are purified by obedience (I Pet. i. 22). Purging is necessary for fruitbearing (John xv. 2), and for service (II Tim. ii. 21). We have not been called unto uncleanness, but unto holiness (I Thess. iv. 7). All the injunctions written in the law concerning the priests are focused upon the believer’s walk

of the present day in Titus ii. 3: “In behaviour as becometh holiness”, which word “holiness” is *hieroprepes*, “proper to priests”.

Such is part of the teaching of the law connected with the brazen altar, “to wash withal”. May we hear the voice of the Son of God: “If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me” (John xiii. 8).

## **#70. The holy anointing oil (Exod. xxx. 22-28). pp. 161 - 164**

The last item to be considered in this long and important section has to do with the composition of the holy anointing oil or ointment, and of the incense to which allusion has already been made in the description of the altar of incense.

The holy anointing oil was composed of specified quantities of myrrh, cinnamon, calamus and cassis, compounded together with sufficient olive oil to give it proper consistency. The incense, as we have already seen, is also specified. A prohibition attaches to both of these—the holy anointing oil and the incense:--

“This shall be an holy anointing oil unto Me throughout your generations. Upon man’s flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you. Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people” (Exod. xxx. 31-33).

### **Light on sanctification.**

The prohibitions concerning this anointing oil will throw some light upon the scriptural conception of holiness. It is “holy”; therefore the first prohibition is:--

*“Upon man’s flesh shall it not be poured.”*—We read that the holy anointing oil was poured upon the head. The Psalmist said, “It ran down the beard, even Aaron’s beard”, and even to the skirts of his garment; but it was not to be poured upon man’s “flesh”. There was an anointing which was a part of the everyday toilet, and an anointing that was used as a mark of respect and favour to a guest. This was not limited to the head and beard, but extended to the “face” (Psa. civ. 15), “feet” (John xii. 3), and “body” (Mark xiv. 8), and was used at “birth” (Ezek. xvi. 9), and “death” (Mark xvi. 1).

We have here a very necessary distinction which we do well to ponder. There is an anointing that belongs to man as such. Sweetness of temper, a kindness of manner, a natural gentleness of disposition may be very fine; they have a fragrance and a smoothness that is all to the good. But we must never make natural qualities in any measure parallel with spiritual graces. The Holy Spirit does not anoint man’s “flesh”:--

“That which *hath been* born of the flesh *is* flesh” (John iii. 6).  
“The flesh profiteth *nothing*” (John vi. 63).  
“The mind of the flesh is enmity against God” (Rom. viii. 7).  
“*Eye* hath not seen, nor *ear* heard, neither have entered the *heart* of man . . . . but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit” (I Cor. ii. 9, 10).  
“The natural (soul-ical) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God” (I Cor. ii. 14).

“The works of the flesh” are sharply distinguished from “the fruits of the Spirit”, and never, until grapes grow on thorns or figs on thistles will the flesh produce anything other than its own works. Consequently we must remember that none can be holy or sanctified outside of Christ, and it is the new man and not the old upon whom the grace of the Spirit descends.

“*Neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it. It is holy, and it shall be holy unto you.*”—This emphasizes from another point of view the necessity to distinguish between the flesh and the Spirit, bringing into prominence this time the danger of counterfeit. If the anointing be not of the Lord, if it be not the fragrance of Christ, if it be not the work of the Spirit, then however near to the true counterpart it may appear, it must be repudiated. It is a holy thing, and it must be kept so. The thought of holiness here, as in all the teaching on the subject in both Old and New Testaments, is very largely that of something specially set apart for God.

*Whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall be cut off.*—Some things belong to the Lord’s people alone. No stranger could partake of the Passover (Exod. xii. 43). It was a memorial of redemption and national birth. No stranger was allowed to contribute anything towards the offerings of the Lord. This prohibition still holds good regarding Christian service, and condemns all such means of making money as dances, whist drives, and the like, that are everywhere spreading their “corruption” and making all such service “unacceptable” by reason of the “blemishes” (Lev. xii. 25).

No stranger, not of the seed of Aaron, was allowed to draw near to God to offer incense (Numb. xvi. 40). No stranger could be king of Israel (Deut. xvii. 15). No stranger upon pain of death was allowed near the tabernacle when it was taken down (Numb. i. 51), and no stranger could ever be appointed to the priest’s office (Numb. iii. 10). Strange fire, strange incense, strange wives, strange gods, a strange vine, strange apparel; these things help us to realize something of the limits set by God regarding that which belongs to His holiness, and speaks of Christ.

### **The Lord’s Anointed.**

There are three outstanding offices that are associated with anointing in the Scriptures—those of Priest (Exod. xxviii. 41), King (Psa. xviii. 50) and Prophet (I Kings xix. 16)—and these three offices are filled, and in their fullest measure, by Christ.

His title, “The Christ”, is but the Greek form of the Hebrew “Messiah”, “the Anointed One”.

“God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power” (Acts x. 38).

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel” (Luke iv. 18).

“For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him” (John iii. 34).

“Thy Throne . . . . Thy Sceptre . . . . Thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows” (Heb. i. 8, 9).

He is God’s Anointed, His Prophet, Priest, and King. We confess that He is *the Christ*, and we acknowledge this threefold fullness. All true sanctification flows from Him.

There is a phase of the anointing that belongs to the period of miraculous gifts (II Cor. i. 21, 22) which is omitted in the dispensation of the mystery (Eph. i. 13), but the true anointing remains. It is seen in “the unity of the Spirit”, which brings us into such vital union with Christ that His anointing becomes ours. We are partakers of His holiness. He is made unto us sanctification as well as redemption (I Cor. i. 30).

While the mystery was never a subject of Old Testament revelation, a very beautiful figure of sanctified unity is given in Psa. cxxxiii. that it would benefit us to ponder:--

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron’s beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments: As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountain of Zion.”

Here we have a double figure of unity. The ointment that was poured upon the head of Aaron extended to the very skirts of his garments. The A.V. of the second figure needs a correction. There is no real “dew” in Palestine, but a “summer sea night mist” rolls in and drenches the parched earth. The mist makes no distinctions. It unites in one Mt. Hermon away in the North and Mt. Zion in the South. So are all in Christ.

The apostle says, “We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ” (II Cor. ii. 16). Just as we found that “consecration” was “filling the hand” with Christ in service and offering, so true sanctification, true unction, true anointing is a life that is so much of Christ, that every act, every word, every thought is just the manifestation of the Anointed One. Words easy to write, words that condemn us as we think of ourselves, words that compel us to flee to Him, to be buried in His death that we may rise to walk in newness of life and serve in newness of spirit.

This holy anointing of ours in Christ comes not “on the flesh”; it resolutely sets aside all counterfeit; it is found where “Christ is all” or not at all, and it is not enjoyed by the alien, the stranger, the foreigner from grace. As we can more fully say, “For me to live is Christ”, as we more fully “preach Christ”, as the life of Christ is more really the life we now live in the flesh, as the fruit of the Spirit is more evidently manifest, so shall we approximate more to the fulfillment of this sacred type of the holy anointing oil.

John, writing to believers of another calling, expressed the same truth, saying:--

“The anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you . . . . it hath taught you,  
*ye shall abide in Him*” (I John ii. 27).

So we come to the conclusion of this type of Christ and His work as set forth in the tabernacle. At every step it has spoken of the Son of God. Starting with the ark and mercy seat, pausing at the altar of brass, and finishing with the holy anointing oil and sweet incense, we can truly say that “*Christ is all, and in all*”.

## The Epistle to the Hebrews.

### #57. Moses. The triumph of faith (xi. 24-28). pp. 4 - 9

The faith that marked the infant days of Moses was prominent in his after life. One or two notable manifestations of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, are given in the record of Heb. xi.:-

*Substance.*—"Refusing . . . . choosing . . . . esteeming, for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Heb. xi. 24-26).

*Not seen.*—"Forsook . . . . not fearing . . . . for he endured as seeing Him Who is invisible" (Heb. xi. 27, 28).

No act of faith is recorded of Moses until "he was come to years". The original has it: "having become great", which is a quotation from the LXX of Exod. ii. 11, and refers to his growth in years as much as, if not more than, to his greatness in wealth and position, although this, too belongs to the expression (*see* Gen. xxiv. 35).

The example of Moses very aptly illustrates the exhortation of Heb. v. 14; vi. 1: "Them that are of full age . . . . leaving . . . . let us go on." When faith is tested there is no make-believe about it. Moses was great, learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and mighty in words and deeds (Acts vii. 22). He apparently had a definite offer made by Pharaoh's daughter of formal adoption into the royal house. It was a very real test. Abraham's trial of faith, too, was intensely real. Nothing on earth could have been so dear in his eyes as his beloved son Isaac. Paul's test of faith was real. The renunciation of the position and privilege of being a Hebrew and a Pharisee cannot be easily estimated by such as ourselves to-day.

#### The activities of faith.

Moses refused, chose, esteemed, had respect, forsook, endured, and kept by faith.

He *refused* to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

He *chose* rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

He *esteemed* the reproach for Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

He *had respect* unto the recompense of the reward.

He *forsook* Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king.

He *endured*, as seeing Him Who is invisible.

He *kept* the passover and the sprinkling of blood.

To the Hebrews had been written:--

"Ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance. Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward" (Heb. x. 34, 35).

and in Moses they would see a very glorious example. These Hebrews were exhorted to consider the “enduring” nature of their heavenly possessions; they were urged to remember that they were associated with a kingdom that “remains” (xii. 28), that here they had no “continuing” city, but sought one to come (xiii. 14). So then the sinfulness of Egypt’s pleasures is not stressed so much as their transience. Moses had a birthright and an adoption that he could not barter for Egypt’s pottage (Heb. xii. 16; Rom. ix. 4), and there was a danger that the Hebrews would succumb under the pressure of their trials, and for a brief period of so-called “peace” forfeit their heavenly calling. The essential element in the faith necessary to endure and overcome is that which is manifested in Moses’ action, and definitely expressed in Heb. xi. 6: “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder (a recompenser) of them that diligently seek Him.”

Hebrews is the epistle of the “right hand of God”. There the Great High Priest has sat down, and because the Psalmist said “At Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore”. Those whose faith enables them to “see Him Who is invisible” are enabled to esteem, at their true worth, those “pleasures of sin” that are “for a season”.

### **Joseph and Moses.**

Joseph’s faith led him step by step to the throne of Egypt. Moses’ faith led him step by step away from Egypt and its throne to the wilderness and to hardship. Paul had said, earlier, concerning the Patriarchs, that “if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned” (Heb. xi. 15). We shall never lack the counsel of *Mr. Worldly Wiseman*, and our own hearts will often turn us astray. Think how one might have argued the case with Moses:--

1. Joseph’s example. See how he used his exalted position for the glory of God and the well-being of his people.
2. Are you not therefore disobedient to the example of such a man?
3. Why not see in your preservation and adoption just the same all-powerful Hand, leading you on to this crisis in you life?
4. Use your influence at Court; get measures put into operation that shall ameliorate the sufferings of your people, and be a deliverer indeed.

Doubtless we can supplement this from our own experience. But all this would be vain, *for God had spoken*. The promise made to Abraham, and remembered by Joseph (Heb. xi. 22), was nearly due to be performed. God had said that Israel would be afflicted, but at the set time He would *bring them out*, and Moses’ faith, like our own, rested upon “the Word of God” (Rom. x. 17).

By the time Moses was born a new dispensation had dawned; “a new king that knew not Joseph” occupied the throne. So the apostle would press upon the consciences of the Hebrews the necessity of weigh the change of dispensation ushered in by the rejection of their Messiah. They had to “forsake”, “go forth unto Him without the camp”, rather than continue in those things that had ceased to be the will of God.

## By faith he forsook Egypt.

We must now consider a different passage.

“By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible” (Heb. xi. 27).

It is generally reckoned that this cannot refer to the time when Moses fled unto Midian, but to the second time that he left Egypt, at the time of the exodus. There is no need to comment upon the obvious “faith” that enabled Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, so we ask a moment’s attention while we look once again at that earlier flight from Egypt.

“*Not fearing the wrath of the king.*”—When we have read through the chapters of Exodus detailing the attitude of Moses toward Pharaoh, the mighty miracles that were wrought, the power that moved heaven and earth and even the angel of death, it seems rather tame to say of that triumphant departure from Egypt, the Israelites loaded with the “spoil” thrust upon them, that Moses “forsook” Egypt, and did not fear the wrath of the king. He had forsaken Egypt 40 years before, and his return was with the express purpose of leading Israel out, not with any intention of settling down himself. Time after time he stood before Pharaoh, calm, unflinching, master of the situation. There was no wrath of the king to fear when, at the last, Israel moved out of the land, and the attempt of Pharaoh to overtake them at the Red Sea hardly fits the passage in Heb. xi.

There are several points of contact between Heb. xi. and Stephen’s speech in Acts vii. Stephen gives a very full account of the occasion that led to Moses’ flight from Egypt:--

“And when he was full 40 years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian, *for he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them, but they understood not.* And the next day he shewed himself unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one another? But he that did his neighbour wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst the Egyptian yesterday? Then fled Moses” (Acts vii. 23-29).

Stephen supplies us with the motive that prompted Moses’ action. He supposed that Israel would have risen as one man and acknowledged him as their deliverer. This was not to be. They rejected him. He left Egypt and remained away for 40 years. Then, Stephen continues:--

“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 by the hand of the angel which appeared to him in the bush. He brought them out” (Acts vii. 35, 36).

It is very evident that Moses’ two manifestations to Israel are typical of the first and second coming of Christ. His flight into Midian is parallel with the Lord’s ascension to

heaven and present period of waiting. Stephen, too, does not say that Moses forsook or left Egypt the second time, but that “he brought them out”. Let us look at Exod. ii. 11-14 again. Verse 11 opens with the words “When Moses was grown”, which is translated in the LXX by words identical with Heb. xi. 34. Exod. ii. 12 gives a statement not repeated by Stephen:--

“He looked this way, and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptians, and hid him in the sand.”

It is easy to say, Moses evidently looked this way and that, to make sure that “no man” should witness the deed, but is that the truth? Stephen tells us that he assumed that Israel would understand his motive, and Isaiah seems to use the expression in such a way as to compel us to believe that Moses was conscious of the Messianic foreshadowing of his act:--

“He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore his arm brought salvation unto him” (Isa. lix. 16).

“And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold, therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me” (Isa. lxiii. 5).

While Exod. ii. 14 says “and Moses feared”, it does not say he “feared the wrath of the king”; but it appears that he feared something less personal and more vital. *Spurrell* translates the passage: “Then Moses was afraid, for he said, Surely this transaction is known”, which endeavours to draw attention to what was passing in Moses’ mind. We know from Stephen that Moses expected Israel to see in this act his credentials as a God-sent deliverer, and that when he was sent later he said: “They will not believe me . . . . they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee” (Exod. iv. 1), and that the signs of the serpent and the leprosy were given to him.

Let no one judge Moses for the slaying of the Egyptian. Under God he was the instrument of slaying thousands of Egypt’s first-born, and of overcoming the flower of their army at the Red Sea. We understand Exod. ii. 14 to mean that at the reply of the quarrelling Israelites Moses was seized with some apprehension that his mission would miscarry, saying: “Surely the intention of my act is evident to them”, much in the same way the Lord said to His disciples after He had washed their feet: “What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter”, which refers to something more than the external act of washing the feet. The only possibility therefore was, that Moses should forsake Egypt. Pharaoh sought to slay him, and his flight out of Egypt was no more an act of unbelief than was the flight for much the same reason of Joseph and Mary, as recorded in Matt. ii.

These points we submit to the reader for careful consideration, believing that many an action may be really “by faith” which, casually judged, may seem the product of some baser motive. We will reserve Moses’ last act of faith, “the passover”, together with Israel’s faith in passing through the Red Sea, with which it is so clearly connected, to a further article.

**#58. The faith that triumphs (xi. 28-31).**  
**pp. 40 - 45**

We now reach the concluding pair of characters in the sevenfold series of Heb. xi., viz., Israel and Rahab. The key thought is “deliverance from destruction”.

Moses is linked with Israel in the keeping of the passover, “lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them”. Israel pass unscathed through the Red Sea, “which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned”. “Rahab perished not with them that believed not.”

The faith of Moses is very comprehensive, and at either end of the record in Heb. xi. it overlaps and includes the faith of others. In both it was a preserving faith, and connected with birth:--

“By faith Moses, when he was born . . . .” (verse 23).

“By faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the firstborn should touch them” (verse 28).

There is no warrant for the change of expression from “by faith” to “through faith” in verses 27 and 28. It was the same faith acting in the same way that actuated Moses throughout. There is a real distinction intended between “by faith” and “through faith” in Rom. iii. 30 which is considered in its place; here, however, it is a variation in the English version only, and no doctrinal difference is intended.

**The passover.**

Several items of interest are given concerning Moses and the passover. “By faith he *kept* the passover.” The word “kept” here is *poieo*, and in its true translation has a wider significance than “kept”. It is used of the sprinkling of blood just as much as of the passover, and it would be hardly true to say, “he kept the sprinkling of blood”. Paul follows the LXX version here, which in its turn faithfully translates the Hebrew. “*To do the passover*” (Exod. xii. 47, 48) does not seem good English, and it is not suggested as an alternative, but it points out the meaning, which is expressed in Exod. xii. 50:--

“Thus *did* all the children of Israel: as the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron, so *did* they.”

The faith that kept the passover found its warrant in the Word of God. We cannot too insistently bring this forward. All sorts of things are said to be done by the Lord’s people “by faith”, but it is difficult sometimes to find any warrant for their actions in the Word. Heb. xi. 1 declares faith to be the substance of things hoped for; Rom. x. 17 declares the Word of God to be the substance of that faith. The passover in Exod. xii. is of divine institution. Moses simply “did” what he was told. “And the Lord spake unto

Moses . . . . . saying . . . . . Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel” (Exod. xii. 1-3). The whole passage (Exod. xii. 1-20) is the actual spoken Word of the Lord. Without break or introduction verses 12 and 13 say:--

“For I will pass through the land.”  
“When I see the blood.” (*For fuller notes on the passover see Volume XIII, pp. 37 & 73*).

### **The sprinkling of blood.**

It is perhaps pardonable for the English reader to link these passages with the others in Hebrews that speak of “sprinkling”. We have:--

- (1). The sprinkling of the water of purification (Heb. ix. 13).
- (2). The sprinkling of both the book and the people (Heb. ix. 19).
- (3). The sprinkling of the tabernacle and its vessels (Heb. ix. 21).

These find their fulfillment in :--

- (1). “The blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Heb. xii. 24).
- (2). “The heart sprinkled from an evil conscience” (Heb. x. 22).
- (3). “The sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. i. 2).

All these references use the word *rhantizo* or *rhantismos*. The word used in Heb. ix. 28, however, is *proschusis*, a word occurring nowhere else in the N.T. Believing that the choice of words to express the truth is a part of that inspiration of God which characterizes the Scriptures, we feel that it is fatal to profitable exegesis to confound what God distinguishes. We have, however, the key to the problem. In other articles we have sought to show the distinction that must be made between *redemption* and *atonement*. Now all the passages cited above have reference to a people *already redeemed*, whereas the passover speaks of the great act of redemption itself. There is no reference to cleansing, dedicating or service in the Passover. It speaks of deliverance; consequently the record uses a distinct word. Instead, therefore, of linking Heb. ix. 28 with Heb. xii. 24, we have to make the following comparisons:--

The passover and its sprinkled blood (Heb. xi. 28) must be compared with such a passage as I Pet. i. 18, 19: “Ye were . . . . . redeemed . . . . . with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.” The atoning Sacrifice, and its sprinkled blood, must be placed in contrast with “the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel” (Heb. xii. 24).

### **Faith versus assaying to do.**

The active faith of Israel begins with the crossing of the Red Sea:--

“By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land; which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned” (Heb. xi. 29).

The passage through the Red Sea has occupied our attention in Volume XIV, page 1. There is a lesson here regarding faith that may well detain us for a moment. By comparing the faith of Joseph with that of Moses, as given in Heb. xi. 22 and 24, we learned that the self-same faith in different circumstances may produce very contrary actions. Faith led Joseph to occupy the throne of Egypt. Faith as certainly led Moses to turn his back on it. Now in the case before us we have two people performing the same act. Israel ventured to cross the Red Sea, and the Egyptians ventured to cross the Red Sea. Externally the acts were similar; internally they were wide apart. Israel's faith rested upon the Word of God: "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward" (Exod. xiv. 15). Egypt's following of Israel, though the same act, was not by faith but through hardness of heart: "I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them" (Exod. xiv. 17). Is there no "assaying to do" on the part of the Lord's people, that ends in disaster?

An outstanding example of faith in modern times is that of *Geo. Muller*. Doubtless many have thanked God for that noble witness, but does it follow that because *Geo. Muller* passed through that Red Sea of difficulties triumphantly, all should or could? The Lord's will has as much to do with *faith* as with *obedience*. He wills that one should suffer weakness, while He wills that another should be divinely healed. He wills to one pecuniary straitness, while to another He wills a full and plentiful supply. Faith will never seek to over-ride these divine appointments. If it is His will that one should be poor, it will not be "faith" but an Egyptian "assaying to do" if that one seeks to alter this, however plausibly he may speak of the triumph of faith that can move mountains. Let us see to it that our Red Seas are crossed at the Word of God; *that* will be by faith. Let us have a holy shrinking from any act that looks like faith, but is a counterfeit.

Between Heb. xi. 29 and 30 lies a tragedy of unbelief. Marah, Manna, Meribah, Kadesh Barnea are passed over in silence. In the reckoning of faith they do not exist. There is no gap between the triumph of the Red Sea, and the overthrow of Jericho forty years afterwards. Alas, we all know too well what these driftings and doublings mean on the pilgrim path.

The faith that accomplished the overthrow of Jericho rested upon the Word of God:--

"The Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho . . . . ye shall compass the city . . . . six days . . . . and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout: and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him" (Josh. vi. 2-5).

Here is the basis of the faith of Heb. xi. 30. We do not attempt a fuller exposition of Josh. vi. in this series, as that will come in its proper course in the studies entitled "Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth".

## **The faith of Rahab.**

We saw in an earlier analysis that the seventh in the double list of witnesses in each instance is a woman. Sarah's faith is positive. Rahab's faith is rather negative: "Rahab perished not with them that believed not" (Heb. xi. 31).

A great deal of unprofitable discussion has taken place over Rahab. Some contend that the Hebrew word *zanah* may mean just an innkeeper. *Schleusner*, with many commentators, would derive *zanah* from *zun*, "be fed", but the laws of language will not permit this derivation. There is no necessity to soften down the language of Scripture. The grace that can save Saul the Pharisee, Matthew the publican, and the like, can save Rahab the harlot.

"His mercy is free,  
'Twas given to Mary, Manasseh and Me."

Another difficulty that some have is the fact that Rahab told lies in defending the spies. Of this the N.T. record takes no notice. It neither minimizes her condition as a harlot, or enters into any justification of her words and deeds. What it does fix upon is that, sinful, erring, ignorant and immoral as she was, she believed God and His Word.

"I know that the Lord has given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us  
. . . . we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you . . . . the  
Lord your God He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath" (Josh. ii. 9-11).

The more complete consideration of the witness of Rahab must be deferred until Joshua is under review. We can well leave Rahab's morals to grow and expand under the illumination of the law of God. Harlot though she was, and untruthful as she was, she believed God, which is the beginning of all morals and all truth. There is one thing to be said of Rahab's false statements concerning the spies. She did not bear false witness *against* them. She did not save herself from the charge of lying at the expense of the life of the spies who had put themselves into her hands.

Josh. ii. and Heb. xi. 31 are not written to justify Rahab's morals, but to bear witness to Rahab's faith. She is included to emphasize the many-sidedness of faith, the way in which it is exhibited by those who differ widely in other ways. Sarah and Rahab are in many points at extremes. Moses and Jacob have few points in common, yet each is bound to each by the common bond of faith.

## **The sevenfold witness.**

We believe it will be of service at the close of this study to repeat the structure already given in Volume XVII, page 14, and the diagram of page 12 of the same Volume.

- A | Faith in connection with DEATH.—Abel and Enoch.
- B | Faith in connection with INHERITANCE.—Noah and Abraham.
- C | Faith in connection with PILGRIMAGE.—Isaac and Jacob.
- D | Faith in connection with RESURRECTION.—Sarah and Abraham.
- C | Faith in connection with BLESSING.—Isaac and Jacob.
- B | Faith in connection with EGYPT.—Joseph and Moses.
- A | Faith in connection with DELIVERANCE.—Israel and Rahab.

The diagram is based upon the fact that if a glass prism be placed before a light, it has the power of splitting up that light into its constituent colours, as seen in the rainbow. The suggestion is that faith in its perfectness is seen in but one Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, but we may appreciate that perfect faith better if we can see it analyzed for us in Heb. xi.

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### #59. Faith, and the better thing (xi. 32-40). pp. 75 - 79

We have now passed in review the fourteen great witnesses to faith that is the substance of things hoped for. We have seen faith in many aspects leading men and women in many ways, but ever resting upon the Word of God. Each example named has been associated with some particular aspect of faith. Before the apostle concludes, he enumerates yet another series of seven, but this time attaches no particular example of faith to any one of them:--

“And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets”  
(Heb. xi. 32).

It seems that we should honour this abbreviation, and not spend time in examining the life and doings of Gideon, Samson, and the rest. We shall only be side-tracked from our theme if we stay to discuss the problem of Jephthae’s daughter, and it would take a volume adequately to deal with the faith of David and the prophets. Nevertheless the very mention of these names impresses upon the mind the length of the list of witnesses to faith found in the Word, but we pass on, with the apostle, to consider his own summary. He gives an impressive list, the first set bring the positive acts of faith, and the second, faith’s endurance. The very tabulation of these acts of faith is solemnizing.

### Eleven positive acts of faith.

- A | Subdued kingdoms.
  - B | Wrought righteousness.
  - C | Obtained promises.
  - D | Stopped the mouths of lions.
  - E | Quenched the violence of fire.
  - F | Escaped the edge of the sword.
  - G | Were made strong out of weakness.
  - H | Waxed valiant in fight.
  - I | Turned to flight the armies of the aliens.
  - J | Women received their dead raised to life again.
  - K | Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance.
- That they might obtain a BETTER resurrection.

### Eleven negative acts of faith.

- A | Others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings.
  - B | Of bonds and imprisonment.
  - C | They were stoned.
  - D | They were sawn asunder.
  - E | They were tempted.
  - F | They were slain with the sword.
  - G | They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins.
  - H | Being destitute.
  - I | Afflicted.
  - J | Tormented.
  - K | They wandered in deserts, in mountains,  
in dens and in caves of the earth.
- God having provided some BETTER thing for us.

Without attempting that which the apostle sets aside as beyond the scope of Heb. xi., we can point out some obvious connections in these lists with the seven names given in verse 32. David subdued kingdoms, as Moab, Ammon, and Edom. The note of triumphant faith is sounded by him in Psa. lx: "God hath spoken in His holiness; I will rejoice . . . . Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe . . . . Through God we shall do valiantly." *God had spoken*; that was the basis of David's triumphant faith.

Gideon supplies us with a wonderful example of weakness being made strong, and of turning to flight the armies of the aliens. When we read of the stopping of the mouths of lions and the quenching of the violence of fire, it is difficult to deny a reference to Daniel and his three companions. The women who received their dead raised to life were the widow of Zarephath (I Kings xvii. 22-24), and the Shunammites (II Kings iv. 36).

## The better resurrection.

We now come to the crux of the passage. By consulting the arrangement of the subject-matter set out above, it will be seen that “the better resurrection” and “some better thing” are focal points.

What is this better resurrection? and how does it harmonize with the balancing clause, “some better thing”, the teaching of Heb. xi., in particular, and of the epistle in general? It is sometimes said of the articles in *The Berean Expositor* that they are somewhat condensed in character, and lest any should fail to realize what has been suggested as our line of study, we will repeat ourselves in more formal fashion.

This “better” resurrection evidently has something to do with the “better” thing provided by God. We must endeavour first to see what this connection may be, then what the relation of this passage is to the teaching of Heb. xi. as a whole and finally how far the teaching concerning “the better resurrection” is supported by the general drift of the whole epistle.

The first thing we propose is to visualize the whole context with these “better” things in view.

### Heb. x. 19 - xii. 25.

- A | x. 19-24. Exhortation. “Let us.” Priest.
- B | x. 25, 26. Warning. “No more sacrifice.”
- C | x. 27-31. He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy,  
how much more . . . . .
- D | x. 32 - xi. 40. Faith, and the better thing.
- A | xii. 1-4. Exhortation. “Let us.” Perfected.
- B | xii. 5-24. Warning. “He found no place for repentance.”
- C | xii. 25. They escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth,  
much more . . . . .

Such is the broad outline, making x.19 - xii. 25 one large section. This will be useful as we proceed, but for the time being we are more concerned about the relation of subject-matter within Heb. xi., viz., “faith” and the “better thing”.

We accordingly amplify the member D | x. 32 - xi. 40, setting it out as follows:--

### Faith and the better thing (x. 32 - xi. 40).

- D | A1 | x. 32-29. The better substance in heaven.
- B1 | xi. 1-12. Faith. Abel’s offering and others.
- A2 | xi. 13-16. The better and heavenly country.
- B2 | xi. 17-35. Faith. Abraham’s offering and others.
- A3 | xi. -35. The better resurrection.
- B3 | xi. 36-38. Faith. Unnamed believers and their sufferings.
- A4 | xi. 39, 40. The better thing foreseen.

The section (x. 19 - xii. 25) begins with exhortations in view of what Christ has done, "Let us draw near", "Let us hold fast". It ends with fuller exhortations in view of what Christ has done, "Let us lay aside", "Let us run". Christ's sufferings and death have, in the first case, consecrated for us a way into the holiest, and in the second, the race and the crown. In the first He is seen as Expiator, in the second as Exemplar. He is first Priest, then Perfecter.

The remainder of the structure is an alteration between faith and the better thing. There are four descriptions of this better thing which we must consider:--

1. The better and enduring SUBSTANCE in heaven.
2. The better and heavenly COUNTRY.
3. The better RESURRECTION.
4. The better THING provided.

It is evident from the context of the first passage that the better substance is something in the nature of a reward. This is implied in the list of sufferings given in Heb. x. 32-34, and expressly stated in the sequel: "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward" (x. 35), a feature that is repeated in xi. 26, and in a similar context.

The second passage sets before us something which the patriarchs had in view that enabled them to be content to become strangers and pilgrims on the earth: "Now 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" (xi. 16). This city is the "city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem", of Heb. xii. 22, closely associated with the spirits of just men made perfect, and the portion, not of sons merely, but of firstborn, which we shall see as we read that chapter.

There is nothing said in the O.T. about this heavenly country and city so far as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are concerned, yet they had it in view, and when Scripture says: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off and embraced them" (xi.13), it is but saying what in other language is expressed in the two remaining occurrences, namely, resurrection and future entry. "These all *died* in faith" implies "resurrection". "Having seen them afar off" implies "having foreseen some better thing".

The better resurrection is something distinct. Because of it and its excellence some endured torture and refused deliverance. Now it was the hope of the whole twelve tribes that there should be a resurrection (Acts xxvi. 7, 8) quite apart from torture or endurance, quite apart from "giving up" and acting like Abraham or Moses. We are here facing a parallel with the "out resurrection" of Phil. iii. (which are not the *hope* but the *prize* of our calling, of our "high calling") and closely involved with "perfecting", "perdition" and heavenly citizenship of Phil. iii. 12, 19 and 20; "end" being the same word as "perdition" in Heb. x. 39, and "conversation" being literally "citizenship". The long waiting, the far-off promises, the dying without receiving, are all explained by the fact that God had planned that all these overcomers should enter their reward together. Abel

and Noah, Abraham and Moses, the suffering saints of the apostle's day, and the last one to endure under the economy of grace pertaining to the "Hebrews", shall not "prevent" one another, but "together with them" shall enter into this better thing, this better country, by way of this better resurrection.

We have seen the relation between the better resurrection and the better thing, we have seen their relation with Heb. xi.; there remains only the general theme of the epistle to be considered. In this epistle we have Christ as a Captain, leading faithful Joshuas and Calebs unto there promised possessions. In this epistle He is seen as Melchisedec, the Priest Who blessed the overcoming Abraham. The historic background is the failure of Israel to go on by faith, and the warning is the possibility of drawing back to perdition. Israel is exhorted to run with patience, and reminded of Esau. Their position is to be one of rejection now, "without the camp", for theirs is soon to be the added glory of the overcomer, because though they have no continuing city, they seek one to come.

Ponder the double line of endurance (verses 32-38) and set your mind on things above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

### **#60. The author and finisher of faith (xii. 1-4). pp. 105 - 110**

The long list of witnesses to faith having been written, "the better thing" emphasized, a giving up and a patient endurance on the part of the faithful pointed out, the apostle turns to the Hebrews to apply the lesson.

Chapter xi. may be looked upon as a great parenthesis, chapter xii., fortified with chapter xi., reverts to the close of chapter x. and gives a fresh application of its truth. Let us refresh our memories by a revisal of x. 32-39. We are in an atmosphere of suffering, yet a suffering illuminated by the prospect of future joys: "Knowing . . . . that ye have in heaven a better and an enduring substance, cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward. For ye have need of patience . . . ." The immediate danger that beset these Hebrews was that of "drawing back", "growing weary", and to encourage them the apostle puts forward three items:--

1. The second coming of the Lord. "Yet a little while" (x. 37).
2. The examples of faith taken from the O.T. (xi.).
3. The example of Christ Himself (xii. 1-4).

It is this third feature which is now before us. Words are used in this passage which demand careful consideration, and it may be well, before attempting the whole passage, to be a little more certain of the words that are used.

WITNESSES (Greek *martus*).—This word does not mean "spectator". It means one who bears witness, even to the length of suffering martyrdom for it. The English word

martyr is the Greek word for witness, and surely no martyr was a mere “spectator”. We find the word in Heb. x. 28, “two or three witnesses”. Rev. i. 5 speaks of “Jesus Christ the faithful Witness”, and Rev. ii. 13 uses the same words of “Antipas, My faithful martyr”. Heb. x. 15 says, “the Holy Ghost is a witness”, and xi. 4 tells us that Abel “obtained witness”.

It may be of service if we give all the occurrences of *martus*, *martureo*, and *marturion* in the epistle to the Hebrews.

“For a testimony of those things” (iii. 5).  
“Of whom it is witnessed that he liveth” (vii. 8).  
“For he testifieth, Thou art a priest” (vii. 17).  
“The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us” (x. 15).  
“Died under two or three witnesses” (x. 28).  
“The elders obtained a good report” (xi. 2).  
“He obtained witness that he was righteous” (xi. 4).  
“God testifying of his gifts” (xi. 4).  
“He had this testimony” (xi. 5).  
“These all having obtained a good report” (xi. 39).  
“So great a cloud of witnesses” (xii. 1).

CLOUD (*nephos*).—The word does not occur elsewhere in Scripture, the usual word for cloud being the related *nephale*. It is a word in use among Greek writers for a great company. Homer, in the Iliad, has the line: “With him followed a cloud of foot-men.” So Herodotus, Euripides and others. The figure was used likewise by Latin writers; Livy has the line *peditum equitumque nubes*, “a cloud of horse and foot”.

PATIENCE (*hupomone*).—The only references of this word in Hebrews are x. 36 and xii. 1. The word literally means “to remain under”. We take note of it here because of its cognates that are not so obvious in the English translation. The verbal form (*hupomene*) comes in Heb. x. 32, “Ye endured”; xii. 2, “He endured a cross”; xii. 3, “endured contradiction”; xii. 7, “If ye endured chastening”.

Closely allied, and having a very definite bearing upon the theme, is the simple form from *meno*, “to remain”. It occurs six times in Hebrews:--

“Abideth a priest continually” (vii. 3).  
“He continueth ever” (vii. 24).  
“An enduring substance” (x. 34).  
“Those things that cannot be shaken may remain” (xii. 27).  
“Let brotherly love continue” (xiii. 1).  
“We have here no continuing city” (xiii. 14).

RACE (*agon*). The word means a contest, a race, a conflict, and the accompanying imagery is borrowed from the Greek games.

“I have fought a good fight . . . . henceforth a crown” (II Tim. 4:7).  
“Everyone that striveth for mastery is temperate . . . . they do it for a crown. So run that ye may obtain” (I Cor. ix. 24, 25).

A connection hidden from the English reader is found in Heb. xii. 4. “Striving against” is *antagonizomai*, just the verbal form of *agon* as used in I Cor. ix. 25, with the prefix *anti*, against.

The consideration of these words has of itself created the true atmosphere of the passage. It is a race, calling for endurance, beset with peculiar difficulties, having a prize ahead, and a glorious example. We are now ready for the structure, and can then pass on to the argument itself.

#### Heb. xii. 1-4.

- A1 | xii. 1. ENDURANCE (*hupomone*).  
RACE (*agon*) set before us.  
Entangling sin (*hamartia*).
- B1 | xii. 2. | a | Looking away to Jesus (*apo*).  
b | Captain and Perfector of faith.
- A2 | xii. 2. ENDURANCE (*hupomene*).  
Joy set before Him.
- B2 | xii. 2, 3. | b | The right hand of the throne of God.  
a | Consider Him (*ana*).
- A3 | xii. 3, 4. ENDURANCE (*hupomene*).  
Opposition (*antagonizo*).  
Sinners (*hamartolos*).

With so great a cloud of witnesses as is found in the Scripture ever with us, we are exhorted to take heart and run with patience or endurance the race set before us. Two things are enjoined, viz., (1) “Lay aside every weight”, and (2) “Lay aside the easily entangling sin”. He who would go on unto perfection must bear in mind the two sources of hindrance, (1) Weight, (2) Sin. The first is not of itself sinful. To one it will be riches, to another home ties, to another health, to another liberty. Each will know best what it is that hinders in the race. The second is sin in one of its many aspects, “easily entangling”. It is not so much external “sins” that are in view, but the old man, the old nature, the flesh. A reference to I Cor. ix. 24-27 plainly shows this:--

“Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air; but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be disapproved.”

Then follows a passage dealing with Israel and the temptations in the wilderness: this is parallel with Heb. iii. and iv. The passage, “I keep under my body”, recalls the opposite walk of those “whose end is perdition”, “whose God is their belly”; Phil. iii.—another passage dealing with a prize.

The greatest encouragement however is found not by looking at the great chain of witnesses, and certainly not by contemplating impediments and entanglements, but by the gaze being directed to the Lord. In Heb. x. 37 the soon-returning Lord was the

encouragement to endure. In Heb. xii. 2 the victorious Leader at the right hand of God is the attractive power. The word “looking” is really “looking away”. Looking away from all lesser patterns, even those of Heb. xi., and from all the weaknesses and hindrances found in self, looking away to Jesus.

He has two titles here that are suggestive. “The Author and Finisher of faith.” Author is *archegos*, and we have the word already in Heb. ii. 10 translated “Captain”, and in close association with the next title, “Finisher”, for that is really “Perfecter”. “It became Him . . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain (*archegos*) of their salvation perfect (*teleios*) through sufferings.”

We are back again therefore in Heb. xii. to the original theme: the need to go on unto perfection, the suffering that is associated with it, and the example of those who drew back unto perdition (Heb. iii., iv.).

“*Who for the joy that was set before Him.*”—The word “for” here is *anti*, usually translated “instead of”. This has given rise to an interpretation of the passage to the effect that the Lord gave up the joy that was before Him, and in its stead endured the cross. This, however, is quite untrue. The whole tenor of the epistle in general, and the particular example here is that, because of the joy that lies ahead, we can endure the suffering now.

That is the character of the example of Abraham and Moses, given at length in Heb. xi. For the joy set before Abraham he was content to live a pilgrim and a stranger. For the joy set before Moses he turned his back on the treasures of Egypt. For the joy ahead of these Hebrew believers they were exhorted to endure. In this sense the sentence should be translated. Over and over again our problems would be solved if we allowed the Word more way with us. If instead of giving time to speculation concerning this word *anti* we were to read on a few verses we should have our answer.

“Esau, who for (*anti*) one morsel sold his birthright.” Here we have contrast. Esau exchanged the future blessing for the present, whereas we are to follow the example of Moses who exchanged present immunity from suffering for pleasures at the right hand of God which are for evermore.

Apart from the passage “crucify to themselves” in Heb. vi. 6, this is the only occurrence of the cross in Hebrews. As in the parallel epistle, Philippians, the reference is to endurance in view of the crown or prize (Phil. ii. 8; iii. 18). In neither of these epistles is the cross mentioned in connection with redemption or atonement. The usage is similar to the earlier references, like those of Matt. x. 38 and xvi. 24. The saying, “No cross, no crown” exactly fits its usage. The cross is prominent in the epistle to the Corinthians—they were carnal. The cross is prominent in the epistle to the Galatians—they were being moved away from the faith. The only allusion to the cross in Romans is in Rom. vi. 6 where the old man is dealt with. The argument of Heb. xii. is, surely, that just as He endured a cross, despising the shame, and is now seated at the right hand of God, so may the believer endure his cross, despise its shame (not “glory in their

shame” as Phil. iii. 19), and in God’s good time enter into that better thing, by that better resurrection, to enjoy that better and enduring substance in heaven and the heavenly city.

We are bid to “consider” Him Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest we be weary and faint. *Analogia*, from which “consider” is taken, is translated “proportion” and “consider”, and here implies the act of weighing and balancing one thing with another. It would mean considering the pros and cons of gaining the whole world and losing one’s own soul. It would mean estimating aright the actions of Esau (Heb. xii. 16) and Moses (xi. 24-26), for just as loss now means the gaining of the soul in that day according to Matt. xvi., so does it according to Heb. x. 39.

We are now brought face to face with another cause of stumbling, “the contradiction of sinners”, producing weariness. Earlier we had the entangling nature of “sin”, now the “contradiction of sinners”. *Antilogia* is translated “strife” in Heb. vi. 16; “contradiction” (vii. 7; xii. 3) and “gainsaying” of Korah (Jude 11).

This last reference bears rather pointedly upon the teaching of Hebrews concerning the One Priest. The four occurrences of *antilego* in Acts (xiii. 45, 45 & xxviii. 19, 22) give further light upon the special “contradiction” that the Hebrews would be likely to meet. Each occurrence has to do with *Jewish opposition* to the ministry of Paul. The occurrences are confined to the beginning and the end of his Acts ministry. The only other reference before Acts xxviii. speaks of Israel as “a disobedient and gainsaying people” (Rom. x. 21).

Perhaps it is hardly necessary to explain to our readers that “contradiction” is connected, too, with our own blessed calling—contradiction from those, who, like gainsaying Israel, “have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge”. Let us not be weary and faint, even though undoubted men of God call us hard names, thinking they are serving God. This careful and proportionate consideration of what Christ endured will enable us to take up our cross, for none of us suffer anything comparable with the sufferings of Christ.

“*Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.*”—When we see that the “striving” here includes the word *agon*—race, we realize that the figure of the context is still maintained.

Let us before closing, “consider Him”, the great Prince-Leader and Perfect of faith, and see how He embraces all the qualities exhibited in Heb. xi.

His offering “speaketh better things than that of ABEL”  
He was the beloved Son in Whom God was “well pleased” (ENOCH).  
He saves in a sense that was impossible to NOAH.  
He was more intimate than even the “friend of God” could be (ABRAHAM).  
He was “The only Begotten Son” offered by the Father (ISAAC).  
He was One Who indeed blessed regarding things to come (JACOB).  
He will be the great Ruler and Restorer (JOSEPH).  
He is the Prophet greater than MOSES.  
He embraces all the heroic acts of GIDEON, DAVID and others,

He endured as none else endured, refusing deliverance, refusing to save Himself, and finally attained unto that better resurrection where He waits the day of His return.

He is indeed the altogether lovely One, the chiefest among ten thousand. Here, as in Col. iii., "Christ is ALL".

## **#61. Discipline and sonship (xii. 5-14). pp. 151 - 155**

Heb. xii. 5-24 is occupied with a twofold theme: 5-14, Sons; 15-24, Firstborn.

The first section, sons, speaks of that of which *all* are partakers if they are true children. The second, of that which *the firstborn* attain, but of which *the Esaus* fail.

The structure of xii. 5-14 is simply in its broad outlines, though involved when we approach the detail.

### **Heb. xii. 5-14.**

- A | 5-10. Mark of sonship. Discipline received.
- B | 10. The end. Partakers of His holiness.
- A | 11-13. Fruit of righteousness. Discipline exercised.
- B | 14. The pursuit. Peace and holiness.

The opening verse of Heb. xi. is twofold in its aspect, viz., (1) faith is the substance of things hope for: this is the theme of Heb.xi. (2) the *elengchos* of things not seen: this is the theme of Heb. xii. 5-14.

*Elengchos* is balanced by *elengcho* in Heb. xii. 5 where it is translated "rebuked". Now the quotation, "the just shall live by faith", in Heb. x. 38, takes us back to the same word, for in Hab. ii. 1 we find it in the word "reproved". In Heb. xii. the apostle quotes Prov. iii. 11, 12, where in the LXX translation we find *elengchos* as "correction". This "rebuke", "correction", "discipline" is an essential accompaniment of sonship and growth.

Let us now look at one or two passages that illuminate the purpose and instruments of chastening:--

"Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep His commandments or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that He might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell these forty years. Thou shalt also

consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee” (Deut. viii. 2-5).

We are apt to fix our minds upon the painful side of chastening, and by reason of our folly, there is often a need for that phase, but it is good also to notice that a part of this discipline or chastening was the provision of the daily manna, the marvelous preservation of clothing, and the care of the wanderers’ feet!

“The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. Blessed is the man whom Thou chasteneth, O Lord, and teacheth him out of the law” (Psa. xciv. 11, 12).

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

Here is another comfort: chastening is not condemnation. Chastening is for sons, condemnation for the world. Man’s thoughts are vain, he needs a twofold treatment; chastening to remove folly, teaching to supply the needed instruction.

Chastening is not only the work of the Father, for Christ Himself says to the church: “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous, therefore, and repent” (Rev. iii. 19).

The apostle puts the matter of this chastening before the reader in a variety of ways. First, the attitude of mind toward it. Do not despise it. Do not faint when rebuked. Perhaps “despise” is too strong a word. Rather what is meant is to hold lightly, to have very little concern about. That is one attitude to be avoided. There is the opposite extreme, however, that is, of magnifying the chastening endured, and so “fainting” at the rebuke. This also is wrong. We have to remember that the chastening has to do with us “as sons” (Heb. xii. 5-7). It comes to us from One Who loves us (Heb. xii. 6). To be without chastening is to be without proof of sonship. The little gutter child, unkempt, uncorrected, uncared for, is free from the discipline, restraint, training, care and correction that loving fatherhood imposes, but who, knowing the truth, would exchange the “discipline” of the one for the “liberty” of the other?

The apostle proceeds to reason from the lesser to the greater. We have had fathers in this life whose discipline was brief, and as far as they knew right, but sometimes in error, yet we held them in respect. God is the Father of our spirits, His discipline is never at fault, and it tends to life. Shall we not then much rather render submission to Him?

The object that the Lord has in view all this time is revealed in Heb. xii. 10: “That we may be partakers of His holiness.” Holiness is the atmosphere of Hebrews, as righteousness is of Romans. The sanctification of the believer lies entirely outside his own deeds or endeavours. They are sanctified by the blood of Him Who suffered “without the gate” (Heb. xiii. 12). If they are called upon to go unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach (Heb. xiii. 13), it is but manifesting in act and character what has been already accomplished. The going without the camp will never sanctify—it may manifest sanctification.

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. x. 10).

“For by one offering He hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified” (Heb. x. 14).

This “perfecting for ever” is in nowise altered or minimized because the epistle proceeds to urge each to “go on unto perfection”, or because it associates perfecting with suffering and obedience. When therefore we read that this discipline has in view the partaking of His holiness, we do not understand that any amount of scourging can sanctify, but that the believer, already perfectly sanctified in Christ, is now trained and encouraged to walk in harmony with such a blessed position.

While the apostle urged the believer to treat with all due reverence the chastening of the Lord, he assumed no stoic indifference. There is something intensely human in the admission: “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby” (Heb. xii. 11).

Three items in this verse demand attention. First, the words “Nevertheless, afterward”. While mother-love is immediate and protective, father-love is concerned with the future. The one sees the babe that is now. The other visualized the man that is to be. The underlying thought is very close to that of II Cor. iv. 16-18, which hinges upon the words, “while we look not at the things which are seen”.

Then the Greek expression translated “The peaceable fruits of righteousness”. We understand this to mean in English, “the peaceable fruits, *namely*, righteousness”. Holiness in Christ is manifest, and imputed righteousness has produced its peaceable fruit. The chastening and the discipline has had the effect of pruning; it has produced fruitfulness. Here is a parallel with Phil. i. 11 which speaks of bringing forth the fruits of righteousness.

All, however, turns upon the third expression: “To them which are exercised thereby”, just as the prayer in Philippians urges the need for discernment and trying the things that differ.

Watch the effect of discipline upon two of the Lord’s children. One becomes mellow, the other hard and sour. The one is going on unto perfection, the other drawing back unto perdition. Look at Israel in the wilderness. After their first experience at Marah one would have thought that the next problem concerning water would, at once, have thrown them back on the memory of the Lord’s earlier intervention on their behalf, and that they would have trusted in quiet confidence. But no, so far as they were concerned, the discipline of Marah was wasted upon them; they were not “exercised” thereby. O let us not pass through trials and reap no reward! Let us ever seek to be “exercised” by the discipline of our pathway, and then it will turn to our profit and the Lord’s glory. This “exercise” is the mark of the “perfect”; “But strong meat belongeth to them that are perfect, even those who by reason of use have their *senses exercised* to discern both good and evil” (Heb. v. 14). A baby has senses, a man has senses exercised. A true son of God is exercised by the chastening of the Lord: he is unworthy of the name if he is indifferent or hardened.

It is not without bearing upon the theme of Heb. xii. that the word “exercise” is *gumnazo*. The word actually means “to be naked”, because in the Greek sports the competitors were stripped. So we have *gumnos* translated “naked” in Matt. xxv. 36; II Cor. v. 3; Heb. iv. 13 and other places. Coming, as it does, after the exhortation to “lay aside every weight and the easily-entangling sin, and run with patience the race set before us”, this word *gumnazo* is very apt.

Seeing then that chastening, though unpleasant, is fruitful, we are exhorted to: “Lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be dislocated; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men” (Heb. xii. 12-14). In other words, we are not to seek martyrdom, we are not to pose as sufferers, we are not to pick the roughest tracks and run the thorniest way. Rather are we to gird up the loins and hope to the end; make the place for our feet as level as we can, not aggravate the lame ankle, but rather get it well, that we may finish our course with joy. Further, we are to follow peace with all men. Our discipline will sometimes come through the permitted oppression of man, and when it does we must bow before the Father’s good pleasure. On the other hand we should not go out of our way to irritate our fellows or ask for trouble, but as far as in us lies, we are to make for peace.

Another line of exhortation is discovered here by observing a parallel with Phil. iii. 19, where the believer is urged to mark those who so walk that their end is perdition. So here, those who were running the race are told to make a firm track so that others not so strong or fleet of foot would be encouraged to continue.

“And holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Heb. xii. 14).

This will cause us to run up against the elements of the world and the tradition of men, and will probably provide all the chastisement that we can endure, but without it, we are warned that “no man shall see the Lord”.

The two words that should be emphasized in the while passage under consideration are “endure”, and “exercise”:-

“If ye *endure* chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons” (Heb. xii. 7).

“Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are *exercised*, thereby” (Heb. xii. 11).

*“Nevertheless afterward!”*

## The leading of the Lord.

#1. p. 95

A—I have a friend, whose sincerity I do not doubt, who nevertheless causes me a certain amount of questioning by reason of an expression which is continually in his mouth. It seems that the one answer he makes to all things is: “I felt led”, and no matter how others may view his action, or what trouble it may bring in its train, “I felt led” seems to be the beginning and the end of the matter. I should like a little talk on the subject if you can spare the time.

B—It will not be very profitable to discuss your friend, for we have nothing certain to go upon, but if you wish we could turn to the Word and gather some of its teaching upon the subject. Now I suppose that before we go a step further we ought to make sure that the idea of the Lord’s leading is a scriptural fact.

A—Of that I have no doubt. One has but to remember Psalm xxiii. to establish that: “He leadeth me beside the still waters . . . . He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”

B—You are right. Let us come to the first great type of the Lord’s leading, namely, the pillar of cloud that led His children Israel. What do you learn from that?

A—The thought that comes most forcibly to my mind is the association in Exod. xl. between the ark, the mercy-seat, and the cloud: “So Moses finished the work. Then a cloud covered the tent” (Exod. xl. 33-38).

B—The only criticism I have to make on your remark is that you have not gone back far enough. The first appearance of the pillar of cloud is found in Exod. xiii. 21. Here you will find neither ark, mercy-seat, nor tabernacle. Here you have redemption, the “way out”, whereas in Exod. xl you have atonement, or the “way in”. We have therefore two presentations of the Lord’s leading—one by reason of redemption, and one by reason of restored fellowship. If we are the Lord’s redeemed He will lead us whether we realize it or not. It is part of the purchase of the blood of the Lamb.

*(To be continued).*

**#1. (concluded). p. 111**

A—That is to say, whether we *feel* led, or whether we are scarcely awake to the new life, that leading is ours, ours until we reach the Father's home.

B—Yes, and the second lesson is that the Lord's will is that He should dwell with His people, that there should be communion, that there should be access and willing service, and with this is connected the second reference to the cloud and the fire. To "feel led" in the true sense indicates a very close fellowship, and all that fellowship includes, such as walking in the light, and the cleansing from sin.

There are two other points connected with this type that we ought to notice. What would you say the pillar of cloud symbolized?

A—I should say it symbolized the presence of the Lord: "And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest . . . . If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence" (Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15).

B—Conscious enjoyment of the presence of God, then, seems to be a necessary accompaniment to feeling led. Do you notice anything else that is a comfort?

A—I cannot say that I do at the moment.

B—It seems to me to be a very gracious provision that the evidence of the Lord's presence was made to fit the circumstance. By day it was a cloud, by night a fire. Had the presence not been visible at all, or only visible by day, the fact would have remained, but see how the Lord condescends to cheer and comfort so that at night as well as by day His children may have the assurance that He is with them and leading them on. It was not only rendered visible at all times, but the last words of Exod. xl. record that it was with Israel "*throughout all their journeys*".

## **The Ministry of Consolation.**

### **#29. “Written for our learning . . . . comfort of the Scriptures” (Rom. xv. 4). pp. 26, 27**

In the three papers preceding this one, we have brought together teaching from the Psalms, which may be summarized as follows:--

The believer, though bowed down in soul, and surrounded by adversaries, may nevertheless be confident of victory, for he trusts in God Who “perfects” or brings all things to their appointed end, and so his heart is “prepared” and unmoved.

This attitude of heart is moreover very closely connected with the “exaltation” of the Lord, which foreshadows the ascension of Christ. The exalted Lord is by no means inaccessible, but on the contrary is One Who “hath respect unto the lowly”.

It seems fitting that we should not conclude these brief observations without drawing the reader’s attention to their N.T. fulfillment.

The “perfecting” God is seen at His blessed work in Hebrews, where “to go on unto perfection” (or the end) is a key passage. Hebrews, moreover, is vitally connected with the ascended Christ, His finished work being emphasized by the fact that He has “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high”. He has “passed through the heavens” (Heb. iv. 14), and in Him we have One Who, having been touched with the feeling of our infirmities, bids us draw near to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need; and as One Who has been made high, yea “higher than the heavens” (Heb. vii. 26), He “ever liveth to make intercession for us”. This exalted One is, moreover, Head of the church, the one body, and as the ascended One He gave “gifts unto men” (Eph. iv. 8-11), which gifts in their turn are instrumental in leading on to the “perfect” man.

Whilst (if Eph. iii. 2-11 be true) the dispensation of the mystery cannot be a subject of revelation in the O.T., nevertheless the ministry of consolation is as wide as suffering saintship, and knows no dispensational boundaries.

There is far more of victory in the ascension of Christ than we have as yet perceived, and it is good in the midst of trouble to remember that One at the right hand of God, and also be able, in His triumph, to be “more than conquerors” (Rom. viii. 34-37).

“O magnify the Lord with Me, and let us exalt His Name together” (Psa. xxxiv. 3).

**#30. Helpers together (II Cor. 1. 8-11).**  
**pp. 27, 28**

Never was there more need than at the present time to remember that among the blessings of redemption is a “sound mind”. Both among the orthodox and unorthodox we meet the extremist. In II Cor. i. 8-11 the apostle Paul mingles together the human and the divine in such a way that while the arm of flesh is absolutely set aside, the weaker saint is nevertheless gathered into a most glorious fellowship with “God that raiseth the dead”. Let us note the transition:--

1. *The utter end of human strength.*

“We were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life” (verse 8).

2. *The utter failure was for a divine purpose.*

“But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead” (verse 9).

3. *No deliverance can be expected from any source other than God, either in the present or the future.*

“Who delivered us from so great a death (*past*) and doth deliver (*present*); in whom we trust that He will yet deliver (*future*) us” (verse 10).

4. *The unexpected call into fellowship of those who, in themselves, are for ever set aside as strengthless.*

“Ye also helping together by prayer for us” (verse 11).

What a light this throws on the condescending grace of God! What a sermon it preaches upon the nature of prayer! What a stress it throws upon the place of fellowship! “Ye also helping together.”

Since the creation of man, and the divine statement: “It is not good . . . . I will make him an help meet for him” (Gen. ii. 18), this element of fellowship has remained.

The Psalmist seems to have had some knowledge of the truth of II Cor. i. for he says in Psalm cxviii. 7: “The Lord taketh my part *with them that help me*”, and Psalm liv. 4 expresses much the same thought: “Behold, God is my helper: the Lord is *with them that uphold my soul.*”

“With them that help me.” “With them that uphold my soul.” “Ye also helping together.” While the flesh can have no place, is it not a comfort to the weakest believer to realize the reality of the words: “Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ” (I John i. 3)?

A parallel passage that but confirms this blessed association of the Saviour and the saint is Phil. i. 19:--

“For I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through *your* prayer (the saints helping together), and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (the Saviour). According to my earnest expectation” (the recipient).

Here once again we have this blessed chain that binds us all around the throne of God. Shall we not rise to such a call for fellowship?

### **#31. “Heights and Depths.”** **pp. 61, 62**

It is beyond our knowledge to be able to say, without reserve, that the apostle Paul was the greatest servant of the Lord Jesus that ever lived, but we do know that he was one of the greatest. We learn much by the noble example he sets us in faith, in hope and in love and its labours. It is, however, written for our consolation that he suffered as we do, felt as we do, prayed as we do, and lived the daily round as we do. In the midst of a passage dealing with the delicate problem of church government, and immediately after giving a charge “before God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels”, Paul suddenly descends to earth and sends a little private advice concerning Timothy’s weak stomach (I Tim. v. 23); and then without ceremony or explanation he resumes his theme concerning church government. The incongruity is only superficial. Timothy, though possessed of spiritual gifts, was an “earthen vessel”, and Paul knew that physical disability often interferes with spiritual witness. If we were more spiritual and less shallow we should accept the fulness of truth that can sweep all things into the service of God, and sense no dissonance when reading of elect angels, church officers, Timothy’s infirmities, Paul’s prescription, and the day of judgment.

In the second epistle to Timothy, Paul’s martyrdom is in full view. During his life of service he had suffered as few men ever suffered, yet how refreshing it is to see the utter absence of “pose”. We have full, deep and utter consecration, but not one word of the heroic:--

“The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee”  
(II Tim. iv. 13).

The man who was happy in the prospect of “being offered” (II Tim. iv. 6), and who could stand unashamed and unperturbed though all men forsook him (i. 12 and iv. 16), had too great a conception of truth to pander to the flesh and write:--

Do not think of bringing the cloak from Troas. What is a little cold to one in whose breast burns the holy fire of martyrdom?

This apparent “neglecting of the body” would have been the surest way of “satisfying the flesh”. Some children of God seem to go out of their way to look for martyrdom. It would be far better to avoid all pretensions and save oneself up for the eventuality of the real thing. In Acts xx. 24 Paul uttered those stirring words that found their fulfillment in II Tim. iv.:--

“None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.”

Yet, look at verse 13 of the same chapter in Acts:--

“And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, *mind*ing himself to go afoot.”

Here was no Stoic who could be “unmoved” simply because bereft of human feeling; here was one that gladly availed himself of a little spell of relief from the constant pressure of the lives of others. If we do not misread the passage, Paul was glad to “get away” for a time; it was a kind of safety-valve.

Let us take consolation from these homely, every-day facts revealed for our learning. Abraham lived many a day as humdrum as our own. He was not always “fighting”, “believing” or “offering”. Paul, with all his strenuous witness, lived the life of a man. However rapt his vision, he found time to eat and drink; however full of zeal, he must have slept, and when he shivered with cold he was too great to be above asking for a cloak. Let us leave the “pose” to others. Let us above all things seek reality, so that our walk shall be worthy in those quiet and unrecorded days as well as during the mountain-top experiences, when such a walk is comparatively easy.

## Redemption. New Series.

### #19. The forgiveness of sins. pp. 49 - 53

The immediate result of redemption is the forgiveness of sins:--

“In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein He hath abounded toward us” (Eph. i. 7, 8).

Forgiveness, however, is also the result of atonement (according to the O.T. usage of the word):--

“Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” (Psa. xxxii. 1).

We find justification closely connected with both redemption and atonement in Romans:--

“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (the O.T. ‘atonement’) through faith in His blood” (Rom. iii. 24, 25).

Justification and forgiveness are closely allied as may be seen by reading Acts xiii. and Rom. iv.:--

“Be it known unto you therefore . . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*, and by Him all that believe are *justified*” (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

“Even as David described the blessedness of the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness*, without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are *forgiven*” (Rom. iv. 6, 7).

The true foundation for heart realization of this great blessing, is not only the experience of it at the hand of the Lord, but the knowledge of it based upon the teaching of His Word. When experience walks hand in hand with revelation we have a fellowship that is real and fruitful.

There are three words used in the Hebrew Scriptures to describe three aspects of forgiveness, viz., *nasa*, *kaphar*, and *salach*. Let us ponder them.

NASA.—“The Lord is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity . . . . as Thou *hast forgiven* this people from Egypt until now” (Numb. xiv. 18, 19).

The Hebrew word means “to bear”, and has a threefold force: (1) lifting up, (2) carrying, (3) taking away. *Nasa* is used sacrificially for the bearing of sin, but it will be well to see its use in non-doctrinal connections first. It is used frequently of bearing the ark (Josh. iii. 8), and of bearing armour (I Sam. xiv. 1). The first occurrence

of the word in the Scriptures shows by the very problem of its translation that from earliest days—even from Eden itself—forgiveness of sin was associated so intimately with the bearing of sin and its attendant punishment, that the same word was used to convey the two separate though related ideas:--

“My punishment is greater than I can bear” (Gen. iv. 13).

“Mine iniquity is greater than it may be forgiven” (Margin).

Long before Moses was instructed to give the law and prescribe the great typical sacrifices, the inter-relation of “bearing” and “forgiving” was understood. Joseph’s brethren say: “Forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy fathers” (Gen. 1. 17), using the word *nasa* (“to bear”).

With the addition of the word “face” the meaning of the word extends further and becomes “acceptance”, as in Gen. xix. 21: “I have accepted thee concerning this thing.”

We are not left in doubt as to what “bearing iniquity” involved.

“Lest they bear sin for it, and *die therefore*” (Lev. xxii. 9).

Forgiveness, therefore, as this word testifies, while an act of grace and mercy, has a righteous basis: “He is faithful and *just* to forgive us our sins.” And so we read of the Lord Jesus:--

“He hath poured out His soul unto death . . . . *He bare* the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors” (Isa. liii. 12).

The next word we consider is *kaphar*, which is more frequently translated “to make an atonement” than in any other way. In a previous article in this series we have examined this word, and found that it meant, “the covering of sin by cancellation”, and hence, when it is translated “forgive”, it approaches very near to the idea of *nasa*. Forgiven sin is *borne* sin, borne it is true by another, but lifted up from the sinner and carried by the Saviour: “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree” (I Pet. ii. 24). So forgiven sin has been “covered”. Not “covered up” as some have said, but “covered” in the sense that its liabilities have been met and discharged.

Jeremiah uses an expression with *kaphar* that makes the figure more vivid: “Forgive not their iniquity, neither blot out their sins from Thy sight” (Jer. xviii. 23). *That* is scriptural “covering” of sin—“blotted out from God’s sight”, and he would be presumptuous who would say thereafter that O.T. atonement or “covering” was a “mere covering” of sin.

The Psalmist said:--

“But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yea, many a time turned He His anger away” (Psa. lxxviii. 38).

Here “forgiveness” is placed in correspondence with “turning His anger away”. When the Publican prayed “God be merciful to me the sinner” (Luke xviii. 13), he used the word *hilaskonai*, “be propitious”, alluding to the O.T. *kaphar*, atonement. The forgiveness of sins is impossible without this propitiation.

“He is faithful and just *to forgive* us our sins . . . . He is the propitiation for our sins”  
(I John i. 9, ii. 2).

The third word is *salach*. This word approaches nearest to the English word “forgive”. Although it occurs some 45 times or more, it is not found with such varying translations as noted in the case of *nasa*, or *kaphar*, being translated either “forgive”, “pardon”, or “spare”. Lexicographers assign to the root of the word the idea “to loose”, “to remit”, “to relax” and its frequent rendering in the LXX (*aphiemi*) approaches very closely this basic meaning. The Greek word we will consider presently.

Solomon uses this word in his great prayer recorded in I Kings viii. with its solemn refrain: “And when Thou hearest, forgive.” It is the word that comes in Psa. ciii. 3: “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.” So also in the repeated statement of Lev. iv., v., and vi.: “And it shall be forgiven them.”

### **New Testament reality.**

While the sacrifices and offerings of the law could never take away sin or touch the conscience, they most clearly pointed to the only way of forgiveness, and that by the shed blood of an accepted offering.

*Nasa* finds its equivalent in *airo*, “to bear”; “Behold the Lamb of God which *taketh away* the sin of the world” (John i. 29). *Kaphar* finds its counterpart and fulfillment in the “propitiation”: “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past” (Rom. iii. 25).

The Epistle to the Hebrews testifies that, although the offerings of the old covenant are of no avail, it still remains true that “without shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. ix. 22).

The two great ideas in N.T. forgiveness are expressed in two passages in Ephesians: (1). There is forgiveness that releases, sets free, remits. (2). There is forgiveness that is an act of gracious kindness.

(1). “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, *the forgiveness* of sins” (Eph. i. 7).

This is the word *aphesis*, meaning release. A good idea of its root meaning is found in Luke iv. 18: “To preach deliverance (*aphesis*) to the captives . . . . to set at liberty (*aphesis*) them that are bruised.” It will be seen that the very exodus from the house of bondage was a figure of forgiveness or release. The word is used of the remitting of debts in Matt. vi. 12, and xviii. 32.

- (2). “Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving (*charizomai*) one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you (*charizomai*)” (Eph. iv. 32).

This word conveys the idea of an act of grace:--

“Graced Him with a Name that is above every name” (Phil. ii. 9).  
“Freely give us all things” (Rom. viii. 32).

Such is the glorious message of the forgiveness of sins. Those sins have been “put away”, “cancelled”, “blotted out”. Their debt has been remitted, the debtor set free. This forgiveness is found in the shed blood of Christ, and in the rich grace of God, and is so established in righteousness that His righteousness has been manifested even in the remission of sins that were committed before Christ came. Whenever and wherever forgiveness is granted it is the glory of the gospel that “He is faithful and *just* to forgive”, even though the whole scheme and provision is an act of mercy and free grace beyond our power to fathom.

He who minimizes or throws doubt upon the sacrificial work of the Son of God, who discredits the shedding of His precious blood, is an enemy to our true peace, a destroyer of the gospel’s sweetest message. It is not only written in Hebrews, in Ephesians, and in Romans (three great epistles indispensable and priceless), that without the shedding of blood is no forgiveness, but it is found in the mouth of the believer in the day of the Lord. Converted Israel cry: “Unto Him that loveth us and *loosed* us from our sins by His blood” (Rev. i. 5).

“Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart (*apoluo*, same word “forgive”, Luke vii. 47) in peace, according to Thy Word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation” (Luke ii. 29).

There are thirty-six references to the blood of Christ in the N.T.; thirty-six references, by six writers, distributed through the four Gospels, the Acts, Romans, I Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, Hebrews, I Peter, I John, and the Apocalypse. The blood of Christ is specifically associated with the new covenant, with the provision of life, with the purchase of the Church, with propitiation, redemption, forgiveness of sins, justification, nearness, peace, access, and victory. It is called “precious”, is said to have been “shed” and “sprinkled”, to speak better things than that of Abel, and to be infinitely more valuable than the blood of bulls and goats. It is too not much to say, therefore, that a denial of the necessity and provision of this sacrificial feature in the purpose of God in Christ, vitiates the whole revelation of God, not only the N.T. with its gospel, but the O.T. with its typical teaching.

These thirty-six references to the blood of Christ in the N.T. deal with twelve great features in the purpose of grace, each one a theme in itself.

### **1. The new covenant, and the aionion covenant.**

Israel’s future, their restoration, their forgiveness, their enjoyment of all the promises made unto the fathers, the faithfulness of God to His word and oath, all find assurance and settlement in the blood of Christ.

“And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. xxvi. 27, 28; Mark xiv. 24; Luke xxii. 20).

“This cup is the new covenant in My blood” (I Cor. xi. 25).

“Behold the days come saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah” (Heb. viii. 8).

“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 *aionion* covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will” (Heb. xiii. 20, 21).

The first covenant was not dedicated without blood, for we read that Moses sprinkled the book and all the people, saying: “This is the blood of the covenant, which God has enjoined unto you” (Heb. ix. 20). The old covenant was not found faultless, so it was put aside. The blood of bulls and goats gave no guarantee that this covenant would ever be fulfilled.

The fact that the new covenant was dedicated and confirmed by nothing less than the blood of Christ assures its complete success, and settles for ever the question of Israel’s restoration and the fulfillment of all the promises made by God unto the fathers.

### **2. The blood is the life.**

The only references to the blood of Christ in the Gospels which have a doctrinal bearing, other than those that refer to the new covenant, are found in John vi. The

statements at first sight appear somewhat repulsive, for we read of “eating His flesh” and “drinking His blood”, but when we remember the references to “the bread of life” which gives life to the world, we are supplied with the key to their meaning: “I am the bread of life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst” (John vi. 35). Here “coming” and “believing” are used instead of “eating” and “drinking”.

In verse 63 we find another guide: “The flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” So when we read: “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you”, and “Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath *aionion* life; and I will raise Him up at the last day” (John vi. 53, 54), we interpret these words as words of spirit and life. And we realize that “coming” to Christ and “believing” on Him is something more than a passing phase of interest; it is in some way a partaking, an incorporating, a communion. So the passage continues: “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me, and I in Him” (John v. 56). These words anticipate those of John xvii. 23: “I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may have been perfected into one.”

This idea of intimate incorporation is found in John vi. 57: “As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me.” If we therefore seek instruction and example as to translating this “eating” and “drinking” into spiritual reality, we must closely follow the attitude of heart that characterized the Saviour’s absolute faith in the Father: “My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work” (John iv. 34).

There is an insistence upon life in the sixth chapter of John:--

“Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting (*aionion*) life” (27).

“For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world” (33).

“I am the bread of life” (35,48).

“That every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have *aionion* life: and I will raise him up at the last day” (40).

“The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” (51).

“Except ye eat . . . . and drink . . . . ye have no life in you” (53).

“The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life” (63).

“Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the word of *aionion* life’ (68).

We have, moreover, seven passages that use the word “living”:--

“The *living* bread . . . . shall *live* unto the age” (51).

“The *living* Father . . . . I *live* by the Father . . . . shall *live* by Me” (57).

“Shall *live* unto the age” (58).

“We believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the *living* God” (69).

No one familiar with Lev. xvii. 14 (“The blood is the life”) will fail to see the close connection between faith, life and the atoning blood of Christ. Indeed, the connection is more than verbal; it is spirit and life, it is fundamental. Faith unites us to Christ in such a way that His very life becomes our own, and His very death is reckoned ours too. John vi. gives in figure what Rom. vi. teaches in plain doctrine.

### **3. Purchase and redemption.**

“Feed the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood” (Acts xx. 28).

A great deal has been written about this impressive and wonderful passage, but after wading through a sea of manuscripts, after weighing over, most carefully, all the evidences, and after waiting upon the Lord for guidance, most expositors have come back to the text as translated in the A.V. It is indeed a tremendous statement. “The church of God” we have read of before, but what a light is thrown upon that church, and that God, when we read: “which He has purchased with His own *blood!*”

Fairly faced, this passage gathers up unto itself the true meaning and essential condition pertaining to the office of the Kinsman-Redeemer, shows the close intimate connection between the Lord and His chosen, called-out, people, settles all arguments as to the efficacy and preciousness of that blood shed for the church’s deliverance, and leaves the deity of Christ unassailable, for none but Jesus Christ is the Redeemer of the church.

The word purchase is *peripoieomai*, “to acquire”, and *peripoissis* occurs in Eph. i. 14: “Until the redemption of the purchased possession”, and in I Pet. ii. 9: “A peculiar people.”

Redemption by the blood of Christ issues in forgiveness of sins in Eph. i. 1, and redemption by the precious blood of Christ (as of a Lamb without spot or blemish) is set forth in I Pet. i. 18, 19 as a deliverance from “tradition”.

An *aionion* redemption intimately connected with the new covenant is found in Heb. ix. 12, while in Rev. v. 9, 10, in the new song, we find the Lamb about to break the seals, claim the inheritance, and place Israel in their position as kings and priests on the earth, all this being effected by the blood of the Lamb.

### **4. Propitiation the “atonement” of the O.T.**

“Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood” (Rom. iii. 25).

Propitiation, here, is “the mercy seat” of Heb. ix. 5, which in its turn gathers up all the great typical teaching found in the O.T. under the word “atonement”. Seeing that the apostle Paul uses this O.T. word directly of the work of Christ, we most gladly and thankfully accept the teaching, rejoicing that all the precious typical blessings foreshadowed under the law are ours, in their glorious reality, through the precious blood

of Christ. A fuller examination of this passage will be found in the series of expositions on *The Epistle to the Romans*.

The references in Hebrews to the High Priest entering within the veil once a year, and to the great Antitype entering “heaven itself”, “neither by the blood of goats or calves, but by His own blood”, teach us the preciousness and the fullness of this wondrous propitiation. The subject is too vast and too important for us to attempt to summarize, so we will leave the remaining references to be dealt with in another paper. Meanwhile let us ponder the depths of grace that are found in the words, “the precious blood of Christ”.

## **#21. The precious blood of Christ (*continued*).** **pp. 113 - 117**

We have already seen that the blood of Christ is most intimately associated with the new covenant, life, redemption, and propitiation, and were nothing else revealed these four items, with all for which they stand, would more than justify the expression, “The precious blood of Christ”. We have further blessings, however, to consider, and so we proceed to:--

### **5. Justification.**

“Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Rom. v. 9).

Justification by faith, without works of law, is fundamental to the gospel of God as preached by Paul. It is, moreover, important to realize that justification is not said to be derived from the life-long obedience of Christ to the law, neither is it said to be based upon His resurrection or present intercession, it is bound in His blood. When the Lord rose from the dead it was “*because* of our justifying” (Rom. iv. 25), not to obtain it.

### **6. Sanctification.**

Closely allied with justification is sanctification, and this, though having wide and deep spiritual and experimental aspects which are very closely connected with the work of the Holy Spirit, finds its foundation and beginning in the blood of Christ:--

“Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate” (Heb. xiii. 12).

We have the typical foreshadowing of this in verse 11 “without the gate” answering to the Old Testament ritual: “The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.” This is the sin

offering so graphically described in Lev. iv. 1-12, and it is by the blood of the sin offering that sanctification is provided. All development springs from this source.

Every passage that speaks of holiness, of saints, and of sanctification, speaks aloud of the efficacy of that precious blood. Not only does the blood of Christ provide justification and sanctification—blessings that are referred to under the heading of our “standing”—but it also has to do with our preservation afterwards in a corresponding “state”. This we see in the next two features, viz., “Cleansing” and “Victory”.

## **7. Cleansing.**

“How much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purge your conscience” (Heb. ix. 14).

“The blood of Jesus Christ . . . . cleanseth us from all sin” (I John i. 7).

“They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. vii. 14).

Sin renders a man unclean. This fact was impressed upon Israel continually. The touching of a dead body, or the eating of certain foods, rendered a man unclean. Uncleaness excluded from the presence of God, or from any act of service to Him. Cleansing was accomplished by sacrifices, baptisms, and the ashes of an heifer, compounded to make a ceremonial purgation. The one statement concerning Christ’s sacrificial work in Heb. i. is of this great cleansing: “When He had by Himself purged our sins” (Heb. i. 3).

It is possible that some rather crude theology is extant, especially in certain hymns, but nevertheless we would far rather hear a child of God singing, “There is a fountain filled with blood” than hear the modern intellectual trample Christ’s blood under foot.

## **8. Victory.**

“And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Rev. xii. 11).

It is evident that here we have the echo of the victory of Calvary carried forward in the experience of the saints: “The blood of the Lamb . . . . they loved not their lives unto the death.” We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us, and as we appreciate His victory and the spirit of His conquest, so shall we conquer too.

These overcomers were no proud conquerors. In the eyes of the world they were pitiable fools. They appeared to be losers; they went to the death with no miraculous intervention to justify their faith. The earth drank in their blood, while they prayed for their murderers. The blood of Christ, shed at the hands of men, the Lamb of God, dumb before the shearers, the cry: “Father, forgive them”, these constituted the testimony and the victory.

## **9. The blood of sprinkling.**

This thought is limited to the circumcision, being connected either with the ratification of a covenant people, or their cleansing and deliverance.

“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (I Pet. i. 2).

“Having our heart sprinkled from an evil conscience” (Heb. x. 22).

“If . . . . the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ . . . . purge your conscience” (Heb. ix. 13, 14).

“Moses . . . . sprinkled . . . . all the people, saying, this is the blood of the covenant, which God has enjoined unto you” (Heb. ix. 19, 20).

“Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood” (Heb. xi. 28).

These features have been seen before, but it is necessary that the reader should be stimulated to discover the meaning of this sprinkling, so that no phase of the blessed work of Christ should be unseen or unappreciated.

### **10. Made nigh.**

“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. ii. 13).

The church of the mystery, which is a new creation, a spiritual unity, indeed *the* unity of the Spirit, is made not by the Holy Spirit Himself, but by the blood of Christ, the Holy Spirit recognizing and hallowing that precious blood, and building into the holy temple only such living stones as bear that sacred mark. No member of the one body is redeemed other than by that precious blood of Christ (Eph. i. 7). No member but is made nigh by that precious blood (Eph. ii. 13), and as we shall see in the next paragraph, there is no bond of peace apart from that same shed blood.

### **11. Peace.**

“And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself” (Col. i. 20).

The reconciliation of all things (even those that are invisible and heavenly) finds its basis in the blood of His cross. The laying down of that life, the pouring out of that blood were absolutely necessary before one member of the body of Christ could know peace. There is no higher spiritual place than that reached in these prison epistles, yet may we remember at all times that even here, in the climax of the purpose of the ages, this thin red line, started at Gen. iii., is found interwoven.

### **12. Boldness to enter.**

In Heb. x. 19 the Epistle reaches a goal. It has emphasized the glorious fullness of Christ in every chapter. Above angels, above Adam, above Moses, above Joshua, above Melchisedec, above all typical sacrifices. The culminating point is the establishing of the “better covenant” upon “better promises” (Heb. x. 1-18), and immediately this has been

reached the apostle says: “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus . . . . let us draw near” (Heb. x. 19-22).

We have seen elsewhere that redemption may be spoken of as the great *exodus*, while the word translated in this passage “to enter” is literally the *eisodus*; the first is the way *out*, the second the way *in*. Redemption is not perfected until the people of God are led out of bondage, and into His presence. Eph. i., ii. and iii. have the same sequence:--

“In Whom we have redemption through His blood” (Eph. i. 7).

“That He might reconcile the both unto God in one body by the cross . . . . we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father” (Eph. ii. 16-18).

“In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him” (Eph. iii. 12).

Such is the summary. A precious and sacred theme such as this demands fuller and more reverent treatment than this list can present. We trust, however, that having seen in outline the blessings that flow to both saved Jew and Gentile by reason of that blood once shed, we may be provoked to prayer and careful study of the Scriptures so that these “dry bones” may live.

## **#22. Christ the Surety. pp. 145 - 151**

The theme of the epistle to the Hebrews is the superiority of the sacrifice and the priesthood of Christ over all other sacrifices, offerings and priests of the law. While there are a series of differences, each one being enough in itself to set the Levitical offerings aside, the one that is stressed more than any other in Hebrews is connected with *life*. This may be seen in Heb. vii. Contrasting the priesthood of Christ with that of Aaron, the epistle says of Christ:--

“Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an ENDLESS LIFE . . . . by so much was Jesus made a Surety of a better covenant. And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of DEATH, but this Man, because He continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood” (Heb. vii. 16-24).

The sacrifices of the law are set aside: “It is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (Heb. x. 1-4). Immediately, the epistle goes on to speak of Christ, saying: “Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me), to do Thy will, O God.” “But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down at the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 5-12). In both references to priest and sacrifice “this Man” excels by reason of resurrection life.

A sinner who pays the penalty of his own sins has no claim upon life. He is finished. The sacrifices offered under the old covenant were substitutes for the sinner, but their efficacy was in the fact that they pointed on to a better sacrifice. The penalty was inflicted, death endured, the blood shed, but where was the possibility of life? Were any of the bulls and goats ever raised from the dead? There is something deeper and fuller even than substitution, and that is identification, and it is in this blessed relationship that Christ is seen as the Surety, Whose sacrifice for sin is the only one that could put away sin, and Whose resurrection from the dead alone gives to those identified with Him the hope of glory.

In Hebrews Christ is seen as the Surety of the better covenant. Although the word “surety” is not used in Ephesians and Colossians, we hope to show that every passage that speaks of dying “with Christ” or being raised “with Christ” passes beyond the thought of sacrifice and substitution to that fullest and closest of all relationships expressed by the titles of the Kinsman-Redeemer and Surety.

### **The meaning of the word.**

The word translated “surety” in the O.T. is the Hebrew word *arab*, which in the form *arabon* is brought over into the N.T. Greek, occurring in Eph. i. 14 as “earnest”. This word corresponds with “pledge” in Gen. xxxviii. 17, 18: “Wilt thou give me a *pledge* till thou send it?” The root idea appears to be that of *mixing* or *mingling*:--

- “A mixed multitude” (Margin a great mixture) (Exod. xii. 38).
- “The holy seed have mingled themselves” (Ezra ix. 2).
- “A stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy” (Prov. xiv. 10).
- “In the warp, or woof” (Lev. xiii. 48).

Arising out of this idea of mixing and interweaving comes that of the surety, who is so intimately associated with the obligations laid upon the one for whom he acts that he can be treated in his stead. So we get:--

- “Thy servant became surety for the lad” (Gen. xlv. 32).
- “He that is surety for a stranger shall smart for it” (Prov. xi. 15).
- “We have mortgaged our lands” (Neh. v. 3).
- “Give pledges to my lord the king” (II Kings xviii. 23).

In Ezek. xxvii. 9, 27 we find the word translated “occupy” in the sense of exchange or bartering. In a way we understand the expression, “Occupy, till I come”, and still speak of man’s trade as his “occupation”.

Such is the underlying meaning of the word “surety”—one who identifies himself with another in order to bring about deliverance from obligations. This is clearly seen in Prov. xxii. 26, 27: “Be not thou one of those that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?” It is evident from this passage that the surety was held liable for the debts of the one whose cause he had espoused, even to the loss of his bed—and this meant

practically his all, as may be seen by consulting Exod. xxii. 26, 27: “If thou at all take thy neighbour’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?”

### **The type.**

While some features of suretyship enter into practically every typical sacrifice of the law, and while it is set forth by the laying of the offerer’s hand upon the head of the offering, the fullest type of the surety is found before the law was given in the story of Judah and Benjamin (Gen. xlii.-xliv.). It is necessary that these three chapters in Genesis be read so that the scriptural setting of this type may be seen, and we trust that every reader, who has any appreciation of the Berean spirit, will not read a word further until these chapters have been read as before the Lord. We will now point out the steps in the narrative that illuminate the type.

*The Cause.*—This is found in the famine that was in all lands, against which Joseph had been divinely guided to provide (Gen. xli. 54).

“Now when Jacob saw there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do you look one upon another? And he said behold, I have heard there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence: that we may live, and not die” (Gen. xlii. 1, 2).

Joseph’s ten brethren, therefore, proceed to Egypt, leaving Benjamin behind, for Jacob feared lest his youngest son might be lost to him, even as was Joseph. Upon arrival in Egypt, Joseph’s brethren bow before him, and although Joseph recognizes them, they know him not. In order to bring them to repentance for their sin, and to make them to confess concerning Benjamin and his father, Joseph accuses them of being spies, to which they reply: “We are all one man’s sons . . . . thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with his father, and one is not” (Gen. xlii. 11-13). Joseph then says to them: “Ye are spies . . . . by the life of Pharaoh ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither” (Gen. xlii. 14, 15).

The brethren were then put into ward for three days, during which time the sin against Joseph their brother came to the surface: “We are verily guilty concerning our brother” (Gen. xlii. 21). The result was that Simeon was taken and put into prison as a hostage, the remaining brethren being sent back home with corn. To their surprise, each man found his money, with which he had paid for the corn, in the sack’s mouth, and realized that this portended further trouble for them: “And when both they and their father saw the bundles of money, they were afraid; and Jacob their father said unto them, Me have ye bereaved of my children. Joseph is not and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me” (Gen. xlii. 35, 36).

*The Remedy.*—There are three remedies suggested in this narrative:--

- (1). THE HOSTAGE OF SIMEON: “And took them Simeon, and bound him.”
- (2). THE SACRIFICE OF REUBEN: “Slay my two sons, if I bring him not to thee.”
- (3). THE SURETYSHIP OF JUDAH: “Send the lad with me, I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him, if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame for ever.”

In these three suggestions we may see three ways in which sin can be dealt with.

(1). *Simeon’s way*.—This is futile, for it can neither make reparation nor restoration.

(2). *Reuben’s way*.—This goes further, and sees the need of the sacrifice, but two dead grandsons would be no compensation for Benjamin.

To Reuben’s offer might be answered:--

“None of us can by any means redeem his brother” (Psa. xlix.7).

“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 it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins” (Heb. x. 1-4).

Reuben was giving of his best. So the sacrifices and offerings of the law were the people’s best, but they had no power to deliver from sin. Simeon the hostage was no remedy. Reuben’s sacrifice was no remedy. What made the difference in Judah’s case? Simeon was a hostage, Reuben’s sons were substitutes, but Judah was himself a surety, and it is in the combination of the two features, “himself” and “surety”, that Judah’s remedy transcends that of the “hostage” and the “substitute”.

(3). *Judah’s way*.—Judah steps forward when all else has failed and says: “I (emphatic pronoun), I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him. If I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let *me* bear the blame for ever” (Gen. xliii. 9). So, in Heb. x., setting aside all sacrifices and offerings that could not take away sin, the Lord Jesus, the true Judah, steps forward and says: “Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me), to do Thy will, O God . . . . by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all” (Heb. x. 7-10). Here is not the thought of a hostage, nor merely of substitution, but of suretyship involving identification: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Heb. ii. 14, 15).

When Jacob’s sons journey again to Egypt, taking Benjamin with them, Joseph arranged that Benjamin should be suspected and detained. This led Judah to step forward and make that moving speech which, when Joseph heard, “he wept aloud” (Gen. xlv. 2).

Judah rehearsed the history of their movements, told of Jacob’s reluctance to part with Benjamin, and how Jacob would certainly die if Benjamin did not return with his

brethren. Judah is the true intercessor, and his pleading reaches its climax in the words: “For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me?” (Gen. xlv. 34). Judah’s word “blame” in the phrase, “Then shall I bear the *blame* to my father for ever” (verse 32), is the word “sin” in Reuben’s statement in Gen. xlii. 22, “Do not *sin* against the child”.

It is surely something to ponder that this word *chata* (“sin” and “blame”) occurs in this narrative in but these two references. There was the sin of Israel’s sons, and Judah in his suretyship seems to suggest that he would bear that sin for ever if he failed. While this is but faintly foreshadowed in the type, it is wonderfully true in the reality: “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree” (I Pet. ii. 24).

Judah, like Aaron, breaks down, as types always must, for Judah had sinned equally with his brethren, but of the true Surety it is written: “He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him” (II Cor. v. 21). Christ is more than Hostage, more than Substitute, He is Surety. As such He has so identified Himself with us, and with our need, that when He died, we died (Rom. vi. 8); when He was crucified, we were crucified (Gal. ii. 20); when He was buried, we were buried (Col. ii. 12); when He was raised from the dead, we were raised (Col. iii. 1); when He was seated in the heavenlies, we were seated in the heavenlies with Him (Eph. ii. 6). This is suretyship. Its essential element is more than substitution; it is interweaving, mingling, identification. As we read Col. iii. 1 and Eph. ii. 6, can we not hear out Surety saying,

“How shall I ascend to My Father, and the child Benjamin (the son of my right hand) be not with me?”

“*With me*”—there lies the secret of suretyship, and the reason why it transcends all the offerings of bulls and goats.

What was the first message sent by the risen Christ to His disciples? The message that echoed the words of Judah the surety:--

“Go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ASCEND unto My Father, and your Father” (John xx. 17).

“How shall I ASCEND to my father, and the lad be not with me?” (Gen. xlv. 34).

Further, let us not miss the emphasis upon “Himself”. Reuben offered *his two sons*. Judah offered *himself*. Paul, in Gal. ii. 20 just quoted, glories in the fact that “the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me”. The innocent lamb or the splendid bull died as sacrifices, but it could never be said of such, “It loved me and gave itself for me”? That is where sacrifice and offering fail, and that is why the Surety said, “Lo, I come”.

It is “His own blood”, not the blood of others (Acts xx. 28; Heb. ix. 12). It is “His own body” (Heb. x. 10; I Pet. ii. 24). It is “His own self” (I Pet. ii. 24). Christ gave “Himself” for our sins (Gal. i. 4). “He loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. ii. 20). “He gave Himself for the church” (Eph. v. 25). “He gave Himself a ransom for all”

(I Tim. ii. 6). He offered up Himself (Heb. vii. 27; ix. 14). We therefore glory in the fact that while Christ exhausted all the meaning of the sacrifices and offerings in His own once-offered sacrifice, He did something infinitely more—He became not only Substitute and Sacrifice, but Surety, and this identification with Himself is our great pledge of life: “Because I live, ye shall live also.”

Reuben’s sons, though slain as promised, would not have brought Benjamin back, or satisfied the father’s heart for the loss of his son. Judah’s suretyship did not offer to forfeit something if Benjamin were lost. Judah identified Benjamin with himself. If Benjamin stayed, he stayed, and if Judah returned, Benjamin would return with him. The offering of Christ transcends all sacrifices ever offered in many ways, but in this one in particular—He *was raised again from the dead*. That feature belongs to His position as Surety: “He was raised again because of our justifying” (Rom. iv. 25). As the risen One, He became “the firstfruits of them that slept”. The thought of the Surety is also seen in I Thess. iv. 14: “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him.”

As our Surety He lives now at the right hand of God. As our Surety He is yet to be manifested as “our life” and we are to be manifested “with Him” in glory. As our Surety He will present us holy and without blemish.

May this blessed fullness of Christ satisfy each heart, as it satisfies the Father.

## The Epistle to the Romans.

### #17. Righteousness---provided and manifested (iii. 24, 25). pp. 22 - 26

When speaking of the “freeness” of the grace of justification as presented in the gospel, we used such expressions as “gratuitous”, and “without a cause”. Having realized the blessed fact that no “cause” for this act of God exists in ourselves, we are able to contemplate that this “causeless” grace not only finds its first great efficient cause in the heart of God Himself, but also finds its meritorious cause, if we may be allowed the expression, in the sacrificial death of Christ.

The sacrificial death of Christ is twofold. It is a redemption, and it is a propitiation, or atonement. While both are accomplished by the one offering of Calvary, they are very different in their meaning, purpose, and results.

*Apolutrosis* is, both etymologically and doctrinally, deliverance of a captive by payment of a price or ransom. In the N.T. this word is used exclusively by Paul and Luke. The passages using it are as follows, and their inter-relation will provide a profitable study, which, however, we here only touch upon before passing on.

#### Apolutrosis in the Epistles.

- A | Rom. iii. 5. Remissions of sins that are past.  
Rom. viii. 23. Resurrection.
- B | I Cor. i. 30. Wisdom . . . redemption.
- C | Eph. i. 7. Forgiveness. Present.  
Eph. i. 14. Inheritance. Future.  
Eph. iv. 30. Conduct. Present influenced by future.
- B | Col. i. 14. Wisdom (i.9; ii. 3, 8, 23) . . . redemption.
- A | Heb. ix. 15. Redemption of transgressions under first covenant.  
Heb. xi. 35. Resurrection.

The standpoints of Romans and Hebrews are clearly indicated. Writing to Hebrews, the apostle speaks of transgressions against the first covenant, whereas when writing to the Romans he speaks of the remission of sins of the past. Rom. viii. 23, read in conjunction with Heb. xi. 35 places the future deliverance, issuing in resurrection and sonship, over against the temporal deliverance from present suffering, showing that the “better resurrection” is comparable with the “redemption of the body”. Both I Corinthians and Colossians find in the wisdom of the world something that is antagonistic to the cross of Christ, and when read together these passages illuminate one another. In a future series we hope to show that the central feature of Colossians is the cross of Christ in its relation to the five great antagonizing “isms” specified in Col. ii. The three passages in Ephesians speak for themselves.

This redemption that is in Christ Jesus sets forth one aspect of His sacrificial work; the other, its complement, is expressed in the word propitiation (*hilasterion*).

### **The mercy-seat.**

There are two commonly-received interpretations of this word: 1. the mercy-seat (Heb. ix. 5; Exod. xxv. 18, 19; Lev. xvi. 2, &c.) and 2. propitiation (Rom. iii. 25). It is evident from the double usage of the word in Romans and Hebrews that we have type (mercy-seat) and anti-type (propitiation) clearly set forth.

A word or two with regard to the way the word *hilasterion* is used in the LXX may be helpful. In some cases *hilasterion* stands alone; in others it is followed by *epithema* or “covering”, e.g., Exod. xxv. 17: “And thou shalt make a propitiatory, a lid of pure gold.” This is an example of *hilasterion* being followed by *epithema*. In Lev. xvi. 2: “Before the propitiatory, which is upon the ark of the testimony”, *hilasterion* is not followed by *epithema*, but by an explanatory clause, “which is upon the ark”. In the few places where the word “propitiatory” stands alone, the context speaks of the ark, the cherubim or something to do with the tabernacle, temple, or their furniture. Moses, Ezekiel and Amos are the only users of this word in the Greek O.T. It does not mean a propitiatory victim, or offering so much as the golden mercy-seat upon which the atoning blood was sprinkled.

The Hebrew equivalent of *hilasterion* in the twenty-one occurrences of the word in the law of Moses is always *kapporeth*, the mercy-seat. There are only two occurrences of the word in the N.T., viz., Rom. iii. 25, and Heb. ix. 5, and as Heb. ix. 5 most certainly adheres to the O.T. usage of the word, the meaning of Rom. iii. 25 must be regarded as the same. We have gone to this length because a great number of expositors have said that while it is true that the Septuagint usage leads us to the one translation—“mercy-seat”, we need not therefore assume that Paul was bound to follow that usage. This, however, is neither good argument nor sound exegesis.

### **Righteousness---provided and manifested.**

As we have seen by structure given in Volume XVIII, page 85, righteousness is to the fore, and it is viewed from two angles.

1. The provision of a righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ, which is “through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”
2. The declaration of God’s own righteousness, while He thus graciously deals with past and present sins, which is set forth by the “propitiatory”.

The two aspects come together in the words, “That He might be *just and the Justifier*”.

Man has “come short”; there is none righteous among men, whether Jew or Gentile, but the mercy-seat covered the unbroken tables of stone, the unaltered covenant and testimony, so that where the atoning blood was sprinkled God was free to become “the justifier of the ungodly” while Himself remaining “just” in all His ways.

This propitiatory has been “set forth” by God. This expression has been taken to mean “publicly exhibited to the world”, and this imported meaning has then been turned against the LXX rendering, “mercy-seat”, by raising the question: Was the *mercy-seat* exhibited to the view of those for whom atonement was made? This would be a legitimate argument IF *protithemi* meant “exhibit in public”. It occurs but three times in the N.T., namely, in the passage in question (Rom. iii. 25) and in the two following passages:--

“I *purpose* to come unto you” (Rom. i. 13).  
 “His good pleasure, which He hath *purposed* in Himself” (Eph. i. 9).

These give the scriptural meaning of the word. God “purposed” or set before Himself in His great plan of the ages, the propitiation. He set it forth in the typical mercy-seat, and it was before Him when He passed over the sins of men before Christ actually came to the earth. Its presence in His purpose justified all His ways with sinful men. The Revisers are nearer the truth when they suggest in the margin of Rom. iii. 25, “foreordained”, than are those who would make the word mean “publicly exhibited”.

“Through faith in His blood.” As the words stand in the English it is natural to read them together as though the clause “in His blood” was dependant upon “through faith”. Dr. Liddon suggests, with every show of truth, that both expressions are to be regarded as adverbial clauses added to *hilasterion*, “the propitiatory”. “Through faith” is the means of subjective appropriation of the atonement; “in His blood” is the objective medium of its exhibition. Thus:--

The Propitiation	\	Received through faith— <i>Subjective</i> .
	/	Exhibited by the shed blood— <i>Objective</i> .

This seems to be nearer the truth than that suggested by the expression “through faith in His blood”.

The *initial* cause of this wondrous gift of righteousness is found in the unmerited grace of God, and is expressed in the *dorean*, the free gift (24). The *mediating* or *meritorious* cause is found in the *apolutrosis*, the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (24). The *receptive* cause is seen to be “through faith” in Christ as the propitiatory (25). The *righteous* cause, that makes the propitiation what it is, is found “in His blood” (25), for without the shed blood there could be neither justification nor remission. These all converge in the one *ultimate* cause, viz., the declaration of the righteousness of God Himself. It is worth while restating this so that it may be realized.

1. The free gift	\	/	The declaration
2. The redemption	\	unto ( <i>eis</i> )	of
3. The faith	/	\	God’s own
4. The blood	/	\	righteousness.

The essential point is “that *He* might be just”, for if that could ever be questioned, of what use would “the righteousness of God by faith” be to us?

While there are several outstanding examples of severe judgment upon sinful men in the O.T., such as the flood, and the destruction of Sodom, the general character of Gentile times is indicated in Acts xvii. 30:--

“At the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.”

“The forbearance of God” in passing over sins of the past must ever be interpreted in the light of His purpose concerning the atoning sacrifice of Christ. That justifies all His dealings with sinful men. Apart from that foreseen offering it appears doubtful whether a holy God would have been justified in continuing to provide for the life and sustenance of guilty men. Nations who never heard of Christ received the bounteous gifts of providence only because He was the coming One. Nothing but the fact of Christ’s death saves the ungodly from immediate judgment. Quite apart from faith or knowledge, all creation owes all that it enjoys to the sacrifice of Christ.

A slight variation in the wording of the expression “to declare” in verses 25 and 26 calls for a moment’s attention.

Verse 25 has *eis endeixin*, unto an exhibiting.

Verse 26 has *pros endeixin*, towards an exhibiting.

The difference in the two expressions is that *eis* looks to the ultimate goal, while *pros* is more immediately concerned with the manifestation of God’s righteousness “at this time”. Seeing that it was the intention of God that in the provision of gospel righteousness His own personal righteousness should not only be understood but publicly exhibited, let us who speak in His name ever maintain this truth.

God could, so to speak, have saved men without the agony and death of Christ, but His righteousness would have been impaired, which is impossible. Love provided the ransom, but righteousness saw to it that the ransom was paid—not only that a righteousness might be provided for the guilty sinner, but

“That He might be JUST and the JUSTIFIER of him that is of the faith of Jesus”  
(Rom. iii.26).

**#18. “That no flesh should boast in His presence.” (iii. 27, 28).  
pp. 57 - 60**

We now come to the conclusion of this important section (Rom. iii. 21-28).

“Where then is boasting? It is shut out. Through what law? of works? Nay, but by the law of faith. For we reckon that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law” (Rom. iii. 27, 28).

The question of the apostle, “Where then is boasting?” reveals the innate tendency of the human heart. Salvation has been so planned that no man, however ingenious, will be able to find a foothold for boasting except in the Lord. “Christ crucified”, the foolishness of God, the offence of the cross, the centre of the very gospel, all was so arranged by God that “no flesh should boast in His presence” (I Cor. i. 29). Christ is set forth as the one sufficient and only Saviour, Redeemer and Sanctifier. “But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (I Cor. i. 30). Not only that no flesh should boast, but that “he that boasteth, let him boast in the Lord” (I Cor. i. 31). Man can be nothing more than the unworthy recipient of God’s unspeakable Gift.

In I Corinthians boasting in human wisdom is the great evil that is cut down:--

“And again, the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man boast in men” (I Cor. iii. 18-23).

“For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou boast, as if thou hadst not received it?” (I Cor. iv. 7).

If trust in the wisdom of the flesh was the snare at Corinth, trust in external works of the flesh was the snare at Galatia.

“They desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh. But let it not be that I should boast, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world” (Gal. vi. 13, 14).

Eph. ii. declares that salvation is by grace to prevent man from boasting:--

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

“It is the gift of God”.—Rom. iii. declares that justification is gratuitous, it is a gift—therefore boasting is excluded. I Cor. iv. 7 states that all things we possess are gifts, therefore boasting is absurd. Ephesians reveals that the whole scheme of salvation is a gift, purposely arranged that no man should boast. The only boasting that is allowable is “in Christ Jesus” (Phil. iii. 3). The man who said this declared that if any man had ground of confidence in the flesh, he had more, but he proceeds to demolish all hope that

the works of the flesh or law could provide anything of which man could boast before God. Paul would rather leave his all upon a refuse heap that he may be found in Christ, not having that righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.

If anyone could ever be justified by works, that one would have a ground of boasting (Rom. iv. 2), but no one ever has or ever will. In Rom. iii. 27, 28 Paul has in mind the twofold boast of the Jew.

“A Jew . . . . and makest thy boast in God” (Rom. ii. 17).

“Thou makest thy boast in law” (Rom. ii. 23).

“In God” and “in law” Rom. iii. 27-30 proceeds to shatter both these grounds of boasting. The law is dealt with in verse 27 (“By what law?”) and the boast in God in verse 29 (“Is He the God of the Jews only?”).

The section under our immediate notice is the one dealing with this boast in the law, which it was the apostle’s aim ruthlessly to shatter. The Jew “rested in the law”, he was “instructed out of the law”, he had “a form of knowledge and of the truth of the law”, he made “a boast of the law” (Rom. ii. 17, 18, 20 and 23), but what he could not do was to “keep the law”. “Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which *doeth* those things shall live by them” (Rom. x. 5). All his pride of race, of circumcision, of law, was vain and empty before the one great fact that “what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Rom. iii. 19).

“By what law?” asks the apostle. “Of works?”, and his answer is: “Nay, but by the law of faith”. “The law of faith” may seem at first strange, owing to the close attention that has been given to the law of Moses, or of conscience. Faith, however, though it be totally distinct from the law of Moses, of conscience, or of works, is not lawless. Nothing that comes from God can be apart from law. Sun, moon, and stars are under law. All the activities of life are governed by law. Consequently we must be prepared to find over against the “law of works” the “law of faith”, over against the “law of sin and death” the “law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus” (Rom. viii. 2). The setting aside of the law as a means of attaining righteousness cast no slur upon the law itself—that still remained holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good (Rom. vii. 12).

The weakness of the law was in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3). It was not intended to be a means either of “life” or “righteousness” (Gal. ii. 21; iii. 21), but a pedagogue until the advent of Christ. The dispensation of law was a ministry of condemnation and death (II Cor. iii.), and the spectacle of a man boasting in that which condemned him, which revealed his exceeding sinfulness, which demanded of him an obedience which he could never render, is pitiable in the extreme.

The suggestion made by some that the gospel was a kind of mitigated law, providing an easier code, bringing the possibility of salvation nearer to human attainment, is grossly untrue. Instead of saying: “*perfect* obedience” to the law is not necessary, we must say:

“no degree of obedience to law is necessary”; all such grounds of acceptance are excluded. Law is as exclusive of faith as a means of righteousness as works are of grace; they cannot exist together. The obedience of faith, the good works that come as a result of salvation, are of course quite another thing. The very passages that most resolutely rule out “works” as a means of salvation, urge them as an evidence and a fruit (Eph. ii. 8-10; Titus iii. 5-8).

The word “conclude” in Rom. iii. 28 is a rendering of *logizomai*, which comes in Rom. iv. 3, 4, 5 and 6, variously translated “reckon”, “count”, and “impute”. It is a logical reckoning. It is patent to all who have eyes to see, that if “a man is justified by faith apart from deeds of law”, then he has no ground of boasting in himself. All he can do is to “boast in the Lord”. With the words “a righteousness of God *apart from law*” (verse 21) the section opened, and with the words “justified by faith *apart from law*” (verse 28) it closes. Its insistence is upon faith as opposed to law, upon grace as opposed to works, upon gift as opposed to wages. May we who by nature had sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. iii. 23) know what it is to be able to “boast in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. v. 2).

“Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches, but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me” (Jer. ix. 23, 24).

**#19. An explanation of the expression “imputed for”  
(iii. 30 - iv. 25).  
pp. 88 – 92**

As such epistles as that to the Romans or to the Galatians are read, it is impressed upon the reader how strong is the desire of the flesh to find some ground of boasting, some little thing to do or to endure to make salvation secure and justification complete. The apostle has already stripped human nature of its last rags of self-made righteousness, “all the world” of “Jew and Gentile” have had their mouths stopped, and all are brought in guilty before God. Redemption by the blood of Christ, and free unmerited grace, has been revealed as the only ground of acceptance with God. Boasting, law, and works have all been excluded, and the conclusion of the matter expressed in the words of Rom. iii. 28: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”

This leads the apostle to the question: “Is He the God of the Jews only? Is He not also of the Gentiles?” This can be answered in but one way: “Yes, of the Gentiles also; seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by (*ek*) faith, and the uncircumcision through (*dia*) faith” (Rom. iii. 29, 30). Exactly what distinction the apostle intended by *ek* and *dia* may be difficult to decide. Not a few commentators bluntly say that there is no difference, but this hardly accords with the scrupulous choice of language that we have found marks the Scripture of truth. Calvin suggests a shade of

irony: “This is the grand difference: the Jew is saved *ex fide*, the Gentile *per fidem!*” Possibly the intention of the apostle was to direct the Jew away from his works, and his rites, to the one great source of his justification, *ek pisteos*, out of faith, while the Gentile, who had no background of law and tradition, was directed rather to the faith as the instrument of his justification, *dia tes pisteos*, “through the faith”, the article being added to give the sense, “through the *self-same* faith” as that of the Jew.

The law was by no means “made void” through faith. It was rather established, for, whether we look upon “the law” as the whole teaching of the O.T. or of the Mosaic covenant, or limit it to the one rite of circumcision, it is evident that the types, shadows, and living examples set forth in the law, pointed forward to the work of the Lord Jesus as the one and only way of escape and acceptance. Prejudice, however, dies hard, and so the apostle leaves the general references to Jew and Gentile and Jewish failure (i. 18 - iii. 19), and to the typical teaching of the law (iii. 21-26), and takes up the case of Abraham.

Bishop Lightfoot shows that Gen. xv. 6 was a standing feature of contention in the Jewish schools. Philo mentions it at least ten times, and in I Macc. ii. 52 we read: “Was not Abraham found faithful in temptations, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness?” Here we see that Gen. xv. 6 and Gen. xxii. 9, 10 are not kept distinct as they are by Paul in Rom. iv. and by James in Jas. ii. The object, too, of Mattathias in Macc. ii. 64 is the upholding of the law: “Wherefore, ye my sons, be valiant, and shew yourselves men in behalf of the law, for by it ye shall obtain glory.”

Paul, as a Pharisee and student of Gamaliel, and one who had been “an exceeding zealot for the traditions of his fathers”, knew exactly the difficulties that were in the mind of his kinsmen, and knew that to deal effectively with the case of Abraham was to deal with the very centre of the argument. To enlighten the minds of his bigoted countrymen on the true meaning of circumcision would be to rob them of their last ground of boasting. The whole of chapter iv. is taken up with the lesson drawn from Abraham’s faith, but before we give either the structure of the chapter, or deal with the subject-matter, we believe a word or two upon the words “imputed” and “imputed for” will be of service in helping us to appreciate the true relation of faith and righteousness, which, of course, is the main theme of the chapter.

### **“Imputed” and “Imputed for”.**

One word, occurring eleven times in this chapter, is so important that it will warrant a separate investigation before proceeding further. *Logizomai* is translated in Rom. iv. as follows:--

- “It was *counted* unto him for righteousness” (3).
- “Reward is not *reckoned* of grace, but of debt” (4).
- “His faith is *counted* for righteousness” (5).
- “To whom God *imputeth* righteousness without works” (6).
- “To whom the Lord will not *impute* sin” (8).
- “Faith was *reckoned* to Abraham for righteousness” (9).
- “How was it *reckoned?*” (10).

“That righteousness might be *imputed* unto them” (11).

“It was *imputed* unto him for righteousness” (22).

“It was *imputed* to him” (23).

“To whom it shall be *imputed*, if we believe” (24).

“Counted”, “reckoned” and “imputed” are all translations of the one word *logizomai*, and between them give a fair and full rendering of its meaning. This is not all, however, for these references divide themselves into two sets, viz., those which speak of *imputing* something, and those which speak of *imputing* for, imputing one thing for another. The two expressions are *logizomai* and *logizomai . . . eis*. We must look at this list again, therefore, to learn the difference intended.

Imputation in its prime meaning is found in Rom. iv. 6, 8, 10, 11, 23 and 24. In these passages one thing is not imputed for another: wages, righteousness and sin are actualities.

*Imputed for* is found in iv. 3, 5 & 22, and in these passages “faith” is imputed *for* righteousness. Rom. ii. 26 supplies us with a use of the expression that must be included: “Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be *counted for* circumcision.” While we must give full value to faith, we must not go to the extreme of making it, in effect, another work—if we do, we make void the gospel. We are justified gratuitously, “not of works”. Faith is not a work. True, it leads to works, but that is another matter.

Before we give a modern illustration of the meaning of “reckon for”, it will help us to review the usage of the Hebrew equivalents for both expressions:--

*Logizomai* is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *chasab*.

*Logizomai eis* is the equivalent of *Chasab V*.

Now *chasab* means to reckon or to impute to one an actual possession. This can be tested in such passages as II Sam. xix. 19, 20: “Let not my Lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely . . . . I have sinned.” Further references are Psa. xxxii. 2, Lev. vii. 18, and Lev. xvii. 4. *Logizomai* is used in this same way in the N.T.:--

“Let it not be imputed to them” (II Tim. iv. 16).

“Not imputing their trespasses unto them” (II Cor. v. 19).

When the Hebrew uses the equivalent for *logizomai eis* (“to reckon for”), the thing reckoned is put in the accusative case, and the thing *for which* it is reckoned is put in the dative with the *l'* before it: “Thou dost count me *for* an enemy” (Job xiii. 24). Sometimes the thing for which the subject is counted is preceded by the particle *ki* (“as”): “He counts me *as* His enemy” (Job xix. 11). The apostle, therefore, in Rom. iv., is using an expression in common use, and the identical phrase is found in Gen. xx. 6: “And He (God) counted it to him as righteousness.”

### A modern illustration.

Many of our readers will remember the days when the standard coin of the realm was the golden sovereign. It would not have been a serious matter if one had accidentally dropped a sovereign into the fire, for the resulting piece of gold would still have been worth 20s.. We should not have used *logizomai eis* when speaking of this coin. We should not have said: "This golden sovereign is *reckoned for* 20s. worth", for it actually was worth 20s., whatever happened to it. It is quite different with the present paper money. To-day we have a *LI* note. Its purchasing value is exactly the same as would be that of a golden sovereign. If two people went into a shop and each purchased *LI* worth of goods, both parcels would be of precisely the same value, whether paid for with a paper note or a golden sovereign. It would be very unwise, however, to conclude that the *LI* note was *actually* of the same value as the gold. Some have found this to be true to their cost. We have heard of one poor woman who accidentally screwed up a *LI* note with waster paper and threw it into the fire: sadly enough its *intrinsic worth* was soon discovered to be only that of *waste paper*. It produced no more heat, it left no more valuable ash; it was only "reckoned for" one pound. We must not, on the other hand, think that the value of the *LI* note is fictional. Behind that valueless piece of paper lie all the resources and power of the British Empire. So with faith. Faith itself is *not* righteousness, but faith is *reckoned for* righteousness. The real righteousness is found in the Lord. The true merit is found in the "faith of Christ", and because of His faith, my faith may be reckoned for righteousness. Did His faith and righteousness not exist, my faith would have no value, just as the paper money has no value when a country or government collapses.

We remember in August, 1914, meeting a man on the continent, who, though possessed of *L5* notes, was nevertheless penniless, simply because the outbreak of war had rendered all paper money valueless for the time being. Had the same man possessed golden sovereigns, he would have found no difficulty in getting them accepted. We would not, however, by this somewhat clumsy illustration give a wrong impression. There is no room for the slightest doubt as to the reality of that righteousness that gives to faith its value.

The word "for" in "counted for" is, strictly speaking, "unto". Just as in i. 16 the power of God is said to be "*unto* salvation", and in x. 10, man, with the heart "believeth *unto* righteousness", so this "righteousness of God" is "by faith of Jesus Christ *unto* all . . . . that believe". It is no fiction; it is a very blessed fact. Righteousness is actually *imputed*, but faith is imputed *for* or *unto* righteousness.

We have departed a little from our usual method, and spent a longer time upon this illustration than space will generally permit, but we felt that the distinction was important enough to warrant it. Faith is precious, it is blessed, it is the one thing necessary to please God. At the same time let us not magnify it into a procuring cause, or a meritorious work. There, in the great Bank of Heaven, is the genuine gold of perfect righteousness, wrought by another on our behalf, that alone makes our faith of any value.

With this introduction we may approach the teaching of Rom. iv.



Conybeare and Howson go so far as to translate the passage: “What then can we say that our father Abraham gained by the fleshly ordinance?” The apostle’s argument is as follows:--

“If Abraham were justified by works, boasting is not excluded in his case. But he has no such ground of boasting before God, for the Scripture tells us that Abraham *believed* God, and this faith of his was *counted for* righteousness.”

“Now if a man earn his pay by his work, it is not *reckoned to him* as a favour, but it is paid him as a debt; but if he earns nothing by his work, but puts faith in Him Who justifies the ungodly, then his faith is *reckoned to him for* righteousness.”

“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

### **The significance of Gen. xv. 6.**

We must now give attention to the actual passage that forms the basis of the apostle’s argument, viz., Gen. xv. 6. At the very outset we are confronted with a problem. Abraham believed God before the act recorded in Gen. xv. Heb. xi. 8 is quite clear as to that, saying: “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out unto a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” Further, Paul brings Gen. xv. and xii. together in Gal. iii. 6 and 8 without any apparent feeling of difficulty in the matter: “And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached before the gospel to Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.” Justification by faith, therefore, is involved at the very outset of God’s promises to Abraham, and in Abraham’s faith in God.

The choice of Gen. xv. as the place in which to record the imputation of righteousness to Abraham seems to be the result of the following facts, all of which have a distinct bearing upon the truth at stake in Rom. iii. and iv. Abraham had come to an end of *himself*—“I go childless” (Gen. xv. 2). Abraham was told by God, that in spite of apparent impossibility he should nevertheless have a son: “He that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir” (Gen. xv. 4). Abraham was then told to look toward heaven, and see whether he was able to number the stars; which command was followed by the promise: “So shall thy seed be” (Gen. xv. 5). Then comes the statement: “And he believed in the Lord, and He counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. xv. 6).

### **The special feature of Abraham’s faith.**

That this feature of Abraham’s faith is the underlying reason for the mention of his justification in Gen. xv. 6, Rom. iv. 17-25 gives abundant proof. This passage, as will be seen by the structure, is the sequel and expansion of Rom. iv. 1-8, the passage under review. Its one great point is the fact that, although Abraham and Sarah were “dead” as far as the natural expectation of parenthood was concerned, nevertheless Abraham “staggered not at the promise through unbelief”. What God said Abraham believed, and it revealed the fact that the God Whose Word he trusted was to him the “God Who quickeneth the dead” (Rom. iv. 17).

To make the matter quite certain, leaving no room for doubt, the apostle clinches the argument by saying:--

“Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, IF WE BELIEVE ON HIM THAT RAISED UP JESUS OUR LORD FROM THE DEAD” (Rom. iv. 23, 24).

The insistence here is upon resurrection. The birth of Isaac was the manifestation of resurrection power, for his parents were “as good as dead”; “Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable” (Heb. xi. 12). And at the offering of Isaac, this same element of faith is prominent: “Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; *from whence also he received him in a figure*” (Heb. xi. 19).

While, therefore, justification is “by His blood”, it becomes ours by faith in the God of resurrection. This is emphasized in the last verse of Rom. iv.: “Who was delivered on account of our offences, and was raised again on account of our justification.” It is not the truth to say: “He was raised again *for* our justification”, for (*dia*) followed by the accusative, meaning “on account of”. The delivering up of Christ by the Father was the demonstration of our guilt to all, for had no guilt been ours, no death would have been His. In like manner the resurrection of Christ was the demonstration before men and angels of the acquittal of all His people. The debt was paid by His death. The acquittal was received in resurrection, and it is for this reason that Gen. xv. 6, and not Gen. xii. 3 (or elsewhere), is the place where Abraham’s justification is revealed. He most implicitly believed in God Who quickens the dead when he believed the promise of a literal seed to himself.

We shall have to give these closing verses of Rom. iv. further attention, but for the moment we must leave them and come back to Rom. iv. 1-8.

### **The testimony of David.**

With the introduction of David, the apostle brings forward the third division of the O.T. It must be remembered that the Hebrew Scriptures are divided into three great sections, viz., the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke xxiv. 44). The Law and the Prophets have borne their witness (Rom. iii. 21), as seen in the case of Abraham and Habakkuk (Rom. iv. 1-8; i. 17). The quotation from David’s words now brings the third and last witness to the gratuitous nature of justification.

David’s testimony is particularly useful because of the precision of his language. He describes the blessedness of the man to whom God *imputeth righteousness* without works, by saying: “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will *not impute sin*” (Rom. iv. 8). Here we have balancing terms. To impute sin is to lay sin to the charge of any one, and to treat him as a sinner. To impute righteousness must in the same way set righteousness to one’s account, and treat one as being righteous. True, the sin is our own, and the righteousness was another’s, but the one is no more a pious fiction than the other. Just as surely as the unsaved man is really a sinner, so the accepted believer is really

righteous in Christ. Whether we shall ever disentangle the threads and be able to say just how far “imputed righteousness” becomes “imparted righteousness”, or where the legal reckoning blends with personal outworking, we cannot say, but let us not lose the joy of our salvation.

Another item of equal importance is brought out by the balance of thought characteristic of Hebrew poets, supplemented by Paul’s introduction.

*Paul’s introduction.*—David describes the blessedness of the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness without works*.

*David’s description.*—David does not use the expression “impute righteousness” or “faith is reckoned for righteousness”, but uses two expressions, the one positive: “iniquities forgiven”, “sins covered”, the other negative: “to whom the Lord will not impute sin.”

It is evident from the apostle’s reasoning that to speak of enjoying the forgiveness of sin, and the non-imputation of sin, is another way of referring to the imputation of righteousness. Some have assumed that a man could be forgiven, and so not be under the imputation of sin, yet not be righteous. This is a misconception. The mind of God on this matter is clearly seen in II Cor. v. 19-21:--

“God was in Christ, reconciling a world unto Himself, *not imputing* their trespasses unto them . . . . that we might be made *the righteousness* of God in Him.”

Again, the twofold reference to sin in the quotation from the Psalm is helpful: “Whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered.” The law is twofold—command and prohibition. Sins are twofold—commission and omission. It follows, therefore, that if sin cannot be imputed to a man, he has neither omitted one commandment, nor committed one breach of the law, so that instead of the non-imputation of sin leaving him neutral, it really indicates that he is righteous. A man is either a sinner or righteous; either right or wrong. There is no outside ground. Consequently forgiveness of sins is but the accompaniment of the imputation of righteousness.

The fact that no middle ground exist between sinnership and righteousness is further evidenced by the strong word “ungodly” in verse 5. Paul had been speaking of Abraham, the father of Israel and of the faith, a man whose name was held in peculiar reverence by his people. Paul was about to refer to David, another name especially beloved among Israel, yet Paul does not scruple to use the word ungodly, nor feel under any necessity to modify its application: “To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

Ungodliness and unrighteousness are brought together in Rom. i. 18. The ungodly and the righteous are brought together in Rom. v. 6, 7. There is no difference—all have sinned and come short (Rom. iii. 22, 23). There is no difference – for the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon Him (Rom. x. 12). All such believe unto righteousness (Rom. x. 10), and that belief is vitally connected with the fact that God hath raised Him

(Christ) from the dead (Rom. x. 9; iv. 24). The two classes—sinners and righteous, are seen in the light of resurrection to be the dead and the living, and to anticipate the teaching of Rom. v.—in Adam or in Christ.

While, therefore, the details may well exhaust the mind of the ablest, the issues are simple. Let us keep things in their proper place, put off the old, put on the new, and walk worthily.

“Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous” (I John iii. 7).

**#21. Circumcision, or the repudiation of the flesh.  
(iii. 30 - iv. 25).  
pp. 155 – 160**

However strange and even repulsive the rite of circumcision may appear to us, there is no doubt that to the Jew it ranked as of the highest importance. It conferred a sense of superiority and dignity that we are convinced was utterly foreign to its intention. Seeing that so much that is vital to our peace is connected with this typical rite, we must not allow ourselves to pass the subject by because it may have somewhat peculiar features.

With the complete revelation of truth in our hands, we are possessed of the inspired comment upon circumcision which will help us in dealing with Rom. iv. This comment is found in Phil. iii. 3, and is immediately followed by a context parallel to that of Rom. iv.:--

We are the circumcision { / which worship God in Spirit,  
                                  { and boast in Christ Jesus,  
                                  \ and have no confidence in the flesh.

These three features are inherent in the type of circumcision. When writing to the Romans, the apostle takes up the case of Abraham, and cites the testimony of David because of the number of Jewish members in the church at Rome. Writing to the Philippians, however, he cites neither Abraham, David, nor O.T. Scripture, but instead gives his own case as an example:--

“If any other man thinketh that he has ground of confidence in the flesh, I more.

1. Circumcised the eighth day.
2. Of the stock of Israel.
3. Of the tribe of Benjamin.
4. An Hebrew of the Hebrews.
5. As to the law, a Pharisee.
6. As to zeal, a persecutor of the church.
7. As to the righteousness of the law, blameless.

But what was gain to me, that I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss because of the super-eminence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for

whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him; not having my own righteousness of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil. iii. 4-9).

This quotation from Philippians presents a very comprehensive view of true spiritual circumcision, and the utter repudiation of the flesh so far as righteousness is concerned. The law referred to here is the law of Moses as a means of attaining righteousness.

The epistle to the Colossians supplements this passage by giving another point of view, showing once again the utter repudiation of the flesh, and setting aside all the ceremonial observances that militated against “worshipping”.

“Ye are complete in Him . . . . in Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ . . . . ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead to your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses: blotting out the handwriting of the decrees that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross . . . . Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Col. ii. 10-17).

Eph. ii., with its references to being dead to sins, to circumcision in the flesh, and to the breaking down of the middle wall of partition, should also be read.

We must not omit here a reference to the epistle to the Galatians, for in that epistle the Jewish fortress of circumcision is carried by storm. Titus, who was not compelled to be circumcised, though present at the Jerusalem conference, is cited as a test case (Gal. ii. 3). Peter’s defection was due to his fear of them which were of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 12). Paul now solemnly testifies:--

“Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye submit to circumcision (pres. subj.—not the state of being already circumcised, for this would include Paul, but of submitting to circumcision after having heard the gospel) Christ will profit you nothing. And I repeat my testimony to every man who submitteth to circumcision, that he is debtor to do the whole law” (Gal. v. 2, 3).

That this question of circumcision had a direct bearing upon the matter of justification by faith is shewn by the next verse:--

“Ye are undone from Christ whosoever ye be, who are seeking justification by law; ye are fallen from grace . . . . for in Christ neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but faith working by love” (Gal. v. 4-6). Or as Gal. vi. 15 has it, “But a new creation”.

Circumcision is connected in its abuse and misrepresentation with “a fair show in the flesh” and “boasting in the flesh” (Gal. vi. 12, 13), whereas, as Phil. iii. most definitely states, it rightfully indicates no confidence in the flesh and, according to Col. ii., repudiates the body of the flesh. The spiritual circumcision of Christ took place at the

cross, and was attested and sealed at His glorious resurrection. The knowledge of Christ after the flesh is opposed to a new creation in II Cor. v. 16, 17, and to a perfect righteousness of God in Him (verse 21).

### **The true meaning of circumcision.**

With this added light we return to Rom. iv. to learn the true meaning of circumcision there.

It must have come as a startling revelation to the prejudiced Jew that Abraham was justified by faith while he was, we may say, a Gentile. “How was it then reckoned unto him? . . . . not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision” (Rom. iv. 10). The absurdity of attempting to exclude the believing uncircumcised Gentile from the full benefits of faith in Christ becomes apparent immediately this fact is remembered. Circumcision was but an external “sign” and “seal” of the righteousness of faith which he had being yet uncircumcised.

This, argues the apostle, enables us to see that Abraham can be the spiritual father of all them that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised: “That righteousness might be imputed unto them also.” Abraham is not only the father of the circumcision by virtue of lineal descent, but “the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised”. To the same effect are the words of the Lord in John: “They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham” (John viii. 39). John the Baptist taught the same truth: “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father” (Matt. iii. 8, 9).

We shall meet the same argument in Rom. ix. 6-8 where the apostle states: “They are not all Israel, which are of Israel, neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children, but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.”

Whether it be in the Gospels or the Epistles, written before or after Acts xxviii., this truth remains constant—true circumcision means the utter repudiation of the flesh.

### **Circumcision and Gen. xv. 6.**

The meaning of this rite becomes more striking when we see how the apostle has linked it with Gen. xv. 6, and balanced it with Rom. iv. 19. Let us seek this lesson.

The complaint of Abraham in Gen. xv. 2 is that he is childless and without an heir. The promise of God is that Abraham shall have a son, and in order that we may be impressed with the physical side of this promise, God says: “This shall not be thine heir (referring presumably to Eliezer); but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels

shall be thine heir” (verse 4). This somewhat strange term is used of both parents, as may be seen by referring to Gen. xxv. 23 and Ruth i. 11. The words were repeated by the Lord when He made His covenant with David: “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom” (II Sam. vii. 12).

The more the fact is faced that Isaac, the promised seed was to be in reality the son of Abraham, the more we shall realize the meaning of circumcision. In Gen. xvii. the covenant of circumcision is introduced (verses 10-14), and this is followed immediately by the promise that Sarah should bear Abraham a son:--

“Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac (that is, *laughter*)” (Gen. xvii. 17-19).

This was the laugh of faith, for Rom. iv. says of Abraham that,

“Without being weakened in faith (for he considered not his own body, now as good as dead—he being about an hundred years old—and the deadness of Sarah’s womb) looking unto the promise of God, he wavered not through unbelief” (Rom. iv. 19, 20).

Abraham’s age—“being about an hundred years old”—fixes this passage in relation to Gen. xvii., where Abraham went through the rite of circumcision. He was not only very conscious that his own body was “as good as dead”, but we realize that circumcision set that fact forth. If Isaac was to be born, he must be a child of promise and not of the flesh—and this he was.

Rightly understood, therefore, circumcision to the Israelite should have been a witness to the deadness and repudiation of the flesh, and the necessity for complete trust in the Lord. Instead, the very rite that symbolized this was distorted into meaning the very opposite, and became a ground of false boasting and of “a fair shew in the flesh”.

We cannot speak more plainly here. We believe all will see the lesson intended by this close association of circumcision, birth, resurrection, and promise, as over against the power and will of the flesh, law and works.

When Jacob’s name was changed to Israel, it was accompanied by the shrinking of the sinew of his thigh. Triumphant Israel ever afterwards halted upon his thigh, and his descendants always avoided “the sinew that shrank” in their diet (Gen. xxxii. 32). Just as Israel’s spiritual triumph was accompanied by the touching of the hollow of his thigh, so the changing of Abraham’s name took place at the very time that circumcision—the repudiation of the flesh—was introduced (Gen. xvii.).

Moreover, there is a parallel between Gen. xv. and xvii. After God had made the promise to Abraham, and Abraham had believed, the Lord confirmed the promise by passing between the divided carcasses of the sacrifices. During this time Abraham was *in a deep sleep*, plainly indicating that he had nothing to do or promise for himself. So,

upon the change of his name and establishing of the covenant (Gen. xvii. 1-8), there is brought in the sign and the seal of the covenant of faith, in which is set forth in typical rite the utter setting aside of the flesh.

God's blessing of gratuitous justification is limited to the true circumcision—those who boast in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Ignorance of this truth led Israel to go about to establish their own righteousness, and not to submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. *“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”* (Rom. x. 4).

# Satan and the Church of the Mystery.

## #1. pp. 129 - 135

In Eph. ii. 2 the apostle gives Satan a new title: "The prince of the authority of the air". Why the *air*? And why is the title revealed just here? While it may be true of this world that: "Princes have but their titles for their glories, an outward honour for an inward toil", it is not so in Scripture. There, titles are used with doctrinal and dispensational accuracy. In the light of the context, this title of the Devil contains, in germ, the whole doctrine of his relationship with the church of the mystery.

Eph. i. 19 - ii. 7 is a complete section of the epistle. It opens with the exalted position of Christ "in the heavenlies", "far above all", with "all under His feet", and it closes with the church raised and seated in the same glory at the right hand of God. The section also contrasts two great spiritual forces that are at work to-day:--

- (1). "According to the inworking of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ . . . ." (Eph. i. 19, 20).
- (2). "The prince of the authority of the air, the spirit that now inworks in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2).

To usward who believe is the mighty resurrection power of the Lord. For the children of wrath is the inworking of him that had the power of death, that is the Devil. To meddle with this distinction, and suggest that Satan can energize those who by death, burial, and risen life are united with Christ, is a denial of truth, and is calculated to help on the cause of the very one it is supposed to resist.

Satan's limitation, expressed in the new title of Eph. ii. 2, is in direct contrast with the glorious position of the church, which, together with Christ, is said to be "far above every principality . . . . in this or the coming age". "Principality" is *arche*, and "prince" is *archon*. It is quite clear that Satan included in the spiritual authorities and dominions of Eph. i. 21, and that the statement holds true *now*. While Christ is not yet manifestly "Head over all things", He is so "to the church which is His body", for God has "given Him" so to be. Whatever Satan's authority may have been before the overthrow of the world, or even while Christ was in the flesh (*e.g.*, Matt. iv.), it is clear that at the present time he has no authority in heavenly places where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, for his authority is expressly limited to "the air".

In harmony with this teaching of Eph. i. and ii. is Col. i. 13, which puts the matter beyond all possible doubt:--

"DELIVERED OUT OF the authority of darkness,  
TRANSLATED INTO the kingdom of the Son of His love."

While those blessed words remain God's truth for us, shall we deny them by admitting for one moment that Satan can have any authority over us? Never! Even John (who did not write for the church of the mystery) taught differently:--

“The whole world lieth in the wicked one” (I John v. 19).

“He that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one TOUCHETH HIM NOT” (I John v. 18).

Can any honestly believe Col. i. 13 and yet endorse a statement such as the following?

“One day God may let a storm from the pit break upon you, not because He wants to weaken and overthrow you, but that you may be sure of your foundation, add to your strength, and understand the conditions of your security.”

Is it possible that the writer of such a statement can have the remotest idea of the “foundation” and “strength” of our position in and with Christ, or the real “conditions of our security”?

It is a Satanic device of the first importance to attract attention *from* the Lord *to* Satan. Does Satan ever whisper into the ear of any of his dupes the blessed words of Col. i. 13? Does he ever torment a soul with the words “delivered”, “translated”, “presented”, and the like? Does he not make them believe that he still has power over them, that God often exposes them? etc. What is it that drives so many children of God to the God-dishonouring conclusion that, as sure as any child of God steps out in faith, and something in the way of illness or trouble follows, the latter is “of the Devil”? Are we to believe that God definitely steps aside, and purposely allows Satan to attack those who seek to trust in Him? We will certainly believe this when we see it written “in the Book”, but we have no faith in the mere reasonings and “experiences” of men, and especially of those who seek to introduce into this dispensation of the ascended Christ features that belong to the days of His flesh.

In the last epistle written by Paul before his imprisonment he said:--

“I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ” (Rom. xiv. 29).

“The God of peace shall tread Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom. xvi. 20).

He may have spoken of something beyond what he then knew, but however this may be, the subjection of Satan beneath the feet of the church of the mystery is a fundamental truth of Eph. i. To turn from darkness to light, and from the authority of Satan unto God, is the inspired forecast of Paul's prison ministry (Acts xxvi. 18). To allow demon possession or Satanic authority into the realm of the church at the right hand of God, is to assist Satan and his lie and not to resist him.

Peter could rightly say to the dispersion of Israel, to whom he ministered, that “your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist” (I Pet. v. 8, 9), but he did not mix the dispensations. He knew the sphere of

Satan's patrol (Job. ii. 2), and his antagonism to the restoration of Israel. Even when we do read in the Scriptures of the rebuking of Satan there is nothing comparable to the tone and language adopted by many to-day. The language and attitude of Michael the archangel (Jude 9) is meekness itself, and would probably be condemned as weak and powerless by many who are vehemently urging us to resist the Devil.

After Enoch was "translated" he was not found (Heb. xi. 5), and though Satan should seek to find and devour a member of the one body, the search would be in vain, for he, too, is "translated", and further, his "life is hid with Christ in God", where Satan can never come.

There are several rallying cries sounding in the church to-day which superficially seem true and splendid, and the cries, "Back to Christ" and "Back to Pentecost", have caught many in their toils. To quote I Pet. v. 8, 9 to a member of the one body may appear to proceed from a strong faith, but in reality it is a denial of the essential condition of security and position of the church, for it ignores the limited authority of the Devil revealed in Eph. ii. 2, and treats with Satan as though he were still an undefeated foe, and as though Christ had not led captivity captive, nor spoiled principality and power. The basic truth is that in the dispensation of the mystery we have *for the first time* a concrete example and foreshadowing of that new creation where God shall be all in all, for the words are used of Christ and the church in Col. iii. 11.

Can anyone imagine that Paul (not to speak of the Holy Spirit Who inspired him) would omit from the great word of warning given in Col. ii. 4-23 the admonition to resist the Devil, if such were to be the crying need of to-day? Can a mountain of the most extraordinary experience outweigh an ounce of inspired truth. Shall we confess that God omitted to warn the church of the one body, in the epistles written to that church, of its most deadly peril. The references in the prison epistles to Satan, the Devil, and the Wicked One can be counted on the fingers of one hand, and even this limited number of references includes those that speak of his defeat as well as of his opposition. When we read books that contain pages and pages of the most minute analysis of the ways of the Devil, when we hear prayers in which the Devil is spoken of as many times as the Lord (in spite of the fact that there is not a prayer recorded for our example that even mentions the Devil), we can only conclude that such writers and pleaders have missed their way, that they are acting as if they were in that dispensation in which it was scriptural to pray "Deliver us from evil", and where forgiveness of sins was withheld from those who did not forgive others (Matt. vi.). Such will be ashamed of their work in that day, for they will have overthrown the faith of some, not realizing the sure foundation of God (II Tim. ii. 15-19).

Returning to Eph. i. 19-23 and its parallel, Col. i. 13, we assert that the whole battery of Satan can be met without moving a finger, and that with all reverence we may emulate Him Who sitteth in the heavens: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall *laugh*."

We have no need to conquer a beaten foe. All the passages that are quoted to support the teaching that the Devil still has authority over the mind and body of the saint,

are taken from scriptures that deal with dispensations other than that of the mystery. Eph. vi., which is appealed to in defence of warfare in connection with the saints and to justify the strange anomaly “prayer-warfare”, teaches no such thing. There is not one word in that passage that means warfare, conquest or fighting. What is enjoined is standing, withstanding and wrestling. There is but one weapon provided; not prayer (for prayer is entirely between the believer and the Lord), but the Word of God. We shall more effectually resist the Devil and all his works if we use the sword of the Spirit, and “preach the Word in season and out of season”, than if we spend whole days and nights in unscriptural prayer. There is only one weapon that terrifies the Devil, viz., the sword of the Spirit. There is only one effective guard against *all* the fiery darts of the Wicked One, and that is faith. There is only one conquest of the Devil, and that is the finished work of Christ. It is a denial of our assured position in Christ to adopt all manner of psychic attitudes in our relation to the foe. In *that* realm he is easily master, and it is no wonder that so many physical and mental wrecks abound. The complete armour of God is held together by the girdle of truth: “the truth shall make you free.” But to be “truth” for *us* it must be dispensational, and without “right division” the armour is ineffective. Hence the number who are defeated in the fight.

We do not base our teaching upon our experiences, but as these are used by others we will for once use such here. We have found that every one with whom we have spoken on this subject has been either clear or befogged in proportion as they were clear or befogged regarding the unique character of this present dispensation. Every one who has either been in bondage to Satan, or who has slipped back into this welter of confusion, has never really acknowledged in its fullness the unalloyed doctrine of the prison epistles. There has always been something belonging to a past dispensation that has spoiled the witness.

Again, Eph. vi. does *not* teach that our warfare is in the heavenlies. Can there be warfare where Christ now sitteth at the right hand of God? Who is *there* with whom we can fight? Satan is beneath our feet in Christ; principalities and powers also. Christ has led captivity captive. He has spoiled principality and power. Warfare is impossible at the right hand of God. If we compare Eph. ii. 2 with Col. i. 13 we shall see that the authority of darkness and the authority of the air are in some measure parallel, and find their link in the words of Eph. vi. 12: “the world rulers of this darkness.” It is true that a superficial reading of Eph. vi. 12 gives the impression that our wrestling is in heavenly places, but *Dr. Bullinger* pointed out years ago that this is not so. First of all we are told with whom we do *not* wrestle, viz., “with flesh and blood”. Then at the end of the verse we find at the close of a parenthesis (in Paul’s customary way), that we do *not* wrestle in heavenly places. The parenthesis then supplies the positive side. We *do* wrestle with spiritual wickednesses, and we wrestle here in “this world”.

“For we wrestle not / BUT WITH PRINCIPALITIES \ in heavenly  
with flesh and blood, \ . . . . OF THIS WORLD / places.”

This has to do with the Christian soldier, and can by no means be brought into the question of demon possession, or of being led captive by the Devil. If anyone is led captive by the Devil, it is folly to exhort him to “put on the armour of God”, for he is not

in the right position to take it up, and Satan would not allow him to do so if he desired. What is to be done? Shall we listen to the unscriptural “experiences” of men as fallible as ourselves? Or shall we believe the diagnosis and the remedy definitely written in the Scriptures? Let us examine “the law and the testimony”.

How many the Devil get a foothold? How did he once energize us? The answer of Eph. ii. 2, 3 is, “through the flesh”. It is the same in Eph. iv. Instead of being exhorted to “resist the Devil”, the member of the one body is told to

“put off concerning the former manner of life 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 . . . . putting away the lie . . . . can you be angry, and sin not? Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the Devil” (Eph. iv. 22-27).

This teaching is not palatable to the carnal mind. The family doctor knows that many a patient would resent the truth that his sickness was attributable to abuse of the dinner table. His vanity must be respected, and another name and cause suggested. So, many a spiritual disease is simply the result of the “deceitful lusts of the old man”, but this is highly offensive, and the spiritual sufferer is told that he or she has been specially singled out by the Wicked One. Deliverance is sought in vain, and the bondage grows worse. We are not told to exhort such to “claim” anything, or to “resist the Devil”, or to do any of the many things that form the mode of deliverance advocated by the teaching we here reject, but we are told that

“the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all apt, apt to teach, patiently enduring evil, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves: if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth: and that they may be awakened out of the snare of the Devil, who are led captive by him at his will” (II Tim. ii. 24-26).

Here are a series of statements which should be weighed with those that we often hear. The remedy is provided in “teaching”, not in resisting or commanding the Devil to depart. Patient endurance of evil is foreign to those who are out to “resist” the Devil, for they say that a believer has no right to submit to evil at all, all such being of the Devil. We, however, prefer Paul as our monitor. The phrase, “If God peradventure” and “repentance” do not harmonize with the system that practically dictates to God what He must do. It is the acknowledging of “the truth” that sets the captive free, not exorcising demons, or muttering on this or that the unscriptural imprecation, “The curse of God”.

The snare of the devil is associated with the “novice” who too quickly jumps into so-called service, and with evil living (I Tim. iii. 6, 7), and this we see all around. What a tragedy it would have been for Paul (and also ourselves) had he listened to the advice to “resist the Devil” in the matter of his thorn in the flesh—the messenger of Satan sent to buffet him! How many have missed their blessing by assuming that all illness, all trouble, all apparent disaster is “of the Devil”. Far more likely is success to be of his engineering.

Into the question of demon possession and Satanic control we do not enter. These things belong to other dispensations. We leave them where Scripture places them. We are concerned for the truth of the mystery. It is laid upon us to make it known, and subversive doctrine must be withstood. Anything less than this would be unfaithfulness to our stewardship. We shall maintain, as long as God grants us grace to be faithful, that positionally, dispensationally, and doctrinally the church which is His body is “delivered” and “translated” from the authority of darkness, and that only in the realm of the flesh and the old man can Satan find any ground for attack. The armour of God is not for captives but for soldiers, and has nothing to do with those who are already bound. We still believe that the truth makes free, and that we best demonstrate our victory over the Devil by believing and teaching that we are “delivered” and “translated” “far above all”.

## #2. pp. 167 - 174

When dealing with this subject in our September issue, we did not give much space to the question of the conflict which is the theme of Eph. vi., and lest our scanty reference should be mistaken, we propose an examination of it here.

There are a series of questions which we feel demand an answer from Scripture. For instance, is it not too readily assumed that all believers are “soldiers” of Christ? This assumption we seriously question as being at the root of many failures in Christian practice, and we hope to show that no babe in Christ or novice in doctrine is in view in Eph. vi. There is not the slightest indication therein that the apostle refers either to the enslaved dupe of Satan, or to the believer frantically struggling to throw off his yoke. We do not find there one paralyzed with fear, devil-dogged at every turn, crying out for “victory” that does not come, nor do we find any instructions to practice a species of auto-hypnotism by “repeating aloud” any phrase even though it be a quotation of Scripture. We once more ask this question, and seek an answer to it from the Word: *Who are the fighters in view in Eph. vi.?*

The first answer that Scripture yields is a correction of our phraseology, for the word “fight” is not used. To use it begs the whole question, for it assumes what is to be proved, viz., that fighting and warfare are actually in view. But one may legitimately interpose, “Armour and weapons indicate warfare”. They do, but we will consider this in its place. Before we go so far, we must determine, if we can, who are the contestants, and then the nature of their contest.

“Every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe”  
(Heb. v. 13).

An unskillful handler of the sword of the Spirit would be hopelessly outclassed in the conflict of Eph. vi.

“Every male from twenty years old and upward, all that were able to go forth to war”  
(Numb. i. 20, &c.).

“Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil” (I Tim. iii. 6).

Every believer is not necessarily ready to don the armour and take up the sword, any more than he is necessarily fit to preach or to teach simply because he is a believer. Instead of this indiscriminate use of the title “soldier”, it will be found that the apostle Paul uses it with great reserve. So also must we if we would be true and well-pleasing to the Lord. Archippus, and Epaphroditus are honoured with the title “fellow-soldier” (Philemon 2 and Phil. i. 25), and from the description given of Epaphroditus we can gather somewhat of the spiritual maturity that attaches to the title. Yet is it not common, to meet enthusiastic men and women using the most advanced military phraseology, and speaking about warfare, victory, &c., who are the veriest babes in Christian doctrine?

In II Tim. ii. 4 the apostle speaks of some essential characteristics of the soldier of Christ.

“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life: that he may please Him Who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (II Tim. ii. 4).

The word translated “life” in this verse is *bios*, and means “livelihood” rather than “life”.

“All her living” (Mark xii. 44).

“Spent all her living” (Luke viii. 43).

“Divided unto them his living” (Luke xv. 12).

“The pride of life” (I John ii. 16).

“This world’s good” (I John iii. 17).

Here is a prime qualification for the good soldier of Jesus Christ. Not a word about fighting can be found in the context, except it be the prohibition in II Tim. ii. 24, “The servant of the Lord must not strive”.

It will be found that the apostle is only applying to the soldier of Christ the principles which regulated the conduct of the soldier in Israel. In Deut. xx. are defined the rules which were to be observed by Israel in time of battle. The officers were to exempt from combatant service the man who had not yet dedicated a newly-built house; or had not yet eaten of a newly-planted vineyard, or had not yet taken to himself a betrothed wife. The second ground of exemption is to be understood in the light of Lev. xix. 23, 24, where the fruit tree was considered “uncircumcised” until three years had passed.

The foregoing three grounds of exemption have their spiritual counterpart to-day. The “soldier” aspect of the teaching of Eph. vi. is reserved for the “Finally” of verse 10, even as the soldier of Israel must have attained to 20 years of age. No man who has not “dedicated” his house as Eph. v. 22 - vi. 9 indicates can hope to overcome in the contest of the faith. No man whose fruit is not definitely the product of the resurrection (“three years shall it be as uncircumcised”) can stand in this conflict. So in Ephesians, before

the exhortation to “put on the armour of God” (vi. 11) is found the essential requisite of iv. 24, “Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” [“For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (v. 9)]. The “officers” of the Lord’s army to-day should make these things clear lest any attempting to engage in this conflict without the presence and blessing of the Lord find themselves in captivity to the devil.

We obtain most helpful light upon the nature of the conflict that is before the church if we carefully note the things said in this connection in II Timothy:--

“Endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (ii. 3).

“I endure hardness, even unto bonds” (ii. 9).

“If we patiently endure, we shall reign” (ii. 12).

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth . . . . a crown” (iv. 7, 8).

All this is prefaced by the words, “Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (ii. 1).

We have followed the same course in our teaching on this subject. First must come the absolute position of “grace in Christ”, where all is viewed as complete. Before the believer is called to put on the armour he is assured that he is accepted in the Beloved, delivered out of the authority of darkness, translated into the kingdom of the Son, quickened, raised, and seated far above all. In this sphere he can win nothing, nor can he forfeit anything; all is in grace and all in Christ. The next step is to “be strong” in that self-same grace: “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might” (vi. 10). This is the uppermost idea in the closing verses of Eph. i.: “The exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe.”

The essence of the relation between Eph. i. and vi. may be seen in the two expressions, to “work *in*” and to “work *out*”. Unfortunately the A.V. does not show this clearly. In Eph. i. “working” (verse 19) and “wrought in” (verse 20) are translations of the Greek word *energeo*, “to work in”. The expression, “having done all”, of vi. 13, is a very free translation of *katergazonai*, “to work out”. The conflict of Eph. vi. is largely the working out of the blessed position and truth of the mystery revealed in chapter i.

Let us now turn to Phil. ii. 12, 13, so that (1) every reader may be assured that we have not given a “private interpretation” of the two Greek words in Eph. i. & vi., and (2) that further light upon the nature of the conflict may be obtained. First the translation: “Work out (*katergozonia*) your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh (*energeo*) in you both to will and to work (*energeo*).” Secondly, the light from the context. Let the reader pass in review every case that he may have known of demon possession, attack, control, satanic dominion over body, mind or estate, and answer as before the Lord this question: “Have you known one solitary case where such a person was in the full light of the truth of the mystery?” Many may have used the terms found in Ephesians. They may have spoken of heavenly places, of membership of the body, and allied subject, but have not these high glories been mixed in their teaching with the previous dispensation of the Acts. Has not the Pentecostal baptism been much

dwelt upon? And have not the sign gifts (such as tongues and healing) come prominently into view? We await the answer with confidence. The only power that can enable anyone to fight the good fight of Eph. vi. is the power of Eph. i. 19, 20. If that has not been worked *in*, it cannot be worked *out*, and so poor souls go into battle at their own charges and without the complete armour, attempting to gain victory instead of standing in a victory already theirs. No wonder there are shipwrecks of faith, broken hearts, crushed spirits, and ruined homes.

We have drawn attention in other articles to the peculiar nature of the epistle to the Philippians as compared with that to the Ephesians. The latter may be summed up in the words of Eph. iii. 12, "In Whom we have boldness and access with confidence", whereas the standpoint of the former is expressed in the words of Phil. ii. 12, "Work out . . . . with fear and trembling". In the one case we have our *position*, in the other our *responsibility*. In the first case there can be no element of reward or loss, for all is a gift in absolute grace; in the second case the salvation already possessed is to be "worked out", and in that realm there is room for "gain" and "loss", and for a "prize". In Phil. ii. Christ is not put forward as Saviour, but as *Example*, His humiliation and subsequent exaltation are applied to the believer as an exhortation, "Wherefore . . . . work out", and we have the completion in chapter iii. in the apostle's example where he is seen running for the prize, avoiding the entanglements of this life, and forgetting the things that are behind. This last expression may be linked with Numb. xi. 5, "We remember . . . . Egypt". These were the words of those who, redeemed out of bondage, fell in the wilderness principally through the evil influence of the "mixed multitude" who went with them.

In II Cor. iv. 17 the term "work out" is found in a similar context. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory". Here we return to the teaching of II Tim. ii., "If we endure, we shall reign".

Reverting for a moment to the fact that no Israelite was permitted to bear arms and to go to war before the age of 20 years, we shall find that this further illustrates the distinctive character of the soldier which we have noticed in II Timothy and Philippians, namely, a close association with crown and prize:--

"Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness: and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from TWENTY YEARS OLD and upward, which have murmured against Me" (Numb. xiv. 29).

Here we have responsibility, forfeiture and loss for those not standing in grace, and this is true of the soldier in Paul's epistles as in the law of Moses.

A further full comment on the true qualities of the soldier can be gathered from the witness of Scripture to the stand of Caleb and Joshua, which our readers are urged to read in conjunction with Heb. iii. and iv. This relation of the soldier with the overcomer is further set out in the matter of those worthies who were given such a high place in the kingdom of David. Jashobeam, the Hachmonite, Eleazar, the Ahohite, Joab, Benaiah and

the rest were all warriors, men who had done valiant deeds in battle (I Chron. xi. 11-47). It is this feature that is carried over into the present time: “Endure hardness . . . . if we endure we shall reign . . . . I have fought a good fight . . . . henceforth a crown.”

Before concluding this aspect of our subject let us look at the armour. We have already observed the evident connection in Eph. vi. and iv. between the exhortation to “put on” the *armour*, and the statement of fact that we have “put on” the *new man*. “The truth that is in Jesus” is—“your having *put off* . . . . and your having *put on*” (Eph. iv. 21-24). *Apothesthai* and *endusasthai* are in the middle voice, whereas *analabete*, “take unto you”, and *analabontes*, “taking”, of Eph. vi. 16 are in the active. The taking up of the armour is the experimental and active entry into all that Christ has been made unto us by God. This “truth in Jesus” is the girdle of our loins, Christ Himself (without the slightest admixture of the principles of law or merit) is our breastplate of righteousness, and so throughout the list.

In Rom. xiii. 12-14 the apostle makes mention of armour, and it will help us to see what is said:--

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

Here in view of approaching morning, the sleeper is called upon to awake, put off his night attire, and don the armour of light—the only fitting attire for the saint passing through this world. Once again may we insist that the apostle does *not* say one single word about fighting, but instead he speaks about *walking*, and just as in Eph. iv. he speaks of the deceitful lusts of the old man, so here he makes no mention of Satan, but immediately indicates the foe by enumerating six “lusts of the flesh”. Then more fully to clinch what we have previously seen in Eph. vi., instead of returning to the subject of the armour and referring to its several items, he proceeds at once to the true meaning and says: “Put on the armour of light . . . . put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

Where Eph. vi. enumerates the parts of the armour, Rom. xiii. points to the appropriation of all that Christ is to the believer; and where Eph. vi. particularizes the spiritual foes, Rom. xiii. points out their only vantage ground with the believer, “the making provision for the lusts of the flesh”. This, as we have already seen, is in entire harmony with what we may learn from a comparison of Eph. iv. and vi.

In I Thess. v. 5-11 we have another reference to armour, another reference to night and day, another placing of drunkenness over against armour:--

“For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that are drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

Surely no one who believes that the Scriptures are inspired and sufficient can further deny the obvious fact that the only “warfare” that these passages will allow is waged between what we are “in Christ”, and what the old man and the lusts of the flesh (acted upon by unseen spiritual foes) would make us if they could.

In our next paper we shall have to return to some of these passages again, for we have not yet discovered exactly what the object of these evil powers may be. That is a subject too important to attempt here. We must therefore content ourselves with the aspect before us, and so would turn to yet another reference to armour in the writings of the apostle, remembering that the word *hoplon*, which can be seen in the English “panoply”, is translated as “armour”, “weapon” and “instrument”.

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down reasonings, and every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and leading captive every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Cor. x. 4, 5).

A reference to chapter xi. will show that the Corinthians were in danger of having their minds corrupted by Satan and his agents. The methods adopted by the enemy were the preaching of *another* “Jesus”, *another* “spirit”, and *another* “gospel”, while the means of defeating this attack are not expressed in terms of war or resistance, but more simply by bringing all to the touchstone of the faith once given. Appended to the satanic counterfeit—another “Jesus” are the words, “whom we did not preach”; to the travesty of the other “spirit”, the words, “which ye have not received”; and to the false “gospel”, the words, “which ye have not accepted”. A return to the written word is the apostle’s one great protection and offensive. He needed no frenzied meetings or agonizing for victory. The truth makes free, and the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God; all other methods which are not found in Scripture we must repudiate as carnal weapons that will be of no avail.

Will the reader note two expressions in the foregoing quotation from II Cor. x.? One is “the height”, and the other “leading captive”. Among those things that are enumerated in Rom. viii. 38, 39 as possible foes over which the believers is “more than conqueror” will be found “height”, and II Cor. x. shows that this spiritual enemy is closely associated with “reasoning that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God”. The other expression, “leading captive”, is found in Eph. iv. in direct proximity to the giving of apostles, etc., for the purpose of leading the Church on to the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”, and so to rise about the cunning craftiness and “wiles” of Satan’s agents. A glance at Col. ii. 14-17 will show a close connection between certain principalities, and the imposition of undispensational teaching, shadows instead of substance which substance (or reality) is the blessed prerogative of every member of the Body of Christ.

One further reference must suffice for this paper, viz., Rom. vi. 12, 13:--

“Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments (weapons, armour) of unrighteousness unto sin, but yield yourselves unto God, as those which are alive from

the dead, and your members as instruments (weapons, armour) of righteousness unto God.”

Here is a use of the word “weapon” which is perfectly intelligible when used in the way that we have seen in Rom. xiii., I Thess. v., and II Cor. x., but utterly impossible of direct interpretation if unscriptural ideas of “warfare” are used.

A summary of our findings will be given at the close of the next article.

### **#3. pp. 179 - 186**

In the previous paper of this series we found our whole space occupied with the questions, “Who are the contestants?” and “What is the armour?” and the investigation necessitated so much reference that a clearly stated answer was crowded out. Before proceeding, therefore, we must attempt to put this first part of our subject before the reader with some degree of clarity.

*Who are the contestants?* The necessary qualification for the soldier in Paul’s teaching, in line with the typical teaching of the law, precludes from the ranks all who are “babes”, “novice”, and such as are not, for any reason, spiritually mature. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, and must be either taught or preached when it is being used. There is no other way of actually “fighting” with the Scriptures, and consequently all those passages of Scripture that indicate that a babe is “unskillful” in the Word, or that maturity in the faith is connected with being ready to teach others, apply equally to the soldier.

We saw, moreover, that the putting on of the armour was explained as the putting on of Christ, and was balanced by the putting on of the new man. With the exception of the passage in Eph. vi., the armour is always used in the conflict with the flesh and its lusts. He who puts on this armour is one who begins to “work out” what has been worked in. The close of Ephesians is really an anticipation of Philipians, the epistle of the soldier, the overcomer, and the prize. Reverting to the fact that the soldier in Israel had to be 20 years old before bearing arms, and that this age limit is mentioned in the case of those who fell in the wilderness, we find in Psa. xci. a suggestion of the security of the believer viewed as simply “in Christ”, as contrasted with the responsibility of one who “20 years old and upward” steps out into the arena of conflict, where gain and loss are permissible terms.

“Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee . . . . The dragon thou shalt trample under feet.”

This expresses in O.T. terms much the same sense of absolute security and positive exaltation above the Prince and the authority of the air that we find in Eph. i. and Col. i. The Psalm approaches to the “positional” element, which we have sought to show, when it reveals the basis of this perfect security in the words: “He that dwelleth in the *secret place* of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.”

We must now take up our study and consider other equally important questions, and the first shall be an examination of the terms used to describe the conflict. Eph. vi. contains no word that can be translated “fight”, “war”, “battle”, “campaign”, “conquest”, or any other military term so familiar to those who engage in “prayer warfare”, and who use this scripture as their warrant. Should it not cause the believer to halt and consider that if a system of teaching is obliged to go outside the Scriptures for its terms, then that system bears the marks indicating the preaching of “another Jesus”, “another Spirit”, and “another gospel” of which the apostle warned the Corinthians, and which he characterized as the teaching of Satan transformed into an angel of light?

The words used in Eph. vi. to define the nature of the conflict are, “stand against”, “withstand”, “stand”, and “wrestle”. The original uses the Greek word *histemi*, with *pros* and *anti*. *Anthistemi* is used by both Peter and Paul. It is the word translated “resist” in I Pet. v. 9. Both Peter and Paul have given to their respective charges clear instructions as to their attitude toward the devil and his agents, and both in perfect accord with their respective callings. Trouble is caused by the persistent attempt of some to rule the members of the Body of Christ by the rules that belong to the “royal priesthood and holy nation”. The latter pass through a “fiery trial” and wait for the salvation of their *souls* “in the last time”, a salvation of which O.T. prophets spake, but on which the epistles of the church of the mystery are silent.

The word translated “wrestle” is *pale*, and does not occur elsewhere in Scripture. Fortunately the word is too well-known to students of the history of Greece to admit of argument. *Bloomfield* gives the following examples of its figurative use in classical Greek:--

“Socrates wrestles with Miletus with bonds and poison: Plato wrestles with a tyrant’s anger, a rough sea, and the greatest of dangers: Xenophon wrestles with the prejudices of Tissaphernes, the snares of Ariaeus, the treachery of Meno, the machinations of royalty; and Diogenes wrestles with poverty, infamy, hunger and cold.”

This is a fairly comprehensive summary of the way in which the idea of wrestling can be applied, and if we substitute the man of God for Socrates and the others, and put “principalities and powers” for the snares, machinations, &c., in the above quotation, we shall approach a fairly true understanding of the apostle’s meaning. It is, moreover, common knowledge that the Greeks wrestled quite naked, a fact that is still evident to any art student of the “antique”, and still with us in the word “gymnasium”, which is derived from *gymnos*, “naked” (Matt. xxv. 36, 38, 43), “bare” (I Cor. xv. 37), and “exercise” (Heb. v. 14). It must be perfectly obvious that if we at this distance can perceive some incongruity in the thought of anyone “wrestling” in complete “armour”, the apostle was fully alive to it also.

One commentator cuts the Gordian knot by asserting simply that the word “wrestling” must mean in this one instance “fighting”. Such a method cannot, however, be allowed. Truth will not be served by twisting the meaning of words to suit our conception of what is right and fitting, but by humbly bowing to the Divine choice of word and type, and patiently seeking a scriptural reason for the apparent difficulty. We therefore leave Eph. vi. for the moment to gather information elsewhere in the epistles of Paul.

Let us look again at II Tim. ii. The apostle passes easily from the figure of the “soldier” to the “athlete”. The word translated “strive for masteries” is *athleo*, and is found only in this chapter. The great “fight of afflictions” of Heb. x. 32 is *athlesis*, and the context is entirely devoted to the alternatives of “going on unto perfection” or of “drawing back unto waste” (for this translation see Matt. xxvi. 8). *Sunathleo* is found only in Phil. i. 27 and iv. 3 where it is translated “striving together for the faith of the gospel” and, “laboured with me in the gospel”. Now II Timothy is the epistle of the “crown”, Philippians the epistle of the “prize”, and Hebrews the epistle concerning those who, like Caleb and Joshua, being over 20 years of age, nevertheless “ran with patience the race set before them”.

The only features which the apostle brings forward in II Timothy as characteristic of the “good soldier” equally characterize the “athlete”, the “wrestler”, and the “runner”. With this fact evident before us, are we not compelled to admit that this self-same limitation is intended in Eph. vi., and that we must there, as elsewhere, see the contender in the games, the wrestler, and the overcomer?

Perhaps the word that sums up the idea more clearly than any other is “endure”. It comes in two forms in II Tim. ii. “Endure hardness” and “Suffer trouble” of verses 3 and 9 are translations of *kakopatheo*, which recurs in iv. 5 and links the ministry of the *evangelist* with the service of the *soldier* and the endurance of the *athlete*. In chapter iv. is a very definite wielding of the sword of the Spirit which required all the courage of the soldier and the endurance of the athlete.

The other word for endure in chapter ii. is found in verses 10 and 12: “I endure” and “If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him.” This Greek word is *hupomeno*, literally “to remain under”: as the noun *hupomone* it is translated “patience”. Patiently enduring evil is apparently one of the last thoughts of those militant wagers of prayer warfare, whose demands and assertions in “prayer” have to be heard to be believed possible. Note the contrast between the fervid and well-nigh frenzied language used at one of these meetings (when the air is being cleansed of satanic powers, or the deliverance of a dupe of the devil is afoot) with the “bearing up under evil” and the “gentleness” and “meekness” which is the scriptural requirement of II Tim. ii. 24-26.

In II Tim. iv. 7 the apostle says: “I have fought a good fight.” The word “fight” is *agon*, and “to fight” is *agonizomai*. The same is true of I Tim. vi. 12: “Fight the good fight of faith”, where *agon* and *agonizomai* are used. Heb. xii. 1 uses the same word *agon*, where it is translated “race”: “Let us run with patience the race that is set before

us.” The next verse speaking of Christ as the “finisher” of faith, finds an exact parallel in the words of II Tim. iv. 7: “I have finished my course.” Here the word “course” is *dromos*, which still survives in the word “hippodrome”, originally a “racecourse for horses”.

Every added piece of information is leading to one conclusion, viz., that the word “wrestle” in Eph. vi. is in harmony with the dominant idea, and that the imagery of the armour must be adjusted to the thought of the athlete, and not overweighed with military conceptions. This entirely harmonizes not only with the references to the “fight” which we have just seen, but to the usage of “armour” which we observed in the previous article.

We must ask the reader to turn once more to these passages in Timothy, for their contexts are illuminating. In chapter iii. 7 the apostle speaks of the “snare of the devil”, which was connected with the manifest practice of the faith. In vi. 9 he refers to the “snare and temptation” again, this time speaking of those who would be rich. Urging Timothy to flee these things, he continues: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.” What are we to understand the apostle to mean here? Has he departed from his own teaching that eternal life is a fight? That cannot be. Moreover, the same teaching reappears in verses 17-19. There “uncertain riches” are set aside, and the riches of “good works” are urged in their stead, that by these a good foundation against the time to come may be laid up, and “that they may lay hold on eternal life”. Here we are evidently in the realm of Philippians. Here is one who is “working out” the salvation already received. This exhortation is followed by another: “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust” (I Tim. vi. 20). This is exactly parallel with the closing words of II Tim. iv. 7: “I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith”; and we have already seen a close connection between Christ as the “Finisher of the faith” and Paul as the “finisher of the course”.

The more we pursue this theme the more the evidence accumulates that the “fight” of Eph. vi. is the faithful maintaining against all odds of the glorious “deposit” of truth revealed in Eph. i. 3-14. We have shown in earlier numbers that the structure of Ephesians places “all spiritual blessings” (i. 3-14) over against “the panoply of God” and “spiritual wickednesses” (vi.), and that the “worked in” power of Eph. i. 19 is the “worked out” power of Eph. vi. 13. We must now leave this evidence with the reader, and pass on to the consideration of the attack that is in view in the conflict of Eph. vi.

The whole armour of God is provided so that the believer shall be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, and in particular the shield of faith is given wherewith to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. What are these wiles? If the reader has consulted the writings of a certain school of teaching, he will know that the human mind and spirit are put upon the dissecting table, and the possibilities of demon control over every avenue is so insisted upon, that we can well believe that some timid readers would immediately develop half the mental diseases described. Our process is simpler, for we seek to know what God has written, and would stop where He has stopped. Now the word “wiles” is the translation of the Greek word *methodeia*, and as this word occurs only here and in

Eph. iv. 14, we cannot expect to understand Paul's second reference if we ignore the first. While the first reference is in a context sad beyond words, there is nothing of the demonism so often associated with the wiles of the devil in Eph. vi., except as will be explained presently. Let us read iv.14:--

“In order that we may be no longer babes, being tossed and whirled about with every wind of doctrine, which is in the dice-throwing of men, in cunning craftiness with a view to systematized deceit.”

We have translated *methodeia* “systematized”. There is somewhat warrant for the freer rendering, “lie in wait to deceive”, for Aquila so uses *methodeus* when translating Exod. xxi. 13. There is certainly a “tossing” and a “whirling” mentioned, but not in the sense of a person possessed or demented. The meaning of the “tossing” and the “whirling” is explained as the result of that itching ear which cannot endure sound doctrine, but is carried away by any new “ism” engineered by seducing spirits with their doctrines of demons. This is where to look for the “wiles” of the devil and the attack of demons. Instead sometimes of spending several hours agonizing in prayer that the meeting-place may be cleansed from all the power of the enemy, it might be more effective if, say, the hymnbooks with their erroneous doctrine had been quietly destroyed. It is in the realm of false doctrine that the wiles of the devil are to be discovered. In chapter iv. these “wiles” are not overcome by fighting, but by attaining to the measure of the perfect man, by being no longer children, by growing up into Christ in all things, by putting off the old man, by putting on the new, by putting off the lie, and by speaking the truth, and by so walking in the power of that new life that no place shall be given to the devil.

We are now once more at the starting point. The soldier is the full-grown man. The conflict is around the truth entrusted to us; the object of the attack is to rob the believer of his crown. Satan has no power over that life which is hid with Christ in God, and the believer is as secure as those who were hidden in the secret place of the Most High. The sphere of possible gain or loss is in the experimental outworking of the truth. There one may be exhorted to “Lay hold on eternal life”; there one may heed the warning, “Hold fast . . . . that no man take thy crown”, or as Paul has written to us: “Beware lest any man make a prey of you . . . . Let no man deprive you of your prize” (Col. ii. 8, 18). The only way to meet this attack is the scriptural one, and any that cannot stand the test of “chapter and verse” should be rejected absolutely. What is the repeated safeguard of Col. ii.?

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not AFTER CHRIST, for in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and ye are filled to the full in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power . . . . having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you . . . . which are a shadow . . . . but the body is of Christ.”

Here it will be seen that in opposition to these spoiled agents of the wicked one the believer stands in all the fullness of Christ. Moreover, these spoiled principalities are engaged in fastening upon the One Body the shadows of the past—fasts, feasts, sabbaths,

or prohibitions such as “Touch not, taste no, handle not”, which, by engendering a spurious sanctity, but minister to the satisfying of the flesh. The whole armour of God can be summed up in the words of Col. iii. 11, “Christ is all”.

The “evil day” of Eph. vi. 13 may be but one of the “evil days” of Eph. v. 16. As there is a future day of redemption (iv. 30), so there may be a future evil day for which the present is a period of training, but of this we have no knowledge, and therefore we prefer to wait for light. We do know that upon the entry of Israel into their possessions one decisive victory took place, viz., the overthrow of Jericho, and that by faith and not by fighting. The analogy may hold good. There is yet to be war in the heavens between Michael and the dragon, but where Scripture is silent we cannot speak.

There is no thought in Eph. vi. of the soldier fighting to obtain victory. That kind of doctrine suits the devil well, for it disguises the fact that he is already conquered, and that the believer, in Christ, is already “more than conquerors”. Praying and wrestling for victory are similar to the O.T. instance of Hagar and Ishmael dying with thirst, with a well of water hard by. The resurrection and ascension of Christ spoiled “principalities and powers”, “led captivity captive”, placed all things under the feet of Christ, and seated the church in the heavenlies.

The soldier of Christ “stands” for all *the truth* of God against *the lie*, and in season and out of season he wields the sword of the Spirit by “preaching the Word”. We shall not serve the truth by going into more detail, and will leave these facts of Scripture with the reader, praying that both reader and writer may be led into all the truth, and that all that is ours in Christ we may “put on”. Then, by grace, “having worked out all”, may we stand.

## A review, and sign of the times.

### “The Royal Religion, a call to the Nations.” pp. 13-15

A book entitled, “The Royal Religion, a call to the Nations” has been sent for review. In the ordinary way we should not give the book the space of a single line of type, but realizing that readers may profit by having their attention directed to these signs of the times, we draw attention to the following features:--

The cover of the book bears “The sign of the Royal Name”, which is the word HATOV, arranged as a cross. *Hatov* is just Hebrew for “The Good”, and is used throughout this book for God. The message of the book purports to be a series of visions given from heaven to “a devout man, a dreamer of dreams, who prayed continually for the consummation and the perfection of the kingdom of God upon earth”. This prayer, so fully in line with the purpose of God, is likely to attract the attention of the Lord’s people, and may entrap the unwary. We therefore draw attention to the following questions, which provide an acid test not only for *this* “Religion”, but for all:--

1. *What is the attitude of this “Religion” to Scripture?* “The Holy Book, the Mother of three Great Religious denominations—Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism” (page 8).
2. *What is its attitude to Christ?* In the sixty pages of this book “Christ” does not occur ONCE! Not until we reach page 49 is the Lord mentioned *at all*, and then He is called “Jesus, the Prophet of Nazareth”. This is the only reference to the Saviour and Son of God.
3. *What is its attitude to atonement, the cross, the resurrection, and the second coming of Christ?* The “Royal Religion” knows nothing at all about these fundamentals.

There is no need for us to go further—here is the gospel of Cain, and one of the many fore-runners of Antichrist. This will be readily seen by comparing Gen. iii. 5, “Ye shall be as God”, and II Thess. ii. 3, 4, “The man of sin . . . . as God”, with the following quotations:--

“The supreme being on earth—the human race” (page 21).

“Man . . . . the visible Creator and King on Earth” (pages 21, 57).

“The man ascended the throne which was erected on the right hand of the Holy Throne of God. And the seven patron Angels surrounded him and crowned him as Visible Creator and King on earth; . . . . made a little less than Divine, and crowned with glory and honour and made him Creator and trustee of His kingdom of Earth” (pages 30, 31).

Notice that all this is without the personal return or reign of the Lord Jesus Christ (I Cor. xv. 24-28).

The last Saturday and Sunday in the month are set aside for various Festivals, and “the Royal Seer” hears a voice which resounds all over the earth, saying:--

“Remember and observe to keep the Sabbath Day and the Lord’s Day Holy” (page 48). This is called the “The Hatov Sabbath.”

“Lastly, set apart a room for an Hatov Sanctuary, and an Assembly Place. Hang up the tablet of the Hatov Mystery on the East Wall and cover it with a veil with seven rings. The veil should have an inscription on it ‘The Hidden One’.”

Anyone who has access to *Two Babylons*” (by *Hislop*) can discover that Saturn was “The Hidden One”, and Saturn has many names. He is Apis, the calf worshipped by Israel before Sinai. He is Pluto, god of the underworld. He is Satan Himself, and Saturday is a survival of his worship, being of course Saturn’s day.

There is much more that might have been quoted, but all is in the same direction. It looks to man to accomplish what Christ alone can do. It places man where Scripture places Christ, and without being uncharitable we have no option but to repudiate the “Royal Religion” with the words of inspired truth.

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Gal. i. 8).

On page 24 the Royal Seer tells us that he “rubbed his eyes and was astounded”. What he really needs is that the Lord should open his blind eyes to see his sinnership, and need of the Saviour, His cross and His resurrection, for in spite of the repeated emphasis throughout the book of “The Name” (Hatov), it still stands written:--

“There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved” (Acts iv. 12).

**“Now learn a parable of the fig tree.”**  
**p. 175**

“A new Jewish sect has been recently established on the eastern border of Poland, near Vilna, with headquarters at Kucewicze, its adherents numbering, it is stated, about 15,000.”

“It has been decided to form a Jewish Church, recognizing the deity of Christ, and also to study the New Testament, adhering, however, to the general rabbinical regulations.”

“The recent development of this and other sects is an entirely new feature in Poland, where until lately any movement of this kind has always been extremely insignificant.—*Reuter.*” (*Daily Telegraph*, 11/10/28).

The seven churches of Asia resemble in constitution the church of Pentecost, and are Jewish in character.

The above suggestive movement in Poland is but another sign that the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles, nears its close. Now is our hope nearer than when we believed.

**“When they will not endure sound doctrine.”**  
**p. 175**

“Young people of to-day”, said the Rev. A. G. Simpson, “want us to stand up to things and argue in the light of all that comes from modern science and philosophy.”

“The more we escape from, and deliberately renounce, a scheme of theology which cannot be justified in the light of modern thinking, and preach that Christianity mainly means a belief in the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and would apply that to the problems of our time, we shall do something for our generation.” (*Daily Chronicle*, 11/7/29).

This statement made at the United Methodist Conference at Halifax, on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 1929, is a symptom of the last days. The prevalent unbelief and the compromise everywhere advocated is after all but a confirmation of the truth that is being denied. II Tim. iv. is being fulfilled before our eyes. Let us seek to fulfil its exhortations and commands.

## “What is man?”

### #1. The usage of “soul” in Gen. i. and ii. considered. pp. 17 - 21

Readers of *The Berean Expositor* know that while all Scripture is our legitimate province, the peculiar testimony of the dispensation of the mystery is our primary witness and occupies the bulk of our available space. Such subjects, however, as the doctrine of Scripture regarding *sin*, *redemption*, and the *deity of Christ* have necessarily claimed our earnest attention. Among the doctrines that have been approached is that which deals with the nature of man, and in Volume I appeared an article entitled: “*What saith the Scripture concerning the immortality of the soul?*” This article gave some of the evidence of Scripture concerning the true nature of the soul, and shewed that such expressions as “*immortal soul*” and “*never-dying soul*” are found nowhere in Scripture. Since then, however, other themes have pressed for attention, and this important study has been held over.

It is a sad fact that we are all liable to uncharitable judgments on our fellows, and, lacking love, we oftentimes lack logic too; and some have not hesitated to affirm that, because we do not believe in the immortality of the soul, we must necessarily endorse the most extreme views of those materialistic and Unitarian teachers who happen to believe the same thing as to the soul as we do. Our defence, however, will be in the prosecution of our study in the true Berean spirit, and we therefore propose a more thorough investigation than we have hitherto given of the scriptural teaching concerning the nature of man.

#### The soul.

As Volume I is now obtainable (having been reprinted), we will not go over the ground there covered, except to recapitulate for the sake of clearness. The following quotations, we trust, will suffice to put the facts before us:--

“The word which the A.V. Old Testament has rendered “soul” is the Hebrew word *nephesh*. *Nephesh* occurs 754 times in the Hebrew of the Old Testament. In the A.V. and R.V. It is translated “soul” 472 times, whilst in the remaining 282 places it is represented by 44 different words and phrases. The English word “soul” is in every occurrence the rendering of the Hebrew *nephesh*, except in Job xxx. 15 and Isa. lvii. 16.

Turning to the New Testament we find that the word rendered “soul” is the Greek word *psuche*. This word occurs in the A.V. 103 times; 58 times it is rendered “soul,” 40 times “life,” 3 times “mind,” once “heart,” and once “heartily.” No other word but *psuche* is translated “soul” in the A.V. New Testament.

The reader is now in possession of the simple facts of the case; we have but to examine these 857 passages, and we have a full, perfect, and authoritative statement by the Creator and Redeemer of the soul of man as to its nature.”

Little more was done in the article referred to in Volume I than to show that the Scriptures do *not* teach that the soul is immortal. We must now acquaint ourselves with what the Scriptures *do* teach.

### Nephesh in Gen. i.

“The moving creature that hath *life* (margin *soul*)” (Gen. i. 20).

“Every living *creature* (lit. living *soul*) that moveth” (Gen. i. 21).

“The earth bring forth the living *creature*” (Gen. i. 24).

“Everything . . . . wherein (there is) *life* (margin living *soul*)” (Gen. i. 30).

Here are the four occurrences of *nephesh* in Gen. i., and these demand our attention.

First let us note that the LXX consistently renders this word in each case by the Greek *psuche*. There is need here, as at all times, to verify references. If we accept the marginal reference in Gen. i. 20, A.V., we shall be certain that the word “life” there is *nephesh*. This we can confirm by the margin of *The Companion Bible* where the note reads: “life=soul. Heb. *nephesh*.” Nevertheless we have to declare that neither authority is strictly true. “Life” in Gen. i. 20 is the Hebrew word *chaiyah*, and the exact note to Gen. i. 20 should state that the word “life” stands for two Hebrews words—*chaiyah nephesh*. It is also well to remember that, whereas in verse 21 the word “creature” is the translation of *nephesh* (“soul”), in verse 20 “creature” is the translation in a different Hebrew word. In the last reference, the A.V. translated *nephesh chaiyah* by one word, “life”, which is liable to be misleading. In this chapter “life” is already the rendering of *chaiyah*. That it is not a suitable rendering of *nephesh chaiyah* is made evident by translating Gen. i. 30 similarly, “Wherein there is living life” or “life of life”. If one objects that the translation, “wherein there is soul of life” or “soul life” is not much better, it will nevertheless have the merit of presenting the facts of the case, before formulating a theory, and also be in harmony with the LXX which reads:--

“*Ho echei en heauto psuche zoes*”—

“Which has in itself soul of life.”

“Soul” is predicated in this chapter of “creeping creatures” brought forth by the waters (verse 20), “great whales” (verse 21)—elsewhere called “serpents” (Exod. vii. 9), “dragons” (Deut. xxxii. 33), and “sea-monsters” (Lam. iv. 3)—“cattle”, “creeping thing”, “beast of the earth” (verse 25) and finally,

“Every beast of the earth, and every fowl of the air, and everything that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is *soul life*, or *living soul*” (verse 30).

We must not fail to observe another fact. Scripture *does* use the expression, “*wherein* there is living soul or soul life”; and if Scripture sees no contradiction in saying that these creatures *are* living souls and that they have living soul *in* them, neither must we.

Some translations, like *Spurrell's*, read in verse 30: “breath of life”, because, we suppose, *nephesh* (soul) is cognate with *naphach* (to breathe). As this phrase, “the breath

of life”, is a translation already in use for an entirely different set of Hebrews words, it is not to be commended.

### **Nephesh in Gen. ii.**

“Man became a *living soul*” (Gen. ii. 7).  
“Adam called every *living creature*” (Gen. ii. 19).

It is easy for us to point to this passage (ii. 7) as evidence of bias on the part of our translators and to ask why the English reader is led to believe that man differs from the beast and creeping thing. Similarly it is easy in the blindness that pride, even of the truth, can bring, to fall into the equality fatal error of saying that man is nothing more than the beasts that perish. Let us observe one or two facts that are to be found in these two chapters.

Man is undoubtedly a living soul. Cattle and creeping things and great whales are also as undoubtedly living souls. To stay here, however, is to be content with but half the truth, which, as the poet says, is “ever the blackest of lies”.

In chapter i., where the animals are called “living souls”, man is not so called. When man is to be made, God does not say, “Let the earth bring forth”, but:--

“Let us make man in our image after our likeness: and let them have dominion . . . .  
so God created man in His own image, and in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them” (Gen. i. 26, 27).

Is it necessary, when repudiating the error of the immortality of the soul, to plunge into the equal error of denying all that is implied by this deliberation of God at the creation of man? While man and beast are alike “living souls”, man alone was created in the image of God. In Gen. ii. 7 we have the additional statement, not mentioned in Gen. i. 27, concerning the “breath of life” (to a consideration of which we must devote a separate paper).

Again, an essential difference between man and the rest of creation is evident from Gen. ii. 18-23. God said, “I will make a help meet for him”. *Kinagado*, the word translated “meet”, means “corresponding to him”, literally “according to his front-presence” (*see Lloyd’s Analysis*). The LXX uses two expressions; in verse 18 it reads *kat’ autou*, “suitable to him”, “in harmony with him”, and, in verse 20, *homoios auto*, “like to himself”. All this is in direct contrast to the animal creation that passed before Adam’s view and it impressed upon him that he stood separated from every other living soul by virtue of the likeness and image of his Maker. There is more in this passage than we can well speak of publicly. Sufficient, however, has been said for our purpose.

### **Were there two Adams?**

Before leaving this passage we ought to deal briefly with the suggestion put forward by many students of Scripture, that the differences in the creation of man and woman, as

recorded in Gen. i. 26-28 and in Gen. ii. 18-25, shew that two different men are intended. If the second mention in chapter ii. indicates a different creation, then, the reference to the forming of every beast and fowl in ii. 19 might also indicate a separate creation, differing from that of Gen. i.; but we need not multiply arguments, for the apostle Paul has settled the matter once and for all.

Gen. i. 27 tells us that Adam was made in the image of God and that male and female were included under that one common name. Gen. ii. 7 omits all reference to the image, and speaks of Adam as being taken from the earth, and made a living soul, and gives details concerning the making of Eve. Now the Adam of Rom. v. 12-14 is the Adam of Gen. ii. and iii., without peradventure. So is the Adam of I Cor. xv. 22 & 45, and I Tim. ii. 12-14. In I Cor. xi. the priority of creation undoubtedly refers to Gen. ii., but in the same chapter (I Cor. xi. 7) Paul has no hesitation in referring back to Gen. i. 26, 27. To Paul the Adam of Gen. ii. was "the first man Adam" (I Cor. xv. 45).

Psa. viii. refers back to Gen. i., and there is not the slightest suggestion that the Psalmist is thinking of any other man than the Adam who is the father of the race (Gen. v.), and of the same flesh and blood as ourselves (Heb. ii. 5, 6, 14). Gen. ix. 6 most clearly refers to the Adam of Gen. i., and the genealogy of Luke ends with the words:--

"The son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God" (Luke iii. 38).

There is another consideration connected with these early chapters of Genesis. It is God (*Elohim*) Who created man in His own image (Gen. i. 26, 27); it is the Lord God (*Jehovah Elohim*) Who formed man in Gen. ii. 7. The same argument that would make two distinct Adams would as well make two distinct Creators. So far as we are concerned, the problem does not exist. We have in Gen. i. the broad outline, and in Gen. ii. more intimate details of one important section of the self-same creation.

The doctrine of Romans and Corinthians is vitally connected with Adam, and we must not allow any speculations of this kind to imperil its clearness and its force. The same reasoning that demands two Adams by the differences in Gen. i. and ii. could also demand two Noahs as guided by the Higher Critics with their Elohist and Jehovistic sections. Gen. vi. 19 simply says of the animals that were to enter the ark: "two of every sort . . . . male and female." In Gen. vii. 2, 3 an additional instruction is given: "of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens." This is but expanding in fuller detail the original command.

Here we must stay. In our next paper we hope to consider the special bearing upon the status of man of the reference to "the breath of life".

## #2. The breath of life. pp. 65 - 69

In our previous article we saw that man, equally with lower creation, is called “a living soul”, but we also saw enough in the record of Gen. i. 26-28 to prevent us from concluding that he was that and nothing more. It is sometimes said that “man is like the beasts that perish”, but we should remember that the full statement is: “Man that is in honour, and *understandeth not*, is like the beasts that perish” (Psa. xlix. 12, 20), which is a somewhat different thought. Eph. iv. 17, 18 says of the Gentiles, that they have “the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them”, which cannot be true of the lower creation.

When writing the article previously quoted from Volume I, and confining ourselves largely to the usage and meaning of *nephesh* = “soul”, we referred to Gen. vii. 21, 22 as using the expression “the breath of life” both of man, cattle and creeping thing. This, however, was too general in its sweep, and while it is true that both man and beast “have all one breath” (*ruach*), there is in Gen. vii. 21, 22 another word which seems peculiar to man alone, and therefore establishes an essential difference.

### N’shamah.

This word *n’shamah* is generally translated “breath” or “breathe” in the A.V. its other renderings being “blast”, “inspiration”, “soul” and “spirit”. The word occurs 24 times, and we believe in 23 of the occurrences man only is the subject. The one passage which demands a more lengthy analysis is Gen. vii. 21, 22.

We propose, therefore, to pass in review the 23 passages, and then consider Gen. vii. 21, 22 to see whether this particular word does, or does not, mark off man from all other creatures. For easy reference we will number each occurrence. Appendix 16 of *The Companion Bible* gives all references.

1. “And breathed into his nostrils the *breath* of life and man became a living soul” (Gen. ii. 7).—It may be queried who it is that is said to breathe, God or Adam, for the pronoun “he” does not decide the question. This breath is by the nostrils, and therefore differs in nothing from that of the lower creatures. Be the answers to these questions what they may, here is the introduction of something special in the process of creation, something quite exceptional, occurring nowhere in the record of Gen. i., but finding somewhat of a parallel in the equally distinctive pause and counsel of Gen. i. 26.

2. “Thou shalt save alive nothing that *breatheth*” (Deut. xx. 16).—We know that sometimes both man and beast were destroyed by the advancing Israelites, as was the case at Jericho. But when taking the next city, Ai, Israel were, by divine command, expressly told to spare the cattle. “And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the *cattle* thereof shall ye take for

a prey.” If we insist that *n’shamah* in Deut. xx. 16 must include cattle, we introduce a serious problem, but if we leave it to mean man, all is harmony. A glance at Deut. xx. 17, 18 will strengthen this view, for it immediately goes on to enumerate those who were to be utterly destroyed, namely, the Canaanites, and the reason given is “that they teach you not, etc.”.

3. “So Joshua . . . . . utterly destroyed all that *breathed*” (Josh. x. 40).—This is parallel with No. 2.

4 and 5. “There was not any left to *breathe* . . . . . and all the . . . . . cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves: but every man they smote with the edge of the sword . . . . . *neither left they any to breathe*” (Josh. xi. 11-14).—Here the meaning of *n’shamah* is obvious. None were left that “breathed”, yet *all* the cattle were spared. According to the true meaning of this word, therefore, cattle did not “breathe”.

6. “The *blast* of the breath (*ruach*) of His nostrils” (II Sam. xxii. 16).—The reference here is to God, and needs no comment.

7. “He smote all the house of Jeroboam, he left not to Jeroboam any that *breathed*” (I Kings xv. 29).—This is the fulfillment of the word of Abijah, given in I Kings xiv. 10-14, where the actual descendants of Jeroboam are in view.

8. “There was no *breath* left in him” (I Kings xvii. 17).—The widow’s son is referred to here.

9. “By the *blast* of God they perish” (Job iv. 9).

10. “Whose *spirit* came from thee” (Job xxvi. 4).—Spoken to men.

11. “All the while my *breath* is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils” (Job xxvii. 3).

12. “There is a spirit in man, and the *inspiration* of the Almighty giveth them understanding” (Job xxxii. 8).—This and the following passages we shall have to consider more fully: for the time we pass them by; they have no reference to the beast, but very intimately connect man with God.

13. “The spirit of God hath made me, and the *breath* of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job xxxiii. 4).

14. “If He gather unto Himself His spirit and His *breath*” (Job xxxiv. 14).

15. “By the *breath* of God frost is given” (Job xxxvii. 10).

16. “At the *blast* of the breath of Thy nostrils” (Psa. xviii. 15).

17. “Let everything that hath *breath* praise the Lord” (Psa. cl. 6).—In Psa. cxlviii. the heavens, angels, and all His hosts, sun, moon and stars, waters, dragons and all deeps, cattle and creeping thing, as well as man, are all called upon to praise the Lord, but “everything that hath *breath*” does not occur there. In Psa. cl., however, man alone is in view throughout, and we force the lower creation unwarrantably into this Psalm if we make “everything that hath *breath*” go beyond its scriptural connotation.

18. “The *spirit* of man is the lamp of the Lord” (Prov. xx. 27).

19. “Cease ye from man whose *breath* is in his nostrils” (Isa. ii. 22).

20. “The *breath* of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it” (Isa. xxx. 33).

21. “He that giveth *breath* unto the people” (Isa. xlii. 5).

22. “The spirit should fail before Me, and the *souls* that I have made” (Isa. lvii. 16).

23. “Neither is there *breath* left in me” (Dan. x. 17).

Here are 23 of the 24 occurrences of *n’shamah*. There are at least eight passages in the above list where the *n’shamah* spoken of is God’s. No. 1 may or may not refer to God, but the parallel in No. 21 is highly suggestive. If we include this there are nine occurrences which refer to God.

A reference to Nos. 11, 12, 14 and 22 shows a close connection between *n’shamah* and *ruach*, spirit. This connection is important in more ways than one. It shews that the word are not identical, and therefore it does not follow that all who have *ruach* must necessarily have *n’shamah*. No. 16 uses the phrase “the *n’shamah* of the *ruach*”, which may prove of service later. Nos. 12 and 18 shew a close connection between *n’shamah* and understanding and conscience—the latter so called because it is a “consciouness of God”.

As we allow these facts to weigh with us it becomes more difficult to believe that all this distinctiveness is overset in Gen. vii. 21, 22. As the passage reads in the A.V. it certainly does look as though “the breath of life” could be predicated of all, both man and beast. Let us, however, search and see. Let us first of all compare the A.V. with the R.V.:--

“And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died” (A.V.).

“And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both fowl, and cattle, and beast, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, of all that was in the dry land, died” (R.V.).

It will be noticed that whereas the A.V. has the word “of” before fowl, cattle, beast, and creeping thing, the R.V. omits it. The A.V. is truer here, inasmuch as it seeks to give

effect to a distinction that is found in the Hebrew. Where “of” occurs in the A.V. the Hebrew particle *beth* occurs, and this particle is generally translated “in”. It will be noticed that there is no “of” before “every man”. Whatever the true translation may be, the point for the moment is, that even in this particular, man is separated from the beasts. The R.V. reveals the presence of the word “spirit” as well as “breath” here. The expression “the *n’shamah* of the *ruach*” is the same as that used in Nos. 6 and 16 of the list of quotations given above, where the reference is to God.

As the passage stands in the A.V. it appears that we are told twice over that all *died*: “And all flesh died”; “of all that was in the dry land died.” The word “of” in the second of these passages is not the same word as those already alluded to. It means “from” and sometimes suggests some out of a number. The translation suggested by *Dr. E. P. Woodward*, whose researches along this line have been of considerable help, is as follows:--

“And all flesh died that moved upon the earth (namely, all flesh), in fowl, and in cattle, and in beast, and in every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And every man (all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life, from among all that was on the dry land) died.”

This translation, though perhaps inelegant, does recognize several features that are blurred in the A.V., and their recognition leads to a distinction between the animals that were destroyed in the flood, and man. In Gen. vii. 15, where there is no doubt that only animals are enumerated, we read: “And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh wherein is the breath (*ruach*, not *n’shamah*) of life.” It would not be true to say that “all flesh” was exclusively used of the animals at the time of the flood, but the full expression “all flesh wherein is the *ruach* of life” appears to be used of the animals to the exclusion of man, while the other expression “*n’shamah* of the *ruach* of life” does appear to be used of man to the exclusion of the animals. This being so, we have the testimony of these twenty-four passages to prove that while man is physically a member of the animal kingdom, he is severed from that kingdom by something distinctive, the image and likeness of God, the personal touch of God at his creation, the possession of the *n’shamah*, the *breath* of the spirit of life. This leaves the question of the immortality of the soul untouched.

### #3. Are “spirit” and “breath” synonymous? pp. 101 - 104

Two words, the one Hebrew, *ruach*, and the other Greek, *pneuma*, are translated both “spirit” and “breath”. It will be seen therefore that the answer to the above question receives at least a partial answer. *Ruach* most certainly does mean “breath”, but the question to which we seek an answer is not whether *ruach* ever means “breath”, but whether it is true that it never means anything else. In other words, where the A.V. (in 232 cases) translates the word *ruach* by “spirit”, we should understand simply the meaning “breath”? There is only one way to discover the true answer, and that is patiently to search the Scriptures in a spirit of prayerful submission to the Holy Word.

The first occurrence of the word is that of Gen. i. 2: “And the *Spirit* of God moved upon the face of the waters.” Can we limit the word here to “breath” or “wind”? A superficially parallel passage may be found in Gen. viii. 1, where we read: “And God made a *wind* to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged.” But we must search more carefully before we come to a conclusion.

Consider the bearing of the following passages upon this question:--

“The Spirit (*ruach*) of God hath made me, and the breath (*n’sjamah*) of the Almighty hath given me life” (Job xxxiii. 4).

Here is an evident reference to Gen. ii. 7, and a recognition of its two parts:--

“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.”	\
“ <i>The Spirit</i> of God hath made me.”	/
“And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.”	\
“And <i>the breath</i> of the Almighty hath given me life.”	/

Here it is most evident that “breath” and “spirit” are not synonymous.

Again, Job says in xxvi. 13: “By *His Spirit* He hath garnished the heavens; His hand hath formed the crooked serpent” (i.e., the constellation so called). And in Job xxvii. 3, 4 he says: “All the while my breath (*n’shamah*) is in me, and the Spirit (*ruach*) of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.” With this we should read Psa. xxxiii. 6: “By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath (*ruach*) of His mouth.” By reading these three passages together we arrive at the conclusion that the Spirit of God and the spirit of man here are very essentially associated with *speech*. It is so in Job xxvii. 3, 4 and it may be seen by comparing Job xxvi. 13 with Psa. xxxiii. 6. Turning back to Gen. i. and ii. we find this close association suggested in the opening verses: “The Spirit of God *moved* . . . . and God *said*” (Gen. i. 2, 3).

Following the record of creation, there is a constant emphasis upon this creative word (*see* verses 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28 and 29). This creative word, according to Job, is “the Spirit of God” in creative power; according to Psa. xxxiii. 6, it is the creative breath of His mouth, which is also called “the Word of the Lord”.

It will be seen therefore that while we believe “spirit” and “breath” to be interchangeable, this by no means allows us to assume that “spirit” and “breath” are synonymous in *our* acceptance of the words.

### **The spirit of man.**

It may be objected by the reader, that we are departing from the title of this series, viz., “What is Man?” but this is not so, as the establishing of the true meaning of *ruach* demands a wider field of search in order to institute comparisons. There must be some one common factor that is true both of “breath” and “spirit”, which seems to be the sense of an “invisible force”. Just as “water”, “bread”, “fruit”, etc., have their spiritual counterparts, justified by some common factor, so breath and spirit having something in common are both good translations of *ruach*. We have never yet found anyone insisting that the “water” of life must of necessity be chemically composed of hydrogen and oxygen, or that the “bread” of life must be made of wheaten flour. Christ Himself could say, “My *meat* is to do the will of Him that sent Me”, using the word “meat” in exactly the same way.

Man “became a living soul”, according to Gen. ii. 7, not at the moment that he was formed of the dust of the ground, but after some further work of creative power had been performed. There, in Gen. ii. 7, we have discovered that it is the gift of *n’shamah*, which man does not share with the brute creation. Here we shall find that *ruach* is a wider term embracing all that live, whether possessing the more exclusive *n’shamah* of life or not.

There is an old difficulty that is continually cropping up in new forms. Because animals have *ruach* and man has *ruach*, the argument has been put forward that men are no better than the brute of creation; but stay, God also has *ruach*. Can we dare go on with this argument?

We shall have to be pardoned by those who appreciate this point, for the sake of those who do not. Take the following argument: “Devon is in England; I am in England; therefore I am in Devon.” As a matter of fact these words are being written in Essex. The fault in this argument lies in the failure to realize that the term “England” is a much wider one than “Devon”. Both “Devon” and “Essex” can be in “England” without necessitating the conclusion, “Therefore Devon and Essex are synonymous terms”. Change the names to *ruach* and *n’shamah*, beast and man. Animals are within the sphere of *ruach*; man, angels and even God Himself are within the sphere of *ruach*, but this does not prove that they are all on one common level any more than the former argument proved that Devon and Essex were the same. We have purposely avoided the set phraseology of logic—those who are logicians do not need it.

We must now extend the limits of our survey, for Old and New Testaments have points of teaching that should be considered together. Happily there is no need to demonstrate that the N.T. equivalent for *ruach* is the Greek word *pneuma*, and so we shall, without further explanation, quote either word. Let us look at some of the statements of Scripture as to the spirit of man:--

“Your whole spirit and soul and body” (I Thess. v. 23).

“The spirit of man which is in him” (I Cor. ii. 11).

“The spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. xii. 23).

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it” (Eccles. xii. 7).

“The Lord which . . . . formeth the spirit of man within him” (Zech. xii. 1).

Each passage quoted demands separate study, and all we can do at the moment is to draw attention to certain obvious facts, viz., that “spirit” is spoken of as part of a “whole” man; that spirit is “in him” and “formed within him”; that at death the spirit returns to God Who gave it, and in resurrection the spirits of just men are made perfect. A disembodied spirit is entirely outside the scriptural account of the condition of man.

The spirit of man is associated with mind, courage, anger, knowledge. We read that Esau’s wives were “a grief of *mind*” to Isaac and Rebecca. Could anyone be found who would demand the translation, “grief of *breath*”? So with Prov. xxix. 11; Ezek. xi. 5; xx. 32.

Paul makes use of the fact that man has a “spirit in him” which is connected with conscience and inner knowledge: “For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (I Cor. ii. 11).

We purposely refrain from including such passages as Rom. viii. 16, “The Spirit . . . . beareth witness with our spirit”, for these refer not to man by nature but under grace and in possession of a new nature called “spirit”, which is quite another subject. All that we hope to have accomplished is to have drawn attention to the fact that the belief that man does not put on immortality until resurrection, and the repudiation of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, do not necessitate the denial that man has “a spirit in him”, and that both by creation and by destiny he is far removed from the brute creation, and indeed is “for a little lower than the angels”.

**#4. “A little lower than the angels” (Psa. viii. 5).  
pp. 139 - 143**

There are two Psalms in which David asks and answers the question, “What is man?”

“Lord, what is man, that Thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that Thou makest account of him! Man is like to vanity, his days are as a shadow that passeth away” (Psa. cxliv. 3, 4).

But instead of this conclusion leading David to consider that man has no place in the scheme of things, and that his little world and span are but a drop in the ocean, it causes him immediately to call upon the Lord: “Bow Thy heavens, O Lord, and come down, touch the mountains and they shall smoke” (verse 5). And all this with the object of delivering one who at first sight was of so little account.

When we turn to the other Psalm of David where this question occurs, we find even less reason for unscripturally belittling man:--

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained, What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him?” (Psalm viii. 3, 4).

Unless we give good heed to the actual teaching of this Psalm, we are liable to become the victims of a false comparison. When man looks away from himself to the vastness of the heavens, the myriads, the immensity of it all is overwhelming, yet is the pessimism of the poet not justified when he wrote:--

“Stately purpose, valour in battle, splendid annals of army and fleet,  
Death for the right cause, death for the wrong cause, shouts of triumph, sighs of defeat.

\* \* \* \* \*

Raving politics, never at rest while this poor earth’s pale history runs:  
What is it all but the murmur of gnats in the gleam of a million million suns?”

Ecclesiastes expresses a similar thought. Because it ends in death, all such activity is vanity. This is a true conclusion, but the poet has been misled by the mere comparison of size and bulk, which is a false basis to work upon.

An astronomer, similarly overwhelmed by this irrelevant logic of size, as Fitchett aptly calls it in his *Unrealized Logic of Religion*, observed that if God dispatched one of His angels to discover this tiny planet, Earth, amongst all the glittering hosts of the stars, it would be like sending a child out upon some vast prairie to find a speck of sand at the root of a blade of grass. This would be very terrible if true, but in its implication it is false. Scripture does not speak of these millions of suns and planets, and the earth as one of them. Its constant language is “the heavens and the earth”, with no thought concerning their disproportion so far as size is concerned. When dealing with moral worth, do we

think in terms of inches and avoirdupois? Does not a mother's love regard the tiny babe at her breast as of incomparably more value than the great house in which she lives?

David was under no misapprehension in the matter when he uttered the words of Psa. viii. Instead of answering his question, "What is man?" as a modern pessimist would do, he looks at it in a God-taught way, and speaks of man's destiny and dominion. He does not speak of man's insignificance as compared with the vastness of the heavens, but he contemplates the moon and the stars, evidently with Gen. i. in mind, he sees that this vast fabric was made with man in view: that God was working out a purpose, and that the magnificence of that purpose puts the argument from relative size completely aside. David does not merely say "What is man?" but, "What is man that Thou art *mindful* of him, and visitest him?"

The word *mindful*, *zakar*, is used in connection with remembering a covenant:--

"I will remember My *covenant* . . . . that I may remember the everlasting *covenant*" (Gen. ix. 15, 16).

"And God remembered His *covenant*" (Exod. ii. 24; *also see* vi. 5).

"He will ever be *mindful* of His *covenant* . . . . He hath commanded His *covenant* for ever" (Psa. cxi. 5 and 9).

From one point of view, man may partake of what is fleeting and insignificant, but it is in his relation to the purpose of the ages that his real position is seen. Israel were reminded of this principle:--

"The Lord did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because He would keep the oath which He had sworn unto your fathers" (Deut. vii. 7, 8).

The word *visited*, *pagad*, of Isa. viii. 4 naturally follows upon remembrance of the covenant:--

"I will *visit* you, and perform My good word toward you" (Jer. xxix. 10).

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath *visited* and redeemed His people . . . . to perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant . . . . the Day-spring from on high hath *visited* us" (Luke i. 68-78).

David therefore in Psa. viii. has in view the fact that man is in covenant relationship with God, and in harmony with that fact is his place in the scheme of things.

In the background (verse 2) and the *subscription* (which in the A.V. is wrongly placed as the *superscription* of Psa. ix., *see The Companion Bible* Appendixes 64 and 65, section XIII) is "the enemy and the avenger". *Upon muth-labben* means "death to the champion". This refers to the death of Goliath. In I Sam. xvii. 4 the "champion" is *ish* = "man", and *habbenayim* = "between the two", i.e., "the man between the two (hosts)".

The Septuagint title of Psa. cxliv., to which we have already referred, is “a Psalm of David concerning Goliath”. There is, therefore, some scriptural connection between these portions which, rightly appreciated, will help us in our understanding of them. Goliath was not only gigantic in stature, but blasphemous in his defiance of the God of Israel. David was but a “stripling”, a “youth” (I Sam. xvii. 33), but we remember that Psa. viii. 2 declares that: “out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast Thou ordained strength because of Thine enemies, that Thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.” Goliath, we are told, “disdained” the youthful David (I Sam. xvii. 42) and cursed him “by his gods” (I Sam. xvii. 43), but, except for a sling, David went against him unarmed, “in the name of the Lord of Hosts . . . . Whom thou hast defied” (I Sam. xvii. 45), and was thus assured of victory: “that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel” (I Sam. xvii. 46). Is there not an echo of this in the opening and closing words of Psa. viii.: “O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in *all the earth!*”

David’s conflict with Goliath, and the use made by God of a stripling against the seed of the Serpent and his god, is but a type of the great conflict of the ages, with man placed upon the earth, no match, apparently, for the great spiritual enemy he has to meet, yet ultimately triumphant because of the great purpose of the ages. So David begins to answer his own question:--

“For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands, etc.” (Psa. viii. 5-8).

The word “angels” is the Hebrew *Elohim*, rendered “God” in a multitude of passages. That it can bear a lower meaning Psa. xcvi. 7 testifies: “Worship Him, all ye *gods*.” Heb. i. 6 says, “Let all the angels of God worship Him”, and Heb. ii. 7 uses the word “angel” in quoting Psa. viii. Again, Psa. lxxxii. says:--

“God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; He judgeth among the *gods* . . . . I have said ye are *gods*, and all of you are children of the Most High. But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.”

We know from I Cor. x. 20 that there is a definite connection between idolatry and demons. Satan makes it manifest in the temptation of the Lord and the establishment of the beast (Matt. iv. and Rev. xiii.) that his object is to divert the worship of mankind to himself. Man by his creation was made after the image and likeness of God, made a little lower than the angels, and, did he but act in harmony with his creation, proof against ever worshipping “the image and likeness” of anything on earth or in heaven.

Man at his creation was given dominion over the works of God’s hands. Could we, for example, speak of the noblest specimen of the brute creation, e.g., a horse, or a dog, in any of the terms used in Psa. viii.? That there has been a fall the Scriptures testify. That man can sink lower than the brute creation is seen alike on the pages of Scripture and of secular history. These both call aloud for redemption and restoration. Psalm viii., however, says nothing as to the *nature* of man. Heb. ii., after quoting part of Psa. viii., adds:--

“But now we see not yet all things put under him, but we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour” (verses 8 and 9).

In I Cor. xv. the Lord Jesus is called “the last Adam”, and “the second man”. Rom. v. says that Adam was a figure of Him that was to come. Christ became man, because man, though fallen into the bondage of sin and death, is destined (in resurrection glory) to dominion.

“For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come . . . . For verily He took not hold of angels” (Heb. ii. 5-16).

Members of the church of the one body, though sons of Adam, and fallen at that, are destined to a sphere of glory “far above all principality and power” (Eph. i.). The Corinthians saints were told that they should one day judge angels (I Cor. vi. 3).

With the testimony before us of Gen. i. 26, 27, “image and likeness”, 28, “dominion”, Gen. ii. 7, the *n’shamah*, Psa. viii., “a little lower than the angels”, we can see that although man, as at present constituted, when compared with the mighty antagonists of the spiritual realm, is indeed a babe, a suckling, a stripling, nevertheless, in due time, the Satanic Goliath shall fall, and the Lord alone be exalted in the heavens and the earth, and man, in blessed association with THE *Son* of man and His victory over sin and death, shall fulfil his destiny, to the glory of God.

## **#5. Immortality and the resurrection. pp. 165 - 167**

There are but three passages in Scripture that speak of immortality, viz., I Cor. xv. 53, 54, and I Tim. vi. 16. These are the only occurrences of the word, which in Greek is *athanasia*. Where we read “immortality” in Rom. ii. 7 and II Tim. i. 10 it is *aphtharsia*, incorruption, and in I Tim. i. 17 *aphthartos*, incorruptible, which, though allied to, must not be confused with, the subject of this series.

The contexts in which the word immortality occurs all deal with resurrection, including a resurrection body. Moreover, the word is a negative; it speaks of a state where death is not, and had not Adam brought death into the world, there would have been no necessity to use its negation, *immortality*.

It will be of service if we observe the way in which this word “immortality” occurs at the moment when the truth is brought forward that resurrection cancels the death brought in by Adam. There had evidently been a controversy at Corinth concerning the resurrection of the dead. Some had said, “There is no resurrection of the dead” (I Cor. xv. 12), while others had said, “How are the dead raised up, and with what body

do they come?" (I Cor. xv. 35). To all these questions the apostle gives answer. In the course of his argument he tells us that "by man came death", and that "all in Adam die"; and further, that death, the last enemy, is to be destroyed. Near the conclusion he says:--

"The dead shall raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (I Cor. xv. 52, 53).

It is evident that the "we" here who are "changed" are the "mortal" who put on "immortality". It is the term used to express the great change at resurrection. And when this great change shall have come, both to living and dead, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. xv. 54).

In Luke xx. 35, 36 we have confirmation of this association of deathlessness with resurrection:--

"They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead . . . . *neither can they die any more.*"

This virtually is immortality. Had this close connection of the word "immortality" with the resurrection been observed, the idea of the immortality of the "soul" would have been impossible. Resurrection from the dead is the distinctive revelation of the Scriptures, and those who hold to its teaching have no need for the false surmises of philosophy.

The word "immortal", as we have seen, is a negative, the positive being the word "mortal". This we find in I Cor. xv. 53, 54; II Cor. iv. 11; Rom. vi. 12 and viii. 11. We have already seen that the references in I Cor. xv. are to literal and future resurrection. The other passages deal with present anticipation of resurrection, or desire for it:--

"For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our *mortal flesh*" (II Cor. iv. 11).

"For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that *mortality* might be swallowed up of life" (II Cor. v. 4).

"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be *dead* unto sin, but *alive* unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your *mortal body*" (Rom. vi. 11, 12).

"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* by His Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Rom. viii. 11).

There can be no doubt as to this evidence: immortality and a resurrection body (no mere "unclothed" condition will answer) are almost synonymous.

There is only one passage that we have omitted, and that is I Tim. vi. 15 and 16:--

"The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see."

This passage, we doubt not, speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ. The title "Potentate" does not seem to be a fitting one for God the Father, for *dynastes* is used of the Ethiopian eunuch who, though great authority, was nevertheless "under Candace" the Queen (Acts viii. 27). The title, however, is appropriate to the Lord Jesus Christ while the ages run their course. There is no need to prove that "King of kings" and "Lord of lords" are the legitimate titles of Christ. There is, however, a difficulty at first when we think of the Saviour "dwelling in light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to Whom be honour and power everlasting"; but when we remember the effect of that glory upon Paul (Acts ix.), and John (Rev. i.), we gain some idea of the impossibility of any man "approaching unto" or "seeing" it until raised and changed into the same glorious likeness.

Christ *only* hath immortality, for He *only* has been raised from the dead to die no more. All others, like Lazarus, have been raised, but not "made alive". If this passage speaks of the risen Christ therefore, we have an undivided witness, that "mortal" and "immortal" have reference to the "flesh" and the "body", either in its present state or in that of a glorious resurrection. Let us hold fast the form of sound words.

## Words in Season.

### #10. “Thou shalt not desire.” pp. 93, 94

In a previous paper we touched upon the question of “desire”, and found among other things that both the flesh and the spirit have “desires”, and that these are opposite the one to the other. The light in which our “desires” are viewed by the Lord may be seen by observing the opening and closing words of the ten commandments:--

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”  
“Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour’s house.”

The reader may object to the alteration of the word “covet”, but he will find that the A.V. has put the alternative translation of the same Hebrew word in Deut. v. 21.

If the relation between these two commandments means anything, it reveals essentially two deities. To follow one’s own desires is incipient atheism. The Gentiles, unilluminated by the law of God, plunged in ignorance and darkness, alienated from the life of God, and living “in the desires of the flesh, doing the will of the flesh and mind” (Eph. ii. 3), were “without God” (*atheoi*, Eph. ii. 12). In other words, we are, all of us, serving either God or mammon, God or self, God or the flesh; and the vehicle of that service is “desire”.

Desire operated in the garden of Eden. We think immediately of the statement concerning Eve:--

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant (margin, a desire) to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise” (Gen. iii. 6).

Desire is certainly prominent in this temptation, for two different Hebrew words are used, but it should be remembered that not only did the Serpent use desire as a means to his ends, but the Lord used it also.

“Every tree that is *pleasant* to the sight” (Gen. ii. 9).

The word “pleasant” here is the word “desire” in Gen.iii. 6.

By our desires we are led, and desire is at the bottom of both sin and service. It was the realization of this that overwhelmed Paul and as he says, “slew him”. As a Pharisee of the Pharisees he was “blameless” as touching the righteousness of the law, but, “one day”, he says, “the commandment *came*, sin revived, and I died” (Rom. vii. 9). Now the commandment that “came” was not that which enjoined some extreme obedience; it was simply, “Thou shalt not desire” (Rom. vii. 7), the complement, as we have seen, of the command, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”. If this be the law, then salvation

is impossible under it. This demands a renewed mind—the gift of a new nature, the Spirit, to take the place of the old nature, the flesh.

The crucifixion of the old man is in practice the crucifixion of desire.

“Walk in spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the desires of the flesh” (Gal. v. 16).

“They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its affections and desires” (Gal. v. 24).

Where does this lead? Are we to be merely passive? No, for that means opening the door to unseen yet great powers of evil. It is for us to recognize that God’s will is supreme, that our new nature desires nothing more and nothing less than that will of God. Mere personal desires sink before that perfect will of God. Instead of mere passivity there is a glorious opportunity for real activity.

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice . . . . be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. xii. 1, 2).

The working of these two desires may be seen in Psa. lxxiii., and we may have to confess that the language of Asaph is by no means foreign to our experience. The old desire was manifested in his “envy” at the prosperity of the wicked, which is perhaps best summed up in the words of verse 7 (margin): “Their eyes stand out with fatness: *they pass the thoughts of the heart.*” The new desire expressed is the result of entering into the sanctuary of God. Then the same Asaph can say: “There is none upon earth that I *desire* beside Thee” (verse 25). When that is the true expression of the heart and life, we shall be led by the Spirit indeed, and shall have approached one step nearer to Him Who could say: “I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent Me” (John v. 30).

## Specially for Young People.

### #5. Bethel and Peniel.

pp. 9 - 13

There are two experiences in the life of Jacob that provide valuable lessons for all who seek God and His will. The first is at Bethel, and the second at Peniel.

The circumstances that led to Bethel give point to the grace that was there manifested. Let us note them:--

1. Jacob had practiced deceit upon his father, Isaac (Gen. xxvii. 19).
2. Jacob had incurred his brother's anger (Gen. xxvii. 41).
3. Jacob was compelled to flee for his life (Gen. xxvii. 42, 43).

Yet in spite of these serious departures from truth, he is not sent away from home without receiving the covenant blessing that both he and his mother had plotted in vain to obtain (Gen. xxviii. 3, 4). The journey to Haran begins, and the first halt is made at a place called Luz (Gen. xxviii. 19). Now this name has a bearing upon the story, and we will therefore consider its meaning.

*Luz* means to turn aside, decline or depart, and in the six places where it occurs (Prov. ii. 15; iii. 21, 32; iv. 21, and Isa. xxx. 12) it is translated "depart", "froward" and "perverse". We are certain that Jacob would be sensitive on this first day of banishment from home, and the significance of his "departure", coupled with his "perverseness", would be impressed upon him. In Gen. xxx. 37 we meet the word *luz* again in the masculine, where it is translated "hazel", probably because the tree is flexible and easily bent. Now the Arabic word *luz* means an almond tree, and Jacob would probably be conversant with this fact, although there is another word in the Hebrew for almond, which means "to watch", the almond being one of the first to blossom in Spring. This forms a point of teaching in Jeremiah:--

"I see a rod of an almond tree . . . . I will hasten (or watch over) My word to perform it" (Jer. i. 11, 12).

"Like as I have *watch over* them to pluck up . . . . so will I *watch over* them to build . . . ." (Jer. xxxi. 28).

Jacob would certainly know the first meaning of *luz*, "depart" and "perverse"; he might also know the second, "the almond", and whether he at first realized it or not, he was to learn the blessed lesson of free grace, that, perverse as he may be in himself, the Lord would "watch" over His Word to perform it. As a result of the dream that God gave him at Luz, Jacob changed its name to Bethel, which means "The house of God", saying:--

“Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it now. And he was afraid, and said How dreadful is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Gen. xxviii. 16, 17).

### **The gate of heaven.**

What is the truth revealed in this gate of heaven? We shall expect that it will be fundamental, elementary, and something suggestive of a beginning. The gate will have to be entered, the house occupied, the Lord of that house known, but these are experiences that will follow. The first feature of this revelation to Jacob is the fact of

### **An unchanging covenant.**

“I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac” (Gen. xxviii. 13).

What did this mean to Jacob? God had declared to Abraham that He would establish His covenant with him and his seed after him, “to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee . . . . I will be their God” (Gen. xvii. 7, 8). What did it mean to Isaac for God to reveal Himself to him as the God of Abraham?

“And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and will multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham’s sake” (Gen. xxvi. 24).

What did it mean later on in life to Jacob?

“Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty” (Gen. xxxi. 42).

This covenant with Abraham was the first feature in Israel’s deliverance from Egypt (Exod. ii. 24; iii. 6, 15; vi. 8). It reappears in Acts iii. 13, 25 in connection with Israel’s restoration, and its inner meaning is manifested in Rom. xi. 28, 29:--

“As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the election, they are beloved for the father’s sakes, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

Translated into terms of Christian teaching, this first lesson at the gate of heaven must be expressed in some such language as that of Eph. i. 4: “Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world”, or the following:--

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (II Tim. i. 9).

“We love Him because He first loved us” (I John iv. 19).

The next lesson that we learn at the gate of heaven is

## Amazing grace.

Jacob, the cheat, the exile, might well have felt that he had forfeited the favour of the Lord. The idea of meeting God on his journey might well have filled him with terror. But there is no rebuke, no reproach, no allusion to his failure, but a *gift* and a *blessing*. “The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed” (Gen. xxviii. 13). This is still the character of God, and is expressed in His gospel:--

“Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound” (Rom. v. 20).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith . . . . it is the gift of God” (Eph. ii. 8).

God is One Who “giveth liberally, and upbraideth not” (James i. 5).

This association of amazing grace and covenant faithfulness is next expressed in a series of promises made to Jacob.

1. I am with thee. PRESENCE.
2. I will keep thee. PRESERVATION.
3. I will bring thee again. PROMISE.

### Presence: “I am with thee.”

It will be remembered that the presence of the Lord was included in the revelation already cited to Isaac in Gen. xxvi. 24: “I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee.” When the time came for Jacob to return to his own land, this essential feature is repeated: “Return unto the land of thy fathers, and thy kindred: and I will be with thee” (Gen. xxxi. 3). Moses knew the supreme importance of this blessing: “My presence shall go with thee . . . . If Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence” (Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15). For ourselves, such a passage as Heb. xiii. 5, 6 may well express the truth to us:--

“He hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”

### Preservation: “I will keep thee.”

The Lord will keep his people in “perfect peace” (Isa. xxvi. 3), while the peace of God itself shall keep their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phil. iv. 7). The Lord will keep His people as a man tends a vineyard: “I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day” (Isa. xxvii. 3).

While thinking of this wondrous “keeping”, we do well to remember Who it is that keeps:--

“My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper . . . . the Lord shall preserve thee

from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore” (Psa. cxxi.).

Jude 24, 25 gives us the Christian equivalent, saying:--

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

**Promise: “I will bring thee again.”**

Restoration is the blessed goal of the O.T. prophets. Isa. lii. 8 and Jer. l. 19 are but samples. Gen. xlviii. 21, Jacob’s dying remembrance of restoration, is echoed by Joseph (Gen. l. 25). Restoration was the uppermost question of the apostles after forty days’ instruction by the risen Lord (Acts i. 6), and the burning theme of Pentecost (Acts iii. 19-26).

The words in the English version that begin with *re* are but various facets of this one blessed truth. *Resurrection* brings again from the dead, *redemption* brings back again from bondage; *reconciliation* brings the exile back to God.

“For I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of” (Gen. xxviii. 15).

“I have *done* that which *I have spoken*.” Here all focuses upon the Lord and His faithful Word. We, to-day, have no other basis for our salvation and our hope. Let us rejoice in the God of Bethel” (Gen. xxxi. 13).

In our next paper we must pursue our journey with Jacob from this gate of heaven and house of God to Peniel where another experience is described for our blessing.

## #6. Bethel and Peniel. pp. 46, 47

In our previous paper we considered some of the lessons that are taught by the record of Jacob's dream at Bethel. This we saw was his first real contact with God; it was the gate of heaven to Jacob. There followed this initial vision a great variety of experiences, all having a special relation to Jacob's peculiar nature and position, but by love and hate, failure and success he was led step by step along the road to the next great experience of his life which took place at Peniel. There is a real connection between Bethel and Peniel, not only in the fact that both places were named by Jacob as a result of his experiences, but because the return journey to Peniel was undertaken upon the express command of the God of Bethel:--

"I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto Me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred" (Gen. xxxi. 13).

There is a gracious touch in the way God brings to mind the gratitude of Jacob at Bethel as expressed in the act of anointing the stone, and making the vow.

The experience associated with Bethel we discovered had some connection also with the original place name, Luz. We shall find again here, in this second great experience, that the name of the place contributes to the lesson. Peniel, where Jacob saw the face of God, was on the banks of the ford Jabbok, and Jabbok means *emptying* (Jer. li. 2; Isa. xxiv. 1). This connection has ever been true.

Job had maintained his integrity; he had said:--

"My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go; my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live" (xxxvii. 6).

"Oh that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with argument" (xxiii. 3, 4).

But when at last he was led into the presence of God he found himself at his Jabbok—*emptying*. He, too, was touched in the hollow of his thigh, and instead of argument he said:--

"Behold I am vile, what shall I answer Thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth" (xl. 4).

"I have heard of Thee with the hearing of my ear; but now mine eye seeth Thee, Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (xlii. 5, 6).

Isaiah had prophesied against Israel, speaking of their rebellion and corruption. He had warned of coming judgment. He had said, "Woe unto them" six times over in chapter v. Then, suddenly, he cries, "Woe is me" (chapter vi.). Isaiah, when he entered the temple, stood upon the banks of his Jabbok—*emptying*. He, too, had to be touched—

this time with a live coal from off the altar. Isaiah who had spoken so directly to the people about their sins, suddenly cries:--

“Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE KING”  
(Isa. vi. 5).

Other instances will occur to the reader. Daniel, Paul and John, all stood upon the same ford Jabbok as a prelude to Peniel.

It is at this place that we read the first real recorded prayer of Scripture (Gen. xxxii. 9-12). In this passage we find the following features:--

- A | The pleading of covenant interest.—“O God of my father Abraham.”
- B | A reminder of God’s promise.—“Return . . . I will deal well . . .”
- C | Confession of unworthiness.—“I am not worthy.”
- C | Acknowledgment of blessing.—“ I am become two bands.”
- B | A request for God’s protection.—“Lest he . . . smite . . .”
- A | The pleading of covenant interest.—“Thy seed as the sand.”

The wrestling at Jabbok is in structural correspondence with this prayer, and the recognition of this will help us somewhat in the understanding of the passage. Further, it must be remembered that the introduction of Esau so prominently here is the echo of the earlier vision at Bethel.

- A | Hatred of Esau.
- B | Bethel.—His vow.
- B | Peniel.—His vow.
- A | Reconciliation of Esau.

This, with the omission of much detail, is the ground plan of the passage: the fear of Esau is uppermost throughout.

*(To be concluded).*

**#6. (concluded). Bethel and Peniel.**  
**pp. 62, 63**

Consider the following alliterative headings:--

The PRAYER (9-11).		The PRESENT (13, 18, 20).
The PREVAILING (25, 28).		The PRINCE (28).
The PRESERVATION (30).		PENIEL (30).

Here at Peniel Jacob became Israel. By the ford of Jabbok—where he received that touch cause him ever after to halt—here he saw the face of God, and ceased contending and clung tightly.

Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians breathes much of the atmosphere of Peniel:--

“We had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead” (i. 9).

“The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (iv. 6).

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” (iv. 7).

“I besought the Lord thrice” (xii. 8).

“My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me . . . . for when I am weak, then am I strong” (xii. 9, 10).

Here are both Jabbok and Peniel; the wrestling (II Cor. xii. 8) and the resting (II Cor. xii. 10); the shrinking of the sinew and the halting & limping (II Cor. xii. 9, 10).

Bethel and Peniel represent two stages in Christian progress. The young believer is warned against despondency. At first all goes with a swing, but after a while Jabbok must be crossed, and in the fuller vision of the Lord one's own unworthiness (Gen. xxxii. 10; Eph iii. 8; I Tim. i. 13), and unfitness (Isa. vi.) take on new shapes, boasting in self receives a death blow, and trust in Him that raiseth the death becomes more real and more vital. Thank God for both Bethel and the gate of heaven, with its vows and its encouragement, and thank God for Peniel and its Jabbok, with its confessions and humbling. Both are needed on the pilgrim journey of faith.