

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,

As we pen these opening words, our minds travel back over the years to 1914, when we wrote the foreword to Volume IV, in the shadow of the Great War. We find no mention there of the fearful conflict then raging, but instead, an expansion of the words:

“Greater light, deeper love, richer liberty, fuller life, in Christ.”

Since that year, what experiences have been ours! What failures of the flesh, what triumphs of grace have marked our path! Twenty-five years of unpopular testimony have filled the interval; many precious lessons have been learned; much truth made clear; mysteries resolved; interpretations discovered; and joy in the Lord and His Word deepened—yet when all has been said, we find it impossible—even in the darker days that may await us—to ask for our readers anything better than the prayer of 1914:

“Greater light, deeper love, richer liberty, fuller life, in Christ.”

Yours in the truth that makes free,

CHARLES H. WELCH
FREDERICK P. BRININGER
PHILIP DIVE

December, 1939.

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The Acts of the Apostles.

#31. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20). The Vision at Troas (xvi. 6 - 11). pp. 21 - 25

In our last article we left the Apostle, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, delivering to the churches the decrees that had been ordained at Jerusalem. So far this being a retrograde movement, as some have supposed, owing to a confusion between the two separate issues that were before the assembly at Jerusalem (Acts xv.), this was undoubtedly a step towards growth and peace, the inspired comment being:

“And *so* (or ‘then indeed’) were the churches established in this faith, and increased in number daily” (Acts xvi. 5).

Our new section (Acts xvi. 6 - xix. 20), a section fraught with the greatest interest to every believing Gentile (for in this second missionary journey, the gospel was first proclaimed in Europe) opens with a geographical reference that has only been fully understood in recent times. Commenting on the words: “Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia” (Acts xvi. 6), Conybeare and Howson write:

“We are evidently destitute of materials for laying down the route of St. Paul and his companions. All that relates to Phrygia and Galatia must be left vague and blank, like an unexplored country in a map.”

All this has, happily, been altered since the completion of the archaeological labours of Sir William Ramsay. We do not intend going into detail here, but we would recommend Sir William Ramsay’s writings on this point to any interested reader. His researches have an important bearing on the dating of the Epistle to the Galatians and other matters in connection with the churches of Galatia, but we must leave these points and pass on to consider the purpose of this journey, as planned by the Apostle and actually led by the Lord. The reader is advised to consult the rough map given in Volume XXVIII, p.232, at each stage in the progress recorded in Acts xvi. 6 - xxviii. 22, as an intelligent grasp of the geography of the route is a considerable asset.

Acts xvi. 6-11.
The Vision of the Man of Macedonia.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|----------------------|
| A | | 6-8. NEGATIVE. "Forbidden." | | |
| | a | Asia. Preach (<i>Laleo</i>). | \ | "They" (Paul, Silas, |
| | b | Bithynia. Assayed to go. | / | Timothy). |
| B | | 9-10. "Enlightened." | | |
| | c | Vision appeared. | \ | |
| | d | Man of Macedonia. | \ | "He", |
| | d | Come over and help us. | / | Paul. |
| | c | After he had seen the vision. | / | |
| A | | 10, 11. POSITIVE. "Called." | | |
| | b | Endeavoured to go. | \ | "We" (Luke |
| | a | Preach (<i>Euaggelizo</i>) unto them. | / | joins them). |

The structure of this section is simple but nevertheless useful. The reader should notice the unobtrusive way in which Luke indicates, by the use of the pronoun "We", his presence at Troas, and then on through the journey up to Acts xvii. 1, where the pronoun is again dropped until xx. 5—from which point it continues to the end of the narrative.

The story of the first preaching of the gospel in Europe falls into three parts. First, we have the closing of doors in Asia Minor, then the opening of the door at Troas, and finally the entry through that newly-opened door into Macedonia. From the contemplation of this record, one great principle emerges, a principle which is true for all time, and for all classes of the Lord's people: namely, that the leading of the Lord is just as real when opportunities for service are closed by Him, as when they are opened. Apart from actually telling the Apostle in plain language that he must cross over to Macedonia, there does not appear to be any other way in which he could have been led, except by the use of compulsion, which is quite foreign to the Lord's method of dealing with his willing servants. There may have been also a need to test this little band, as they start on such a momentous journey. What was the compelling power that had led them thus far? An apparent rebuff would try their temper, would test the genuineness of their obedience, and would indicate whether it was the maturing of their own plans or the ready following of the Lord's leading that was uppermost in their hearts. There can hardly be a greater test for whole-heartedness than to have all one's ardour apparently rejected, to be ready to offer one's self upon the sacrifice and service of the gospel, only to be met with unexplained prohibitions. Yet all along there have been these seasons of trial. Paul himself had withdrawn earlier into Arabia; Moses before him had spent forty years in the desert. Let us remember that a closed door may be the unexpected answer to our prayers. The writer himself can say without exaggeration that some of the things for which he cannot be too thankful have been closed doors, even though they were bitterly disappointing at the time. If rightly accepted, the closed door urges us forward as it did the Apostle and his company. Being forbidden to "speak the Word in Asia", we can well understand that there could be no thought of turning back.

Striking northward until they came "over against" (*kata*) Mysia, they "assayed" to go into Bithynia. The word "assayed" is, in the original, *peirazo*, from *peiro*, "to pierce" or "perforate", and so "to test" or "make trial". In the Acts we find the word translated

“tempt” in v. 9 & xv. 10, and the noun form *peirasmōs* occurs in xx. 19 as “temptation”. In Acts ix. 26 we read that the Apostle “assayed” to join himself with the disciples at Jerusalem, the idea being that he naturally felt somewhat different about his reception, but made the attempt. It is right, therefore, for the believer, when faced with an apparently shut door, to try the latch, in case it merely needs a touch to open it, but there must be no forcing of the lock.

Failing to receive permission to enter Bithynia, these three devoted men went on their way once more, arriving in due course at Troas. We must not, of course, allow our imagination to invest these three way-worn travelers with a classical scholar’s interest in ancient Troy, but, on the other hand, it seems almost impossible for a man like Paul, brought up in the Cilician University City of Tarsus, famous for its philosophy and learning, not to have had some interest in the scene of Homer’s famous poem. And further, Troy was not only famous because of its legendary past, but on several memorable occasions it had been visited by men of world-wide renown. Here Xerxes had passed on his way to the attempted conquest of Greece; here also Alexander the Great, at the tomb of Achilles, had conceived his idea of world conquest. In Suetonius, also, we read:

“A report was very current, that he (Julius Cæsar) had a design of withdrawing to Alexandria or Ilium (Troy), whither he proposed to transfer the imperial power, to drain Italy by new levies, and to leave the government of the city to be administered by his friends” (Suetonius J. C. lxxix).

Where the conquerors of earthly territory had gathered inspiration or had cast their approving gaze, there the Apostle of the Gentiles, harbouring the vast design of traversing the length of the Roman empire in the cause of Christ, received his call to cross the sea, and plant the standard of the cross on European soil.

We can well believe that, having arrived at the sea coast, the Apostle and his companions would feel that they had reached a crisis. Either they must receive instructions to enter some specific territory, or there would seem nothing left but to return from whence they came. Earnest prayer would ascend to heaven before they retired to rest; and with what relief and thanksgiving they must have listened the next morning to the Apostle’s account of his vision. During the night he had seen a vision of a man of Macedonia, and the man had cried, “Come over and help us”. Not only would they be grateful for the fact that Asia and Bithynia had been closed to them, seeing that it had led to this fuller venture for the faith, but they would also realize that, had they stayed in either Asia or Bithynia, the Apostle might never have met that “beloved physician”, who not only ministered to the Apostle’s needs, but wrote the treatise we are at the moment studying.

Paul makes two references to Troas in his epistles:

“When I came to *Troas* to preach Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord” (II Cor. ii. 12).

“The cloke that I left at *Troas* with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments” (II Tim. iv. 13).

There is also a visit to Troas on the return to Jerusalem recorded in Acts xx. 5, 6.

Having heard the account of Paul's vision, we read that they "gathered assuredly" that the Lord had called them to preach the gospel in Macedonia. *Sumbibazo*, "to gather assuredly", is an interesting word, made up of *sum* "with", and *baino* "to go"—the idea being that these men of God "put two and two together", and made the vision "walk with" its interpretation. The word is used of the Apostle himself in Acts ix. 22, where, after his conversion, he was able, with the knowledge he already possessed of O.T. prophecy, to "prove" that the "Jesus" he had formerly persecuted was "the very Christ". He was enabled so to marshal his O.T. prophecies and made them "walk together" with the actual facts of the life of Jesus of Nazareth that many were convinced. There are three occurrences of the word in the epistles (Eph. iv. 16, Col. ii 2 and 19), in which the Apostle uses it with reference to the members of the body being "compacted" or "knit-together", but the same underlying thought of "going together" is evident upon examination. Here, therefore, as earlier, the Apostle and his companions exercised the "sound mind" that had been given them, and we can well imagine the surprise with which they would have listened to the idea sometimes put forward that "faith" and "reason" should be kept apart.

Hesitation and uncertainty now give place to directness and activity. "Immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia", says Luke; and this endeavour being successful, they loosed from Troas, and coming by a straight course to Samothracia, arrived on the next day at Neapolis (Acts xvi. 11). The "straight course" here must not be regarded as obvious and inevitable, for we learn from Acts xx. 6 that the return journey from Philippi to Troas occupied five days. The word translated "a straight course" is *euthudromeo*, which, according to Conybeare and Howson, is a technical expression meaning "to sail before the wind". The passage between Tenedos and Lemnos was not without some risk, owing to the proximity of very dangerous shoals (Purdy's *Sailing Dictionary*), and the hand of the Lord can be seen in giving a favourable passage.

At Neapolis, the Apostle set foot for the first time on European soil. This town is the modern Kavala, and served as a port for Philippi. As a port it left much to be desired, but as the great Via Egnatia (the military road through Macedonia) began here, it was the invariable landing-place for travelers crossing from the shores of Asia Minor.

The next section of the Acts opens with the words:

"And from thence to Philippi" (Acts xvi. 12).

We have heard the cry of the man of Macedonia, and we have seen the response to it. Everything is now ready for the first great proclamation of the gospel in Europe. An examination of this epoch-making visit must occupy our attention in the next article.

**#32. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).
Philippi. The First Converts (xvi. 12 - 15).
pp. 61 - 64**

Philippi! How poor the reception given by this city to the heralds of salvation, but how rich the response when the love of the truth had been received.

Luke speaks of Philippi in this passage as “the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony” (Acts xvi. 12). The actual capital was Amphipolis, and a writer composing a fictitious narrative would almost certainly have made the Apostle go straight to this city. Amphipolis had, however, fallen into insignificance, and Philippi, owing to its association with the battle between Octavius and Antony on the one side, and Brutus and Cassius on the other, had grown in importance. The victory won by Octavius was celebrated by making Philippi a colony, with the privilege of immunity from taxes. A table known as the “Pentinger Table” represents Philippi as a flourishing city, with houses drawn on the site, while Amphipolis, the capital, is only vaguely chronicled. The rival claims of Amphipolis and Philippi are not *in themselves* of great importance to us to-day, but they are interesting as demonstrating Luke’s veracity as a writer. Every item of proven history that is brought to light intensifies our appreciation of the fact that Luke had “accurately followed from the very first”, in order to give us “certainties”.

In connection with Acts xvi. 12, Bishop Wordsworth puts forward the suggestion that the word *meris*, translated “of that *part*” should be understood as referring to the frontier as *meros* is translated elsewhere “*coast* of Tyre and Sidon”, and “*coast* of Cæsarea” (Matt. xv. 21, xvi. 13). According to this view, the verse would read: “Philippi, which is chief of the border cities of Macedonia.”

Philippi was also a “colony”, and coins have been found bearing the inscription COL., AUG., JUL., PHILIP (i.e. *Colonia, Augusta, Julia, Philippensis*).

At this point it would perhaps be advisable to get some idea of the constitution of a Roman colony. The Greeks and the Romans looked at the world from two different points of view. The Greeks were philosophers, poets, artists, and their citizenship was intimately associated with their literature; hence for them the world was divided into “Greeks” and “Barbarians”. The Romans, however, “thought imperially”, each man being either politically a “Roman”, or else belonging to a people subjected to Roman rule. The Roman terms were *cives* and *peregrini*, “citizens” and “strangers”. The fundamental idea of a “colony” was that the city of Rome was, so to speak, transplanted and reproduced in some distant part of the Empire. The colonies were primarily intended as a protection at frontiers; and they also provided a means of settling and rewarding soldiers whose active service was over. The insignia of Rome were displayed in the city, and the Latin language was spoken and used on the coinage. The colonists paid poll-tax as citizens, and also a ground tax, as they were outside Italy. Philippi and Troas, however, had the special privilege of the *Jus Italicum*, which raised them to the same

state of immunity from taxation as belonged to Italy itself (Hoeck's *Romische Geschehte*). With these things in mind, the reader will realize that the passage in Phil. iii., which speaks of "our citizenship" being "in heaven" (verse 20) would mean much more to those who received the letter than is immediately obvious from the words used.

The fact that Philippi was a military centre would account for the smallness of the Jewish population, and also for the presence of Lydia of Thyatira, "a seller of purple". Thyatira had been famous from early days for the purple dye which was made there, from the shells of a mollusk commonly known as *Tyrian Purpura*. Homer mentions the purple dye of Lydia in the Iliad:

"And as by Lydian or by Carian maid
The purple dye is on the ivory laid" (Iliad iv. 141).

An inscription has also been found in the ruins of Thyatira, bearing the title "The Dyers".

To return to the narrative itself—upon arrival at Philippi, the apostles did not at once begin to preach, for we read that they "abode certain days". Then apparently, when the Sabbath day came, having already discovered that there was no synagogue in the city:

"We went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither" (Acts xvi. 13).

True to the dispensational character of the time, the Apostle keeps literally to the principle of "the Jew first" (Rom. i. 16) and waits until the Sabbath day. Finding no synagogue, and knowing the customs of his people, he turns to the river-side and finds there a place where "prayer was wont to be made". The word in the original is *proseuche*, and we learn from contemporary writers that this was an enclosure of circular shape, open to the sky, and near a river or the sea, because of the ablutions necessary in Jewish worship. Josephus records a number of decrees that were made by different rulers in connection with this custom. The following is one short extract:

"We have decreed, that as many men and women of the Jews as are willing so to do, may celebrate their Sabbaths, and perform their holy offices, according to the Jewish laws; and make their proseuchae at the seaside, according to the customs of their forefathers; and if any one, whether he be a magistrate or a private person, hindereth them from so doing, he shall be liable to a fine, to be applied to the uses of the city" (Ant. Bk. xiv. 10, 23).

Why only women are said to have resorted to this place of prayer is unexplained, but, whatever the reason, one can well imagine what a rebuff this reception would be to any false pride. However, the Apostle and his companions were led of the Lord, and were apparently willing to walk in His way. One at least of the women who listened would have caused the Apostle and his fellow-workers to exchange understanding glances. They had been forbidden to speak the word in Asia, and had traveled across the sea to preach to the men of Macedonia, and now, to their surprise and joy, their first convert is

found to be a woman belonging to the very province from which, as preachers, they had been excluded. The words “which worshipped God”, which appear in verse 14, indicate that Lydia was already a proselyte.

Lightfoot draws attention to the place that women occupied in Macedonia as follows:

“It may, I think, be gathered from St. Luke’s narrative, that her social position was higher in this country than in most parts of the civilized world. At Philippi, at Thessalonica, at Berea, the women—in some cases certainly, in all cases probably, ladies of birth and rank—take an active part with the apostle (Acts xvi. 13; xvii. 4, 12). It forms moreover a striking coincidence, and surely an undesigned coincidence, between the history and the epistle, that while in the former the gospel is related to have been first preached to women, and the earlier converts specially mentioned are women, in the latter we find the peace of the Philippian Church endangered by the feuds of two ladies of influence, whose zealous aid in the spread of the gospel the apostle gratefully acknowledges (Phil. iv. 2).”

There are no accidents in Divine Providence. It was peculiarly fitting that this new departure should be associated with a “colony”, a miniature Rome, and it is also suggestive, in view of the emancipating and enlightening doctrine, that the first to receive the gospel were women, and not men.

In verse 14 we read that Lydia’s heart was “opened”, and in the following verse we find her home opened also. The words “She constrained us” suggest that the Apostle did not readily accept her invitation. We know, however, that he fully acknowledged the right of every servant of the Lord to be maintained, at least, by those to whom he ministered; and he also declared that it would have been quite right for him to have been accompanied by a wife, or a sister in the Lord, but these privileges he had foregone lest his sincerity should be called in question.

The only other occurrence of the word translated “constrained” here is Luke xxiv. 29, where the Lord “made as though He would have gone further” (verse 28). Lydia’s trade would have demanded a considerable capital, and she may, therefore, have been a woman of means. The apostles would be grateful indeed to the Lord, Who had gone before, preparing a place for them, and raising up helpers who were willing to use their material possessions for the furtherance of the gospel.

**#33. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).
Satan's Attempt at Compromise, and Paul's Refusal (xvi. 12-15).
pp. 101 - 104**

If, speaking humanly, the reception which the Apostle received at Philippi was humbling to the flesh, subsequent events at the same city show how impossible it is to foresee what may be the sequel to a genuine call to preach in any particular place. One might be pardoned for expecting that, with the two closed doors in Asia and Bithynia, and the vision of the man of Macedonia, Philippi would have proved to be a place where great gatherings assembled to hear the Word, and converts were numbered by the hundred. A little experience, however, would modify these expectations, and the presence and persistence of an active enemy would be kept in mind. If Troas proved to be an open door, the Apostle's added words: "And there are many adversaries" most certainly fitted the situation. The first test encountered by the apostles was that of the out-of-the-way meeting place by the river side, and the fact that only some women were present. This was faithfully met, the situation accepted, and the Word preached. One heart was opened, and a household baptized, so that the first encounter was a victory of faith. What will be the next move on the part of the opposition? Instead of creating a disturbance and getting the Apostle expelled from the city, the enemy of truth changes his tactics and attempts to compromise the purity of the gospel. If Balaam cannot curse Israel, he will involve them in evil associations, and we have the testimony of Rev. ii. that this method of attack to which every faithful minister of the truth is peculiarly susceptible. Only those who have walked alone for years, because of the demands of the faith, can have any conception of the strength of the temptation to join up with this or that, so that the stigma of isolation and peculiarity may be removed. To capitulate, however, means a life's work shipwrecked; and we can see this drama enacted for our learning in the remainder of the section dealing with Philippi.

"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, that a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. And this she did many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out that same hour" (Acts xvi. 16-18).

The A.V., in the margin, draws attention to the fact that "spirit of divination" may be rendered "spirit of Python". As this encounter with the powers of darkness at Philippi occurs at a most critical period in the history of the preaching of the gospel, we must seek to get as full an understanding as possible of what this expression involves.

Speaking of the agency of evil spirits, the Rev. Walter Scott writes:

"Of all the devices which he has ever employed for these purposes, one of the most successful has been to invest, as far as he was able, error with the form, and to array it in the beauties of truth; to imitate all the methods which God has adopted to demonstrate the divinity of the true religion; and thus to transform himself into an angel of light. If

God has raised up true, Satan has raised up lying prophets. If God has commissioned his servants to work real miracles, Satan has employed his to exhibit counterfeit ones. If to the Jews were committed the oracles of God, to the heathen were committed the pretended oracles of Delphos and Dodona, and many others. If the intrinsic excellence and the purifying tendency of the doctrines of the gospel, and the beauties of holiness adorning the character of those who have been commissioned to publish them, are amongst the means which God has employed to recommend His truth, the servants of Satan have been transformed as the ministers of righteousness, and have pretended deep concern for the happiness of those to whom they have delivered their message. And it has been thought, and is maintained at the present day by some, that his giving answers by the oracles to which our attention is now to be directed, has been amongst the principal means by which he has carried on his intercourse with our fallen sinful world” (*Existence of Evil Spirits*).

There is a growing tendency to “explain away” the references to demon possession which we find in the Scriptures. It is suggested that our Lord merely accommodated Himself to the superstitions of the age, and that, if He had lived to-day, He would have called the disease by its true name of “epilepsy”. The symptoms recorded in Matt. xvii. 15, Mark ix. 17 and Luke ix. 39 are certainly very like those of epilepsy, but the Lord’s words clearly attribute these very symptoms to actual demon possession. The demoniacs of the Gospels do not express themselves as they would if they were insane or hypochondriacal (Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24); they answer question put to them in a rational way. They also recognize that they are possessed by demons (Mark v. 9), and the Lord commands these demons not to make Him known as the Messiah (Mark i. 34 margin). We also learn that these demoniacs knew that Jesus was the Son of God (Matt. viii. 29), and the Christ (Luke iv. 41). If he is at all uncertain, the reader should not remain satisfied with the few remarks given above, but should tabulate for himself all that is written in the Gospels in this connection. We believe that the result will be a conviction that actual demon possession is the truth of the matter.

The damsel that followed the Apostle at Philippi was “possessed with a spirit of Python”. Python, in Greek mythology, was the name given to the Serpent that was born of the mud left by the flood. The Serpent was killed by the god Apollo, to whom it was supposed that the Serpent’s powers of prophecy and oracular utterance were transferred. Apollo’s prophecy was at Delphi, where a priestess called *Pythia* gave cryptic replies to questioners’ enquiries.

The following are some of the cases of Satanic opposition encountered at various stages of the apostolic witness:

- (1) At the entry of the gospel into Samaria, we find Satanic opposition represented by Simon the Sorcerer. This man “believed”, but had very questionable ideas concerning the bestowal of the Holy Spirit (Acts viii. 9-24).
- (2) At the entry of the gospel into Galatia, under the separate ministry of Paul and Barnabas, we find again Satanic opposition represented by Elymas the Sorcerer, who was smitten with blindness, “not seeing the sun for a season” (Acts xiii. 6-11).
- (3) At the entry of the gospel into Europe, we find Satanic opposition represented by the damsel possessed with the spirit of Python. This spirit was cast out (Acts xvi. 16-18).

- (4) When Athens was visited, the city of the world's wisdom, the name of the Lord was confused with those of the demons that played a prominent part in Greek idolatry, for the philosophers said: "He seemeth to be a setter-forth of strange demons" (Acts xvii. 18).
- (5) At the separation of the church from the synagogue, we read that "certain vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus". These men were overpowered and wounded (Acts xix. 13-16).

There is no reason to doubt that "Python" was simply another name for "that old Serpent, the Devil", and the Apostle was not going beyond his experience when he spoke the comforting words of Rom. xvi. 20: "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

We observe here—for our learning and warning—that this demon-possessed woman spoke words of truth. No fault can be found with her statement: "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation" (Acts xvi. 17).

This was certainly true, and the God Who sent them is given His true place and title. "The Most High God" is a title used elsewhere in the Acts by Stephen (Acts vii. 48). They were also truly described as "servants" on their own confession, for Paul uses the same word (*doulos*) again and again to define his own position as "a servant of Jesus Christ" (Rom. i. 1). There are but five words used in the original for the phrase: "Which show unto us the way of salvation", and we believe it would be difficult for the wisest Christian to express in five words a truer and fuller synopsis of apostolic witness. The word "show" here is *kataggello*, used in Acts xiii. 5, 38 & xv. 36 and elsewhere for Paul's "preaching". Also, the use of the word "Way" as a symbol of the gospel is masterly; the same word is used elsewhere in Acts ix. 2; xiii. 10; xviii. 26; xix. 9, 23; xxii. 4 and xxiv. 14. Here, then, we have a perfect presentation of truth. The Apostle and his companions are "servants", the One they serve is "The Most High God", and their great work is "to show unto us the way of salvation". Yet we read that the Apostle was grieved and commanded the spirit, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of the women—"And he came out the same hour." Satan has no conscience and no honour. He will persecute, imprison, and kill, or, on the other hand, he will quote Scripture and utter the most irreproachable commendation of the gospel and its messengers, but he has but one end—to deceive, to corrupt, to keep the Son of God, if possible, from His rightful throne.

As servants of the most high God, we must look deeper than the surface before we allow anyone to involve our ministry with theirs. They may give an unimpeachable testimony to the Truth, they may appear to be ministers of righteousness, and yet, all the time, they may be like the false apostles and emissaries of him who, for his own ends, comes as an "angel of light". The Apostles here was evidently sensible of "Satan's devices" and would not allow his ministry to be thus compromised. We are not, of course, endowed with any supernatural gift of infallibility, and there is a possibility that, at times, our concern for the sacred trust committed to us, may have caused us to refuse some proffered fellowship that would have been helpful. If this should have been so, He

Who judges the thoughts and intents of the heart will deal with us both righteously and in mercy.

**#34. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).
Paul and Silas, and the Philippian Jailer (xvi. 19 - 40).
pp. 141 - 146**

In Acts xvi. 16 we read that the damsel possessed by the spirit of Python “brought her masters much gain by soothsaying”. The word *ergasia*, “gain”, occurs four times in the Acts, and in each case we find it to be the motive behind the persecution of the Apostle (Acts xvi. 16, 19; xix. 24, 25). The flame of persecution, which was fanned by the Evil One, was directed to one end—to destroy the testimony of the gospel. The kind of instrument used to this end was immaterial so long as the end itself was achieved, and so we find him using both Jews and Gentiles. At one time was Saul of Tarsus, a Hebrew and a Pharisee, whose moral uprightness was such that he could write of that period of his life: “touching the righteousness of the law, blameless.” Saul would have scorned to have followed the rabble, or to have been moved by the desire for gain; nevertheless he persecuted the Church. The Jews, either by their religious leaders, or because of their own fanatical adherence to the tradition of their fathers, persecuted the Church. But we find that the Gentiles also persecuted the Church, moved by the fact that the Christian faith, by supplanting their idolatries, robbed them of their gains, and at length, Rome, the protector of the Apostle during the Acts, became the great persecutor of the Church under the awful rule of Nero and his successors.

During the period covered by the first fifteen chapters of the Acts we read of persecution arising from the following causes:

- (1) The leaders of Israel were grieved because the apostles preached, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead (Acts iv.).
- (2) The leaders of Israel were cut to the heart by Stephen’s speech. They stoned him, and another persecution was begun (Acts vii., viii. 1).
- (3) Saul of Tarsus, being troubled in his conscience (he was kicking against the goad at his conversion, ix. 5) organized a great persecution of the Church (Acts viii., ix.).
- (4) The Jews being incensed at Saul’s conversion and subsequent witness, took counsel to kill him (Acts ix. 23, 29).
- (5) Herod stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church. James was killed. Peter was imprisoned. He saw that it pleased the Jews (Acts xii.).
- (6) The Jews at Antioch, filled with envy at the evangelizing of the Gentiles, stirred up opposition—and expelled the apostles (Acts xiii.).
- (7) The Jews from Antioch and Iconium (apparently from envy and hatred) followed Paul to Lystra and stoned him, leaving him for dead (Acts xiv.).

At Acts xvi. we meet with the first *Gentile* persecution and another factor enters into the situation: “They saw that the hope of their gain was gone.” In a world composed as it is of religious zeal and sordid greed, it is practically impossible to witness for the truth

without touching the interests and arousing the antagonism of one or other of these representative opponents. When one reads a funeral eulogy which declares that the man who has died “had not an enemy in the world”, one is inclined to think: He did nothing, therefore, in the cause of truth.

Returning to Acts xvi., we find that Paul and Silas are caught and taken before the rulers, the charge against them being:

“These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans” (Acts xvi. 20, 21).

Wordsworth remarks here:

“Christianity was hated as Judaism, by the heathen, and as worse than heathenism by the Jews. It had to contend against Judaism and Heathenism, and it triumphed over both.”

We feel sometimes, in our small degree, that those responsible for *The Berean Expositor* are in much the same condition. The orthodox are against our teaching because it traverses the “traditions of the elders”, and the Modernists are against us because we are out of date and old-fashioned. It is good at such times to think of the apostles and take courage from their experience and example.

The Jews were not liked by the Romans, and a Roman Colony particularly would endeavour to keep them out. About this time the Jews had caused such disturbances at Rome, that Claudius had expelled them by edict (Acts xviii. 2):

“He banished from Rome all the Jews, who were continually making disturbances at the instigation of one Chrestus” (Suet. Claud. xxv.).

Judaism was a *religio licita* (a lawful religion) within the Roman Empire, but those in authority were free to punish any unauthorized introduction of any new object of worship.

Luke’s historical veracity is again evident here. He says that the Apostle was taken to the “rulers” and brought before the “magistrates”. As a colony, Philippi was rather like a miniature Rome, and justice would therefore be administered in it by two officers called *duumviri*. This title was rendered in Greek *strategos*, the word translated by the A.V. “magistrate”. Inscriptions have been found in Philippi, bearing the names and titles of *duumviri*, and one of them, whose name was found at Neapolis, was actually *duumvir* when Paul was taken at Philippi.

The men who laid the charge against the Apostle and his companions were too wise to refer to their private grievances; they were very conscious of the pride that held sway in a Roman Colony, and it was to this pride that they appealed. Had the Apostle or Silas uttered the words, *Civis Romanus sum* (“I am a Roman”), even the pride of Philippi would have yielded to the pride of Rome, but they evidently refrained and endured the ignominy of being beaten in the market place. On three occasions the Apostle tells us

that he was “beaten with rods”, and in each case he could have saved himself by announcing his citizenship. Let those who have somewhat hastily condemned the Apostle for his appeal to Cæsar, ponder these facts.

The “rending off” of their clothes shows that brutal violence was indulged in (*perirregeumi*)—a part of the “shameful” treatment to which the Apostle refers in I Thess. ii. 2. The Roman procedure would be adhered to in a Roman Colony, and the Apostle and his companions would be stripped, either completely or to the waist, and tied to a post erected for that purpose in the market place.

“It was the first of three such scourgings with the rods of Roman lictors which Paul endured, and it is needless to dwell even for a moment on its dangerous and lacerating anguish But such horrors occurred eight times at least in the story of one whose frame was more frail with years of suffering than that of our English missionaries, and in whose life these pangs were but such a drop in the ocean of his endurance, that, of the eight occasions on which he underwent these horrible scourgings, this alone has been deemed worthy of even passing commemoration” (*Farrar*).

After the scourging, the keeper of the prison was enjoined to keep his prisoners “safe”, and this he interpreted by thrusting them into the inner prison, and fastening their feet in the stocks. Here, unattended, with backs lacerated, with feelings outraged, in utter darkness, lay the men who had so willingly responded to the call of the man of Macedonia to “come over and help us”. If Paul and Silas had moaned throughout the night, refusing comfort and accusing one another of having made a complete mistake, it would have been but human. We must remember, however, that Paul had received his commission in terms of suffering (Acts ix. 16), while Silas was commended to the churches as one who had “hazarded” his life for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we read:

“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God; and the prisoners heard them” (Acts xvi. 25).

The original here is *proseuchomenoi humnoun*, “praying, they were singing”, and it is possible that the “hymn” may refer to the group of Psalms called the “Hallel” (cf. Matt. xxvi. 30: “And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives”).

Hobart has given us a volume dealing with Luke as a physician, and draws attention to the many medical terms found in his writings. The word describing how the prisoners “heard” the singing of Paul and Silas through the prison wall, is *epakroaomai*, a term used in the medical profession at that time for “hearing by placing the ear to the body”.

While the Apostle and his companions were singing, and the other prisoners listening, there came the shock of an earthquake. The doors flew open, and everyone’s bands were loosed. The first impulse of the jailor was to draw his sword and we read that he “would have killed himself”, for under the Roman law the jailor would have had to endure the same punishment as the prisoners who escaped. We find the same anxiety about the escape of prisoners later on in the narrative in Acts xxvii. 42.

The jailor uses the word *kurioi*, “Sirs”, in his appeal to Paul and Silas, and in their reply they point him away to *Ton Kurion*, “The Lord”. Whether the jailor meant by the word “saved” what the Scriptures mean, we cannot tell, but, that after being given the answer: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house”, we read that Paul and Silas “spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house”. It is well to remember that the “word” here, *logos*, implies a “logical account”, showing that after preaching the way of salvation in the simple terms of verse 31, the preachers followed the declaration with explanation and instruction.

The jailor then washes the wounded backs of the Lord’s servants, and in turn he and his house are baptized.

The magistrates were, apparently, rather perturbed about their very un-Roman conduct, and “when it was day” sent the sergeants (or lictors, the bearers of the rod) saying, “Let these men go”.

“But Paul said unto the, They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison, and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out” (Acts xvi. 37).

“How often”, says Cicero, “has this exclamation, *I am a Roman citizen*, brought aid and safety, even among barbarians in the remotest parts of the earth”.

And so we find this terrible beginning of the Apostle’s testimony in Europe overruled for the furtherance of the gospel. The publicity that such an unfair condemnation would give, the testimony of the character of the preachers that the trial afforded, the intervention of the earthquake, the salvation of the jailor, the public recognition by the magistrates at the end, would all combine to give the message of the gospel a hearing such as a normal procedure could never have afforded.

It would not be justifiable, in entering upon a new sphere of service, actually to pray for stripes and imprisonment, but one can take courage from these examples and stand firm in spite of the fiercest opposition. It is a strange feeling, that has often been the experience of the writer, to steam into the railway station of some new town, observe its public buildings, its multitude of churches, its teeming numbers, and to contemplate the complete insignificance to most of the people in the town of the coming into its midst of just one mere speaker, armed only with his Bible and a desire to spread the light and liberty of the truth. Nevertheless there are happy occasions of victory to be recorded, in the name of the same Lord, who, in the Acts, gave the vision, permitted the indignities, granted the salvation, and at length established such an assembly as the church of the Philippians.

Satan’s twofold attack had failed and the gospel standard was firmly planted in Europe. Paul neither compromised with the Devil (Acts xvi. 17, 18), nor gave place to him (Acts xvi. 25). He was, by grace, proof against both flattery and frown, and came out of the conflict “more than conqueror through Him that loved us”. For the sake of the

gospel, he could become either a Jew or a Roman, and later on, among the Greek philosophers, we again find how true it was, that he was “made all things to all men”, that “by all means he might save some”. Two households at least were “saved” before the Apostle departed. Truly these men were the “servants of the Most High God, which show unto us the way of salvation”.

**#35. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).
Thessalonica and Berea (xvii. 1 - 14).
pp. 181 - 188**

With the preaching of the gospel in Philippi we get the first real conflict between the heralds of the cross and the power of the world, as represented by Rome. With the preaching of the Word in Athens, the conflict is extended and we meet the wisdom of the world, as represented by the city of Athens. In the colony of Philippi it was the Roman magistrates, and the jailor that were prominent, whereas in Athens we have the Stoics and Epicureans. Before his arrival at Athens, however, we have the record of the Apostle’s visit to Thessalonica and Berea.

There is much in common between these two visits, and the parallel may be set out as follows:

Thessalonica and Berea (Acts xvii. 1-14).

- A | 1. Thessalonica. The synagogue of the Jews.
- B | 2, 3. Scripture. Reasoning. Opening. Alleging. Three sabbath days.
- C | 4. Some believed.
Devout Greeks. Chief women. Not a few.
- D | 5. But the Jews.
- E | 5-9. The uproar. The charge.
- F | 10. Paul and Silas sent away.
- A | 10. Berea. The synagogue of the Jews.
- B | 11. Scripture. Received. Readiness. Searched. Daily.
- C | 12. Many believed.
Honourable women, Greeks, and of men, not a few.
- D | 13. But the Jews.
- E | 13. The Stir. The knowledge.
- F | 14. Paul sent away. Silas and Timothy remain.

By noting verses 10 and 14 we find that Paul, Silas and Timothy were together at Berea, but that Luke had evidently stayed behind to continue the work at Philippi. Luke was with the Apostle when he was met by the demon-possessed damsel, for he uses the pronoun “we” (Acts xvi. 16), but the third person is employed after this until Luke again joins the Apostle as indicated by the reappearance of the “we” at Acts xxi. 1.

The route taken by the Apostle from Philippi to Thessalonica was the one usually followed. We have a document called the Antonine Itinerary, which gives the length of this journey as one hundred miles; Philippi to Amphipolis 33 miles; from there to Apollonia another 30 miles, and so to Thessalonica 37 miles. We have no record of how long this journey took, and it is idle to speculate.

The next happening of spiritual importance occurs at Thessalonica, and we accordingly find this city now brought into prominence. It was ideally situated as a centre from which might be “sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia and in Achaia, but also in every place” (I Thess. i. 8). Its geographical position and political importance made it a natural point of contact with the whole neighbourhood. On modern maps the city is named Salonika.

Nothing is said in Acts xvii. of the physical condition of Paul and Silas, but a passage in I Thess. ii. speaks volumes:

“For yourselves, brethren, know our entrance in unto you, that it was not in vain: but even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention” (I Thess. ii. 1, 2).

The Christian church began in the synagogue and was not separated from it until this second missionary journey was over (Acts xix. 9). So we read in Acts xvii. 2 that, “*as his manner was*, Paul went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures”. The basis of the Apostle’s reasoning was, therefore, “the Scriptures”, and his method is defined as “opening and alleging”, with the object that his hearers might become convinced that the suffering and risen “Jesus” was truly “the Christ”. We had one glimpse of the Apostle’s method in Acts xiii., and here we have another. We shall profit by giving it our careful consideration.

The word *dialegomia*, “reasoning”, indicates an argument, in which two or more speakers take part, or in which one speaker argues out the pros and cons in the course of his remarks. The passage before us says that Paul “reasoned with them out of the Scriptures”, and his method is further illuminated by the two words that follow: “opening and alleging.” The word translated “opening” is *dianoigo*, “to open thoroughly”, and is used literally for opening a door, and figuratively for opening the understanding. In Acts xvi. 14 *dianoigo* is used with reference to the opening of Lydia’s heart, and in Luke xxiv. 32 and 45 we have the example of Christ, Who “opened” the Scriptures, and then “opened” their understanding. Paul was closely following His Master’s footsteps.

“Alleging” is *paratithemi*, “to place beside”. Its first occurrence in the N.T. is associated with parables, a mode of teaching in which one thing is placed beside another, because of some resemblance, as for example:

“The field is the world” (Matt. xiii. 38).

“Another parable *put He forth*” (Matt. xiii. 24).

We have an early use of the word in Exod. xix. 7 where Moses “laid before” the people the words of God.

The Apostle’s “argument”, therefore, was two-fold. First he opened up the Scripture and saw to it that the understanding of his audience was also so far opened that they understood the passage cited, and then by bringing passage after passage and placing them over against their actual fulfillment—that had only just become history—he sought to prove that the Messiah of O.T. prophecy was the Christ he preached, and that, in spite of Jewish prejudice, “He must needs have suffered” and that He had risen from the dead. Paul’s first object was to convince his hearers that “Jesus was the Christ”, and that He had indeed died and risen again—a fact of which he reminds the Thessalonians when writing to them in his first epistle:

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again” (I Thess. iv. 14).

We have only two sources of information regarding the subject-matter of the Apostle’s ministry: the record of the Acts where the churches are first founded, and the subsequent epistles where they are given added teaching. We should therefore read I and II Thessalonians while we have this chapter in the Acts before us, so that we may be able to compare the Apostle’s line of teaching in the Acts with that in the epistles.

That the Apostle followed much the same method elsewhere is evident from I Cor. xv.:

“That Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. xv. 3, 4).

“Whether it were I or they, so we preached and so ye believed” (I Cor. xv. 11).

The Thessalonian epistles throw considerable light upon the way in which the Apostle spent his time at Thessalonica. In I Thess. ii. we read:

“Ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail; for, labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God” (I Thess. ii. 9).

From the Apostle’s remarks in Philippians it would appear that, but for the gracious and repeated contributions made by that assembly, his evangelistic work in Macedonia would have been rendered almost impossible (Phil. i. 5; iv. 15). Judged by modern standards it strikes one as extraordinary, that within the limits of Acts xvi. 40 and xvii. 1-14, there could be formed a company of believers so fully grown in grace as not only to have made their own witness secure, but also to have followed the Apostle with gifts to enable the work in Macedonia to go forward.

To add to the Apostle’s burden at Thessalonica, we find at the time of his visit a famine was raging, and Lewin in his *Fasti Sacri No. 1735* says that a modus or peck of wheat was sold for six times its usual price.

The result of this devoted ministry at Thessalonica was that “some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas”. The word “consorted” is *proskleroo*, *pros* meaning “towards”, and the remainder of the word, “to take by lot”. The “threw in their lot” with the Apostle and his companions, and so formed the nucleus of the church. We are not told their names here, but we learn that there were a multitude of “devout Greeks” (the word “devout” indicating that they were already proselytes) and “not a few of the chief women”. The inclusion of the women here and again at Berea (verse 12) is an interesting feature.

The “open door” at Thessalonica was not, however, long free from “adversaries”. Beginning at verse 5, we read:

“The Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city in an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other, they let them go” (Acts xvii. 5-9).

Several points of importance must be considered before we leave Thessalonica for Berea. In the first place we note that the charge made against the Apostle was very similar to that which swayed Pilate, and led him to hand the Saviour over to the enemy. To be convicted of having said: “There is another king, one Jesus” would entail very severe punishment. The Apostle had evidently emphasized the *kingdom* of the Lord at Thessalonica (I Thess. ii. 12; II Thess. i. 5), and had given a prominent place in his ministry to the hope of the Second Coming. This provided a basis for his enemies upon which to found the false charge that he had preached another king in opposition to the rights of Cæsar.

As the Apostle could not be found by the mob, Jason, in whose house he had stayed, was dragged before the “rulers of the city”. The word for “rulers” in Acts xvii. 6 and 8 is *politarchs*, a term not used before this chapter and never used again afterwards. Here, once again, Luke shines out as a truthful historian. Unlike Philippi or Troas, which were “colonies”, Thessalonica was a “free city”. Such cities were allowed a measure of self-government, and were generally as “Greek” in their atmosphere as a colony was “Roman”. The Roman Governor did not interfere with purely local matters, and the local magistrates were even granted the power of life and death.

These magistrates are referred to by Luke as *politarchs*. In connection with the Apostle’s visit to Thessalonica, in some free cities there was a “senate” or “assembly”—an arrangement which was true of Thessalonica (See Acts xvii. 5 where the word *demos* is used). In connection with the Apostle’s visit to Thessalonica, it is interesting to note that the British Museum contains the following inscription on marble slabs that once formed part of a triumphal arch built to commemorate the victory of Augustus over Antony.

The title "Politarch", and the names, Sosipator (1) Secundus (2) and Gaius (3) were inscribed on a triumphal arch in the town of Thessalonica. The original is now in the British Museum.

- - - I l l u s t r a t i o n - - - (BE-XXIX.185).

There are seven names in this inscription, and three of them are the same as those borne by friends of the Apostle from this very district: Sopater of Berea (Acts xx. 4), Gaius the Macedonian (Acts xix. 29), and Secundus of Thessalonica (Acts xx. 4).

The whole atmosphere is changed when we step out of Acts xvi. into Acts xvii. We leave a Roman colony, with its "praetor" (Acts xvi. 20) and "lictors" (Acts xvi. 35), and its appeal to Roman exclusivism (Acts xvi. 21); and we enter a Greek city with its *demos* (Acts xvii. 5), and its *politarchs*.

The Jews' attempt to move the city proves abortive, the magistrates finding nothing against Jason, except that he entertained some new religious ideas. Apart from having to give some guarantee that he would not imperil the peace of the city, he is allowed to go free.

As the Apostle had no desire to foment strife, and realized that he would not further the truth by another period of imprisonment, he permitted the brethren to send Silas and himself away by night to Berea. The structure emphasizes the close parallel that is intended with the visit to Thessalonica, but whereas Acts xvii. 2, 3 represents the Apostle as "opening and alleging" from the Scriptures, in the corresponding passage in connection with Berea, this feature is kept in the background, and the attitude of the Bereans brought to the fore:

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so" (Acts xvii. 11).

This reference has stood on the title page of *The Berean Expositor* ever since it was published in 1909, and together with II Timothy ii. 15, has been our watchword and inspiration ever since. Berea is now called Verria, and is a city of some 20,000

inhabitants. At the time of the Apostle's visit, there were sufficient Jews among the population to justify a synagogue, and it was of these Jews that the term "more noble" was used.

Light is thrown upon the choice of Berea and the withdrawal by night, by some words of Cicero addressed to a prefect of Macedonia whose maladministration had exasperated the people:

"Ye came to *Thessalonica* without the knowledge of any, and by night; and when you could not endure the laments of the mourners and the storm of complaints, you stole away to *the secluded town of Berea*" (Cic. in Pis. 36).

The word *eugenes*, "noble" is used in Acts xvii. in a figurative sense, and approximates to the Latin "ingenuus". The word is used in our own language in the form "ingenuous", meaning noble in character, generous, honourable, straightforward. The ingenuous character of the Bereans was manifested in their attitude towards the Apostle's teaching and the Scriptures. *Eugenes* also occurs in Luke xix. 12, and I Cor. i. 26.

"Readiness of mind" here is *prothumia*, and occurs also in II Cor. viii. 11, 12, 19; ix. 2, and Rom. i. 15. The "readiness" of the Bereans did not indicate any lack of critical faculty. They received readily, but they also searched daily to see whether the things so readily received "were so". This magazine was entitled *The Berean Expositor* with this in mind. However strongly convinced the writer of its articles may be as to their truth, it is nevertheless our sincere hope that these articles will be placed side by side with the Scriptures, to see whether what is stated is, in fact, true.

In verse 12 we read that, as a result of the Apostle's ministry, "many of them believed", which is in contrast with the "some" who believed in Thessalonica (Acts xvii. 4, 12).

The Apostle, however, was not long left undisturbed. The Jews at Thessalonica obtained knowledge of his activities at Berea and traveled the 57 miles that intervened. The Apostle reveals in I Thess. ii. 17, 18, that he had hoped to have been absent from Thessalonica for but a "short time", and had indeed attempted to return "once and again", but, as he says, "Satan hindered us". Sad words indeed for Paul to write of the zeal displayed by his kinsmen according to the flesh.

It had become evident by now that Paul was the object of this Jewish rage, and so, leaving some behind to establish the little company in the faith, once more, as a fugitive, the Apostle is "sent away as it were to the sea". There is no need to interpret *Hos epi ten thalassan* as though it implied that the Apostle merely made a feint of going to the sea, and then turned inland. *Winer* gives a number of references to the classics to show that *Hos epi* denotes intention. From some point on the coast a suitable vessel was found, and we read that "they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens"

Paul's experiences in the Greek city of Thessalonica, and his encouraging interval at Berea, would be helpful preparation for his witness in Athens, the metropolis of the

world's wisdom, the city of philosophy, culture, and art, and yet a city of superstition, idolatry, and moral darkness. Paul was ready to preach to the wise or to the unwise, at Athens or at Rome, and we look forward in our next article to considering together the triumph of Christ, as the Wisdom of God, in the city which represented the world's finest philosophy.

**#36. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).
Athens (xvii. 16 - 34).
pp. 221 - 227**

Before the Apostle is permitted to speak for the truth in Rome, the metropolis of the world, he comes first into contact with the wisdom of ancient Greece. To the Romans he writes: "Christ is the end of the law for *righteousness* to everyone that believeth", while to the Corinthians he writes: "Christ is the power of God and the *wisdom* of God." The Apostle's steps were guided, not only with respect to the salvation of sinners in the various towns he visited, but also in such a way that he himself would learn from each successive stage some fresh aspect of the fullness of Christ.

The record of the Apostle's visit to Athens as given in Acts xvii. 16-34 can be comfortably read in five minutes, but to appreciate, even intellectually, the full meaning of the Apostle's words, makes demands that can only be satisfied by a liberal education. As to the spiritual teaching of the passage, each will receive according to his capacity.

We must endeavour in this short article to acquaint the reader with the city of Athens, as Paul knew it, and to explain his reference to the two classes of philosophers, the Stoics and the Epicureans. We must also say something about Mars' Hill, about the character of the Athenians, their temples, their art, and the idolatry with which the city was full. And then finally, with the atmosphere understood and appreciated, we shall be able to perceive the aptness of the Apostle's speech, and the way in which he became "all things to all men, that by all means he might save some".

Apollonius of Tyana (B.C.4 - A.D.97), a Pythagorean philosopher, traveled over a good deal of the route taken by Paul. He was driven out of Antioch by the insults of the people, and sailed away, as did the Apostle, from Seleucia and Paphos. His entrance into the city of Athens is described as follows:

"He went post haste up from the ship into the city: but as he went forward, he fell in with quite a number of students of philosophy."

He also comments upon the religious devotion of the Athenians, and upon their altars to unknown gods:

"Where also altars of unknown gods are erected" (*Hou kai agnoston daimonon bornoi hidruntai*).

Athens was a “free” city, that is to say, free to live under its ancient constitution and to make new laws, providing of course that the interests of Rome were not touched. From the inscriptions, we gather that in the Apostle’s time the constitution of Athens consisted of three estates, the Areopagus, the Council of Six hundred, and the People, the Areopagus taking precedence. The words “Areopagus” (Acts xvii. 19) and “Mars’ Hill” (Acts xvii. 22) are really the same, one being Greek and the other Latin and English.

Before we go further, we shall be well advised to go back to the record in Acts xvii., and discover its structure, so that we may have the backbone of the argument in our minds, as we consider each of the individual items in turn.

Paul at Athens (Acts xvii. 15 - xviii. 1).

- A | xvii. 15-17. Paul bears witness at Athens.
- B | xvii. 18. The philosophers encounter him.
- C | xvii. 18-21. Jesus and the resurrection.
 - “Some said other some.”
- D | xvii. 22-23. The Unknown God. *Agnosto*.
- E | xvii. 23-29. Philosophy and Idolatry. |
 - a | 23-25. The Creator. No need of temples.
 - b | 25-29. The creature. We are His offspring.
 - a | 29. The Creator. No graven image.
- D | xvii. 30. Times of ignorance. *Agnoias*.
- C | xvii. 30, 31. “That man” and the resurrection.
 - “Some mocked, others said.”
- B | xvii. 33, 34. A philosophers cleaves to him.
- A | xviii. 1. Paul departs from Athens.

Paul’s encounter with the philosophers, and the conversion of at least one of them, Dionysius the Areopagite, is evidently the important feature of the passage. Paul’s preaching of Jesus and the resurrection was the doctrine that struck these philosophers as something “new”, and his double reference to “ignorance” (xvii. 23, 30), coming from one whom they had esteemed a “Babbler”, must have impressed them.

We read that the Apostle’s spirit was “stirred within him” as he saw the city “wholly given up to idolatry”—or, as the margin has it, “full of idols” (Acts xvii. 16). A writer of ancient times, Petronius, said of Athens that “it was easier there to meet a god than a man”, and Paul would have been horrified to see that they had even erected a statue of the High Priest of Israel, Hyrcanus. Statues in every conceivable attitude, size and material met the beholder’s gaze at every turn. There were more statues in Athens, said Pausanias, than in the whole of Greece.

True to one part of his commission the Apostle “disputed in the synagogue with the Jews”, but he also remembered that he was the Apostle to the Gentiles, and so we find him “in the market place daily”, disputing with them that meet him (Acts xvii. 17). Three topographical features of Athens must be understood if we are to follow the Apostle’s

steps intelligently: the Agora, the Areopagus, and the Acropolis. The Agora (or market place) lay at the foot of the hill that dominates the city. In the Agora was the Painted Porch, which gave its name to the Stoic school of philosophy which met there. The Areopagus was the rocky elevation a little removed from the Agora, and obtained its name from the legend that Mars was tried there by an assembly of the gods for murder. On the top of this hill was a platform about 60 yards long and 24 yards broad, the platform being approached by a flight of steps. At the top of the steps were two stones, one called the Stone of Impudence, upon which Paul would have taken his stand. A rock-cut bench accommodated the assembled judges. Here, some centuries earlier, Socrates had answered to the charge of corrupting the Athenians with strange gods and new doctrines, and had been condemned to death.

The Acropolis, an isolated rock rising from the centre of the city, is not mentioned by name in the Acts, but it must have been included in the Apostle's sweeping reference to "temples made with hands" and "art and man's device". It was the heart of the city, and was to the Greek what Mount Sion was to the Hebrew. Aristides, the rhetorician, fancifully expresses the attitude of the Athenians to the Acropolis by saying that it was the middle of five concentric circles of a shield, of which the outer four were Athens, Attica, Greece, and the world. At the Acropolis were temples and shrines in one jeweled heap; here also stood the Parthenon, the Temple of the Virgin, regarded as the jewel upon the girdle of the earth, an architectural marvel. The visitor to the British Museum should not fail to examine the collection known as the "Elgin marbles", where portions of this and other temples from the Acropolis may be seen.

In the Agora, the Apostle encountered "certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics". With regard to the Epicureans, Dr Churton observes:

"They allowed that the world was made, but maintained that it came together by chance, 'a fortuitous concourse of atoms', and that the Deity took no part in its administration."

Cicero reports that Epicurus said "Death is nothing to us, for what is dissolved is insensible", while Tertullian writes: *Nihil esse post mortem, Epicuri schola est*: "After death is nothing is the teaching of Epicurus."

The Stoics, on the other hand, were pantheists and fatalists. They taught that the Deity pervades the matter of the world, just as honey fills the comb of the hive. They undermined the doctrines of Providence, and personal responsibility, and judgment to come, and also believed that under the One God, Who ruled above, were divine beings, called demons, who acted as mediators. The doctrines of the two schools have been summed up in the words "Pleasure" and "Pride".

It is interesting to note that Seneca, who was a Stoic, speaks as follows:

"It is usual to teach men how to worship the gods. We should forbid men to light lamps on the Sabbath, *because the gods have no need of light*, and men take no pleasure in smoke. He that knows God serves and honours him. We should forbid men to bring sheets and bathing-combs to Jove, or to hold a glass before Juno, for God seeks no

ministers. Why not? He ministers to mankind; He is everywhere and ready to assist all.”

The Apostle’s words in Acts xvii. 24, 25 become even more pointed in the light of this Stoic’s remarks.

Some of the philosophers that heard Paul speak said: “What will this babbler say?” The word “babbler” here is *spermologos*, primarily a small bird like a sparrow, a “seed-picker”. It was later applied to beggars who picked up what food they could in the Agora, and then to those who, like parasites, lived by flattery.

Others who heard Paul said:

“He seemeth to be a setter-forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection” (xvii. 18).

The word “gods” here is *daimonion*, and it is practically impossible for Luke to have written this word without thinking of Socrates, who had been charged with *kaino daimonia eispheron*, “bringing in new demons”. As we have noted earlier, to the Athenian a “demon” was not a “devil”, but a lesser divinity; and the emphasis which the Apostle placed on “Jesus and the resurrection” made them think that he was introducing another of the many “demons” with which the pagan world abounded. There are some, even, who think that they imagined “Jesus and Anastasis” to be two gods, and it is certainly true that there were altars at Athens to such qualities as Fame and Modesty, Impetuosity and Persuasion.

We next read (verse 19) that “they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?” The magnetic word here was the word “new” for Luke adds:

“All the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear something NEWER (*kainoteron*)” (Acts xvii. 21).

Demosthenes noted this characteristic of the Athenians, and another writer gave them the nickname *kechenaioi*, or “gapers”. Demades suggested that the crest of Athens ought to have been a great tongue.

And so the Apostle standing in the midst of Mars’ Hill, surrounded by men for whom any reference to the O.T. Scriptures would have been useless, seizes upon the presence of an altar to the unknown god, to preach to these philosophers a wonderful gospel appeal—an appeal, however, which cannot be rightly appreciated without some understanding of the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers.

Bishop Wordsworth has given a good summary of the Apostle’s address as follows:

“This speech contains a statement of the *Unity* of the Godhead (verse 23), against Polytheism; of the *Creations* of all things by Him, against the Epicurean theory of a fortuitous concourse of atoms; of its *Government* by Him, against the Stoic doctrine of

Fate, and the Epicurean notion of indifference (verses 23, 24); of the Divine Omnipresence, and of the *autarkeia* (self-sufficiency) of the One Great First Cause (verse 25) in opposition to the popular theology; of the origin of *all nations* from one *blood*, against the Athenian conceit of their own dignity as *autochthones* (indigenous to the soil, as distinct from a settler); of the spirituality of the Godhead in opposition to idolatry (verse 29); of the witness to God's existence, and other attributes, in man's conscience and in human nature, and in the visible world (verse 29). It concludes with a reply to the objection that these are new doctrines (verse 30), and with a statement of the doctrine of human accountability and universal judgment to come by One Whom God has appointed; of which He has given a pledge by His resurrection from the dead."

It is to be regretted that the A.V. makes the Apostle open his address with a reference to Athenian "superstition", for this at once alters the whole tone of his speech. A better rendering would be: "I observe that in every respect ye are very religious." As Farrar remarks, "It is possible to be 'uncompromising' in opinions, without being violent in language or uncharitable in temper."

The Apostle then proceeds:

"For as I passed by, and beheld the objects of your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD'."

Diogenes Laertius tells us that the Athenians, suffering from an epidemic, were commanded by Epimenides to allow sheep to wander at will, and wherever one lay down, to sacrifice it to THE PROPER GOD. We also have the words of Philostratus: "It is wise to speak well of all the gods, and that at Athens, where altars even of unknown gods are erected."

It is absolutely necessary in speaking, that one's hearers, whether Jews or Gentiles, believers or unbelievers, should have some common ground with the Speaker, which he can use as a starting-point. The "common ground" between Paul and the Jew was provided by the O.T. Scriptures and their Messianic testimony, and he accordingly proceeded to prove from the Scriptures "that Jesus was the Christ". No such common ground, however, was possible with the Apostle's audience on Mars' Hill. He therefore seizes upon the confession of ignorance and need that stood out so pathetically on that altar, and with that as a basis, he proceeds to lead his hearers on, until at last, by a series of steps, he reaches his subject of "Jesus and the resurrection".

"Whom therefore ye ignorantly (or perhaps, 'unconsciously') worship, Him declare I unto you."

The Apostle then proceeds to demonstrate the folly both of idolatry and of both schools of philosophy, by proclaiming the true nature of God, the Creator.

The fact that the Greeks of Athens had gone so far as to erect a statue in honour of Hyrcanus, the High Priest, makes it quite within the realm of possibility that, having adopted practically all the gods of Asia, Europe and Africa (see *Jerome* on Titus), they might have included also the God of the Jews. They could not, however, have erected a statue for the Jews abominated graven images. Also they could give their altar no name,

for the Jews avoided the utterance of the name “Jehovah”. Dion Cassius speaks of the God of the Jews as *arrheton*, “not to be expressed” (xxxvii. 17), and Caligula, speaking to the Jews, refers to their God as “Him that may not be named by you” (Philo).

Standing upon Mars’ Hill, the Apostle had before him perhaps the most wonderful assemblage of “temples made with hands” and objects of devotion “engraved by art and man’s device”, that the world could provide, but he sweeps them all aside, to point his hearers to the true God. Appealing to their own poets and philosophers—Aratus of Cilicia and Cleanthes had said, “We are his offspring”—the Apostle, without endorsing the mythology of these writers, shows how unreasonable it is for the “offspring” of God to think that the Godhead is “like unto gold, or silver, or stone”.

To the Jew, the Apostle’s witness was that “Jesus” was the “Anointed”. To the philosopher, he declares that “that Man”, Who had been raised from the dead, was the Lord’s “appointed”.

“Because He hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man Whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead” (Acts xvii. 31).

The historic fact of the resurrection was open to all men to investigate, and upon this the Apostle based his claim. The times of ignorance had passed, and God now commanded “all men everywhere” to repent.

At the mention once more of the “resurrection of the dead”, some “jeered”, while others said: “We will hear thee again of this matter.” So far as we know from the Scriptures no church was founded at Athens, but at least one trophy of grace was brought from this city of idols and philosophy—Dionysius, the Areopagite. We know nothing of the social standing of the “woman named Damaris”, but her inclusion here brings Athens into line with Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea, for women are specially mentioned in each of these cities as being among the first to believe.

And so, with undaunted faith, the Apostle passes from Athens, the city of learning, to Corinth, the city of license.

Fruits of Fundamental Studies.

#12. The Sphere of Man's Dominion. pp. 15 - 19

It is evident that the present creation, vast as it is, finds its focus in man, in spite of the fact that, compared with that creation, he is infinitesimally small. The Psalmist gives utterance to this truth when he says:

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou has ordained; what is man?” (Psa. viii. 3, 4).

The vastness of creation is placed over against the insignificance of man. The Psalmist continues:

“Thou madest 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 Thine hands” (Psa. viii. 5, 6).

Here man is viewed as crowned in the midst of created things. We shall have to return later to the consideration of what man's dominion involves, but for the moment let us get some idea of man and his setting, the world of nature. The universe, of which the world of nature is a part, comprises “things invisible” as well as “things visible” (Col. i. 16). For the time being, man is “a little lower than the angels” (Heb. ii. 7 margin), and the invisible spirit world is not his legitimate sphere (Col. ii. 18). He is warned, however, against the false deduction, that what is most evident to his senses must necessarily be the most real, for “the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are *aionion*” (II Cor. iv. 18). He must remember that “existence is essence clothed with form” (*Tiberglein*), but that form is not essential to the perfection of being. As we read in John v. 37: “Ye have neither heard His voice, nor seen His (the Father's) shape.”

There are many passages of Scripture that teach us to view the “fashion of the world” as we would the shifting scenes of a theatre.

“The fashion of this world passeth away” (I Cor. vii. 31).
“The world passeth away” (I John ii. 17).

Something of the truth of this was perceived and expressed by our own great poet:

“The great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
And, like this substantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind” (*Tempest iv. 1*).

Those things that are shakeable are destined to be removed; only those things that are unshakeable will abide. These abiding things belong to the Kingdom of God, and to the

One Who remains (Heb. xii. 27, 28; xiii. 8), and they are in direct contrast with the present creation:

“They shall perish they shall wax old as doth a garment they shall be changed” (Heb. i. 11, 12).

This was the character of the world into which Adam was introduced and over which he was given dominion.

We read that man was “moulded” out of the dust of the earth (Gen. ii. 7), and that upon breathing with his nostrils the breath of life, he became a living soul. While it is true that the word translated “soul” is used of the lower creatures as well as of man (Gen. i. 20, 21, 24), yet in man it is associated with qualities and powers that are not possessed by the lower orders of creation.

The word “soul”, when used of man in the Scriptures, is often synonymous with “self”. Compare, for instance, an expression used by Job with a parallel one used by Paul:

“Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul (self), I would despise my life” (Job ix. 21).

“For I know nothing by myself”—or “For, to myself, I am conscious of nothing (evil), yet am I not hereby justified” (I Cor. iv. 4).

Note also the way in which the Apostle, in Rom. vii., speaks of his “flesh”, his “body” and his “mind” as Himself’:

“I (*ego*) am carnal.”

“It is no longer I (*ego*) that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

“For I know that in me (*emoi*) (THAT IS, IN MY FLESH) dwelleth no good thing.”

“With the MIND I myself (*autos ego*) serve the law of God, but with the FLESH, the law of sin” (Rom. vii. 14-25).

Man is spoken of as spirit, and soul, and body (I Thess. v. 23), but it is not strictly true to speak of him as tri-partite, for in Mark xii. 30 we have “heart, mind, and strength”—so that we might as reasonably speak of him as sex-partite. Man is a living soul, an individual made up of spirit, and body, and mind.

The body.—In its present constitution the body limits man to the earth, gives him size and shape, and endows him with the property of impenetrability—which may be defined as that property of matter by virtue of which two bodies cannot occupy the same space at the same time. In this respect man differs from “spirits”, and his body differs from that “spiritual body” which will be his in resurrection glory (I Cor. xv. 44).

Flesh, and “flesh and blood”.—The present body is one of “flesh and blood”, and “flesh and blood” cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. xv. 50). We know, however, that there will be a body, just as real, though not of flesh and blood, that shall inherit that kingdom in the future (I Cor. xv. 44). Flesh and blood are the concomitants of corporeal

life, and belong to that condition described in Hebrews as “for a little lower than the angels” (Heb. ii. 7; see also ii. 14 and 17).

This corporeal body of flesh and blood is suggestive of weakness, transitoriness, and dullness with regard to spiritual things:

“With him is an arm of flesh: but with us is the Lord our God” (II Chron. xxxii. 8).

“He remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away and cometh not again” (Psa. lxxviii. 39).

“Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven” (Matt. xvi. 17).

Soul and Spirit.—The soul stands for organic life. Adam was “natural”, i.e. “soul-ical”—a word derived from *psuche*. We read in Romans that “the Spirit is life” (Rom. viii. 10), and this is true whether in the present sphere or in the glory. There is a spirit of man and of beast (Eccles. iii. 21), and the body without the spirit is dead (James ii. 26).

The outer man is perishing, but the inward man is renewed from day to day. With this inward man the Apostle delighted in the law of God (Rom. vii. 22), and in this inward body is distinct from this inner man, as the Apostle suggests in II Cor. xii.:

“I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell; God knoweth” (II Cor. xii. 2).

The body can be killed by man, but not the soul (Matt. x. 28); there is a definite distinction between the two. The members of the body are spoken of as “instruments” (Rom. vi. 13). They are the means whereby we see, hear, touch, etc., but it must be remembered that it is *we ourselves* that do the seeing, or hearing or touching, and not these organs.

The body is spoken of as a “sheath” (Dan. vii. 15), as “clothing” (Job x. 11), as a “house” (Job iv. 19), and as a “tent” (II Pet. i. 13).

Such is a brief summary of the teaching of Scripture concerning man and his world. We have purposely avoided lengthy arguments or extended quotations as we are not so much seeking to teach or prove something hitherto unknown, as to bring together that which we have already learned, so that as we proceed we may build securely upon a good foundation. The nature and extent of man’s legitimate dominion and the doctrine that arises out of this is our immediate concern, and this article must be looked upon as a preparation for the study of that subject. This we must reserve for our next paper.

#13. Man's Dominion, and the Way of Cain. pp. 51 - 58

In our last paper we dealt briefly with the nature of man and the world in which he finds himself, and we learnt that man in his present condition is frail, and that his present world is fleeting. There is, of course, a sphere in which man will attain to immortality and in which his world will “remain”, but this belongs to the future resurrection glory, the period of the “glorious liberty of the children of God”.

We have already found Psalm viii. to be a valuable passage in connection with the nature of man and the world in which he lives, and we must now turn to this Psalm again to learn something of his dominion.

“Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea” (Psa. viii. 6-8).

The works of God's hands include “things in heaven” as well as “things in earth”, and the Psalmist certainly recognizes this, for we read: “The heavens are the work of Thy hands” (Psa. cii. 25). It is quite evident that man has no dominion over the sun, moon and stars, but apart from this obvious exception, we might be tempted to believe that dominion over every terrestrial work of God's hands is implied in the words of Gen. i. or Psalm viii. Such, however, is not the case.

We have already quoted Psalm viii. Let us now refer to Gen. i.:

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion, over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Gen. i. 26).

These words describe the counsel of the Lord before the creation of man. After man was created, the dominion is further defined as follows:

“And God blessed them and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Gen. i. 28).

It is evident, therefore, that the words “over all the earth” in Gen. i. 26 refer simply to all living things on the earth, and not to all its inorganic elements and forces.

One of the earliest recorded acts of man (in Gen. ii.) is that which sets forth his authority over the lower creation:

“And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof” (Gen. ii. 19).

This dominion was seriously modified by the fall. In Gen. iii. and iv. we read:

“Cursed is the ground for thy sake” (Gen. iii. 17).

“When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength” (Gen. iv. 12).

After the flood, when Noah seems to be in some respects in the position of a second Adam, the words of Gen. i. 28 are repeated: “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth” (Gen. ix. 1). Instead, however, of this being followed by the same words as in Gen. i., we read:

“And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea: into your hand are they delivered” (Gen. ix. 2).

A further change is seen in the fact that whereas in the beginning the food of man was:

“Every herb bearing seed and every tree in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed” (Gen. i. 29).

immediately after the fall, in Gen. iii., we read:

“Thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread” (Gen. iii. 18, 19).

When we come to Gen. ix., we find a further change:

“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things” (Gen. ix. 3).

It will be observed that in none of these instances does God give to man, either fallen or unfallen, dominion over what we call to-day the “forces of nature”. The fullest dominion was necessarily that which was originally given in Gen. i., and the subsequent modifications, so far from *extending* the sphere, imply serious *limitations*.

Before passing on to the real purpose of this article, which is to trace man’s departure from the divinely appointed bounds of dominion, as in the case of Cain’s line, it is perhaps necessary to correct a false view that is often expressed, and is indeed countenanced by the A.V. translation of Gen. v. 3. The usual view is that, whereas Adam was created in the likeness of God (Gen. v. 1), all his posterity have been begotten in “his” (i.e. in Adam’s own) likeness and image—it being implied that this is something quite different. However, in Gen. ix., after the flood, we read that God said: “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: *for in the image of God made He man*” (Gen. ix. 6). And centuries after, James wrote:

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, *which are made after the similitude of God*” (James iii. 9).

The true intention of Gen. v. 3 is expressed by translating the original as follows: “And begat a son in this likeness, after this image”—it being understood that the reference is to the opening verse of the chapter. It is true that Adam fell, and that all men are fallen creatures, but it is also true that all men without exception are made after the similitude of God, and in His image (I Cor. xi. 7).

When man sinned and was subjected to vanity, two courses were open to him—either meek acceptance of the new circumstances, with hope in redeeming love as providing the only just and real solution, or a rebellious breaking away from the path indicated by the Lord, and an attempt to palliate the effects of the curse by means that would be but an extension of the temptation, “Ye shall be as God”.

The right spirit in this connection is exhibited by Noah’s parents. They evidently felt very sorely the effects of the curse, but instead of casting about for some temporary measure to alleviate its immediate consequences, they looked beyond and named their son, Noah, saying:

“This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed” (Gen. v. 29).

Lamech did not live to see Noah’s typical character fulfilled, for he died 595 years after the birth of Noah, at the significant age of 777. He (Lamech) did, however, look forward by faith to the true solution of the misery brought about by sin, for the ark and the salvation that it sets forth is a type of the divine method, not only of alleviating, but of delivering from, the curse and all its accompaniments.

In contrast with this is the action of Cain. Being driven from the presence of the Lord, instead of meekly accepting the judgment pronounced, he begins to introduce what would now be called “civilizing” measures. He builds a city (Gen. iv. 17), and his posterity introduce the harp, the organ, and working in metals (Gen. iv. 21, 22). The practice of having several wives also originated in the time of Cain. While cities, organs and metal working may be innocent innovations in themselves, they are deadly if they are introduced to take the keenness off the edge of God’s judgment. From Cain’s day onwards to the present time, man has gone on adding layer upon layer of this veneer. Each layer modified and soothed for a time, but the curse upon the earth made itself again and again. The groan of creation will never be hushed, though cities be magnified out of all recognition, and music be “on tap” from morning till night.

It is fairly safe to say that, should the reader maintain the view expressed above in the presence of any half-dozen people, one at least of the company would point with triumphant finger to man’s “inventions”. These “inventions” are not forgotten in Scripture. The following is the comment of inspired wisdom, as recorded in Eccles. vii.:

“God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions” (Eccles. vii. 29).

It is impossible to miss the intention of this observation. The seeking out of inventions is placed in direct contrast with being made upright, indicating that the inventions of man are an exhibition of his fall.

The word translated “inventions” here is derived from the Hebrew *chashab*, “to think, purpose, intend”. It is used in a good sense when referring to the “purpose” of the Lord (Jer. 1. 45), or the “cunning” craftsmanship of those who worked on the tabernacle, but it usually has an evil meaning, as the following passages indicate:

- “Saul *thought* to make David fall” (I Sam. xviii. 25).
- “His wicked *device* which he *devised* against the Jews” (Esther ix. 25).
- “They *imagined* a mischievous *device*” (Psa. xxi. 11).
- “*Invent* to themselves instruments of music” (Amos vi. 5).
- “He shall *forecast* his *devices*” (Dan. xi. 24).

Someone may perhaps object to the inclusion of the passage from Amos in this list, on the ground that most musical instruments have been invented by someone, and that the possession of them can hardly be regarded as evil. There is only one satisfactory way of answering objections of this kind, and that is to *let the Book speak for itself*.

The following is the context of the passage concerned:

“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came

Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines; be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border?

Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near;

That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;

That chant to the sound of the viol, and *invent* to themselves instruments of musick, like David;

That drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments; but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph” (Amos vi. 1-6).

It will be seen that the evil lay in the “device”, not in the mere possession of the instrument. It was one of the many devices introduced to deaden the senses, to help men to “put far away the evil day”, and not to “grieve for the affliction of Joseph”. It is *this feature* that stigmatizes so much of so-called “modern progress”. It is used as an opiate to deaden the conscience, as a distraction to drown the groan of creation, as a palliative to take off the edge of the curse—in other words, *it is the way of Cain*.

We find further reference to the evil effect of inventions in II Chron. xxvi.:

“And he made in Jerusalem engines, *invented* by cunning men” (“inventions, invented by the inventor”, *Rotherham*) (II Chron. xxvi. 15).

Assuming that Uzziah, as king, had the right to defend his city and country against the enemy, one might perhaps object and ask why it should not be legitimate for him to make use of the inventive genius of his time. Again, let the Book speak for itself:

“As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper he strengthened himself exceedingly he was marvellously helped, till he was strong; but when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to destruction” (II Chron. xxvi. 5, 8, 15, 16).

It was not the mere possession of these inventions that mattered, but the evil influence that their possession always produced—the inducing of a self-reliance that was incipiently anti-christian. The next recorded act of Uzziah was the usurpation of the priesthood, an action which was visited by leprosy, and which cut him off for the rest of his days from the house of the Lord.

Two other words are found in the O.T. which are translated “inventions”—one in the Psalms, and one in the Book of Proverbs. The word used in the Psalms has two forms, *maalal* and *alilah*, both derived from the same word meaning “work”. Is “work” then to be condemned as evil? Once again we must examine the context.

“Thou tookest vengeance on their *inventions*” (Psa. xcix. 8).
“They provoked Him to anger with their *inventions*” (Psa. cvi. 29).
“They went a whoring with their own *inventions*” (Psa. cvi. 39).

These are the statements. Let us now consider the reason for the Lord’s attitude. Hebrew poetry balances thought rather than sound, and so we read in Psalm cvi. 39:

“Thus were they *defiled*
With their *own works*;
And went a *whoring*
With their *own inventions*.”

It is evident that the word “works” here corresponds with “inventions”.

In the same Psalm, the same word comes again in verses 13 and 35:

“They soon forgot *His works*.”
“They were mingled among the heathen and learned *their works*.”

The terrible expression “to go a whoring” is used once more in the Psalms, at the close of Asaph’s experience in Psalm lxxii. In this passage it is used in direct contrast with that utter trust in the Lord that Asaph had learned in the Sanctuary:

“Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee” (verse 25).
“Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from Thee” (verse 27).

Here again it will be seen that the real evil in these “inventions” lay in the fact that they undermined Israel’s trust in the Lord, and substituted something else in its place.

The reference to “inventions” in Prov. viii. 12 does not call for special comment, but the reader should notice the one occurrence of the word in the N.T.—in Rom. i. Of all the terrible lists of sins that are found in the N.T. none, perhaps, is quite so black as that which occurs at the end of Rom. i., and it is in this context that we find the only N.T. reference to “inventions”: “Inventors of evil things” (Rom. i. 30).

Coming back now to our main subject at the beginning of this article, namely, man’s legitimate sphere of dominion in contrast with his attempted dominion over the forces of nature, it is evident that the same principle was at work in the initial temptation of our first parents.

“Ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil” (Gen. iii. 5).

The Evil One suggested that God was holding back further blessings and powers for selfish ends. It was certainly true that God had given Adam a limited domain, but it was equally untrue to suggest that any good thing had been withheld. The word “good”, like most terms, is relative. What would be “good” for a man might be “evil” for a child; and what would be “good” for an angel might be “evil” for Adam. Had Adam been found faithful in few things, he would have been made ruler over many things. Satan, however, tempted him to seek control over powers that, while man was still immature, would inevitably be evil in their results.

The Bible does not use the language of Science, but it makes many references to the mighty forces of “Nature”. In some passages these forces are said to be under control of a special angel, and it would seem that man himself, though at first “a little lower than the angels”, was destined in God’s good time to be higher than the angels, and to have an extended dominion. This dominion was at first related primarily to the animal world, but it would doubtless have been extended to include the world of Chemistry and Physics, with perfect power and full knowledge—whereas to-day man is becoming more and more conscious that he is dabbling with forces which at any moment may turn back and destroy him. Much that is called “progress” may really be the intrusion, before the time, into things that were intended as man’s domain at a subsequent period.

We have already exceeded our space and must conclude our study for the time being. While we are living in the world, we must of necessity come in contact with its “inventions” on every hand, but, if we realize something of their character, we shall see them in their true light as part of the outworking of the *pseudos*—“the lie”, the imitation, the spurious—and shall not allow them to come between us and the Lord, Who alone can supply the one and only cure for all life’s ills.

#14. The Constitution of Man, and the Possibility of Revelation. pp. 87 - 91

In previous studies we have referred to the fact that the creation of man in the divine Image was vitally connected with the making known to him of truths pertaining to the unseen spiritual world. This matter is of such importance, and its bearing upon the value of inspired Scripture so vital to our understanding, that we make no apology for giving it further consideration.

An important point in this connection is well expressed by Bishop Browne as follows:

“We are to lay it down as a sure and undeniable truth, which holds universally, that we have not the least perception or idea of things immaterial, of purely spiritual beings, or of God in particular, *as they are in their own nature.*”

The reader can easily test the accuracy of this statement for himself. Apart from imagery borrowed from his own experiences, let him endeavour to construct a mental conception of “spirit”. Something invisible, inaudible, intangible: something not conditioned by space and time, and uninfluenced by natural forces. Under such conditions, he will find himself completely baffled. Every conception that he forms of pure spirit, will be invested by him with attributes that belong to the world of time, sense and space.

A man born blind can have no true conception of “light”. We may tell him that light is *derived* from the “Sun”, but he will have little idea of what the “Sun” is, apart from its name and the fact of its existence. We may tell him that light is *coeval* with the Sun, that it is *distinct* from the Sun and yet *inseparable* from it. We may also tell him that this light diffuses itself over illimitable expanses, and that upon it depends the life of all creatures on the earth. The man born blind will have some idea of what light is, but his conception will not be comparable with what it would have been if his eyes had been opened. So it is with the revelation concerning “God” that is given to us in Scripture. All men by their very nature, are born blind so far as spiritual things are concerned. All that has been said above concerning “light” has also been said concerning “Christ”, and theological arguments concerning the Person of Christ must appear as pitiable to the onlooking angels and principalities, as would the arguments that one blind man might put forward to another concerning the nature of light.

It would seem that God has two possible ways of revealing Himself to man:

- (1) He must raise man up to a higher level, so that he shall be able to comprehend the true nature of the non-material world, or
- (2) He Himself must condescend to man’s lowly estate, must come down to the level of his understanding, use terms with which he is acquainted, and ultimately, if the revelation is to be complete, come among men as a Man Himself.

No student of Scripture can have any doubt as to the course actually adopted. In the first place God condescended to use human language and human imagery, and then finally, in the fullness of time, He manifested Himself in Christ, so completely that it could be said: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."

By his very constitution as originally created, man is a creature whose ideas are first of all received through his senses. These sense-impressions are the only raw material for thought to work upon. If we could conceive of a man being created, and deprived at the outset of his five senses, we should have a being who could never think, and could never understand or know anything. When God created man, He made in His own likeness and image, and it is in this likeness that we have the one medium whereby the unseen and invisible may be translated into terms intelligible to man.

The Scriptures abound with metaphors and analogies. The invisible God is spoken of as having eyes, ears, hands, feet, nostrils, and as experiencing such feelings as anger and wrath. The attributes of goodness, righteousness, and power are ascribed to Him, but every word that is used, and every image expressed is essentially human. We must always bear in mind that when we speak, for instance, of God's "goodness", we are using a human term, which employs something which is known to man, and by virtue of its resemblance to the Divine reality, allows us to see the true goodness of God "as in a glass, darkly". Revelation does not come to man with a new set of ideas and express them in an entirely new language. If it did, the revelation would be useless. What Scripture does is to take terms that are known to man, and transfer them by analogy to the corresponding realities of the spiritual world.

The early writers saw this fact clearly. God was called *Anonymous* ("Without a name") because He is *in Himself* inexpressible in human language. Justin Martyr says:

"There is no 'name' for God. Theos, Pater, Kurios, Despotes, are not properly 'names' but appellations only for the Supreme Being, taken from His operations, and the benefits we receive from Him."

For this reason the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed as "The Image of the Invisible God", "The Logos", "The Form of God", "The Express Image (visible character) of His Person" (or Substance, the underlying invisible reality), "God manifest in the flesh". If Adam was ever to understand God, it was essential in the very nature of things that there should be at the outset an element in common, and for this reason man was made "like" God.

In every normal man there is a set of what we may call *a priori* laws of the mind. If the mind is not utterly mendacious, it affirms, positively and unreservedly, that the two and two are four, and that acceptance of this fact is essential to all intellectual activity. The ideas and beliefs which come to us in this way are the common basis upon which all subsequent reasoning and revelation rest. It would be the annihilation of all reasonable thought to deny such a self-evident axiom as that the shortest distance between two points lying in the same plane is a straight line.

We are so constituted by creation, that it is inconceivable that this should not be true everywhere and at all times. And further, we are also sure that these things are so inherently, and that they have not merely been willed so by almighty power. If seven is multiplied by seven we have forty-nine. Can any one imagine that God, by the mere arbitrary exercise of His will and power, could make this product either more or less? In such simple basic things lies the germ of all righteousness, and their acknowledgment is the test of our conception of righteousness.

Bishop Pearson writes:

“God cannot be known unto us otherwise than by *relation* to creatures, as for example, under the aspect of dominion, or of cause, or in some other relation.”

Hamilton writes:

“It is indeed only through an analogy of the human with the Divine nature that we are percipient or recipient of the Divinity.”

To quote again from Bishop Browne:

“Though we know not God *in His own nature*, yet are we not wholly ignorant of Him, but may attain to imperfect knowledge of Him through the analogy between human things and divine.”

So God made man in His likeness, and by reason of the fact that human things resemble, on a lower plane, things that are spiritual and divine, He could speak to man concerning Himself, giving him a sufficient revelation to fulfil all his present needs, and at the same time creating a desire to know more in God’s good time. Man was made “for a little lower than the angels”, but was destined to be raised above them when God’s time came.

The discernment of good and evil belongs to the angels, as is made clear in II Sam. xiv. 17, and in Heb. v. 14 this discernment is said to be characteristic of adulthood. The temptation in Eden was vitally concerned with this question of good and evil:

“Ye shall be as gods (angels), or as God (Elohim), knowing good and evil” (Gen. iii. 5).
“Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil” (Gen. iii. 22).

Satan tempted man sinfully to anticipate that which would have been his in God’s appointed time; to throw aside the revelation by analogy, and to attempt to know “even as we are known”. The attempt proved disastrous, and has left its mark upon man and his world ever since.

The Scripture reveal truth to us “as in a glass, darkly”. In resurrection glory, when made higher than the angels, we shall see “face to face”. When we possess “spiritual” and “heavenly” bodies in resurrection (I Cor. xv. 40, 44) there will be no need for the analogies that are necessary in our present limited condition. Seeing “through a glass,

darkly” will then give place to “knowing as we are known”. God’s ways and times are governed by infallible wisdom and unerring love. In the fullness of time, Christ, the Great Analogy of God, came into the world, and we are now able to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Moreover, we must never forget that the gift of human language, and the fact that the revelation of God is couched in this language, obeying the laws of grammar, and adopting the figures and imagery with which the human mind is familiar, that all this part of the divine condescension, just as surely as is the fact of the Word “becoming flesh” and the “form of God” being exchanged for the “form of a servant”.

In all this we have been speaking primarily of man as originally created and constituted. We do not forget that redemption and newness of life have, through grace, entered this present sphere, and that the believe, being united with Christ, and having the Holy Spirit of God, already in measure anticipates that new creation, in which the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, “as the waters cover the sea”. So we find the Apostle writing in his Epistle to the Corinthians:

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. 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 we have the mind of Christ” (1 Cor. ii. 9-11, 13, 16).

#15. The Problem of Evil, and the Lesson of Gen. i. - iii. pp. 128 - 134

Is there any one, in possession of his faculties, who has not been exercised, at some time and in some degree, by the “problem of evil”? It has engaged the minds of the greatest philosophers, thinkers and theologians, since the beginning of history. The Book of Job is but an exposition of one of the many aspects of the problem, and what is the Book of Ecclesiastes but a record of the searchings of the mind into the same profound subject? What is the conflict of the ages but the conflict of good and evil? What is the theme of Genesis and Revelation but this same problem? And what is the very gospel of the grace of God but the solution, by Divine love, of the problem of good and evil? It should be noticed, however, that, while men of all times and opinions have had their “problems” concerning the origin, nature and end of evil, there is no such “problem” of good. It is true that the subject of “good”, its character, nature and fruit, has been a perennial theme for student, philosopher and preacher alike, but there is no *problem* about good, as there is about evil. Opinions concerning “evil” range from that which regards God as the Creator of “all things” and the Author of evil—not merely evil as a penalty for sin, but evil in its moral aspects—to the other extreme of the total denial that evil has any existence at all.

Poets of all shades of thought have clothed the mystery of evil with their imagery. The haunting cadences of the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, the tragic verses of Browning's "Saul", the light and shade of Tennyson's "In Memoriam", the many lines which the reader may recall from Shakespeare, indicate how deeply this problem enters into the very stuff of life. The reader would probably not wish for pages of quotations on this point, and we will therefore be content with two only before we pass on to the positive teaching of the Scriptures. Here is one of the many aspects of the subject from Shakespeare's pen:

"For nought so vile that on the earth doth live
But to the earth some special good doth give,
Nor aught so good but strain'd from that fair use,
Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse:
Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied.
And vice sometimes by action dignified.
(Romeo and Juliet ii. 111)."

The underlying thought here is that the "good" or "evil" resides not so much in the thing itself, but in the use or abuse that is made of it—an aspect that we shall understand more clearly when we have considered the teaching of Gen. i.-iii.

Our second quotation is from the writings of Sir Richard Burton, a master of Oriental languages. He gives expression here to something of the Oriental attitude towards good and evil.

"There is no good, there is no bad, these are the whims of mortal will:
What works me weal that call I good, what harms and hurts I hold as ill.
They change with space, they shift with race, and in the veriest span of time,
Each vice has worn a virtuous crown, all good been banned as sin and crime."

There is indeed a mixture here of good and evil, and it is certainly wrong to affirm that "good" and "evil" are but the "whims of mortal will". The second line of the quotation:

"What works me weal that call I good, what harms and hurts I hold as ill."

we shall find to be the very essence of the temptation of our first parents, and an indication of the real nature of "evil". This, however, we shall see more clearly when studying the Scriptures concerned.

While Burton may not have meant what we mean by "dispensational truth", his third line does express what we have all seen, namely, that what was "good" for Israel under the law may be "evil" for a believer under grace. These things, if they do nothing else, will, we trust, help us to appreciate the many-sidedness of this great theme, and in view of its complexity and the extreme diversity of teaching and opinion with regard to it, any contribution which we may offer towards the problem of the nature of evil, must be offered with genuine humility, and based upon the facts that cannot be denied.

The first point that we should like to make may be expressed as a simple statement of fact:

- (1) “*Good*” (Heb. *Tob*) occurs in the record of Creation seven times (Gen. i. 3 - ii. 3).
- (2) “*Evil*” (Heb. *Ra*) does not occur once in the record of Creation (Gen. i. 3 - ii. 3).
- (3) “*Evil*” is introduced into the narrative of Genesis, where man, a moral agent, is being tested (Gen. ii. 9).

We have stated these facts as baldly as possible. What do they imply? The fact that “good” can be attributed seven times to creation in its varied forms, without the necessity of “evil” as a foil, teaches us that “good” is positive and not dependent upon “evil”. Darkness may be the antithesis of light, but light is positive and does not depend upon darkness, for we read that “God is light, and *in Him is no darkness at all*”. “Good”, therefore, is not a relative term, but a positive one.

We observe, in the next instance, that “evil” is mentioned for the first time in connection with the trial of a moral agent. While the narrative has to deal with sun, moon and stars, beast, bird and fish, and even the fact of the creation of man, “evil” is unknown. Not until man is called upon to choose does “evil” come into the narrative, and not until desire leads to action does evil itself actually emerge. The tree of Gen. ii. 9 is not called “the tree of good and evil” but “the tree of the *knowledge* of good and evil”. The knowledge or perception did not reside in the tree itself, but was bound up with man’s reaction to the prohibition of which the partaking of this tree was the visible emblem. The whole question revolved around the choice of the man, rather than the nature of the tree. It does not matter what the “fruit” may have been, whether the traditional pomegranate or the equally traditional apple; this makes no difference whatever. Had man obeyed the voice of the Lord he would still have known “good and evil”, but it would have been an experience that was blessed, and under Divine favour. Man, however, disobeyed, and attained to this knowledge under the Divine displeasure, and it ended in forfeiture, sorrow, shame and death.

There is no such *thing* as “good” or “evil”. “Good” or “evil” as such cannot be created. It would be possible for “good things” or “evil things” to be created, but when we deal with “evil” and its problem, we are not dealing with a substance that exists somewhere in bulk, for evil is the result of thought, desire, choice, will. It is therefore impossible to teach that “God is the Author of evil”. For God to be the Author of moral evil, it would necessitate that Adam should be compelled to disobey, which in the very nature of things would be a contradiction. If Adam’s “disobedience” really “obeyed” the dictates of his Creator, then sin is no longer sin, for a disobedience which turns out to be obedience is not only nonsense, it borders, by the very nature of its subject, upon blasphemy.

Let us now turn to Gen. iii., a chapter that is rightly considered as the seed plot of Biblical doctrine.

In the account of the temptation of Adam and Eve, we find that something which was hitherto understood to be a prohibited things, is presented in such a light as to be

considered “good”. This is the essential nature of evil. Evil is not pursued or practiced for itself alone, however wicked the perpetrator; the evil course is followed, and its consequences accepted, because it has been made to wear a false mask, and appear as “good”. The Tempter recognized this fact and acted accordingly.

“Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”

Had the Serpent not intended to create in the mind the false idea that the prohibited tree was really “good”, he could have stated the same set of facts and have created an opposite effect by presenting them in some such way as the following:

How kind of God to surround you with so many evidences of His love and care. Every tree except one is at your disposal, and that one is evidently kept from you by the same love that has so lavishly provided the rest.

To appreciate the significance of the Tempter’s opening attack, emphasis should be placed on the word “every”:

“Yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of *every* tree of the garden?”

Having slipped the mask of “good” over the features of “evil”, the Tempter has only to stand by and skillfully play upon the mind of man to accomplish his ends. The human mind has been so constructed that it will seek that which appears to be “good”. This lies at the root of life itself, and without it the human species would die out.

Having stimulated the interest of the woman, the Tempter now proceeds to justify here disobedience. This prohibited tree, he suggests, will enable you to reach the goal of your very existence: “Ye shall be as God.” From one point of view this aspiration could be regarded as a blasphemous usurpation of the prerogative of Deity, but, from another aspect, to be “like God” is the true goal of every believer and the very object of redeeming grace itself.

Human activity and response now come into play. Satan has touched the inner springs of action, and he can now leave the rest to work itself out.

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof” (Gen. iii. 6).

Once the premises of Satan’s argument are granted, no fault can be found with Eve’s subsequent response. If once “evil” can be made to appear “good”, sin will inevitably follow. Man is assailable through three avenues, and wherever “evil” can be made to appear as “good” for either body, soul or spirit, man will naturally desire it and the consequence will be sin.

- (1) HIS BODY “Good for food.”
- (2) HIS SOUL “Pleasant to the eyes.”
- (3) HIS MIND “To make one wise.”

In Gen. iii. we read that Eve was “beguiled” (Gen. iii. 13); in II Cor. xi. that she was beguiled through the Serpent’s “subtlety” (II Cor. xi. 3); and in I Tim. ii. that “the woman being deceived, was in the transgression” (I Tim. ii. 14). At this point we must anticipate a possible objection. The reader may perhaps criticize our argument somewhat as follows:

The argument as to the essential nature of evil (as something that is falsely presented as ‘good’) breaks down immediately one turns from the account of the woman’s fall to the sin of Adam. In I Tim. ii. 14, which is only partially quoted above, we read:

‘And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression.’

Adam, therefore, knew what he was doing, and the argument as to the essential nature of evil breaks down.

To this objection we would reply that we have not yet considered the question with regard to Adam, and this we propose now to do—carrying back with us, from I Tim. ii. 14, the fact that Adam was not deceived. Adam took the fruit of the tree, knowing that Satan had dressed up evil to appear as good.

When the Lord questioned Adam, he gave as the reason why he had transgressed:

“The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat”
(Gen. iii. 12).

The most common interpretation of Adam’s answer is to regard him as one who was not above shifting the blame on to the shoulders of the weaker vessel, but such a view, we feel sure, is not the true one. Eve was deceived into believing an “evil” was a “good”, and *so was Adam*. By her act of disobedience, the woman who had been given “to be with him” was already separated from Adam, by sin which would inevitably involve death. By refusing to take the fruit offered by Eve, Adam would have remained sinless. His love for the woman, however, and his sadness at her failure and the prospect of separation, together with his inability to foresee what God could do other than execute the penalty already merited, made the “evil” appear to be a “good”. It seemed better to Adam to perish with the woman he loved, rather than to live on in solitude and grief. Adam’s action but confirms the fact that “evil” must be considered as a “good” before it can work upon man’s desires and influence his choice.

We leave to the reader the illuminating task of discovering N.T. examples of this vital principle. In the threefold temptation of the Lord, for instance, as recorded in Matthew and Luke, this glossing over of “evil” to make it appear a “good” will be discovered to be at the very foundation of Satan’s attack on the Lord, as the blessed Second Man, and Last Adam.

**#16. The Inadequacy of the Works and Words
of God as a Revelation of Himself.
pp. 161 - 165**

Before we leave the realm of creation (Gen. i.) and enter the moral sphere (Gen. ii. and iii.), with its problems of free will, the presence of good and evil, and other related themes, let us take a final glance at creation and its revelation in Gen. i., and the limitations in their knowledge of God that finite creatures must expect and accept.

Good and Creation.—Let us consider first the testimony of creation apart from the Biblical record. Quite apart from the written Word, man has the whole circle of nature around him, of which he himself is the crown and climax, and this creation speaks to him of God. The following is the reasoned testimony, overwhelming in its irresistible logic, of one who spent himself in bringing the good news of salvation to men, and who is therefore the less likely to judge the heathen from a purely academic standpoint:

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom. i. 18-20).

Aristotle who, so far as we know, had not read any of the Scriptures, confirms the Apostle’s testimony, saying: “God Who is invisible to every mortal being, is seen by His works.” When the Apostle in Acts xiv. speaks to the heathen, who knew nothing of God from contact with the Jews, he appeals to the evidence of creation:

“Turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein: Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways: Nevertheless He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness” (Acts xiv. 15-17).

The Apostle follows much the same line when addressing the assembly on Mars Hill.

“Ye men of Athens, I perceived that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that He is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, seeing He giveth to all, life, and breath, and all things: And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us: For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring. Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or

stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts xvii. 22-30).

In Psalm xxxiii. we read:

"Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him. For He spake and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast" (Psa. xxxiii. 8, 9).

In Psalm xix. also we read of creation, particularly in connection with the heavens: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge."

A day is coming when the doctrine of evolution will have reached its ultimate goal, and God will have been driven from His very creation. In that day it will be the "everlasting gospel" that will be preached, a gospel which contains no word concerning redemption, but proclaims the fear of God and His acknowledgment as the Creator" (Rev. xiv. 6, 7).

In all our studies, however, we must keep steadily before the mind the fact that the knowledge of God is *relative* and *conditional*. We cannot know God unless He manifests Himself to us, and our knowledge is inevitably limited by the necessity of His being described to us in terms of human thought. Language is symbolic. "Our symbols are windows through which we apprehend a reality which transcends our conceptions. The symbols are true as far as they go" (*H. Spencer*).

God and Revelation.—We cannot emphasize too strongly or too frequently, that *all* names and attributes of God that we find in Scripture are *analogical* and *symbolical*. God Himself is far greater than all His names and attributes. He, the Infinite One, has condescended to the limitations of human terms, but He Himself is above and beyond the reach of language, logic, or philosophy. We have in the Scriptures a faithful, true, inspired, infallible manifestation of the Invisible and Incomprehensible God.

"At present we only see the baffling reflections in a mirror, but then it will be face to face. At present I am learning bit by bit, but then I shall understand, as all along I have myself been understood" (I Cor. xiii. 12, *Moffatt*).

"For the present we see things as if in a mirror, and are puzzled; but then we shall see them face to face. For the present knowledge I gain is imperfect, but then I shall fully know, even as I am fully known" (I Cor. xiii. 12, *Weymouth*).

The A.V. here: "Now we see through a glass darkly" is rather misleading as it tends to make the English reader think of transparent glass. The preposition (*dia*) should be rendered: "by means of"—"Now we see *by means of* a glass". The only other occurrence of *esoptron*, "glass" or "mirror", is James i. 23: "Like a man beholding his natural face in a glass."

We must, however, be careful in this passage (I Cor. xiii.) not to think that the Apostle is referring to the imperfect character of the dispensation of the Acts period, as contrasted with the perfect character of the dispensation of the Mystery. No one, surely, would

claim that any member of the One Body during the dispensation of the Mystery “knows even as he is known”.

It is certainly our joy to testify to the fuller knowledge that is ours now that the Mystery has been made known, but we cannot in this life ever “know as we are known”. That the glorious consummation awaits the day of resurrection, when we shall see “face to face”. However full our faith, however near we are to the Lord, nothing that we experience now can compare with the joy of that day, when we shall be manifested with Him in glory.

The word translated “darkly” in the A.V. is our English word “enigma”. In this life we see by means of the mirror of the Word, reflecting spiritual realities in an enigma. Invisible things are represented by things seen, spiritual things are spoken of as possessing natural qualities, and eternal things are expressed in the terms of time. There are certain things that it is possible for us to know while encompassed with the infirmities and limitations of our human nature, but we must not imagine that these relative truths are absolute, or that types and shadows are realities. We must be careful not to import into the realm of the real, the shadows and images of the relative.

In his book “God and Nature”, *H. Spencer* has said one or two things in connection with our subject that are perhaps worth repeating here:

- (1) God is invisible to our physical senses because He is pure Spirit and Infinite (Exod. xxxiii. 20; John i. 18).
- (2) God is unimaginable. He cannot be pictured by act or by mind.
- (3) Our knowledge of God is indirect. Even Scripture and the manifestation of God in Christ involve translation into human and finite terms.
- (4) The relativity that characterizes human knowledge limits our knowledge of God. We can only know what He reveals and the finite capacity of our minds limits His self-manifestation to us.
- (5) Divine inscrutability does not mean that God is wholly unknowable, but that we are unable to know Him fully and adequately (Job xi. 7-9; xxxvi. 26; Psa. lxxvii. 19; cxxxix. 6; Prov. xxx. 4; Isa. xlv. 15; Iv. 8, 9).

While we are considering this question of the limitations of human knowledge, it may be useful to observe one or two related ideas so that our understanding may be clarified. We speak of the “Infinite” and the “Absolute” in our endeavour to present something of the greatness of the Lord, but we must remember that the word “infinite” means strictly “unlimited”, while the word “absolute” means “unrelated”. So far as man is concerned, a thing which is wholly unlimited and wholly unrelated, is wholly unknown and wholly unreal. In theology, therefore, the terms “Infinite” and “Absolute” are modified to refer to a Being Who is “Self-limited” and “Self-sufficient”. When we use the term “the Infinite”, we mean the Being, Whose limitations are wholly within Himself. He is limited by what He is, and not by other and external things. Similarly, when we use the term “absolute” we mean that God is absolute in the sense that He is self-sufficient and independent of all externals. We find, however, that the philosopher speaks of God as being self-sufficient and independent *for His fullness* upon relations to other realities. This is where Scripture is at variance with Philosophy, for, according to the Scriptures,

the fullness of God is seen *in Christ and His redeemed people*, and is explained, not by the necessities of Metaphysics, but by the presence of Love. The exposition of this aspect of the subject, however, must wait until we come to the creation of man and endeavour to discover the purpose that lay behind it.

The age-long controversy concerning the Unity and Trinity of the Godhead is largely a matter of the conflict between the conception of the Absolute and the conception of the Relative. If God be Infinite and Absolute, He must be unique. God, therefore, is One, and the Trinity is a revelation of this Divine Unity to man. In all these things, to confuse the relative names and attributes whereby God has made Himself visible to us “as in a glass darkly”, with the Eternal reality itself, is to add the confusion of misunderstanding to the legitimate enigma which our limited human ability makes inevitable.

Let us thank God that He has stooped so low, and, while we wait with hope for that day of revelation when we shall see “face to face”, let us rejoice that in the mirror of the Word we may see now to the full capacity of our present powers of vision.

#17. “Adam”, and the “Likeness” of God (Gen. i. 26, 27). pp. 201 - 205

If we turn to Gen. i. and read the account of the creation we find that the first creative act in connection with this present system is introduced by the majestic words: “Let there be light, and there was light.” As we go on with the account, we find that each successive day’s work is ushered in by some similar formula: “Let there be a firmament”, “Let the earth bring forth”, “Let the waters bring forth”. The opening of the sixth and last day of the series is no exception to the general rule:

“And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature, after his kind, cattle and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: And God saw that it was good” (Gen. i. 24, 25).

This, however, does not bring the creation to a close. At verse 26, we enter an entirely different atmosphere, and encounter words regarding the Godhead which are utterly different from all that has gone before. We now read that God said, “Let Us make man” and this man is spoken of as made “in the image” and “after the likeness” of God.

The word “create” is used on only three occasions throughout this narrative:

(1) It is used of the creation, in the beginning, of the heaven and the earth. This is followed by a reference to the great deep, which, on the third day, forms the “seas”.

(2) These seas being something new, the inhabitants are not said to be “made” or “brought forth”, as in other cases, but the word “create” is once more introduced, to describe the way in which God provided this new element with fitting life: “And God *created* great whales.” The word “whale” refers to certain sea monsters which were apparently unknown in the creation that preceded the deluge of Gen. i. 2.

(3) There is no other use of the word “create” until we come to verse 27, where we read: “So God created man.” Man, therefore, was a new creature on the earth.

Not only do we find the word “create” used in this connection, but we are also impressed by the solemn pause and apparent deliberation before man is created.

“And God said, Let Us make man” (Gen. i. 26).

The idea that God consulted with the angels or with some other creatures over the creation of man would not in itself seem probable, and indeed is to be rejected upon the express evidence of Scripture.

“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counselor, hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel ?
(Isa. xl. 12-14).

The use of “us” and “our” in Gen. i., coming as it does in the opening chapter of the Book of the Law, a law which emphasized the Unity of the Godhead (Deut. vi. 4), should cause us to pause. We do not propose, in this article, to attempt to deal with the vast subject of the nature of the Godhead. A study in Gen. i. is hardly the place for such an enquiry. It is, however, legitimate to ask why it was that God, Who is self-sufficient, should have created anything at all, and further, why it was that He should have made man in His image and after His likeness. We have already considered, in Volume XXVII, pages 188-191, the question as to whether the very act of creation does not imply a self-limitation of the Almighty, and we believe that we have given a satisfactory answer—namely, that God is not only almighty and self-sufficient, but He is also *love*, and love dwelling alone, fully absorbed in its own perfection, would cease to be love at all. However, we must not stay to go over this ground again; what awaits us now is the consideration of man, his name and his office.

The name “Adam” occurs for the first time in Gen. i. 26. It is usual for commentators to refer to Gen. ii. 7, and teach that Adam was so called because he was taken out of *adamah*, or “ground”. If Gen. ii. 7 were the first occurrence of the word Adam, there might be some justification for this view, but inasmuch as he was so called in the counsels of God in Gen. i. 26, there does not seem to be any good reason in favour of the suggestion, except the obvious one that *adamah*, “the ground”, and *Adam*, “the man”, are very similar in the Hebrew. If similarity of sound be sufficient justification, we need not leave Gen. i. 26, for in this verse we have awaiting us the

word “likeness”, which is derived from *damah*, “to be like”. Not only does Gen. i. 26 tend to support the idea that “Adam” was so named because he was made in the “likeness” of God, but Gen. v. 1, 2 seems to use the same sort of argument:

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man (*Adam*), in the likeness (*demuth*) of God made He him. Male and female created He them: and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created” (Gen. v. 1, 2).

This passage certainly looks back to Gen. i. 26-30, and not to Gen. ii. 7, 21-23.

The purpose for which man was created is expressed in the three terms “image”, “likeness”, and “dominion”. The word “image”, *tselem*, is from the Hebrew root *tsel*, meaning “shadow”. The first occurrence in the O.T. is in Gen. xix. 8: “The shadow of my roof.” The LXX translates *tsel* by the Greek *skia* some 27 times. The latter is found in the N.T. seven times as follows:

“The *shadow* of death” (Matt. iv. 16; Luke i. 79).
“The *shadow* of it” (a tree) (Mark iv. 32).
“The *shadow* of Peter” (Acts v. 15).

The word is also used figuratively of the ceremonial law: “A shadow of things to come, and not the very image” (Heb. x. 1; I Cor. ii. 17); and in Heb. viii. 5: “The example and shadow of heavenly things.”

Adam was not the “very image”, but he in some measure shadowed forth the Lord; and Rom. v. 12-14 indicates that in other ways than those suggested in Gen. i. 26, 27, Adam was a “figure of Him that was to come”.

By creation, man is “the image and glory of God” (I Cor. xi. 7); but this image is, after all, “earthly”.

“The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven
as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly”
(I Cor. xv. 47-49).

In his second epistle to the same Church, the Apostle resumes the theme, and we give below the two references to “the image” in this second letter:

“But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same *image* from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”
(II Cor. iii. 18).

“In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the *image* of God, should shine unto them” (II Cor. iv. 4).

How many know and preach this gospel? How many realize that the announcement that “Christ is the *image* of God” is the “gospel of the glory of Christ”, and the subject of Satan’s attacks from the beginning? Before the world was, the Lord Jesus Christ had this

“glory” (John xvii. 5), and it was the subject of Satanic opposition, as we learn from Ezek. xxviii. It was “shadowed forth” in the creation of man, and attacked by the Serpent in the garden of Eden as explained in II Cor. iii. & iv., and is the goal towards which the purpose of the ages is directed. The central section of Romans (v. 12 - viii. 39) opens with Adam, a failing figure of Him that was to come, and closes with the goal of God’s great purpose: “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. viii. 29).

The climax of revelation in connection with “the Image” is found in Colossians:

“His dear Son Who is the Image of the Invisible God” (Col. i. 13-15).

“When Christ Who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the Image of Him that created him” (Col. iii. 4, 10).

Here, both in Col. i. and iii., the “image” is connected with creation. Moreover, Col. i. 16 makes it clear that the Son was the Creator of Gen. i. 26, and that Adam foreshadowed in some way yet to be considered, “Him that was to come”, “the last Adam”.

Returning to Gen. i. 26, we must now consider the added clause “after our likeness” (*demuth*). The LXX Version translates this by *kath homoiosin*, which we may compare with the Apostle’s use of the word when speaking to the Athenians in Acts xvii.:

“Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is *like (homoios)* unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device” (Acts xvii. 29).

Isaiah also challenges us with the question:

“To whom then will ye *liken (damah, see demuth above)* God?” (Isa. xl. 18).

And Ethan says:

“Who in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? Who among the sons of the mighty can be likened (*damah*) unto the Lord” (Psa. lxxxix. 6).

Nevertheless it is true that man was made after the likeness of God, and in James iii. we read, concerning the tongue:

“Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the *similitude (homoioses)* of God” (James iii. 9).

The prophet Hosea uses the word *damah* when speaking of the way in which God had condescended to use figures of speech:

“I have multiplied visions, and used *similitudes* by the ministry of the prophets” (Hosea xii. 10).

During His public ministry, the Lord Himself used many similitudes—for example:

“The kingdom of heaven is *like (homoios)* unto treasure” (Matt. xiii. 44).

“Unto what is the kingdom of God *like?*” (Luke xiii. 18).

“Whereunto shall I *liken* this generation?” (Matt. xi. 16).

Man is to God what a figure of speech is to thought, a symbol, an analogy, a type.

When Nebuchadnezzar saw in a dream the successive kingdoms of Gentile rule in the form of an image, neither he nor Daniel ever imagined that such kingdoms were actually like the image itself, but simply that this image and its peculiar construction “shadowed forth” in symbol the moral characteristics of the kingdoms concerned. So, in Gen. i. 26, there is no question of external resemblance. Whether seen in the frail type Adam, or in the glorious person of the Son of God, the “image and likeness” are never to be understood as physical. The Saviour Himself taught that God is spirit, that no man has ever seen His shape. It is true that He declared that “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father”, but no one with any understanding of the Word would think that He intended physical likeness here. The Father was set forth in the life and character of the “Word made flesh”, but the Father was not “like” the physical form which the Lord took when He was “found in fashion as a man”. So, in connection with Adam, the “image” and “likeness” have reference to what is moral and mental. However, we have already come to the end of our space, and will therefore defer any further remarks upon this important theme until our next article.

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth. (Second Series).

The Books of SAMUEL.

#2. The King Demanded, Tested and Rejected.

(I Samuel viii. 4 - xv. 35).

pp. 8 - 15

We surveyed in our last article the opening section of the First Book of Samuel, covering the last days of the Judges, and were saddened to observe that even Samuel seems to have failed at the end of his life, in relation to his sons. The parallel between I Sam. viii. 1-3 and I Sam. ii. 22-25 is too plain to be ignored. Yet such is the testimony of Scripture: no man is perfect. We find this fact stressed throughout the Scriptures, from Adam onwards. Noah, for example, a sort of second Adam, the eighth person, is brought through the day of wrath, and re-occupies the earth, but he is found drunk and one of his sons is the father of Canaan, Cush and Nimrod. Abraham is the father of the faithful, the friend of God, the one through whom all families of the earth are to be blessed, yet we know that he wavered, that he was untruthful, and he begat Ishmael. Moses, the great prophet and type of Christ, with whom God spoke face to face as a man speaks to his friend, forfeited entrance into the land because he spoke unadvisedly with his lips. And so the story grows. Neither Joshua, nor David, nor any other prophet, priest or king was perfect. Together with their outstanding typical qualities, there was always evidence of frailty, failure and sin.

We come now to the next section of the book of Samuel, in which we discover another principle that is characteristic of the ways of God. Contrary to all human expectation, God is *second*, not *first*. Saul is king before David. Moses is accepted the second time. Joseph is acknowledged the second time. Cain lives and Abel dies. Esau comes before Jacob, Ishmael before Isaac, Antichrist before Christ, the kingdoms of this world before the kingdom of the Lord. The reason is simple. God is dealing with responsible moral creatures, and he teaches them through the exercise of their own choice and the experience of their own efforts. Had Adam never been allowed to exercise his choice, the human race would probably have been convinced that man could stand unassisted against all temptation. Had Israel not failed so signally, man would doubtless have believed that it was within his power to accomplish a righteousness by works. Had government never been entrusted to man, the nations of the earth would never have been convinced that the only true king is the King appointed by heaven.

And so here, in the Book of Samuel, we are to see one more example of the working out of this principle, and we shall, therefore, have to consider Saul, the people's choice, before studying David, the "man after God's own heart".

Let us make one observation at the outset. No one was coerced into demanding Saul. No predestination compelled men, against their better judgment, to this decision. The

failure of Samuel's sons, and the natural tendency of man to trust in himself, were sufficient.

Saul's history occupies I Sam. viii. 4 to II Sam. i. 27 and falls into three sections:

- (1) I Sam. viii. 4 - xiv. 35. The demand for a king, his testing and rejection.
- (2) I Sam. xvi. 1 - xxvi. 25. The anointing of David, and his persecution by Saul.
- (3) I Sam. xxvii. 1 - II Sam. i. 27. Saul's sin and death.

We shall find that the consideration of the essential features in the first of these sections will occupy all the space we have available in this article, and once again, as with the first eight chapters, we must refrain from presenting anything like a complete structure.

The following is an analysis of the outstanding points:

I Samuel viii. 4 - xv. 35.

The demand for, and the rejection of, Saul.

- A1 | viii. 4-9. | a | A king demanded by the people.
 - b | The Lord rejected.
 - c | Reference to history since Egypt.
- B1 | viii. 10-22. The manner of the king.
 - C1 | x. 8. The Test. | Tarry seven days.
 - I will offer sacrifice.
- A2 | x. 18, 19. | c | Reference to history since Egypt.
 - b | God rejected.
 - a | A king demanded.
- B2 | x. 25. The manner of the kingdom.
 - C2 | xi. 3-13. The Test. | Give us seven days.
 - Saul hewed yoke of oxen.
- A3 | xi. 15 - xii. 12. | a | Saul made king.
 - c | Reference to history since Egypt.
 - b | Lord God rejected.
- B3 | xiii. 1. The reign of Saul. One year.
 - C3 | xiii. 8 - xv. 19. The Test. | He tarried seven days.
 - Saul's disobedience. The offerings.
 - Saul's oath. The spoil.
 - Saul's disobedience. The offerings and the spoil.
- A4 | xv. 26. | b | The word of the Lord rejected.
 - a | Saul rejected from being king.

Taking this outline as our guide, let us consider the teaching corresponding to the letter "A" in the structure. This aspect of the subject occurs four times, and in three of the passages the people are reminded of the attitude of their fathers since the exodus from Egypt. In the personal dealing with Saul himself, however, in chapter xv. this item is not repeated. Saul was there being dealt with because of his own iniquity.

It is evident from the Scriptures, that whoever at any time chooses any king other than the Lord Himself is making a wrong choice. On the other hand, as in case of divorce, some things were permitted because of the hardness of man's heart. The reader may perhaps remind us that there was a definite law made by Moses to regulate the choice of a king and his subsequent conduct. This is perfectly true, but is not the whole truth. The passage referred to is Deut. xvii. 14-20, and the law is prefaced by the words:

“When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me”

This passage makes it clear that the desire for a king did not spring from a true conception of their calling, for the reason—“like as all the nations”—was entirely contrary to the revealed will of the Lord. If, however, Israel did desire a king, the Lord would not permit them to transgress all His will. He would not permit a stranger to be king, and by prohibiting polygamy and wealth, and by commanding that the king should write a copy of the law, He would keep the people in check.

The ominous phrase “like all the nations” is found in Israel's demand in I Sam. viii. 5, and constituted the rejection of the Lord:

“They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them” (I Sam. viii. 7).

Then comes the reference to Egypt:

“According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt, even unto this day” (I Sam. viii. 8).

These three features are repeated in x. 18 and 19, but come in the reverse order from the opening passage (see structure “A2”):

“Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you, and ye have this day rejected your God, Who Himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations: and ye have said, Nay, but set a king over us” (I Sam. x. 18, 19).

This threefold reference occurs once again in xi. 15 - xii. 12 (see structure “A3”):

“And there they made Saul king Behold I have hearkened unto your voice in all ye said unto me, and have made a king over you.”

“Now, therefore, stand still, that I may reason with you before the Lord, of all the righteous acts of the Lord which He did to you and to your fathers. When Jacob was come out of Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, the Lord sent Moses and Aaron and the Lord sent Jerubbaal, and Bedan, and Jephthah, and Samuel” (The Revised Syriac reads “Samson”).

Instead of crying to the Lord, when Nahash the king of the Ammonites came against them, Israel turned away from the Lord to a king of their own choice:

“Ye said unto me, Nay; but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king” (I Sam. xii. 7-12).

In these three passages we have the root of Israel’s failure.

One can also see in the words of the Lord, His sense of Israel’s ingratitude. This thought frequently recurs, and several Psalms (e.g., Psa. cvi. 13) refer to it. Jeremiah, also, refers to the breaking of the covenant by Israel when the Lord led them out of Egypt. The same spirit, alas, persists into the N.T., when we read the awful words: “We have no king but Cæsar” (John xix. 15).

The opening chapter of Isaiah also speaks of Israel’s ingratitude, and in Hosea xi. 1-5 we read of Israel’s apostacy and the dominion of the king of Assyria.

Ever since they refused their Messiah, the children of Israel have been robbed and persecuted by the kings of the earth, and they will find no rest, until they say: “Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt. xxiii. 39).

Returning to our structure on page 10, we have now to consider sections “B1” and “B2”—“The manner of the king” and “The manner of the kingdom”. The word “manner” is *mishpat*. The primary meaning is “judgment, law or right”, but it can also mean “usage, manner or custom”. So in I Samuel we find the following: “the priest’s custom” (I Sam. ii. 13); “perverted judgment” (I Sam. viii. 3); “the manner of the king” (I Sam. viii. 9 and 11); “the manner of the kingdom” (I Sam. x. 25); and “manner” and “ordinance” in xxvii. 11 and xxx. 25.

The manner of the king (I Sam. viii. 10-18).—Samuel told the people plainly what they must expect if a king were placed over them. Their sons would be taken “for his chariots, and his horsemen”, and he would commandeer their labour in the field and at the forge. After a long list of other exactions, Samuel warns them:

“And ye shall cry out in that day, because of your king which ye shall have chosen you, and the Lord will not hear you in that day” (I Sam. viii. 18).

The manner of the kingdom (I Sam. x. 25):

“Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord.”

The “manner of the kingdom” expresses what is *de jure*; the “manner of the king”, what is *de facto*.

Instead of the word “manner” being repeated a third time, we have in its place a reference to the first year of Saul’s reign, when all seemed to be going well—until the

opening of the second year, when he began to manifest those traits that darkened his whole reign.

One further point is emphasized in the structure, and that is the thrice-repeated test of “seven days”.

The first test (I Sam. x. 8):

“And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and show thee what thou shalt do.”

Saul was warned that he could not start his reign with any hope of success, unless he were wholly devoted to the Lord (the burnt offering) and fully reconciled to Him (the peace offering)—and further, that this devotion and reconciliation were beyond his own power to effect, and that he must humbly wait for the Lord Who, through Samuel, would bring it to pass.

The second test (I Sam. xi. 3-13).

The second test of seven days, occurs in chapter xi. The reader may remember that in Judges xi. the people of Gilead were involved in a controversy with the Ammonites, on account of a grievance felt by the Ammonites at the possession by Israel of the land beyond Jordan. When Nahash the Ammonite heard of the possible appointment of a king over Israel, he came and besieged Jabesh Gilead. When the men asked that they might enter into a covenant with him as servants, Nahash consented upon the condition that they should suffer the loss of their right eyes. They then asked for a seven days’ respite, and Saul responded to their call for help:

“And he took a yoke of oxen, and hewed them in pieces, and sent them by the hands of messengers, saying, Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen” (I Sam. xi. 7).

As a result, Nahash was beaten, and the people said,

“Who is he that said, Shall Saul reign over us? bring the men, that we may put them to death” (I Sam. xi. 12).

The third test (I Sam. xiii. 8 - xv. 19):

“As for Saul, he was yet in Gilgal, and all the people followed him trembling. And he tarried seven days, according to the set time that Samuel had appointed: but Samuel came not to Gilgal; and the people were scattered from him. And Saul said, Bring hither a burnt offering.”

Saul was sorely tried. We dare not condone his sin, but how many of us would not have acted in the same way? The Philistines were gathered together to fight, and the people, seeing they were in a strait, began to hide or fly. Those who followed Saul, did so trembling. He waited with much anxiety until the seventh day, and then broke down. Had he endured to the end the Lord would have established his kingdom (I Sam. xiii. 13),

but as it was, he lost the kingdom, and another man, after the Lord's own heart, was sought. It was under this awful shadow that Saul lived until his tragic end, and it was because of this promise concerning another, that he persecuted David.

We find that, while Saul did not render full obedience to the Lord, either in the matter of Gilgal, or in the commission to destroy the Amalekites (I Sam. xv.), he was very determined to keep his own oath, even though it were foolish to do so (I Sam. xiv.). Saul's dreadful end was perceived by Samuel to be incipient in his early disobedience, for he said: "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft" (I Sam. xv. 23); and it was for resorting to witchcraft that Saul died (I Chron. x. 13). He Who knows the hearts of all men, saw what was hidden from the human eye. At the beginning Saul was meek, forbearing, generous, just as his antitype, the Antichrist at the time of the end, shall come in peaceably with flatteries. The reader will remember that, at the anointing of David, Samuel was told not to look upon the outward appearance.

However the matter may appear on the surface, and not forgetting the mercy extended by Saul (I Sam. xi. 13), it still remained true, as Samuel said in the succeeding chapter, that by making Saul king, they had rejected the Lord.

"And when ye saw that Nahash, the king of the children of Ammon came against you, ye said unto me, Nay, but a king shall reign over us: when the Lord your God was your king" (I Sam. xii. 12).

Such is the gist of this first section of the life of Saul. Where Saul failed, the Lord Jesus overcame. Tempted to seek the kingdom and the glory by a short cut He repudiated the offer, and was content, though rejected by the cities that had seen his mighty works, to wait God's time, saying, "Even, so, Father".

We commend the study of this section to the reader, believing that the outline supplied will enable him to consider the intervening detail without losing sight of the main argument. If we have contributed in any way towards making that argument clear, we are indeed thankful. The task before us in these books of the kingdom is formidable, and were it not for the consciousness that we have a work to do, we might well feel the burden to be too great. However, when He commands He also enables, and so we trust that we shall continue, ever being able to say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us".

The Books of SAMUEL.
#3. David, Anointed and Persecuted.
(I Samuel xvi. 1 - xxvi. 25).
pp. 44 - 51

We have already seen that Saul's record is divided up into three sections, as follows:

- (1) I Sam. viii. 4 - xiv. 35. The demand for a king, his testing and rejection.
- (2) I Sam. xvi. 1 - xxvi. 25. The anointing of David, and his persecution by Saul.
- (3) I Sam. xxvii. 1 - II Sam. i. 27. Saul's sin and death.

This is not only the actual order of events in Saul's career, but it also foreshadows the great history of Christ and the Antichrist. Christ, as the true Anointed, has already been chosen and is believed in by His people, but He and they are for the time being in such places as the Cave of Adullam, or, as Hebrews puts it, "outside the camp". At the close of this period of persecution, "Antichrist" comes to the fore, but his association with demoniacal powers is now evident and he dies "without hand" (cf. I Chron. x. 13, 14).

In the present article, we must concentrate our attention on the period of David's persecution, and once again we must ask our readers to remember that the amount of material concerned is too great to deal with in detail in an article of this type. All we can do is to point out the main features, leaving the reader to supplement as the Lord gives grace. This method must not, however, be misconstrued as implying either indifference or laziness. The amount of concentration necessary for arriving at an outline of this kind can only be appreciated by those who have attempted its discovery.

The following analysis provides a thread by which the main argument of this very full section may be followed without losing one's way among the many explanatory details.

I Samuel xvi. 1 - xxvi. 25.

- A | xvi. 1-23. THE LORD'S ANOINTED.
- B | xvii. 1-54. GOLIATH. His sword (51).
- C | xvii. 55-58. Whose son is he? The son of JESSE.
- D | xviii. 1-4. JONATHAN. "Stripped himself."
- E | xviii. 5 - xix. 17. | SAUL seeks DAVID'S life.
 - TWO ATTACKS. The Javelin (11).
 - The Philistines (17-27).
 - TWO CONFESSIONS. The Lord with David (xviii. 12, 28).
- D | xix. 18-24. SAUL. "Stripped off his clothes."
- C | xx. 1-42. THE SON OF JESSE.
- B | xxi. 1-9. GOLIATH. His sword (9).
- E | xxi. 10 - xxvi. 25. | DAVID spares SAUL'S life.
 - TWO OCCASIONS. Skirt (xxiv. 4).
 - Spear (xxvi. 12).
 - TWO CONFESSIONS. I know (xxiv. 20)
 - Prevail (xxvi. 25).
- A | xxvi. 23. THE LORD'S ANOINTED.

Let us now become a little more acquainted with the various links in this chain. First and foremost comes the record of David's anointing (xvi. 1-23). There are seven occurrences of the verb "to anoint" in this first book of Samuel, four having reference to Saul (ix. 16; x. 1; xv. 1 & 17), and three to David (xvi. 3, 12, 13). It is noticeable that whereas Saul is said to be anointed captain twice, and king twice, neither of these titles is used of David in connection with this initial anointing. The words are simply:

"Anoint unto Me" (xvi. 3).

"Anoint him for this is he" (xvi. 12).

"Samuel anointed him in the midst of his brethren" (xvi. 13).

While it was the purpose of the Lord that David should be both king (xvi. 1) and captain (xiii. 14), that purpose was not made known at the beginning either to Jesse, or to his sons, or to David himself. David simply knew that, for some reason, Samuel had been sent, and that he had been selected. Not until the death of Saul do we find David actually anointed "King" (II Sam. ii. 4). In the series of articles entitled "Light for the Last Days", Volume XXVII, page 61, we have drawn attention to the principle found in Rev. xi. 15, that the Lord can only reign as King, when the usurping kingdoms are no more. We shall also see, when considering the section relating to Goliath, that David's action portrayed the prophecy which was made later by Daniel as recorded in Dan. ii.

We must leave to the reader the pleasure and profit of a personal study of the narrative of David's first anointing, and pass on to his first great act. Just as the Lord passed from the anointing at Jordan (Matt. iii.) to the conflict in the wilderness (Matt. iv.), so we find David passing from his anointing by Samuel to the conflict with Goliath. In passing, mention is made of the fact that, upon his anointing "the spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward", while "the spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him". There is every likelihood that the incident described in I Sam. xvi. 14-23 did not take place before the events of chapter xvii., but that it is inserted here as a concrete illustration of the change that came over Saul. (See *The Companion Bible* here and in the margin of xvii. 1).

In xvii. 4 Goliath is called "The champion". The Hebrew here is *Ish-habbenayim* or "The man between the two". We may compare this with Psalm viii., which concludes with the word "Muth-labben"* (* - In the A.V. this appears in the super-scription of Psalm ix. For further explanation, see *The Companion Bible*, Appendixes 64 and 65), meaning "The death of the man between". In this psalm, having overcome the enemy, David looks back to the dominion forfeited by Adam and forward to the Lord Himself, of Whom he was so wonderful a type.

In I Sam. xvii., the various pieces of Goliath's armour are enumerated: helmet, coat, greaves, target, spear and shield—six pieces in all. His height is given as six cubits and a span, and his spear-head as weighing 600 shekels of iron. In a later record, where the brother of Goliath of Gath is mentioned, and another giant of the same place, he is said to have had on both hands and feet, six fingers and six toes. The connection between these

numbers and the prophetic forecast of Rev. xiii. 18: "Six hundred, threescore and six" seems irresistible.

David's exclamation: "What have I now done?" (I Sam. xvii. 29) will need no explanation to any reader who has been one of a large family, particularly if he has been the youngest of a number of brothers.

There is a further point in connection with Jesse's family that may perhaps present a difficulty. While I Sam. xvii. 12 states that Jesse had "eight sons" and xvi. 10 that "seven of his sons" passed before Samuel before David was called, yet I Chron. ii. 13-15 gives the names of Jesse's sons, ending with "David, the seventh". In I Samuel we have the historical record, whereas in I Chron. ii. we have the genealogy, and for some reason unexplained, one of Jesse's sons could not be reckoned in the genealogy, either because he was the son of a concubine, or because he had died young. It is, however, no accident that David should be both seventh and eighth. We have a corresponding problem in Rev. xvii. 10, 11, where we read that there are "seven kings", and yet there is an "eighth", who is of "the seven". For an explanation of this problem the reader should refer to Volume XIII, page 91.

The fact that Goliath had presented himself for forty days before David took up the challenge, is also suggestive. The number 40 is the symbol of test and probation. It was after the forty days' fast that the Saviour, Who had just been anointed, met the temptation of the Devil (Matt. iv. 2).

Why does the record so particularly explain that the instrument of Goliath's overthrow was one of the five "smooth stones out of the brook"? If we think for a moment of these stones, and of the fact that they were not fashioned by hand, we at once recall the passage in Dan. ii., where the colossus seen by Nebuchadnezzar was destroyed by "a stone cut out without hands" (Dan. ii. 34, 44, 45). David was enacting on the battle-field in Ephas-dammin (which, according to Aaron Pick, means "Nothing but blood") what Christ Himself will accomplish in reality by the blood of His cross.

It is pitiable to see Saul's response to David's simple faith. Saul was concerned with the fact that Goliath had been a man of war from his youth, but David was relying on the fact that the Lord, Who had delivered him from the paw of the lion and of the bear, could and would deliver him out of the hand of the Philistine. In reply to this challenge of faith, Saul says: "Go, and the Lord be with you" (I Sam. xvii. 37), but he immediately spoils it by dressing young David up in the armour of a man who stood head and shoulders above his fellows! How ridiculous any of us look when we stand up in second-hand armour—relying on second-hand faith, or preaching second-hand sermons. We are glad that David had the sense to say: "I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them" (I Sam. xvii. 39).

When the champion of the Philistines was slain, Saul remembered that he had promised to give his daughter to the victor (I Sam. xvii. 25). He therefore enquires of Abner: "Whose son is the youth?" and Abner replies that he cannot tell. Saul then asks

David: “Whose son art thou, young man?”—a question which makes us think of the similar question asked concerning Christ in the Gospels. The structure given on page 45 shows that this question is important.

One can never read the account given in the next section of the book without being moved, for it is one of the few instances recorded in Scripture of utter and selfless affection. Jonathan had every reason, speaking after the manner of men, to hate David, for it very soon became apparent that he was destined to occupy the throne. Yet it is written:

“The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul” (I Sam. xviii. 1).

As a result of this love, Jonathan and David made a covenant (I Sam. xviii. 3)—a covenant which is mentioned on four other occasions in this book, twice by name (xx. 8 and xxiii. 18) and twice by implication (xx. 16 and 42). Saul and Jonathan set forth in type the two classes among Israel, whose true character was manifested by their reaction to Christ. Saul represents the persecuting and unbelieving Jew, who went out in blindness and hardness of heart, and Jonathan the believing remnant who crowned the Saviour in their hearts, during the time of His rejection, in anticipation of the day of His glory. Saul’s javelin was directed not only at David, representing Christ, but at Jonathan also, the type of the believer (See the six occurrences: I Sam. xviii. 10, 11; xix. 9, 10, 18; and xx. 33).

We read that Jonathan “delighted much” in David (xix. 2), and that he “spake good” of him (xix. 4). On numerous occasions he interposed on David’s behalf, even at the risk of his own life. Almost the last of his recorded acts is found in I Sam. xxiii.:

“And Jonathan, Saul’s son, arose, and went to David into the word, and strengthened his hand in God” (I Sam. xxiii. 16).

And in the next verse we read:

“Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee” (I Sam. xxiii. 17).

a passage which is parallel with the Lord’s promise to the faithful in Rev. iii. 21.

It is written in Scripture that “every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord” (Phil. ii.). There are some who find in this passage an argument in favour of the final reconciliation of all, universally. To such we would commend the two sections indicated in the Structure as follows:

D | xviii. 1-4. JONATHAN. “Stripped himself.”
D | xix. 18-24. SAUL. “Stripped off his clothes.”

Jonathan stripped himself of his robe, and “gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle” (I Sam. xviii. 4). This, in symbolic language, is what Paul did when he counted all things loss for the excellency of the

knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord (Phil. iii. 8, 9). When the soul is knit to the Lord, when we love Him as our own soul, then that love cannot be satisfied until it yields up its all. We read in the next chapter that Saul also “stripped” himself. He had heard of David’s escape from the trap which he had set, and now, when he learned that David was at Naioth in Ramah, he sent messengers to take him. These messengers, however, failed in their errand and joined the ranks of those who were prophesying. This happened three times over, so that eventually Saul himself went to apprehend him. But in verses 23 & 24 we read:

“The spirit of God was upon him also and he went on, and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. And he stripped off his clothes also, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night” (I Sam. xix. 23, 24).

Jonathan’s act was voluntary, Saul’s was involuntary. The A.V. reads: “He lay down naked”, but the margin tells us that the Hebrew is the word “fell”, and refers the reader to the case of Balaam in Numb. xxiv. 4—“*Falling* into a trance”—where the same word is used. Neither Balaam nor Saul *voluntarily* obeyed the Lord. All men, whether prompted by love, or driven by power, must one day recognize the Lordship of Christ. All men must be stripped of self-righteousness, but all such stripping will not be voluntary and will not therefore necessarily involve union with the Saviour. All men will at length recognize their sinnership, but although Saul three times uttered the words: “I have sinned” (xv. 24, 30, and xxvi. 21), it was not a confession that accompanied salvation. He did not forsake his sin or truly turn to the Lord.

The reader should examine for himself those sections indicated in the structure by references to “the son of Jesse”, “the sword of Goliath”, and “the Lord’s anointed”. We shall have to pass these passages by without comment, so that space may be found for the sections indicated by the letters E and E. These two sub-divisions occupy a very considerable part of the whole passage, namely, xviii. 5 - xix. 17, and xxi. 10 - xxvi. 25.

In chapter xviii. we find that Saul’s jealousy was aroused by the song of the women: “Saul hath slain his thousands: And David his ten thousands” (I Sam. xviii. 7). His first attempt upon David’s life was by a clumsy attack with a javelin. When this failed, he planned, on two occasions, to involve David in battle with the Philistines—by making this a condition for the winning of his daughter’s hand, although he had actually promised this as a reward for the destruction of Goliath. In this, too, Saul failed.

Not only did Saul make these two attempts upon David’s life, but on two occasions it is recorded that he realized that “the Lord was with David”:

“And Saul was afraid of David, *because the Lord was with him*, and was departed from Saul” (I Sam. xviii. 12).

And again, in verse 28 of the same chapter:

“And Saul *saw and knew that the Lord was with David*, and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him. And Saul was yet more afraid of David: and Saul became David’s enemy continually” (I Sam. xviii. 28, 29).

In the sections *E* and *E* in the Structure, the two attacks made upon David by Saul, are balanced by the two occasions on which David spared the life of Saul:

“Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul’s robe privily” (I Sam. xxiv. 4).
“So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul’s bolster” (I Sam. xxvi. 12).

It is significant that on both these occasions Saul was asleep. In the second reference, this fact is emphasized by the words: “A deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them” (I Sam. xxvi. 12).

On seven different occasions Scripture records the fall of a “deep sleep” (Heb. *tardemah*). These references, which are given below, seem to indicate that the Lord uses this “deep sleep” when He wishes to deal with man in some great crisis.

- A | Gen. ii. 21. ADAM. For blessing.
- B | Gen. xv. 12. ABRAHAM. Righteousness by faith.
- C | I Sam. xxvi. 12. SAUL. To warn.
- B | Job iv. 13. JOB. Is mortal man righteous?
- C | Job xxxiii. 15. JOB. To hide pride from man.
- A | Prov. xix. 15. SLOTH. \ Judicial blindness
- Isa. xxix. 10. JUDGMENT. / (Rom. xi. 8).

In this deep sleep Saul received from God his final warning. He is so far moved as to confess: “I have sinned” (I Sam. xxvi. 21) and to acknowledge that David should “prevail” (I Sam. xxvi. 25), but this does not prevent him from resorting to the Witch of Endor.

Balancing the two confessions of xviii. 5 - xix. 17 in the Structure, we have the two confessions of xxi. 10 - xxvi. 25. One of these we have already quoted above, and the other is found in xxiv. 7-12.

Although much of interest has necessarily been passed by without comment, we trust that the main theme of our passage has been discovered and presented, and we therefore conclude with Saul’s confession in chapter xxiv.:

“And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil. And thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me: forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thine hand thou killest me not. For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold, I know well that thou shalt surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand. Swear now, therefore, unto me by the Lord, that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father’s house. And David sware unto Saul.”

The Books of SAMUEL.
#4. Saul's last act of rebellion and death.
(I Samuel xxvii. 1 - II Samuel i. 27).
pp. 81 - 87

The story of Saul now draws to its terrible end. If the record had been the invention of man, an epic poem with David as the hero and Saul as the villain, many passages would have been either omitted, or completely altered. The Scriptures, however, are a true record, and there is only one man whom they set forth as being perfect, the Man, Christ Jesus. David, was, indeed, a man after God's own heart, but he was by no means perfect. He sinned and fell, more than once, though his repentance was deep and genuine. Neither Aaron (Deut. ix. 16-20), nor Samuel (I Sam. viii. 1-3), nor David (I Sam. xxvii. 1-12), were without fault; the three types of Christ, as Priest, Prophet and King were all found wanting.

David's history in this section is closely associated with Ziklag. According to Dr. Young, Ziklag means "bending". For David it was a place of humiliation and shame, but it was also the place to which there came in the days of his humiliation, those who afterwards were numbered among his mighty men. As always, the type, while teaching certain truths, displays also certain weaknesses, a principle common to all the typical characters of the O.T. from Adam onward. One has only to think of Adam, Noah and Abraham to see examples of this. If Ziklag means "bending", it would seem that the word, in connection with David, has a twofold significance—in the first place, the true "bending", in humiliation and suffering at the hands of Saul; and secondly, the false "bending", when, moved by fear, he compromised with the ungodly.

Originally Ziklag had belonged to Judah (Josh. xv. 31), but it subsequently passed to Simeon (Josh. xix. 1-5), and in the days of Saul it had fallen into the hands of the Philistines. It would therefore seem to suggest the believer's failure to "possess his possessions", and the subsequent need for humbling before victory can be assured.

It will be seen from the structure below that the section before us is primarily a simple alternation of the story of David at Ziklag, and the association of Saul with the witch of Endor and his consequent death.

I Samuel xxvii. 1 - II Samuel i. 27.

- A1 | I Sam. xxvii. 1 - xxviii. 2. DAVID AT ZIKLAG. Amalekites destroyed.
- B1 | xxviii. 3-25. SAUL AT ENDOR. The Witch.
- A2 | xix. 1 - xxx. 31. DAVID AT ZIKLAG. Servant of Amalekite spared.
- B2 | xxx. 1-10. SAUL AT GILBOA. Death and dishonour.
- C1 | xxxi. 11-13. The kindness of the MEN of JABESH-GILEAD to SAUL.
- A3 | II Sam. i. 1-16. DAVID AT ZIKLAG. Amalekites killed.
- C2 | i. 17-27. SAUL and JONATHAN lamented by DAVID.

Let us now examine these sub-divisions and seek to learn the lessons that await us. Beginning at the first verse, we read:

“And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul; there is nothing better for me than that I should speedily escape into the land of the Philistines” (I Sam. xxvii. 1).

It would be difficult for any writer to speak words of censure or condemnation with regard to David’s attitude, without at the same time censuring and condemning himself. Only as we treat of these passages with an eye upon our own frailty can we dare to speak of them truthfully. It is in the spirit of Gal. vi. 1 “considering our own selves”, that we speak here of David’s declension.

In chapter xxiv., we find Saul halting in his persecution, and confessing that he is wrong. David cuts off part of Saul’s skirt, and expostulates with him, and Saul seems to repent. Soon, however, he is once more seeking David’s life. On one more occasion David spares the king’s life, and once again expostulates with him as in chapter xxiv. Again Saul makes a wonderful confession, but David is growing weary, and feeling sick at heart. “And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day at the hand of Saul.” We can surely sympathize with David here, even if Scripture forbids that we should condone. We should probably have given up long since.

David now goes to Achish King of Gath, with his two wives, and asks for and received Ziklag as a residence. It is interesting to notice here that, although we read of David finding grace in the eyes of Achish, there is no mention of the Lord. David and his men now invade the Geshurites, the Gezrites and the Amalekites and destroy their cities. It is true that these cities were originally devoted to destruction (Josh. xiii. 13; xvi. 10; and I Sam. xv.), but David did not answer Achish truthfully when he asked, “Whither have ye made a road to-day?” We read that David “saved neither man nor woman alive”, so that no tidings should reach Gath and thus imperil his relationship with Achish. “And Achish believed David.” How sad to think that David should be so compromised with evil, and how he must have shrunk inwardly when Achish manifested his trust so far as to make him “keeper of his head for ever” (xxviii. 2).

From David’s temporary lapse, we now turn to the fatal step taken by Saul (I Sam. xxviii. 3-25). Samuel was dead, and so could not be consulted, and Saul had put away the wizards and those that had familiar spirits. When he enquired of the Lord, “the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets”. In his despair he takes the plunge foreseen by Samuel when he warned Saul at the beginning that “rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft” (xv. 23). “Then Saul said unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit.” Such a woman was found at Endor, and Saul, disguising himself, went by night, and demanded that her familiar spirit should be brought up. There has been considerable debate as to whether Samuel himself actually appeared to Saul, or whether a spirit impersonating him gave the message. It is impossible for anyone to be absolutely certain. All that we can do is to seek to understand what is written according to the analogy of the faith. Scripture teaches that

the dead “know not anything”, and that there is no knowledge in the grave. At death, the body returns to the dust as it was, and the spirit returns to God Who gave it. There is no consciousness between death and resurrection. If it should be objected that on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses and Elijah were most certainly present, we would reply that both were special cases. Moses is specially mentioned in Jude as one over whose body Michael and the Devil contended (showing that he was bodily present on the Mount), and in the case of Elijah, we know that he was caught up to heaven by a whirlwind, so that he cannot be compared with the generality of men. Samuel had died and had been buried in Ramah. When Saul said “Bring me up Samuel”, we do not know whether he really expected Samuel himself to appear, for he had gone by design to one that had a “familiar spirit”, and had previously said, “Divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring him up whom I shall name unto thee”. The general attitude of the Scriptures towards the diviner is one of unreserved condemnation, together with the assurance that he deals in lies:

“That frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh *diviners* mad” (Isa. xlv. 25).

“Therefore hearken not ye to your prophets, nor to your *diviners*, nor to your dreamers, nor to your enchanters, nor to your sorcerers for they prophesy a lie unto you” (Jer. xxvii. 9, 10).

“Let not your *diviners* deceive you” (Jer. xxix. 8).

“*Diviners* have seen a lie” (Zech. x. 2).

Turning to the N.T., we read, in connection with Saul’s great antitype, the Man of Sin:

“After the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie” (II Thess. ii. 9-11).

Here we find that, while Satan is said to work with lies and deception, God can and does sometimes intervene, and ensure that certain people shall be made to believe a lie. On one occasion we read of a “lying spirit” being sent by the Lord in punishment (I Kings xxii. 21-23; II Chron. xviii. 19-24), and it is obvious that if this could also be done to fulfil the word of the Lord concerning Saul. In the case of Ahab, we are not told that he deliberately set out to consult with one that had a familiar spirit, but in Saul’s case we know that he did. In the law of the Lord, which was familiar to Saul, we read:

“Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them. I am the Lord” (Lev. xix. 31).

“The soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set My face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people” (Lev. xx. 6).

We are distinctly told that, when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord “answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets” (I Sam. xxviii. 6). In these circumstances it is difficult to believe that, when Saul turned to the power of darkness, the Lord actually answered him by raising the prophet Samuel from the dead. The fact that the message given to Saul through the witch was true does not in any way prove that Samuel himself was present. The young girl who cried after the apostles in Acts xvi. used words that were quite true, but she was nevertheless under the control of an evil spirit (Acts xvi. 16-18).

If we examine I Sam. xxviii. carefully, we shall find that Saul himself saw nothing. He asked the witch: “What form is he of?” and she replied: “An old man cometh up; and he is covered with a mantle.” We then read that “Saul perceived that it was Samuel” (xxviii. 13, 14). This might have been convincing enough to Saul in his overwrought state, but it is hardly logical to conclude that an old man wearing a mantle must necessarily have been Samuel. All that we actually know is that the witch was startled at the apparition, that she perceived that her questioner was Saul, that she described what she saw, and that Saul heard the prophecy. The prophecy was true, and in this we can see the restraining hand of the Lord, but there is no reason to believe that the Lord made any special exception in this case. Those who believe that the soul is immortal, and that the dead are not really dead but alive in another sphere, may find “proofs” for what they believe in this chapter, but we dare not run counter to the whole testimony of Scripture, Spiritism, in all its ways, is from beneath and is abhorrent to the Lord.

We must now return to David and Ziklag (I Sam. xxix. 1 - xxx. 31). David was now in a very serious predicament. The Philistines were gathering for war, and Achish had so trusted David that he believed that he had “made his people Israel utterly to abhor him” (xxvii. 12). Moreover, he had made David “the keeper of his head” (xxviii. 2). Whatever David did now would be an act of treachery. If he betrayed the trust Achish had reposed in him, it would be base indeed. On the other hand, how would it be possible for him to fight with Achish against his own people and future subjects? This is surely a lesson for us all. The man who sets out to please everybody generally succeeds in pleasing no one. We well remember, when we first began our printed testimony, how many wrote to us about the “mistake” of not being sufficiently diplomatic with regard to our attitude to the Lord’s Supper. It was suggested that it would limit the sphere of our ministry, and make many turn back—and this was certainly the case. We decided, however, that the only thing was to “burn our boats” so that there should be no compromise. We have certainly “suffered” for our actions in some respects, but we have been spared the dreadful predicament in which David found himself. There are also other elements of truth about which some have compromised to their spiritual undoing. We need not mention them specifically; each one will know his own heart before the Lord.

The Lord in mercy used the natural suspicions of the Philistines themselves to extricate His servant, and he appears to have learned the lesson. Upon returning to Ziklag, however, David found to his horror that the Amalekites had taken their revenge upon him, and had sacked the town carrying away all the women as captives. So bitter was the grief of David’s men, that they even spoke of stoning him—“but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God” (xxx. 6).

He now does what he had failed to do in chapter xxvii. He enquires of the Lord through Abiathar the priest, and received the assurance of victory. The six hundred men who formed his band had already marched over rough country for three days, and by the time they reached the brook Besor two hundred were so faint that they could go no further. Much time was saved in the pursuit by the finding of an abandoned Egyptian servant belonging to the Amalekites, and there was a great slaughter—only four hundred

young men escaping on camels. David recovered all that had been taken by the Amalekites, the typical teaching probably being that David had at last overcome the flesh, for which Amalek usually stands. David's magnanimity did not meet with the approval of some of his men, who objected to the suggestion that the two hundred who had stayed behind at Besor should share the spoil. David, however, overruled their objection and "made a statute and an ordinance", the terms of which are a comfort to many in the present day:

"As his part is that goeth down to battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike" (xxx. 24).

Aaron Pick states that *Besor* means "The bringer of good tidings", and it is certainly true that some have to press on and preach the gospel, while others remain behind and teach, build up or supply the necessary means. All alike, however, shall receive the Lord's approval in that day—whether they be those that sow or those that water or reap.

In verse 26, we read that David "sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, even to his friends, saying: Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the Lord." Thirteen places are mentioned "where David himself and his men were wont to haunt", beginning with Bethel, "The house of God" and ending with Hebron, "Fellowship". These were the places associated with the days of David's rejection, corresponding to the present day when Christ is rejected. To his people, before the day of his coronation comes, he sends indications of his victory, and though the number thirteen suggests that the day of full blessing has by no means arrived, yet Bethel at one end and Hebron at the other indicate a very blessed fellowship, anticipating the greater day when David shall be acclaimed King over all Israel.

The last chapter of I Samuel records Saul's ignominious death, a death at last by his own hand. The Philistines strip him of his armour, cut off his head, and fasten his body to the wall of Beth-shan. The last three verses, which record the considerate action of the men of Jabesh-gilead for the dead Saul, are balanced by the song of the bow, David's lament for Saul and Jonathan (II Sam. i. 17-27).

In II Sam. i. 1-16 another Amalekite is slain, and the section ends with David's lament, a lament in which no word is uttered concerning the cruel persecution he had suffered at the hands of Saul. His tribute to Jonathan is very moving:

"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (II Sam. i. 26).

With the fall of Saul, the way is now clear for David to show himself to his people, and our next article will deal with his anointing as king over the house of Judah. So the purpose of the ages unrolls, foreshadowing in the history of David, in faltering type, the glories of his greater Son.

The Books of SAMUEL.
#5. David anointed King over Judah.
Ish-bosheth usurps the kingship over all Israel.
(II Samuel ii. 1-11).
pp. 134 - 139

We have now reached, in a series of articles which has extended over a period of many years, the beginning of the recorded history of the Kings of Israel and Judah. Before we proceed further with our studies, it will be advisable to consider what principle we must adopt in future in view of the almost overwhelming amount of subject-matter to be dealt with and the feebleness of the instrument that must bear the burden. We hasten to explain that we are not thinking of failing health on the part of the writer, who for these many years has been so mercifully sustained, but rather of the magazine itself. What can we hope to do with 20 pages, published monthly, in face of the sheer mass of material that awaits us in these books of the Kingdom? In the Second Book of Samuel, the two Books of Kings, and the two Books of Chronicles, we have more detail to consider, compare and unravel, than our length of days will allow. Moreover, we have other important studies in hand, the present series being only one of many. It is essential, therefore, that we should come to some understanding before we embark upon the history of the Kings of Israel, so that, while acknowledging the inspiration and profitableness of all Scripture, we may also retain our sense of proportion.

With the exception of the opening chapter, the whole of II Samuel is devoted to the life of David. After David we have Solomon; and then a succession of kings, good and bad, who reign over the divided house of Israel and Judah, until the Babylonian captivity under Nebuchadnezzar brings the dispensation of the Kingdom of Israel to an end, and the times of the Gentiles begin.

We propose giving the Second Book of Samuel a fairly careful study so that the salient points of David's career, particularly those which contribute to the understanding of the purpose of the ages, may be seen, and then, using a key which we shall explain in due course, to go through the remaining history of the kings briefly, so that time may be allowed for the testimony of the Prophets and the Psalms to be given a hearing. We are sure that none of our readers will accuse us of negligence or lack of reverence in our attitude to the Word of God—we are but bowing to the necessities of the case, and seeking to use our stewardship to the fullest advantage.

In our last article we left David lamenting the death of Saul and Jonathan (II Sam. i.), and we now take up the theme in the second chapter, where the story of David as King properly begins. In its broadest outline the record of the Kings is as follows:

- A | II Sam. ii. 1 - iv. 12. The Kingdom. Divided.
David, King over Judah.
- B | II Sam. v. 1 - xxiv. 25. The Kingdom. United.
David, King over all Israel.
- B | I Kings i. 1 - xi. 43. The Kingdom. United.
David, Solomon over all Israel.
- A | I Kings xii. 1 - II Kings xxv. 30. The Kingdom. Divided.
Rehoboam, Jeroboam and successors over Israel and Judah.

The subject, therefore, falls into four sections, the first being II Sam. ii. 1 - iv. 2—giving the reign of David as King over Judah, up to the time when he ascended the throne of a united people. The most important part of this first section from our present point of view is that which records the anointing of David at Hebron (II Sam. ii. 1-11). We will first look at the structure of this passage and then consider its message.

II Samuel ii. 1-11.
The Two Kings. David and Ish-bosheth.

- A | 1-3. DAVID goes to Hebron with his two wives.
- B | 4. Men of Judah. David anointed King.
- C | 4-10. SAUL though dead, still has influence.
 - a1 | 4-6. *Saul* dead and buried.
 - b1 | 7. David *anointed* King.
 - a2 | 8. *Saul's* captain, Abner.
 - b2 | 8, 9. Ish-bosheth *made* King.
 - a3 | 10. *Saul's* son Ish-bosheth. 40 years.
 - b3 | 10. His reign of two years.
- B | 10. House of Judah. David followed.
- A | 11. DAVID reign in Hebron 7 years and 6 months.

One of the things that strikes the reader as this structure emerges, is the fact that, though Saul is dead and buried (ii. 4, 7), his evil influence is still active; also, that Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, is "made king", but not "anointed".

David is pre-eminently a type of Christ, and his life is recorded, not so much for its own sake as for its remarkable foreshadowing of the future. For instance, we find that, before David was anointed King over all Israel, he was anointed King over his "own", the house of Judah. The instructed reader will not need any proof that in this, David was a type of Christ. The day is yet to dawn when Christ shall be acknowledged King over all, but it is the blessed privilege of His brethren to acknowledge Him as King now.

We must now give our attention to the record of II Sam. ii. 1-11, so that we may learn its typical lesson, and our faith and hope may be strengthened. First of all, let us consider the city selected by God in answer to David's prayer.

"Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah? Unto Hebron" (ii. 1).

Hebron was a city that was closely associated with Abraham, at the time of his separation from Lot.

“Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever Then Abraham removed his tent, and came and dwelt in the plain of Mamre, which is Hebron, and built there an altar unto the Lord” (Gen. xiii. 14-18).

Hebron was also sacred to the Israelite, for there Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were buried (Gen. xxiii. 19; xxxv. 27; xlix. 30; l. 13). The burial of the patriarchs here must not be looked upon in any mournful way. They await the promise of God, and, as it were, claim the land by their presence there. Joseph’s command “concerning his bones” (Gen. l. 24, 25; Heb. xi. 22) was an act of faith, for he said: “God will surely visit you.” In addition to these hallowed and encouraging associations, the meaning of the word itself is suggestive. The word “Hebron” means “a ford”, as in Gen. xxxii. 22, and so suggests those that “pass over”—in other words, the redeemed. It was here at Hebron that David was anointed by the men of Judah.

After this anointing there follows the incident of David’s magnanimity to the men of Jabesh-Gilead, who had “buried Saul”. In his message to them David says: “You master Saul is dead.” Instead of this kindness to the inhabitants of Gilead moving them to loyalty towards David as king—for he had added the words: “And also the house of Judah have anointed *me* king over them”—we have an act of rebellion and attempted usurpation. Saul was dead and buried, but he had a captain Abner, who was Saul’s cousin (I Chron. ix. 36), and also a son, a man who is called Ish-bosheth in II Sam. ii. 8, and Esh-baal in I Chron. viii. 33. Ish-bosheth means a “Man of Shame”, and Esh-baal a “Man of Baal”. Both are significant names for a type of Antichrist.

Ish-bosheth was brought over to Mahanaim, a place associated with Jacob’s return to his home and his meeting with Esau (Gen. xxxii. 2). The word means “Two Camps”, and the place was so named because of the angels that met the returning patriarch. When Ner took Ish-bosheth to Mahanaim, however, the word took on a new significance. Israel were divided into “two camps”, one section following David (“The Beloved”), the Lord’s anointed, and the other a man who was “made king”, Ish-bosheth (“The Man of Shame”). With the exception of the tribe of Benjamin, to which Ish-bosheth himself belonged, the places and tribes enumerated were all on the West side of Jordan. The reader will remember that the tribes of Reuben, and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, asked for the land of Jazer and Gilead, and so never crossed the Jordan, so far as their inheritance was concerned. These facts surely have a spiritual significance. Believers whose interests are largely “on this side of Jordan” are those who are most likely to come under the dominion of the usurper to-day. So we read that at the place called “Two Camps”, Ish-bosheth was made “King over Gilead, and over the Ashurites, and over Jezreel, and over Ephraim, and over Benjamin, and over all Israel” (II Sam. ii. 9). Inasmuch as David was already King of Judah, and the name “Israel” had not at that time come to indicate the ten tribes that separated from Judah after the death of Solomon, we can see that the

idea of usurpation was very definite. Satan is the Prince of this world and the God of this age, and his subordinates are called the “rulers of the darkness of this world”.

The name Jezreel in II Sam. ii. 9 is associated with Jezebel and her awful end “by the wall of Jezreel” (I Kings xxi. 23). Jezreel was also the name given to the eldest son of Hosea (Hos. i. 4), and became a symbolic name for Israel (Hos. i. 11), prophesying first of all their “scattering” in judgment, and then their final “sowing”, when all “men of shame” shall be for ever put down and the true David, “the Beloved”, shall reign from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

David reigned over Judah in Hebron for seven and a half years, and in II Sam. v. 5 we read:

“In Hebron he reigned over Judah seven years and six months; and in Jerusalem he reigned thirty and three years over all Israel.”

According to Hebrew computation this makes 40 years (in I Kings ii. 11 the odd six months are ignored), and as he was 30 when he began to reign (II Sam. v. 4), we have a total of 70 years associated with this great typical king. Ish-bosheth, on the other hand, reigned only two years, and died at the hand of murderers at the age of 42 (6*7):

“Ish-bosheth, Saul’s son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and reigned two years” (II Sam. ii. 10).

These two years of usurpation should be viewed in the light of Hosea’s prophecy:

“After two days will He revive us, in the third day He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight” (Hos. vi. 2).

“For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days” (Hos. iii. 4, 5).

It is evident, we trust, that the seven years of David’s reign over Judah, before he was acclaimed King over all Israel, are prophetic of heaven’s true King. He also has been anointed and is King among His brethren, but the usurper still seeks to exercise dominion over “all Israel”, finding a place for his usurpation in the territory that lies “on this side of Jordan”—the world and its attractive snares. The end, however, is fixed, for “after two years” Israel seek the Lord and David their King, and the Millennial Reign begins.

The Books of SAMUEL.
#6. A Sevenfold Foreshadowing of the Millennial Kingdom.
(II Samuel v. - xxiv.).
pp. 165 - 172

We have so far considered the brief but richly prophetic account of David's reign over Judah in Hebron (II Sam. ii. 1-11), and, passing by the details which occupy chapters iii. and iv., we come now to chapter v. where David is anointed King over all Israel.

The story of David's reign occupies the remaining nineteen chapters of the Second Book of Samuel. This record contains some acts that are typical, and others that are shameful. All are necessary to make up a faithful record; and all are necessary if we are to enter into the workings of the of the human heart and have a complete picture of the two natures in the child of God. All these things are not, however, necessary to our understanding of the purpose of the ages, and we must therefore make some selection.

In the centre of the record we find eleven chapters, all overshadowed by David's sin in connection with Uriah and Bathsheba, and at the close of the book we have another confession on David's part. In the first of these sections the child that Bathsheba bears to David is stricken with sickness and dies; and in the second, the land is stricken with pestilence, which destroys seventy thousand men. The consequences of David's sin follow him through many a weary year, as the sins of Amnon, and Sheba, and Absalom show.

The structure of the whole passage is given below, but we shall only deal with those sections in which David is in any measure a type of Christ. His sin with regard to Bathsheba, while bringing to light much truth of both doctrinal and practical importance, will not be included in our survey, except to give it its place in the structure.

II Samuel v. 1 - xxiv. 25.
The Kingdom. United.

- A | v. "All the tribes." David anointed.
- B | E | vi. The bringing of the Ark to Zion (Psalm xxiv.).
F | vii. The promise. "He will make thee an house."
G | viii. 1-14. David's victories. Spoils dedicated to the Lord.
- C | H | viii. 15-18. David's Officers. Joab, Zadok, etc.
I | ix. 1 - x. 5. The house of Saul. "For Jonathan's sake."
J | x. 6 - xi. 1. Wars. "But David tarried."
- D | DAVID'S SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCE (xi. 2 - xx. 22).
K | xii. 10. "The sword shall never depart from thy house."
L | xii. 13. "I have sinned."
M | xiii. 1 - xx. 22. Consequences.
Amnon, Absalom, Sheba.
- C | H | xx. 23. David's Officers. Joab. Zadok, etc.
I | xx. 1-14. Saul and his bloody house. "Jonathan."
J | xxi. 15-22. Wars. "David waxed faint."
- B | E | xxii. Deliverance from all enemies (Psalm xviii.).
F | xxiii. 1-7. The Prayer. "My house." "All my desire."
G | xxiii. 8-39. David's mighty men.
Water poured out before the Lord.
- A | xxiv. 1-9. "All the tribes." Israel numbered.
D | DAVID'S SIN AND ITS CONSEQUENCE (xxiv. 10-25).
L | xxiv. 10. "I have sinned."
K | xxiv. 11-15. Famine, enemies or pestilence.
M | xxiv. 16-25. The offering.
Consequences.

While it will not be possible for us to go through this great section step by step, we very much hope that many of our readers, with this analysis before them, will use it in their own private study, for there are valuable lessons embedded in this record of greatness and frailty, of high intent and tragic fall, that none of us can afford to miss. Meanwhile we must devote ourselves to those parts of the record that foreshadow David's greater Son.

The anointing of David as King over all Israel (II Sam. v. 1-25).—The Israelites were greatly troubled when they heard of the death of Abner (iv. 1), and after the treacherous murder of Ish-bosheth, all the tribes of Israel come to David and anoint him King.

They remind the King and one another of several important facts (II Sam. v. 1, 2):

- (1) "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh."
- (2) "When Saul was King, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel."
- (3) "The Lord said to thee, Thou shalt feed My people Israel, and thou shalt be captain over Israel."

When Israel shall at length look upon Him Whom they have pierced, will they not also realize that for their sakes He had taken upon Him flesh and blood, that He had led them out and brought them in, and that He was their true Messiah appointed by God?

The capture of the stronghold of Zion.—The first event recorded after the anointing of David over all Israel, is the overthrowing of the Jebusites and the taking of the stronghold of Zion. The Jebusites' taunt in this passage should be understood in the sense that they considered their fortress to be so impregnable that in derision they manned the walls with the blind and the lame—"thinking, David cannot come in hither". There was, however, a secret entrance into the stronghold that somehow had come to the knowledge of Joab. This is called in the A.V. "the gutter"—"a rock-cut passage or shaft, from the upper Gihon (now the Virgin's Fount on the east of Ophel) leading up into the city, and up which the inhabitants drew their water supply" (*Companion Bible*). This conduit is shown in the Ordnance Survey maps, and *The Companion Bible* gives in Appendix 68 a cross-section showing the "gutter", from a drawing made by Sir Charles Warren.

We learn from I Chron. xi. 6 that Joab went up this "gutter" first, and so became chief. By this means the stronghold of Zion was taken, and we read in verse 7: "The same is the city of David" (II Sam. v. 7). We can see here an anticipation of the final overthrow of Babylon and Satanic opposition, which the N.T. places just before the revelation of Christ as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The bringing up of the Ark to Zion.—The capture of Zion was preliminary to the bringing up of the Ark of God, "Whose name is called by the name of the Lord of Hosts, That dwelleth between the cherubims" (II Sam. vi. 2). David's intention here was right, but owing apparently to ignorance or neglect of the law, Uzzah is smitten, and the Ark left for three months at the house of Obed-edom, the Gittite. From I Chronicles we learn that David must have been exercised over the miscarriage of his plan, and must have sought the Lord and His word about it, for we read:

"Then David said, None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites; for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God, and to minister unto Him for ever" (I Chron. xv. 2).

This time the transfer of the Ark is accomplished with safety, and David, discarding his royal apparel and girt with a linen ephod, dances before the Lord.

"So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of a trumpet" (II Sam. vi. 15).

Upon returning to bless his own household, however, David is met by his wife's sarcastic disapproval:

"How glorious was the King of Israel to-day, who disrobed himself to-day in the sight of the handmaidens of his servants, as one of the low people might disrobe himself!" (II Sam. vi. 20).

It may be of interest to the reader to know that the LXX here uses *apokalupto*, where the A.V. reads “uncovered”. This word, of course, gives us the word used for the “revelation” of Jesus Christ—which emphasizes a point that has perhaps not been given its due weight, namely, that the “revelation” of Jesus Christ, even though “glorious in our eyes”, is nevertheless a condescension on His part. There is a “light” in which He dwells that is unapproachable (I Tim. vi. 16), and the “glory” of His appearing must not hide from us the other equally glorious fact that all His acts on our behalf are condescensions beyond our understanding.

The house of the Lord and the house of David (II Sam. vii. 1-29).—With the coming of the Ark to the city of David, there comes also “rest round about from all his enemies”; and the King, contemplating the disparity between his own house of cedar, and the house of curtains that held the Ark of God, is moved to build a house for the Lord. He reveals later to his son Solomon, however, that the Lord had forbidden his building such a house, because he had “shed blood abundantly”. The Temple must be associated with one who was in type the Prince of Peace.

In II Sam. vii., to David’s amazement, the Lord makes a promise concerning his house:

“Also the Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house” (II Sam. vii. 11).

Further on, in verse 18, we read:

“Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord and said, Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto? And this was yet a small thing in Thy sight, O Lord God; but Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant’s house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord God?” (II Sam. vii. 18, 19).

David was facing grace, and was learning in his measure the same lesson that we may learn to-day as we contemplate the grace of God, namely, that the grace of the “hitherto”, is to be eclipsed by the “exceeding riches of grace” which the Lord will reveal in the ages to come (Eph. ii. 7).

This indeed was not “the manner of man”. The word “manner” is the Hebrew *torah*, “law”, and “man” here is “Adam”. The passage reminds us of Psalm viii., where David asks “What is man?” and then goes on to speak of the Lord’s wonderful condescension to a position “lower than the angels”, which will ultimately associate the sons of Adam with the Son of God in His dominion over all the works of His hand. David saw by faith something of the glorious truth revealed subsequently in I Cor. xv. 22-28, 45-49; and Heb. ii. 5-10.

With great reluctance we must pass over the intervening chapters that reveal such great depths, after the heights of chapter vii., and come now to the closing chapters xxii.-xxiv. Chapter xxi. significantly ends with the overthrow of several giants, one of them being another Goliath of Gath (II Sam. xxi. 19).

David's psalm of thanksgiving for his deliverance from all his enemies (II Sam. xxii.).—We have here a prophetic foreshadowing of the day when “all enemies” shall be under the feet of Christ, and the glorious goal shall be achieved. The Psalm, which occupies the whole of II Sam. xxii., was afterwards revised and put into the Book of the Psalms as number xviii.

“In this magnificent hymn the Royal Poet sketches in a few grand outlines the tale of his life—the record of his marvelous deliverances and of the victories which Jehovah had given him—the record, too, of his own heart, the truth of its affection towards God, and the integrity of purpose by which it had ever been influenced. Throughout that singularly chequered life, hunted as he had been by Saul before he came to the throne, and harassed perpetually after he became king by rivals who disputed his authority and endeavoured to steal away the hearts of his people—compelled to fly for his life before his own son, and engaged afterwards in long and fierce wars with foreign nations—one thing had never forsaken him, the love and presence of Jehovah. By His help he had subdued every enemy, and now, in his old age, looking back with devout thankfulness on the past, he sings that great song of praise to the God of his life” (*Perowne*).

Following this great song of praise are “the last words of David”—which are in structural correspondence with the promise of chapter vii., and refer to David’s “house”.

David's last words. The Kingdom foreseen (II Sam. xxiii. 1-7).—David’s “last words” must be read together with Psalm lxxii., where it is said that the prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are “ended” (Psa. lxxii. 20). Both are prophetic utterances concerning the glorious reign of David’s Greater Son. In II Sam. xxiii. we read: “He that ruleth over men must be just” (II Sam. xxiii. 3), while in Psa. lxxii. we read: “He shall judge the people with righteousness” (Psa. lxxii. 2). This righteous rule is followed by newness of life:

“As the tender grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain”
(II Sam. xxiii. 4).

“He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass; as showers that water the earth”
(Psa. lxxii. 6).

Verse 5 of II Sam. xxiii. needs some slight revision. Rotherham’s Version perhaps expresses David’s intention more closely than any other that we have examined, as follows:

“When not so was my house with God,
Then a covenant age-abiding He appointed me,
Ordered in all things and guarded,
Now that is all my salvation and all my desire
Will He not make it shoot forth?”

The “last words” of David refer to Christ, and in the words: “Will He not make it shoot forth?” (or grow) we have in verbal form the prophetic title of Christ as “The Branch” (*Tsemach*).

“I will raise unto Davie a righteous branch” (Jer. xxiii. 5).

At the close of this prophetic “last word”, David looks down the centuries and sees that “the sons of Belial” shall finally be tossed away as thorns, and shall be utterly burned with fire. With this the reader should compare the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares, and all references to the “seed of the wicked one”, from Genesis to Revelation.

The “tares” having been destroyed, we should expect the next step to be parallel with the words:

“Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father”
(Matt. xiii. 43).

The sons of Belial have dominated the earth long enough, and at their removal, II Sam. xxiii. introduces David’s mighty men.

The names of the mighty men whom David had (II Sam. xxiii. 8-39).—These names are linked together in groups.

THE FIRST THREE.—ADINO, ELEAZAR, and SHAMMAH (II Sam. xxiii. 8-12).
THE SECOND THREE.—ABISHAI, BENAIAH, and ASAHHEL (II Sam. xxiii. 18-23).
THE THIRTY ONE.—Then follows a list beginning with ELHANAN of Bethlehem and ending with URIAH the Hittite.
“Thirty seven in all.”

Here we have the overcomers, who are honoured when the days of persecution are over—a glorious anticipation of that day when in every sphere of blessing, there will be those who, having “endured”, shall receive “the reward” of their inheritance, “the prize” of their calling, “the crown” of life, or righteousness, and share with Christ, not only in His life, but in His glorious reign.

The A.V. and the R.V. in II Sam. xxviii. 8 read, in the margin “Josheb-bassebet the Tachmonite”, instead of “the Tachmonite that sat in the seat”. His original name meant “A man of shame”, but this was altered to Adino, meaning “Ornament”. Whether the lesson here is an encouragement for the most worthless of sinners to seek to please the One Who has become Saviour and Lord, or an encouragement to the suffering and persecuted saint, who is for the time being accounted “vile” (cf. Phil. iii. 21 “this body of humiliation”), the end is the same.

One name is notably absent from this list—the name of Joab. The note in *The Companion Bible* at verse 24 is as follows:

“24. ASAHHEL.—The third of the second three, brother of Joab, but not Joab. His *name* here but not *himself*, because when the time of the end comes with its ‘last words’, *loyalty* will be the one test. Joab remained true in Absalom’s rebellion, but fell away in Adonijah’s, Hence in I Cor. 16.22 ‘*love*’ is the test, in the light of ‘Maran-atha’, *not* the ‘strifes’ of ch.3, or the wrong judgments of chapter 4, or the uncleanness of ch.5, or going to law of ch.6; not the fornication of ch.7, not a wrong conscience of chs.9,10, not ecclesiastical disorders of ch.11, not the misuse of special gifts (chs.12, 13, 14), not orthodoxy (ch.15), but ‘love’ and loyalty to the Person of Christ, the true David, David’s son and David’s Lord.”

We cannot conclude without referring once again to Uriah the Hittite. Defrauded and basely betrayed by David the man, he is nevertheless honoured and exalted by David as the type of heaven's King.

And so we must conclude this all too meager survey of the reign of David over all Israel. Let us sum up the various points so that their prophetic import may be the better realized.

- (1) David is anointed King over all Israel.
- (2) The Jebusite is overthrown.
- (3) The Ark ascends to its place in the city of David.
- (4) God promises David "a house", and David catches a glimpse of "the law of the Man" that is to come.
- (5) David at last, with all enemies subdued, sings a Psalm of Praise.
- (6) David gives his "last words" regarding the future kingdom.
- (7) The mighty men who shared with David in his distress now share with him in his triumph.

May every reader be able to enter into the realization of the prophetic import of these seven items.

The Books of CHRONICLES.
#7. The Divine survey of the history of the kings
in relation to the House of God,
as indicated by an examination of the Book of Chronicles.
pp. 206 - 212

If our intention were to study the record of each king of Israel and Judah in turn, our next book would be the First Book of Kings, and our theme the closing days of David and the accession of Solomon. This, however, is not our purpose. As we have already explained, what we are attempting to do is to present to the reader a sort of bird's eye view of the whole period covered by the reign of these kings, so that the light that their history throws upon the purpose of the ages may be seen. With such a task before us, we may well ask "Who is sufficient for these things?"

Most readers are probably aware that the ground covered by Samuel and the two books of Kings, is traversed again in the two books of Chronicles. Upon examination, however, we soon perceive that this is no mere repetition. The essential fact about the books of Chronicles is that they view history *from the Divine standpoint*. To be convinced of this, one must investigate for oneself, but the earnest student will find a good deal of the spade work already done for him by Girdlestone, in his *Deuterographs*, a book still obtainable at second hand. Appendix 56 of the *Companion Bible* also supplies the parallel references, without the actual text. As an example, let us take the

record of Saul's death as given in I Sam. xxxi., and compare it with I Chron. x. The reader will notice minor differences in the two records, but none of these would seem to justify the time and space of re-writing. At I Chron. x. 13, 14, however, we find a definite addition, the Divine comment upon the factual history recorded in I Sam. xxxi.:

“So Saul died for his trespass which he committed against the Lord, because of the word of the Lord, which he kept not; and also, for that he asked counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire thereby, and enquired not of the Lord: therefore He slew him, and turned the Kingdom unto David the son of Jesse” (I Chron. x. 13, 14).

The books of Samuel and I & II Kings view history from the human standpoint, whereas the same events are shown in I & II Chronicles as they appear from the Divine standpoint.

“In the former books we have three *chapters* (or 88 verses) given to the *secular* events of Hezekiah's reign (II Kings xviii., xix., xx.), and only three *verses* (II Kings xviii. 4-6) given to his great religious reformation. In Chronicles this is exactly reversed. *Three* chapters (or 84 verse) are devoted to his reformation (II Chron. xxix., xxx., xxxi.), while *one* chapter (or 32 verses) suffices for the secular events of his reign” (Appendix 56, *Companion Bible*).

Here, then, is material to our hand. All we need is diligence, patience, the gift of some key-thought, and the record will unfold itself. For this we prayed, and waited, and at length we were led to discover that Israel's history is to be understood dispensationally *in the light of their attitude to the house of God*. We noted down every king that had anything to do with the Temple, either for good or ill, and to our amazement the notes took shape until we were able to perceive, however dimly, the onward movement of something greater than human action or design. The record is written round the lives of sixteen kings, of which three were Gentiles: Shishak, king of Egypt; Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; and Cyrus, king of Persia. This leaves the number of Israel's kings as 13, an ominous number associate with rebellion (Gen. xiv. 4), fleshly failure (Gen. xvii. 25), self (I Kings vii. 1), and Satan (Rev. xii. 9). The thirteenth king of Judah was Ahaz, who was, as we shall see, a type of Antichrist.

Before we can go further it will be necessary for us to acquaint ourselves with the way in which Chronicles associates the history of Israel with the house of God. This can be done by each reader for himself by patiently reading through the record and noting each occurrence. The following is the structure obtained.

The Kingdom of Priests.
The history of Israel is the history of the House of God.

- A | I Chron. xxviii. DAVID. Command to build (10). Writing (19).
The Lord be with thee (20).
- B | II Chron. ii.-xi. SOLOMON. Determines (ii. 1). Begins (iii. 1).
Finishes (v. 1). Dedicates (vi.). Threat (vii. 19-22).
- C | II Chron. xii. SHISHAK. Deliverance granted (7). Treasures taken to Egypt (9).
- D | xiii. ABIJAH. Keeps to Levitical order (10, 11).
- E | xv., xvi. | a | ASA. Brought in dedicated things (*good*) (xv. 18).
b | ASA. Brought out silver and gold (*bad*) (xvi. 2).
- F | xx. JEHOSHAPHAT. Be not afraid (15).
Battle is not yours (15).
Believe His prophets (20). Dead bodies (24).
* * * Types of Christ and Antichrist. * * *
- G | xxii. JOASH. Hidden (12).
- H | xxiii. JOASH. King brought (20).
- I | xxiv. JOASH. Repaired (4). Levites gathered (5).
- J | xxiv. | c | JOASH. Set house in his state (13).
d | JOASH. Vessels to minister (14).
- K | xxiv. JOASH. Burnt offerings offered (14).
* * Three out of four types of Antichrist. * *
- L | xxv. JOASH. Take vessels (24). *Israel's King*.
- M | xxvi. UZZIAH. Sacrilege (16). 16 years (1). The leper.
- M | xxvii. JOTHAM. Entered not (2). 16 years (1).
- L | xxviii. AHAZ. Take portion (21). *Followed Israel* (2).
* * * Types of Christ and Antichrist. * * *
- G | xxviii. AHAZ. Shut up (24).
- H | xxix. HEZEKIAH. Doors opened (3).
- I | xxix. HEZEKIAH. Cleansed (15). Levites gathered (12-15).
- J | xxix. | d | HEZEKIAH. Sacrifice (31).
c | HEZEKIAH. Service of house set in order (35).
- K | xxx. HEZEKIAH. Passover kept (15).
- F | xxxii. HEZEKIAH. Be not afraid (7).
With us the Lord battles (8).
Rested on words (8). Cut off slew (21).
- E | xxxiii. | b | MANASSEH. Build altars (*bad*) (4, 5).
a | MANASSEH. Took away altars (*good*) (15, 16).
- D | xxxiv. JOSIAH (8). Restore to Levitical order (30, 31).
- C | xxxvi. NEBUCHADNEZZAR. No remedy (16). Vessels to Babylon (7).
- B | xxxvi. NEBUCHADNEZZAR. Burnt (19). Threat fulfilled (21).
- A | xxxvi. CYRUS. Charge to build. Writing.
The Lord be with him (22, 23).

In I Chron. xxviii. we find David expressing the desire of his heart to build the house of God, but, bowing to the Divine will, he urges his son Solomon to build it, saying:

“Be strong and do it” (I Chron. xxviii. 1-10). David does not leave the matter there, however. He provides “the pattern”, which he says that he had had “by the spirit” and by “writing by His hand upon me” (I Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 19), and he also supplies abundant material.

“Now I have prepared with all my might for the house of my God, the gold for the things of gold silver brass, etc. in abundance. Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver given Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?” (I Chron. xxix. 2-5).

With such an example and such an appeal, there was a great response, and we read that “the people rejoiced and offered themselves willingly”. David, however, recognizes in prayer that

“All this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy name, cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own” (I Chron. xxix. 16).

In verse 22 we read: “And they made Solomon, the son of David, king *the second time*”—a phrase that reminds us of the coming of Christ “the second time” to put forth His great power and reign.

In II Chron. ii. 1 it is recorded that Solomon determined to build a house for the name of the Lord, chapter iii. tells us when the work began, chapter v. that it was at length finished, and in chapter vi. we have its dedication. In chapter vii. 19-22 we have a warning which includes the prophetic utterance:

“And this house, which is high, shall be an astonishment to every one that passeth by it, so that he shall say, Why hath the Lord done thus unto this land and unto this house?”

It will be helpful, at this point, to look at the other end of the story. In II Chron. xxxvi. the warning is fulfilled, the house of God is burnt with fire, and the people carried away captive:

“To fulfil the Word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil three score and ten years” (II Chron. xxxvi. 21).

The last item in the structure, and the last word of the Book of Chronicles, is one of restoration.

“Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying:

Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and He hath charged me to build Him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah, Who is there among you of all His people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up” (II Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23).

We observe that we have here the “charge to build”, the putting of the proclamation into “writing”, and the prayer, “The Lord his God be with him”, all of which are reminiscent of the opening section in connection with David. It is good to “see the end from the beginning” and to know by the prophetic word that, after many days of apostasy and rebellion, the time of restitution will surely come.

Returning to the beginning of the record, we come next to the transgression of Rehoboam and the punishment executed upon him by Shishak king of Egypt, who carried away the treasures of the house of the Lord. Rehoboam and his princes humbled themselves, however, and the Lord granted “some deliverance”, or “deliverance for a little while”. Rehoboam’s attitude here is in strong contrast with that described at the end of the book, where we read of the king and his associates that, instead of humbling themselves and repenting—

“They mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people, TILL THERE WAS NO REMEDY” (II Chron. xxxvi. 16).

The acts of Abijah in chapter xiii., and the acts of Josiah in chapter xxxiv. have this in common, that both kings were zealous in witnessing against idolatry and in restoring the worship of God in accordance with the law. Asa and Manasseh come next in the structure and provide a picture of that mixture of good and bad that is often a link between the true and the false. Jehoshaphat and Hezekiah are the next corresponding members and form an obvious pair. In both cases we have the fear of an enemy, an exhortation not to be afraid, the thought that “the battle is not yours, but God’s”; and in both cases we have the destruction of the enemy either by “ambushments”, by angelic ministry, or by patricidal murder. All these items are indicated in the structure and should be checked.

We now come to the three central groups in the structure, that provide types of both Christ and Antichrist. Athaliah and the destruction of the seed royal are a type of Satanic opposition to the purposes of God in Christ, while the hiding of the infant king for *six* years, and his proclamation in the *seventh*, will need no explanation to those who are acquainted with prophecy. Ahaz stands in line with Athaliah as a type of Antichrist, and the “hiding” of the king’s son is echoed by the “shutting up” of the doors of the Lord’s house. Hezekiah follows in much the same steps as Joash in the cleansing of the Temple, the gathering of the Levites, and the setting in order of the Lord’s house. All these points are noted in the outline already given.

The four kings that come centrally in the structure are important because of the way in which they indicate the various phases of Antichrist’s rebellion and opposition. It should be noted that the name of the evil king of Israel here, is the same as that of the good king of Judah. This is a fruitful cause of much evil. Satan’s deception is carried out by means of travesty. Let the reader compare, for example, the names of the descendants of Cain given in Gen. iv. 16-24, with those of the descendants of Adam given in Gen. v. To make sure that there is no mistake in connection with Enoch the Scriptures refer to him as

the “seventh from Adam” (Jude 14), for there was also a son of Cain who bore the same name.

Uzziah also is a type of Antichrist, for although at first all seemed well, we read later:

“He was marvelously helped till he was strong. But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction; for he transgressed against the Lord his God, and went into the temple of the Lord to burn incense upon the altar of incense’ (II Chron. xxvi. 15, 16).

Uzziah was stricken with leprosy and remained a leper to the day of his death, a dreadful picture of the Usurper and his doom.

Of Jotham it is said that he followed his father in so far as he had done right in the sight of the Lord, but he “entered not into the Temple”.

The fourth king Ahaz completes the evil triad. We read that he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel and made molten images to Baalim. “Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen”. In the same chapter we read that a hundred and twenty thousand men of Judah were slain in one day, “because they had forsaken the Lord God of their fathers” (II Chron. xxviii. 6), while Israel “carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil”.

“And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord; THIS IS THAT KING AHAZ” (II Chron. xxviii. 22).

Ahaz seems to be specially marked as a transgressor, as were Cain and Dathan before him. He stands out in strong contrast to Hezekiah, who is singled out for his good deeds (II Chron. xxxii. 12, 30).

It is impossible in these articles to enter into fuller detail, and we can but hope that the reader will accept the suggestion that he should take the key provided and use it in his own personal studies.

We would also remind the reader that the Lord Jesus Himself associated the failure of Israel with the Temple in Matt. xxiii.:

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! BEHOLD YOUR HOUSE IS LEFT UNTO YOU DESOLATE. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt. xxiii. 37-39).

The Gospel of JOHN.

#1. An Introduction to the Gospel. A Question of View-Point. pp. 5 - 8

While it is true that “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places” are “far above all”, it is essential that we should remind ourselves continually of the basis upon which all these blessings rest, namely, the finished work of the Son of God, accomplished in the fullness of time upon the earth. The epistles of the N.T. abound in references to this finished work, but it is essential that those inspired records which we call the Gospels, should be read, studied and understood if that work is to become a reality to us.

Three things must be kept in mind when we think of the Gospels and their purpose.

- (1) The historic facts which they record are basic. The birth, death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord are fundamental to doctrinal and practical truth.

“If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain”
(I Cor. xv. 14).

- (2) While the Gospels are, in a sense, complete in themselves, the Lord told His disciples that there was still further truth to be revealed to them when the Spirit of Truth had come.

“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now”
(John xvi. 12).

- (3) There is a Divine purpose in the fact that the earthly life of our Lord is recorded from four different aspects. The only One Who could have inspired a single complete account of that life and ministry has not done so, but has been pleased to inspire four different writers to write individual and selective accounts from four different points of view.

MATTHEW.—The point of view of this writer is that of the Kingdom, and his readers are Jews and Jewish believers. He begins with Abraham.

MARK.—This Gospel follows the same line as the Gospel of Matthew, but is shorter and omits some subject-matter that would not appeal to the Gentile proselytes, for whom the account was primarily intended.

LUKE.—Luke writes for the Gentiles evangelized by Paul. He goes back to Adam.

JOHN.—John’s point of view is to be discovered. All we will say at the moment is that in John xx. 31 the Apostle has plainly indicated the great object he had in mind in writing his account of the ministry of Christ.

Every teacher, whether inspired or not, if he is to be successful in his work, must establish contact with his hearers, and then proceed from the known and accepted to the unknown. Matthew, for instance, is traversing ground which would be very familiar to his hearers when he traces the genealogy of our Lord back to Abraham. Every name in

the first sixteen verses of Matthew would be as well known to many of his hearers as the commonest household words. Abraham was the common ancestor of them all, and Judah the father of the particular tribe most concerned. Having established contact with his hearers, Matthew then proceeds to advance one further step, and to prove that the Son born of Mary was the Heir to the throne of David, and yet a virgin's Son and Emmanuel, "God with us".

John opens his Gospel with the words:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

We must suppose that in this case also the writer is standing on common ground with his hearers. Strange as this language may sound in our ears, it can be shown that the necessity for the "Logos" was the burden of both Greek and Alexandrian philosophy at the time of John's writing, and that the city of Ephesus, from which the Gospel emanated, was a place where the philosophies of East and West mingled and where these ideas were at that time "in the air". In a later article we will substantiate these statements as to the important position that the "Logos" held in ancient philosophy, but for the moment we must pass on.

That John wrote for non-Jewish readers is at once evident, for it is obvious that no Jew needed to be told that the "Passover" was a feast of the Jews, or that "Rabboni" meant My Master. We have considered these questions more in detail in Volume XX, where the reader will find the following eightfold proof:

- (1) The *world* is the sphere of John's ministry.
- (2) The fact that Jewish customs are explained shows that the *non-Jewish* reader is in view.
- (3) The *rejection of the Lord by His own people* is at the very forefront of the Gospel.
- (4) No mention is made of the Lord's Supper, the *New Covenant* feast.
- (5) The *ascension* is emphasized.
- (6) The "Word" in John i. 1 is parallel with the "Image" in Col. i.
- (7) The prayer of John xvii. is, among other things, that "the world" may know.
- (8) Miracles are not mentioned as such; they are called "signs".

Those readers who are not familiar with the Scriptural arguments associated with the above summary are earnestly recommended to consider what has been put forward in the Volume referred to. The question of view-point is most important in the study of any part of the Scriptures.

The special "signs" recorded in John's Gospel, which are so intimately associated by the writer with his message (John xx. 31), are eight in number. In Volume XI and XII, these eight "signs" are dealt with in some detail. We will give here the structure only.

The eight signs.

- A | ii. 1-11. THE MARRIAGE IN CANA. The third day.
No wine. Glory manifested.
- B | iv. 46-50. THE RULER'S SON. After two days. At the point of death.
- C | v. 1-47. THE IMPOTENT MAN. Pool Bethesda. 38 years.
Sabbath. Sin.
- D | vi. 1-14. THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND.
Many went back (vi. 66).
- D | vi. 15-21. THE WALKING ON THE SEA.
Many of the people believed (vii. 31).
- C | ix. 1-44. THE MAN BORN BLIND. Pool Siloam. From birth.
Sabbath. Sin.
- B | xi. 1.44. THE SISTERS' BROTHER. Two days. Lazarus is dead.
- A | xxi. 1-14. THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES. The third time.
No meat. The Lord magnified.

We shall give evidence later on in this series, that John wrote his Gospel at Ephesus, after Paul had finished his course. We do not believe that John teaches the truth of the Mystery, or that he was himself a member of the One Body, but he knew that the revelation had been made through Paul, and records in his Gospel aspects of the Person and work of Christ that the other Gospel writers were not permitted to reveal. In Volume XXVIII, page 126, the reader will find a chart indicating the relation between John's Gospel and the Prison Ministry of Paul. This we commend to any of our readers to whom it is not familiar.

In the articles printed in earlier volumes of *The Deity of Christ*, John i. 1 has necessarily been considered, and a series entitled "*This is the Record*", which runs through Volume XXVI, also touches upon important passages in John's Gospel. In the present series, however, we desire to approach the Gospel as a study in itself. In this opening article we have tried to give some idea of what has already been written on the subject, so that all our readers may have the benefit of these introductory attempts, and be prepared to go forward with us in a more systematic study of this wonderful revelation of light and love.

#2. Historical Evidence and the Scope of the Book. pp. 41 - 43

Readers of *The Berean Expositor* are not very much concerned with what is called the “Higher Criticism”; for the Scriptures speak too plainly to the quickened understanding to need external proofs. We must not, however, forget that inability to meet criticism, or failure to bring forward evidence, may mean that, at some important moment, our witness may be blunted and some friend or acquaintance left in darkness. We propose, therefore, to devote one or two further articles to introductory matters before dealing more fully with the book itself.

The Gospel of John has been more severely criticized than the other three, and its genuineness has been denied. It is not our intention here to load our pages with ancient names, or with many extracts from antiquity. We give, however, a few pointed references. Clement of Alexandria (A.D.150-215) writes:

“St. John, the last (of the evangelists), when he saw that the outward bodily facts had been set forth in the (existing) Gospels, impelled by his friends (and) divinely moved by the Spirit, made a spiritual Gospel.”

One of the earliest and most important witnesses in this connection is Irenæus (born A.D.98), who knew and had conversed with Polycarp, a disciple of John himself. Irenæus unhesitatingly ascribes the fourth gospel to John, and speaks of this belief as of universal acceptance in his day.

Victorinus of Pettan wrote of John and his Gospel:

“When Valentus and Cerinthus and Ebion and others of the school of Satan were spread throughout the world, all the bishops of the neighbouring provinces came together to him to constrain him to commit his own testimony to writing” (*Migne Patrol* v. 333).

In connection with this quotation it is interesting to note that Cerinthus taught that Christ was a man, *and nothing more*, and that He was the son of *both* Joseph and Mary—a doctrine that is most definitely refuted in the opening of John’s Gospel. Irenæus also writes of John as being “willing, by the publication of his Gospel, to take away the error which Cerinthus had disseminated amongst men”. He tells us, moreover, that John remained at Ephesus up to the time of the Emperor Trajan.

We do not propose to pursue this subject further. Those readers who are concerned with proofs for the canonicity of John’s Gospel, and are able to appreciate historical evidence, will already be in possession of sufficient means to prosecute their studies without our help, and those who are not will not benefit by a multiplicity of proofs.

We turn now to the book itself in relation to the other Gospels, and note first those things which are common to John’s Gospels and the Synoptics.

- (1) The work of the “Forerunner”, John the Baptist.
- (2) The last supper, but no reference to the institution of a memorial feast.
- (3) The anointing at Bethany.
- (4) The miracle of feeding the 5000.
- (5) The miracle of walking on the sea.
- (6) The crucifixion.
- (7) The resurrection.

The word “synoptic” has been used in the note above, and it may be that some readers are not quite clear as to its actual meaning. The word means, “to see together”, “to have a common point of view”; and it is this common point of view that unites the three Gospels, Matthew, Mark and Luke. John, while recording some of the same incidents in the life and death and ministry of the same Lord, has a point of view entirely his own. This different point of view is manifest in the opening verse: “In the beginning was the Word”, and throughout the Gospel. We shall therefore learn more by “trying the things that differ” than by observing the things in common, and we will therefore record a few of these differences as examples.

The Companion Bible draws attention to some 84 words that are employed by John that are not used by the Synoptic writers, and these will be noted as our exposition proceeds. There are also other words, not exclusive to John, but used by him with great frequency than in the other Gospels, and these are grouped together in *The Companion Bible* in the foreword to John’s Gospels. Of this list of 32 words we give the following by way of example.

| | Word. | John’s Gospel. | Synoptic Gospels. |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| <i>Kosmos</i> . . . | THE WORLD . . . | 79 times | 15 times. |
| <i>Ho Pater</i> . . . | THE FATHER . . . (used of GOD) | 121 | 66 |
| <i>Martureo</i> . . . | WITNESS . . . | 33 | 3 |
| <i>Aletheia</i> . . . | TRUTH . . . | 25 | 7 |
| <i>Pempeo</i> . . . | SEND . . . | 33 | 15 |
| <i>Teleioo</i> . . . | FINISH . . . | 19 | Twice |

These six words, which are so characteristic of John’s message, would, if studied together, throw considerable light upon the special purpose of his Gospel.

The following inter-relation of the four Gospels is common knowledge, but is set out here in order that our testimony may be complete, and that any new reader may have the benefit.

MATTHEW.—Christ is set forth as KING. “Behold *thy King*” (Zech. ix. 9).
 Christ is set forth as David’s BRANCH.
 “Behold I will raise unto David a righteous *Branch*
 and a King shall reign and prosper” (Jer. xxxiii. 5, 6; xxxiii. 15).
 Christ *genealogy* is therefore given from Abraham through David (Matt. i. 1-17).
 Christ, *relatively*, presented as in the highest earthly position, a KING.

MARK.—Christ is set forth as SERVANT. “Behold *My Servant*” (Isa. xlii. 1).
 Christ is set forth as the BRANCH.
 “Behold I will bring forth My Servant, the *Branch*” (Zech. iii. 8).
 Christ, as a servant, needs no *genealogy*.
 Christ, *relatively*, presented as in the lowest earthly position, a SERVANT.

LUKE.—Christ is set forth as MAN. “Behold the *Man*” (Zech. vi. 12).
 Christ is set forth as the BRANCH.
 “Behold the man whose name is *the Branch*” (Zech. vi. 12).
 Christ’s *genealogy* is traced back to Adam.
 Christ, *intrinsically*, presented as the MAN.

JOHN.—Christ is set forth as GOD. “Behold *your God*” (Isa. xl. 9).
 Christ is set forth as Jehovah’s BRANCH.
 “In that day shall Jehovah’s *Branch* be beautiful and glorious” (Isa. iv. 2).
 Christ, as God, can have no *genealogy*. He “was” in the beginning.
 Christ, *intrinsically*, presented as “GOD”, mediatorially as the “WORD”,
 and savingly as “JESUS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD”,
 “THE WORD MADE FLESH”.

#3. The Logos, in Philosophy and in Revelation. **pp. 92 - 99**

When the Apostle was confronted with the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers at Athens, he did not use words of scorn or derision, but rather of sympathy. The Jew in him, as well as the Christian, abominated the sight of idols, and we read that “his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry” (Acts xvii. 16). Nevertheless, when he was arraigned before these philosophers, he did not alienate them by ridicule or contempt, but rather used the local conditions as a starting point for his speech:

“I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD, Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him I declare unto you” (Acts xvii. 23).

It is in much the same spirit that John, at Ephesus, surrounded by Greek and Alexandrian philosophy, opens his Gospel with the title *Logos*. There is no introduction to the title, no leading up to it, but simply a statement with which he expected most of his hearers to be in agreement. After the prologue of i. 1-18, the title *Logos* is never again used of Christ, the whole object of the Gospel being to prove that the Messiah, the Son of God, fulfils all and more than all that the ancient philosophers, or the writers of the Hebrew Wisdom literature, ever conceived.

We referred above to Paul’s attitude at Athens, which is actually recorded, as an illustration of what was probably John’s attitude at Ephesus, which is left to be inferred. Let us now acquaint ourselves a little further with the position at Athens. The

philosopher Chrysiphus had said that God pervades all nature and that He has many names to match his operations.

“They all call him *Dia*, ‘through’ whom are all things, and they call him *Zeus*, inasmuch as he is the cause of ‘life’.” (Diog. Laert vii. 147).

According to Chrysiphus, Zeus is the *Logos* that regulates (*dioikeo*) all things, and is the soul of the world.

On another occasion, when Paul stood before a group of Pharisees and Sadducees, we find that he seized the opportunity presented by their mutual antagonism to gain the ear of the Pharisee in the matter of the resurrection. So here, at Athens, before the Stoics and Epicureans, he seizes upon their distinctive tenets and shows how they meet in the person of Christ. Knowing the sayings that were current among them, he refers to the fact that “we are also His offspring”, and also that He is not “like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device”. He teaches the Divine *transcendence* (the Epicurean position); “Neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though He needeth anything”, but he also teaches the Divine *immanence* (the Stoic position) by adding: “If haply they should feel after Him For in Him we live, and move, and have our being.”

And then, when both parties begin to realize that Paul has taken hold of both their conflicting positions, he brings these opposite views into synthesis by focusing their attention upon the “Man” that has been ordained (Acts xvii. 31).

Paul does not necessarily endorse the somewhat popular etymology of Chrysiphus. *Dia* and *Dion* need not necessarily be derived from *dia*, “through”, and there are other possible origins of *Zeus* besides *zoe*, “life”; nevertheless the idea was sufficient for the Apostle to use as a starting-point from which to direct the attention of his hearers to the Lord God, the true Source of life, through Whom all else must be derived. And so John, surrounded at Ephesus with a blend of Greek and Philonic philosophy and the Hebrew Apocryphal Wisdom, takes up the central theme of this philosophy, the *Logos*, and, stripping it of its heathen and Hebrew accretions, and adding to it that which revelation alone could give, leads his hearers to see that the elusive and abstract *Logos* of human philosophy found its full and perfect significance in the living Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

No explanation of John i. 1 can compare with that written by the same writer in his first epistle:

“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full” (I John i. 1-4).

Just as the first eighteen verses of John form a sort of prologue to the Gospel, so the first four verses here form a prologue to the epistle. In both we observe, as Westcott notes, a similar sequence of thought:

“In each, the main subject is described first (John i. 1-5; I John i. 1).
Then the historical manifestation of it (John i. 6-13; I John i. 2).
Then its personal apprehension (John i. 14-18; I John i. 3).”

Each book, however, has its own distinctive point of view. The Gospel is concerned with demonstrating that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, so that, believing this, life may come through His name. The epistle, on the other hand, takes up the practical working out of this truth.

The references to the *Logos* in John’s writings are as follows:

- A | John i. 1-5. In the beginning. With God (*pros*).
- B | John i. 14. Made flesh. The Lamb (in context).
- A | I John i. 1-4. From the beginning. With the Father (*pros*).
- B | Rev. xix. 13. Coming in flesh (I John iv. 3; II John 7). The Lamb.

Outside the writings of John there is no specific reference to the *Logos* (unless Heb. iv. 12, 13 be one), but if the word itself is not used by Paul, the doctrine underlying it is most gloriously present in his epistles. He speaks of the “Image of the invisible God” (Col. i. 15; see also II Cor. iv. 4), which to all intents and purposes corresponds to the *Logos* of John i. 1-5. He speaks also of “the express Image of His Person” (Heb. i. 3), which is even closer to the meaning of the *Logos*. These passages will come up for more careful examination when the present preparatory studies are over. For the moment, we must continue our quest for the doctrine of the *Logos*, as underlying John i. 1-5.

First of all, we must refer to the passage in Prov. viii. 22-31, which anticipates the fuller revelation of John i. 1-5:

“The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there; when He set a compass upon the face of the depth; when He established the clouds above; when He strengthened the fountains of the deep; when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment; when He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight, rejoicing always before Him: rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men” (Prov. viii. 22-31).

The apocryphal writings must also be considered, for, while they are not canonical scriptures and are not looked upon as inspired and authoritative, the thoughts they express and the words they employ hold an important place in the history of doctrine.

In Ecclesiasticus xxiv. Wisdom follows the same line of thought as that given in Prov. viii. Wisdom is represented as seeking rest, and the Creator causes Wisdom's "tabernacle to rest" in Jacob. When one reads in John i. 14 that the Word was made flesh and "tabernacled" among us, one feels that there is at least a passing glance at this ancient book of Wisdom. John, however, shows that the fond hope of Ecclesiasticus that Wisdom should find a home among Israel was not immediately realized, for "He came to His own, but His own received Him not".

The following is a quotation from The Wisdom of Solomon—a passage which it is difficult to read without thinking of John i. and Heb. i.:

"For she is the breath of the power of God, and a pure effluence from the Almighty For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness" (Wisdom of Solomon vii.).

There is something comparable, also, between The Wisdom of Solomon xviii. 15 and Rev. xix.:

"Thine Almighty Word leaped down from heaven out of Thy royal throne, as a fierce man of war into the midst of a land of destruction."

While the Targums, or Aramaic paraphrases of the O.T., were not committed to writing until after the Christian era, they embody teaching that was current from a much earlier period, and in these Targums we frequently meet the word *Memra*, "The Word". For example, in the Targum of Onkelos on Gen. iii. 8, Adam and Eve are said to have heard the voice of *the Word* of the Lord walking in the garden. And in Deut. v. 5, the Targum reads:

"I stood between the Word (*Memra*) of the Lord and you, to announce to you at that time the word (*pithgama*) of the Lord."

It will be seen that the Targum differentiates here between "the Word" (*Memra*), and the spoken word. It is "the Word" (the *Memra*) that creates, preserves and redeems. The Targums, however, fall short of the complete truth, for they never seem to have identified the *Memra* with the Messiah. It is this identification that is the peculiar office of the Gospel according to John.

Our account of Hebrew thought as to the *Logos* would be incomplete without a reference to the Apocalyptic Book of Enoch, of which one authority has said: "The influence of Enoch in the New Testament has been greater than that of all the other apocryphal and pseudepigraphal books taken together." This does not mean that John borrowed from the Book of Enoch, but it is obvious that the inspired writers of Scripture must have used words that were intelligible to their hearers, and could not have ignored the doctrines that were believed and taught all around them.

The Book of Enoch is a compilation whose date is regarded by authorities as between 170B.C. and 64B.C. In the section known as the Similitudes we find the following

passage, which is in some respects parallel with John's Prologue and his insistence upon the ascension:

"Wisdom came to make her dwelling among the children of men, and found no dwelling-place; thus Wisdom returned, and took her seat among the angels."

The philosophy of the Greeks, and particularly that of Heraclitus and Plato, must never be forgotten in considering the meaning of the *Logos*. This does not imply that we should import the speculations of men into the revelation of God, but simply that we should recognize that even inspired truth must use words of common meaning, and that John's immediate readers would be fully cognizant of the philosophic use of this word.

Speaking of Heraclitus, Dr. Drummond writes:

"He clearly perceived that the universe was one, and that all its multifarious changes were governed by a rational and unalterable law. To this law he gave the very name which we translate 'Word' in the Gospel."

To Heraclitus, however, the *Logos* was not a person, but much like the scientists "laws of nature".

Plato's views on the *Logos* are set forth in the *Timæus*:

"The world is represented as 'a living and rational organism', the 'only begotten' (*monogenes*) Son of God, itself a god and the express image (*eikon*) of the supreme God" (J. S. Johnston).

What Plato ascribed to the creation itself, revelation ascribes to the Person of the Son of God. The groping of unaided reason stumbled upon the terms "*logos*" and "only begotten" and "image", but could not relate them one to another, or to the truth.

Plato speaks of ideas as "vowels", which, chain-like, pervade all things (Soph. 253)—a suggestion which at once makes us think of Him Who is the Alpha and the Omega, the glorious "chain-like" link in the purpose of the ages.

We must now pass on to Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, who attempted to bridge the gulf between the revelation of God as given in the Hebrew Scriptures and the demands of Philosophy. Two contrary views were held as to the nature of God: one view being that He was transcendent, and the other that He was immanent. The first view removed God so far from creation and human affairs as to reduce Him to an abstraction, while the second identified Him with creation so closely that it became virtually Pantheism. The transcendental God was "unknowable and unthinkable". He had no qualities, and no attributes. His only name was "I am that I am".

With these thoughts in mind, let us turn once more to the Gospel of John. Here, too, we find One Who could say: "Before Abraham was, I AM" (John viii. 58), but we also read that He said, "I am the bread of *life*", and "I am the light of *the world*". The transcendent One was also immanent. Greek philosophy felt the need for the mediating

Logos, but the *Logos* was regarded as being *neither God nor man*. The Christian revelation also stresses the need for the mediating *Logos*, but reveals the glorious fact that He is *both God and Man*. In other words, the passage in John i. 14: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us”, together with its complement in John xi. 25: “I am the resurrection, and the life” contain the truth which Plato and Philo sought, but sought in vain. When we consider these earnest seekers after the truth and compare their position with our own, how grateful we should be for the light vouchsafed to us in this day of grace.

John reveals that God is transcendent in His nature (John i. 18), but that in the *Logos* He is also immanent throughout the extent of His creation. Creation, revelation, incarnation, redemption, ascension are all possible and necessary, if the *Logos* of John i. be true.

The Rabbinical School at Alexandria, where Philo lived, urged the transcendental aspect of the nature of God to its extreme, setting its face against all forms of anthropomorphism. Philo, for instance, says that, to accept in their literal sense the words: “It repented God that He had made man”, is to be guilty of an impiety greater than any that was drowned in the flood. For Philo God was an abstraction, and His nature only capable of being shadowed forth by negatives. We can only know what He *is not*.

How comforting to turn from such a view for a moment to the reassuring words of John xiv. 9: “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father”, even though, at the same time, we must not forget the utter transcendentalism of such passages as John v. 37: “Ye have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His shape” (John v. 37). As we realize the immensity of the gulf that yawned between the far-off Platonist God, and the things of time and sense, we may perhaps better understand why the Lord uses the figure of Jacob’s ladder as representing Himself in John i. 51.

Philo uses the following names and titles in his description of the *Logos*:

The “Son of God”; the “First-born Son” (*protogonos*, i. 414); the “Image of God” (*eikon Theo*, i. 6); “God” (i. 655 *de Sommus Theos*); “Second God” (*ho deuterios Theos*, Fragments ii. 625); “archetypal man” (*ho kat’ eikona anthropos*, i. 427). When one reads and listens to many Christians to-day as they speak of the Lord Jesus Christ, one wonders whether they have got any further than Philo’s “Second God”!

Philo speaks of the “seamless robe”, when referring to the indissoluble texture of the universe, and it is surely no accident that this apparently irrelevant detail is incorporated in John xix. 23, for we must constantly bear in mind that the doctrine of the prologue of John i. 1-18 is elaborated and illustrated throughout the record of the Gospel. Philo refers to the Divine Word as flowing like a river, which may be compared with John’s reference to the living water. He also speaks of the *Logos* as the “Heavenly Bread”, which is parallel with the Gospel reference to Christ as the Bread that came down from heaven.

In his Confessions (vii. ix.), Augustine has a fine comment on the essential difference between philosophy and revelation, and with this we must bring the present article to a close.

“Thou procurest for me by means of one puffed up with most unnatural pride, certain books of the Platonists, translated from Greek into Latin. And therein I read, not indeed in the very words, but to the very same purpose, enforced by many and diverse reasons, that, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: the same was in the beginning with God: all things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made: that which was made by Him is life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not BUT THAT HE CAME UNTO HIS OWN but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, as many as believed in His name; *this I read not*. Again, I read there that God the Word was born, not of flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. BUT THAT THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us, *I read not there*.”

Augustine puts his finger on the crux of the matter. Human reason could go so far as to see the necessity for the *Logos*—for all God’s ways are wrought with reason—but it could never penetrate the mystery of godliness and discover that “God was manifest in the flesh”. The glorious fact that “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself” was the secret of the God of Love, and it was this secret that was John’s message, both in Gospel and Epistle.

#4. The Structure of the Gospel as a Whole. The Key of the Eight Signs. pp. 125 - 128

In our previous studies we have merely cleared the way for the blessed task which now lies before us: an examination of the teaching of this fourth record of the earthly life and ministry of the Son of God. Our first duty is to see the book as a whole, in order to discover its theme and the way in which that theme is elaborated, illustrated and proved.

At the very beginning of this Gospel we are at once struck by its unique point of view. Let us compare the way in which it opens with that of the other Gospels.

MATTHEW . . . This gospel opens with the words: “The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (Matt. i. 1).

MARK . . . The writer here omits all reference to genealogy, and opens with the words: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God” (Mark i. 1).

- LUKE . . . Luke goes back before the advent of Christ, to the birth of the forerunner, John the Baptist. He begins with an explanatory prologue, to Theophilus, and opens his Gospel with the words: "There was in the days of Herod the King of Judæa, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia" (Luke i. 5).
- JOHN . . . John gives no genealogy, as Matthew does; he goes back to an earlier beginning than that referred to by Mark; and he speaks of a time and a sphere in which the Lord could have no forerunner. He begins with the words: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John i. 1).

The first eighteen verses of this Gospel constitute a marvelous and awe-inspiring prologue to the rest of the book. The prologue enunciates the theme, and the rest of the Gospel elaborates it and demonstrates its truth. The central and largest section of the Gospel is a golden chain of eight links, the eight "signs" selected by John about which the whole Gospel narrative is woven. On either side of these eight "signs" we have a reference to specially prepared witnesses. The simplest possible analysis, therefore, of the Gospel according to John is as follows:

- A1 | i. 1-18. The PROLOGUE. The theme enunciated.
 A2 | i. 19 xxi. 25. The GOSPEL. The theme elaborated.

Taking the second member A2, we can set it out in its simplest form as follows:

- B | i. 19-51. WITNESSES.
 C | ii. 1 - xxi. 14. SIGNS.
 B | xxi. 15-25. WITNESSES.

This simple structure naturally contains a wealth of detail and its gradual unfolding will, we trust, be a joy and rejoicing of heart, as we go forward in this labour of love. Each of the members denominated "Witnesses" may be sub-divided as follows:

- B | i. 19-51. WITNESSES.
 a | i. 19-34. The witness of John the Baptist.
 "This is the record I saw and bare record."
 b | i. 25-51. Andrew, Simon the son of Jona, Philip, Nathaniel.
 "Follow Me."

This section dealing with witness is paralleled at the close in inverse order as follows:

- B | xxi. 15-25. WITNESSES.
 b | xxi. 15-23. Simon Peter, Son of Jonas, John.
 "Follow Me."
 a | xxi. 24-25. The witness of John.
 "We know his testimony is true."

The bulk of the Gospel lies between these two outposts, and, as we have said above, is interwoven with the eight distinctive "signs". No good purpose will be served by setting

“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through His name” (John xx. 30, 31).

Any structure that ignores this testimony must be faulty, and consequently misleading. We were therefore obliged to start afresh, and the result we commend to the discriminating reader.

The majestic prologue of John i. 1-18 now awaits us. Its theme is magnificent beyond our comprehension, and as we draw near, let us remember that we are approaching holy ground. May worship mingle with our studies, and may we too “behold His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth”.

#5. The Prologue in Outline (i. 1-18). pp. 172 - 175

In reading John’s Gospel, most of us find that it is the prologue that contains the more difficult expressions, while in the body of the Gospel itself we feel on more familiar ground. It is probable, however, that those who were primarily in the Apostle’s mind when he wrote this record, would find the reverse to be true. As they began to read about the *Logos*, at the beginning of the Gospel, they would be on familiar ground, but they would feel that they were entering quite new territory as they followed the earthly footsteps of Him Whom was the *Logos* “made flesh”. We have thought so frequently of the Hebrew people as the channel of Divine revelation and as the supreme example of the failure of the creature to *attain unto righteousness*, that we have tended to forget the Greek nation, as the example of the failure of human reason to *attain unto wisdom*. We are expressly told that the Jew sought after righteousness but did not attain it, because he sought it by law and not by faith (Rom. ix. 31, 32; x. 3), and in I Corinthians we read:

“The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom” (I Cor. i. 22).

Just as “Christ” was the true Righteousness of the Jew, so He was equally the true Wisdom of the Greek.

“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).

In the first three Gospels the Jew is distinctly prominent, and there are abundant references to the Old Covenant Scriptures. The Jew and the Old Covenant Scriptures are conspicuous, too, in the body of the Gospel of John—for it is a faithful record of the Lord’s deeds and words in Jerusalem, Judæa and Samaria—but in the prologue the Greek point of view is prominent, and the problem of the Greeks is shown to be solved in the person and work of the Son of God.

It is interesting to notice that John's Gospel is the only one that uses the word *Ellen*, "Greeks". With the coming of the "Greeks" and their request: "Sir, we would see Jesus" (John xii. 20, 21), the Saviour says *for the first time*: "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified" (John xii. 23). To His mother at the marriage feast He had said: "Mine hour is not yet come" (John ii. 4). To the Samaritan woman He says: "The hour cometh" (John iv. 21, 23). In chapter v. He says: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God" (John v. 25). In vii. 30 and viii. 20, we read that "His hour was not yet come". And then in John xii., *with the quest of the Greeks*, we reach the turning-point of the Gospel: "The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified." It is clear, therefore, that the Greek point of view cannot be ignored without serious loss.

As we are not "Greeks", and have not been brought up in an atmosphere of philosophic discussion, we shall have to pause, at various points, as we go through the prologue, and acquaint ourselves with some of the ideas that John seems to have had vividly in mind as he wrote. We all know something of what is intended by the title "The Word", but how many of us know anything of the history of the quest for the *Logos*?

Coming now to the structure of these first eighteen verses, it is at once clear that verses 1 and 18 are in correspondence.

- a | In the beginning was the WORD.
- b | The Word was WITH God.
- c | The Word was GOD.
- c | GOD only begotten.
- b | In the BOSOM of the Father.
- a | He hath DECLARED Him.

Here the "Word" "declares", and the term "with God" finds its echo in "in the bosom of the Father". The reading "God only begotten" echoes the statement that the "Word was God". We defer the proofs for this reading until later.

The structure of the complete section is as follows:

The Prologue (John i. 1-18).

- A | 1 | a | THE WORD. In the beginning.
 - b | WITH. The Word was with God.
 - c | GOD. The Word was God.
- B | 2. The same was in the beginning with God.
- C | 3. All things were made by Him (*Egeneto dia*).
- D | 4, 5. In Him light and life (*En*).
- E | 6-8. JOHN. Witness (*Marturian*).
- F | 9. True light cometh into the world (*Erchomenon*).
- G | 10, 11. Received not (*Paraelabon*).
- G | 12, 13. Received (*Elabon*).
- F | 14. The Word made flesh dwelt among us (*Eskenosen*).
- E | 15. JOHN. Witness (*Marturi*).
- D | 16. Out of His fullness (*Ek*).
- C | 17. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (*Egeneto dia*).
- B | 18. No man hath seen God at any time.
- A | 18 | c | GOD. God only begotten (*The Word was God*).
- b | BOSOM. The bosom of the Father (*With God*).
- a | DECLARED. He hath declared Him (*The Word*).

The reader is asked to note the correspondences in this outline. We have already drawn attention to the balancing members at the beginning and end. Passing to verse 3, we see that it corresponds with verse 17, the two passages revealing Christ as Creator both in nature and in the realm of grace. The words *egeneto dia*, “came to be through”, are used in each case. In the two members marked “E” we have a double reference to the witness of John the Baptist, while *erchomen*, “coming”, in i. 9, is echoed by *eskenosen*, “dwell” or “tabernacle”, in verse 14. The central passages revolve around the thought of reception.

Having sketched out the conditions under which John wrote his Gospel, and having given in outline the structure of the prologue and of the Gospel as a whole, we are now ready to undertake the joyful task of opening up some of the treasures of wisdom, and grace, and glory, that are to be found in what is perhaps the last book in the Holy Scriptures.

**#6. “In the beginning was the Word” (i. 1).
pp. 212 - 219**

Within the ambit of human experience, two conditions are inseparable from existence and action—the conditions of time and space. It is true that in a certain sense “thought” is free from the conditions of space, for thought cannot be regarded as occupying so many cubic inches, but, on the other hand, there can be no thought without a thinker, and speaking humanly, the living personality of the thinker must conform to all the conditions of space and time. So that we come back to the fundamental fact, that for all human experience, there must be a place *where*, and a time *when*. With John i. 1 before us, we are naturally thinking particularly of the limitations of time, and the reader will remember that the Preacher, who examined all things that are done “under the sun”, found that there was a time and a season for every purpose (Eccles. iii.). The synoptic Gospels, and the narrative sections of John’s Gospels are no exceptions to this rule. The earthly life of the Son of God was as much conditioned by time and space as that of the sons of men.

“Now when Jesus was born *in* Bethlehem of Judæa, *in* the days of Herod the King”
(Matt. ii. 1).

Here we have the two essential conditions: the place, “in Bethlehem”, and the time, “in the days of Herod”. We also read that Herod enquired “where” Christ should be born, and at “what time” the star appeared. We also discover that, from the beginning of His ministry, the Lord was conscious of a set time in which His work was to be accomplished, and a set hour in which that work should reach its crisis.

We turn now to the opening words of John’s Gospel, and are immediately confronted with a state of being that is not conditioned in the same way as our own. We do not read about the beginning of any particular event or action, which could be used as a sort of date line. There is no possibility of printing a date in the margin here, for all is timeless. We are simply told that “in the beginning”, however far back that may be, the Word already “was”. Nothing is said about activity; it is just sheer existence. The passage is quite different from Gen. i. 1, where we read that “in the beginning God *created*”. Here, in John i., it is just pure unconditioned existence that confronts us, and if we are honest we shall say, concerning this sphere of being, that we can know nothing apart from what we are told. To import into John i. 1 arguments drawn from our own experience would be simply irrelevant. Our difficulty in understanding the statement that the Word was “with God”, and also that the Word “was God” is inevitable with our present human limitations. We cannot make the unconditioned being of God conform to the limitations of time and space.

“In the beginning was the Word” (*En arche en ho logos*).

Every student of the Greek N.T. can call to mind the opening sentences of the Gospel according to John. They represent, so far as mere words are concerned, perhaps the acme of simplicity. But what a difference there can be between “form” (the actual words used)

and “content” (the truth that those words are designed to teach), for who among us can ever hope to plumb the depths or scale the heights of such a revelation? Nevertheless, just as one may be impressed with the serene majesty of the Jungfrau, without ever having set foot upon its frozen slopes, so we may contemplate the majesty of John i. 1 without pretending that such infinitude has been comprehended. We can believe what God has told us, even though the subject-matter transcends our experience.

En arche.—First of all, let us note the four occurrences of this phrase in the N.T.:

“In the beginning was the Word” (John i. 1).

“The same was in the beginning with God” (John i. 2).

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning” (Acts xi. 15).

“Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel no church communicated with me but ye only” (Phil. iv. 15).

It will be seen that in each case something must be understood, if we are to grasp the writer’s full meaning. For example, in Acts xi. 15 the reference is to the beginning of the Apostle’s ministry, and looks back to Acts ii. 4. In Phil. iv. 15 the Apostle supplies the necessary explanation, which we purposely omitted in the quotation above, for immediately after the words “in the beginning of the gospel”, he adds “when I departed from Macedonia”. It would appear then, that after each occurrence of the phrase “in the beginning” we must add an explanatory term commencing with the word “when”—and we must now consider the question of what should be added to John i. 1.

Bloomfield says: “At *en arche*, understand *ton panton* (‘of all things’) from the subsequent context at verse 3, *pantaegeneto* (‘all things were made by Him’).” However, if we pay regard to Col. i., we shall remember that there, where Christ is described as the Creator of all things visible and invisible, He is said to be “before all things”, both as to time and pre-eminence. *The Companion Bible* supplies the words “of the ages” and refers to Heb. i. 2 and xi. 3, where the ages are said to be prepared by Him.

There is an obvious parallel between Gen. i. 1 and John i. 1, but there is also an important distinction to be observed. In Gen. i. 1 it is an act done, whereas in John i. 1 it is a Being existing. Genesis speaks of the first moment of time, while John goes back to a period before the ages.

In John xvii., we have two references to this period “before the age times”.

“And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was” (John xvii. 5).

We can therefore read in John i. 1: “In the beginning (before the world was) was the Word.”

The second passage in John xvii. reads: “Thou lovest Me before the foundation (overthrow, *katabole*) of the world” (John xvii. 24). This refers to a period before Gen. i. 2, and so is not parallel with John i. 1.

The relation between John i. 1-3 and Gen. i. 1 seems therefore to be as follows:

- (1) Primarily, originally, before the ages, before the world was, was the Word (John i. 1).
- (2) In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth (Gen. i. 1).
Subsequent revelation teaches us that He Who is called *Elohim* or God in Gen. i. 1, is called *Ho Logos*, or God, in John i. 1 and all things without exception were made by Him.

It is a mistake to regard “Wisdom” in Prov. viii., and the *Logos* in John i. 1, as though they were identical. In John i. 1 the *Logos* is *the Creator*, whereas in Prov. viii., the Creator is said to have *possessed* wisdom, “in the beginning of His way”. So long as we remember this important difference, Prov. viii. 22-36 will reveal a great deal as to the character of the Creator, the *Logos*, Who by His wisdom made all things.

When one speaks in one’s mother-tongue, there are always present in the back of the mind, certain other meanings besides the one primarily intended. For example, when we use the words “right” and “righteousness”, there is at the back of the mind the idea of a “right” line or “plumb” line, something absolute, incapable of deflection. In the same way, when we use the word “wrong”, we have a dim consciousness of the idea of “wringing” or twisting” away from the “right”. Similarly a Greek, or anyone thoroughly acquainted with the Greek language, could not use the word *arche*, in the sense of “beginning”, without having at the back of his mind the various shades of meaning that elsewhere attach to it. It will therefore be of service to the reader if he becomes acquainted with the various meanings of *arche* in the N.T.:

- (1) A beginning, in order of time, as in John i. 1.
- (2) A first or original state. “The angels which kept not their first estate” (Jude 6).
- (3) Authority, whether human or angelic.
Human. “Be subject to principalities” (Titus iii. 1).
Angelic. “Far above all principality” (Eph. i. 21).
- (4) The “Chief”, “Head” or “Beginning”, as title of Christ.
“These things saith the Amen, the faithful, and true witness, the Beginning of the creation of God” (Rev. iii. 14).
“Behold I make all things new I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End” (Rev. xxi. 6).

In combination with other words, we find the following:

- (5) *Arhegos*. Leader, Captain, Author (Heb. ii. 10; xii. 2).
- (6) *Archiereus*. High Priest (Heb. ii. 17).
- (7) *Architekton*. Architect (I Cor. iii. 10).

Christ’s title as “the Beginning of the creation of God” is suggestive of great depths. There is a Rabbinical note to Gen. i. 1 in which the words “In the beginning” (*B’reshith*) are taken to refer to the Messiah, for *rosh* means “head” as well as “beginning” (compare

the Greek equivalent *arche*, meaning “chief” as well as “beginning”). The *Logos* created all things “in the beginning”, and He Himself is “the Beginning of the creation of God”.

We return now to John i. 1, to notice how this beginning of all things is related to Him Who is the Word:

“In the beginning WAS the Word.”

We draw particular attention here to the word “was”, which is part of the verb *eimi*, “to be”. In contrast to this we read in verse 3, that “all things *were made* by Him”, the verb being *egeneto*, “to come into being”. We must therefore repudiate the slightest suggestion that John i. 1 tells us that the Word *came into being* in the beginning. We are simply told that He “*was*” in the beginning. We have here the basis of the stupendous claim made by the Lord in John viii. 58: “Before Abraham was (*genesthai*, ‘came into being’) I AM (*Ego eimi*).” As “the Word” He is the “I AM”, absolute and transcendent. As the Word made flesh, He can say, “I am the Bread of life”, “I am the good Shepherd”. In all such cases, the absolute “I AM” has become relative and immanent.

If we endeavour to think of God *as He is*, we are attempting the impossible. “No man hath seen God *at any time*.” Both John and Paul reveal the fact that God in His essence is “invisible”; He is “spirit”, and no man has seen His “shape” or heard His “voice”. Yet this same God is revealed as essentially “love”, and we know that He “created” heaven and earth, and finally man in His Own image. It is clear that He purposed to reveal Himself, and, being love, He must inevitably reveal this love in revealing Himself. He therefore takes the step which involves self-limitation. He, the invisible One, becomes visible; so that Paul can speak of the “Image of the Invisible God”. He Whose voice no man has ever heard, becomes audible; and we further read that He Who cannot be approached (I Tim. vi. 16) has been “handled” by men and women like ourselves (I John i. 1, 2).

The name whereby John is inspired to set forth this glorious self-limitation and mediation of the Most High is that of the *Logos*, or “the Word”. In writing to the Philippians Paul uses the word *morphe*, “form”; to the Colossians, he uses *eikon*, “image”; to the Hebrews, *charakter*, “express image”; while in I Tim. iii. 16, at the centre of an epistle which begins and ends with the thought of the invisibility of God (I Tim. i. 17 and vi. 16), he speaks of the Mystery of Godliness: “God was manifest in the flesh.” In all these cases, we must be most careful not to use any of these revealed titles out of their context. Each has its own setting, and taken together they provide a wonderfully complete presentation of the truth. The examination of these various passages cannot, however, be undertaken until we have first examined with some care the opening section of John’s prologue: John i. 1-5.

We have already given some indication of the growing conception of the *Logos* in the minds of thinking men from early days. Unaided human reason discovered the need for the *Logos*, but was entirely unable to supply the need. The *Logos* was a felt necessity,

but beyond the wit or power of man to provide. The words of Prof. Burton on this point are suggestive:

“St. John was as far as possible from being the first to apply the term *Logos* to Christ. I suppose him to have found it so universally applied, that he did not attempt to stay the current of popular language, but only kept it to its proper channel, and guarded it from extraneous corruption” (*Inquiries* p. 220).

Our English translation of *Logos* as “the Word” has come to us through the Latin. In early times, two words were used by the Latin translators: *Sermo* and *Verbum*, but as time went on *Sermo* was dropped and *Verbum* universally adopted. Tertullian (A.D.198-210), while giving us both Latin words as a translation of *Logos*, preferred himself the word *Ratio*.

“*Logos* means the ‘word’, not, however, in a grammatical sense, for which either *rhema*, *onoma*, or *epos* is used, but always, like *vox*, of the *living spoken word*, the word, not in its outward form, but with reference to the thought connected with the form” (*Passow*).

The *Logos* of John i. 1 denotes Christ as He Who represents, or in Whom had been hidden from eternity, and especially from the beginning of the world, what God had to say to man (see *Cremer*). Just as Christ had to say to His disciples, “I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now” (John xvi. 12), so God has had to speak to man in successive stages. In his original state of innocency, man walked and talked with God (Gen. iii. 8), but subsequent to his expulsion from Eden, he walked and talked with God to a less and less degree. To the nations at large, the only voice that was heard was the voice of creation (Rom. i. 19, 20; Acts xiv. 17; Psa. xix. 1-4). Fallen man, even though specially chosen, as were the people of Israel, could not bear to hear the immediate word of God, and so we read:

“And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die” (Exod. xx. 19).

And then at length we have the coming of Christ Himself, and we read:

“God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son” (Heb. i. 1, 2).

But even though the time had come for “the Word” to appear among men, and do what neither the Law nor the Prophets could accomplish, even then He could not reveal all, until the time came for the advent of the Spirit of truth—Who, not “speaking from Himself”, would “take of the things that are Mine, and show them unto you”.

We find in the N.T. a very close parallel between the living *Logos*, and the written *Logos*. A lengthy list could be compiled, but the following will be sufficient to illustrate our meaning:

| The Living Word. | The Written Word. |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| THE TRUTH (John xiv. 6). | THE TRUTH (John xvii. 17). |
| THE LIFE (John xi. 25). | THE LIFE (John vi. 63). |
| THE JUDGE (John v. 26, 27). | THE JUDGE (John xii. 48). |
| SANCTIFIER (John xvii. 19). | SANCTIFIER (John xvii. 17). |

These few parallels taken from John's Gospel could be supplemented from practically every book in the N.T.

Two meanings that attach to the Greek word *Logos* which must not be missed, are indicated by the translations "account", and "reason":

"I desire fruit that may abound to your *account*" (*logos*) (Phil. iv. 17).

"Be ready always to give an answer (*apologia*) to every man that asketh you a *reason* (*logos*) of the hope that is within you, with meekness and fear" (I Pet. iii. 15).

Christ the *Logos*, speaks to man, that man may know the thoughts of God, Who in His essence is beyond human comprehension. In Christ the *Logos*, we have God's reason for all that He has planned and made, the *logical account* of the creation and the purpose of the ages. This we shall see more fully when we come to verse 18, and its echo in Col. ii. 2, 3.

Webster and Wilkinson's Greek Testament note at this point is worth recording:

"The indecision, instability and presumption of German Rationalists, in their criticism on this term, are, whether intentionally or not, admirably satirized by Goethe, when he makes Faust translate it first 'the Word', then 'the thought', then 'the power', and lastly *by the Spirit's help*, 'the deed'."

Here for the moment we must stay. We have learned that before all things and before all time, there "was", in timeless existence, the Word, the Reason, the Archetype, the Mediator, the Revealer. The world is the destined sphere, and man the destined recipient of the priceless revelation of God, not only as Almighty and Invisible, but, through the Word become flesh, as the God Who is love, and the God Who is also Father.

"In the beginning was *the Word*."

"He hath *declared* Him."

Great Plainness of Speech.

#9. The Bride and the Body.

pp. 59, 60

Were we all logical and consistent, the recognition of three spheres of blessing would suffice to save us from confusing “The Body” with “The Bride”. But there is abundant evidence that none of us is fully reasonable. One effect of the fall is a darkened understanding, and while, by grace, “the renewing of the mind” is going on day by day, we too often “see men as trees walking”. In accord with the title and object of these articles, therefore we draw attention to the difference between “The Bride” and “The Body” that must be recognized if we would distinguish between things that differ.

In the book of the Revelation the Bride is identified with the New Jerusalem, and to any who realize the peculiar character of the Mystery, this, of itself, would be enough to show her to be distinct from the Body of Ephesians. The Bride is called the Bride of the Lamb and the Lamb’s wife, yet the actual title “The Lamb” is never used in the Prison Epistles, although it is nevertheless most blessedly true that the church of the Mystery is saved by the same sacrifice and precious blood as is the Church of the Acts period.

Just as the “New” heavens and earth are linked with the present heaven and earth, and just as the “New” covenant is connected with the old covenant, so the “new” Jerusalem is nevertheless a new “Jerusalem”, and, as such, has no connection with a calling which, at the start, reminds those who are blessed, that they were once aliens from the commonwealth (citizenship) of Israel. Further, each gate of the New Jerusalem is inscribed with the name of Israel, and its foundations contain twelve courses of stones (twelve being the number of the tribes), which bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. As I Cor. xv. 5-8 makes clear, Paul was not one of the twelve. Writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle said:

“I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ”
(II Cor. xi. 2).

Writing to the Ephesians, the Apostle takes the very word translated “husband” and reveals *that* as the status and goal of the Church which is The Body of Christ.

“Unto a perfect man (husband), unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 13).

The idea that we are not to take too much notice of the “mere” letter of the word, and that the apostle could mix his metaphors as he pleased, will not do. A Berean knowledge of the perfection, and therefore accuracy, of the language of inspiration, would prevent the acceptance of such a slipshod idea as that Paul could, in one Epistle, speak of the Body as the perfect “husband”, and, in another, of the same company, as a “chaste virgin” “espoused to one husband”. Further, the idea that the Ephesian position is merely the “perfecting” of the Corinthian, as some teach from I Cor. xiii. 9-13, is ruled out, for

no “perfecting” could change a Bride into a Bridegroom. The idea is intolerable: a mixture that Scripture repudiates.

We believe, therefore, that the titles “The Bride” and “The Body” belong to two distinct companies. “The Bride” is made up of faithful Israel, together with those believing Gentiles who, by the promise made to Abraham, and by their similar faith, are associated with that “city which hath foundations”. But “The Body” pertains to the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles. It is the subject of a mystery never revealed in O.T. Scripture, and is removed from all connection with Abraham and Israel. The spiritual evolutionist may talk of the development of the Corinthian position in Eph. ii., but the statement is:

“For to CREATE (not perfect or develop) in himself of the twain one new man” (Eph. ii. 15).

which prevents us from seeing in this anything parallel with the olive tree of Rom. xi., even though it should be taught that Gentiles now, equally with Jews, are reckoned “true olives”. It is a “new creation” that we see in Eph. ii., and as such it cannot merge the Bride and the Body together.

Articles dealing with the above subject will be found in earlier Volumes, as under:

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| The Bride and The Body | Vol. xi. 9. |
| The Feminine words used of the Church | Vol. xi. 9. |
| The Bride and The Wife | Vol. xv. 74. |
| The Body in Ephesians | Vol. viii. 145; xv. 106. |

#10. The Body of I Cor. xii. and Spiritual Gifts. pp. 117, 118

While the “church which is His Body” is the peculiar theme of the dispensation of the mystery, the figurative use of the “body” is found elsewhere, particularly in I Cor. xii. That passage is often confused with the subject of the One Body of Ephesians, and to avoid this, needs to be studied in its context. The subject of I Cor. xii. is defined for us in the opening verse where the Apostle says “Now concerning spiritual gifts brethren”. After disposing of false gifts in verses 1-3, the Apostle, in conformity with the opening verse, devotes *the whole of the chapter*, to spiritual gifts, diverse, yet all from the one source, and uses this complexity, yet unity, of the various members of the human body in illustration of his subjects. We ask, then, with reason, What has this to do with the church of the present dispensation?

Closer examination of I Cor. xii. 4-30 but confirms the oneness of its theme. Let us see this for ourselves, and first, by the structure of the passage.

- A | 4-11. GIFTS. DIVERSITY IN UNITY.
 - a1 | There are diversities of gifts.
 - b1 | But the same Spirit.
 - a2 | There are diversities of service.
 - b2 | But the same Lord.
 - a3 | There are diversities of inworkings.
 - b3 | But the same God.
- B | 12-27. ILLUSTRATION.
 - The body, members and head.
 - Comely and uncomely parts.
- A | 28-30. GIFTS. DIVERSITY IN UNITY.
 - a | God hath set some in the church.
 - b | First apostles.
 - Secondarily prophets.
 - Thirdly teachers.
 - Then miracles, gifts of healing, helps,
 - governments, diversities of tongues,

Surely, in view of this analysis, the use of the passage for any other purpose than the exposition of the origin and nature of miraculous gifts would be to “handle the word of God deceitfully”.

The figurative use of the eye, ear and nose, as members of the head, is legitimate in the context of I Cor. xii., but out of place in Ephesians, where Christ is Head. Reference is also made in the chapter to members less honourable than others, which, again, is in keeping with its theme but contrary to Eph. iii. 6, where the heart of the mystery is expressed in the idea of a “joint body”. There are, too, uncomely parts rightly introduced in I Cor. xii., but who will dare to associate such an idea with the church of the one Body of Ephesians?

We therefore believe and teach that the status of the church of the Body of Christ is a distinctive feature of the dispensation of the mystery, received by the apostle Paul by revelation, and peculiar to the present time. The subject of I Cor. xii. is not the status of the church, but the problem of spiritual gifts, and the Apostle by an apt use of the figure of the human body illustrates “diversity in unity”, which is the answer to the problem raised by the Corinthians in connection with the use, and comparative value, of these miraculous gifts.

Further notes and comments on the subject will be found in the article entitled “The Difference between I Cor. xii. and Eph. iv.” (Volume XVIII, page 178), and in the book “The Apostle of the Reconciliation” (pages 154-160).

#11. The Prison Ministry of Paul. **pp. 156, 157**

The difference that is observable between the church as constituted during the Acts period, and the church of the dispensation of the mystery, is reflected in the twofold ministry of the apostle Paul, who was the human instrument empowered for the founding of both. From the beginning Paul's authorship differed from that of Peter, for Paul was chosen on the road to Damascus to bear the name of the Lord to the *Gentiles*, and, writing later in the epistle to the Romans, and during the same period, he magnified his office as the apostle to the *Gentiles*, while in Gal. ii., he tells how he went up to Jerusalem to lay before the leaders of the circumcision "that gospel which he preached among the *Gentiles*".

Before the Apostle's liberty was cut short by imprisonment, he wrote six epistles to the churches, namely Galatians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Corinthians & Romans and, about the time of his detention under Felix, he wrote the epistle to the Hebrews, bringing the number of this group of Epistles up to seven. But after he reached Rome and had spent that memorable day with the leaders of the Jews recorded in Acts xxviii., the Apostle, from his Roman prison, wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon. He was then released and wrote in that interval of freedom, I Timothy and Titus. He was then retaken and imprisoned, and, with death in view, wrote his last epistle, II Timothy. Acts xxviii., therefore, divides the written ministry of the Apostle into two groups, each consisting of seven epistles.

In Acts xx. 17-38, we learn that the first ministry of the Apostle was coming to a close, and that a new ministry, closely associated with bonds and afflictions, awaited him. From Acts xxvi. 16-18 we further learn that when the Lord commissioned the Apostle on the road to Damascus, he told him of a future ministry that lay before him, and that at some future date He would appear unto him once more to give him the subject and content of this new, and as it proved, prison, ministry. Thus while the great basis of justification by faith and redemption by the blood of Christ remained unaltered, an entirely new superstructure was erected on it, having many unique features, and entirely distinct from either the Abrahamic covenant or promise, or the new covenant made with the house of Israel and of Judah. Truth is revealed in the prison ministry of Paul that no human heart could have conceived, and no human ear had hitherto heard, and it is to maintain, against all odds and all misrepresentations, that unique ministry that we have laboured with voice and pen these thirty years, the glory of it making any "loss" sustained of no importance whatever.

While we must remember, and use in their proper place, the seven epistles left to us by the apostle of the mystery, the four great prison epistles that contain the complete revelation of our high calling are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and II Timothy.

We therefore believe and teach that these prison epistles are the standard given to us, using which we may read and profit by all scripture, without attempting to take to ourselves instruction and promise that belong to others. Again, we see in these prison epistles a complete statement concerning our standing, our state, our calling and our hope. We refuse to import into this unique revelation items of doctrine or practice that will not square with its superlative teaching, and therefore leave ordinances, miraculous gifts, Abrahamic and Davidic promises, the voice of the Archangel, the trump of God, the law of Moses, and the heavenly Jerusalem where we find them, that is on the other side of Acts xxviii., and in Paul's earlier ministry.

Notes and fuller details will be found as follows:

The Prison Ministry of Paul Vol. i. 4; ii./iii. 50; xi. 145; xviii. 51.

For a general opening up of the prison ministry of Paul, the reader is directed to the volume entitle: "*The Testimony of the Lord's Prisoner.*"

#12. The unique character of the Dispensation of the Mystery. pp. 199, 200

A number of fundamental differences that are observable between the calling of the church during the Acts, and the calling of the church during the dispensation of the mystery, make it utterly impossible that they can be the same company or even that the relation between them could be that of child to adult. However different a full-grown man may be from his infant stage, his origin remains the same, he cannot be said to have had one birth-place when a baby, and another when grown up: that is absurd. In the same way, the choice of the church of the mystery took place in a period denominated "before the foundation (overthrow) of the world" (Eph. i. 4), a period never associated with any other company. The church of the mystery therefore has a calling that forms part of the outworking of the divine plan that antedates all history, and about which very little is revealed in the Scriptures.

Not only is there this unique period of its choice, but there is the equally unique sphere of its blessing, "in heavenly places". Where these heavenly places are, and what are their characteristics, Eph. i. 20-23, ii. 6 and iii. 10 reveal. Again, no company of believers ever entertained the hope of being blessed *there* or seated *there*. Such is the second peculiar characteristic, that marks off the church of the mystery from all else.

Again, this church receives a title of such intimacy as to well-nigh overwhelm with the sense of the fullness of its meaning:--

"The church which is His body, THE FULNESS of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 22, 23).

Where in the whole range of Scripture is there anything to approximate to that title? Then, as already mentioned, this church is said to be “seated together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 6). The epistle to the Hebrews is the grandest exposition of what the seating of Christ at the right hand of God in heaven itself means, but Hebrews leaves the seated Priest alone in heaven’s holiest of all, no revelation having then been made of the church and its high calling.

To the foregoing could be added the additional distinguishing features of the blessed removal of the middle wall, the blotting out of Jew and Gentile in the new man, the status of this company, “the perfect man” (husband) and its hope, “to be manifested with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 1-4).

We therefore believe and teach that the calling and constitution of the church of the dispensation of the mystery is unique. That no other church or company has a calling or constitution like it, and that it is destructive of all true interpretation or understanding to attempt to bring over, or unite, the church of the Acts with the church of the mystery on the ground that both companies are built upon the rock Christ Jesus and His finished work. It no more proves that they are the same, or similar, than that Westminster Abbey is the same as the Houses of Parliament. The unique blessings of the dispensation of the mystery are our priceless inheritance. Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, blessed and seated together in heavenly places, destined to be the very fullness of Christ, and the perfect man, let no one attempt to link together what God has manifestly kept asunder.

For further notes and fuller details the reader is referred to the following Volumes, and also to “The Testimony of the Lord’s Prisoner”.

Foundation (*katabole*) Vol. iv./v. 22.
Unique Character of Dispensation of Mystery Vol. xii. 155-158.

None Other Things.

“Saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come” (Acts xxvi. 22).

#6. The heavenly country and calling. pp. 26 - 28

When the Apostle uttered the words which form the title of this series, it would of course have been possible for an extreme literalist to have attempted to show that, unless the Apostle had confined himself entirely to a literal quotation of the actual words of Moses and the Prophets without adding any words of his own, his statement was not true. We can hardly believe, however, that anyone would, in fact, have adopted such an extreme attitude. If such a view were legitimate, Paul's "one word" of Acts xxviii. 25 would be open to criticism, for the quotation which constitutes this "one word" is made up of 55 "words" in the Greek, and 70 "words" in the English. Many more such examples could be given, but we fear that the average reader would grow impatient, and feel that we were wasting time. We have an object, however, in view, and that is to show that, even though Paul's utterances were not simply quotations, and even though some of his teaching does not appear upon the surface of the O.T. Scriptures, the language of the Prayer Book is applicable here, when it speaks of the doctrine of Holy Scripture "*and whatsoever may be proved thereby*".

In the N.T. we learn that Abraham not only received the land of Canaan as an inheritance, but that he also looked for a "better country, that is, an heavenly". Although the New Jerusalem is never mentioned in the O.T. Scriptures, it is nevertheless true that this "city which hath foundations" constituted a real and blessed hope in O.T. times. When we read such verses as Heb. xi. 9, 10, 13-16, we may feel at first that here at least the Apostle is saying something more than "the Prophets and Moses did say should come". Let us observe, however, exactly what is written in this chapter (Heb. xi.).

We know, from the record of Genesis, that Abraham "believed" and had "faith". The nature of faith is not enlarged upon by Moses and the Prophets to the extent that it is so treated in the N.T., and the reason is fairly obvious. To teach that Abraham's faith was "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" is certainly an *expansion* of the O.T. account, but it is not an *addition*. How shall we intelligently interpret the fact that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were willing to be tent-dwellers in the very land of promise, dying in full faith without possessing more than a burial ground in the land, unless we believe that they knew that the promise upon which they rested demanded the resurrection of the dead for its fulfillment and enjoyment? Paul himself tells us that "they that say such things, *declare plainly*" (Heb. ix. 14 A.V.), or "*make it manifest*" (R.V.). While we may have to admit that some of the deductions tabulated in Heb. xi. 9, 10, 13-16, were not so "manifest" to us, our own poorness of insight is surely not the standard whereby we must judge the Apostle. From the recorded attitude of

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, it is “manifest” that they sought a country, and it is also clear that if they had had an earthly country in mind, they could have found an opportunity to have returned. As they did not, it is obvious that such pilgrims and strangers, with such promises apparently unfulfilled, yet with such triumphant faith, must have had a heavenly country and a heavenly city in view, for there is no other alternative.

We must now consider some of the statements made by the Apostle with reference to Melchisedec in Heb. vii. We first meet Melchisedec as “Priest of the Most High God” in Gen. xiv. 18. Nothing more is said of him in the O.T. until we reach Psalm cx., where we read:

“The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Psa. cx. 1, 4).

When this Psalm was written, there was in existence the divinely appointed Aaronic priesthood. The greatness of Melchisedec’s order of priesthood is proved from several statements made in the Book of Genesis.

- (1) The fact that Melchisedec had “no father or mother” (i.e. no “pedigree”), and no specific end to his ministry, is in strong contrast with the law regulating the Aaronic order. In these things Melchisedec foreshadowed the Son of God, “Who abideth a priest continually” (Heb. vii. 3).
- (2) Gen. xiv. 20 records the fact that Abraham gave tithes to Melchisedec. In Heb. vii. Paul states that “without contradiction the less is blessed of the better” (Heb. vii. 4-8).
- (3) “If I may so say”, continues Paul, “Levi, who was in the loins of Abraham, paid tithes to Melchisedec”. This shows that the Levitical order was imperfect, and that a change in the priesthood was necessary (Heb. vii. 9-11).
- (4) This change necessitated the transfer of the Melchisedec priesthood from earth to heaven:
“For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah” (Heb. vii. 12-14).
“For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest” (Heb. viii. 4).

As we have already remarked, these features may not have been obvious to us, but to the Apostle they were “without contradiction”. He could, therefore, speak of the heavenly calling and the heavenly priesthood without going beyond that which was revealed in the O.T., even though these things were not expressed in so many words by the O.T. writers. Those who would object to the Apostle’s claim must, to be consistent, criticize also the statement of Matt. ii. 17, 18 that the massacre of the innocents “fulfilled” the prophecy of Jer. xxxi. 15, and the further statement of Matt. ii. 23, “He shall be called a Nazarene”—for this actual expression is not to be found in the Law and the Prophets. Who would have dreamed that the language of Deut. xxx. 12, 13 could possibly have referred to the gospel, or to the ascended Christ, and His death and burial? And yet the Apostle makes no apology for using the passage in this way. The same argument applies to the statement that some will be living at the Coming of the Lord and will not “prevent” those that sleep. Such a statement does not go beyond the testimony of Moses and the Prophets.

If Paul had uttered one word that associated any believing Jew or Gentile with the seated Christ at the right hand of God, in the holiest of all, he would most certainly have gone beyond the limits of the inspired testimony of Moses and the Prophets and have revealed truth that was exclusive to the dispensation of the Mystery. It is this that makes the Apostle's claim so important to all who would appreciate the distinctive nature of the Mystery. The heavenly calling, with its city the New Jerusalem, is not related to the Mystery, and rightly falls within the limits set by the Apostle.

The mention of the Mystery may perhaps cause some reader to remember that, long before the prison epistles were written, Paul spoke of several "mysteries". Can these mysteries possibly fall within the limits of "Moses and the Prophets", or will their investigation prove that the Apostle was, after all, wrong in claiming that he had said "none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come"? To a consideration of this question we hope to devote the closing articles of this series.

#7. The Mysteries.

The mysteries of Israel's blindness (Rom. xi. 25) and the mystery that was silenced (Rom. xvi. 25) considered in the light of our title. pp. 64 - 69

We have already seen that the gospel, the inclusion of the Gentile, the hope entertained by the early church, and the possession of spiritual gifts, all fall within the testimony of the law and the prophets. There remains, however, one other subject which at first sight may seem to upset all our previous arguments—the subject of the "mysteries" of which Paul was a steward long before the "mystery" of the prison epistles was made manifest.

There are five mysteries specified in the epistles written before Acts xxviii. that must claim our attention:

- (1) The MYSTERY of Israel's blindness (Rom. xi. 25).
- (2) The MYSTERY that had been kept secret (Rom. xvi. 25).
- (3) The MYSTERY of the wisdom of God (I Cor. ii. 7).
- (4) The MYSTERY in relation to resurrection (I Cor. xv. 51).
- (5) The MYSTERY of iniquity (II Thess. ii. 7).

Let us examine these five mysteries, and see whether we find them in agreement with the O.T. Scriptures, or whether we shall have to admit that they go beyond them.

The mystery of Israel's blindness (Rom. xi. 25).

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in" (Rom. xi. 25).

In this same chapter we have another reference to the blindness that fell upon Israel, in verses 8-10:

“According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear; unto this day. And David saith Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see” (Rom. xi. 8-10).

We have here three quotations taken from Isa. xxix., Deut. xxix., Isa. vi. 9 and Psa. lxix. 22. If we turn, first, to Isa. xxix. 10 we find no hint of the “secret” revealed in Rom. xi., but as we read on to verses 17 and 18 we become aware of the fact that a change is intended. Instead of judgment we have restoration; Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, the deaf shall hear, and “*the eyes of the blind shall see*”. The secret of Rom. xi. is here, for those who are able to discern it.

The passage in Deut. xxix. 4 does not refer primarily to the time of which Paul spoke, but to the condition obtaining when Israel came out of Egypt. The words: “unto this day” as uttered by Moses can have no other interpretation. There is a hint, however, of further and fuller revelation in the last verse of the chapter—a verse that has suffered somewhat at the hands of translators. We transcribe the note given in *The Companion Bible*:

“The italics in the A.V. (put in Roman type in the R.V.) show that the Hebrew was not clear to the translators. They make good sense in English, but this is not the sense of the Hebrew text. The words rendered ‘unto the Lord our God’ have the extraordinary points (App. 31) to show that they form no part of the text, and should come out. The meaning then is:

The secret things, even the revealed things (belong) to us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law, i.e., the revealed things, and the secret things which have not been, but will yet be revealed.”

Israel had “seen” the miracles which had been wrought in Egypt, but these “revealed” things had left them blind. Their children, however, were to “do all the words of this law”, so that the fact that blindness was only for a time was evidently a part of the “secret”. Moreover, it is the “nations” that comment upon Israel’s excision (Deut. xxix. 24-28), and that are likely to become “wise in their own conceits”.

Isa. vi. 9 and 10—the third passage mentioned above—is followed by the prophet’s question “Lord, how long?” and the Lord’s answer in verse 11. In verse 13, also we have the pledge of the remnant. Even Psalm lxix., which seems to speak of hopeless misery, ends on the same note: “God will save Zion.”

We may conclude, therefore, that the secret of Israel’s blindness is well within the testimony of Moses and the prophets.

The mystery that had been kept secret (Rom. xvi. 25).

We have now to enquire whether or not this secret is outside the scope of Moses and the prophets.

If we examine the structure of Romans, it becomes clear that the complete epistle demands the inclusion of Rom. xvi. 25-27; otherwise the opening salutation of Rom. i. 1-7 is without its corresponding member. In Rom. i. 1-7 we have the gospel, “which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures”, concerning Christ as the Seed of David and Son of God, “for obedience of faith among all nations”. In the corresponding passage at the end of the epistle, Rom. xvi. 25-27, we have, not the “preaching” of the gospel or its “power unto salvation”, but a reference to “Him that is of power to stablish you, according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith”. In Rom. xvi. we have an advance on Rom. i., but not something entirely different. The secret “now” made manifest (that is, at the time of Paul’s writing) is said to have been “silenced” in *aionion* times. Let us give this statement our careful attention. Where the A.V. reads “kept secret” we have substituted “silenced”. What is the justification for this alteration and what does it imply? The Word used in the original is *sigao*, and occurs nine times in the N.T. One of these occurrences is in Luke ix. where the disciples had heard the voice speaking out of the cloud saying: “This is my beloved Son: hear Him.” Immediately after this, we read:

“And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they *kept it close*, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen” (Luke ix. 36).

Again, in Luke xx., after the Lord had answered the question put to Him regarding the lawfulness of giving tribute to Caesar, we read:

“And they could not take hold of His words before the people; and they marveled at His answer, and *held their peace*” (Luke xx. 26).

The remaining occurrences are Acts xii. 17; xv. 12, 13; Rom. xvi. 25; I Cor. xiv. 28, 30 and 34. There is no suggestion in any of these passages of “keeping a secret”, but rather the consistent idea of keeping something quiet.

Returning to Rom. xvi., we observe that this act of “silencing” is said to have taken place “in *aionion* times”, whereas the mystery of Ephesians is related to a period “before the overthrow of the world” (Eph. i. 4), or “before *aionion* times” (II Tim. i. 9). The mystery of Rom. xvi. cannot, therefore, be the mystery of Eph. iii. or Col. i. Moreover, this mystery, which was silenced in age times, was made manifest by the apostle Paul and “by the scriptures of the prophets”. It has been suggested that these “scriptures of the prophets” are not the O.T. prophecies, but the “prophetic writings” of the N.T., either the epistles of Paul himself, or the writings of those who had the gift of prophecy in the early church. So far as Rom. xvi. itself is concerned, there is no positive evidence either way, so that we must turn to other passages for help. In Rom. xvi. we have *graphon prophetikon*, “writings prophetic”, and in II Pet. i. 19 *prophetikon logon*, “prophetic word”. In the latter passage we are not left in doubt as to whether this “prophetic word” was uttered by O.T. or N.T. prophets, for the inspired comment reads:

“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (II Pet. i. 21).

As this is the only other occurrence of *prophetikon*, we feel bound to accept the view that the word refers definitely to the O.T. writers.

If we examine the Epistle to the Romans carefully, we discover that it contains an inner and an outer section, which may be set out as follows:

| | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| Romans i. 1 - v. 11. OUTER PORTION. | Romans v. 12 - viii. INNER PORTION. | Romans ix. - xvi.* OUTER PORTION. |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|

[* - For a fuller treatment of this important theme, the reader is referred to the articles on “The Epistle to the Romans”.]

While the outer portion deals with Abraham, the inner is concerned with Adam—and it was this truth relating to Adam which, though incipient in the pages of Genesis, was “silenced” while the truth relating to Abraham occupied the bulk of the O.T.

Of the glorious doctrine of justification, the Apostle wrote:

“But now the righteousness of God without the law hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets” (Rom. iii. 21).

Of the equally glorious doctrine of Rom. v. 12 - viii. the Apostle declares that it had been silenced in age-times, but was now made manifest and by prophetic scriptures made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.

Truth has its times and seasons. Man must first realize his own sinnership and personal transgression, before he learns of his association with a ruined race and a federal head. At the time when Romans was written, the moment had come when the full teaching concerning the “one offence” and the “one righteousness” must be brought out of obscurity and made manifest. No uninspired commentator could ever have brought out from Gen. iii. what Paul makes known in Rom. v., but, on the other hand, there is nothing revealed in Rom. v. which cannot be dimly perceived in the ancient record, when once the light of inspiration is turned upon it.

The reconciliation of the Gentile was never a secret. We have already considered the testimony of Moses and the prophets regarding the inclusion of the Gentile, and this inclusion of necessity involved their reconciliation. The reconciliation of one portion of the race (the circumcision) with the other (the uncircumcision) now gives place to the deeper reconciliation of the race as such, for in Rom. v., where the silenced secret has been made manifest and Gen. iii. made to speak, neither Jew nor Gentile is mentioned.

Here we must pause. The remaining “mysteries” must be reserved for another time; for if we attempted to deal with them here, we should either have to give them scant attention or else unduly lengthen the present article. We offer the above comments with full confidence that all who are willing to follow the lead of the inspired scriptures only,

will find no difficulty in believing that, so far as these two mysteries in Romans are concerned, they do not go beyond the things “which the prophets and Moses did say should come”.

**#8. The remaining mysteries of Paul’s early ministry,
considered in the light of our title.
pp. 105 - 109**

We have so far examined the mysteries of Romans and found no reason to call in question the accuracy of Paul’s statement before Agrippa, and we must now go on to consider the two mysteries that are specifically mentioned in I Corinthians. We use the word “specifically” because there are also two general references in Chapters iv. & xiii.:

“Let no man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the *mysteries* of God” (I Cor. iv. 1).

“Though I understand all *mysteries* and all knowledge and have not love, I am nothing” (I Cor. xiii. 2).

These “mysteries”, however, are not defined and cannot therefore be called upon as evidence in the case we are examining. The two mysteries in I Cor. ii. and xv., on the other hand, are specific, and must therefore be examined. The first of these passages reads as follows:

“We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory” (I Cor. ii. 7).

Because we have a reference here to a time “before the ages”, there has sometimes been a tendency to ignore the context and assume that the passage refers to the mystery of Ephesians and Colossians. If we go back to the previous chapter, we find that the Apostle speaks of the wisdom of God in connection with the cross of Christ (I Cor. i. 24), and also, by contrast, of the wisdom of this world (I Cor. i. 20, 21). In the second chapter, he reminds the Corinthians that when he came to them, he did not pander to human fancies and indulge in “excellency of speech or wisdom”, but rather “determined to know nothing among them, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”. The Apostle was most anxious that the faith of these believers should not stand in the wisdom of men, but, although he so ruthlessly sets aside human wisdom, he assures the Corinthians that he does speak wisdom “among them that are perfect”. The identity of these “perfect” ones may be gathered from a comparison of I Cor. iii. and Heb. v. & vi.

| I Corinthians iii. | Hebrews v. and vi. |
|---|---|
| Babes, carnal, fed with milk, not with meat. Building upon the one foundation, that which may be rewarded or may be consumed by fire. | Need of milk, not strong meat. A babe. Full grown (perfect) ones. Those who go on unto perfection. The earth either received blessing or is nigh unto cursing. Whose end is to be burned. |

For our present purpose, it is enough to note that the “perfect” one is one who has grown in grace, who has got beyond the “first principles”, and who can be taught further and fuller truth. In contrast, therefore, with the basic truth of “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” the Apostle continues: “Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect” (I Cor. ii. 6). His subject is still “wisdom”, though not, as he had already said, “the wisdom of this age, nor of the princes of this age that come to naught”. Nothing has so far been said about “the mystery”; the Apostle has confined himself to the one subject of “wisdom”, the kind of wisdom of which he spoke, and the kind which he repudiated.

Instead of going to Corinth, and speaking to the unprepared multitude the whole truth of God at once, the Apostle fed them according to their capacity. To babes he gave the “milk” of the Word, to adults the “meat”. In Gal. ii. he tells us that, when the great controversy was raging concerning the place of the uncircumcised Gentile in the Church, he “communicated unto them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, *but privately* to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run in vain” (Gal. ii. 2).

So the Apostle here tells the Corinthians that he had spoken the wisdom of God in a mystery. He does not say that he told them “the Mystery”, for this would have been altogether foreign to his thought. The presence of the word “hidden”, coming so near the word “mystery” has led the superficial reader to a false conclusion. It was not the mystery that was hidden, but the wisdom, and it was this of which Paul spoke to those who were perfect—and so “in a secret”. He clinches his argument with a quotation from the Prophets, a proof that “the Mystery” of Ephesians was not in mind:

“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But He hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (I Cor. ii. 9, 10).

The Apostle’s intention here is made very clear by his own expansion of the argument. He proceeds, in verse 12, to place in contrast the “spirit of the world” and the “spirit which is of God”—an evident parallel with the contrasted “wisdom of the world” and “wisdom of God” in the earlier part of the chapter. In verse 12 we read that this “spirit which is of God” is given to us of God, *which things we speak*” (I Cor. ii. 12, 13). Here we are back again to the subject of verses 6 and 7, which deal with what the Apostle said, and how he said it. In verse 13, he repeats the statement that he did not speak “in the words that man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, explaining spiritual things to spiritual persons”. Then follows in verses 14 to 16 the contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man, and then in chapter iii. the subject of chapter i. is resumed. A careful examination of the context shows that “wisdom”, either human or divine, is the subject, and that being so, there is no necessity to question the Apostle’s statement that he did not go beyond that which “the Prophets and Moses did say should come”.

We must now pass on to the second “mystery” of Corinthians, which is found in chapter xv., and has to do with resurrection:

“Now this I say brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory” (I Cor. xv. 50-54).

We observe first of all that the “mystery” here is associated with the testimony of the prophet Isaiah, whose prophecy relates to Millennial times (Isa. xxv. 6-9). Both in I Thess. iv. and here in I Cor. xv., the Apostle distinguishes between those who shall be “alive and remaining” at the coming of the Lord, and those who have already “fallen asleep”. When the change takes place, with regard both to the “living” and the “dead”, the prophecy of Isa. xxv. 6-9 will have been fulfilled.

When we examine I Cor. xv. 51 more closely we observe that there is no word in the original that can really be translated “show”. The original reads: *Musterion humin lego*, “a mystery to you I speak”. Moreover, it is necessary to consider whether these words would not be more correctly rendered in the form of a question. To make this point clearer, let us turn for a moment to Luke xvi.

It may be that some readers are still perplexed to find our Lord apparently saying, in connection with the parable of the unjust steward: “But I say unto you, Make unto yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness” (Luke xvi. 9).

Most of our readers, however, know that the words *Kago humin lego* should be translated in the form of a question: “And do I say unto you?” the question being followed by the reasons why the Lord’s people should not in any sense emulate the spirit of the unjust steward.

Returning to I Cor. xv. and examining the Apostle’s words again, we discover that there is no “mystery” here at all. In verses 47-49 he contrasts the first Adam with the Second Adam, and the image of the earthy with the image of the heavenly, and verse 50 opens with the words: *Touto de phemi*: “But this I say.” The Apostle then proceeds to declare that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption”. Immediately following this, in verse 51, we have: *Musterion humin lego*: “Do I speak a mystery when I tell you this?”—the implied answer being, of course, “No”. To sum up, we may conclude that, when the Apostle taught the glorious doctrine of the resurrection, he did not go beyond the testimony of Moses and the Prophets.

There is now only one other “mystery” to be considered: “The mystery of iniquity” in II Thess. ii. 7. It hardly seems necessary to quote from the Book of Daniel to prove that the rise of the Man of Sin, the Son of perdition, is entirely within the scope of O.T. prophecy. The mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh, is enshrined in the O.T. title Emmanuel (“God with us”), and the mystery of iniquity is but the Satanic travesty of

the truth. The Man of Son sets himself up “as God” and will one day have his “*parousia*” (coming) with its preliminary “lying wonders” (II Thess. ii. 9).

There is a possibility that the correct reading of Isa. xi. 4 should be as follows:

“With righteousness shall He judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the Oppressor (*ariz* instead of ‘earth’, *erez*) with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall he slay the wicked.”

The manifestation and the destruction of this Man of Sin were fully known to the prophets. That which has an end must obviously have had a beginning, and that which finally dares to come out into the light of day may well begin secretly at first. In all this there is nothing that goes beyond the testimony of the Law and the Prophets.

We have now examined the various mysteries that are found in Paul’s early ministry, and have discovered nothing in any one of them that goes beyond what “the Prophets and Moses did say should come”.

#9. Is the “Church” within the testimony of the Law and the Prophets? pp. 146 - 149

We have now considered Paul’s teaching in connection with the gospel, the inclusion of the Gentile, the hope, the gifts of the Spirit, and the mysteries, and have found in all these instances the words used in his defence before Agrippa to be literally true. There is no need to lengthen this investigation unduly, and we believe that the most exacting of our readers will be satisfied with the list of subjects examined, if we conclude with some consideration of the church and its relation to O.T. prophecy. By the church here we mean, of course, the church of the early Acts and Paul’s earlier epistles, and not the church of the One Body as revealed in Ephesians.

It is common knowledge that the word translated “church” is the Greek *ekklesia*, from *ek*, “out of”, and *kaleo*, “to call”. The term is used mainly in a New Testament setting, but Stephen does not hesitate to speak of the nation of Israel called out from Egypt in the fulfillment of God’s purposes as the “church in the wilderness” (Acts vii. 38). Stephen was fully justified in the choice of this word, for both the Septuagint Greek and the O.T. Hebrew contain the Greek and Hebrew equivalents in abundance.

The N.T. writers did not invent the title of the “church” neither did they invest it with entirely new attributes and associations. The meaning of the word will, therefore, be clearer if we examine some of its O.T. occurrences.

The Septuagint Version of the O.T. in Greek contains no less than 70 unquestioned occurrences of *ekklesia*, and there may be several more. There are also six occurrences

of the verb *ekklesiazō*, “to gather”, or “assemble”. The first occurrence of *ekklesia* is in Deut. iv. 10, where the verb *ekklesiazō* is also found. The word is usually translated in the English version of the LXX either “assembly” or “congregation”. In addition to the Book of Deuteronomy, the word is also found in Joshua, Judges, I Samuel, I Kings, I and II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Joel and Micah. It will be seen, therefore, that the word was in common use from the days when Israel were assembled before Moses, up to the time of Ezra, Nehemiah, and the prophets.

The word that the Greek translators had before them was the Hebrew *kahal*, “to call, to gather, to assemble”. It is not necessary to enumerate all the many occurrences, but we give a few that are outstanding.

“The whole *assembly* of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening” (Ex. xii. 6).

The exclusive nature of an *ekklesia* is illustrated in Neh. xiii. 1:

“On that day they read in the book of Moses in the audience of the people; and therein was found written that the Ammonite and the Moabite should not come into the *congregation* of God for ever.”

The Book of Genesis uses the word *kahal* in the following passage in chapter xxviii.:

“And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a *multitude* of people” (Gen. xxviii. 3).

The translation of *kahal* by “multitude” here is unwarranted. The A.V. itself bears this out, for, apart from the parallel passage in Gen. xlviii. 4, the word “multitude” is never again used as a rendering of *kahal*. The A.V. translators themselves were evidently not quite satisfied, for in the margin they give as an alternative, the word “assembly”. The second and third occurrences of *kahal* in Genesis are in Chapters xxxv. and xlviii.:

“A nation and a *company* of nations shall be of thee” (Gen. xxxv. 11).

“I will make of thee a *multitude* of people” (Gen. xlviii. 4).

These three passages in Genesis are three prophetic statements in connection with the blessing given to Jacob, who was also named Israel. However strange or improbable it may appear at first sight, these three passages constitute the foundation of every reference to the *ekklesia*, the “church”, in the Old or New Testaments. When, therefore, we read in Matt. xv. 24 that the Lord said: “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel”, and in xvi. 18: “Upon this rock I will build My church”, we do not feel under any necessity to modify the limitation of chapter xv. or to expand the exclusive company of chapter xvi. The “church” to which the Lord added daily, on and after the day of Pentecost, was an Israelitish assembly, as a reading of Acts ii. will show, and subsequent statements in the Acts will confirm (e.g., x. 28 and xi. 19). The inclusion of the saved Gentiles into the *ekklesia* was explained by James as being quite consistent with the testimony of the prophets (Acts xv. 14-18).

The LXX translators of Genesis do not use the word *ekklesia* to translate *kahal*, the “assembly” or “congregation”, but the word *synagogue*. We must never forget that the “church” began in the synagogue. After he was “separated” by the Holy Ghost at Antioch, we read that the Apostle “preached the word in the synagogue of the Jews” (Acts xiii. 5). Further on in the same chapter we read that “they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down” (Acts xiii. 14). Upon being invited to speak, the Apostle gave that wonderful address which contains the first positive statement in the N.T. concerning justification by faith (Acts xiii. 39). Moreover, when the Gentiles desired to hear more concerning this truth, it was to the synagogue that they had to go (Acts xiii. 42). Even though the Apostle turned from Israel in Acts xiii. 46, we find him in the very next city preaching in the synagogue (Acts xiv. 1). Not until we reach Acts xix. do we find the believers withdrawn from the synagogue and meeting on neutral ground (Acts xix. 8, 9).

In Paul’s own summary of his life in Acts xxii. we read:

“And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat *in every synagogue* them that believed on Thee” (Acts xxii. 19).

James also, who tells his hearers to call the Elders of the church, speaks of the synagogue as the place of worship (James. ii. 2; v. 14).

When, therefore, the Apostle confesses in Gal. i. 13 that “beyond measure I persecuted the church of God”, we must remember that that church, as the Acts of the Apostles shows, largely was associated with the synagogue, both of the land and of the dispersion. To-day in the light of the Mystery, the word “church” has taken upon it a higher meaning. The church of Ephesians was most certainly not within the range of Moses and the Prophets; but, while Israel as a nation stood before God, *there* was the *kahal*, the called-out people, the church of God, and while the hope of Israel remained, as it did until the end of the Acts (Acts xxviii. 20), there could be but one “assembly”, or “church”, and to this the Gentile believer was added.

We trust that the reader has by now satisfied himself that Paul meant exactly what he said in his defence before Agrippa. Should further and fuller confirmation be sought, let each reader take up the Book and examine its testimony. We do not fear the result. Not only did Paul say that he had not said anything outside the testimony of Moses and the Prophets, but he also said at the close of this first ministry:

“I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts xx. 27).

This, of course, did not mean that Paul had exhausted the mind of God; but simply that everything that had then been made known he had honestly and unreservedly declared.

In conclusion, may we say that we are grateful to the correspondent who originally challenged us on this question? Truth has nothing to fear from examination: the more it is investigated in the right spirit, the clearer it will become.

Notes and Jottings from an Old Bible.

#17. Affirmation. p. 19

The form of assent among the Jews was *Chen dibroth*, which becomes in the Greek *Su eipas*, "Thou hast said". There are instances in the Talmud of this usage, as for example:

"A certain man was asked, Is Rabbi dead? He answered, Ye have said it, on which they rent their clothes, taking it for granted from this answer that it was so."

The phrase, "Thou hast said", occurs in Matt. xxvi. 64:

"The High Priest answered and said unto Him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said" (*Su eipas*).

This passage is of importance because of its bearing upon Matt. xvi. 18. The A.V. and R.V. render the passage under notice, "Thou art Peter", the text reading *Su ei petros*, but since the days of Augustine and Jerome opinion has wavered as to whether the Lord did say, "Thou art Peter", or whether He replied as he did in Matt. xxvi., "Thou hast said".

It is a matter too technical for this short note, but after consulting the Retractions of Augustine and seeing the place that chapters xvi. and xxvi. occupy in the structure, the writer has come to the conclusion (the opinion is given for what it is worth) that in both cases the true reading is, "Thou hast said", and that instead of the church being built upon Peter, it is the great confession, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, which is the rock foundation of our faith. As in Matt. vii. 21, "sayings"—not persons—are the basis of the building.

#18. The First Word in Leviticus.

p. 180

The first word in Leviticus is in the Hebrew *Vayikra*: “And he called”, and it has one peculiarity that has attracted the attention of reader but has never been fully explained. The last letter of this word is the letter “A”, which is the Hebrew letter *Aleph*, and in all Hebrew MSS this letter is written considerably smaller than the rest. No explanation is given, but the feature is as old as the text itself. Aleph is the equivalent of Alpha in the Greek, and Lightfoot’s note is:

“It seemeth, by such a writing, to hint and intimate, that though this were a glorious oracle, yet was it small in comparison of what was to come, when God would speak to His people by His Own Son, Whom the ark, mercy seat, and oracle, did represent.”

#19. Ablutions demanded by the Law.

p. 180

Ceremonial washing, as symbols of purification, are reducible under four heads.

- (1) The cleansing necessary to initiate into a high office. The consecration of Aaron and his sons into the priestly office is an example (Lev. viii. 1-6).
- (2) The cleansing from contact with common life, in preparation for special ministry. The cleansing imposed upon the priest, on pain of death, before approaching the altar (Exod. xxx. 17-21; Psa. xxvi. 16).
- (3) The cleansing from defilement contracted in special circumstances, and so to be restored to normal. There are eleven kinds of uncleanness of this nature recognized by the law (Lev. xii.-xv.).
- (4) The cleansing or absolving of oneself publicly; the disavowal of complicity in some particular deed. There is an instance of this type of ablution in Deut. xxi. 1-9): “Our hands have not shed this blood.” Pilate’s action as recorded in Matt. xxvii. 24 also falls under this heading.

Allegory (Gal. iv. 24).
p. 206

It is sometimes urged by those who oppose the historic accuracy of the O.T. that even Paul admitted that the incident concerning Sarah and Hagar and the birth of Ishmael, was but an allegory. It is well to be accurate when dealing with the Word of God, and to remember that the Apostle did not say that the incidents themselves were “but allegories” but *ha tina estin allegoroumena* = “which is allegorizing”, i.e., referring to his own use of the historic incidents.

Occasional Meditations.

#3. The redemption of Christ.

Isaiah liii.

pp. 158, 159

“Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him—Jesus” (Acts viii. 35). May this be the Divine key-note of all our meditations, and particularly so in connection with this chapter of Isaiah. The word “arm” in verse 1 means “that which sows” or “the seed corn”—so that the passage *could* be translated, if the N.T. did not settle it for us, “the seed corn of the Lord”. In John xii. 38 we read: “That the saying of Esaias might be fulfilled And to whom hath the arm of the Lord revealed?” The connection between this quotation and John xii. 24 is worthy of notice. The same truth as is expressed in John xii. 24 is found in verse 10 of Isa. liii.: “He shall see His seed.”

A literal rendering of verse 5 would read:

“And He was being wounded because of our transgressions, He was being crushed because of our iniquities, the discipline connected with our peace—upon Him, and in His bruises there is a healing to us.”

His perfect sinlessness is declared in verse 9. Yet a righteous God is pleased to bruise Him (verse 10). Why is this? The answer is that His soul was made “*an offering for sin*”. Sin, not being *in* Him, was laid *upon* Him (verse 6). In other words, the One “Who knew no sin was made a sin-offering in the place of us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”.

Verses 11 and 12 give further light:

“Out of the travail of His soul He shall see and shall be satisfied. In His knowing (and feeling—the same word as ‘acquainted’ in verse 3) He shall cause a righteousness, the Righteous One, My Servant, for the many; and their iniquities as a burden He shall bear.”

In this verse we have: (1) The Lord as perfectly righteous, (2) His obedience as a Servant, so “making righteousness”, (3) “the many”—those for whom that substitutionary suffering was endured, and (4) the “bearing” of their sins.

In verse 12 we read:

“With a view to that which is fixed, I will evenly divide for Him among the many, and with strong ones He shall evenly divided the spoil; on account of which He poured out to death His soul, and with transgressors He was numbered, and the sin of many He bore as a sin-offering, and for transgressors He made a meeting” (or mercy seat).

In this verse we have set forth the joy of the Lord as well as His suffering (cf. Heb. xii. 1-3), for suffering and glory are always linked together. Because of His great atoning work, the kingdom is His, which is to be evenly divided among the many—in other words, every redeemed one must *enter* the kingdom by virtue of redemption. The division of the spoil is in the hands of Christ. He divides this among the strong—in other words, the overcomers, the faithful, the obedient. These not only have an entry into the kingdom, but an *abundant* entry (II Pet. i. 5-13); not only will they live with Christ, but they will also *reign* with Him in His kingdom.

The next sentences show a threefold aspect of the death of Christ: (1) He “poured out”—willingly; (2) He “was numbered”—representing what man thought, and still thinks, of Him; (3) He “bore”—the substitutionary work. The last words of the chapter: “*He made a meeting*”, should be full of comfort to every saved sinner. By His sacrifice those who were dead in sins are fitted to meet the living God. Unholy rebels are made fit to enter the courts of Heaven. Sinners who were far off have found in Him a meeting place, a “mercy seat”, where God still says: “There will I meet with you.” Reader—if you are a believer, rejoice, and seek to live as one for whom such wonderful blessings have been prepared. If, on the other hand, you feel, by grace, your need of a Saviour, and of a perfect righteousness—look into this chapter and “behold the Lamb of God”.

The powers that be.

*(Being a series of studies of Roman history,
and Roman laws and customs,
in so far as they throw light upon the N.T. narrative).*

#9. Herod the Great. pp. 1 - 5

When Herod received the governorship of Galilee from his father, He exhibited great skill and daring in putting down the brigands that infested the land, and succeeded in capturing and executing their leader Hezekiah, together with most of his followers. Now at this time Herod was a lieutenant to the High Priest, and the Sanhedrin, realizing that, if they let this usurpation by Herod of the Council's right in the matter of capital punishment go unquestioned, all semblance of their authority would vanish, summoned him to appear before them. Acting on the advice of Antipater he appeared, not as a humble suppliant, but surrounded with a life guard, haughty, self-confident, and with a purple robe partly concealing his bright armour. He made no apology, but produced an order from Sextius Cæsar to the Sanhedrin, telling them to acquit him. The Sanhedrin were overawed, and no word of condemnation was uttered, until the Nasi rebuked the assembly, prophesying that Herod in the day of his power would not pardon their action in calling him in question. Herod gathered together an army for his intended vengeance, but was dissuaded from further action by his father and his brother Phasael. Ten years later, however, he massacred the Sanhedrists, sparing only Shammai and Avtalion. Mark Anthony was now a power in the East (B.C.42) and Herod, by bribes, by his own fascinating personality, and by his reminders of his father's services to Cæsar, established himself in Anthony's friendship, throughout the remainder of his (Anthony's) life.

About this time Herod was made Tetrarch by Mark Anthony. During the same period, Antigonus, the younger son of Aristobolus II, was endeavouring to get his father's kingdom back again, and, aided by the Parthians, he entered and occupied Jerusalem. By a base plot, Phasael, Herod's brother, and the High Priest Hyrcanus were decoyed to Galilee, where they were thrown into prison. As the aged High Priest knelt at his feet for mercy, so the story runs, Antigonus himself actually "bit off the old man's ears" (*Hautos ta hota labatai tois hodousin*, Josephus B. J. i. 13, 9)—in order to incapacitate him for ever from acting as High Priest again. Phasael, realizing that the end had come, dashed his head against the prison wall, and so violent death claimed the next member of the Herod family.

Herod himself escaped from Jerusalem with his mother, his sister Salome, and the Asmonæan Princess Mariamne, his affianced bride. Arriving at Masada, a fortress on the Dead Sea, he at one time determined to follow his brother's example and commit suicide. After many perils, however, he succeeded in reaching Rome, where he was welcomed by both Octavian and Anthony. By what secret intrigues and bribes he succeeded will never be known, but he managed to gain such an ascendancy over the minds of both Octavian

and Anthony that they nominated him KING OF THE JEWS (A.D. 37). And all this was accomplished in a single week.

“Before the seven days were over, unintoxicated by his astounding success, unseduced by the splendours, luxuries and dissipations of Rome, he had rejoined his ships at Brindusium. He had come to Rome a bunted ruined exile; he left it with purple and diadem.”*

Upon returning to Palestine, war with Antigonus was renewed, and Herod’s brother Joseph was the next to die—this time in battle—his head being sent by Antigonus to Herod. In revenge, Herod defeated Antigonus’ general and sent his head to his (Herod’s) brother, Pheroras. So passed another of this bloodstained family.

While Jerusalem was besieged, Herod went to Samaria and was married to Mariamne, the descendant of the Asmonæan Princess. By this marriage Herod entertained high hopes of winning the approval of the Jews, but in this he was bitterly disappointed. Antigonus was taken captive at last, and was brought before the Roman general. He was then sent in chains to Anthony, and, upon being assured by Herod that troubles would continue if he were spared, Anthony had him first scourged and then beheaded.

Herod now put into operation his long-delayed vengeance upon the Sanhedrin, and a new period of blood and lust and terror began that it is difficult to parallel even in those terrible times. It was necessary that a High Priest should be appointed, and Herod chose an obscure Jew from Babylon named Hananell—who is sometimes identified with the Annas of the Gospels. Annas’ five sons, together with his son-in-law Caiaphas, each became in turn High Priest at Jerusalem. On hearing that certain Rabbis were discussing Deut. xvii. 15, which forbids a stranger being King, Herod had the whole number put to death except Baba ben Buta, whom he spared because he wanted his counsel, but whose eyes he had put out. There is a tradition that Baba counseled Herod to build the Temple in expiation of his crimes.

There are now entered into the life of Herod, a woman whose name is mainly associated with Mark Anthony—Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt. Alexandra, the descendant of the Asmonæan line, and the mother of Herod’s wife, Mariamne, regarded her son-in-law Herod as an Idumæan upstart, and began to urge her bosom friend Cleopatra to use her influence to bring about his downfall together with the replacement of Hananell by her own son Aristobolus.

[* - We are in great debt to Farrar’s book “The Herods” and all quotations in this series that are not followed by the author’s name, are taken from this work.]

At this time Mark Anthony sent for Aristobolus, and Herod, fearing the result of the presence of this handsome youth at court, deposed Hananell and made Aristobolus High Priest. He then became jealous of the popularity of Aristobolus, and had him drowned while entertaining him at his balsam gardens at Jericho. Cleopatra now induced Anthony to summon Herod to appear before him at Laodicea. Herod left instructions that, in the event of his death at the hands of Anthony, Mariamne should not be permitted to survive him. This instruction leaked out, and on his return from Laodicea, Mariamne charged him with it. In a paroxysm of fury Herod ran at her with his sword, ordered his slave to be executed, and Alexandra his mother-in-law to be flung into prison.

Anthony, in his mad infatuation, had given to Cleopatra the revenues of Greece, Cyprus, Phoenicia, Crete, Syria, Iturea and parts of Cilicia. Lysanius, the tetrarch of Abylene, was put to death, and the lease of his territory was given to Cleopatra. But still this “all-rapacious harlot” was unsatisfied. She wanted also the crown of Judæa, and had already secured the balsam gardens close to Herod’s capital, Jericho. She now visited Herod in prison, being confident that the glamour and fascination that had captivated Mark Anthony, would prove too strong for Herod. However, he resisted all her blandishments—which only made her the more relentless and furious. Fearing, therefore, that he would lose his Kingdom, he selected the fortress of Masada on the Dead Sea, stored it with provisions, and made it capable of receiving 10,000 men. Very soon, however, Octavian had beaten Mark Anthony, and Herod transferred his friendship to the victorious side. “The ever restless Alexandra, still nursing her plans of ambition and revenge, persuaded the poor, aged, deposed High Priest Hyrcanus to further her efforts”. The plot was discovered and Hyrcanus, sole survivor of the Princely Asmonæans, laid his head on the block at the age of eighty.

“The axe fell on the wrong neck. It would have been better for Herod, it would have saved him an iliad of future woes, if he had ordered the execution of the vile Alexandra instead of that of her blameless father, whom she had inveigled into her plans.”

Herod so impressed Octavian with his vigour and magnificent endowments that he bade him resume his crown, and returned to him the balsam gardens that had been given to Cleopatra, as well as many cities, including the fortress known as Strato’s Tower, which he turned into the splendid capital city of Cæsarea.

Further machinations by Alexandra led to the execution of her daughter Mariamne, Herod’s wife. No sooner, however, was Mariamne dead than remorse and regret preyed upon the king until he fell a victim to the pestilence that was raging at the time. On hearing of a further plot of Alexandra’s, however, he seemed to shake off his sickness, and ordered her execution. His day of peace, however, had passed. Another baneful woman was at work to accomplish further misery for Herod the Great.

Salome was already a grandmother, and growing tired of her second husband. She revealed to Herod the fact that Baba had concealed two youths of Maccabæan origin, with the result that further executions followed. “And so, through rivers of blood, Herod waded to his doom.”

We have still to deal with further facts of importance in connection with Herod—in relation to the birth of the Saviour, the building of the Temple, and other features—but as we do not wish to encroach on the space reserved for definite exposition, we will reserve these for our next article.

#10. Herod the Great (Concluded). **pp. 73 - 76**

The career of Herod the Great presents a strange alternation of splendid qualities, dazzling charm, outrageous sensuality, and appalling blood-lust. In the year B.C.25, a terrible famine swept away thousands of people, and the killing of the flocks left them without the means of making clothing. In these circumstances Herod displayed the most unsparing magnanimity. He sold the silver plate from his own table, he bought immense bales of wool and quantities of bread, and distributed seed-corn to prevent the failure of the subsequent harvest. Yet, at the same time, he loathed the Jews over whom he ruled, and while in some respects acting in a way calculated to win their allegiance, wounded their feelings very acutely by building heathen temples in Cæsarea and becoming a patron of the heathen games.

“If he had confined such exhibitions of his heathen proclivities to the many pagan or semi-pagan cities of his kingdom, the Jews might have tolerated and partially condoned his conduct. But their horror can better be imagined than described when, in defiance of their most cherished convictions, he built a theatre and an amphitheatre at Jerusalem itself (B.C.25).”

The criticism raised by the Pharisees over this question led to the torture and death of many families. And so the rule of blood continued.

In B.C.27 Herod married again. His new wife was also named Mariamne and was the daughter of a priest, named Simon. To give his new Queen more dignity, Herod deposed the existing High Priest, and replaced him by his father-in-law. However, instead of improving conditions by these actions, he only made them worse, for Simon incurred the hatred of the people by his greed and cruelty.

About this time Herod sent his two sons to Rome, where they were entrusted to the family of Pollio—to whom Virgil addressed the poem in which he anticipated that Pollio’s infant son might be the promised Messiah and bring in the golden age. They returned to Jerusalem in B.C.19 aged eighteen and nineteen. On their return, however, they spoke too freely about their mother’s execution, and were “imprudent enough to treat Pheroros and Cypros and Salome, the brother, and mother, and sister of Herod, as plebeians almost beneath their disdain”. Herod attempted to improve things by arranging for his two sons to marry. But this only made matters worse, for the wife of the elder son

treated Salome with contempt, and said that when her husband became king, he would reduce the whole Idumaeen family to the obscurity out of which they had emerged by their allegiance with the Asmonaeen princes.

Salome now played upon Herod's fears in connection with his past crimes, and poisoned his mind against his sons, whom she represented as being rivals for the throne. In order to remind his two sons that they had an elder brother, Herod took back his divorced wife Doris, and summoned his son, Antipater, back to the court.

“Antipater soon showed himself to be even worse than Salome—‘a mystery of iniquity’—a demon incarnate of villainy and guile. None but an oriental of the worst nature, exacerbated by past wrongs, and with his heart swollen to bursting with venomous hate and inordinate ambition, could possibly have played with such infernal skill the part which Antipater now assumed.”

In B.C.13 Antipater was sent to Rome to receive the same advantages as his brothers had enjoyed. “By his letters and subtle insinuations, he brought the weary king to such a state of frenzy as at last induced him to sail to Rome with his two sons, with the intention of procuring their punishment at the hands of Augustus.” Nothing but the good sense of Augustus saved them, and disentangled the web of lies that had been woven around them. Back again at Jerusalem, however, the villainy of Antipater soon accomplished their ruin. Slaves were tortured and made to “confess”, what was required of them, and as a result the elder son Alexander was thrown into prison. From prison Alexander wrote a letter involving Salome and the whole court.

About this time, in enforcing his demands against the Arabians, Herod overstepped the mark and incurred a reprimand from Augustus. At the same time he again petitioned Augustus for leave to put his two sons to death—a letter that cost Herod a kingdom. The two sons were soon after strangled, in the place where Herod had married their mother. An old soldier named Teron, and three hundred others, were executed for raising a protest. When Augustus heard of it, he said that he would greatly prefer to be Herod's pig (*hus*) rather than Herod's son (*huios*). This saying Macrobius associates with the massacre of the infants at Bethlehem.

The wheels that work within wheels now bring together the sect of the Pharisees, the growing expectation of a Messiah even in the heathen world, and the family affairs of Herod. Pheroros, Herod's brother, was a Pharisee, and the Pharisees had wished to make him king. About this time Pheroros fell ill and was visited by Herod. Touched by this visit, he ordered his wife to fling into the fire the poison that Antipater had supplied for Herod's murder. Doris was accused, and the slaves of Pheroros tortured. Pheroros' wife confessed, and flung herself from the roof of the palace. The fall, however, did not prove fatal, and she confessed to Herod about the poison. When it was discovered that Mariamne had been in the plot, she was divorced, her father the High Priest deposed, and Matthias made High Priest in his place. Doris sent a secret letter warning Antipater, but the slaves conveying it were caught.

“With the shadow of a haunted midnight creeping over his icy heart, he sullenly rode on to Jerusalem. When he arrived he boldly advanced to salute his father, who met him with the stern words:

‘Even this marks a parricide, to wish to get me into his arms, while under such heinous accusations! God confound thee, vile wretch! Touch me not, till thou hast cleared thyself.’”

A forged letter incriminating Salome was found in the possession of Antipater’s slaves, and Herod was now haunted by the thought that the letters that had led to the death of his two sons might have been forged also. What a nightmare of blood and intrigue!

Herod now sank into a veritable Gehenna of misery:

“The distemper seized his whole body, and greatly disordered all its parts with various symptoms” (*Josephus*).

He was carried back from Jericho to Jerusalem, and there “in his madness, he ordered Salome to summon all the chiefs of the Jews, to have them shut up in the Hippodrome, and then to send his soldiers and massacre them all, that his funeral might be accomplished with the genuine lamentations of the whole people who hated him”. His son Antipater, believing that Herod was dead, bribed the jailor, with immense promises, to set him free. On hearing of this, Herod roared with a terrible voice, “Then kill him at once, and bury him ignobly in the Hyrcanium”. Five days later Herod himself died. We are glad to record that, on the order of Salome, the Jewish nobles were set free from the Hippodrome.

Such was the state of affairs when there was born at Bethlehem the infant Christ.

“In the very year stained by the tragic abominations which we have narrated, the angels sang above His cradle their divine song of ‘Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, goodwill toward men’.”

#11. The Remaining Members of Herod's House. pp. 112 - 116

Unless the reader is already acquainted with the history of these times, it will probably come as a surprise to him to discover how much the affairs of the Roman Empire, often linked with some of the greatest names of the period, became interwoven with the fortunes of the Herods and those of the Jewish nation. By ways that were often devious and dark, these men prepared the background upon which the supreme miracle of the ages was to be enacted. While our chief concern will always be this miracle of love, an acquaintance with the historic background cannot but help to enhance its teaching and reveal its character. We have so far devoted two short articles to the tragedy of Herod the Great. We are only too conscious of the scrappy reading that such a compressed account must make, but we must now pass on to some consideration of the successors to that blood-stained throne.

At various times Herod had made and cancelled a number of wills. At one time he had bequeathed his entire kingdom to Philip, the son of Mariamne, daughter of Simon the Priest, but finally he appointed Archelaus to be King of Judaea with Samaria and Iturea, Antipas to be Tetrarch of Galilee and Peraea, and Philip to be Tetrarch of Trachonitus. Of the administration of Archelaus Josephus writes that Judaea was left a prey to ten thousand disorders, and we can well understand the words of Matt. ii. 22:

“But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither.”

On account of his cruelty and his marriage with his brother's widow, Archelaus was deposed and banished to Vienne in Gaul. There is a tradition that his journey to Rome to receive the kingdom was the basis of the Lord's parable of the nobleman in Luke xix. If so, it shows how deep an impression the hatred of this man had made upon the minds of the people, for the Jews sent a message after him to Rome saying, in effect, “We will not have this man to reign over us”.

With the passing of Archelaus, kingship departed from Judaea, and a Roman Procurator, such as Pilate or Felix, took the place of the King of the Jews. As Archelaus does not appear in the Scriptural record, except in Matt. ii., we must pass on to other characters.

Students of Scripture often confuse Philip I, the son of Herod the Great and the second Mariamne, and Philip the Tetrarch, the son of Cleopatra of Jerusalem (not to be confused with Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt). Philip I lived and died without occupying an official position, and only comes into the pages of Scripture at all on account of the abduction of his ambitious wife Herodias by his half-brother, Herod Antipas (Matt. xiv. 3).

Philip the Tetrarch provides a refreshing contrast to the general character of Herod's family, keeping aloof from the family intrigues, and discharging his duties faithfully. For 37 years he devoted himself to the well-being of his dominion and people, and died without issue in A.D.34 at Bethsaiada Julius—a city which he named after the profligate daughter of Augustus. He also rebuilt Paneas, calling it Cæsarea Philippi.

Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch, occupies a more conspicuous place in the N.T. It was this man to whom the Lord referred as “that fox” in Luke xiii. 32, and whom John the Baptist rebuked. He it was also who granted Salome's request for John's head in a charger, and to whom the Saviour was sent by Pilate at the time of His trial. His great friend was the Emperor Tiberius, in whose honour he built the city called Tiberias, on the shores of the Lake of Galilee. The building of this city brought Herod into conflict with the Jews, for in digging the foundations the workmen came across an old cemetery. The Rabbis therefore pronounced the site unclean, so that no Jew could enter or leave it without seven days purification.

Another fact that should be mentioned in connection with Herod is that he began an adulterous intrigue with Herodias, his brother's wife, promising to divorce his Arabian wife, and marry Herodias. This naturally caused ill-feeling between Herod and the country of his wife's people at Petra.

We shall have to say more about Herod in connection with the Lord's trial, when we come to deal with Roman law, but for the moment, after a few brief notes concerning his end, we must pass on to other members of the same family.

At the death of Tiberius, Caligula, who was a great friend of Herod's half-brother, Agrippa, made him (Agrippa) king. Herodias was fiercely indignant to think that one who had depended upon their charity for his very bread, should have surpassed them in honour and dignity, and she therefore urged her husband to go to Rome and beg for kingship himself. He was followed, however, by a freedman of Agrippa, who charged him with planning rebellion, and made great capital out of the fact that Herod had accumulated enough arms to equip 70,000 men. As a result of these representations Caligula bestowed the wealth and tetrarchy upon Agrippa and banished Herod to Lyons (A.D.39). With all her crime and passion, Herodias demands of us at this point the acknowledgment of one act that was magnanimous. Hearing that Herodias was Agrippa's sister, Caligula restored to her own possessions and exempted her from exile. She replied, however: “It is not just that I, who have been partner in his prosperity, should forsake him in his misfortunes” and so she went into exile with the man whom she had virtually ruined.

The life story of Herod Agrippa is a romantic one, passing rapidly “from squalor to splendour”. At one time he is loaded with wealth; at another, his poverty prompts him to suicide. Some idea of the marriage tangle that seems to be characteristic of Herod's family, can be gathered from Farrar's attempt to define his relationships. “Agrippa, son of two first cousins, married another cousin, the daughter of his own aunt, who had married her uncle.” During the reign of Tiberius Herod was under suspicion, and was

kept in prison for six months. On the death of Tiberius, Caligula released him, and bestowed upon him the tetrarchies belonging to Philip and Lysanius. He was also given the title of King, and a gold chain of weight equal to that of the iron one with which he had been fettered by Tiberius.

Caligula, the maniac (Volume XXVIII, page 50) infuriated the Jews by ordering that his statue should be put in the Holy of Holies at Jerusalem. To his lasting credit, however, Agrippa succeeded, not without some risk, in dissuading the mad Emperor from this act. Later, when Rome was thrown into confusion by the death of Caligula, Agrippa was summoned to the Senate, whose sympathies were in favour of restoring the Republic. "With oriental subtleness he professed to fall in with their plans, but told them that they would require an army he advised them to send for Claudius, requesting him to refuse the diadem." Herod, however, privately informed Claudius of the timidity of the Senate, advising him to claim the throne, but to promise a mild and equitable government. To Herod Agrippa, more than to any other man, Claudius owed his succession to the throne of the Caesars. The edicts in favour of the Jews resulting from the friendship between Claudius and Agrippa we have already referred to in Volume XXVIII, pages 50-54.

Agrippa's policy now was to "please the Jews". To this end he acted as a zealous Jew, and was responsible for the execution of the apostle James, and the imprisonment of Peter. Josephus says that he lived at Jerusalem, kept himself entirely pure, and offered every day his appointed sacrifice; while the Mishna records that he paid his first-fruits, like any other Israelite, taking his basket on his shoulder. The way in which Herod died is recorded in Acts xii. His age was 54, and he left three daughters, Mariamne, Bernice and Drusilla, and one son, afterwards Agrippa II.

After Herod's death Claudius was inclined to give the Kingdom of Judæa to Herod's son, Agrippa II, but he was persuaded to defer this, in view of the fact that he was only seventeen years of age. Fadus was actually in charge at the time of the famine mentioned in Acts xi. 28. In A.D.50 Agrippa II was promoted by Claudius to the kingdom and also made Keeper of the Temple. Two years later he was given the title of King (Acts xxvi. 2).

Agrippa was inseparable from his sister Bernice, and there were rumours among the Jews that their attachment was by no means innocent. It was before this king and his sister that Paul made his memorable defence.

About this time Agrippa offended the Jews very much by building a lofty chamber which overlooked the courts of the Temple. In reply to this, the Jews erected a wall between the Palace and the Temple, which not only obstructed Agrippa's view, but interfered with the supervision of the Roman guard. Agrippa and Festus ordered the wall to be demolished, but the Jews appealed to Nero. The High Priest, accompanied by ten deputies, went to Rome, and, by the favour of Poppæa (Volume XXVIII, pages 85-87), they granted their suit, but were detained in Rome as hostages.

Agrippa did his utmost to make the Jews see the folly of opposing the trained armies of Rome, but all in vain. The populace became maddened at the mention of the hated Procurator Florius (just as the Jews had become inflamed at the mention of the word "Gentiles" by Paul in Acts xxii. 21, 22), and broke out into curses. From cursing Florius, they passed to cursing Agrippa, throwing stones, and ordering him to leave the city. So began the Jewish war, which was to end with the destruction of the Temple, and the scattering of Israel. Throughout the whole war Agrippa remained with the Romans. In A.D.75 he went to live at Rome, with his sister Bernice, whom Tiberius would have made Empress, if he had not been deterred by the open murmurs of the Romans.

When Josephus published his "Wars of the Jews" he sent a copy to Agrippa, and the King congratulated him on the accuracy of his narrative. The work of Josephus is a mine rich in incidents during these eventful years, and he has proved to be a very faithful historian. Practically all that we have written so far in this series has been derived from Josephus, although we have taken much at second-hand from books by Farrar, S. Buss, Conybeare and Howson, Lewin and others.

With Agrippa II, the man who was "almost persuaded to become a Christian", the Asmonæans and the Herods disappear from the pages of history. The last of the line, Agrippa's nephew, perished as we have already seen in the eruption of Vesuvius.

#12. Herod's Temple. pp. 153 - 156

We have already spoken of the appalling bloodshed associated with the reign of Herod the Great, and we must now, by contrast, refer briefly to some of his public acts of a more constructive kind.

Herod was so well regarded in Rome, that he was permitted to extend his frontiers "to the widest limits ever dreamed of by Solomon". As King of Judæa, he had an acknowledged precedence over all but the very greatest of the Oriental kings. He protected his subjects from the inroads of Bedouin marauders, and put down with a strong hand the bandits that infested the region of Galilee and Trachonitis. He surrounded the whole of Palestine with castles and fortified towers. He shook "an inexhaustible cornucopia, filled with gifts, over the heathen world, building gymnasia in Tripolis, Damascus, Ptolemais and Nicopolis; theatres in Damascus and Sidon; an aqueduct in Laodicea; baths in Ascalon; temples in Tyre and Rhodes; colonnades in Tyre and Antioch. The towns of Byblos and Berytus owed to him their city walls. Athens, Sparta, Nicopolis, Pergamum, and Cos received ostentatious donations or prizes for their games; and had it not been for his permanent and regal endowment, the ancient and famous Olympic contests would probably have come to an end" (*Hausruth*). When he came into power, he found the harbour and Stratos Tower silted up; after twelve years of labour, he left a splendid breakwater and harbour. The city was renamed Cæsarea, and

was equipped with a most carefully planned sanitation scheme that was centuries ahead of Eastern systems. At Jerusalem, he built a palace, in the praetorium of which the Saviour was questioned by Pontius Pilate, and finally, he also rebuilt the Temple of Jerusalem in a style whose magnificence baffles description.

Herod had a passion for personal glory, and he was mortified to realize that the Jews still hated him as an Edomite usurper. Rabbi Baba, whose life had been spared, but whose eyes had been put out (see pages 1 to 5 of this Volume), is said by the Talmud to have suggested to Herod the rebuilding of the Temple as a means of expiating his many crimes. The Jews raised endless objections, however, to the proposal, "Where was the necessary wealth?" Herod pointed to his apparently inexhaustible treasury. "Would it not be sacrilege to pull down that venerated structure?" Herod point out that it was fast crumbling with decay. "What guarantee was there that he could build another?" Herod pledged himself that nothing should be touched of the ancient Temple, until everything was ready for the erection of the new. "Would it not be sacrilege to let Gentiles enter the Court of the Priests, or to touch the stone and timber of the Holy of Holies?" Herod undertook to train a thousand priests, and ten thousand Jewish artisans. All objections were overborne and the work commenced.

After eight years' work, the old Temple had been taken down, and for another eighteen months, the trained priests worked at the erection of the Holy Place. Herod was most careful to pay regard to the scruples of the Pharisees, and, though the building of the Temple had emptied his treasury, he never once set foot within the forbidden precincts.

In the Royal Portico were four rows of Corinthians columns, 162 in number, 27 feet high, and so thick that it took three men with outstretched arms to encircle them. One of the marble slabs bearing the Greek inscription that prohibited the Gentile from access (the "middle wall of partition" of Eph. ii.) was found in recent years in Jerusalem. The Gate of Nicavor was of Corinthian Brass, and was approached by fifteen semi-circular steps, while in the Great Court was the "Hall of Squares" where the Sanhedrin met. Over another gate was a golden vine, each cluster of grapes being as high as a man. Within hung the veil, which was "rent in twain" at the crucifixion.

The Rabbis speak of the wonders of this building with exaggerated praised:

"Whoever has not seen the Temple in the perfection of its architecture has never seen a beautiful structure in all the world. With what materials did Herod erect the building? Rava said with alabaster and marble; some say with alabaster, stibium and marble; one row receding, another slightly projecting. Herod thought of covering the whole with gold, but the Rabbis advised him to leave it as it was, as it resembled the waves of the sea" (*Succah f. v. i. 2*).

No wonder the disciples said, "See what manner of stones and what buildings are here!" (Mark xiii. 1). Its gilded pinnacles and lustrous Pentelic marble made it look like a mountain of snow tinged at the summit with the gold of dawn. It has been described as longer and higher than York Minster, standing on a solid mass of masonry almost equal in height to the tallest of our church spires. We can well understand the astonishment

with which the Jews must have heard the Lord's words: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again."

Herod's evil genius, however, led him to mar his gift and rouse against him the bitter resentment of the Jews. In order to attract the notice of the Roman Agrippa (not to be confused with Herod of that name) he placed over the great gate of the Temple a large golden eagle, emblematic of the power of Rome. This action caused the Jews to curse the very name of Herod, and all his munificence was wasted.

The Temple had been in process of building for 46 years when our Saviour opened His ministry, but it was not actually finished until A.D.65, although 18,000 men were constantly employed on the work. What an immense labour, and yet how soon destroyed—for within 6 years of its completion. Titus had left it a desolation.

The reader who realizes the importance of some knowledge of these Roman Emperors and Idumean Kings should not rest satisfied with the meagre notes that we must necessarily be content with in these articles. Josephus should be studied, and the great histories of the past; while a modern contribution in lighter vein is provided by the two historical novels by R. Graves, "I, Claudius" and "Claudius the god". These are very illuminating, and cover a great deal of the ground traversed in this series.

We must now turn our attention to other points of interest that come under the general heading of "The Powers that be".

#13. The Roman Provinces. pp. 234 - 238

The recognition of Roman authority in the N.T. is clearly seen in several ways. For example, we find references to Roman provinces and colonies, and to the various kinds of rulers—proconsuls, procurators, tetrarchs, etc. We also find the Jews discussing the question of tribute, and there are references to "publicans", or tax-gatherers. Having devoted some space now to the history of the Roman Emperors and the Herods, let us next consider briefly the Roman provinces.

We feel fairly certain that unless the reader has already considered the matter, he will have no idea how many of these Roman provinces are mentioned in the N.T. The etymology of the word "province" is unknown. Some derive it from *pro* and *vincere*, "to push forward"; others from *proventus*, "a country paying tax to a ruling state"; and yet others to *providentia*, "a country entrusted to the care of someone". The meaning of the term, however, is quite clear, whatever may be its etymology. In Roman history, a province was a dominion, and was administered by a governor sent from Rome. The first province was Sicily, which was ceded to Italy in B.C.240. The land was the property of the Roman people and Senate, and the inhabitants paid tithes of their produce. There was

no land-tax in Italy itself, but a tax was payable on any land that remained the property of a provincial.

In B.C.129 Attalus bequeathed his kingdom of Pergamos to Rome, and this became the province of Asia. “The Province” was the name given to Transalpine Gaul, and this is still retained in the name “Provence”. In the days of Julius Cæsar there were fourteen provinces, seven in Europe, five in Asia, and two in Africa; and by B.C.27, when Augustus partitioned the empire between himself and the Senate, there were twenty-four. The *provinciae Caesaræ* were controlled by governors representing the Emperor, bearing the title *legæ* or *propraetor*, while the *provinciae Senatoriæ* were administered by representatives of the Senate, called *proconsuls*. Augustus himself retained control of frontier provinces, partly because many of them were wealthy. It is interesting to note, in passing, that the only fresh province acquired by Rome during the first century of the Christian era, was the province of Britain.

Josephus uses the title “President” when speaking of the *propraetors*, while Luke often uses the more general title *hegemon*—which he applies to the legate Cyrenius, to the procurator Felix, and to the Emperor himself (Luke ii. 2 and iii. 1; Acts xxiii. 33). The procurators, as for instance Pilate and Felix, were appointed by the Emperor over subordinate districts—Judæa, for example, being a dependency of the larger province of Syria. Luke never makes a mistake in his choice of terms. Cyprus, Achaia and Asia, for example, were senatorial provinces, under the jurisdiction of proconsuls. The A.V. translates the word used by Luke “deputy”, but the R.V. more correctly renders it in some of its occurrences as “proconsul”.

With regard to finance, the revenue from the imperial provinces was called *tributum*, while that from the senatorial provinces was called *stipendium*. The Emperor, moreover, received additional revenue by virtue of taxes levied on legacies and inheritances, excise duty on goods for sale, a “bachelor’s tax”, etc. The regulations introduced by Augustus were most beneficial for the provinces, for before his time, the collector of taxes was little less than a robber.

“It is attested by Cicero that the arrival of a governor, even in a peaceful province, was little different from the entrance of a victorious army into the country of a vanquished enemy. Even men who were of good repute for their humanity, returned to Rome with almost incredible sums of money after they had been in a province for some years. What the governors left undone was completed by usurers and the farmers of the public revenue” (*Schmitz*).

The reader will remember that Felix expected to get money from Paul and his friends, and Zacchæus, the tax-gatherer, speaks, after his conversion, of refunding with interest if he had taken more than his due. The words of the Pharisee in the parable: “I am not an extortioner or even as this publican”, and the advice of John the Baptist to the publicans to “exact no more than is appointed you” go to show how prevalent this evil had become.

From time to time exchanges were made with regard to the provinces between the Emperor and the Senate. These exchanges complicate the work of the historian considerably, but they serve to demonstrate Luke's accuracy as a recorder of fact. For example, Cyprus was originally an imperial province, but was later exchanged for Dalmatia, and when Paul visited it, was senatorial, with Sergius Paulus as pro-consul. On this subject we are much indebted to the writings of Septimus Buss, and the following is an abbreviation of his more elaborate list of Roman Provinces with Scripture references.

Embraced in Syria.

JUDÆA.—Matt. ii. 1; Luke iii. 1; Acts xxviii. 21; Rom. xv. 31.
SAMARIA.—Matt. x. 5; Luke xvii. 11; Acts i. 8; viii. 1.
GALILEE.—Matt. ii. 22; Luke iii. 1; xxiii. 6; Acts ix. 31.
PHENICE.—Acts xi. 19; xv. 3; xxi. 2; xxvii. 12.
SYROPHOENICIA.—Mark vii. 26.
SYRIA.—Matt. iv. 24; Luke ii. 2; Acts xv. 23, 41; Gal. i. 21.

Embraced in Asia.

CILICIA.—Acts vi. 9; xv. 23, 41; xxi. 39.
PAMPHYLIA.—Acts ii. 10; xiii. 13; xv. 38; xxvii. 5.
LYCIA.—Acts xxvii. 5.
ASIA.—Acts ii. 9; vi. 9; II Tim. i. 15; I Pet. i. 1; Rev. i. 4.
BYTHINIA.—Acts xvi. 7; I Pet. i. 1.
PONTUS.—Acts ii. 9; xviii. 2; I Pet. i. 1.
GALATIA.—Acts xvi. 6; xviii. 23; Gal. i. 2; I Pet. i. 1.
PHRYGIA.—Acts ii. 10; xvi. 6; xviii. 23.
CAPPADOCIA.—Acts ii. 9; I Pet. i. 1.
CYPRUS.—Acts iv. 36; xi. 19, 20; xiii. 4; xxvii. 4.
CRETE.—Acts ii. 11; xxvii. 7, 12; Titus i. 5.
PARTHIANS, MEDES, ELAMITES, dwellers in MESOPOTAMIA.—Acts ii. 9.
ARABIA.—Mark iii. 8; Acts ii. 11; Gal. i. 17.
SCYTHIA.—Col. iii. 11.

Embraced in Egypt.

MACEDONIA.—Acts xvi. 9, 10, 12; Rom. xv. 26; I Tim. i. 3.
ACHAIA.—Acts xviii. 12, 27; Rom. xv. 26; I Thess. i. 7, 8.
ILLYRICUM.—Rom. xv. 19.
DALMATIA.—II Tim. iv. 10.
SICILY.—Acts xxviii. 12.
SPAIN.—Rom. xv. 24, 28.

North Coast of Africa.

CYRENE.—Matt. xxvii. 32; Acts ii. 10; vi. 9; xiii. 1.
LYBIA.—Acts ii. 10.
EGYPT.—Matt. ii. 13; Acts ii. 10.

The student of Scripture who has endeavoured to "place" Galatia and the epistle to the Galatians, will have experienced considerable difficulty in getting anything like harmony.

To-day, however, thanks to the researches of Sir William Ramsay, we are in possession of the facts that reveal the extent of the Galatian Province, and we now know that the churches founded in Acts xiii. and xiv. at Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, were the original churches of Galatia. The testimonies of Ptolemy and Tacitus, together with the evidence provided by the monuments, make it quite clear that it is the larger province of Galatia, and not the small and original kingdom of Galatia, that is referred to in the N.T.

The two maps given below show the relative positions of the earlier kingdom and the later province, in relation to the missionary journey of Acts xiii. and xiv.

- - - Illustration - - - (BE-XXIX.237).

We will conclude this account of the Roman Provinces with a note on Egypt, as the “Granary” of Rome. The corn vessels sailed from Alexandria to Puteoli, occupying about 12 days on the voyage. In such a vessel Paul sailed from Melita to Puteoli as recorded in Acts xxviii. 11-13. The governor of Egypt ranked above all other rulers of provinces, being styled *Praefectus Augustatis*; and it was from Egypt that Herod obtained supplies of corn during the famine that prevailed in Judæa.

We trust that the reader has caught something of the character and atmosphere of this extensive empire, in which the gospel was first proclaimed in the days of Augustus and Tiberius. Anyone who wishes to follow up this study further is recommended to read “The Church in the Roman Empire” by Sir William Ramsay. In this book the author seeks to prove that Paul planned his itinerary along the lines of Roman development, and conceived of the Roman Empire particularly as the first great field for evangelization. Whatever view one may hold as to the corrections of this theory, it is certainly true that the trend of the gospel was Westward rather than to the East, and that Paul planted his footsteps, not in obscure and out-of-the-way places, but in the chief cities and colonies of the Empire.

The Epistle to the Romans.

#74. Romans xii. and xiii. “Vengeance” and “The Powers That be” (xii. 17 - xiii. 7). pp. 29 - 34

We now arrive at the central section of Rom. xii. and xiii. with its emphasis upon “vengeance” and “civil rule”. For the place this section occupies in the main structure, the reader is referred to Volume XXVIII, page 191.

Romans xii. 17 - xiii. 7. Vengeance.

C | xii. 17 - xiii. 7. “Coals of fire” or “The sword”.
e | l | xii. 17. *Recompense* no man evil.
m | 17. *Provide* things honest.
f | n | 18-21. *Vengeance*. Coals of fire.
o | xiii. 1. Be subject.
n | 2-4. *Revenger*. The sword.
o | 5. Be subject.
e | m | 6. *Pay* tribute.
l | 7. *Render* to all their dues.

The exhortations of the Apostle, from verse 10 onwards, have been mainly concerned with the believer’s attitude towards those within the sphere of grace. At verse 17, however, where our new section starts, he turns his attention to the attitude which should be manifested by the Christian towards those that are without. Immediately the outside circle is brought into view a note of evil is struck, and the question of vengeance introduced. The problem of the Christian’s right attitude towards his enemies and towards civil government has now to be faced. To appreciate this problem in its true setting involves a very considerable knowledge of Roman history. To attempt the briefest synopsis here, would, however, hold up our studies far too much, and we must therefore refer the interested reader to the series under the general heading: “*The Powers That Be*.” This series forms a kind of supplement to our studies in the Acts and Romans, and deals with “Roman history, and Roman laws and customs, in so far as they throw light upon the N.T. narrative”. By arranging the articles in this way, those who are not specially interested will not have the studies in the Acts and Romans impeded, while those who *are*, will, we trust, find them valuable sidelights on the many passages that refer, either pointedly or remotely, to the historical events taking place at the time of writing.

It had been a most perplexing question among the Jews, as to how far they should recognize the sovereignty of a pagan ruler. The Law of Moses reads:

“Thou shalt in any wise set him King over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set King over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother” (Deut. xvii. 15).

One of the twelve apostles is referred to as “Simon the Canaanite” in Matt. x. 4; and “Simon Zelotes” in Acts i. 13. These titles do not imply that Simon was a Canaanite in the sense of belonging to the nations devoted to destruction at the time of Joshua, but rather that he was one whose watchword was “Palestine for Israel, and down with the oppressor”. Hence he is also named “The Zealot”.

The believing Jew would have many qualms of conscience concerning the right attitude to be adopted toward pagan kings and governors. The converted idolater also was troubled, as a perusal of I Corinthians will show, particularly with regard to possible complicity with the idolatry from which he had been delivered.

In Acts iv., we read that Peter and those with him said to the rulers who threatened them:

“Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts iv. 19, 20).

Paul also gives us a splendid example of uncompromising loyalty to the Lord, and we must therefore give earnest heed to the tempered and gentle spirit that pervades his admonitions on this thorny question. If the passage is read through as a whole, it will be seen that the Apostle does not by any means suggest an abject submission to civil rule whatever its demands. There is to be no prostration of the conscience before any successor to Nebuchadnezzar’s image, even though that image be now called “The State” or even “The Church by law established”. What the Apostle maintains is that no Christian is justified in opposing government, or in having the remotest connection with sedition or rebellion. He cannot be an agitator, or march under the banner of any company, whatever may be its grievance; neither must he fail to comply with the just demands for tribute, custom, fear or honour, that necessarily accompany organized government. And so we read: “Recompense”, “provide”, “live peaceably”, “be subject”, “pay”, “render”.

“Recompense to no man evil for evil” (Rom. xii. 17).—If we walk according to the flesh, we shall find ourselves acting in a way which is quite contrary to this principle. Under the law, it was possible to exact “an eye for an eye”; but under grace we are called upon to love our enemies—a command more easily written and read than fulfilled, and yet one which lies at the very root of all true Christian living. In the same verse the Apostle continues: “Provide things honest in the sight of all men.” The English word “provision” is made up of “pro”, before, and vision”, to see—and so, to see a need beforehand and make all necessary arrangements to meet it. The Greek word *pronoëo* is made up in exactly the same way—*pro*, “before”, and *noëo*, “to perceive”. Rendered literally, the passage would read: “Provide beautiful things in the face of all men”, referring to the truly beautiful spirit that suffers without threatening or reprisal, confiding

its cause, as in the case of the Lord Himself, into the hands of Him Who judgeth righteously.

The next item of exhortation is accompanied by an element of reserve and qualification:

“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men’ (Rom. xii. 18).

It is evident that the Apostle recognizes here that living peaceably with all men, in a world that does not know God, is not always possible. The point is, that, so far as we are concerned, the quarrel or the strife must not originate on our side. We must be willing, for the sake of peace, to yield, where the law entitles us to enforce our rights. On the other hand, where our stewardship is involved, or our loyalty to the Lord, we must, of course, refuse to pay the traitor’s price for a so-called peace. We can settle most cases of conscience by remembering that, if it be a matter of our “rights”, we can gladly forego them for His sake, but if it be a matter of “His truth”, we have no option but to stand fast. That something like this is in the Apostle’s mind seems evident from the next statement:

“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is Mine: I will repay saith the Lord’ (Rom. xii. 19).

It has been suggested that, by the words; “Give place unto wrath”, the Apostle implies that we should give it room to spend itself, as a mariner does a storm. In Eph. iv. 27, he warns us against giving place to the Devil by entertaining sinful anger. So here, the Apostle seems to say, Give place to God, Who alone has the prerogative of vengeance. If vengeance is to fall, then it will come from the hand of God, but the believer should labour and pray that his enemy should, on the contrary be saved—so that, instead of recompensing evil with evil, he should seek to overcome evil with good. If his enemy is hungry, instead of letting him starve, he will go out of his way to feed him—for, in so doing, he will “heaps coals of fire on his head”.

What are we to understand by this figure? In Psalm. cxl. 9, 10 we read:

“As for the head of those that compass me about, let the mischief of their own lips cover them. Let burning coals fall upon them: let them be cast into the fire; into deep pits, that they rise not up again.”

This is just the opposite of the spirit manifested in Rom. xii., where the Apostle is quoting from Prov. xxv. 21, 22. Dr. Bullinger, in “Figures of Speech”, draws attention to the fact that the word “heap” means “to take hold”, and that an ellipsis must be supplied as follows:

“The coals of fire which thine enemy casts at thee, thou shalt take them and put them upon his head: he will thus get what he intended for thee.”

The latter part of this comment is modified in *The Companion Bible*, where we read:

“If thou doest good to one whose burning words (xvi. 27, xxvi. 23) thou hast received, they will burn him in another sense. Illustration David (I Sam. xxiv. 16-22).”

This is much more in harmony with the teaching of Rom. xii. The unexpected return of good for evil will, it is hoped, in many cases bring about shame and contrition, so that the persecutor may become a believer, and the persecuted one the true victor, overcoming evil with good.

Coming now to Rom. xiii., and its teaching concerning human government, we must remember that Nebuchadnezzar did not attain his authority over the earth, merely as an act of vain-glory, or by force alone. He undoubtedly was a powerful warrior and was not lacking in vanity, but it is also written:

“And the Lord gave Jehoiakim, King of Judah, into his hand” (Dan. i. 2).

“Thou, O King, art a King of Kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, strength, and glory and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold” (Dan. ii. 37, 38).

When the Apostle wrote the epistle to the Romans, Babylon had been succeeded by Persia, Persia by Greece, and Greece by Rome; nevertheless, Paul and Daniel say much the same thing, for human government was still under God’s control. While many of the rulers of the Roman world were unscrupulous, mean, and licentious, this fact did not in any way justify a Christian’s resisting the authority that they represented. These rulers were responsible to God for the way in which they used their authority, but it was no business of the Christian to interfere. Even our Lord paid tribute, and spoke of “rendering to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s”.

“We must needs be subject”, says the Apostle, “not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake”. Many are obedient out of fear, who would rebel if the cause of fear were to be removed. There are many who are respectable citizens, not because of positive and formative volition, but because of the negative and enslaving power of fear. The Christian must always act “for conscience sake”, whether he obeys the voice of authority, or decides that it is right to disobey it. Neither fear of consequences, nor hope of reward, must enter into the secret counsels of the heart.

In Jude we read of those who “despise dominion and speak evil of dignities”; and a few verses further on, of other members of the same class, who “have men’s persons in admiration because of advantage” (Jude 8, 16).

Such men are wiling either to speak evil of dignities, or to fawn upon them, as it suits their base interests. The Christian, on the other hand, should be able to “talk with crowds” and yet keep his virtue, and “walk with kings” without losing the common touch. We must also remember that, because we own no man as Lord, and all our service is rendered in the name of the Lord Jesus, this does not mean that we may demonstrate our liberty by being discourteous or uncouth. If we are to follow the teaching of Scripture, we must “render to all their dues”.

(*philotheoi*)”. In the same epistle, the crown is for all those “who have *loved* His appearing”, while the defection of Demas is attributed to the *love* of this present evil age (II Tim. iv. 8, 10).

We also remember the pre-eminent place given to love in I Corinthians—above all miracles and martyrdom, above even faith and hope. Love is all-comprehensive, for God Himself is love; and when we know even as we are known, we shall need no other attribute to make God all in all to us. For the time being, the white light of love must be split up to suit our present limitations, but we can see even now that both law and grace, as well as faith and hope, look to love for their realization.

We must pass on to the closing member A | xiii. 11-14.

A | xiii. 11-14. The night. The flesh. The light. Put on.
a | 11. *Time*. Knowing the season.
b | 11. *Action*. The hour to awake.
a | 11, 12. *Time*. | c | Salvation *nearer*.
d | Night *far spent*.
c | Day *at hand*.
b | 12-14. *Action*.
e | Put off.
f | Put on.
g | Walk “as” (pos.), (*Euschemonos*).
“Not” (neg.)
f | Put on.
e | Put off.

This is the last section of the Structure, and the teaching of Rom. xii. and xiii. is now complete. No conformity with this age was the key to the first section (Rom. xii. 1, 2); and “walking honestly”, as in the day; not as in the night, is the teaching of this and balancing section (Rom. xiii. 11-14). In the first passage *suschematizo* is used; and in the second *euschemonos* (“honestly”). In both words the root is *schema*, “fashion”. We are not to be conformed to the fashion of this world which passes away, but to be fashioned in harmony with “the day”—the day of salvation.

There is an emphasis here upon the importance of recognizing “the time”. While the people of Israel remained a factor the purpose of the ages, the Second Coming of Christ could be regarded as imminent. Contingent upon Israel’s repentance, the return of the Lord was to take place, and the “times of refreshing” would have come (Acts iii. 19-21). In view, therefore, of “the present necessity”, the shortness of the time, and the character of the days immediately preceding the Second Coming, the Apostle gave special instructions, as for example in I Cor. vii., with reference to marriage (I Cor. vii. 26, 29). This instruction was considerably modified when the dispensation changed (Eph. v. 22-23, I Tim. iii. 1-5, v. 11-14).

A knowledge of the character of the season leads to action—“It is high time to awake out of sleep”. We find a very close parallel to Rom. xiii. 11-14 in I Thess. v. 1-10. In

both passages we have darkness and light, sleep and wakefulness, armour and the hope of salvation. Let us see the two passages together.

| Romans xiii. 11-14. | I Thessalonians v. 1-10. |
|---|---|
| <p>“Knowing the season” (<i>kairon</i>).</p> <p>“It is high time to awake out of sleep the night is far spent, the day is at hand let us walk honestly as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof. Let us put on the armour of light, for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”</p> | <p>“But the times and seasons (<i>kairon</i>) you know perfectly.”</p> <p>“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night, and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. Putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”</p> |

The two passages follow their own order, but the parallel between them is plain.

While the particular phase of the Lord’s Coming may be different in different passages, the practical influence of this “blessed hope” remains the same:

“Teaching us that, having denied ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age, looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ” (Titus ii. 12, 13).

“I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and kingdom, preach the word love His appearing” (II Tim. iv. 1-8).

In Rom. xiii. 12 we have the exhortation: “Let us put on the armour of light.” In verse 14 we read: “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.” After the first reference to “putting on”, the Apostle mentions certain particular activities of the flesh—rioting, drunkenness, etc. After the second reference, we have the all-inclusive statement: “Make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.” It is evident that the putting on of “the armour of light” is but a figurative way of describing the full equipment of the believer who stands in all that Christ is made to him. Comparing this passage with Ephesians, we read in Eph. iv. of “having put off the old man, and having put on the new man”, while in Eph. vi., what is true of every believer in Eph. iv. is put into practical effect when the armour is “put on”—the armour being specified as being either the gifts of grace in Christ, or the Word of God itself. In Eph. vi. the foes in view are “spiritual wickednesses”, but in Rom. xiii. the enemy is nearer home. The enemy in Romans is “the flesh”—not the flesh in others, but the flesh in ourselves.

It is important here to keep close to the actual teaching of the passage. There is nothing to justify the idea that the believer cannot fall into sin, or that he will not sometimes be “overtaken in a fault”. Even those described in Galatians as “ye which are spiritual” are exhorted to “restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. vi. 1). What we are warned against here is “making provision for the flesh”—a provision which is made by conforming to this age,

by forgetting that we are of the day and that it is high time for us to awake out of sleep, and by forgetting the nearness of our hope. Just as we are to “*provide* things honest in the sight of all men” (Rom. xii. 17), so we must be careful *not to provide* for the satisfaction of the lusts of the flesh.

The word translated “armour” has already appeared in Romans, but in its previous occurrence it is rendered “instruments”:

“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* (*Margin* ‘arms’ or ‘weapons’) of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God” (Rom. vi. 12, 13).

The “yielding” here in Rom. vi. is the “presenting” of Rom. xii. 1 and 2. The “mortal bodies” in Rom. vi. are those that are yielded as living sacrifices in Rom. xii., for they are yielded “as those that are alive from the dead”. The strength for this is in our “reckoning”—according to Rom. vi. 11—or, in our “putting on the Lord Jesus Christ”—according to Rom. xiii. 14.

It is our reasonable service thus to present our bodies; it is a logical outcome of grace not to think highly of ourselves; it is rational to endeavour to serve the Lord in the place and with the gift that He has been pleased to bestow. It is our reasonable service to refrain from avenging ourselves; it is our reasonable service to render to all their dues and to recognize that He Who has so sovereignly given to every believer some gift for His glory, has also, in His wider providential dealings with the world, ordained the powers that be. It is a logical conclusion that love fulfils all law, and that we who are saved by grace and are waiting for glory, should stand complete in all the fullness of the gift of Christ.

“I beseech you”, writes the Apostle, at the beginning of this section, “I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God”. May this beseeching and our contemplation of these “mercies of God” not be in vain.

#76. Romans xiv. 1 - xv. 7.
“Receive ye one another.”
pp. 109 - 112

The section just concluded (Rom. xii. and xiii.) was an exposition of what constituted, and what arose out of, “reasonable service”. The section now before us met a very real need in the Church of the Apostle’s day, and also indicates what should be our attitude to-day, even though the particular questions under discussion may not be exactly the same as they were while the “middle wall of partition” between Jewish and Gentile believers still remained.

The subject of this section is that of “reception”. The Apostle deals with this in two ways: (1) Negatively: “Not to doubtful disputations” (xiv. 1), and (2) Positively: “As Christ received us, to the glory of God” (xv. 7). The “doubtful disputations” were concerned with the eating of “meats” and the observance of “days”. The true spiritual attitude in these things is to realize that they make little or no difference to the believer, and that things are in themselves neither clean nor unclean. Days can be neither sacred nor secular in themselves; what matters most is the effect upon the conscience and the motive that is behind the action. It will not be difficult for the reader to see, beyond the concrete examples here introduced, the general principles which must govern the setting of all such grounds of dispute and offence.

The structure of such a section as this is necessarily a long one, and it is not practicable to set it out in full in these pages. We give a condensed outline here, and in the course of exposition each section will be expanded as the occasion demands. It will therefore be a simple matter for the earnest student to reassemble the whole structure should he so desire. Those who do not think it necessary to do this may nevertheless feel assured that the whole structure is before us, even though it cannot be exhibited. The skeleton structure is as follows:

Romans xiv. 1 - xv. 7.

- A1 | xiv. 1. Receive the weak.
- B1 | xiv. 1. *Diakrisis*. Doubtful disputations.
 - C1 | xiv. 2-5. Meats, etc., and the estimate of faith.
 - D1 | xiv. 6-12. The Lordship of Christ. It is written.
 - C2 | xiv. 13-22. Meats, etc., and the estimate of faith.
- B2 | xiv. 23. *Diakrino*. Doubts and damnation. Not of faith is sin.
 - D2 | xv. 1-5. The humility of Christ. It is written.
- C3 | xv. 5. Something better than meats, etc.
- B3 | xv. 6. *Homothumadon*. One mind and one mouth. Better than *diakrisis*.
- A2 | xv. 7. Receive ye one another, as Christ also received us.

This question of “receiving one another” is one that transcends dispensational boundaries, and is an accompaniment of salvation wherever it is manifested. The ecclesiastical side of the matter is by no means the most important, though this aspect has alas, often been allowed to overshadowed all others.

The word translated “receive” in Rom. xiv. 1 and xv. 7 is the Greek word *proslambano*, *pros* being the preposition “toward” or “unto”, and *lambano* meaning “to receive”. There is, therefore, a very personal touch about the word. It is not merely “to receive” but “to receive unto oneself”. There is something warm and kindly about the word—the very antithesis of anything formal.

Proslambano occurs 14 times in the N.T., the only occurrences in the epistles, apart from those in Romans, being found in Philemon. The two references here indicate very clearly the personal character of the word:

“Thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels” (Philemon i. 12).

“If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself” (Philemon i. 17).

We get further light on the meaning of the word from its occurrences in the Acts. In Acts xviii., we read of Aquila and Priscilla “taking” Apollos “unto them” (Acts xviii. 26); in chapter xxvii. the Apostle exhorts the famished sailors to “take” some meat (Acts xxvii. 34); while in chapter xxviii. we read of the kindness of the barbarous inhabitants of Malta, who kindled a fire and “*received* us every one, because of the present rain and because of the cold” (Acts xxviii. 2). All these passages indicate something of the intimate character of the “reception” enjoined by the Apostle.

If the reader is not acquainted with the usage of the various words translated “to receive”, and particularly of *lambano* and its many combinations, he should examine the Scriptures and discover the important place that this aspect of faith holds.

In John i. 12 the word is *lambano*: “As many as *received* Him”, while in the previous verse: “His own *received* Him not”, it is *paralambano*. The latter (*paralambano*) is used in Col. ii. 6: “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.” When we think of all the pretty things that prevent the reception of the believer by other believers, we should be humbled as we remember that the Lord Himself “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Himself (*sumparalambano*) the form of a servant (literally ‘slave’)” (Phil. ii. 7). We are exhorted, in the context of this same passage, that this mind should be in us, “which was also in Christ Jesus”.

Each believer has “received” the “reconciliation” (Rom. v. 11), and if each of us is reconciled to God, surely there should be free reception of one another “as Christ also received us”. Every believer has received the “spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Rom. viii. 15), and it would surely be strange if those who call upon the same Heavenly Father should be unwilling to receive one another. It is obvious, however, that fellowship with other believers must have some sort of touchstone, and must rest upon something more than a merely personal feeling. The basis of all true reception is that

“Christ has received” the other believer to the glory of God, and that this too must regulate our own attitude. At this point, however, a difficulty arises. It is not given to any of us to know the heart of another, for that belongs to the Lord alone. We can, therefore, only act according to evidences; and we must consider what these necessary evidences must be. In the Second Epistle of John we read:

“Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there came any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, received him not in your house, neither bid him God-speed” (II John 9, 10).

No amount of “Christian charity” can alter the force of this passage. Christ is the touchstone of all doctrine and practice. We receive as He received. We received those whom He has received, and we cannot receive those who do not receive Him. It is sadly possible to preach “another Jesus”, and those who have been taught to honour the Son even as they honour the Father, cannot accept those whose estimate of Christ does not accord Him this equal honour. It must, however, be kept in mind that John deals with the reception of *teachers*, whereas Paul is dealing with the reception of *believers*. If we may be allowed a somewhat imaginative use of the terms, the pew is broader than the pulpit.

These few notes will possibly be sufficient to open up the new subject that is to occupy us during the study of this section, and we will reserve all further comment until we have examined more closely the “doubtful disputations” which were dividing the early Church.

**#77. Romans xiv. 1 - xv. 7.
“Reasonings” and “Reason”.
pp. 149 - 153**

We have seen that this section of the epistle deals with the question of “reception” and treats it in two ways: first, *negatively*—how not to receive, and then *positively*. We must now turn our attention to the negative aspect, which is presented first.

The words: “Not to doubtful disputations” are the translation of *me eis diakriseis dialogismon*, and before we proceed, it will be necessary to obtain some scriptural light upon their usage and meaning.

To take *diakrisis* first, this word is used in a good sense in I Cor. xii. and Heb. v.:

“For to one to another *discerning* of spirits all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit” (I Cor. xii. 8-11).

“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to *discern* both good and evil” (Heb. v. 14).

It is clear from these passages that in Rom. xiv. 1 the Apostle cannot be condemning the faculty of discrimination in itself, but rather its unkind application in connection with the reception of a weak believer. Just as we are about to learn that the question of meats and herbs in itself is of little consequence, but that it is the part played by the conscience that matters, so we may learn here, that the possession of the gift, or grace, of discernment must be under the tempering power of kindness and love. Priscilla and Aquila would not have succeeded with Apollos as they did, if they had seized upon his errors at once and made him feel uncomfortable in the presence of the assembled synagogue.

Diakrino is translated in a variety of ways in the A.V., but each translation has at its base the idea of discrimination. For example:

“Ye can *discern* the face of the sky” (Matt. xvi. 3).
“Is it so that there is no wise man among you? no, not one, that shall be able to *judge between* his brethren?” (I Cor. vi. 5).

Perhaps the passage that is most important in view of the problems discussed in Rom. xiv., is that which records Peter’s words after he had received the vision of the great sheet filled with all manner of beasts and creeping things, and had been exhorted to “slay and eat”. This vision is recorded in Acts xi., and is the basis of the Apostle’s appeal for charity in Acts xv.: “And *put no difference* between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith” (Acts xv. 9). These words were spoken in Paul’s own hearing—for he was himself at the Jerusalem gathering—and he could scarcely have written Rom. xiv. 1 without remembering this critical occasion.

To take now the second word in Rom. xiv. 1, *dialogismos*, we find that it is usually translated “thoughts” in the A.V., and in nearly all its ten occurrences the word has evil associations. In Luke ix. 47 we read: “And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart.” While in verse 46 of the same chapter *dialogismos* is translated “reasoning”. We may therefore translate Rom. xiv. 1: “Not for discrimination of reasonings.”

The reader should notice here that “reasonings” and “reason” are not the same thing. “Reasonings” arise out of an evil heart (Matt. xv. 18-20), but it would be quite wrong to set aside “reason” because “reasonings” are condemned. If Rom. xiv. 1 sets aside “reasonings”, chapter xii. 1 just as clearly upholds “reason”, for we read: “I beseech you present your bodies which is your *reasonable* service.” Peter also exhorts his hearers to be ready to give “a reason” for the hope that is in them” (I Pet. iii. 15).

That the use of “reason” was characteristic of the apostle Paul, the following passages make abundantly clear:

“And Paul, *as his manner was*, went in unto them, and three sabbath days *reasoned* with them out of the Scriptures” (Acts xvii. 2).
“Therefore *disputed* he in the synagogue with the Jews” (Acts xvii. 17).
“And he *reasoned* in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks” (Acts xviii. 4).

“He himself entered into the synagogue, and *reasoned* with the Jews” (Acts xviii. 19).
“He went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months, *disputings* and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God” (Acts xix. 8).
“*Disputing* daily in the school of Tyrannus” (Acts xix. 9).
“Paul *preached* unto them” (Acts xx. 7).
“Paul was long *preaching*” (Acts xx. 9).
“And as he *reasoned* of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled” (Acts xxiv. 25).

Not only did the great Apostle continually and consistently “reason”, but the Word of God itself is said to do so: “And you have forgotten the exhortation which *reasons* with you as sons” (Heb. xii. 5).

We must never forget that faith and hope are “reasonable”, and in I Pet. iii. 15 we read: “Be ready to give an answer (*apologia*) to every man that asketh you a reason (*logon*) of the hope that is in you.”

Our Lord’s words when He walked with the two disciples to Emmaus also provide further evidence that faith is reasonable, for we read:

“O fools (*anoetos*, inconsiderate, thoughtless) and slow of heart to believe He expounded (*diermenuo*, explained or interpreted) in all the Scriptures Then opened He their understanding (*nous*, mind) that they might understand (*sunieni*) the Scriptures” (Luke xxiv. 25, 27, 45).

We have already referred to Acts xvii. 2 and xviii. 4 in connection with the Apostle’s reasoning, and it is good to see that the sequel was that some were “persuaded” (*epeithe*, i.e. won over to conviction). The Apostle did not hesitate to “speak wisdom” among them that were “perfect” (I Cor. ii. 6), and in Heb. xi. 3 he writes: “By faith we understand” (*noeo*).

Some of our readers will know that an attempt has been made to belittle the series of articles we have published under the heading “With all thy getting, get understanding”. Such an attitude, however, is not in accordance with the Scriptures, for the very title of the series is a text of Scripture, and the getting of understanding obviously implies the exercise of the reasoning faculties. It is impossible for any man to “believe” a statement, whether uttered by God or man, unless he understands its “meaning”. He may not be able to appreciate the *full* significance of the statement, but he must understand the fundamental meaning of the terms used. The Scripture not only speaks of the cross, but of the “word (*logos*) of the cross”; it not only presents to us the fact of reconciliation, but also preaches the “word of reconciliation”. The “cross”, presented without explanation, can mean nothing; and immediately we attempt to explain its place in the scheme of salvation we must call upon the whole intelligence to take part. Unbelief may be blind, but faith sees.

By the mere process of “reasoning” human nature cannot attain to the truth, because, first of all, God’s truth is beyond the powers of human intelligence to attain, and secondly because sin has robbed man of his birthright. He goes astray from truth like a lost sheep.

He calls light darkness, and darkness light. When, however, man believes the Word of God, the entrance of that Word gives light to the simple. The mind is renewed, and this renewed mind functions as God intended. Faith is discovered to be most reasonable, the purpose of the ages most rational, and the plan of salvation demonstrates that God is not only “righteous” but “right”. While, therefore, the Apostle warns the Church at Rome against “doubtful disputations”, it is quite untrue to suggest that reason and faith can ever conflict.

As we have mentioned the series entitled, “With all thy getting, get understanding”, we would draw the reader’s attention to the fact that these articles were not prepared so that the reader should be able to sit in judgment upon the Word of God, but rather that he should be able to judge the writings of men. In any case, we trust that all readers of *The Berean Expositor* will “search and see” before accepting anything that is written in its pages.

#78. Romans xiv. 1 - xv. 7.
“Meats” and “Days”.
The “strong” and the “weak”.
pp. 188 - 192

One of the most conclusive evidences that a change of dispensation took place at Acts xxviii., is the complete change in the character of the “cases of conscience” that come up for consideration in the epistles of the Mystery. The problems of Rom. xiv. are pre-eminently Jewish, and are practically unknown in the Church to-day. The eating of meats and the observance of days are regarded as things to be repudiated in Col. ii., but already a new point of view is evident.

There are two words translated “to eat”, that occur with great frequency in the N.T.—*esthio* and *phago*. While both these words are found many times in the Gospels and the earlier Epistles of Paul, there is not a single occurrence of either of them in the prison epistles. The N.T. occurrences are too many to give in full, as *esthio* occurs 64 times, and *phago* 97 times. *Phago* does not differ from *esthio* in any essential, and is actually used to form some of its tenses. It is as fanciful to attempt to draw any distinction between them, as it would be to make some essential difference between “go” and “went”.

Esthio.

“Why *eateth* your Master with sinners?” (Matt. ix. 11).

“Another, who is weak, *eateth* herbs” (Rom. xiv. 2).

“Whatsoever is set before you, *eat*, asking no question for conscience sake” (I Cor. x. 27).

Phago.

“To *eat* with unwashen hands defileth not” (Matt. xv. 20).
“I have never *eaten* anything that is common or unclean” (Acts x. 14).
“One believeth that he may *eat* all things” (Rom. xiv. 2).

Another word that occurs in Rom. xiv. in this connection is the word “meat”. This is the translation of *broma*, which is not limited to “flesh” but covers the whole range of eatables. The word occurs in Rom. xiv. where the Apostle says: “The kingdom of God is not *meat* and drink” (Rom. xiv. 17), and again in Col. ii.: “Let no man, therefore, judge you in *meat* or in drink” (Col. ii. 16).

No one can read the Book of Leviticus or the writings of the Rabbis, without realizing what an important place the question of clean and unclean food occupied in the mind of a zealous Jew. Dr. Lightfoot calls the following the Pharisaical ladder to heaven:

“Whosoever hath his seat in the land of Israel, and eateth his common food in cleanness, and speaks the holy language, and recites his phylacteries morning and evening—let him be confident that he shall obtain the life of the world to come” (*Maimonides*).

The teaching of the law was supplemented by many glosses, and the Rabbis did not scruple to bring in the unseen world to enforce their traditions. Thus we read: “Shibta was one of the demons, who hurt them that wash not their hands before meat” (*Babylonian Taanith*).

The feelings of the early Church on this question of eating find expression in the reprimand administered to Peter in Acts xi.:

“Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them” (Acts xi. 3).

These two things—circumcision and “meats”—distinguished Israel from the Gentile world, and of these, the more important distinction was the eating of clean meats, for Ishmaelites and other descendants of Abraham who did not discriminate in the matter of meats were nevertheless circumcised.

Let us now turn our attention to the passage that deals with these scruples. The following is the structure of Rom. xiv. 2-5, but the reader should also refer back to page 110 for the structure of the complete passage.

The Estimate of Faith (Rom. xiv. 2-5).

- G1 | xiv. 2-5. MEATS, ETC., AND THE ESTIMATE OF FAITH.
- a1 | a | One eats all things.
 - b | Another eats herbs.
 - a | One must not despise.
 - b | The other must not judge.
 - b1 | FOR GOD HATH RECEIVED HIM.
 - a2 | a | Who art thou that judgest.
 - b | Another man's servants?
 - a | To his own Master he stands or falls.
 - b | He shall be held up.
 - b2 | FOR GOD IS ABLE TO MAKE HIM STAND.
 - a3 | a | One man esteemeth.
 - b | One day above another.
 - a | Another man esteemeth.
 - b | Every day alike.
 - b3 | LET EACH BE FULLY PERSUADED IN HIS OWN MIND.

The parties in view in this conflict are not “the right” and “the wrong”, or “the orthodox” and “the heretic”; they are “the strong” and “the weak”. A believing Jew, even though justified by faith, found it very difficult to throw off the effects of his upbringing and early prejudices. Hence, if he were obliged to live in a Gentile city, he might find it impossible to feel free from pollution in eating ordinary food, and so would “eat only herbs”. Seneca tells us that in his youth he adopted the practice of vegetarianism, but that his father induced him to give it up, lest he should be suspected of foreign superstition (probably Judaism). In the Clementine Homilies the eating of meat is attributed to impure demons and bloodthirsty giants, and Peter is represented as saying that he made use of bread and olives, and sparingly of certain vegetables.

The Apostle's handling of these very real difficulties is referred to by Farrar in the following terms:

“He treats the difficulty in the same masterly manner—broad yet sympathetic, inflexible in convictions yet considerate towards prejudices—which he had already displayed in dealing with a similar question in his epistle to the Corinthians” (*Farrar*).

“Inflexible” yet “considerate”. What grace is needed for the perfect blend of these two qualities. Without them, the “strong” will become arrogant, and the “weak” self-righteous.

What is said in Rom. xiv. concerning “meats” is also said concerning “days”. In this connection, the following paragraph from the writings of Dean Alford is interesting, particularly in view of the fact that, as Dean of Canterbury, he would naturally be obliged to uphold the observance of Sunday as the Lord's Day.

“One man (*the weak*) esteems (*selects for honour*) one day above another day; another (*the strong*) esteems every day. Let each be fully satisfied in his own mind. It

is an interesting question, what indication is here found of the observance or non-observance of a day of obligation in the apostolic times. The Apostle *decides nothing, leaving every man's own mind* to guide him in the point. He classes the observance or non-observance of particular days, with eating or abstaining from particular meats. In both cases, he is concerned with things which he evidently treats as of *absolute indifference in themselves*. Now the question is, supposing the divine obligation of one day in seven to have been recognized by him *in any form*, could he have thus spoken? The obvious inference from his strain of arguing is, that he *knew of no such obligation*, but believed *all times and days to be*, to the Christian strong in faith, ALIKE. I do not see how the passage can be otherwise understood. If any one day in the week were invested with the sacred character of the Sabbath, it would have been *wholly impossible* for the apostle to commend or uphold the man who judged all days worthy of equal honour—who, as in verse 6, paid *no regard* to the (any) day. He must have visited him with his strongest disapprobation, as violating a command of God. *I therefore infer that sabbatical obligation to keep any day, whether seventh or first, was not recognized in apostolic times.*”

These words, coming from one who regarded “the Lord’s Day as an institution of the Christian Church”, and “binding upon us from considerations of humanity and religious expediency”, may be of some weight with those who have looked upon the Christian Sunday, the First Day of the Week (or, as it is mistakenly called, the “Lord’s Day”) as having N.T. sanction.

As a zealot for the traditions of his fathers, Paul would know all about the trivial things that were debated among the Jews with so much zeal—we read, for example, of a discussion as to “whether an egg laid on a festival might or might not be eaten” (*Bitsah*)—but, being delivered now from these tormenting scruples, and standing in the blessed freedom of grace, he sees in these Levitical and traditional observances, a menace to the gospel and to the believer’s standing. He approaches the subject, however, rather differently in Romans from the way in which it is dealt with in Galatians.

In Galatians, the turning back to circumcision and Mosaic observances as being necessary for complete salvation and assurance, the Apostle regards as definitely antagonistic to the cross of Christ. He therefore writes:

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain” (Gal. iv. 8-11).

To the Colossians, who were in danger of being cheated of their reward by teaching that cast doubt upon their completeness in Christ, the Apostle writes:

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ” (Col. ii. 16, 17).

In I Tim. iv. we find a further reference to “meats”, in connection with the departure from the faith that characterizes the “latter times”:

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

In Rom. xiv., the Apostle’s attitude to these things is less severe than in Galatians, for their observance was not being insisted upon in Romans as vital to salvation, though they were spoiling the free and full reception of fellow-believers.

The Apostle asserts the believer’s right to liberty, but at the same time he warns the “strong” against censoriousness, and the “weak” against despising. It is evident that his own sympathies are with the strong, but he makes it clear that “we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Rom. xv. 1).

He meets the difficulties of the situation by a threefold argument:

- (1) God hath received him.
- (2) God is able to make him stand.
- (3) Each must be fully persuaded in his own mind.

The Apostle has more to say about this matter, in Rom. xiv. 13-21, but before he discusses such questions as whether a thing is clean or unclean in itself, he turns the reader’s attention to a very serious aspect of the question: namely, that in thus judging another, the believer is usurping the prerogative of his Lord. This aspect of the Apostle’s teaching we must take up in our next article. Meanwhile, it would be salutary for us all to examine ourselves in the light of this chapter, and see just how far “days” and “meats” enter into our own conception of Christian worship, doctrine and practice.

“The Both”; “The Twain”; “The Joint Body”; Who are they, and what do these words imply?

#1. Introduction. pp. 193 - 199

The article which we introduce with this brief note, is from the pen of an old friend and fellow-believer, Mr. A. A. J. Woodley. His suggestive exposition of Eph. ii. appears to us to be inevitable, if once we adopt the view which we have advocated in the Berean Expositor, namely, that John’s Gospel was not written for the Jew, but was written in the light of the revelation of the mystery, and probably after Paul’s course had finished.

Neither Mr. Woodley nor ourselves find “The Mystery” in John’s Gospel, but no one can read the Lord’s words recorded in John xviii. 21: “That they may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us”, and not recognize a unity that rises to the heights usually associated with the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians. We feel sure that our readers will appreciate Mr. Woodley’s pioneer spirit, and we hope to follow this introductory article with a series that will expand and further confirm the note here struck (*Editor*).

“The assembly, which is His Body” (Eph. i. 22, 23).

“For HE is our PEACE, Who hath made BOTH ONE” (Eph. ii. 14).

“. . . . for to make (in order the HE might create) IN HIMSELF of TWAIN, ONE NEW MAN, so making PEACE; and that HE might reconcile BOTH unto GOD in ONE BODY by the cross” or as Dr. Rotherham’s translation reads: “That THE TWO He might create IN HIMSELF into ONE MAN OF NEW MOULD” (Eph. ii. 15, 16).

“For THOROUGH HIM we BOTH have access by ONE SPIRIT unto the FATHER” (Eph. ii. 18).

“Ye are FELLOW-CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS, and of the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD” (Eph. ii. 19).

“. . . . if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which has been given to me you-ward: How that by revelation HE made known to me the mystery THAT THE GENTILES SHOULD BE *Joint*-HEIRS, *Joint*-BODY, *Joint*-PARTAKERS of His promise (the promise) IN CHRIST by the gospel” (Eph. iii. 2, 3, 6).

“ONE BODY, and ONE SPIRIT, even as ye were *also* called in ONE HOPE of your calling, ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM, ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL, WHO IS OVER ALL, AND THROUGH ALL, AND IN ALL” (Eph. iv. 4, 5, 6).

“For the perfecting of the SAINTS (*see* Eph. ii. 19) for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (upbuilding) of the BODY OF CHRIST” (Eph. iv. 12).

“For we are members of HIS BODY” (Eph. v. 30, 31, 32; “of His flesh and His bones” *not in Texts*).

“Giving thanks unto the Father, that hath made you sufficient for your share IN THE INHERITANCE OF THE SAINTS IN THE LIGHT” (Col. i. 12).

“And let the PEACE OF GOD rule in your hearts, to the which ye are *also* called in ONE BODY; and be ye thankful” (Col. iii. 15).

“For our CITIZENSHIP in the heavens hath its rise” (Phil. iii. 20).

“ each regarding not his own (interest, gifts, advantages, etc.), but each those of others also” (Phil. ii. 4).

“And did not HE make ONE? (make of TWAIN ONE FLESH?) Yet had He the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore ONE? That He might seek a godly seed” (Mal. ii. 15).

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“THE BOTH”; “THE TWAIN”. -- Who are they?

Who are the “*Joint-HEIRS*”, “*Joint-BODY*”, “*Joint-PARTAKERS*” with US GENTILES?

Who are the “SAINTS” in Eph. ii. 19?

Does Scripture give us the answers to these questions? I believe it does, and what I am writing in these notes sets out what I see, by God’s grace, He would have me learn. As, however, fellow-students of God’s Word may not have arrived at the same answers in the searching of the Word, I am seeking their help, either in confirmation or rejection of the findings here set forth; in either case, may I humbly ask for *all the scriptures* on which *their* findings rest. I think I have set out the bulk of Scripture passages which prove the existence of *two* bodies or assemblies which are *in Him* created into *One*.

I think we can all agree that the above questions are only partially answered by reference to the position of JEW (i.e., ISRAEL) and GENTILE before and since Christ came. After prayerfully and carefully searching the Word of God, one feels that there is no doubt that the clear statement:

“In order that He might *create in Himself* of TWAIN ONE *new man*,”

refers to a *future creation*, when *two bodies* or *assemblies*, one mainly *Jewish* and the other mainly *Gentile*, are made ONE *in Christ*. As Rom. x. and other passages tell us Jew and Gentile are precisely on the same footing, “there is no distinction” as regards salvation (verse 12), therefore the *mystery* made known by revelation to Paul “*That the Gentiles should be joint-heirs, joint-body, joint-partakers of the promise in Christ by the gospel*” is something much more, even that which God would make known to His saints or saved ones of this dispensation (Col. i. 26, 27). The great majority of saved ones ever since Paul made known *the mystery* have followed the example of those to whom he himself declared it, as stated in II Tim. i. 15; iv. 16, 17, preferring to choose for themselves what they think is their *calling* and *hope* rather than by “rightly dividing the Word of truth”, and by praying to God for His revelation (Eph. i. 17) to perceive by the Holy Spirit’s teaching *what is His calling* and *hope* for them. Where we make our own choice there can be no full assurance, for it is only as God reveals His choice for us that we can have this. Paul says that he prays that this rejection of him (God’s minister or

apostle of this dispensation) and of his God-given message or gospel “may not be laid to their charge” (II Tim. iv. 16).

The “*joint-body*”, composed of *two* heavenly callings, assemblies or bodies, is as regards the *Gentile* portion still being formed or built-up by the Holy Spirit in this “dispensation of the grace of God” given to Paul usward (Eph. iii. 2).

“*The one new man*”: “*The one body*” is a *new creation in Christ*, when God’s purposes have been completed concerning the forming of the “joint-body”. The “holy temple in the Lord”, in which *both* the heavenly “bodies” have their part, still awaits completion, for we read:

“IN WHOM *ye* (Gentiles) *also* are being built in together for an habitation of God through the SPIRIT” (Eph. ii. 22).

Why should not Eph. iii. 6 and other passages mean exactly what they say? If we believe all as written, then the questions which arise in our minds and to which we must seek the answer of Scripture are:

- (1) Who are the “SAINTS” of Eph. ii. 19?
- (2) *When* are “THE BOTH” and “THE TWAIN” made “ONE”, and *how* (i.e., under what human relationship does God illustrate this “CREATION IN CHRIST INTO ONE NEW MAN”, so that we may grasp as much as the finite mind can do of spiritual realities).
- (3) Can we trace in Scripture the “TWO” BODIES forming the “JOINT-BODY”, which IN CHRIST will be made into “ONE” BODY? And if so, does God name them?

(1) We can deal with questions 1 and 3 together. We know that the word “saints” has not the same meaning in all its occurrences in Scripture, but we have to be guided by the context. As regards Eph. ii. 19, Dr. Bullinger in his Lexicon says that the N.T. “saints” refer to “God’s heavenly people”, and we know that in connection with the Jew or Israel there is a heavenly as well as an earthly calling, even as there is in connection with Gentiles in this dispensation. I Cor. xv. 40 tells us that those who are members of the heavenly callings will have “heavenly bodies”, those on the new earth “bodies earthy”, and verse 41 points out that there will be differences in position “IN GLORY”, even as the passages we are considering point the complete oneness of all in Christ and in God.

In Eph. iv. 13 the goal set before us Gentiles who are members of “His body” is “a perfect or full-grown MAN” *in Christ*; it is also spoken of as a “new man” in Eph. iv. 24 and Col. iii. 10.

In II Cor. xi. 2 Paul, speaking in his earlier ministry to that other assembly or body, mainly *Jewish*, formed *in Christ*, says: “I have espoused (betrothed) you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ”, and in Revelation we learn of a heavenly people or assembly designated “*the bride*”.

(2) We have therefore *two* heavenly “bodies” or “assemblies” brought to our notice as a perfect or new *man* and as a *bride*, respectively, and in Revelation we read:

“Blessed are they which are called to the MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB”
(Rev. xix. 9).

which reveals the fact that in addition to the perfect or new *man* (bridegroom) and the *bride*, there are “others” called and blessed with the “*both made one*”, and the “*creation in himself of the twain into one man, making peace*”. As to those others who by God’s grace are “called to the *marriage supper of the lamb*”, I would ask all to read the very helpful exposition on “bridal relationships” etc., given by the Editor in Volume XX, pages 139-142, which helps us to see that “the many” who now “look for” the blessings and promises connected with the *bride* assembly or body, may have their part in one of these “bridal relationships”, for no one can find any scriptural authority for declaring that the revelation of God made known to Paul concerning “The dispensation of the Mystery”, the calling out of “The assembly which is His Body” to be made known to God’s saved ones in this dispensation, offers to *all* the choice of one of *two* heavenly callings, bodies or assemblies, for Col. i. 26, 27 very clearly defines and limits the particular heavenly calling which “God would make known to His saved ones” in *this* dispensation, and if we would see what further provision is made by God’s wondrous grace for “us, sinners of the Gentiles”, we must turn to the further revelation recorded by God through John, after Paul and his ministry had been rejected, for it is there we learn, as the Editor pointed out, that there are other companies or assemblies of “saved ones” to be associated with the *two* principal assemblies or bodies to be made “one in Christ”.

The oneness in Christ of this joint-body (composed of Gentile and Jewish bodies or assemblies) is confirmed by the Holy Spirit under another figure or symbol, viz.: “*A holy temple in the Lord*” (Eph. ii. 19-22), for we read:

“Hence then, ye (Gentiles) are no longer strangers and sojourners, but are FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE SAINTS, and of THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD, and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF BEING THE CHIEF CORNER STONE, *in Whom* ALL THE BUILDING FITLY FRAMED TOGETHER, groweth unto a HOLY TEMPLE IN THE LORD, *in Whom* ye *also* are builded together for an habitation of God through THE SPIRIT.”

In this “one new man” in Christ, we have the perfect (*heavenly*) man of Ephesians in place of the perfect *earthy* man (Adam) of Genesis, and the *heavenly* bride in place of the *earthy* bride of Genesis, and the Holy Spirit further helps us to see (as far as our finite sight is able) the complete *unity and union* of “*the both*” and “*the twain*”, by quoting His own words of Gen. ii. 24. The “old creation” was “*one flesh, one breath*” (Gen. ii. 24; Eccl. iii. 19); the *new creation in Christ* becomes “*one body, one spirit*” (Eph. iv. 4). Satan brought about the ruin and fall of God’s perfect, natural or earthy man, with his “joint-body” or woman, as she is called, created “one flesh”, but instead of frustrating the purpose of God, God so works through Christ that *in Him* “at His appointed time” He creates “*one new man*”, who is not only in the likeness and image of God, but who has been made “partaker of the divine nature”, a *heavenly* or *spiritual* man instead of an *earthy* man.

As by God's grace He gives us some glimpses of His manifold (infinitely diversified) wisdom in the unfolding of His purposes of grace, we learn in Eph. iii. 10 that God is also making known "His manifold wisdom" to principalities and powers in heavenly places by the assembly which is His Body, forming part of a "joint-body" (Eph. iii. 6).

The statement of Eph. iii. 6 that "His Body" of Eph. i. 22, 23, composed mainly of Gentiles "should be joint-heirs, joint-body, joint-partakers of the promise of Christ by the gospel" clearly shows that the One Body of Eph. iv. 4 is the fulfillment of Eph. ii. 16, and that the names or titles of assemblies, such as "The assembly which is His Body", cannot mean exactly the same as "One Body" in Eph. iv. 4. The Holy Spirit does not call "His Body" "The assembly which is One Body", and although most of us have used the expression "*The One Body*", for "His Body" (knowing what we each referred to) yet as we now look carefully at all God says concerning "His Body", a "Joint-Body", and "One Body", we cannot believe the Holy Spirit intends us to use all as meaning "His Body" only, for by so doing we must confuse ourselves. We have the same unity brought before us in the "*two folds*" of John x. 16, or rather, as the Scripture expresses it:

"And *other sheep* I have which are not of *this fold*: them *also* I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be *one flock* and *one shepherd*."

In case any who read these notes should at first sight hastily conclude that by suggesting that Scripture teaches the forming of a "joint-body", to be created in Him into "One Body", or "One New Man", we are detracting from the glorious calling and hope, or position of "The assembly which is His Body", as set forth in Ephesians, we would ask them to first consider whether Adam lost anything of what God had given him, or of his position, by his becoming "one flesh" with Eve, and whether being made one flesh in any way deprived either from fulfilling the purposes for which each was created, or from entering into all that God had provided for them *both* individually and collectively.

Phil. ii. 4 tells us to "look on the things of others", and in this connection it will do no harm for us to read again our Lord's words in John xvii. concerning those whom we believe are members of that "other" assembly, or our "join-body, joint-heirs, joint-partakers" with us "of the promise in Christ by the gospel":

"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word, that they all may be ONE, as Thou, FATHER, art in ME, and I in THEE, THAT they also may be *one in us*, and the glory which Thou gavest ME I have given them, THAT THEY MAY BE ONE, EVEN AS WE ARE ONE: I IN THEM AND THOU IN ME, THAT THEY MAY BE MADE PERFECT IN ONE FATHER, I WILL THAT THEY ALSO, WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, BE WITH ME WHERE I AM" (John xvii. 20-24).

Where can we find greater *oneness* than here expressed. It passes our understanding, yet such are the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus (Eph. ii. 7) that we (Gentiles) "chosen in Him before the overthrow of the world" as members of "His Body" should be formed into a "joint-body" with those for whom He was specially praying in John xvii., to be *created* with them *in Him* into "One Body",

and be brought with them into this knowledge-surpassing *unity and oneness in the trinity* (A. A. J. Woodley).

**#2. The Mystery, exclusive in its calling,
but permitting relationship with members of other callings,
such as that of the Bride.
pp. 228 - 230**

The reader will remember, we trust, the suggestive article written by our brother, Mr. A. A. J. Woodley, which appeared on page 193. We propose now a series of articles in which the main idea suggested there should be examined, developed and further substantiated. To do this, it will be necessary first for one or two preliminary phases of truth to be reaffirmed.

The Mystery—What it is not.

(1) The “Mystery” is *not* the inclusion of the Gentile in the scheme of salvation by grace. This needs no extended proof. It is implied in the promise to Abraham referred to in Gal. iii.:

“The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen (Gentile) through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Gal. iii. 8).

(2) The “Mystery” is *not* the opening up of the heavenly sphere. The heavenly calling (Heb. iii. 1), the heavenly gift (Heb. vi. 4), the heavenly country (Heb. xi. 16), and the heavenly Jerusalem (Heb. xii. 22) form no part of the “Mystery”, though it is true that the exclusive sphere to which the blessings of the “Mystery” belong is described as “in heavenly places”. Before the Mystery was made known, the Apostle could speak, in his epistle to the Corinthians, of “heavenly” bodies, and the bearing of a “heavenly” image (I Cor. xv. 48, 49).

The “Mystery” is a term which represents a new dispensational dealing with the believer, consequent upon the setting aside of Israel and the temporary suspension of Israel’s hope, both earthly and heavenly. This new calling does not arise out of any promise made to Abraham or to the fathers, but goes back “before the overthrow of the world” (Eph. i. 3, 4), and “before age-times” (II Tim. i. 9). It was God’s foreknown method of filling the gap occasioned by Israel’s foreknown rejection, but, inasmuch as He did not choose to incorporate this gracious plan within the scope of O.T. prophecy and O.T. covenants, the calling and hope of Gentile believers during this present interval in the working out of the purpose of the ages is referred to as the dispensation of the *mystery*. This calling is described as “The church which is His body” and the sphere of its blessings is said to be “in heavenly places”, “far above all principality” a sphere to be entered into and enjoyed when this Church shall be “manifested” with Christ in glory.

But the fact that the Church of the Mystery has its own time period, its own sphere, its own constitution, and its own hope does not isolate it from the rest of the redeemed. It still belongs to that one great association of the saved which constitutes “the whole family” and it is named with the same family name (Eph. iii. 15).

The Bride.—Israel as a nation is spoken of as a divorced wife, who, by God’s infinite mercy, shall at length be restored; but the Bride is an elect company, made up partly of Israel and partly of Gentile believers, call through the ages from the time of Abraham (who looked for the “heavenly city”) onwards, and including such as the Galatian believers (“Jerusalem above” being their “mother”) and the Corinthian saints (“presented as a chaste virgin to Christ”). This calling does not necessitate the presence of Israel as a nation, and many believers to-day apparently find in the Bride and the Heavenly Jerusalem all their hope and desire.

The Gospel according to John.—The Gospel according to John was written after Paul had finished his course, and the dispensation of the Mystery had been made known. We have sought to demonstrate the relationship between Paul’s epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, and John’s Gospel in the form of a chart, and the reader who is not familiar with this is advised to consult Volume XXVII, page 126.

John’s Gospel is distinguished from the other three by many fundamental differences. For instance, the opening prologue with its revelation concerning Christ as the “Word” is unique. Moreover, while Matthew shows the Lord’s ministry as definitely limited to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. x. 6; xv. 24), John links it with the “world”. While Matthew records the prohibition: “And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not” (Matt. x. 5), John records that the Lord “must needs go through Samaria”, and devotes considerable space to His conversation with the woman of Samaria and the conversion of the men of that city (John iv.). Moreover, the many explanations that John felt it necessary to give—explaining that the Passover was a feast of the Jews, explaining the existence of a feud between the Jews and the Samaritans, explaining even the meaning of the titles “Messiah” and “Rabboni”, all these provide a definite proof that John had the Gentile in mind in writing his Gospel.

Mr. Woodley has drawn the reader’s attention to the article in Volume XX, page 140, where the “Bridal relationships” of John’s Gospel are dealt with. We will not attempt in this series to give an exposition of the marvelous unity that forms the subject of John xvii. 21-24—this must take its place in the exposition of John’s Gospel which is being pursued in another series—but we cannot read the passage without realizing that we are very close here to the zenith of revealed truth. The glory that the Lord refers to here as being given to His believing people is the glory that He had with the Father “before the world was” (John xvii. 5), and we also find that this is the only occasion recorded in any of the Gospels on which the Saviour refers to the love of the Father that was His “before the foundation of the world” (John xvii. 24), a period intimately associated with the Mystery (Eph. i. 3, 4). The believing company of John xvii. were to “behold” the Lord’s glory, and to share it, even as the Church of the Mystery looks forward to being “manifested with Him in glory” (Col. iii. 3, 4). While, therefore, the

Body and the Bride, ministered to by Paul, the prisoner, and John, the aged apostle, are two distinct companies, there are many indications that lead us to believe that, though “two”, they may yet be “one”, just as a husband and wife, without losing their own individualities, can be pronounced “no more twain, but one flesh” (Matt. xix. 6: see also Eph. v. 31 and Eph. ii. 18).

In our next article we hope to consider the links which the Apostle has established between the Mystery and the period of Genesis that deals with Adam and creation *before the fall*.

The Eternal God is thy Refuge.

*(Being a series of studies designed to encourage
the believer in times of stress).*

#1. The particular bearing of the word “eternal”. pp. 238 - 240

At the moment of writing these words, this nation is in a state of war. We recognize, of course, that both “war” and “peace”, while the world rejects the Son of God, can be but relative terms. There was much real enmity during the days of so called “peace”, and, conversely, there may be enjoyed, in the midst of conditions of war, a peace which the world can neither give nor take away. It has never been our policy to “meddle” with the affairs of nations (Deut. ii. 5), or the consciences of its readers, but rather to pursue a ministry which belongs to a sphere entirely removed from the things of earth, leaving its readers with the Word as the sole arbiter for all their actions. Nevertheless it is obviously true that we may learn from the things around us, and there are still occasions when the rebuke may be merited that the children of this generation are wiser than the children of light. Foreseeing the possibilities of conflict, the Government has, among other things, provided refuges for the protection of the people, and it is this fact that provides the theme of our present meditations. God also has foreseen and provided a refuge, and He Himself is set forth in the Word in this capacity. At other times, we should have felt called upon to spare no pains in acquainting the reader with structural analysis and other exegetical features, but as this series is intended to minister to the “present necessity”, we shall in this case approach our subject more directly. The refuge is, so to speak, intended for immediate use, not to be taken to pieces and examined. The character of these short meditations will, therefore, differ somewhat from that of many of our other studies.

“The eternal God is thy refuge” (Deut. xxxiii. 27).

This is the covering title of the series, and takes us to the Fountain-head of all consolation, comfort and protection.

Moses must have had a reason for using the adjective “eternal” here. He could have said, with the Psalmist, “God is our refuge”, or “The God of Jacob is our refuge”, but he obviously intends to direct our attention, not only to God, but to some element in His character that is of particular relevance in connection with the need for a shelter, and its provision. The word “eternal” represents at least four different ideas in the Scriptures, and we must therefore acquaint ourselves with the facts.

Qedem, “eternal”, means “to precede, to go before”, and so at times conveys the thought of “anticipating” something before it happens, as may be seen in Jonah iv. 2, which Gesenius translates: “Thus I *anticipated* (the danger which threatens me) by fleeing to Tarshish.”

“Of old” is also a frequent translation, and the words of Hab. i. 12: “Art Thou not from everlasting?” give a similar thought. The reader should not only remember that the “eternal” God is “from of old”, for this of itself would not necessarily prove that He would be a refuge, but also that the word carries with it the idea of “being beforehand with anything”, “anticipating the demand” and providing for it.

As with the word “eternal”, so with the word “refuge”, it represents a number of ideas. In Deut. xxxiii. 27, the word is *meonah*, from a root meaning “to dwell”. This refuge is, therefore, a dwelling place. The same word is used for the “dwelling place” of God Himself (Psa. lxxvi. 2), and for the “dens” of wild beasts (Psa. civ. 22). In either case, the meaning is the same. It is a place that provides protection, and where one may feel secure.

The refuge provided for the people of God, is not to be conceived of in terms of concrete or steel, for immediately after the opening statement of Deut. xxxiii. 27 we read:

“And underneath are the everlasting arms.”

In our own language the word “arms” may have two different meanings, but there is no ambiguity in Deut. xxxiii. 27. The “everlasting arms” refer, not to armaments, but to the arms of the Lord, once “stretched out” to accomplish the deliverance of Israel (Deut. iv. 34; v. 15; vii. 19; ix. 29; xi. 2; xxvi. 8), and now stretched out in loving support, so that the weary child of God, forgetting all alarms, thinking not of unkindly steel or rough concrete, sinks into peaceful and secure rest in the arms of the God and *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“The God Who is beforehand is thy refuge.”

Things that be of God.

#1. The glory of God.

p. 39

If the righteousness of God be the irreducible standard according to which all things acceptable must conform, the glory of God is the goal and object towards which creation, old and new, must lead. In creation, “The heavens declare the glory of God”, and in the new creation, in all its varied spheres, the glory of God is the ever present goal.

SIN IS THE COMING SHORT OF THE GLORY OF GOD (Rom. iii. 23).

JUSTIFICATION REVIVES THE HOPE OF THE GLORY OF GOD (Rom. v. 2).

The whole life of the believer should be lived in view of the glory of God (I Cor. x. 31), even as, in his original creation, he was made in the image and glory of God (I Cor. xi. 7). In contrast with the face of Moses which shone with a transient glory, the light of the glory of God is seen in the face of Jesus Christ (II Cor. iv. 6). Howsoever many may be the promises of God, in Christ is the Yea and the Amen, to the glory of God (II Cor. i. 20), and when at last every knee shall bow—in heaven and earth and under the earth—and when every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, that too shall be to the glory of God (Phil. ii. 11).

This is one of the things that be of God which must be kept steadily before the mind if doctrine, hope and practice are to be scriptural and well pleasing.

#2. Things that be of men contrasted.

p. 79

When our Saviour rebuked Peter for his attitude towards the great work of the Cross, He said:

“Get thee behind Me, Satan Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Matt. xvi. 23).

We may learn some important lessons from this severe rebuke. The “things that be of God” are most evidently opposite to the “things that be of men”, and moreover, these “things of men” are but the opposition of Satan expressed through human lips. The words, “Thou savourest”, in the original, have nothing to do with incense or offering, but are an example of the idiomatic use of the verb *phroneo*, “to think”. The word *phren*, from which *phroneo* is derived, originally meant “the diaphragm, the region of the heart, the seat of the vital and mental powers”, so that, although the verb *phroneo* means “to think, or understand”, it is not entirely removed from the movements of affection, or

bias, or inclination. There are instances of such a use in the Apocrypha: as, for example, “to take part with” and “to be well affected” (I Mac. x. 20, II Mac. xiv. 26). It should be our earnest prayer that we may ever “incline” and be “well affected” towards the “things that be of God”, realizing that such an attitude will often be opposed to the “things that be of men”.

Scripture does not veil the fact, that to many there is something very offensive about the doctrine of the cross, and we should realize how diametrically opposed are the “things of God” to the “things of men” in this particular.

The self-same word is used in Matt. xvi. and in Gal. v., to indicate the attitude of God and man to the cross.

“Thou art an *offence* unto Me” (Matt. xvi. 23).

“Then is the *offence* of the cross ceased” (Gal. v. 11).

In both places the Greek word is *skandalon*, a word which is translated many times “stumbling-block”.

It is painfully evident from Phil. iii. that it was possible for a believer, by his walk, to become an “enemy” of the cross of Christ (Phil. iii. 18), and the message of the cross could be emptied of meaning by resorting to “wisdom of words” (I Cor. i. 17). There are many contrasts instituted by Paul between the things of God and the things of men, as for example the opening words of Gal. i. 1, or his attitude to “man’s day” (I Cor. iv. 3), but this we can only suggest to the reader, space not allowing of further comment here.

#3. Grace.

p. 99

“The grace of God” is the characteristic of that gospel for which the apostle Paul was willing to live and to die (Acts xx. 24), and unto that grace of God he had been recommended at the beginning of his public ministry (Acts xv. 40), and which was still his stay when he became the Lord’s prisoner (Eph. iii. 7).

The dispensation of the mystery, ministered by Paul as the prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles, was “the dispensation of the grace of God” (Eph. iii. 2), and this same grace of God which brings salvation, teaches us to “live looking for that blessed hope” (Titus ii. 11-13).

Let us not forget that “grace” and “gratitude” are never far apart in the renewed mind.

#4. Righteousness. **p. 139**

Whether we contemplate Creation, Law, or Gospel, one thing remains constant: the righteousness of God is maintained throughout all His works and ways. While it is a blessed fact that salvation springs from the *love* of God, it is so planned that it vindicates His *righteousness*, and provides also a righteousness for the guilty sinner who believes. In setting forth the Lord Jesus Christ as the propitiation, God was as much concerned that it should “declare *His* righteousness”, as that it should provide a righteousness for the redeemed. The very power of the gospel resides in the fact that “therein the righteousness of God is revealed”. To this end Christ died, the just for the unjust: and He Who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The righteousness of God is absolutely essential, whether it be in doctrine, or in practice; it is one of the “things that be of God” without which all must be in vain and end in death.

#5. Power. **pp. 159, 160**

The righteousness of God and the power of God are never separate in their motives. Might always subserves Right. When power to do is not under the control of Righteousness, then we have the conditions for the making of a Devil.

In the epistles of Paul, the power of God is associated with the cross (I Cor. i. 18), and with the gospel (Rom. i. 16). Peter assures the believer that this same power “keeps” (I Pet. i. 5), and provides all things that pertain unto life and godliness (II Pet. i. 3).

Resurrection is also intimately associated with the power of God. Christ “liveth by the power of God” (II Cor. xiii. 4), even as He was invested with power at His resurrection (Rom. i. 4). The resurrection of the believer is also assured by this same power (I Cor. vi. 14), as also is the ability to walk in newness of life unto God (II Cor. iv. 7; xii. 9; xiii. 4; Eph. i. 19; Phil. iii. 10).

The reader should note that *dunamis*, “power”, is closely related to the verb *dunameo*, “to be able”, and that in some passages where the word “able” occurs, it is wise to substitute the word “power” in order to do justice to the original.

#6. Peace.

p. 160

In Isaiah we read that “the work of righteousness shall be peace” (Isa. xxxii. 17), and in Romans that “being justified by faith, we have peace with God” (Rom. v. 1). The righteousness of God is vitally associated with peace *with* God, peace *from* God, and the peace *of* God.

The peace of God is very near to the climax of Christian experience, but the Apostle leads to the ultimate goal when he passes from the peace of God (Phil. iv. 7) to the God of peace (Phil. iv. 9). This is but another example of the principle that is at work throughout the purpose of the ages.

The righteousness of God is to lead to the God of Righteousness; the salvation of God is to lead to the God of Salvation; the glory of God is to lead to the God of Glory; and the peace of God is but a step on the way to the goal of all fellowship: “The God of peace shall be with you.”

The only references to “the peace of God” in the N.T. are Phil. iv. 7 and Col. iii. 15, both occurrences being in a practical setting. The word “rule” in Col. iii. 15 is *brabeuo*, “To act as umpire, judge, or president in the Greek games”, and is cognate with *brabeion*, “the prize” (I Cor. ix. 24 and Phil. iii. 14), and *katabrabeuo*, “to beguile of reward” (Col. ii. 18). No one who “contends for the mastery” can hope to attain to the prize of our high calling who is not continually under the influence of this most important of the “things that be of God”.

#7. Help.
p. 220

The apostle Paul, at different times, attributed his continuance and successful ministry, to the grace of God, to the mercy of God, or to the power of God. Once he used a military figure when he said to Agrippa, a military man:

“Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day” (Acts xxvi. 22).

The word “help” used here by the Apostle occurs nowhere else in the N.T. It signifies military assistance, and is derived from *koros*, which means a young person. The element of youth however must not be unduly pressed any more than the word “infant” must be unduly pressed in the military term “infantry”. The idea behind the figure used by Paul is, that he was permitted to conduct his campaign with a fair amount of freedom of action, but that he knew that whenever the pressure of the foe demanded it, there was always available that “additional military aid” which in so many human campaigns has turned the tide of battle and ensured victory.

Let us not under-estimate the psychological influence this ever available aid must have upon the servant of the Lord, even when the battle is at its fiercest or victory nowhere in sight.

The truth of God contrasted with the lie and Unfaithfulness.
p. 220

The truth of God is in solemn contrast with “the lie” in Rom. i. 25, and with unfaithfulness in Rom. iii. 7. The former reference deals with the nature of the Godhead; the Creator as contrasted with the creature, the incorruptible God as compared with corruptible man, “the truth” as contrasted with “the lie”. In Rom. iii. 1-8 the faithfulness of God to all His Word is in view; the God Who cannot lie, Who changes not, even though His chosen people fail. The Hebrew word for “faith” is the Greek word “Amen”.

#8. The life of God.

p. 240

Paul, in his ministry, makes fourteen references to God as “The living God”, also of “The life of Jesus”, and of “Christ Who is our life”, but once only does he speak of “The life of God”, and that in Eph. iv. 18. In fact verse 18 contains the only reference to “life” (*zoe*) in the epistle. In Scripture, emphasis may be produced by repetition, but sometimes a truth stands out on the page of Scripture by the mere fact of its isolation. Here is such a statement. The Gentiles had become alienated from the life of God by reason of the ignorance that was in them. Here is one of the things of God, without which neither righteousness nor grace, peace nor glory, are of any avail. What this “life of God” involves, and how it is associated with “ignorance” is a theme that demands most sober thought. Praise be to God for “Christ our Life”.

The Volume of the Book.

#31. The Greek Text of the Revised Version. Is it trustworthy? pp. 121 - 125

In Volumes XXIII and XXIV we endeavoured to draw the reader's attention to several features of importance that justify the use of the R.V. as one of many aids to the understanding of the Word of God. We sought to be as fair as possible in our presentation, but we feel that unless this commendation is associated with a warning, some may be led to a fuller acceptance of the R.V. than we can conscientiously advocate.

The R.V. must be considered from two points of view: (1) The changes that have been made in the English translation. (2) The changes that have been made in the Greek text.

The second consideration is the more serious and far-reaching in its consequences. In direct disobedience to their instructions, the Revisers have forced upon the church a new Greek Text, a text virtually imposed upon them by Drs. Westcott and Hort, a text circulated among them privately and under a vow of secrecy, a text never submitted to the publicity and open examination which such a subject demands. The rule under which the Revisers undertook their task, so far as the Greek text is concerned, reads:

“To introduce as few alterations as possible into the Text of the Authorized Version, consistently with faithfulness.”

The condition enjoined was that, whenever “decidedly preponderating evidence” compelled a change in the text, it should be indicated in the Margin. Dean Burgon asks, with every reason for his astonishment:

“Will it be believed that this notwithstanding, *not one* of the many alterations which have been introduced into the original text is so commemorated? On the contrary: singular to relate, the Margin is disfigured throughout with ominous hints that had ‘Some ancient authorities’, ‘Many ancient authorities’, ‘Many very ancient authorities’ been attended to, many more changes might, could, would, or should have been introduced into the Greek Text than have been actually adopted.”

Before proceeding, we must put the reader in possession of a few outstanding facts concerning the Greek Text so that he may duly appreciate the gravity of the situation brought about by the Revised Text of the R.V.

If a comparison be made between the A.V. and the R.V. it will be found that there are 36,000 alterations.

Canon Cook, speaking of the Reviser's Text of the first three Gospels, says:

“It is not too much to say that in nine passages out of ten—nay to go further—in every passage of vital importance as regards the integrity of Holy Scripture, the veracity of the sacred writers, and the records of our Lord’s sayings, nearly all ancient versions, and with very few exceptions, all ancient Fathers, support the readings rejected by the Revisers.”

Of the 36,000 alterations mentioned above, over 5,000 are definite changes of the Greek Text, and not a revision of the A.V. translation.

“There is the idea in the minds of some people that scholarship demands the laying aside of the Authorized Version of the Bible and taking up the latest Revised Version. This is an idea, however, without any proper basis. The Revised Version is in large part in line with what is known as Modernism, and is peculiarly acceptable to those who think any change, anywhere or in anything, progress. Those who have investigated the matter, and are in hearty sympathy with what is evangelical, realize that this Revised Version is a part of the movement to ‘modernize’ Christian thought and faith and do away with the established truth” -
(*The Herald and Presbyter*, July 16, 1924).

The dramatic discovery of the Sinaitic Manuscript (*see* Volume XXI, pages 169-176) gave it an importance that is not borne out by cool examination, and much the same can be said of the famous Vatican Manuscript. These two, the Sinaitic and the Vatican Manuscripts, practically dominate the R.V.

Dr. B. Warfield writes:

“I have been surprised, in comparing the R.V. with other versions, to find how many changes, which are important and valuable, have been anticipated by the Rhemish translation which now forms a part of what is known as the Douay Bible And yet a careful comparison of these new translations with the Rhemish Testament, shows them, in many instances, to be simply a return to this old version, and leads us to think that possibly there were as finished scholars 300 years ago as now, and nearly as good apparatus for the proper rendering of the original text.”

Before we commit ourselves to an unreserved acceptance of the Greek Text of the R.V., we must pause and consider whether after all it may not be but the rising to the surface of some of the errors perpetuated in the Romish Version, to the undermining of truth. The veneration paid to the Vatican Manuscript may perhaps be the veneration, not of truth, but of tradition. Hemphill writes:

“In fact nine tenths of the countless divisions and textual struggles around that table in the Jerusalem Chamber arose over Hort’s determination to base the Greek N.T. on the Vatican Manuscript.”

Cardinal Wiseman exulted openly that the A.V. had been thrust aside and the pre-eminence of the Vulgate re-established through the influence of his attacks and those of other textual critics (*see* Wiseman: *Essays* Vol. I, page 104).

We must devote a separate article to the question of Westcott and Hort’s Greek Text. In the present article we want to survey the subject from a wider angle.

It has been too readily assumed that the scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were in possession of material for the revision of the Greek text that warrants the setting aside of the Received Text upon which the A.V. is based.

Kenyon, whose connection with the Department of Manuscripts at the British Museum lends weight to his words, writes:

“A correspondent of Erasmus in 1533 sent that scholar a number of selected readings from Codex B (The Vatican MS) as a proof of its superiority to the received Greek Text.”

Erasmus, however, rejected the readings of the Vatican Manuscript because he considered the massive evidence of his day proved the Received Text to be correct.

When Constantine in A.D.312 adopted the Christian faith, as it was then presented, and had to choose between the conflicting editions of the Greek Text that were in use in his day, he had before him three types of manuscript.

- (1) The Constantinopolitan. This is the Received Text of the A.V.
- (2) The Palestinian or Eusebio-Origen.
- (3) The Egyptian of Hesychius.

The defenders of the Constantinopolitan text were the humbler classes. The Eusebio-Origen text was intermingled with philosophy. Constantine adopted this as the official text and asked Eusebius to prepare fifty copies. *The Vatican Manuscript belongs to this group; many authorities believe that it is one of the actual copies, and that the Sinaitic is another.* (See Swete, Intro. to O.T. in Greek; Dr. I. M. Price, The Ancestry of our English Bible; A. T. Robertson, Intro. To Textual Criticism).

Scrivener in his introduction writes:

“That the worst corruptions, to which the New Testament has ever been subjected, originated within a hundred years after it was composed; that Irenæus (A.D.150) and the African Fathers, and the whole Western, with a portion of the Syrian Church, used far inferior manuscripts to those employed by Stunica or Erasmus, or Stephens thirteen centuries later, when moulding the Textus Receptus (i.e. The Text of the A.V.).”

In spite, however, of the prestige of Constantine’s adopted version it was unable to hold its own, and what is now called the Received Text (the Greek Text of the A.V.) early became the Bible of the Greek Empire, Syria, North Italy, South France and the British Isles.

The Syriac Version (A.D.150) follows the Received Text.

“The Old Latin Versions were used longest by Western Christendom who would not bow to the authority of Rome.”

The two main streams of Greek Manuscripts and their relation to the two versions may be set out as follows:

| A. V. | R. V. |
|--|---|
| The Received Text (Greek). Waldensian Bible (Italic). Erasmus. Received text restored. Luther. Dutch, French, Italian from the R.T. Tyndale A.D.1535 (English) from the R.T. The Authorized Version A.D.1611. | Sinaiticus and Vaticanus (Greek). Vulgate (Latin). Rome's Bible French, Spanish, Italian from the Vulgate. Rheims. English from the Vulgate Jesuit Bible of A.D.1582. Westcott and Hort. Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, R.V. 1881. |

Tyndale translated from the text of Erasmus. Writing of this, *Demaus* said:

“He was of course aware of the existence of Wycliff’s version; but this as a bald translation from the Vulgate into obsolete English could not be of any assistance to one who was endeavouring ‘simply and faithfully’ so far as God had given him the gift of knowledge and understanding, to render the N.T. from the original Greek into proper English” -
(*Demaus*, “William Tyndale”).

The reader, however much he may have to admit ignorance of the principles of textual criticism, or however firmly he may have been persuaded to accept the Vatican Manuscript as of greater authority than the Received Text, will at least be willing to admit that the matter cannot summarily settled. The question of the value of the R.V. must first of all turn upon the authority of the Revisers’ adopted Text. Without pretending to deal with this matter as an expert, or for experts, we feel it incumbent upon us to set before the reader the claims that the Received Text still possesses, and to make clear the methods and the principles that led to the adoption of the Revisers’ Greek Text.

May we earnestly ask our readers not to think lightly of this matter? It is our heritage, and the whole fabric of truth that is at stake. When we find Unitarians, Modernists and Romanisers holding the R.V. in preference to the A.V. it should make us pause, lest we be mistaking the chaff for the wheat.

**#32. The Greek Text of the Revised Version.
What are the Evidences?
pp. 175 - 179**

There is no short cut to textual criticism. The need for personal and patient inspection of every original manuscript, painstaking tabulation and comparison, and many years of labour, as well as sound scholarship and critical acumen, makes textual criticism the service only of the few. We must, therefore, be prepared to accept the findings of others. On the other hand, we shall not easily allow any scholar or group of scholars to take from us the Greek New Testament which has been in use through the centuries, and substitute a text of their own, based upon one or two manuscripts of the fourth century, unless there is very strong evidence in favour of the change. The Revisers' Greek Text is largely that of the Vatican Manuscript, and we have a right to know upon what grounds this one manuscript is to be regarded as correct in preference to hundreds of other testimonies. It is not enough to speak of "authorities"; we must see the evidence. In all matters of textual criticism appeal must be made to the consent of antiquity; yet the oldest existing manuscript need not necessarily be the purest.

There are three instruments of textual criticism: (1) Copies, (2) Versions, (3) The Fathers.

(1) *Copies*.—Since the beginning of Christianity a great number of copies have been made and widely distributed. The very existence of these widely distributed copies is a most effective safeguard against fraud. Where anything like unanimity exists among thousands of such copies, we probably have the original text.

(2) *Versions*.—Not only were copies made of the original Greek, but the necessities of the case soon produced many versions in various languages. The old Peshito Syrian Version dates from the second century. While these translations do not present the original, they provide a most valuable check upon innovations, and where their evidence concurs the text is beyond dispute.

(3) *The Fathers*.—From the beginning, the Christian faith was attacked, and these attacks called forth an army of apologists, controversialists and teachers, whose writings cover the whole range of the sacred volume, so providing evidence of the text with which they were familiar.

Most of the copies of the Greek N.T. now in existence date from the 10th to the 14th centuries. They are copies of manuscripts older than themselves, and in the main are faithful presentations of the inspired originals. The testimony of these manuscripts, together with the evidence of the Versions and the witness of the Fathers, have been ruthlessly set aside in the R.V. in favour of one or two manuscripts, of which the chief are the Vaticanus and the Sinaiticus, which are assigned to the fourth century. To these may be added the Alexandrian (A), the rescript Codex designated C, and the Codex Bezae (D).

“Singular to relate, the first, second, fourth and fifth of these codices (B, Aleph, C, D), but especially B and Aleph, have within the last twenty years established a tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of the Critics, which can only be fitly spoken of as a blind superstition. It matters nothing that all four are discovered on careful scrutiny to differ essentially, not only from ninety-nine out of a hundred of the whole body of extant MSS besides, but even *from one another*. This last circumstance, obviously fatal to their corporate pretensions, is unaccountably overlooked” (*Burgon*).

If we take the two most important of these MSS, we find that they differ markedly on every page. Collating them with the Received Text, in the Gospels alone we find the followings:

“The Vaticanus is found to omit at least 2877 words; to add 536, to substitute 935; to transpose 2098; to modify 1132 (in all 7578)—the corresponding figures for the Sinaiticus being severally 3455, 839, 1114, 2299, 1265 (in all 8972). And be it remembered that the omissions, additions, substitutions, transpositions and modifications, *are by no means the same in both*. It is in fact easier to find two consecutive verses in which these two MSS differ the one from the other, than two consecutive verses in which they entirely agree” (*Burgon*).

Bishop Ellicott, the Chairman of the Revisionists, speaks of these four manuscripts as follows:

“The simplicity and dignified conciseness of the Vatican Manuscript (B); the great expansiveness of our own Alexandrian (A); the partially mixed characteristics of the Sinaitic (Aleph); the paraphraistic tone of the singular codex Bezae (D) are now brought home to the student” (*Considerations on Revision 1870*).

Dean Burgon asks:

“Could ingenuity have devised severer satire than such a description of four professing *transcripts* of a book: and *that* book, the everlasting gospel itself?”

Dean Burgon suggests that the reader should take a copy of the Greek N.T., using Lloyd’s edition, and turn to page 189, which contains ten verses of Luke’s Gospel (chapter viii. 35-44). Upon collating the five codices, the following result is obtained:

“A stands alone twice, B 6 times, Aleph 8 times; C 15 times; D 93 times AB, stand together by themselves once; Aleph C once; C D once Lastly, they are never once found to be in accord in respect to any single various reading. Will any one, after a candid survey of the premises, deem us unreasonable, if we avow that such a specimen of the *concordia discors* which everywhere prevails between the oldest uncials, but which especially characterizes Aleph, B, D, indisposes us greatly to suffer their unsupported authority to determine for us the text of Scripture?”

Bishop Ellicott’s view was that the best way of proceeding with the work of revision was “to make the Textus Receptus the standard, departing from it only when critical or grammatical considerations show that it is clearly necessary”.

Lachmann, Tregelles and Tischendorf, however, followed a different line:

“Lachmann’s text seldom rests on more than four Greek codices, very often on three, not infrequently on two, *sometimes on only one*” (*Scrivener*).

Tregelles, whose indefatigable industry and conscientious labour surpass all praise, nevertheless adopted Lachmann’s leading fallacy and so spoilt his work. He persuaded himself that *eighty-nine ninetieths* of our extant manuscripts and other authorities could safely be rejected.

“The case of Dr. Tischendorf (proceeds Bishop Ellicott) is more easily disposed of. *Which* of this most inconstant critic’s texts are we to select? Surely not the last, in which an exaggerated preference for a single manuscript which he has had the good fortune to discover, has betrayed him into an almost child-like infirmity of critical judgment”

The last to enter the field of textual criticism were Drs. Westcott and Hort, who confess that they “have deliberately chosen on the whole to rely for documentary evidence on the stores accumulated by their predecessors, and to confine themselves to their proper work of editing the text itself”.

These Editors take the Vaticanus as their standard together with its combinations with the other primary Greek manuscripts. But, as *Dean Burgon* pertinently asks:

“Did it ever occur to these learned men to enquire how the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament has fared at the hands of Codex B (The Vatican Manuscript)? They are respectfully invited to address themselves to this very damaging enquiry.”

The readings of the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus combined may safely be accepted as genuine, say Westcott and Hort. But what is to be done when these two manuscripts disagree? The answer is, that one takes the Vaticanus and any other primary manuscript that agrees, as giving the true text because “on the closest scrutiny” they generally “have the ring of genuineness”, and hardly ever “look suspicious after full consideration”.

With reference to the varied readings in Mark ii. 1-12 of the five manuscripts held in such veneration by Westcott and Hort, *Dean Burgon* asks:

“What would be thought in a court of law of five witnesses, called up 47 times for examination, who should be observed to bear contradictory testimony *every time*?”

On the surface, then, it appears that these five oldest manuscripts are not trustworthy witnesses: and on closer investigation their testimony betrays the baseness of their origin. Upon evidence such as this, in spite of the overwhelming unanimity of ancient copies and versions, the R.V. would rob the Lord of His glory and the Church of the truth in such a passage as I Tim. iii. 16.

When we learn that among the Revisionists was *G. Vance Smith*, a Unitarian Minister, and read the following extracts from the writings of Westcott and Hort concerning such important matters as Darwinism, Mariolatry and Romanism, we cannot help feeling that such leanings must surely have coloured much of their labours on the Greek Text.

“My feeling is strong that the theory (Darwin’s) is unanswerable. If so, it opens up a new period” (*Dr. Hort*, 1860).

“I wish I could see to what forgotten truth Mariolatry bears witness” (*Dr. Westcott* to Archbishop Benson, 1865).

“You know I am a staunch sacerdotalist” (*Hort* to Lightfoot).

“The pure Romish view seems to me nearer, and more likely to lead to, the truth than the Evangelical we dare not forsake the sacraments or God will forsake us” (*Dr. Hort*, 1868).

These are the views of the men who have imposed upon us in the R.V. the text of the Vatican Manuscript.

Bishop Wilberforce, the first Chairman of the Revision, wrote: “What can be done in this most miserable business?” He absented himself and did not take part in the proceedings.

Samuel Hemphill gives a vivid account of the dominating character of Westcott and Hort and their ruthless methods.

“A strong and united group of Progressives quickly manifested the determination to impress their principles, their ideals, and it may be added, their personalities fully upon the work. Their motto was ‘Thorough’, their goal was minute and detached perfection in the textual and grammatical departments; and no consideration for the mind of the outside public, if they ever seriously thought about feeling the throbbings of the public pulse at all, could deflect them by one hair’s breadth from the effort to reach that goal. Deaf to the pleadings and remonstrances of the conservatives, who fondly hoped to confine the company to the work of removing ‘plain and clear errors’ and passionately prophesied that the Revision if overdone would be a public failure, these zealous and ‘fearless’ men, pressed for an entire reconstruction of the Greek text on modern critical principles a new type of text was incidentally and in passing elaborated and what was scarcely less serious, a new standard of ‘faithfulness’ in translation was set up.

Scrivener was one of the most assiduous of the Revisers, and never failed to state his case fully, but he found himself constantly in a minority, and was in truth very often voted down by sheer force of numbers, when Hort and Westcott opposed him as they generally did.

While he had been taught, by the actual work of collation to use these MSS (the Vatican and the Sinaitic) as only two out of many helps to the reconstruction of the primitive text, Hort and Westcott had persuaded themselves to regard their consentient voice as the one virtual final and infallible authority.”

The seriousness of our quest we trust is evident. Which version is more trustworthy? We unhesitatingly say, the Authorized Version. We must reserve the examination of specific instances of the Revisers’ handling of the sacred text for another article.

**#33. The Greek Text of the Revised Version.
The Revisers' Text, and the Voice of Antiquity.
pp. 230 - 233**

Before we proceed to a consideration of one or two specimens of the Revisers' Greek Text, it may perhaps be advisable to give some idea of the methods adopted by Drs. Westcott and Hort in establishing their "Revised Greek Text of the New Testament". We should justly expose ourselves to a charge of presumption were we to attempt our own criticism of the theory adopted by these two Revisers, and we shall therefore quote instead from the writings of one whose name stands as high as any man's in the field of textual criticism—Prebendary Scrivener. Dr. Scrivener, who was himself one of the Revision Committee and a continual opponent of Drs. Westcott and Hort, has given an estimate of their theory that should cause all who value the truth, to hesitate very much before accepting the many alterations and omissions presented to us in the R.V. The following are some of his comments with reference to the system used by Drs. Westcott and Hort in constructing their "Revised Greek Text of the New Testament" (1881).

- (1) "There is little hope for the stability of their imposing structure, if its foundations have been laid on the sandy ground of conjecture. And since barely the smallest vestige of historical evidence has ever been alleged in support of the views of these accomplished Editors, their teaching must either be received as intuitively true, or dismissed from our consideration as precarious and visionary."
- (2) "Dr. Hort's system is entirely destitute of historical foundation."
- (3) "We are compelled to repeat as emphatically as ever our strong conviction that the Hypothesis to whose proof he has devoted so many laborious years, is destitute not only of historical foundation, but of all probability."
- (4) "We cannot doubt" (says Dr. Hort) "that S. Luke xxiii. 34 comes from an extraneous source". "Nor can we on our part doubt" (rejoins Dr. Scrivener) "that the system which entails such consequences is hopelessly self-condemned."
(Scrivener's "Plain Introduction", etc., Ed. 1883).

Let us weigh these words carefully. "The sandy ground of conjecture." Is this sufficient warrant for the change from the A.V. to the R.V. in I Tim. iii. 16? "Destitute of historical foundation." Is this the ground upon which our knowledge of the Word of God must rest? The Revisers were instructed not to meddle with the Greek Text except where the error was "plain and clear". Inasmuch as Dr. Scrivener was one of the Revisers together with Drs. Westcott and Hort, his sweeping condemnation should make us think carefully before accepting such a text as true. Others also of the Revision Committee have publicly repudiated any complicity in this matter, including Canon Cook, and Archdeacon Wordsworth. Dean Burgon, in the Dedication of his work on the Revisers' Text, writes as follows:

"It is, however, the systematic depravation of the underlying Greek which does so grievously offend me: for this is nothing else but a poisoning of the River of Life at its sacred source."

Later on, in his examination of the theory of Westcott and Hort, he writes:

“Strange, that you should not perceive that you are the dupes of a fallacy which is even transparent. You *talk* of ‘antiquity’. But you must know very well that you actually *mean* something different. You fasten upon three, or perhaps four, or two, or perhaps three—or *one*, or *perhaps two*—documents of the ivth and vth century. But then confessedly, there are one, two, three, or four *specimens only* of Antiquity, not ‘Antiquity’ itself. And what if they should prove to be *unfair samples* of Antiquity? Thus, you are observed always to quote Cod. B (The Vatican) or at least Aleph (The Sinaiticus). Pray, why may not the truth reside instead with A (The Alexandrian) or C (The Rescript) or R (The Bezae)? You quote the old Latin or the Coptic. Why may not the Peschito or the Sahidic be right rather? You quote either Origen or else Eusebius, but why not Didymus and Athanasius, Epiphanius and Basil, Chrysostom and Theodoret, the Gregories and the Cyrils? It will appear therefore that we are every bit as strongly convinced as you can be of the paramount claims of ‘Antiquity’ but that, eschewing prejudice and partiality, we differ from you only in this, viz. that we absolutely refuse to bow down before the *particular specimens of Antiquity* which you have arbitrarily selected as the object of your superstition. You are illogical enough to propose to include within your list of ‘Ancient Authorities’ Cod. 1, 33 and 69—which are severally MSS of the xth, xith and xivth century. And why? Only because the Text of those 3 copies is observed to bear a sinister resemblance to that of Codex B (The Vatican). But then why, in the name of common sense, do you not show corresponding favour to the remaining 997 cursive copies of the N.T.—seeing that these are observed to bear *the same general resemblance of Codex A* (The Alexandrian)?”

Neither the reader nor the writer can be regarded as “textual critics”. No mere intuition can ever constitute a qualification for such an important office. The only basis for true and stable progress towards the attainment of the original Greek text is the exact collation of all existing MSS, Versions, Fathers and Lectionaries. “We may safely keep our ‘theories’ back till we have collated our MSS, re-edited our Versions, indexed our Fathers. They will be abundantly in time *then*.”

Before concluding this article, which is only intended to show the seriousness of unqualified acceptance of the R.V. Greek Text, we give in our own words Dean Burgon’s summary.

Dr. Hort says of the text of Lachmann, made in 1831, that it is “the first founded upon documentary authority”. We discover, however, that Lachmann arbitrarily swept aside “Antiquity” and relied on one or two MSS of the ivth and vth centuries. The Received Text (the text of the A.V.) edited by Erasmus (1516) and Stunica (1522), exhibits a traditional text “the general purity of which is demonstrated by all the evidence which 350 years of subsequent research have succeeded in accumulating; and which is confessedly the text of A.D.375”.

In the “History of this Edition” of the R.V. Greek Text, there are many and serious occasions where “W” disagrees with “H”. As Dean Burgon says:

“We are reminded of what was wittily said concerning Richard Baxter, viz., that even if no one but himself existed in the church ‘Richard’ would still be found to disagree with ‘Baxter’, and we read with uneasiness that ‘No individual mind can ever act with perfect

uniformity or free itself completely from *its own idiosyncracies*; and that the danger of *unconscious caprice* is inseparable from personal judgment” (page 17).

We do not wonder that the Dean continues:

“May we be permitted without offence to point out (not for the first time) that ‘idiosyncracies’ and ‘unconscious caprice’ and the fancies of the ‘individual mind’ can be allowed *no place whatever* in a problem of such gravity and importance as the present.”

It would be a weariness to most of our readers to continue with this theme. The theory upon which Drs. Westcott and Hort worked to produce their Greek Text is unsound. It depends upon assumptions and not evidences, and it arbitrarily sets up one or two MSS as standards to the discrediting of widely distributed evidences of even earlier dates. The reader who desires to pursue this subject further should read the Introduction written by Dr. Hort, and then Dean Burgon’s searching criticism. We are convinced that by the time he has finished reading these, the additions and subtractions of the R.V. will weigh little with him unless confirmed by other evidences.

This is all we aim at in this series. We are not pretending to teach the principles of textual criticism, but simply to give sufficient evidence for accepting with extreme caution the unsupported readings of the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS which underlie the Text of the present Revised Version.

Wisdom; Human and Divine.

Being a comparison of the groping after the truth of the ancient philosophers with the truth as it is revealed in Scripture, in order that the believer may the better appreciate the Word of God.

#18. The Philosophies of New Testament Times.

Stoicism, the Philosophy of Pride.

Epicureanism, the Philosophy of Pleasure.

Scepticism, the Philosophy of Indifference.

pp. 34 - 39

Our investigations into the history of philosophy bring us at last into actual contact with the philosophers mentioned in Scripture. Aristotle's successors were the Stoics and the Epicureans, and both of these schools are mentioned in Acts xvii.

Stoicism.

To the Stoic, the proper condition of the mind was expressed by the word apathy; to the Epicurean, by self-contentment; and to the Sceptic, by imperturbability or indifference. All three agreed that the only way to happiness was peace of mind, but they each sought it differently—the peace of apathy, the peace of self-contentment, and the peace of indifference. How the heart rejoices as one thinks of that “peace with God” which the justified believer possesses, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and that “peace of God”, passing all understanding, that keeps the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. What a tremendous change, from the Stoic's peace of apathy to the believer's peace with God on account of the atoning sacrifice of Christ.

Zeno, the founder of the Stoics, taught that the real business of all philosophy is human conduct, and had little sympathy with the idealism and dialectic of Plato and his school. The keen interest in logic displayed by the Socratic school was not perpetuated by the Stoics. Indeed, one of them likened logic to the eating of lobsters—much trouble for little meat. This attitude was probably intensified by the abuse of logic among those whose paradoxes prove them to be clever but useless members of society.

“Belonging to an age morally debased and politically oppressed, its founder, Zeno, conceived the idea of liberating himself, and all who were able to follow him, from the degeneracy and slavery of the age, by means of a philosophy which, by purity and strength of moral will, would procure independence from all external things and unruffled inward peace.”

The hymn to Jove, written by the Stoic, Cleanthes, and quoted by Paul on Mars' Hill, shows how near at times these men came to the truth.

“Most glorious of the gods, immortal Jove!
Supreme, on earth beneath, in heaven above!
Thou great first cause, whose word is Nature’s law,
Before thy throne we mortals bend in awe;
For we thine offspring are. To man is given—
To man alone—to lift a voice to heaven.”

To “follow nature” and to “live in agreement with nature” constituted the moral principles of the Stoics, but their attitude must not be confused with that of the Epicureans, who made pleasure their guide and goal. The Stoic interpretation was to “live in agreement with your own rational nature, so far as it is not corrupted and distorted by art, and to exclude every personal end, consequently, the most personal—pleasure”. What high ideals—but what poor material on which to work! There is, alas, a “corruption” and “distortion” deeper than that produced by “art”, which makes the exhortation to “follow nature” a course that ends only in death. The words of the prophet:

“We have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isa. liii. 6).

contain truth concerning the nature of sin and the one and only remedy—a remedy that was unknown to Stoic philosophy.

The Apostle’s words in Acts xx. 24: “None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself”, would have gained the approval of the Stoic, but he would not have understood the Apostle’s motive, which was “Christ and the gospel”. The Stoics held that he only is good who is perfectly good. Their standard, however, was not God’s law of righteousness, but “reason and nature”. They affirmed that faultless moral action was only possible through the possession of entire virtue, a perfect perception of the good, and perfect power of realization. The apostle Paul could have told them, out of his own experience, how deep a gulf there is between “perfect perception” and “perfect power”:

“That which I do, I allow not; for that I would, what do I not, but what I hate, that do I *to will* is present with me, but *to perform* that which is good I find not O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom. vii. 15-24).

F. W. Farrar writes of the Stoics as follows:

“Aiming at the attainment of a complete supremacy, not only over their passions, but even over their circumstances—professing fictitious indifference to every influence of pain or sorrow,

‘For there was never yet philosopher
That could endure the toothache patiently’ (Shakespeare).

standing proudly alone in their unaided independence and self-asserted strength, the Stoics, with their vaunted apathy, had stretched the power of will until it cracked and shriveled under the unnatural strain; and this gave to their lives a consciousness of insincerity which, in the worst sort of them, degraded their philosophy into a cloak for every form of ambition and iniquity, and which made the nobler souls among them

melancholy with a morbid egotism and an intense despair. In their worst degeneracies Stoicism became the apotheosis of suicide, and Epicureanism the glorification of lust.”

Epicureanism.

The watch-word of the Epicureans was pleasure, and morals were all explained in this light. The sailor who risked his life to save a stranger, the martyr who died for his faith, the profligate whose sensuality ruined the lives of others, were all actuated, according to Epicurus, solely by the “pleasure” they received. One can easily see how soon such a philosophy would spread its blight over the community. The Apostle probably had the Epicureans in mind when he spoke of those “whose god is their belly”, for Metrodous asserted that everything good has reference to the belly. To demand virtue for its own sake they considered foolishness. According to the Epicurean view, only those who had pleasure as their aim had a real object in life. The Stoics and the Epicureans may be called the exponents of pride and pleasure, and each in their own way were necessarily enemies of the faith.

The Epicureans were materialists. The gods, if they existed, dwelt apart in complete indifference. The universe was but a thing of chance, and as there was no creator, there could be no moral governor, and no day of judgment. The idea of a resurrection was to them ridiculous; and, as the Apostle wrote: “. . . . if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die”—which was exactly what the Epicurean philosophy led to. To the Stoics also the idea of future reward or punishment was intolerable, so that we can appreciate the way in which the Apostle led up to the day of judgment, and the resurrection of the dead, when he spoke to these philosophers on Mars’ Hill.

Paul could not have been ignorant of the fact that Socrates also had been arraigned before the Athenian Council at Areopagus on the charge of introducing strange gods, and had pleaded his own cause, as did the Apostle. The opening words of his defence were as follows:

“Ye men of Athens (the same words as were used by the apostle Paul), I know not how you yourselves have been affected by my accusers; but I have well-nigh forgotten myself, so persuasively have they spoke. If you hear me defending myself in the same language that I am wont to use in the market place, where and elsewhere most of you have heard me, let me entreat you not to be surprised, or take it in ill part, for thus it is: now for the first time, at the age of more than seventy years, I appear at the bar of the court.”

Socrates did not know the Saviour, or the blessed hope of resurrection, but he said to his judges: “I must obey God rather than you”, and died for his teaching and his conscience. It certainly seems that the Apostle, who wrote of the Gentiles who have not the law (Rom. ii.), and of the period of Gentile ignorance that God winked at (Acts xvii.), would not have entertained any harsh views concerning the old philosopher who had stood years before in the same place.

Scepticism.

The one other system of philosophy with which we have to deal is Scepticism. The founder of this school was Pyrrho, who was associated with Alexander the Great. The fundamental doctrine of the Sceptics was the same as that of the Stoics and the Epicureans—namely, that “philosophy shall conduct us to happiness”. The Sceptics held that what things really are, lies beyond the sphere of our knowledge. For all we know, the opposite of every proposition is still possible. In the circumstances, the true line for the philosopher is a complete suspension of judgment. His attitude was: “It is possible, it may perhaps be so, I know nothing for certain”—to which he was careful to add, “Nor do I even know for certain that I know nothing for certain”. In this suspension of judgment, and in this alone, the Sceptic believed that tranquility was to be found.

Paul, as we have seen, bore his testimony before the Stoics and Epicureans. In the case of the Lord Himself, it was before the Sceptic, Pontius Pilate. When Pilate asked “Thos art a King then?” the Lord answered:

“Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth My voice” (John xviii. 37).

To which Pilate replies: “What is truth?” Pilate did not ask this question in order to obtain an answer. His words were the words of a Sceptic, and were probably spoken with a sneer, and a contemptuous turn of the heel, without waiting for any answer, and believing that no answer was possible.

“And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in Him no fault at all” (John xviii. 38).

Here, before one of the basest products of the philosophy of the ages, stood the living Truth Himself, and yet the Jews combined with the Gentiles to put Him to death, choosing rather Barabbas.

Throughout this series we have but one aim—to do all that we can to impress the reader with the fact that the only true wisdom is the wisdom that comes to us in the living personal Christ. All else is but an unsuccessful groping in the dark. He alone solves the problem of Being and Becoming; of the First Cause and the Last Goal. He Himself is Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Like Asaph, we have vexed our souls in the schools of philosophy, and find no satisfaction or peace until at length we have gone into the sanctuary, and there we have seen the end. In the light of the birth at Bethlehem, the sacrifice of Calvary, and the resurrection from the sealed tomb, we see that which no philosopher could discover, and like Asaph we can say:

“Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee” (Psa. lxxiii. 25).

It may be our glad task at a future date to draw the reader's attention to the actual philosophy of the Scripture themselves.

“The darkness is past, and the true light now shineth” (I John ii. 8).

“We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life” (I John v. 20).

(Concluded).

Words of Comfort.

#4. “Nevertheless Afterwards” (Heb. xii. 11). pp. 77, 78

In the preceding three articles of this series we have seen that suffering and trial are (1) only for a season, (2) always for a reason, and (3) however manifold, are perfectly matched by manifold grace. Another thought which should be of comfort to the tried and tested believer is found in Heb. xii. 11: “Nevertheless afterwards.” If we go back through this epistle, we shall find in every section a compensating “afterwards”. The first section speaks of Christ being made “a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death”, but what a blessed sequel is revealed—He Who was perfected through sufferings, becomes the Captain of Salvation leading many sons to glory (Heb. i., ii.). The next section speaks of Israel’s wilderness experiences, and here again, while many failed of the grace of God and fell in the wilderness, there was a blessed “afterwards” for those who, like Caleb and Joshua, “wholly followed the Lord” (Heb. iii., vi.). And so throughout the Epistle.

Of all the examples of a blessed “afterwards” that Scripture provides, the case of Job stands out as one of the most striking. The Divine comment here, given in James v. 10, 11, is worthy of note:

“Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.”

If we consider the Apostle’s experience as recorded in II Cor. xii., we find that he, too, passed through a bitter trial to realize the blessedness of God’s “afterwards”. His experiences followed so closely in the footsteps of his Lord, that we can truly speak of them, as we observe his three-fold request for deliverance, as the Apostle’s Gethsemane.

“For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”

Then comes the “afterwards”:

“Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (II Cor. xii. 8, 9).

It would be a profitable labour for every reader to compile a list of Scriptural examples setting forth in various ways how blessedly true is this principle of “Nevertheless afterwards”.

The life of the Lord Jesus Himself provides many illustrations. In Matt. xi. we find Him rebuking Chorazin and Capernaum “wherein His mighty works were done, because

they repented not”; and yet, arising out of this terrible rejection, come those blessed words of comfort:

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest I am meek” (Matt. xi. 20-30).

In Heb. xii. the writer makes it clear that this principle of the “afterwards” applies to the Lord Himself as well as to His children:

“Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. xii. 2).

Following directly from this statement is the passage that contains our text. In verses 5-11 the Apostle’s theme is chastisement. He encourages all who may be suffering chastisement, to remember that chastening implies childhood and parentage, and that it is for our profit—“that we might be partakers of His holiness”. Moreover, there is comfort in the fact that the Lord Himself admits that *no* chastening seems *at the time* to be joyous, but rather grievous. Nevertheless it is not barren suffering. It yields “the peaceable fruit of righteousness”—on one condition: that those who pass through the chastening must be “exercised thereby”; otherwise it is all in vain.

We are safe in saying that no readers of these pages can tread the pathway of truth, surrounded by an evil world and in themselves still mortal and fallible, without continually passing through chastening. May all such be enabled to “glory in tribulation also; knowing that tribulation worketh” (Rom. v. 3)—“*Nevertheless afterwards.*”

#5. When Affliction is Good (Psa. cxix. 67, 71). pp. 118, 119

How many of us have ever said out of a full heart: “It is good for me that I have been afflicted?”

We are so constituted that affliction is a thing to be shunned, and this is natural. We often find “the elements of the world”—too often accepted as axioms not needing proof—turn out to be false if adopted in the spiritual world. Consequently, there may be many occasions when the flesh is smarting, when pride is wounded, when the believer is cast down by a vision of his own heart’s baseness, in other words, when it is good to be afflicted. The immediate reason given by the Psalmist is “That I might learn Thy statutes” (Psa. cxix. 71).

Another reason is given in the context: “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word” (Psa. cxix. 67).

It will be as well that we have a correct idea of the meaning of the word affliction, so that the fullest blessing may be received from the Word of truth. Without providing any lengthy proof, we suggest that the word translated “afflict” bears the thought of being “humbled”. It is translated “poor” in many passages, notably in the Psalms. The following will suffice our present needs in the matter of proof:

“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 wouldest keep His commandment or no” (Deut. viii. 2).

The parallel here with Psalms cxix. 67 and 71 is close, both the passages referring to “keeping” or “leaving” the Word of the Lord.

“But I am *poor* and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me” (Psa. xl. 17).

Here the word is translated “poor”, and is associated with the word “needy”. Doubtless we have called to mind the words of the Sermon on the Mount, in which blessedness is said to belong to the “poor in spirit”, to them that “mourn”, to the “meek” and to the “persecuted” (Matt. v. 3-12). In each case there is an “afterwards” as we saw in our last article.

Before the Psalmist said: “It is good for me that I have been afflicted”, he exclaimed, “Thou *art good*” (verse 68), and further, “and *doest good*”. He had prayed: “Teach me *good* judgment and knowledge”, which is not learned without a measure of experience—often in the school of affliction.

Not only do we find in this stanza references to that which is “good”, but also “well” and “better”.

“Thou hast dealt *well* (Heb. *tob*) with Thy servant” (verse 65).
“It is *good* (Heb. *tob*) for me that I have been afflicted” (verse 71).
“The law of Thy mouth is *better* (Heb. *tob*) unto me than thousands of gold and silver” (verse 72).

There can be nothing so important to the believer in this present life as his knowledge of, and loyalty to, the Word of God, and as we all have a tendency to “go astray”, “affliction” or “humbling” should lead us to a fuller understanding of the Word, and a closer walk with the Lord, enabling us to “learn” God’s statutes, and to “keep” God’s Word. Grievous as affliction may be, and shrink as we will from anything that “humbles”, we trust we shall be enabled to say (with the Psalmist) of Him Who is good, and Who doest good:

“It is good for me that I have been afflicted.”

Weekly Bible Readings for January, 1939.
The King and The Kingdom.
p. 20

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>January 1st.</i> Matthew xv. THE COMPASSION OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does "tradition" means? Look at verse 9; it will help you. 2. To whom was the Lord Jesus sent when He came at the first? (21-24). 3. Can you explain the great faith of this woman? (26, 27). 4. Need Christians to-day have only the "crumbs that fall from Israel's table"? Memorize Matt. xv. 8, 9. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>January 8th.</i> Matthew xvi. THE CONFESSION OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the sign of the prophet Jonah? 2. Did Christ mean that He would build His Church on Peter, or on Peter's confession given in verse 16? 3. "From that time forth began" see Matt. iv. 17, and note the change of teaching following Israel's rejection on their King. Memorize Matt. xvi. 16. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>January 15th.</i> Matthew xvii. THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why should this glorious vision make Peter think of tabernacles. Zech. xiv. 19 and Lev. xxiii. 34 might help you. 2. In what way was John the Baptist like Elijah? (10-13). 3. The children of the King are free: Do they therefore please themselves? (24-27). Memorize Matt. xvii. 5. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>January 22nd.</i> Matthew xviii. THE PARDON OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What kind of person is greatest in the Kingdom of heaven? (1-4) 2. Does this passage teach that little children are so good that they do not need a Saviour? (10, 11). 3. The parable of Matt. xviii. 23-25 illustrates the passage already considered in Matt. vi. 14. From what you know of the gospel which the Apostle Paul preached, say whether you think forgiveness can be lost, as it was in this parable. If not, explain the reason. Memorize Matt. xviii. 10, 11. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>January 29th.</i> Matthew xix. THE FUTURE REIGN OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the time when the kingdom was preached, how could eternal life be obtained? (16-19). Is this true for us to-day? 2. What is "The Regeneration" of verse 28? Can twelve thrones and twelve tribes of Israel mean "the Church"? 3. "Suffer little children" (13). Can you find mention in the N.T. of one who "from a child knew the holy Scriptures which were able to make wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus"? Memorize Matt. xix. 25, 26. |

Read each chapter through carefully, not forgetting to ask, in prayer, that God would open the eyes to see and the heart to understand.

Our Young People's Page.

Weekly Bible Readings for February, 1939. Subject: The Gospel according to Matthew. The King and The Kingdom.

*(The notes are for the guidance of those superintending
the Young People's reading).*

p. 40

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>February 5th.</i> Matthew xx. THE RANSOM OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the parable of verses 1-14, and then say whether Christian service "earns" anything, or is reward an act of kindness instead? 2. The Saviour said "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister". Show how Christ acted (26-28). 3. What does the word "ransom" mean? Memorize Matt. xx. 28. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>February 12th.</i> Matthew xxi. 1-22. THE WELCOME OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Verse 5 is a quotation from Zech ix. 9. Can you say what is left out of this passage, and why? 2. Unto which of the four sowings of Matt. xiii. 3-8 would you liken those who cried, Hosannah (xxi. 9)? For they soon cried Crucify Him. 3. "Nothing but leaves only" (19). Can you explain this miracle of the fig-tree? Memorize Matt. xxi. 5. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>February 19th.</i> Matthew xxi. 23-46. THE REJECTION OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "I go Sir: but went not" (30). How does this fit the people of Israel? 2. "This is the heir" (38). Do these words show that the leaders of the people knew that "Jesus" was the Sent One? 3. "The head of the corner" (42). Find (in other parts of the N.T.) two references to Christ as "The Christ Corner Stone". Write them out. Memorize Matt. xxi. 42. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>February 26th.</i> Matthew xxii. THE MARRIAGE OF THE KING'S SON.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who were the guests that "would not come" (3). 2. When was the second invitation to the same people given? (4). 3. Was the city destroyed? (7). If so, do you know the date? and by whom? 4. When will this marriage take place? Can you give any further details as to the Bride and her home? Memorize Matt. xxii. 12. |

Read each chapter through carefully, not forgetting to ask, in prayer, that God would open the eyes to see and the heart to understand.

Weekly Bible Readings for April, 1939.
Subject: The Gospel according to Matthew.
The King and The Kingdom.
p. 80

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| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>April 2nd.</i> Matthew xxii. 15-46. THE DEITY OF THE KING'S SON.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (xxii. 32). Was the Lord speaking about "dead" people being "alive" in paradise? If not, what was the real subject? (see verses 23, 28, 30, 31). 2. What one word fulfils the whole law? (36-40). 3. "If David then call Him Lord, how is He His Son" (45). Can you answer this question? Memorize Matt. xxii. 31, 32. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>April 9th.</i> Matthew xxiii. THE JUDGMENT OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many times does the Lord say "Woe unto you" in this chapter? 2. Write out one verse which shows that these leaders were "hypocrites". 3. Explain "strain at a gnat and swallow a camel" (24). 4. Why does the Lord say "Your house" and not "My house"? (38) Memorize Matt. xxiii. 12. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>April 16th.</i> Matthew xxiv. 1-14. THE PROPHECY OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did the disciples speak about the stones of the temple? Is there anything at the end of chap. xxiii. to make them do so? 2. What three questions did they ask? (3). 3. What do you understand by the expression "The end of the world"? (look at xiii. 39). Memorize Matt. xxiv. 4, 5. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>April 23rd.</i> Matthew xxiv. 15-28. THE COMING OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some say that Daniel was not a prophet. What did Christ say? 2. Read Dan. xii. 1-3 and say whether the great tribulation of Matt. xxiv. 21 and of Rev. vii. 14 are the same. Give your reasons. 3. If a man worked a miracle today, would it <i>prove</i> that he came from God? (24) Memorize Matt. xxiv. 24. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>April 30th.</i> Matthew xxiv. 29-51. WAITING OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. We do not know what day or hour the Lord comes (36), but we do know that this coming is immediately "after" something. What is it, and what will appear? 2. In what way will the Coming of Christ be like the days of Noah? (37-39) 3. What does this passage say that believers should <i>do</i> and <i>be</i>? (42-44). Memorize Matt. xxiv. 42. |

Read each chapter through carefully, not forgetting to ask, in prayer, that God would open the eyes to see and the heart to understand.

Weekly Bible Readings for May, 1939.
Subject: The Gospel according to Matthew.
The King and The Kingdom.
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| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>May 7th.</i> Matthew xxv. 1-13. THE KING AS BRIDEGROOM.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the great lesson that should be learned from the parable of the Wise Virgins? 2. Where else in Matthew do we read of “wise” and “foolish” together? 3. Was it wrong for the wise virgins to go to sleep? Memorize Matt. xxv. 6. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>May 14th.</i> Matthew xxv. 14-46. THE SERVANTS OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If five talents gained five, and two talents gained two, how many should one talent have gained to have earned the Lord’s “Well done”? 2. What is the reward for faithful service? 3. Are they believers who go into everlasting life here? What is the wages of sin as taught by the apostle Paul? Memorize Matt. xxv. 40. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>May 21st.</i> Matthew xxvi. 1-30. THE MEMORIAL OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The disciples called the act of the woman “waste”. What did the Lord call it? 2. What O.T. person was sold for twenty pieces of silver? 3. What did the Lord mean when He said: “This is My body”? (26). Memorize Matt. xxvi. 13. |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>May 28th.</i> Matthew xxvi. 31-75. THE BETRAYAL OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “I will not deny thee” (35). Did Peter keep his word? What lessons do we learn? 2. Read verse 53, and say whether the Lord Jesus “gave His life” willingly. 3. “He is guilty of death” (66). Prove from other Scriptures that Christ was innocent, righteous and holy. Memorize Matt. xxvi. 31, 32. |

Read each chapter through carefully, not forgetting to ask, in prayer, that God would open the eyes to see and the heart to understand.

Weekly Bible Readings for June, 1939.
Subject: The Gospel according to Matthew.
The King and The Kingdom.
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| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 4th.</i> Matthew xxvii. 1-35. THE CROSS AND CROWN OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Judas said? (4). Pilate's wife said? (19). Pilate said? (24). 2. What was the only crown that Jesus wore? What is the lesson in the fact that "thorns" were used? (<i>see</i> Gen. iii.). 3. What prophecies were fulfilled at the crucifixion of Christ. <p style="text-align: center;">Memorize Matt. xxvii. 35.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 11th.</i> Matthew xxvii. 36-66. THE OFFERING OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why was the Saviour forsaken? (46). Where is this written in the O.T.? 2. What was the first thing to happen after Christ died? What does this teach us (<i>see</i> Heb. x. 19-22). 3. What was done to make sure that the body of the Lord could not be removed from the sepulchre? How does this prove the fact of the resurrection? (57-66) <p style="text-align: center;">Memorize Matt. xxvii. 54.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 18th.</i> Matthew xxviii. THE TRIUMPH OF THE KING.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What proofs are given in this chapter that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead? 2. How were the Jews deceived as to the resurrection of Christ? 3. Does verse 19 say "Preach the gospel"? Has this work been done yet? Are there words in verse 20 that suggests that this "great commission" is yet to be fulfilled? <p style="text-align: center;">Memorize Matt. xxviii. 5, 6.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>June 25th.</i> THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect references to the title "Son of David" in Matthew. 2. What other title found in Matt. xxii. belongs to Christ as the "Son of David"? <p style="text-align: center;">Memorize Matt. xxvii. 36, 37.</p> |

(As the questions for the next few weeks will be upon the Gospel as a whole, no special chapter has been selected for reading).

Read each chapter through carefully, not forgetting to ask, in prayer, that God would open the eyes to see and the heart to understand.

Weekly Bible Readings for July, 1939.
Subject: The Gospel according to Matthew.
The King and The Kingdom.
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| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>JULY 2nd.</i> THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.</p> | <p>If the following statement is true, prove it by passages from Matthew.</p> <p>A promise was made to David, that there shall be a King greater than himself, who shall rule on the earth. To fulfil this promise the Lord Jesus was born, and will yet come again Memorize Matt. xxvi. 64.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>JULY 9th.</i> THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.</p> | <p>The Gospel according to Matthew is divided into two parts. The division comes in chapter xvi. In iv. 17 and in xvi. 21 is one proof. In iii. 17 and xvii. 5 is another proof. Do you see that this is so? Write a short explanation, making this clear. Memorize Matt. xvi. 21.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>JULY 16th.</i> THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.</p> | <p>Collect references that use the titles "Son of God" and "Son of Man". What two names found in i. 21-25 harmonize with these titles? Memorize Matt. x. 42.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>JULY 23rd.</i> THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.</p> | <p>Collect the miracles mentioned in Matthew. Put them down in order. Can you see that they form different groups? What was the purpose of these miracles? You may find an answer in chapter xi. Memorize Matt. viii. 2, 3.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><i>JULY 30th.</i> THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM.</p> | <p>Collect the parables. Give each a title, as for example "The parable of the Sower". These are parables in chapters other than xiii. Memorize Matt. xiii. 34, 35.</p> |

Read each chapter through carefully, not forgetting to ask, in prayer, that God would open the eyes to see and the heart to understand.