

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,

“Now when Daniel knew he kneeled upon his knees three times a day AS HE DID AFORETIME” (Dan. vi. 10).

The perilous and momentous days in which we live bring with them a special spiritual peril, the peril of allowing the pressure of earthly conflict to minimize or suppress service or spiritual exercise.

While the believer must never allow it to be said that the unbeliever is more ready or active in his offers of help and sympathy in mundane troubles, the noble spirit manifested by Daniel in the words, “as he did aforetime”, should provoke us to emulation. It is in this frame of mind that the foreword of yet another annual Volume is written.

The year’s witness has been prepared, printed, published and posted, literally in “the presence of our enemies”, and we commend the present Volume and its succeeding numbers to all who appreciate the “Berean” attitude of heart and mind toward the Word of Truth.

Yours in peace that passeth understanding,

CHARLES H. WELCH,
PHILIP DIVE,
FREDERICK P. BRININGER

December, 1940.

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The Acts of the Apostles.

#37. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).

Paul at Corinth. The Second Vision (xviii. 1 - 17).

pp. 31 - 36

We now come to the Apostle's visit to Corinth, which immediately follows his witness at Athens. The two cities were widely different in character and associations. The great concern of the men of Athens was "to speak or to hear some new thing". Corinth, on the other hand, was regarded as the "Vanity Fair" of the Empire, and its reputation for evil was such that its very name became a term to express the foulest immorality. *Korinthiazesthai* became a synonym for licentiousness, and the meaning of "Corinthian" is still given in the English Dictionary as "a licentious man about town".

The famous temple of Aphrodite Pandemos, that crowned the Acrocorinthus, was served by a thousand *heirodouloi*, "consecrated slaves", whose lives were devoted to immorality in the name of religion. It was from Corinth that Paul wrote the terrible indictment of Gentile depravity that forms the second half of Rom. i. When a "Corinthian" appeared on the stage at this time, he was usually represented as drunk. Corinth was a seaport and a centre of commerce. It therefore attracted merchants from all quarters, and the mixed character of its population influenced the whole for evil.

Upon arrival at Corinth, Paul finds a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus and lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla. This man and his wife had been obliged to depart from Rome because Claudius had commanded that all Jews should leave the city.

Finding that he was of the same craft—the craft of tent-making—the Apostle took up his abode with this worthy couple, to whom the whole company of Gentile believers are particularly indebted (Rom. xvi. 3, 4). Paul had entered Athens "alone", but here in Corinth his loneliness would have been intensified. Who would think twice about this weary Jew? He knew only too well how cruel the money-loving merchants could be, and would not have looked to them for help or sympathy. He therefore turns his footsteps to the Jewish quarter and there by the grace of God he comes upon Aquila.

The decree issued by Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed was instrumental, under God, in bringing about the birth of the Saviour at Bethlehem. The decree of Claudius was equally overruled here to bring about this happy fellowship between Aquila, Priscilla and the Apostle. Suetonius says of Claudius that "he banished from Rome all Jews, who were continually making disturbances at the instigation of one Chrestus".

There is every reason to believe that Paul had been brought up in comfortable, if not in affluent, circumstances. He had been taught a trade, not because his parents had ever intended that he would be obliged to work at it for a living, but because this procedure was in accordance with the teaching of the Rabbis. Rabbi Judah, for instance, writes:

“He that teacheth not his son a trade, doth the same as if he taught him to be a thief.” And Gamaliel, at whose feet Paul had sat, said that he that had a trade in his hand was “like a fenced vineyard”. “St. Paul, after working miracles, stood in his workshop at Corinth, and stitched hides of leather together with his hands, and the angels regarded him with love, and the devils with fear” (*Chrysostom*).

The fact that there was a “Chief Ruler” of the synagogue at Corinth indicates its importance and numerical strength. A stone has been discovered in Corinth, dating from between B.C.100 and A.D.200, bearing the inscription (*Suna*) *goge hebr (aion)*, “Synagogue of the Hebrews”, and there is every probability that this stone was actually in position during the Apostle’s stay.

Continuing with the narrative in chapter xviii., we read:

“He reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks. And when Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed by the word (Texts read *logos*) and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ” (Acts xviii. 4, 5).

Here we have the same enthusiasm, the same methods, the same object. And here, alas, also the same result, the opposition and blasphemy of the Jews. Once more there were branches broken out of the olive tree, and once more the Apostle turns to the Gentiles (Acts xviii. 6).

Before we go further, it may be as well to give the structure of the whole passage, which is as follows:

Paul at Corinth (Acts xviii. 1-17).

- A | 1-7. CLAUDIUS. (*Roman Emperor*). |
 - a | Jews expelled from Rome.
 - b | Synagogue. The Word. Jews oppose and blaspheme.
- B | 8. CRISPUS. (*Chief Ruler of Synagogue*). |
 - Believed. Baptized.
- C | 9, 10. VISION. Much people in this city.
- A | 11-16. GALLIO. (*Roman Deputy*). |
 - b | Hard by synagogue. The Word. Jews made insurrection.
 - a | Jews driven from judgment-seat.
- B | 17. SOSTHENES. (*Chief Ruler of Synagogue*). |
 - Beaten (Believed later, I Cor. i. 1).

We find, therefore, that the theme of Acts xviii. 1-17 revolves around five focal points—the action of two Roman rulers, the action of two synagogue rulers, and the vision granted to Paul by the great Ruler over all, the Lord Himself.

On two occasions the Apostle announced in a synagogue that he would turn to the Gentiles, once in Antioch (Acts xiii. 46), and once again in Corinth (Acts xviii. 6). In both cases we read in the immediate context that the Jews not only opposed but

“blasphemed”. The Apostle himself knew only too well the dreadful hatred from which this blasphemy came, for he confessed before Agrippa that he had himself “compelled believers to blaspheme” (Acts xxvi. 11), while in Rom. ix. 1-3 he writes that his heart was heavy for his kinsmen, for he himself used to wish himself accursed from Christ.

There are some who have attempted to draw the dispensational boundary either at Acts xiii. 46, or at Acts xviii. 6, but just as Paul’s turning to the Gentiles in Acts xiii. was followed by a series of synagogue visits from Acts xiv.-xviii., so again, after the utterance given in Acts xviii. 6, we find the Apostle once more in a synagogue in Ephesus in Acts xix. 1. The synagogue witness ends in chapter xix., but Israel as a people are not set aside until after the critical conference at Rome (Acts xxviii.).

With reference to Acts xviii. 6 Alford writes:

“Not absolutely, but only at Corinth: for we find arguing with the Jews again in the synagogue at Ephesus. I have adopted the punctuation of Lachmann, erasing the colon after *ego*: ‘I shall henceforth with a pure conscience go to the Gentiles’.”

When the opposition of the Jews at the synagogue reaches the culminating point of blasphemy, the Apostle withdraws and finds accommodation in the house of one named Justus, “whose house joined hard to the synagogue”. There may be more reasons than one for the inclusion of this detail. It may indicate that Paul was still hopeful that many of the Jews he had left would nevertheless come under the sound of the gospel—and in this he was most certainly right, if Crispus and his household were brought in this way—and the position of the house may also have indicated that the complete separation of the church from the hope of Israel was not yet due.

The reader will remember that the vision seen by Paul here in Corinth is in structural correspondence with the vision of the man of Macedonia, seen in Troas. (For the structure of Acts xvi. 6 - xix. 20, which shows this correspondence, see Volume XXVIII, page 230).

“Then spake the Lord to Paul in a vision, Be not afraid but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city” (Acts xviii. 9, 10).

Athens, the city of culture and philosophy, has no such vision, and no such promise, but Corinth, where sin was brazen and depravity enthroned, provides an arena for the triumph of Jesus Christ and Him crucified (I Cor. ii. 2). The Lord tells Paul in the vision that He has “much people in this city”. Truly, as the Apostle wrote to the Corinthians:

“Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish the base the despised the things that are not, to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh should glory in His presence” (I Cor. i. 26-29).

The Apostle continues at Corinth for a year and six months, teaching the word of God, and upon the arrival of Timothy, who had been sent back from Athens to Thessalonica,

he writes his two epistles to the Thessalonians. With regard to the date of these epistles, Conybeare and Howson give the following notes:

- (1) "It was written not long after the conversion of the Thessalonians (I Thess. i. 8, 9), while the tidings of it were still spreading (*apaggelousia*, present tense) through Macedonia and Achaia, and whilst St. Paul could still speak of himself as only taken from them for a short season (I Thess. ii. 17).
- (2) St. Paul had been recently at Athens (iii. 1), and had already preached in Achaia (i. 7, 8).
- (3) Timotheus and Silas were just returned (*arti*, iii. 6) from Macedonia, which happened soon after St. Paul's arrival at Corinth."

These epistles to the Thessalonians were not given to reveal some new or esoteric doctrine, but to help those who had already believed and been taught, and now needed encouragement and correction by the way.

The Jews appear to have waited for some favourable opportunity for venting their anger against the Apostle, and the coming of a new Roman Governor seems to have provided them with the long desired weapon. Gallio was the younger brother of Seneca, and took his name from Junius Gallio the rhetorician, who had adopted him (*Dio. Cass. xl. 35*). Tacitus informs us that Gallio died in the year 65 (*Tac. An. xv. 73*), and Pliny tells us that *after his consulship* he had a serious illness, on which account he took a sea-voyage (*Pliny N. H. xxxi. 33*). We also learn from his brother Seneca that it was *in Achaia* that he boarded a ship for the sake of his health (See *Ep. 104*). Gallio would not have been appointed deputy until his brother Seneca had been restored to favour, which makes the earliest possible date A.D.50, for in A.D.49 Seneca had been recalled from his exile in Corsica and appointed tutor to the young Nero. Prefects were bound by edict to quit Rome about the middle of April. When Cicero traversed the same course, he took about 50 days to get to Cilicia, so that Gallio would have arrived at Corinth at some time during June. We are therefore practically forced to put the date of Gallio's proconsulship at A.D.53, a very striking testimony to Luke's accuracy as a historian. Moreover, under Tiberias, Achaia had been an Imperial Province, while under Claudius it was restored to the Senate and reckoned as an "unarmed province", governed by a proconsul (A.V. "deputy"). In all these changes, never once does Luke falter or make a mistake. Critics who have attempted to discredit his accuracy have been covered with confusion, and some, like Sir William Ramsay, have been converted to a belief in his inspiration.

Seneca spoke of his brother as "the sweet Gallio", and said of him that "no mortal is so sweet to any single person as he is to all mankind". It is in this light that we must understand the comment: "Gallio cared for none of these things." The attempt to scare him by the charge "This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law" failed, and before Paul could make his defence, Gallio dismissed the case. Had it been a breach of Roman law, Gallio would have dealt with it as a Roman, but seeing that there had been committed no "wrong or wicked lewdness", and that it was evidently some squabble about Jewish laws and customs, he says to the Jews, "Look ye to it, for I will be no judge of such matters". Thus, through the instrumentality of Gallio, the promise made by the Lord in the vision was fulfilled.

We do not know for certain that Sosthenes succeeded Crispus as the chief ruler of the synagogue, but it seems probable. There is no record in the Acts of his conversion, but the fact that Crispus and Sosthenes are both mentioned in the opening chapter of the epistle to the Corinthians makes it appear likely.

The Apostle now turns his thought toward Jerusalem. He had set foot in Philippi, the chief city of one part of Macedonia, he had witnessed and suffered in Thessalonica, he had spoken both in the Agora and on the Areopagus at Athens, and had seen the triumph of the cross at Corinth. He had encountered a good deal of opposition, but he had also made some friends in the faith: Lydia of Thyatira, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Sopater of Berea, Dionysius and Damaris, Aquila and Priscilla, Crispus and Sosthenes—all trophies of grace and fellow-helpers in the Christian witness.

One other great city is to be visited before this second missionary journey is concluded—the city of Ephesus, whose name is so intimately associated with the great revelation of the Mystery towards which the narrative of the Acts is drawing steadily nearer. It will not be long before we arrive at the prophetic foreshadowing, and then the actual experience once more of prison, an experience from which no earthquake delivers, and which lasts between Cæsarea and Rome for about four years. These themes we must consider in subsequent articles, as together we follow the narrative of those things which the ascended Christ continued to do and to teach through his servants.

**#38. The Second Missionary Journey (xvi. 6 - xix. 20).
John's Baptism and Special Miracles (xviii. 24 - xix. 20).
pp. 69 - 76**

With the conclusion of his ministry at Corinth, Paul now turns his face to Jerusalem. There are two points in connection with this visit to Jerusalem that we must notice particularly, because of the indication they give that the ground is still Jewish:

- (1) THE VOW.—“Having shorn his head in Cenchrea; for he had a vow”
(Acts xviii. 18).
- (2) THE FEAST.—“I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem”
(Acts xviii. 21).

It may be as well to settle one point in this connection at once. There are some who suggest that the reversal of the order “Priscilla and Aquila” in verse 18 indicates that it was Aquila, and not Paul, who had the vow. A knowledge of what was incumbent upon a man who made a vow, however, makes it clear that Paul, who was anxious to get to Jerusalem, was the one under the vow, and that Aquila, who stayed behind, could not have been under any such obligation. The Nazarite vow, according to the law (Num. vi. 1-21), necessitated the offering of the hair that had been shaved off, together with a burnt offering, at the Temple. The taking of a vow of this sort was usually a means of acknowledging some great deliverance, from sickness, or accident, or

some other calamity. To look back to Acts xviii. and endeavour to find this deliverance at the judgment-seat of Gallio, is to limit our interpretation unduly. The Acts does not record a tithe of the sufferings and the deliverances that Paul experienced. We have only to turn to his epistles, Galatians, Thessalonians and Corinthians, to meet with such a list of afflictions, that it would seem almost impossible for any one man to have endured them all, and to have been brought through alive and able to serve. We may take as an example the list given in II Cor. xi., remembering at the same time that we should have had no knowledge of most of these troubles, had not the Apostle “become a fool” in his boasting.

“In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in death oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once I was stoned, thrice I have suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep” (II Cor. xi. 23-25).

Added to this almost unprecedented suffering, is a list of “perils” that beset the Apostle in his ministry, and the passage concludes:

“Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches” (II Cor. xi. 26-28).

Coming back to Acts xviii., it would appear that the Apostle, who was still an Israelite, still looking for the hope of Israel, and yearning for the salvation of his own kinsmen, could find no means of expressing his thankfulness for so great a deliverance more appropriate than the taking upon him of the Nazarite vow. Paul was not “under the law” so far as salvation was concerned, but at the same time he was not standing in the full light of the Mystery, as made known in his prison epistles. Christianity was still a movement among the Jews. It destroyed no legitimate Jewish aspirations, but rather pointed to the Lord Jesus as the true Messiah and the fulfillment of all their hopes. It is this fact that colours the whole of the Acts up to xxviii. 28, and all the epistles written before that period (namely, Galatians, Thessalonians, Hebrews, Corinthians and Romans).

Lightfoot, referring to Rabbinical teaching, writes as follows:

“Nazarism was, most ordinarily, for thirty days; though sometimes it was for years, and sometimes for term of life. He whose vow was expired, was to bring three beasts, one for a burnt offering, another for a sin offering, and a third for a peace offering. If he polled his head in the country, as Paul did at Cenchrea, he was to bring his hair, and burn it under the caldron” (*Lightfoot*, Vol. IX. 307).

Josephus, also, in speaking of Berenice who sacrificed her hair as part of a vow, gives the period as thirty days (B.J. ii. 15.1).

Coming back to the Acts, let us next notice the accuracy of Luke’s language. In Acts xviii. 18 the word translated “shorn” is *keiramenos*, while in xxi. 24 we have the word *xuresontai*, “shave”. *Keiro* refers to the cutting or cropping of the hair (as, for example, the polling of the head of Absalom) and we find that the Mishna (I. c. vol. ii. page 167) permitted this to be done by a temporary Nazarite in foreign lands.

Acts xxi. 24, however, refers to the actual “shaving” of the head. The Apostle recognizes the distinction between these two words in I Cor. xi. 6: “If it be a shame for a woman to be *shorn* or *shaven*.” Dion Cassius, also, tells us that when the Prefect of Egypt, for his own ends, sent an unusually large tribute, that had been wrung out of the people by extortion, Tiberius rebuked him by saying that he wished his sheep “shorn” (*keiresthai*) and “shaved” (*aposuresthai*).

Bearing in mind the Apostle’s vow, we can at once understand his desire to get to Jerusalem without delay. At Ephesus he enters the synagogue and reasons with the Jews, but although they “desire him to tarry longer time with them”, we read that he “consented not, but bade them farewell saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh at Jerusalem”.

Luke gives no details of the visit to Jerusalem, or of the keeping of the feast, or the conclusion of the Nazarite vow. All he says is:

“And when he had landed at Cæsarea, and *gone up*, and saluted the church, he *went down* to Antioch” (Acts xviii. 22).

The details were apparently not necessary for Luke’s purpose in writing the Acts, and we must abide by the inspired decision. Nothing of moment seems to have taken place, no conference with the leaders at Jerusalem, and no turmoil or riot among the Jews. The Apostle was permitted to fulfil his vow in peace. “He saluted the church”, and turned his steps once more to the regions beyond.

Jerusalem was not the spiritual centre of Paul’s activity, but rather Antioch; and it is to Antioch, where he first received the definite call to evangelize the Gentiles, that his footsteps now turn. After a little time spent among friends, a short period of refreshment, we once again find the Apostle on the road. The call to service, and the needs of his spiritual family could not be ignored.

“And after he had spent some time there, he departed, and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples” (Acts xviii. 23).

The fact that he visited the churches “in order” enables us to follow the Apostle’s footsteps as he visits the church which was founded when he and Barnabas had responded to the call in Acts xiii. Passing through the “upper coasts” (i.e. the highland district of the Western Taurus range), he at length arrives at Ephesus, and so is able to fulfil his promise that, “if God will”, he would return to them again (Acts xix. 1 and xviii. 21).

Before we deal with Acts xix., however, and Paul’s great work at Ephesus, we have another incident to consider, that took place while Paul was absent from Ephesus.

“A certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue, whom when

Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly” (Acts xviii. 24-26).

Apollos had many natural and spiritual advantages. He was born at Alexandria, a seat of learning, and was instrumental in the diffusion of the Greek language and the production of the Greek version of the O.T. known as the Septuagint. According to the A.V. Apollos is described as “an eloquent man”. The word is *logios*, which, according to Philo (Vit. Mos. i. 5) means “learned”, and according to Josephus “eloquent” (Ant. xvii. vi. 2). Josephus speaks of Judas and Matthias as “two of the most *eloquent* men among the Jews, and most celebrated interpreters of the Jewish laws”. The word must not, however, be made to include all that is conveyed by the word “eloquent” to-day, or as it would have been understood by the Greek rhetorician. Nevertheless it is clear that Apollos must have had a natural gift that surpassed that possessed by Paul, for the Apostle reminded the Corinthians that, according to their standards, they had said of him: “His bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible” (II Cor. x. 10).

Apollos was not merely eloquent; he was also “mighty in the Scriptures”, and “instructed in the way of the Lord”. On the other hand, we read that he knew “only the baptism of John”. There are some who think that Apollos was not a believer in the Lord Jesus, though true so far as he went. The texts, however, read in verse 25: “He taught diligently the things concerning Jesus.” The word “diligently” is *akribos*, “accurately”, and is found again in verse 26—“more perfectly”. Apollos had the foundation of the faith, but he stopped short at the baptism of John. He could, however, be a very convincing speaker, so far as proving the Messiahship of the Lord Jesus was concerned, for John’s baptism was appointed for the very purpose of making the Messiah manifest to Israel (John i. 30-34).

When Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos speak, they felt as some of our readers have probably often felt when listening to an earnest man, preaching with fervour and grace, but knowing only the truth as far as Acts xxviii. We have personal knowledge of more than one instance, in which readers of *The Berean Expositor* have emulated the kindly act of Aquila and Priscilla, and have been able to “expound the way of God more perfectly”. Apollos evidently profited by their gracious ministry, and, when he wished to pass into Achaia, the brethren commenced him by letter. We read that he “helped them much which had believed”, and “mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ”.

While Apollos is at Corinth, Paul arrives at Ephesus, and he too is met with the same limitations as were found in Apollos. This time, however, instead of one man, it is twelve disciples who “knew only the baptism of John”.

The controversy that has arisen over this passage (Acts xix. 1-12), as to whether Paul baptized these believers, or whether verse 5 refers to what took place when men heard and believed John the Baptist’s testimony, will perhaps remain a moot point until we know “even as we are known”. We give below the structure of the passage as set out in *The Companion Bible*. According to this structure, the words of verse 5: “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” refer to what took place

when men believed the testimony of John the Baptist, and not to the re-baptism of the twelve disciples by Paul himself.

Acts xix. 1-12. Paul. Ministry at Ephesus.

- c | 1. Paul's arrival at Ephesus.
- d | 1. Certain men. Their character. Disciples.
- e | 2. Spiritual gifts. Their ignorance of them.
- f | 3. What they had received. John's baptism.
- g | 4, 5. What Paul said. Paul's description of John's action.
- g | 6. What Paul did. Luke's description. Paul's action.
- f | 6. What they now received. Special gifts.
- e | 6. Spiritual gifts. Their use of them.
- d | 7. The men. Their number. About twelve.
- c | 8-12. Paul's continuance at Ephesus.

The words *pneuma hagion* ("the Holy Ghost") in verse 2 refer to spiritual gifts, and not to the Holy Spirit Himself. These coming gifts of the Spirit had been spoken of by John, but the men concerned here had not heard of Pentecost. After this interview with the Apostle, we read that "the holy spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied".

After this the Apostle spends three months in the synagogue, "disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God". We read that some of those who heard "were hardened", and once again there is a movement towards the Gentiles:

"He departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus" (Acts xix. 9).

This "school of Tyrannus" was probably what the Jews called *Beth Midrash*, a kind of private rabbinical seminary, and here the Apostle continues for the space of two years, so that all in Asia "hear the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks".

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul" (Acts xix. 11).

Why should God have wrought "special" miracles by the hands of Paul, just at this point? The word translated "special" is not easy to explain, because it changes its meaning and application at different times. The word *tugchano* means "to hit a mark, as with an arrow" (Homer II. xii. 394), and then, by an easy transition, "to hit upon", "to light upon", with the element of chance attached, as in Acts xvii. 17, "to meet by chance" (*paratucho*). *Ho tuchon* means "an every-day man", or, with the negative, "no ordinary man"; and the word is used by Josephus in describing Herod's temple as "no common work".

Coming back now to the record of Acts xix., let us notice the two kinds of miracles that are particularized.

“So that from his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them” (Acts xix. 12).

These miracles are said to be “special”—miracles with “no chance work about them”, intended to “hit the mark”. Paul was in a city full of “magic” (*see* xix. 19). In his opening ministry at Philippi he had been the subject of Satanic attack through the instrumentality of the damsel possessed by the spirit of Python, and here again in Ephesus we have the same sort of contrast. The complete failure of the Jewish exorcists to cast out the evil spirit by calling over him the name of “Jesus”, is exactly parallel with Paul’s refusal to allow Satan to bear witness to the fact that he was showing to the people “the way of salvation”.

As a result both of the positive witness of the “special” miracles, and of the utter failure of the Jewish exorcists, we read that “fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified”. Moreover, there was a public confession and a burning of the books relating to “curious arts” to the value of 50,000 pieces of silver. Many of these magical books and leaves of papyrus—known as *Ephesia grammata*—have since been discovered.

Immediately after this public exhibition of the triumph of the gospel over the powers of darkness, we read of Paul’s desire to go to Rome: “I must see Rome also.” He had found the door temporarily shut in Asia (Acts xvi. 6), and had seen the vision at Troas (xvi. 9). At Philippi, a Roman colony, he had witnessed the failure of the Devil’s first effort to compromise the new witness, and at Ephesus also, the temple-keeper of Diana, he had seen the triumph of light over darkness. Another round of ministry had been brought to a glorious conclusion. The gospel had been preached, many had believed, and the powers of darkness had been driven out of their strongholds.

We conclude this very inadequate survey with a simplified structure, trusting that it may be of service to any who desire to prosecute their studies further.

Acts xviii. 24 - xix. 20.

- A | xviii. 24 - xix. 7. JOHN’S BAPTISM. |
 - a1 | APOLLOS.—“Knowing only the baptism of John.”
Taught “more perfectly”.
 - a2 | DISCIPLES.—“Unto John’s baptism.”
“Spake with tongues and prophesied.”
- B | xix. 8-10. The word of the Lord Jesus heard.
- A | xix. 11-19. SPECIAL MIRACLES. |
 - a3 | PAUL AND EVIL SPIRITS.—“Went out of them.”
 - a4 | SONS OF SCHEVA AND EVIL SPIRITS.—“Prevailed against them.”
- B | xix. 20. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

**#39. The Third Missionary Journey (xix. 21 - xxi. 39).
Paul at Ephesus (xix. 21 - xx. 4).
pp. 97 - 104**

The second missionary journey comes to an end with the words of Acts xix. 20: “So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed”, and we must now begin our study of the Apostle’s third journey.

If we refer back to the structure which was given in the first article of the series (Volume XXIV, page 3), we shall find that the next verse (xix. 21) marks the beginning of the final section of the book. As the structure shows, this section corresponds with the close of Peter’s ministry:

E | xii. 1-23. JERUSALEM.
Peter’s imprisonment.
Close of ministry.
 + + + + + + +
E | xix. 21 - xxviii. 31. EPHESUS TO ROME.
Paul’s imprisonment.
Close of one ministry and commencement of the prison ministry,
and the “dispensation of the mystery”.

This closing section is divided into two parts, the first part dealing with the time during which Paul was still free (xix. 21 - xxi. 39), and the second with the remainder of his recorded ministry, during which he was a prisoner, in Cæsarea, on board ship, and at Rome (xxi. 40 - xxviii. 31). We will not attempt to set out the structure of these two parts together but rather concentrate upon the first part—the Apostle’s third missionary journey which closes the Apostle’s activity as a free man during the Acts.

Let us first consider the section in broad outline:

**Acts xix. 21 - xxi. 39.
 (“I must also see Rome”: xix. 21).**

- A | xix. 21 - xx. 4. THE UPROAR (*thorubos*, xx. 1). Temple at Ephesus.
- B | xx. 4-16. TROAS. A work wrought among the Gentiles.
- C | xx. 17-38. MILETUS. Bonds. The Holy Ghost.
- C | xxi. 1-17. TYRE AND CÆSAREA. Bonds. The Holy Ghost.
- B | xxi. 18-26. JERUSALEM. What God had wrought among the Gentiles.
- A | xxi. 27-39. THE UPROAR (*thorubos*, “tumult”: xxi. 34). Temple at Jerusalem.

It will be seen that the section begins and ends with an uproar in a temple, in each case instigated by men of Asia, while its central members deal with prophetic warnings concerning the “bonds” that awaited the Apostle. We must now follow his footsteps through each of these six subdivisions, noting particularly the events that led to his

apprehension at Jerusalem by the Roman soldiers, which was the first step in the series of incidents that brought him finally to Rome. Across the whole of Acts xix. 21 - xxviii. 31 might be written the Apostle's opening words: "After I have been there, I must see Rome also" (Acts xix. 21), while across the second section could be written the Lord's answering words:

"Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of Me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts xxiii. 11).

Before we examine this passage more intimately, and before we attempt a description of the great Temple of Diana, let us acquaint ourselves with the disposition of the subject-matter.

Acts xix. 21 - xx. 4.
The Uproar. The Temple at Ephesus.

- A | xix. 21-22. | a | After these things were ended.
 - b | MACEDONIA; pass through.
JERUSALEM; I must go to.
MACEDONIA; sent unto.
 - c | ASIA; he himself stayed.
- B | xix. 23-27. | d1 | No small stir about that way.
 - e1 | DEMETRIUS. Silver-smiths.
DIANA. Silver shrines.
 - d1 | No small gain.
 - e1 | This craft. No gods.
This craft. Great goddess.
- C | xix. 28-34. | f | When they heard.
 - g | They cried: GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS.
 - h | Confusion.
 - i | GAIUS AND ARISTARCHUS.
 - j | PAUL.
 - h | Confusion.
 - i | ALEXANDER.
 - f | When they knew.
 - g | They cried: GREAT IS DIANA OF THE EPHESIANS.
- B | xix. 35-41. | d2 | Appeasement.
 - e2 | Goddess.
 - d3 | Be quiet.
 - e2 | Goddess.
 - d4 | Lawful.
- A | xx. 1-4. | a | After these uproar was ceased.
 - b | MACEDONIA; for to go.
SYRIA; to sail to.
MACEDONIA; return through.
 - c | ASIA; his companions.

The reader will observe—and the structure brings this into prominence—that Macedonia is very much in the Apostle's mind at this time.

“After these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit when he had passed through *Macedonia* and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. So he sent into *Macedonia* two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus; but he himself stayed in Asia for a season” (Acts xix. 21, 22).

“And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into *Macedonia* he purposed to return through *Macedonia*” (Acts xx. 1, 3).

His objective was Jerusalem, and then Rome, but his way was through Macedonia, and he sends on ahead two trusted workers, while he himself stays in Asia. In I Cor. xvi. the Apostle reminds the church of the collection for the saints (I Cor. xvi. 1) which was to be taken by him to Jerusalem (I Cor. xvi. 3), and he tells them that he will come to them when he has passed through Macedonia. This is the journey that is recorded in the chapter of the Acts that we are now considering.

Although he had accomplished so much, by the grace of God, the Apostle still looked eagerly out on to the great Roman world, desiring to preach Christ in the regions beyond. The words “I must see Rome” indicate his desire and willingness, and, in writing to the Romans, he contemplates passing through Rome to Spain (Rom. xv. 22-29).

In order to appreciate what happened to the Apostle, and the incidents recorded in Acts xix. with regard to Ephesus and the Temple of Diana, we must acquaint ourselves with some of the ancient records.

We gather from the first epistle to the Corinthians, that it was written at about the time of the Passover, and that the Apostle intended to remain in Ephesus until Pentecost (I Cor. v. 7; xvi. 8). This would give an approximate date for Acts xix. 23, as the month of May. This particular month was specially dedicated to the goddess of Ephesus. *Dr. Chandler* found an inscribed marble slab in this district, and the following translation will perhaps help us to understand the presence of the crowds and their enthusiasm for the worship of Diana.

“Inasmuch as it is notorious that, not only among the Ephesians, but also everywhere among the Greek nations, temples are consecrated to her and sacred portions besides this, as the greater token of veneration paid to her, a month is called by her name; by us *Artemission* in which (other cities) general assemblies and *Hieromenia* are celebrated, but not in the holy city, the nurse of its own, the Ephesian goddess: the people of Ephesus, deeming it proper that the whole month called after her name be sacred and set apart to the goddess, have determined by this decree, that the observation of it by them be altered. Therefore it is enacted that in the whole month *Artemission* the days be holy, and that nothing be attended on them, but the yearly feastings, for from this improvement in our worship our city shall receive additional lustre, and be permanent in prosperity for ever.”

The reader who is acquainted with the narrative of Acts xix. will see that Demetrius was but expressing the sentiments that were evidently popular. There was obviously a close association in the minds of the people between the “improvement” of the worship of Artemis (or Diana, in our version) and the prosperity of the city.

“By this craft we have our wealth this our craft is in danger , also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.”

So great was the magnificence of this temple that it was included in the seven wonders of the world. The attitude of the Ephesians themselves towards it can be gauged from the fact that an offer by Alexander to dedicate the spoils of a conquest to the building of the temple, on condition that he should be permitted to inscribe his name on the front of the building, was refused (*Strabo*).

A description of the temple is found in Pliny, who says it was 425 feet in length, 220 feet broad, and supported by a hundred or more columns, each of which had been contributed by a prince, one of them being the famous Croesus.

Among the privileges of the Temple of Ephesus was the right of asylum it gave to all who came within bow-shot. This right attracted to its precincts the scum of the earth, and the nature of the worship of the goddess completed the general atmosphere of corruption.

“Ionia had been the corruptress of Greece (hence the proverb ‘Ionian effeminacy’), Ephesus was the corruptress of Ionia—the favourite scene of her most voluptuous love-tales, the lighted theatre of her ostentatious sins” (*Farrar*).

Our Lord’s saying, “To him that hath shall be given” is most certainly true with regard to the student of Scripture. The more we bring, for example, to the epistle to the Ephesians, the more we take away. When we realize something of the immoral atmosphere in which many of the Ephesian saints had been born and bred, and which perhaps still shadowed the lives of their relatives, we can the better understand Paul’s faithful reference to sensual sins in Eph. v. 3-5, and the depths suggested by his reference to the shameful things “which are done of them in secret” (Eph. v. 12).

In Eph. ii. the Apostle stresses the “foundation” of the spiritual temple, and its “chief corner-stone”. This, too, would have an appeal to the Ephesians, for they would know that in order to avoid damage by earthquake, the upper foundations of the Temple of Diana had been built at vast cost on artificial foundations of skin and charcoal laid over the marsh.

Again, the Apostle emphasizes the privilege that the Ephesians possessed in Christ, of being “fellow-citizens”. The following extract from Josephus will give some idea of the privileges that were granted by the state to the Jews living in Ephesus.

“I have at my tribunal set these Jews, who are citizens of Rome, and follow the Jewish religious rites, and yet live at Ephesus, free from going into the army on account of the superstition they are under. This was done before the twelfth of the calends of October when Lucius Lentelus and Caius Marcellus were consuls and my will is that you take care no one give them any disturbances” (Ant. xiv. x. 13).

In paragraph 17 of the same book we actually meet the word “fellow-citizens”.

The temple of Diana was also a treasury, in which a large portion of the wealth of Western Asia was stored up. Guhl, a German writer, says that the Ephesian Temple was, in the ancient world, rather what the Bank of England is to-day. The emphasis on “riches” of grace and glory in the epistle to the Ephesians gathers fuller interest in the light of this fact.

During the month of May a great fair was held, and Ephesus would swarm with people from all parts of Asia.

Pliny, the Roman, writing half a century after the time of Paul’s visit to Ephesus, speaks of the utter neglect into which heathen institutions had fallen in the neighbouring province of Bithynia, as a direct consequence of Christian teaching—and this in spite of the fact that the Christians were a persecuted sect.

Paul’s teaching concerning the vanity of idolatry was apparently well known, for Demetrius says:

“Not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands” (Acts xix. 26).

When personal interest, superstition, and racial pride combine, little more is required, and the words of Demetrius act like a spark on tow. In verse 29 we read:

“The whole city was filled with confusion; and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul’s companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre” (Acts xix. 29).

In the narrative here, there are several items of interest that confirm the accuracy of the inspired writer. It is, for instance, assumed that there was a theatre at Ephesus, and that it was large enough to hold a great concourse of people. Moreover, it is further assumed that it was natural for the people to go there, both as a confused multitude, and as a legal assembly. The ruins of the theatre testify to its original grandeur. *Fellows* estimates its capacity at 30,000, while *Wood* suggests 25,000. In any case, it was evidently a vast structure. We also read of “certain chief men of Asia” sending to the Apostle “desiring him not to adventure himself into the theatre”. The original here is *asiarchs*, and this word is actually found on inscriptions and coins. Another point that is vouched for by archæology is the reference to the silver shrines of Diana, which are said to have been made by Demetrius (Acts xix. 24). *Lewin* gives an illustration of an *Aedicula*, or miniature shrine, of Cybele, and mention is made of similar shrines by many ancient writers.

The “town-clerk”, also, is a familiar figure in the annals of the time: The original word is *grammateus* (Acts xix. 35), which might perhaps better be translated “recorder”.

“He had to do with state-papers; he was keeper of the archives; he read what was of public moment before the senate and assembly; he was present when money was deposited in the Temple; and when letters were sent to the people of Ephesus, they were officially addressed to him” (*Conybeare and Howson*).

For example, a letter sent from Apollonius to the Ephesians is addressed: *Ephesion grammateusi*—"To the Ephesian town-clerk".

The town-clerk refers to the city of the Ephesians as a "worshipper" (*neocoros*) of the goddess Diana. The word used by Luke here is peculiar, and means literally "a temple sweeper". This eventually became a title of high honour, and was boastfully exhibited on the coins of the period.

In verse 38 we read:

"The law is open, and there are deputies: let them implead one another" (Acts xix. 38).

We learn from Pliny that these large cities were assize towns, and he specifically names in the province of Asia, Sardis, Smyrna and Ephesus. The town-clerk refers to the presence of the pro-consuls (or "deputies") and indicates that the "assizes" were actually on—"The law is open" (*Agoraioi agontai*).

It has been said that the recorder's speech here might well be regarded as a model for popular harangue. Such excitement, suggests the recorder was *undignified*, as the grandeur of their worship was unimpeached; it was *unjustifiable*, as they could prove nothing against the men; it was *unnecessary*, as other means of redress were open to them; and finally, if neither pride nor justice prevailed, the thought of the Roman power should have restrained them—for, as Hackett has remarked, "There was nothing on which the Roman looked with such jealousy as a tumultuous meeting".

The accuracy of Luke's record and the danger in which the Apostle was placed are illustrated by the account we have of the martyrdom of Polycarp.

"The proconsul, observing Polycarp filled with confidence and joy, and his countenance brightened with grace, was astonished, and sent the herald to proclaim in the middle of the stadium, 'Polycarp confesses that he is a Christian'. When this was declared by the herald, all the multitude, Gentiles and Jews, dwelling in Smyrna called out 'This is that teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our gods; he that teacheth the multitude not to sacrifice, nor to worship'. Saying this, they cried out, and asked Philip the Asiarch to let a lion loose upon Polycarp" (*Euseb. H. E. iv. 15*).

We must now bring our survey of this incident to a close with two further notes:

(1) The word *ekklesia* is used in Acts xix. on three occasions, and it is well to bear the implications of this fact in mind when we are speaking of the "Church". The passages are as follows:

"The *assembly* was confused" (Acts xix. 32).

"Determined in a lawful *assembly*" (Acts xix. 39).

"He dismissed the *assembly*" (Acts xix. 41).

(2) The following inscription, which is dated A.D.55, and therefore corresponds closely to the period of Acts xix., shows how accurate Luke has been in his record concerning the town-clerk.

“Apollonius to his father and to his mother consecrated the enclosure and this monument having filled the offices of clerk at this market, town-clerk, and high priest, and having been in charge of the record office. Erected on the 28th of the month Demarchusius in the year 13. He also served the senate by means of assessors in the time of the proconsul Paulus.”

While much has necessarily been left unsaid, we trust that the structure of the passage and the few archæological notes that have been given, will make the story of Acts xix. the clearer, and so intensify the reader’s interest in the work of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

**#40. The Third Missionary Journey (xix. 21 - xxi. 39).
Paul at Troas (xx. 4 - 16).
pp. 125 - 130**

Continuing with our study of the Apostle’s third great missionary journey, we now leave Ephesus and accompany him on his way towards Jerusalem, and eventually Rome. We have already seen from the structure (Acts xix. 21 - xxi. 39) given on page 98 that the record of this journey from Ephesus to Jerusalem is in six sections, and that the visit to Troas (B | xx. 4-16) is the second of these. We must now fill in the detail of this second section before proceeding further.

Acts xx. 4-16.

- D | 4, 5. These going before (Paul and a few others
went round by Macedonia—see notes).
- E | 5, 6. | k | Tarried at Troas.
 - l | Sailed away from Philippi.
 - m | After days of unleavened bread.
- F | 7-12. | n | Paul preached on first day of week.
 - o | Ready to depart on the morrow.
 - p | A young man, taken up dead.
 - q | His life is in him. Trouble not.
- n | Paul talked a long while, till break of day.
 - o | So departed.
 - p | The young man, brought alive.
 - q | Not a little comforted.
- D | 13, 14. Paul, minded to go afoot. Met at Assos.
- E | 15, 16. | k | Tarried at Trogyllium.
 - l | Sailed by Ephesus.
 - m | The day of Pentecost.

Were it not for the information to be found in the epistles, we should know very little of the eventful period covered by the opening verses of Acts xx.:

“And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed into Macedonia. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece” (Acts xx. 1, 2).

Before the tumult, Paul had intended to leave Ephesus at Pentecost (I Cor. xvi. 8), and had instructed Titus to meet him at Troas (II Cor. ii. 12). From the writings of Cicero, and the chronology of Wieseler, we learn that a voyage from Ephesus to Athens occupied fourteen days, and to Corinth one day longer. While awaiting with some anxiety the coming of Titus, Paul occupied himself in preaching the gospel (II Cor. ii. 12), but he adds:

“I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother; and taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia” (II Cor. ii. 13).

This explanatory comment is followed in the next verse by a note of triumph which might well be written across the first four verses of Acts xx., viz., “Thanks be unto God Which always causeth us to triumph in Christ” (II Cor. ii. 14).

Leaving Troas, the Apostle goes on into Macedonia, of which Philippi was the chief city. Although his heart was warmed by the affection of the Philippians, he writes in II Cor. vii.:

“When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest (see ‘no rest’, II Cor. ii. 13) but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears” (II Cor. vii. 5).

During this three months’ stay in Greece (Acts xx. 3), the Apostle wrote his wonderful epistle to the Romans, with which his first series of inspired epistles closes. Towards the end of this epistle, we read:

“Whosoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: but now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem” (Rom. xv. 24-26).

In verses 30 and 31 of this same chapter of Romans, Paul manifests his apprehension concerning “them that do not believe in Judæa”. This apprehension was only too well founded, for he was just on the point of embarking for Cenchrea, the Corinthian sea-port, when a Jewish plot to waylay him was discovered. Lewin’s remark here is worth recording, even though Alford feels it to be inconsistent with what is said in Acts xx. 4.

“Paul eluded his adversaries by a change of route. He determined, instead of crossing the sea direct, to go round by Macedonia (The reader would be well advised to consult the map here). The better to evade a watchful foe, Paul and his friends divided themselves into two companies, and it was arranged that Timothy, Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius of Derbe, Tychicus and Trophimus should sail to Troas,

the common resting-place, and there await the apostle's arrival, and that Paul himself, and Luke and Titus with Jason should make a forced march by land up to and through Macedonia and rejoin the others at Troas."

Speaking of these same events, Farrar writes:

"Of the seven converts who accompanied St. Paul, Sosipater son of Pyrrhus, a Berean, Aristarchus & Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, Timothy of Lystra, Tychicus & Trophimus of Ephesus, and Luke—all except the latter (i.e. Luke) left him apparently at Philippi, and went on to Troas to await him there."

Farrar's view seems more in accord with all the facts that we possess, but the matter is not important enough to debate. Whatever the truth may be, some arrived at Troas and "tarried for us" (says Luke)—"and we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days" (Acts xx. 6). We have no information as to whether the Apostle actually observed the feast of unleavened bread or not. Probably, being in Philippi, he did not, although in another community, if the influence of Jewish upbringing had been strong, he would have had no scruples in doing so.

The journey from Troas to Neapolis had only taken two days on a former occasion (Acts xvi. 11). It would seem, therefore, that the wind must have been contrary in this case, as we read that it took five days to make the return journey. It has been supposed that from Neapolis, or at least from Troas, to Patara, Paul chartered a vessel, for it not only waited for him at Assos, but sailed by Ephesus, and waited for the elders at Miletus.

The famous letter written by Pliny the younger from Bithynia to the Emperor Trajan some 50 years after Paul's visit to Troas, provides an interesting sidelight on Luke's inspired record. Concerning the early Christians, Pliny writes:

"They were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternatively a hymn to Christ as God, and bind themselves by an oath not to commit any wickedness, but on the contrary, not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them: and when these things were ended it was their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a meal which they ate in common without any disorder."

With these words we may compare the record of Acts xx. 7:

"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

Much has been written regarding the true translation of the phrase "The first day of the week". The original reads *En de te mia ton sabbaton*, and has sometimes been translated "The first of the sabbaths". *The Companion Bible* has the following note on this point:

"FIRST, etc.=first day of the Sabbaths, i.e. the first day for reckoning their seven sabbaths to Pentecost. It depended upon the harvest (Deut. xvi. 9) and was always from the morrow after the weekly sabbath when the wave-sheaf was presented (Lev. xxiii. 15).

In John xx. 1 this was the fourth day after the crucifixion—‘The Lord’s Passover’ Cp. Ap. 156. This was by Divine ordering. But in A.D.57 it was twelve days after the week of unleavened bread, and therefore more than a fortnight later than in A.D.29.”

The reader may feel that there is a weak point in this argument, for there is no evidence given for the “twelve days” that this view necessitates. Those who regard “the first day of the week” as referring to Sunday, draw attention to the fact that if we assume this day to be the Sabbath, then, as this day begins at sunset, by traveling at day-break Paul would have been traveling on the Sabbath. This would not have been likely in view of the Jews’ bitter opposition to his teaching, and the Apostle’s conciliatory attitude at Jerusalem a few weeks later (Acts xxi. 21-24). It is also a point worth considering that if we translate *Sabbaton* and *Sabbata* as “Sabbath” and “Sabbath day”, then there is no word for “week” in the New Testament, which seems rather unlikely.

If we were not called under the dispensation of the Mystery, we should feel obliged to devote considerable space and time to this subject, but as the question of the observance of any particular day, be it a Sabbath, or the first day of the week, belongs only to those of other callings, we feel that we can safely leave the matter without further investigation. The same remark applies to the expression that meets us in Acts xx. 7: “to break bread.” We have already realized on other and fundamental grounds, that the observance of a New Covenant memorial feast has no place in the dispensation of the Mystery, and we are therefore not personally concerned with the question as to whether these believers at Troas met to keep the Lord’s supper, or whether, as in Acts xxvii. 33-35, the words simply indicate an ordinary meal. We have already written fairly fully on this debatable subject, and we trust, therefore, that we shall not be discharged with seeking to evade the issue, if we say no more about it here.

The Apostle’s speech referred to in verse 7 (Acts xx.) lasted until midnight, and we read that a “certain young man named Eutychus fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead”. The fact that even such a speaker as the Apostle could have at least one member of his congregation overcome with sleep sounds a very human note. The wording of verse 9 reads like the record of an eye-witness. First, the young man sinks into drowsiness (“being fallen into a deep sleep”) and then, having been overpowered (“entirely relaxed by sleep”), he falls from the third loft where he had been sitting, and is “taken up dead”. The word translated “dead” is *nekros*, which is used 18 times in the Acts and in every other instance without ambiguity. The Apostle immediately descends to where the young man lies. He does not first reassure the mourning company that the young man’s “life is in him”, but at once embraces him, as Elijah and Elisha had done before him (I Kings xvii. 21 and II Kings iv. 34). After “breaking bread” and continuing his discourse until day break, the Apostle departs.

The structure here brings into correspondence the division of his company and the waiting of some of them for Paul at Troas, and the division of his company and the waiting of them all for Paul at Assos.

“And *we* went before to ship and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, *mindin*g himself to go afoot” (Acts xx. 13).

The distance between Troas and Assos is between 20 and 30 miles, and travelers have spoken of difficulty in finding the road. In Paul's day, however, there was a good Roman road (*see the Antonne Itinerary*), and it was doubtless along this road that the Apostle traveled.

Some commentators "wonder why" the Apostle took this course, but we believe that any who have been engaged for any length of time in public ministry, especially if it has involved meeting fresh people and dealing with fresh problems, will readily understand the Apostle's imperative need for a few hours entirely free, even from the company of those he loved so well.

Meeting the ship at Assos, the Apostle continues his journey via Mitylene, Chios, Samos and Trogyllium to Miletus. In the two verses that describe this journey (Acts xx. 14, 15) we find the characteristic variety of expression that denotes that the record is a *personal* one. We read that they "came" to Mitylene; they "came opposite" Chios; they "touched at" Samos; they "remained" for a while at Trogyllium; and at length "came" to Miletus. The Apostle had deliberately "sailed by" Ephesus, in order to save time, "for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost".

With this remark, the section before us reaches its conclusion, and once again we must bring our study to a close. There is an intensity about these steps leading to Jerusalem, and we begin to sense that a crisis is at hand—a crisis which prepared the way for the introduction of a new dispensation, and which is therefore of intense interest to all who realize their association with the dispensation of the Mystery.

**#41. The Third Missionary Journey (xix. 21 - xxi. 39).
The Prison Ministry Foreshadowed (xx. 17 - 38).
Elders and Overseers.
pp. 164 - 169**

An examination of a modern map will show that considerable changes have taken place on the coast at Miletus since the days of the apostles. What in those days were islands off the coast are now gentle elevations on dry land, while the river Meander near which Miletus stood, has brought down so much soil in its circuitous course that the whole aspect of the place has completely changed. Miletus is placed by the sea in Ptolemy's geography, and is stated to have had four havens, one of which could hold a fleet.

In xx. 16 we read the "Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spent the time in Asia". For some unrecorded reason, however, the ship was delayed and Paul seizes the opportunity to send to the Church at Ephesus asking the elders to meet

him at Miletus. Ephesus is some 40 miles away, so that the journey was a possible one for any who were sufficiently zealous to make it. And so we find the little band at Miletus, eagerly listening to the last message they would receive from the Apostle, until the time came for him to write his wonderful epistle to the Ephesians.

As we have a great deal of ground to cover, let us first avail ourselves of the help afforded by the structure.

Acts xx. 17-38.

- G | 17-18. CALL TO THE ELDERS.
They come.
- H1 | 18-21. TEACHING. *Apostello, anagello.* |
a | I have kept back nothing.
b | I have taught.
- I | 22-25. GRACE. |
c | *And now* I go bound.
d | Bonds await me.
e | Finish my course.
e | Testify gospel of grace.
c | *And now* I know.
d | See my face no more.
- H2 | 26-31. WARNING. *Apostello, anagello.* |
f | Record.
g | Shunned not to declare.
h | Take heed.
i | Yourselves.
j | The flock.
h | Overseers.
j | The flock.
i | Your own selves.
f | Remember.
g | Ceased not to warn.
- I | 32. GRACE. |
c | *And now* I commend.
e | Word of His grace.
- H3 | 33-35. PRACTICING. |
a | I have not coveted.
b | I have showed.
- G | 36-38. LEAVE-TAKING TO THE ELDERS.
They accompany him.

It will be observed that the subject-matter falls into three main groups. The section labeled H1, H2 and H3 are in the nature of a personal defence, linking together, as the Apostle so often did, his teaching and his manner of life. The sections labeled "I" are concerned with the Apostle's ministry of grace, with its hint of prison, and his commending of his hearers to the grace of God.

Before tracing the Apostle's teaching through this section, let us first become acquainted with what was involved in the office of an "elder", for we shall meet this title in the pastoral epistles, and there has been a good deal of controversy as to its exact significance.

The word translated "elder" is the Greek *presbuteros*, which occurs in its Anglicized form in I Tim. iv. 14 as the word "presbytery". The base of the word is *proeisbenai*, "to be far advanced in", *probaino* being translated both "to go on" (Matt. iv. 21), and "of great age" (Luke ii. 36). Persons of mature years were considered worthy of offices of trust, and so we have the words *presbeia*, "embassage" (Luke xiv. 32), and *presbeuo*, "I am an ambassador" (Eph. vi. 20). The idea of age associated with the holding of office is familiar in our present-day words "*alderman*" and "*senator*".

In the O.T. the "elders" of Egypt are referred to (Gen. i. 7: LXX *presbuteros*), and the "elders" of Israel (Exod. iii. 16), and the title occurs many times in the Gospels. The word is often disguised in our language under the title "priest", for our Saxon forefathers spoke of the "elder" as a *preoster* or *preste*. The sacerdotal associations linked with the word "priest" in its modern usage should not be applied to *presbuteros*. The English word "priest" should be reserved for the Greek *hierous*, a title which, so far as the Church is concerned, belongs only to the Lord Himself.

In the pastoral epistles, and in the epistles written by James, Peter and John, we again meet with this office of "elder", and find the word applied to women as well as to men (I Tim. v. 2; Titus ii. 3). Its heavenly counterpart is also referred to twelve times in the Book of the Revelation. Moreover we read that there were elders in the church at Jerusalem (Acts xv. 2) and that the Apostle ordained elders in every church in Galatia (Acts xiv. 23).

In Acts xx., we find the elders of Ephesus addressed by another title:

"Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*" (Acts xx. 28).

The word "overseers" here is the translation of the Greek *episkopos*, which is a compound of *epi*, "upon" or "over", and *skopeo*, from *skeptomai*, "to look". Apart from this occurrence in Acts xx. 28, the four other occurrences of *episkopos* are translated "bishop". The related word *episkeptomai* is translated ten times "visit", and once "look out". The first of these references (Matt. xxv. 36: "Sick and ye visited Me") give some idea of the unofficial and kindly meaning of the word.

Episkopeo is translated "looking diligently" in Heb. xii. 15, and "taking the oversight" in I Pet. v. 2; while *episkope* is translated "visitation" in Luke xix. 44 and I Pet. ii. 12, "bishoprick" in Acts i. 20, and "office of a bishop" in I Tim. iii. 1.

The tendency of the Saxon to soften some of the harsher sounds of the Greek is seen in the transition from the original *episkop* to "bishop", and from the Greek *kuriake*

(retained in the Scotch “kirk”) to the Saxon “church”. When applied to Christ Himself, the office of Bishop is linked with that of Shepherd:

“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls” (I Pet. ii. 25).

In chapter v. of the same epistle we find the figure of “feeding the flock” associated with “elders” and Christ Himself as “the Chief Shepherd”. Paul uses the same figure in Acts xx., where he speaks of the “elders” being made “bishops” (or “overseers”) over “the flock” (Acts xx. 28).

It is a striking tribute to Dean Alford’s honesty to read in his Greek N.T. the following frank statement concerning the A.V. translation “overseers” in this passage. Irenaeus is quoted as teaching (1) that “bishops” and “elders” were two distinct titles, and (2) that neighbouring churches were brought in so that there might not seem to be *episkopoi* in one church only.

“That neither of these was the case”, the Dean comments, “is clearly shown by the plain words of this verse: he sent to *Ephesus*, and summoned *the elders of the church*. So early did interested and disingenuous interpretations begin to cloud the light which Scripture might have thrown on ecclesiastical questions. The A.V. has hardly dealt fairly in this case with the sacred text, in rendering *episkopos* (ver. 28) ‘overseers’: whereas it ought to have been ‘*bishops*’, that the fact of elders and bishops having been originally and apostolically synonymous might be apparent to the ordinary English reader, which now it is not” (Alford *in loco*).

If we turn to the pastoral epistles we shall receive abundant confirmation of the fact that the words “presbyter” and “bishop” are synonymous.

“For this cause I left thee in Crete and ordain elders (*presbyters*) in every city if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot and unruly. For a bishop (*episkopos*) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre: but a lover of good men, just, holy, temperate” (Titus i. 5-8).

It is quite clear here that the Apostle uses the two titles *presbuteros* and *episkopos* of one and the same office. This can also be confirmed by comparing the passage quoted above (Titus i. 5-8) with I Tim. iii. 1-7:

“If a man desire the office of a bishop he must be blameless, the husband of one wife apt to teach; not given to wine, no striker, not guilty of filthy lucre one that ruleth his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity” (I Tim. iii. 1-4).

The next two verses provide further light upon the “office of a bishop”:

“For if a man know not how to *rule* his own house, how shall he *take care* of the church of God?” (I Tim. iii. 5).

The word “rule” here must be carefully interpreted if we are not to fall into the very error to which the Apostle refers in Acts xx.:

“Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts xx. 30).

There is nothing so likely to produce an overbearing prelacy as a misconception of the kind of “rule” a “bishop” was called upon to exercise. Peter refers to the evil consequences of attempting to be “lords over God’s heritage”, and John puts his finger on the same temptation when he speaks of Diotrefes, “who loveth to have the pre-eminence” (III John 9).

We are reminded by such passages as these of the following words, which will no doubt be familiar to some of our readers:

“But man, proud man,
Dress’d in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he’s most assured,
+ + + +
Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven
As make the angels weep.”

The figures of a shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep, and of a father in his own household, should have been sufficient to prevent any misunderstanding of the word “rule”. The word itself (in I Tim. iii. 4 and 5) is *proistemi*, which means “to preside”, and then “to stand before” so as to defend and maintain (compare Titus iii. 8, 14). The figure of a father presiding over and maintaining his own house, is then transferred to the bishop “taking care” of God’s house, the church. The only other occurrences of *epimeleomai*, “to take care” are found in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke x. 34, 35).

In Eph. iv. the Apostle speaks of the order of ministry given by the ascended Christ as follows:

“And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers” (Eph. iv. 11).

We have already seen that a bishop must be “apt to teach” (I Tim. iii. 2), and that the office of a bishop is interchangeable with that of an “elder” and a “shepherd”. The word “pastor” in Eph. iv. 11 is *poimen*, which is translated “shepherd” in John x. 14, and is linked with *episkopos* in I Pet. ii. 25. The office of “elder” or “bishop” is therefore included in the gifts of Eph. iv. 11 under the double title of “pastors and teachers”.

The introduction of bishops and deacons in Phil. i. 1 is in line with the teaching of this particular epistle which stresses service rather than salvation. Their presence in this epistle also provides an interesting parallel with the epistles to Timothy and Titus as shown in the skeleton structure below:

The seven epistles of Paul, after Acts xxviii.

- A | EPHESIANS. | The Mystery.
- B | PHILIPPIANS. |
 - a | Bishops and Deacons.
 - b | The Prize.
- C | PHILEMON. Truth in Practice.
- A | COLOSSIANS. | The Mystery.
- B | I & II TIMOTHY and TITUS. |
 - a | Bishops and Deacons.
 - b | The Crown.

On closer examination we find that even the rule of bishops and deacons had failed by the time II Timothy was written, and that ruin rather than rule seems to be the keynote of the Church's external order from this time onwards. It is not in any sense a ground for boasting that we can see no rule of bishops and deacons to-day. If we are obliged to walk an individual path, let us not boast, but rather remember the position from which the Church, in its manifest aspect, has fallen. Nevertheless, we can rightly rejoice—that, though all should fail, “He faileth not”—and in these closing days, with apostacy on the horizon, we can but cling more closely to the One Who is more to us than bishop, elder or pastor could ever be.

#42. The Third Missionary Journey (xix. 21 - xxi. 39). The Prison Ministry Foreshadowed (xx. 17 - 38). Paul surveys his “Acts” ministry (xx. 18 – 21). pp. 200 - 208

If the reader will refresh his memory, by turning to the previous article of this series (page 164) he will see that the opening member of the structure, with its reference to “Elders”, occupied all the available space. We must now turn our attention from ministry in general and the particular office denominated Elder to Bishop to the ministry of the apostle Paul, and that phase of it that was drawing to a close, covered in the structure by H1 | xx. 18-21, and H3 | xx. 33-35, where the Apostle surveys his preaching and his practice up to that time. Even though the reader were unacquainted with the passage his first perusal of verses 18-27 would suffice to convince him that Paul is reaching the close of one ministry, and looking on to the opening of another, and that this second ministry is so closely connected with imprisonment, that the Apostle entertains no hope of seeing these Ephesian believers again.

Before we follow his argument, it will be profitable to observe how much there is in common between the phraseology of this recorded speech and that of the epistles written by the same apostle.

ACTS.—“After what manner I have been with you” (Acts xx. 18).

EPISTLE.—“*Ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake*” (I Thess. i. 5).

ACTS.—“Serving the Lord” (Acts xx. 19).

With the exception of the statement of our Lord Himself, “Ye cannot serve God and Mammon”, *douleuo* is used exclusively by the Apostle for service unto the Lord. There are six occurrences in his epistles which, together with Acts xx. 19, make seven in all.

EPISTLE.—“*Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord*” (Rom. xii. 11 and see also Rom. xiv. 18; xvi. 18; Eph. vi. 7; Col. iii. 24; and I Thess. i. 9).

ACTS.—“Serving the Lord with humility of mind” (Acts xx. 19).

EPISTLE.—“*In lowliness of mind let each esteem other*” (Phil. ii. 3).

Paul is responsible for six out of the total seven occurrences of *tapeinophrosune*, “humility of mind”.

ACTS.—“With many tears and temptations” (Acts xx. 19).

EPISTLE.—“*My temptation which was in my flesh*” (Gal. iv. 14).

ACTS.—“How I kept back nothing that was profitable” (Acts xx. 20).

EPISTLE.—“*But if any man draw back*” (Heb. x. 38).

ACTS.—“How I kept back nothing that was profitable” (Acts xx. 20).

EPISTLE.—“*All things are not expedient*” (I Cor. vi. 12).

There are sixteen occurrences of *sumphero* “expedient” or “profitable” in the N.T.: eight occur in the Gospels and Acts xix. 19, and the other eight exclusively in Paul’s epistles.

ACTS.—“The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city” (Acts xx. 24).

EPISTLE.—“*The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit*” (Rom. viii. 16).

ACTS.—“That I may finish my course” (Acts xx. 24).

EPISTLE.—“*I have finished my course*” (II Tim. iv. 7).

These are the only occurrences of *dromos*, “course” except that in Acts xiii. 25, where, again, Paul is speaking. The use of the verb *teleioo*, “to perfect”, in the sense of finishing a race, is characteristic of the Apostle’s language, especially in Phil. iii. and the Epistle to the Hebrews.

ACTS.—“Over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you (*tithemi*) overseers” (Acts xx. 28).

EPISTLE.—“*Whereunto I am appointed (tithemi) a preacher*” (II Tim. i. 11).

ACTS.—“Not sparing the flock” (Acts xx. 29).

EPISTLE.—“*If God spared not the natural branches*” (Rom. xi. 21).

There are seven occurrences of *pheidomai*, “to spare”, in Paul’s epistles. Elsewhere it is found only in Acts xx. 29 or II Pet. ii. 4, 5).

ACTS.—“Therefore watch and remember” (Acts xx. 31).

EPISTLE.—“*For ye remember brethren our labour*” (I Thess. ii. 9).

Mnemonewo.—This is a word very characteristic of the apostle Paul. He uses it again in Acts xx. 35, seven times in the Church Epistles and three times in Hebrews.

ACTS.—“Therefore remember night and day” (Acts xx. 31).

EPISTLE.—“*With labour and travail night and day*” (II Thess. iii. 8).

The association of night and day as an indication of continuance is a characteristic expression of Paul. He uses the combination seven times (Acts xxvi. 7; I Thess. ii. 9; iii. 10; II Thess. iii. 8; I Tim. v. 5; II Tim. i. 3). The other epistles do not use the expression.

ACTS.—“I ceased not to warn to every one” (Acts xx. 31).

EPISTLE.—“*Warning every man, and teaching every man*” (Col. i. 28).

This word *noutheteo*, “to warn”, occurs in seven passages, all of them in Paul’s epistles. It occurs nowhere else except in Acts xx. 31, where it is Paul who is speaking.

ACTS.—“An inheritance among all them are sanctified” (Acts xx. 32).

EPISTLE.—“*The inheritance of the saints in light*” (Col. i. 12).

ACTS.—“I have coveted no man’s silver, or gold, or apparel” (Acts xx. 33).

EPISTLE.—“*Neither used we a cloke of covetousness*” (I Thess. ii. 5).

This is a characteristic attitude of the apostle Paul.

ACTS.—“These hands have ministered unto my necessities” (Acts xx. 34).

EPISTLE.—“*We labour, working with our own hands*” (I Cor. iv. 12).

ACTS.—“These hands have ministered unto my necessities” (Acts xx. 34).

EPISTLE.—“*Distributing to the necessity of saints*” (Rom. xii. 13).

ACTS.—“These hands”; “These bonds” (Acts xx. 34; xxvi. 29).

“How that so labouring ye ought to support the weak” (Acts xx. 35).

EPISTLE.—“*We both labour and suffer reproach*” (I Tim. iv. 10).

Kopiao, “to labour” is a word much used by the Apostle. He employs it fourteen times in his epistles. None of the other apostles use the word except John (Rev. ii. 3).

Here, within the compass of eighteen verses, we have eighteen instances of the usage of words peculiarly Pauline. Could there be more convincing proof that Luke is a faithful eye-witness, and a trustworthy historian?

We now return to the opening of the Apostle’s message to the elders of Ephesus.

“Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind” (Acts xx. 18, 19).

While we might have expected that the Apostle would have put foremost the preaching of Christ or doctrinal purity, we observe that he speaks first of his own personal integrity. To this aspect of the subject he returns in verses 33-35. His reason for reminding his hearers of his unselfishness and lowliness may have been that as he was about to leave them and enter another phase of ministry, he would have them realize that he was not following this course out of self-seeking. Indeed, he said later, “I count not my life dear unto myself”, and he would inculcate in these believers the self-same spirit, making them willing, though sorrowful, that the Lord’s service should deprive them of his presence. From beginning to end of his ministry the Apostle was able, with a good conscience, to bring together his “doctrine” and his “manner of life”.

After this reminder, the Apostle passed on to the outer circumstances in which he had triumphed by grace.

“And with many tears and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews” (Acts xx. 19).

The western mind regards weeping as a sign of weakness, but Paul was eastern in this respect, and once more in this address he appeals to his tears saying:

“Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” (Acts xx. 31).

When the Apostle felt obliged to write the stern letter he did to the Corinthians, he said:

“For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you, with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you” (II Cor. ii. 4).

There could be no doubt, suggested the Apostle, of his unselfishness and the intensity of his concern for all who came under his ministry. From the commencement of that ministry the Jews had been his enemy, had stirred up opposition, and had laid wait for him, plotting against his life. This is recorded in Acts ix. 23, and Acts xxiii. 12 gives the account of a further plot. Again, in Acts xiii., xiv., xvii., xviii., xix. and xx., we read of Jews following the Apostle from one city to another stirring up opposition, but there is no record of his meeting with such antagonism in Asia itself. The Apostle appeals to what was common knowledge among his hearers, though not recorded in detail by Luke. In the same way, Paul speaks of scourgings, beatings, shipwrecks, prisons, and many perils when writing to the Corinthians (II Cor. xi. 23-28), but we should have remained in ignorance of these many sufferings had not the Apostle become “a fool” in boasting.

“I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you” (Acts xx. 20).

Hupostello, “to keep back”, is a word used for the reefing of a sail (Pind. I. 2. 60), and the Apostle uses it as a man of keen perception, possessed of a ready use and appreciation of language, as an intimate study of his writings reveals. He had possibly heard the word in use during his voyages, and, with the ministry of the word ever in mind, he seized upon its applicability to his own attitude in the case in point. He has not “lowered sail”, but with every stitch of canvas set he had fulfilled his ministry of the Word and Gospel. He did not however make the unqualified claim that he had “kept back nothing”, but added the words, “that was profitable for you”. He had but recently written the Epistle to the Corinthians, where he plainly says that he had, of purpose, “kept back” certain doctrines because of the immaturity of the Corinthian saints (I Cor. ii., iii.). But nothing was kept back because of fear, or policy, or self-seeking. Our English word “profitable” is not full enough to convey the Apostle’s meaning here. The word he used was *sumphero*, which is often translated “expedient”, but even this word has taken upon itself a somewhat sinister meaning. The Greek word occurs twice in the Acts, the first occurrence being Acts xix. 19, where it is translated “brought together”.

“Many of them also which used curious arts *brought* their books *together*, and burned them before all men” (Acts xix. 19).

In Acts xix. 19 the word is used transitively, but in all other passages it is intransitive. While therefore we cannot translate “I kept back nothing that would bring you together”, we must not import into either the word “profit” or “expedient” some of their modern meanings. The Apostle lets a little light into the nature and method of his teaching.

“I have showed you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house” (Acts xx. 20).

“*Showed.*”—This word must not be confused with an entirely different word that is translated “showed” in verse 35. Here, the original is *anaggello* (pronounced *anangelo*) and means “to declare”, as in verse 27, where the Apostle uses the word a second time.

The word suggests that the messenger had “brought back” word, as in Acts xiv. 27, where the Apostle “rehearsed” all that God had done. It also means an unreserved declaration, as the occurrence in Acts xix. 18 reveals.

“They confessed and showed their deeds” (Acts xix. 18).

The reader will observe that in Acts xix. 18-20, it is recorded of the Ephesians that they “brought together” their books, and confessed and “showed” their deeds and that the Apostle, apparently impressed with this genuine repentance, ever quick to search his own heart, and ever ready to assimilate and use current words and occurrences, is found using the same word of himself on the next possible occasion.

“*And have taught*” (*didasko*, Acts xx. 20).—Teaching holds a far more important place than some believers are prepared to admit. Our Saviour’s public ministry combined preaching with teaching (Matt. iv. 23), and His commission to the Apostles, given in the last chapter of Matthew, is “*Teaching* them to observe” (Matt. xxviii. 20). The Acts of the Apostles is a continuation of all the Jesus began to do and to teach (Acts i. 1), and the last verse of the Acts brings together “preaching” and “teaching” (Acts xxviii. 31). It was from among certain “prophets and teachers” that the Holy Ghost separated preachers for the evangelizing of Galatia (Acts xiii. 1). From this word comes *didaskalia*, “doctrine”, which, apart from Matt. xv. 9 and Mark vii. 7, is a word exclusive to Paul’s writings, where it occurs nineteen times. *Didache*, another word translated “doctrine”, is more evenly distributed. *Didache* is teaching in process, but *didaskalia* is the substance of the teaching, or, as we express it, doctrine itself.

Teachers, *didaskaloi*, were included in the gifts of Eph. iv. 11, and the Apostle stressed the fact that he was not only an apostle, or a preacher, but a *teacher* of the Gentiles (I Tim. ii. 7; II Tim. i. 11), and the apostacy of the last days is associated more with “doctrines” (I Tim. iv. 1; II Tim. iv. 3), and “teachers” (II Tim. iv. 3) than with preachers. This teaching the Apostle had conducted both “publicly” and “from house to house”.

Demosios, “publicly”, is found only in the Acts of the Apostles, where it occurs four times:

“The *common* prison” (Acts v. 18);

“Beaten *openly*” (Acts xvi. 37);

“Convincing the Jews, *publicly*” (Acts xviii. 28, and Acts xx. 20).

In like manner *demos*, “the people”, occurs four times, and is found only in the Acts.

The Apostle’s ministry was not conducted in a corner. Like his Master he could say:

“I spake openly to the world: I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing” (John xviii. 20).

Unlike the Lord, however, his ministry was not confined to public speaking. He trained and taught the believer in things pertaining to faith, life and godliness, and so the Apostle says, “publicly and from house to house”. Saul the persecutor was thorough:

“As for Saul he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison” (Acts viii. 3).

and the same zeal that he manifested as a zealot for the religion of his fathers now characterized him as a champion of the cross. In the Apostle’s days the church was often accommodated in the house of a believer (Rom. xvi. 5; Col. iv. 15; Philemon 2). Aquila and Priscilla knew the value of this homely ministry (Acts xviii. 26), and alas, the propagandists of the last few days will be aware of it too (II Tim. iii. 6), and will find a ready ear in those who “wander from house to house” (I Tim. v. 13).

Having defined his ministry as “serving the Lord”, and its true presentation as “with all humility of mind”; its accompaniments of “tears, temptations and lying in wait of the Jews”; its unreserved exposition, “I kept back nothing”; its wisdom and consideration, “that was profitable” not for his own profit but “unto you”, and having further particularized this ministry as one of both “public” and “private” teaching, the Apostle proceeds to summarize its substance.

“Testifying (*diamarturomai*) both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts xx. 21).

His ministry was a testimony. In verse 24 we shall meet the word again, “to testify the gospel of the grace of God”. *Diamarturomai*.—*Dia*, “through” is emphatic, and akin to our “thorough”. It should never be forgotten that the Greek word for “witness” (*martur*) is the word translated “martyr” in Rev. ii. 13 and xvii. 6, and that our word “martyr” is but the Greek word “witness” in English letters. Paul’s testimony was always at the risk of life and limb, and while it is not necessary for a true witness to be martyred, yet He Who reads the thoughts and intents of the heart, knows whether we hold His truth so dear that Smithfield itself could not turn us back. We boast not. We realize only too keenly our frailty, but we pray that such may be the character of our “testimony” in His sight.

Paul’s testimony was to both “Jew and Greek”. Were we unprepared by this reference, we would probably slip into the error of thinking that “Jew and Gentile” is the common phrase in the N.T., whereas it is not so. It is true, that the A.V. reads in I Cor. x. 32:

“Neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.”

and this has been made the foundation of a special attempt at “right division”, but the fact remains that *Hellen* (Greek) and not *Ethnos* (Gentile) is used here. Again, in Rom. i. 16 we read “To the Jew first, and also to the *Greek*”, but in Rom. ii. 9, 10 the identical phrase is translated, “to the Jew, first and also the *Gentile*”, but this is without warrant. The same correction is needed in John vii. 35, Rom. iii. 9 and I Cor. xii. 13.

“Jews” are coupled with or contrasted with “Greeks” in no less than twenty-one passages of the Acts and Epistles, and while the Jew and the Gentile do occur together, it is with nothing like the same frequency, and cannot compare with the reiterated “Jew and Greek” of Paul’s epistles. To attempt an explanation of this peculiarity is beyond our present scope. That it is of purpose we most surely believe, and the series of articles that have appeared in these pages dealing with Greek wisdom will give direction to the enquiring mind. In the Jew, God manifested the bankruptcy of human righteousness; in the Greek the utter failure of human wisdom. To both Paul preached and taught the same need, viz.:

“Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts xx. 21).

“Repentance” is *metanoia*, and means “a change of mind”, or “an after mind”. Repentance presupposes that one has entertained false ideas, consequently we find repentance urged upon Israel concerning their false ideas as to the King and Kingdom. The Corinthians had entertained false ideas concerning the scope of their liberty in Christ, and had to be shown that liberty was not license (I Cor. viii. 9, 10). The man caught in the snare of the Devil was delivered upon repentance or, as it is expanded, by acknowledgment of the truth (II Tim. ii. 25). Paul urged repentance upon philosophic Athens (Acts xvii. 30), no longer restricting this need to the people of Israel, and in another summary of his earlier ministry he said:

“I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance” (Acts xxvi. 19, 20).

So the Thessalonians:

“Turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God” (I Thess. i. 9).

Repentance, however, cannot be separated, except mentally, from the positive act of faith. He who “turns from idols” without “turning to the living God” may be but “empty, swept and garnished”. Repentance and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ go together.

At this point we must bring our exposition to a close for it is too late in the article to consider the implication of such words as “faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”. The interested believer, however, knows the prime importance of the words, and it is with them that Paul brings the survey of his “Acts” ministry to an end. His next words denote a change, “And now”, but this too we leave for consideration in another article.

The Eternal God is thy Refuge.

(Being a series of studies designed to encourage the believer in times of stress).

#2. “God is our Refuge and Strength” (Psa. xlvi. 1). pp. 29, 30

After having considered the testimony of Moses, which provides the title for this series, we turn almost instinctively to the Psalms. There have, of course, been great doctrinal and dispensational changes since their immortal phrases were sung and penned, but human experience and need, and Divine mercy and provision remain unchanged. Let us turn, then, to Psalm xlvi.

“God is our Refuge and Strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psa. xlvi. 1).
“The Lord of hosts is with us: The God of Jacob is our refuge” (Psa. xlvi. 7, 11).

The land and people of Israel were not strangers to war, and this Psalm probably refers to the siege under Sennacherib. It does not celebrate “a victorious campaign, but a successful defence” (*Companion Bible*).

“In the whole of Israel’s history, there is *only one event*, of which we can here think, the destruction of Sennacherib’s army before the gates of Jerusalem, Isa. xxxvii. 36 . . . after the exodus from Egypt, there was no occasion more appropriate than this for bringing vividly out the leading idea in this Psalm” (*Hengstenberg*).

The blessed refrain “God is with us” is but an echo of the Immanuel (“God with us”) that we find in Isa. viii. 10; and just as Hezekiah prayed that through the deliverance of Jerusalem the kingdoms of the earth “may know that Thou alone art the Lord” (Isa. xxxvii. 20), so in this Psalm we read:

“Know that I am God. I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psa. xlvi. 10).

We note first of all in this psalm that the exultant reference to God as Refuge comes three times—in verse 1, verse 7, and in the last verse, 11. Further, it should be noted that the reference to the earth being “removed” and the waters “roaring” in verses 2 and 3, corresponds with the “rage” of the heathen and the “moving” of the kingdoms in verse 6, where the same two words are found in the original. The “Selah” between verses 3 and 4 draws attention to the contrast between the roaring waters without, and the gentle flow within of the river that supplied, as from a secret source, the needs of Zion.

Coming back to the thought of the Refuge in this Psalm, we note next that the Psalmist has been inspired to use two words to describe this refuge, and neither of them being the same as that found in Deut. xxxiii. 27. The word used in verse 1: “God is our refuge”, carries with it the idea of something one can “trust”, as will be seen by its usage in

Psalm xci. 4, “Under His wings shalt thou *trust*”. It is probably derived from a word which means “to make haste” or “flee” (Psa. xl. 13), and suggests that such a refuge is one to which one would flee for safety (compare Heb. vi. 18). The second word is found in Psalm xlvi. 7 & 11 and means a “high tower”. The idea of safety is evidently associated with this, for we read in Prov. xviii. 10:

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it and is safe.”

To sum up, then, we may say that God Himself is set before us as our Refuge, in a threefold light. He is a “dwelling”—prepared beforehand by God Who anticipates all eventualities (Deut. xxxiii. 27). He is also a “trustworthy” refuge (Psa. xlvi. 1), and a high and exalted place of safety (Psa. xlvi. 7, 11). This, dear reader, is a word in season for us all. “*The Eternal God is our refuge.*”

#3. “A very present help in trouble” (Psa. xlvi. 1). pp. 52 - 54

Most readers could provide examples from their own personal experience of the attitude so often adopted by people of “letting things slide”. While no danger seems imminent these people give the superficial appearance of an enviable *sangfroid*, but in many cases these are the very people who show the greatest evidence of fear when the crisis breaks. One can find many examples to-day which illustrate the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. And so we come to another blessed aspect of the teaching of Scripture concerning our “refuge”.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psa. xlvi. 1).

However fully the Government may have provided for the people, all such provision is rendered useless if it is not available when wanted. Steel shelters, guaranteed to withstand concussion, to protect from flying splinters, and to resist falling masonry, are so much mockery in a day of calamity, *if they have never been erected*. Respirators, proved by test to provide adequate protection against poison gas, are so much lumber *if they are not at hand when wanted*. And so we read the God is not only our Refuge, but He is “a *very present* Help in trouble” (Psa. xlvi. 1). There is no actual reference here to the “presence” of God, although, of course, it is implied. This majestic A.V. translation was not altered in the R.V. advisedly, but the reader should know that the words translated “A very present help” are literally “A much *found* help”. This same word, when used of the wicked in Psalm xxxvii. 36, is translated “could not be found”.

Let us consider next one or two passages of Scripture that will strengthen our faith in this “very present” aspect of God’s provision.

“He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep” (Psa. cxxi. 4).

Every human life, without exception, is an alternation of waking and sleeping, and there is bound to come a time when sleep will rob even the most vigilant and conscientious guard of all power to carry out his duty. There is, however, more than this in Psalm cxxi. 4. It is not merely for the sake of the poetry of the passage that the Psalmist uses the two expressions “slumber” and “sleep”. The two words have not quite the same meaning. “To sleep” (Heb. *yashen*) means “to fall asleep” involuntarily, as when a deep sleep fell upon Adam (Gen. ii. 21), or when man “sleeps the sleep of death” (Psa. xiii. 3). “To slumber” (Heb. *num*), on the other hand, refers more to “drowsiness”, something that might be shaken off and overcome. In Proverbs we read that “*drowsiness* shall clothe a man with rags” (Prov. xxiii. 21), and Nahum’s charge against the rulers of Nineveh is expressed in the words: “Thy shepherds *slumber*.” Of false shepherds of Israel, we read in Isaiah:

“His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, *loving to slumber*” (Isa. lvi. 10).

The Lord neither “slumbers” through lack of interest, nor “sleeps” because of frailty. He is indeed a *very present* help in trouble.

“The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good” (Prov. xv. 3).

However watchful and wakeful a human sentinel may be, his eyes cannot possibly be “in every place”. No such limitations, however, are to be found in the Lord as our great Refuge. He will ever be “a very present help in trouble”, for He is “ever present”. “Whither shall I flee from Thy presence?” asked the Psalmist, and we know the answer. “Whether he ascend to heaven, or descend to hell, there will He still be found.”

Moreover, the most watchful and vigilant of human guards is baffled by the fall of darkness, but this is not so with the Lord, for we read in Psalm cxxxix.:

“The darkness and the light are both alike to Thee” (Psa. cxxxix. 12).

Here, then, is ground for assurance, quiet confidence and peace. Our Refuge is God Himself, and that being so, it must necessarily partake of His glorious attributes. He is eternal, He is almighty, He is ever-present, and we therefore have His encompassing protection by night and by day, in darkness and in light, unceasing, unwearied, and unailing.

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge.”

#4. “The God of Jacob is our refuge” (Psa. xlvi. 7, 11). pp. 61, 62

We have learned from the Scriptures that:

- (1) “The eternal God is our refuge”;
- (2) “God is our refuge and strength”, and we now add
- (3) “The God of Jacob is our refuge.”

The God of Israel and the God of Jacob are, of course, the same Person, but the two titles present two different aspects of truth. Jacob was frail, erring and sinful, the man who lied and deceived. Israel, on the other hand, was a princely title. And yet, though the name Jacob is associated with weakness and need, it is “the God of Jacob”, and not “the God of Israel”, Who is the Refuge of Psalm. xlvi. This title—“The God of Jacob”—is very much like the N.T. “God of all grace”, for it was grace indeed that chose and forgave and blessed Jacob.

This leads us to another truth. We read once or twice the title “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel”, but the usual title is “The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”. This is God’s great covenant name. The church, of course is not blessed under the terms of this covenant, but rather in accordance with His purpose and grace, that chose every member in Christ “before the foundation of the world”. Nevertheless it is certainly true that if “Jacob” could find his refuge in God, so may those who, though “aliens” and “strangers”, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

The fact that underlies the title we are considering is well expressed in Psalm cxxxv. 4:

“The Lord hath chosen *Jacob* unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure”
(Psalm cxxxv. 4).

The opening verses of Psalm xx. are also relevant:

“The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble: *The name of the God of Jacob* defend thee;
send thee help from the sanctuary, and strengthen thee out of Zion” (Psa. xx. 1, 2).

The title “The God of Jacob” must not be taught of, however, as purely defensive in character, for in Psalm lxxvi. we read:

“At Thy rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the chariot and horse are cast into a dead sleep”
(Psa. lxxvi. 6).

Returning to Psalm xlvi. we note that in verses 7 and 11 there is a twofold title given to the Lord:

“The Lord of Hosts is *with us*; the God of Jacob is our refuge.”

He Who is the God of grace, is also the Supreme Ruler of all the hosts of heaven and earth, and it is this God Who is our refuge and Who is “with us”.

“When thou passest through the waters, I will be *with thee*” (Isa. xliii. 2).

“I will be *with him* in trouble” (Psa. xci. 15).

“He will be *with thee*; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee” (Deut. xxxi. 8).

This emphasis upon the nearness of the Lord which we have already seen in verse 1 (“A very present help in trouble”), and in verses 7 and 11 (“The Lord of Hosts is with us”) is found again in verse 5:

“God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.”

“With us” “In the midst” “Very present”.

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge.”

#5. “Only” and “at all times” (Psa. lxii.). **pp. 77 - 79**

Having seen something of Psalm xlvi., we pass on now to other passages, so that the reader may be able to see how all-embrasive is our divinely provided Refuge and Defence.

In Psalm lxii. 7 and 8 we read:

“In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in Him at all times ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us” (Psa. lxii. 7, 8).

Six times over in this Psalm does the particle *ak* occur—translated “truly” in verse 1, “surely” in verse 9, and “only” in verses 2, 4, 5, and 6. We have already learned that “God is our Refuge”, and we now learn that He *only* is our Refuge.

Using Young’s literal translation, we find the following occurrences of the word in Psalm lxii.:

Verse 1 ONLY.—Toward God is my soul silent,
From Him is my salvation.

Verse 2 ONLY.—He is my rock and my salvation,
My Tower, I am not much moved.

Verse 5 ONLY.—For God, be silent, O my soul,
For from Him is my hope.

Verse 6 ONLY.—He is my rock and my salvation,
My tower, I am not moved.

In contrast to the Rock and the High Tower provided by God, man is likened, in verse 3, to a “bowing wall, and a tottering fence”. And in verse 9 we read:

“ONLY.—Vanity are the low, a lie the high.”

This is followed, in verse 10, by the words:

“Trust not in oppression set not your heart upon wealth when it increaseth.”

We find, too, a progression in confidence as the Psalm proceeds, for in verse 2 we read:

“He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defence; *I shall not be greatly moved.*”

In verse 6, however, his confidence has grown. He has compared the “bowing wall and tottering fence”, and the vain attempt of his enemy to cast him down; and he can now say:

“He only is my rock, and my salvation; He is my defence; *I shall not be moved*”
(verse 6).

Here we have true boasting, namely, boasting in the Lord, for he who says “I shall not be moved” without full trust in the Lord may be self-deceived. With true humility the Psalmist says at first: “I shall not be *greatly* moved”, suggesting a consciousness of human frailty as well as a confidence in Divine power.

Another passage of a similar kind is found in Psalm xlvi.:

“God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved” (Psa. xlvi. 5).

In another Psalm, David attributes this blessing to mercy:

“For the king trusteth in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved” (Psa. xxi. 7).

The same word in the original is rendered “to slip” and “to slide”:

“Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps *slip* not” (Psa. xvii. 5).
“Their foot shall *slide* in due time” (Deut. xxxii. 35).

Coming back to Psalm lxii., we find in the second reference to God as the Refuge of His people, that He is not only a Refuge and Defence from enemies *without*, but also a Refuge from anxiety *within*:

“Trust in Him at all times, ye people, pour your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us” (Psa. lxii. 8).

Or, as the writer of the hymn puts it:

“How oft in the conflict, when pressed by the foe,
I have fled to my Refuge and breathed out my woe;
How often when trials like sea billows roll,
Have I hidden in Thee, O Thou Rock of my soul.”

And so we find that God is indeed our Refuge, whether from the upheavals of nature (Psa. xlvi. 2, 3), or from conflict among nations (Psa. lxii. 4), or from the fears and troubles of our own hearts (Psa. lxii. 8).

“Trust in Him AT ALL TIMES.”
“HE ONLY is my Rock and my Salvation.”

“Only”—and “at all times”. What an all-embracing exclusiveness!

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge.”

#6. Experimental entry into eternal truth (Psa. xc. and xci.) pp. 109 - 111

When we think of God as our refuge for His people, we instinctively, as we have already said, turn to Psalm xlvi. There is, however, another psalm that is almost equally relevant, and that is Psalm xci.

It would be beside the point in this series to consider at any length the historical setting of the passages that speak of God as our refuge, but we cannot refrain from drawing attention to the following points.

The Psalms are divided into five books, each book ending with the phrase, “Amen and Amen”. Psalm xc. commences the fourth book, which corresponds with Numbers, the book of the wilderness. This psalm, which has been called “The funeral hymn of the world”, is entitled: “A Prayer of Moses, the man of God”, and deals with the sojourn of Israel during the forty years’ wandering in the wilderness. The following psalm (xci.) refers to the children that Israel said had been brought out of Egypt to die in the wilderness. The covering text for the two related psalms might well be such a passage as Numb. xiv. 27-34:

“How long shall I bear with this evil congregation? as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you. Your carcasses shall fall in the wilderness from twenty years old and upward. Doubtless ye shall not come into the land ye shall bear your iniquities even forty years, and ye shall know My breach of promise.”

The reader should compare this passage with the following verses in Psalm xc.:

“Return” (verse 13).
“We are consumed in Thine anger” (verse 7).
“The days of our years are threescore years and ten” (verse 10).

In regard to Numb. xiv. 31-33, viz.:

“But your little ones, which ye said should be a prey, them will I bring in, and they shall know the land which ye have despised Your children shall wander in the wilderness forty years until your carcasses be wasted in the wilderness.”

the following should be compared:

“Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day: nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness: nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee” (Psa. xci.).

The first of these psalms opens with the glorious words:

“Lord, Thou has been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God” (Psa. xc. 1, 2).

This is a great, unalterable doctrinal fact. It extends beyond the possibilities of human experience, for it goes back to the beginning of creation, and concerns the very Being of God. Doctrine is essential, for without it we cannot build or grow, but it is one thing to subscribe to the “doctrine” of Psalm xc.—the children who fell in the wilderness probably believed its truth—and quite another to enter into the truth experimentally. It is this kind of difference that we find when we compare the opening of Psalm xc. with Psalm xci. The latter does not take us back to a time before the creation, but deals with the immediate present:

“He that *dwelleth* in the secret place of the Most High shall *abide* under the shadow of the Almighty. I will *say* of the Lord, He is *my* refuge and *my* fortress, *my* God; in Him will I *trust*” (Psa. xci. 1, 2).

“Dwell”, “abide”, “say”, “my”, “trust”. This is clearly *experimental* truth.

The same note is again evident in verses 9 and 10.

“Because thou hast made the Lord, Which is my refuge, Even the Most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, Neither shall any plague come nigh thy tent” (Psa. xci. 9,10).

The change of person may be accounted for if we regard Moses as addressing Joshua in the first place, and through him all who “wholly follow” the Lord (Deut. i. 36).

Here then is the Refuge provided for all who “trust”, for all who “abide”, for all who “dwell”. Such are “covered with His feathers”, and protected by His stretched-out “wings”.

The words “abide under the *shadow* of the Almighty” may be compared with Gen. xix. 8, with its allusion to the inviolable character of Eastern hospitality: “Therefore came they under the *shadow* of my roof.”

We also find that this dwelling-place is described as “the secret place of the Most High”. This aspect of the subject we must leave for the moment, but we shall hope to return to it in our next meditation. Meanwhile, let us rejoice in this Refuge, to which we may flee, a “dwelling-place” and a “shadow” where we may abide.

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge.”

**#7. “When others helpers fail, and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, Lord, abide with me.”
pp. 143, 144**

Among the experiences that left their mark upon the soul of David, was that which he endured in connection with the cave of Adullam. In Psalm cxlii., which is the last of eight Psalms that have reference to this experience, David, in spite of his anointing and his faith, is shown to have been sometimes brought so low that despair entered his heart.

“And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul”
(I Sam. xxvii. 1).

He had been hunted as a partridge in the mountains, and he knew what it was to be overwhelmed. Looking back upon these times, David said

“When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then Thou knewest my path” (Psa. cxlii. 3).

Possibly, at the time, David entertained doubts as to the Lord’s watchful care, but looking back afterwards he gladly acknowledges that in his darkest moments (for the word “overwhelmed” literally means “was darkened”), the Lord knew his path.

“Refuge failed me”, said David as he remembered his isolation and loneliness.

“I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me:
Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul” (Psa. cxlii. 4).

“*No man refuge failed no man cared.*”—The word “refuge” David uses here to indicate his plight, is the Hebrew *manos*, “somewhere to flee to”, “escape” (Job xi. 20); “way to flee” (Jer. xxv. 35); “flight” (Amos ii. 14). There is a peculiar element of bitterness in the choice of this word *manos*, for the verb of which it is a derivative is used in many passages which speak of “fleeing” to one of the Cities of Refuge (Numb. xxxv. 11, 25; Deut. iv. 42, etc.). But David was cut off from all earthly provision for He had not even a City of Refuge to which he could flee, and added

to this, “no man cared”! In such circumstances there is nothing left but God, and, blessed be His name, David wrote this Psalm to tell us that He “knew”, He “cared”, He provided a “refuge”.

“I cried unto Thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living” (Psa. cxlii. 5).

Here David used another word for “refuge”—the one already found in Psalms xci. 2 and xlvi. 1. Not only did the Lord provide a refuge when all help failed, but David adds that the Lord was his portion in the land of the living. *Cheleq*, “portion”, has reference to “dividing spoil”, or “dividing an inheritance”. David used the word when he said

“As his *part* is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his *part* be that tarrieth by the stuff; they shall *part* alike” (I Sam. xxx. 24).

He had also heard the words of the men of Belial who had cried:

“We have no *part* in David” (II Sam. xx. 1).

“What *portion* have we in David?” (I Kings xii. 16).

No man “knew”; no man “cared”; refuge had perished, but God remained, and while God abides, He is the refuge of His people, and not only so, but He is their portion, He takes the place of the *victor’s spoil*, and He supplies the place of the *lost inheritance*. David could, then, boast in his sorest need and direct distress, that he was “more than conqueror” through the Lord. Let us beware of the “refuge of lies” (Isa. xxviii. 15); let us not be cast down when we look to the right hand and find “no man”; let us cast all our care upon Him “for He careth for us”. “*The Eternal God is thy Refuge.*”

#8. The “secret place” and the “shadow”. pp. 145, 146

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty” (Psa. xci. 1).

It is evident that we have here in this first verse the echo of thought which is so characteristic of Hebrew poetry. Let us seek a fuller understanding of these wonderful words.

There is a much greater difference between the Hebrew words for “dwell” and “abide” than our English version would indicate. The word “dwelling” implies a settled place of habitation, as, for instance, in Psalm xxiii.: “I will *dwell* in the house of the Lord for ever.” Isaiah, also, uses the word as he looks forward to the future reign of peace: “They shall build houses and *inhabit* them” (Isa. lxy. 21). “To abide”, on the other hand, means “to lodge for a night” (Gen. xxxii. 21) or “to tarry a night” (Judges xix. 10). The transitoriness of the word is evident in Psalm xxx. 5 where we read that “weeping *may*

endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”. The believer *dwells*, as in a permanent habitation, “in the secret place of the most High”; he *lodges* as though tarrying for a night “under the shadow of the Almighty”. The first word speaks of the believer’s eternal security, the second of the protection afforded day by day as he journeys homeward through the wilderness.

“*The secret place.*”—Jonathan advises David in I Sam. xix. to “abide in a secret place” because of Saul’s anger (I Sam. xix. 2), while Job speaks of Behemoth as lying “in the *covert* of the reeds and fens” (Job xl. 21). Isaiah, also uses the word when he speaks of Moab as “a *covert* from the face of the spoiler” (Isa. xvi. 4), while in chapter xxxii. he speaks of another “covert”, infinitely greater than Moab:

“Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.
And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a *covert* from the tempest”
(Isa. xxxii. 1, 2).

When the Lord came forth to deliver David when he was fleeing from the hand of Saul, we read that “He made darkness His *secret* place” (Psa. xviii. 11). And again, in Psalm xxvii.:

“In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; in the *secret* of His tabernacle shall He hide me” (Psa. xxvii. 5).

Again, in Psalm cxxxix. we read:

“My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them” (Psa. cxxxix. 15, 16).

The “secret place” here is somewhat analogous with the believer’s position in the Church of “the Mystery”, as “chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world”.

For every member of the One Body there is food for reflection in Psalm xci. 1. We too can go back, as did Moses, to the Lord our dwelling-place, “before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world”. We can rest in the unalterable truth of our election before the foundation of the world, and we can also know what it is day by day to tarry, as it were, “under the shadow of the Almighty”. Not only is He our *eternal* home, but His presence is also our “lodging-place” throughout life’s pilgrimage.

“*The shadow of the Almighty.*”—How unsubstantial a thing is a shadow, and yet the very shadow of the Almighty provides full protection for the weary pilgrim. The following are four ways in which this figure of a protecting shadow is used:

- (1) The *shadow* of the outstretched wings—“Hide me under the *shadow* of Thy wings” (Psa. xvii. 8).
- (2) The *shadow* of a cloud from the heat (Isa. xxv. 4, 5).
- (3) The *shadow* of a great rock in a weary land (Isa. xxxii. 2).
- (4) The *shadow* of the Lord’s hand (Isa. li. 16).

Those of us who know our calling and election, and something of the “secret place of the Most High”, need nothing more during life’s pilgrimage, than the shadow of His hand, to preserve us until traveling days are done.

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge.”

**#9. “The name of the God of Jacob defend thee” (Psa. xx. 1).
pp. 189, 190**

The word “defence” is one that has been much in use in recent times, and assurances have been given from time to time as to the adequacy, the readiness, and the quality of the nation’s defences. So too, in Scripture, we find that not only is God the Refuge of His people, but He is also their Defence.

In Psalm vii. 10, where we read: “My defence is of God”, the Psalmist uses the word *magen*, “a shield”, but in most passages in the Psalms the word is *misgab*, “a high place”. It is to this that the Psalmist refers when he says: “The name of the God of Jacob defend thee” (Psa. xx. 1). The verb here, which supplies us with the noun *misgab*, is *sagab*, and this must be included in our study if we are to appreciate the nature of the “defence” that we may find in the Lord.

The primary meaning of *sagab* is “to lift up”, then “to be exalted”, “to be placed on high”, “to be lofty”. In Psalm cxlviii. 13 we read: “His name is excellent” (or more literally, “His name is most high”) while in Isa. ii. 11 *sagab* is used of the Lord, Who shall “alone be exalted in that day”. Other occurrences are in Psalms cxxxix. & lxix. and, more familiarly, in Psalm xci.:

“It is *high*, I cannot attain to it” (Psa. cxxxix. 6).

“O God, set me up on *high*” (Psa. lxix. 29).

“I will set him on *high* because He hath known My Name” (Psa. xci. 14).

The word *misgab*, which actually appears in the A.V. of Jer. xlvi. 1, is used by David in II Sam. xxii., when he says of the Lord:

“The Lord is my rock: in Him will I trust: He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, *my high tower* and my refuge, my Saviour” (II Sam. xxii. 3).

It was this word, translated “refuge”, that came before us in Psalm xlvi. 7 and 11.

Out of his experience “in the cave”, David write the Psalm we considered in our last article. Out of another experience belonging to the same period he wrote Psalm lix., the superscription of which reads, referring to I Sam. xix. 11: “When Saul sent and they watched the house to kill him.” The Psalm opens with the words:

“Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God, *defend* me from them that rise up against me” (Psa. lix. 1).

The Psalm is divided into two parts by the references to God as David’s defence. If, instead of the somewhat ambiguous rendering: “Because of His strength will I wait on thee” (verse 9), we read “O my strength” as in verse 17; the two verses can then be read together:

“O my Strength, I will wait upon Thee, for God is my defence.”
“O my Strength, unto Thee will I sing, for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.”

Note the advance in verse 17 over verse 9. In verse 9 David says, “I will wait”, but at the close he says, “I will sing” (verse 17). Further, whilst in verse 10 he says: “The God of my mercy shall prevent me”, in verse 17 he adds to the words, “for God is my defence”, the words “and my mercy”.

God was not only David’s “Strength” but his “Mercy”. He (David) was “set on high”, i.e. lifted above the conspiracy of his foes.

Well may we sing:

“O Redeemer, what a Friend Thou art to me,
O what a Refuge I have found in Thee.”

Or, in perhaps better known words:

“All my trust on Thee is stayed,
All my help from Thee I bring.
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of Thy wing.”

“The Eternal God is thy Refuge.”

Fruits of Fundamental Studies.

#18. "What I believe."

pp. 5 - 7

A popular London daily newspaper some time ago published a series of articles, entitled "What I Believe". The usual endeavour was made to get a "representative" set of opinions, and the writers included an agnostic, a Jesuit, a poet, a playwright, and a professor. Apart from two of the articles, or at most three, the views expressed would have been better headed: "What I do *not* believe." Anyone in trouble or despair, reading the series, would be justified in echoing Job's words: "Miserable comforters are ye all."

One article, however, was particularly striking by reason of the fact that it so completely missed the mark, and so completely justified the opening chapters of Genesis. The article concerned was written by a Professor of Industrial Relations, whose intense humanity and wise counsel have made him both loved and respected by a large number of wireless listeners, and by the many readers of his articles and letters of advice.

This is the way in which he opens his article:

"Do I believe in God? I don't know. If I could only grasp the question—but I can't. Ask your Sealyham if he believes in Time-Space. He'll bark or growl because he'll know you're making those noises humans make. But it won't mean anything, because the question was beyond his ken."

At first sight one might be pardoned for saying that there is some truth in the Professor's simile. God is infinite, God is spirit, God is invisible. Who are we, that we should talk of knowing Him or believing in Him? There is, however, a fundamental fallacy here that we do well to recognize. It is obvious that the Sealyham would not have the remotest conception of Time-Space, and any appearance of intelligence in this connection would be misleading. Let us set the argument out in syllogistic form. The reader will probably perceive that we need more than one syllogism to make a perfect presentation of the argument, but for our present purpose, this will suffice.

A Sealyham cannot understand Time-Space. God is even more difficult to understand. Therefore man cannot understand God.

Even the untrained mind will perceive the weak point here, but let us pass on to the sequel. The assumption is that man is no more capable of understanding the idea of God than a dog is capable of understanding the idea of Time-Space. But is this so? The Book of Genesis goes out of its way to draw attention to the creation of man, marking him off from all other creatures, and emphasizing one feature in particular that renders the Professor's argument valueless. If Genesis be true, man was made in the "image and likeness" of his Creator. While recognizing the immense gulf that separates the Creator from His creatures, we must also remember that God has instituted a relationship between man and Himself of such a character that God and man may use similar terms. They can

meet on common ground, and can understand a common language. While it is true that the human terms in which God has been pleased to reveal His nature and attributes must always be understood as symbols, and not ultimate realities, yet the testimony of Genesis and the faculties of man alike assure us that the comparison instituted by the Professor is not a true one. The reader will find other articles in this series dealing more specifically with the meaning of Gen. i. 26, and also with the general question of the testimony of language. This is simply a short article in the form of a supplementary note, using the Professor's argument as a means of drawing attention to the true relationship between man and God.

Luke iii. 38 tells us that Adam was a son of God, and we should expect a son, however lowly, to be capable of a fellowship and understanding in relation to his father, that would be on a much higher plane than any relationship that could exist between the most intelligent dog and the thought processes of his master. Man, created in the image of his Maker, has been endowed with a faculty which at least appreciates "His eternal power and deity" and renders ignorance "without excuse" (Rom. i. 19, 20). The advent of sin and death has impaired these faculties and seriously impaired the "image", but both faculties and image remain the distinctive characteristics of man. Added to this, of course, we have the gospel message, that in the fullness of time God was manifested in the flesh, and seen and heard by men, to whom it was revealed that, having seen Him, they had seen the Father. Both the nature of man by creation, and the coming of Christ in grace, make the parallel between the Sealyham and man untrue and misleading.

"That which may be known of God" has been manifested to man in terms that he can understand, and that are based on the very nature and purpose of his creation. The Book of Genesis, so easily tossed aside by the modern mind, contains in germ the answer to the problems of all mankind. What a tragedy first of all to brush the lamp aside, and then to speak of groping in the dark as wisdom!

**#19. An enquiry into the character of
the "dominion" given to Adam (Gen. i. 26-28).
pp. 48 - 51**

In our last article we considered the meaning of the name "Adam" and its connection with the "likeness" of God, after which he was created. The reader is asked to carry forward the results obtained to this article, as we continue with our present study.

How far, and in what direction, was Adam intended to shadow forth God Himself? How far was he, as a creature, able to represent Deity? What limits can be set? The reader will no doubt be acquainted with the two extreme answers to these questions. There are some who will not allow the image and likeness to be anything more than physical, while there are others who would deduce from this passage the inherent immortality of the soul. The truth lies mid-way between the two extremes.

“And God said, LET US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness; and LET THEM have dominion” (Gen. i. 26).

In our last article we saw that the name “Adam” was similar to the Hebrew word for “likeness”. This “likeness” was expressed in the “dominion” which was originally conferred upon man. When sin entered into the world, however, resulting in a curse upon the earth, his dominion over the lower creatures was impaired. When Noah, whom we can regard as a sort of second Adam, steps out of the ark into a new world, the word “dominion” is no longer used and “the fear of you and the dread of you” takes its place (Gen. ix. 2). Man, however, is still looked upon as being “in the image of God” (Gen. ix. 6), and “in the likeness of God” (James iii. 9).

The dominion that was given to Adam was:

“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).

This dominion was a “shadow” of the greater dominion that was to be exercised by Christ, the true Image of God. David, in Psalm viii., sees something of this, and the apostle Paul in the N.T. completes the story.

“When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; What is man that Thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands; 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 seas” (Psa. viii. 3-8).

If we turn to the Epistle to the Hebrews, we shall see that Adam foreshadowed Christ. The Creator of Gen. i. 26 is addressed in Psalm viii., and the Psalmist says that “the heavens are the work of Thy fingers”. Unless we are willing to quibble over the difference between “fingers” and “hands”, it is clear that Christ is the Creator in Whose image and likeness Adam was created, for in Heb. i. we read:

“And Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of Thine hands” (Heb. i. 10).

From Heb. i. we proceed to Heb. ii., where we have Psalm viii. quoted, with the comment:

“For in that He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put under Him” (Heb. ii. 8).

This shows that we have passed from the type, whose dominion was over sheep and oxen, to the antitype, Whose dominion is over all. The Apostle continues:

“But now we see not yet all things put under Him: but we see Jesus, Who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Heb. ii. 8, 9).

This dominion, of which Adam’s “likeness” was but a faint shadow, is further expanded in Eph. i., where we reach the zenith of the revelation of “the mystery of Christ”. In this epistle we are concerned with that section of the “all things” that is associated with the exalted sphere where Christ sitteth “far above all heavens” (Eph. iv. 10). And so we read, in Chapter i.:

“He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 20-23).

With this rapid glance at the relationship between this “dominion” and “mystery”, let us turn back now to I Cor. xv., to see one further application of the passage:

“Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power: for He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet. But when He saith, All things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all” (I Cor. xv. 24-28).

This goal of the ages is the fulfillment of the pledge shadowed forth in the creation of Adam.

We must now return to Gen. i. 26, in order to investigate what is actually implied by the word “dominion”. There are various possible alternatives that are *not* used in this passage. The word used here is not *baal*, “to have dominion as lord and proprietor” (Isa. xxvi. 13), or *mashal*, “to reign as a governor, or a superior” (Judges xiv. 4), or *shalat*, “to rule” (Psa. cxix. 133), but *radah*, “to tread down, to subdue”. The following are three passages in which this particular word occurs:

“They that hate you *shall reign* over you” (Lev. xxvi. 17).

“With force and cruelty *have ye ruled*” (Ezek. xxxiv. 4).

“*Rule thou* in the midst of thine enemies” (Psa. cx. 2).

These references indicate something of the nature of this particular type of dominion, and particularly the passage from Psalm cx., which is Messianic and speaks of the Day of the Lord. The Psalm goes on to speak of the Lord “striking through kings”, “filling places with dead bodies” and “wounding the heads over many countries”(Psa. cx. 5, 6). This conception of dominion is carried over into verse 28 of Gen. i., where we read:

“Replenish the earth and *subdue* it.”

The word “subdue” is a translation of the Hebrew *cabash*, and its significance may be gathered from the fact that its substantival form means a “footstool” (II Chron. ix. 18). In Neh. v. 5 it is rendered “to bring into bondage”; and it is the word used by the King when he exclaims of Haman, “Will he force the Queen?” (Est. vii. 8). The word is also used of the conquest of Canaan under Joshua (Josh. xviii. 1), a subjugation whose rigour there is no need to quote chapter and verse to prove.

The LXX translates the word “subdue” by *kata kurieuo*, meaning “to rule imperiously”, “to lord it over”, “to get the mastery”. Its occurrences in the N.T. will give further light on its meaning:

“Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles *exercise dominion* over them” (Matt. xx. 25; Mark x. 42).

“The man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them, and *overcame* them, and prevailed against them” (Acts xix. 16).

“Neither as *being lords over* God’s heritage” (I Pet. v. 3).

The creation of Adam, his very name, and the dominion given to him, all foreshadowed the subduing of all enemies beneath the feet of the Lord Jesus Christ. An enemy is most certainly in view in Gen. i. 26-28, and in Chapter iii. he is revealed—“that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan” (Rev. xii. 9).

#20. The essential difference between a mechanical and a moral creature. Genesis i. and ii. pp. 138 - 143

The reader will have already observed that in Gen. i., where creation is the theme, the name under which the Creator reveals Himself is that of *Elohim* (“God”), while in chapter ii., where we enter into the realm of human activity, the name changes to *Jehovah Elohim* (“the Lord God”). It is not our purpose at the moment to enlarge upon either of these Divine titles. We are simply recording the fact that the change coincides with the transition from creation in general, to that of the responsible creature. It has been said that all creatures lower than man are “held”, but that man himself is “held accountable”.

The Divine government of Gen. i. 3-25 is set forth as absolute:

“He spake and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast” (Psa. xxxiii. 9).

The original Hebrew of Gen. i. 3 is impressive in its extreme simplicity:

“And God said, Light be; and light was.”

Even this rendering does not impress the eye as would a reading of the original, which is made more striking by the similarity of the two forms of the Hebrew verb “to be”.

At the close of the record of the second day’s work we read, “And it was so” (Gen. i. 7), and this phrase is repeated in verses 9, 11, 15, 24 and 30. Again, in verses 4, 10, 12, 18, 21 and 25, we have the repeated phrase: “And it was good.” The appearance of light, the appearing of the dry land, the gathering of the waters, the growth of grass, herb and tree, the rule of the sun and moon, the creation of the monsters of the sea, the fowl of the heavens, the beasts, cattle, and creeping things, are all said to be “good”. Light is certainly “good”, but light is physical, not moral. It is impossible for the mind to conceive of the idea that light could have refused to come into being when God spoke. It would be equally impossible to think of promising a reward to the sun for ruling the day, or of punishing the moon for causing an eclipse. In the realm of creation we are in a sphere of mechanical movement, where everything is determined, where there can be no option, no alternative, no choice. When, however, we pass from this realm of creation to the realm of human activity, we leave the sphere of mechanical determinism, and enter the sphere of moral agency, accountability and contingency. When God formed man of the dust of the ground, man had no knowledge of his own creation, and therefore had no responsibility for the form in which he was fashioned, or for the mind and will with which he was endowed. The moment he stood upright, however, as a living soul, made in the image and after the likeness of his God, he entered into a relationship with his Creator, in which obedience or disobedience were equally possible, and in which disobedience involved a penalty. At this point we step out of the sphere of Mechanics into the sphere of Morals, where contingency is possible. It would have been impossible without altering the nature of man, for such words as “It was so”, to have followed the command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Looking at man as a creature, God could and did pronounce him to be “good” (Gen. i. 31), but, with reference to the prohibition concerning the tree of knowledge, and man’s own moral nature, it was impossible for him to be pronounced “good” apart from trial and proof. Moral good cannot be ready-made; it must be acquired. The possibility of evil was incipient in the creation of a moral being.

There were three ways in which evil could have been prevented:

- (1) God could have created a being who was incapable of sinning. Had He done so, the creature thus formed could never have risen above the level of a brute beast. His actions would have been governed by the promptings of instinct, and would have had no moral value.
- (2) God could have created a being capable of sinning, and yet have kept him from all possible internal and external temptation. Had man been thus formed and hedged about, he would have remained innocent, but would never have been upright. He would have been innocent as an animal is innocent, but could never have been upright as a man is upright.
- (3) God could have created man, and allowed temptation, and yet have prevented him yielding to it. If this had been done, the very act would have destroyed the moral nature that had been formed. Enforced goodness, coerced love, compulsory worship are contradictions. Goodness, love and worship are emptied of their essential meaning the moment the principle of compulsion enters. God can create innocent beings, but in the very nature of things, the creation of a virtuous character or a ready-made righteousness is impossible. A virtuous character cannot be bestowed by Divine fiat.

We must therefore expect, in the very nature of things, to find contingency in the second chapter of Genesis.

“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen. ii. 16, 17).

The twofold usage of the word “determine” is an interesting example of the difference between what is mechanical and what is moral.

- (1) “I am *determined* to face the wind.”
- (2) “Dust is *determined* to go with the wind.”

In the first case a resolution is made after due consideration, a definite choice arrived at after pondering alternatives. In the second case there is no choice, and there can never have been an alternative.

It is obviously foolish to speak of a “will”, apart from the person that wills, and it is equally absurd to talk of “evil”, as though it existed somewhere in the universe as a thing in itself. Moral evil cannot be “created”, or come into existence, apart from moral beings who actually do what is wrong. When we discuss the existence of evil apart from the actions of those who act wrongly, we are inventing difficulties which have no real existence. The problem of *evil* is the problem of *personality*. If a moral person, who is held accountable for his actions, transgresses a prohibition and thereby comes under a penalty, it is utterly wrong to charge the One Who lays down the prohibition and inflicts the penalty, with the creation of the evil thus punished. If such a state could be conceived, anything would be possible, and the whole groundwork of truth would dissolve. Under such conditions nothing would or could matter. To speak of predetermined sin would be a contradiction, for sin is the transgression of a law, and a predetermined act is itself of the very essence of law. Obedience and disobedience in this case would be quite irrelevant.

In the story of the garden of Eden, we must not imagine some insidious trap, definitely placed there so that man should fall into it. We must realize, rather, that man, as a moral creature, had to be tested. In the law we read:

“If ye will not be reformed by Me by these things, but will walk contrary unto Me: then I will also walk contrary unto you and will punish you yet seven times for your sins” (Lev. xxvi. 23, 24).

These words would mean less than nothing if it had already been predetermined that Israel would in fact “walk contrary”. Indeed, if it had been decreed that Israel should act in this way, then their so-called “contrary” actions would actually be in agreement with the Divine intention and sin would become an impossibility. “To be forewarned is to be forearmed”, and the very knowledge of what in the natural course of things will inevitably happen becomes by the interposition of moral agency a means of falsifying such apparent predetermination.

It is possible that an objection may have formed itself in the minds of some of our readers in connection with the statement made above that evil cannot be “created”. In Isa. xlv. 7 we read:

“I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I, the Lord, do all these things” (Isa. xlv. 7).

The word translated “evil” here is the Hebrew *ra*. So far as its usage is concerned, there are about an equal number of passages where the word means “moral evil” or “sin”, and where the word means “evil” in the sense of a “calamity” or “judgment”. Merely to quote Isa. xlv. 7 is, therefore, inconclusive. The only way to settle whether the word “evil” is used here in a moral or in a penal sense is by considering the context. We have met quite a number of people who misquote the passage as though it read: “I make good, and create evil”, instead of “I make *peace*, and create evil”. Evil that is in contrast with peace is not necessarily moral evil or sin at all. It may be righteously inflicted because of transgression, as in Amos iii.:

“Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?” (Amos iii. 6).

The context deals with the principle of cause and effect. A bird cannot fall into a snare if there is no gin set; the trumpet cannot be blown in a city, without the people running together. And so, if there be “evil” in a city, then there must have been some just cause, for the Lord punished sin and reward righteousness.

We must remember, in Gen. ii., that it is not “good and evil” but the “*knowledge* of good and evil” that is prohibited. Such knowledge is in itself desirable in the right persons, for we find in Heb. v. 14 that the ability to discern both good and evil is a mark of the “perfect” or “full grown”. Adam, however, was a babe so far as experience was concerned, and to acquire an adult’s knowledge with a baby’s experience meant failure. When the Tempter said, “Your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil”, his statement was true, even thou his intention was to deceive, for in Gen. iii. 22 we read:

“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.”

Man was made “for a little than the angels”, though destined to be “above” them. To attempt to penetrate into the realm of spirit before the right time, is witchcraft and spiritism, and to attempt to grasp universal knowledge while still a babe is equally disastrous. Man will one day “know even as he is known”, but he must be willing to wait God’s time.

The same thing is true with regard to the kingdoms of the world. It is the revealed purpose of God that, when the seventh angel sounds, “the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ” (Rev. xi. 15). On the other hand, for the Lord to have yielded to the temptation of the Evil One, to grasp this sovereignty before the appointed time, would have been the same in principle as the act which

brought about the downfall of Adam. Where man failed, in a garden of plenty, the Lord triumphed in a wilderness of want (Matt. iv. 8, 9).

A knowledge of good and evil really comprises the whole realm of knowledge. He who knows all good and all evil, knows all things. This was evidently understood in O.T. times, as the language of the woman of Tekoah indicates:

“As an angel of God, so is my Lord the King to discern good and evil” (II Sam. xiv. 17).
 “My Lord is wise, according to the wisdom of an angel of God, to know all things that are in the earth” (II Sam. xiv. 20).

Comparing the two passages, we see that “good and bad” and “all things on the earth” are synonymous.

There is a tendency with most of us to read the words of Gen. ii. as though they were “The knowledge of good and *evil*”, or even “The knowledge of *evil*”. We must remember, however, that the tree represented both *good and evil*. “Good” out of place, and before its time, can be definitely harmful. Marriage, for example, is “honourable in all”, but that which is most blessed within the limitation of marriage, is itself a sin if entered into apart from those Divinely appointed limits. Again we observe that “good” and “evil” are not things in themselves, but terms which refer to the actions of particular people.

We will conclude by giving, in the form of a table, a list of some of the characteristics that distinguish the sphere of mechanical determinism from that of moral accountability.

Creation (<i>Mechanical</i>).	Creation (<i>Moral</i>).
Title: God.	Title: Lord God.
Pronouncement: “It was so.”	Pronouncement: “Thou shalt not.”
Created things “good”.	Moral creatures tested.
Created things “held”.	Moral creatures “held responsible”.
No option.	Freedom of choice.
Things or animals.	Persons.
Sin not possible.	Sin possible.
Faith and love impossible.	Faith and love possible.
No fellowship.	Fellowship.
“Let there be light.”	“Let Us make man.”

#21. “Things Visible and Invisible.” pp. 157 - 164

According to Gen. i. 1, creation is divided into two sections—“the heaven” and “the earth”. In the record of the refashioning of the submerged earth for man, however, the heaven of Gen. i. 1 is no longer in view, but rather a specially appointed “firmament” (Hebrew: *raqia*, “thinness” or “expansion”) which is “called heaven”. In this are placed the sun and the moon, and it is in the open firmament or expanse of this heaven that the fowls of the air are created to fly. From Gen. i. to the end of the O.T. attention is directed in “creation” to man and the earth, until eventually we reach again the heights of Gen. i., in the creation of a new heaven and a new earth at the time of the end. When we come to the N.T., however, after the great Sacrifice has been offered, we realize that creation is subdivided in another way. The distinction between heaven and earth is maintained, but we further become aware of the fact that there is a creation which lies beyond our ken, not merely because of physical distance, but because this newly revealed creation belongs to another realm of being altogether. We learn from Col. i. 16 that the Lord created all things in heaven and in earth, “*visible and invisible*”. It is this “invisible” creation that we are seeking to understand a little about in the present article.

The first thing we must face is the essential limitation expressed in the very word “invisible”. What do we *know* about an invisible creation? The adjective itself is a negative one. We know nothing positively; all we can say is that it is *not* visible. Moreover, this is not by any means the only negative definition that we encounter. We learn from Scripture that God is *infinite*, *immortal*, and *incorruptible*. Such terms as these make us realize the greatness of God, but they do not reveal any positive qualities. “Infinite” means “not finite” or “not having bounds”; “immortal” means “not subject to death”, but these definitions still leave the nature of God unexplained and unrevealed. In theology and philosophy, too, we meet other negatives—the *absolute*, the *unconditioned*, the *incomprehensible*—words that make us realize again the limitations of our present state. It is true that there are also positive revelations awaiting us—we know Him as Creator, Redeemer, Father, we “see” Him in the person of His Son, and we behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ—but we are also told in the same Gospel that records the words “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father” that “No man hath seen God at any time”. Quite apart from the question of his sin, man needs a Mediator. Christ is the Image of the invisible God, quite apart from His work as Redeemer. Man himself belongs to the visible creation, but He is conscious that he is surrounded by an invisible one.

What exactly do we mean by a “visible creation”? To answer this question we must enquire a little more deeply into the problem of sight.

Keeping to the physical realm, and avoiding the figurative use of the verb “to see” in the sense of mental perception, it becomes clear that, after all, the marvel of vision is essentially superficial. Sight depends upon the combination of several factors:

(1) First of all, there must be light. The nature of light we are not concerned with at the moment. We simply note that it is essential to sight.

(2) Secondly, there must be an organ of vision, the eye. The light rays enter the lens of the eye and are registered on the nerve-ends that form the retina. The impulses there received are transmitted by the optic nerve to the brain, and thus, by some means still unknown to man, these impulses are interpreted into colour, form and tone. There is no effort in sight, and no exercise of the will. If the eye is open and there is no defect, it is not possible to avoid receiving the impression.

(3) What we “see” is the combined effect of a multitude of rays of light that are reflected *from the surface* of the object concerned. If an object be completely transparent, we see nothing of it. If it be translucent, we see a variety of shadows. Moreover, not only is it true that we see only the external service of the visible universe, but it is also clear that what we do see is inevitably incomplete. For example, no one has ever seen a cube; all one can see at any given time is three of its six sides. No one has ever seen a table; if the observer sees the top, he cannot at the same time see the underside. If he sees the long side, he cannot see both ends at the same time. He can never see more than one half of each of the four legs at a time. Moreover, if he looks at the polished surface, he cannot see the annular rings, while the nature of the timber itself is quite beyond his ken. We are reminded of the skit: “What is mind? no matter. What is matter? never mind”, for although it be a piece of nonsense, it is wise nonsense, inasmuch as it exposes the inability we all feel to get beneath the surface to the hidden substance. Further, no two people can “see” the same object at the same time, for the rays of light that enter one’s own eye, cannot be the same as the rays that enter another eye. Only by analogy and the evidence that creation is rational, do we take it for granted that we all see alike.

One of the limitations that is inseparable from a “visible” creation is a faulty or restricted judgment. Truth cannot be seen or stated absolutely; it can only be relative, and in the nature of a compromise. Perhaps an illustration will make this point clearer. Every reader knows that, if he were to walk every step of the way along the track from King’s Cross to Edinburgh, and if he were to measure the width of the railway lines at every step, the distance between them would always be the same. On the other hand, he also knows that, if he gives a truthful account of what he actually *sees* while walking along the line, he will say that he actually *sees* the lines drawing nearer and nearer together until they appear to meet on the horizon. Moreover, if he draws what he *knows* to be true, everyone will condemn his drawing as being untrue to appearance, while if a railway were constructed as it *appears*, no engine could ever run on it. We are continually adjusting what we *see* and what we *know*, and such adjustments constitute much of the experience of life. We could, of course, easily multiply examples of this. We all know that the rim of a cup is a circle, and yet a cup seen in the ordinary way shows that circular rim in the form an ellipse. Which is right? It all depends upon what we mean by “right”—right in appearance, or right in actuality. By the very constitution

of creation of which man forms a part, absolute truth is beyond his powers of expression and beyond his power of attainment.

The difference in character between the two creations—the visible and the invisible—is clearly expressed in the well-known words of I Sam. xvi.:

“Man looketh upon the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart”
(I Sam. xvi. 7).

It is evident here that what constitutes the “looking” that is occupied with outward appearance, and what constitutes the “looking” that is concerned with the thoughts and intents of the heart, belong to two different creations, the one the visible and the phenomenal, the other the invisible and the real.

When we turn from this visible world, and try to think of a world where “to see” does not mean the effect of an image formed by rays of light reflected from an illuminated surface, but rather to pierce to the very innermost recesses of things, “dividing asunder soul and spirit”, we begin to realize that, wonderful as this world is, wonderful as is the sense of sight, it is as nothing, or at best a shadow, when compared with the glories of the creation that is invisible to man. We say “invisible to man” advisedly, for we must not think, because *we* cannot see without light and the eye, that the same limitation applies to the spirit world.

The present creation is largely one of external manifestation. We can, if we choose, let it rest at that, and sink to the level of the animal world. If, however, we are exercised, we may learn from it something of the invisible world, and particularly something about the One Who created it.

“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”
(Rom. i. 20).

“*The invisible things of Him.*”—The words used here (*ta aorata*) are in the plural and include His “invisible attributes”, two of which are immediately named—“even His eternal power and divinity”. Before we examine these attributes, we must note first the medium through which they are “manifested” and by which they are “perceived”.

The phrase “From the creation of the world” gives a date line (the word “from” here is *apo*, “since”; not *ek*, “by” or “by means of”) while “the things that are made” provide a medium of manifestation. In verse 19, the limited nature of this manifestation is indicated by the words “that which *may* be known of God”. This is objective knowledge, and becomes subjective by being “manifest in them”, and this, not by unaided reason or observation, but because “God hath showed it unto them”. Creation, therefore, is intended to reveal “that which is knowable of God”. There is no ground for teaching that the observation of creation alone would ever lead a sinner to the Saviour, or that through the study of Botany, Geology, or Astronomy, the earnest student could ever arrive at the

truth of John iii. 16. It is not “*all* which may be known of God” that is revealable by creation or manifested in man, but rather all that comes within the range concerned.

The “invisible things” mentioned here are (i.) His eternal power, and (ii.) His divinity. The word translated “eternal” is *aidios*, and occurs only once more in the N.T.—namely in Jude 6, where it is found in the phrase “everlasting chains”. While from a purely etymological point of view, *aidios* might be regarded as linked up with the verb *idein* “to see”, and so be translated “His *unseen* power and divinity”, the usage—which has destroyed many an etymological theory—is against this derivation. The word is found in Homer, Thucydides, Plato and other classical writers, and means “everlasting”. The Lexicons derive the word from *aei*, “always”, as in Acts vii. 51 and II Cor. vi. 10. Creation, therefore, makes manifest the “lasting, abiding power” of the Creator and “His divinity”.

The reader will observe that we do not follow the A.V. here in its use of the word “Godhead”. If different words are used by the inspired Scriptures, it will obviously not be “rightly dividing the Word of truth” if we translate the various words concerned by the one term “Godhead”. We may not be able to fully to comprehend all that these fine distinctions imply, but we can at least save ourselves from increased confusion by noting the differences. The words concerned are as follows:

- (1) *To Theion*.—“The *Godhead* is (not) like unto gold” (Acts xvii. 29).
- (2) *Theiotes*.—“His eternal power and *Godhead*” (Rom. i. 20).
- (3) *Theotes*.—“In Him dwelleth all the fullness of the *Godhead* bodily” (Col. ii. 9).

To preserve the distinction here, *to theion* and *theiotes* should be rendered “divinity” and “divine”, while *theotes* should be rendered “deity”. Nature can reveal the one, but Christ alone can make manifest the other.

It will be seen, therefore, from this brief review, that Creation makes some of the invisible attributes of God perceptible to man. The way in which these “invisible things” are “clearly seen” is explained in the phrase which immediately follows—“Being understood (*noeo*) by the things that are made”. This “understanding” may be defined as “the mental correlative of perception by the senses”—in other words, what “sight” is in the world of sense, “understanding” is in the world of thought. This enables us to “perceive”, without being able to “grasp”, the idea that, in the invisible world, complete understanding takes the place of mere superficial vision. The proverb “Beauty is only skin deep” might well be applied to the whole realm of human knowledge. It is alas, only too possible to “see” without “understanding” (Matt. xiii. 14).

In II Cor. iv. the Apostle makes the following statement on the relative worth of the visible and invisible worlds:

“While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal” (II Cor. iv. 18).

The word “temporal” originally meant “lasting only for a time, passing, temporary”. It has now, however, come to mean “pertaining to the sphere of human life; terrestrial as opposed to heavenly; secular as opposed to sacred”. The Greek word in II Cor. iv. is *proskairos*, “for a season” (as in Matt. xiii. 21 and Heb. xi. 25), and has the sense of the original meaning of “temporal”, i.e., “transient” or “temporary”. This is the character of the “visible creation”. It is here for a time, and is destined to pass away. The “*unseen*” things on the other hand, are “eternal” or “age-abiding” (*aionios*) and endure until the purpose of the ages is reached. The chapter division between II Cor. iv. and v. should not prevent the reader from realizing that the Apostle is illustrating his meaning by referring to this present body as a tent soon to be taken down, in contrast with the resurrection body which is *aionion* in the heavens. When that day dawns, we who now “see by means of a mirror, enigmatically”, will then see face to face, and our partial knowledge will be exchanged for a knowledge that belongs to the invisible world, for the resurrection body will be both “spiritual” and “heavenly” (I Cor. xv. 40, 44).

In connection with the invisible world, the Apostle gives a word of warning in Col. ii., which, when we fully understand it, will probably illuminate the problem of the temptation in the garden of Eden:

“Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the Head . . . increasing with the increase of God” (Col. ii. 18, 19).

Into the obvious difficulties of this passage we do not at the moment propose to enter* (* - *A fuller examination of this passage will be found in the series “Studies in Colossians”, Volume XXIV, page 203*). We simply draw attention to the one feature that has a definite connection with our present theme. “Intruding” means to put one’s foot into another man’s territory. To attempt to attain unto “things not seen” is, like the sin of the garden of Eden, turning that which will be “good” in its own appointed time into “evil”, because entered before the change takes place, and in the wrong spirit. However “good” anything may be, if it be attained by “intrusion” and as a result of the “vain puffing up of the fleshly mind”, it cannot be anything but “evil”. The “increase of God” provides for the change from childhood to full grown adulthood, and the perfect state is yet to be. We must not leave this subject without referring to the relation between the invisible creation and “faith”, “hope”, and “love”.

The relation between *faith* and the invisible creation is referred to in Heb. xi.:

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things *not seen*” (Heb. xi. 1).
“He endured as seeing Him *Who is invisible*” (Heb. xi. 27).

The relation between the invisible creation and *hope* and *love* are referred to in Rom. viii. and I Pet. i.:

“Hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” (Rom. viii. 24).
“Whom having not seen, ye love” (I Pet. i. 8).

The nature of God Himself lies beyond human ken:

“The King eternal, immortal, invisible” (I Tim. i. 17).
“Whom no man hath seen, nor can see” (I Tim. vi. 16).

The invisible God, however, has been made manifest to man in the person of Christ, as “the Image of the invisible God” (Col. i. 15).

“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, Which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him” (John i. 18).

In the context of both of these passages we shall discover that creation is prominent. The visible creation manifests “what is knowable” of the unseen attributes of God, while Christ, as the Image, makes manifest the higher spiritual qualities of redeeming love. We may not be able to explain why God considered it wise to make Himself manifest among lower orders of being, but we can rejoice in the realization that He has done so. Moreover, it is not only to man that God has revealed Himself. We read of “angels” and “principalities” learning by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, while in I Tim. iii. 16 we read that God was “manifest in the flesh”, “justified in the Spirit”, and “*seen of angels*”.

The whole of the visible creation is one vast collection of types and symbols of eternal verities. Creation contains the wolf as well as the lamb, the serpent as well as the dove, just as in the invisible world we have their counterparts, good and evil. The “heavenly things” are the “true”, while the earthly things, “made with hands”, are but shadows and types (Heb. ix.). The heavenly realities belong to the invisible and eternal creation, whereas the earthly visible things are destined to pass away when the great probation is over.

**#22. The “dust of the ground” and the “living soul”.
(Gen. ii. 7 and i. 29).
pp. 191 - 195**

Having dealt briefly with the question of moral accountability and its bearing upon “sin” and other related themes, we come next to a brief consideration of the constitution of man, with particular reference to the body. At his original creation man was given a body, made of the “dust of the ground”, and even in the resurrection state a body will still be a necessity. We are rather apt to speak slightly of the body because of its association with sin, but we should always remember that in itself it is a wonderful part of God’s creation.

We are fully aware that the prime purpose of *The Berean Expositor* is the exposition of the Word, and that many related subjects of interest in themselves must therefore necessarily be excluded. In this series, however, we are purposely allowing ourselves a

little latitude, so that subjects relating to the Scriptures that would ordinarily have to be passed by, may be given some consideration. We propose, therefore, in this article, to seek to learn a little of what is implied by the words of Gen. ii. 7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground."

The word translated "dust" here may also be rendered "ashes" (as of an animal that has been burnt: Num. xix. 17), "powder" (into which the vessels and the altars of Baal were stamped: II Kings xxiii. 4, 6, 12), "rubbish" (that had accumulated on the broken walls of Jerusalem: Neh. iv. 2), and "earth" (out of which iron can be taken: Job xxviii. 2). "The highest part of the dust of the world" in Prov. viii. 26 refers to the soil, without which neither vegetable nor animal life would be possible.

We often speak of the "ground", but how many of us associate the word with the verb "to grind"? The "ground" has literally been *ground* by the action of flood, fire, and frost, and so made into a comparatively fine powder. From this "dust of the ground" the body of man was made, and to this at death his body returns. Let us now examine the composition of this wonderful frame, and see how far the "dust of the earth" enters into it.

The composition of the body of a man weighing a little over 150 lbs. would be as follows:

Oxygen 90 lbs., Carbon 36 lbs., Hydrogen 14 lbs., Nitrogen 3 lbs. 8 ozs.,
Calcium 3 lbs. 12 ozs., Phosphorus 1 lb. 14 ozs., Chlorine 4 ozs., Sulphur 3½ ozs.,
Potassium 3 ozs., Sodium 2½ ozs., Fluorine 2 ozs., Magnesium 1½ ozs., Silicon ¼ oz.,
Iron 1/6 oz.

These are the main constituents of the human body, but there are other elements also present in small quantities. In addition to the 150 lbs. detailed above, we have a "trace" of the following:

Lead, Cerium, Argon, Manganese, Zinc, Vanadium, Beryllium, Aluminum,
Lithium, Chromium, Helium, Iodine, Cobalt, Boron, Neon, Arsenic, Bromine,
Rubidium, Scandium, Nickel, Lanthanum, Strontium, Titanium, Copper,
Neodymium, Molybdenum, Silver and Tin.

It is interesting to note that such gases as Argon, Neon, and Helium, which we normally associate with electric lamps, electric signs and airships, form part of the human body, while such unfamiliar elements as Beryllium (which enters into the composition of the emerald) and Molybdenum (which is employed as an alloy for tool steel), as well as the more familiar Aluminum, Zinc and Tin, all have their place. What a wonderful Alchemist "Evolution" must have been to have got all these elements together, of such bewildering variety, and in such "disproportionate proportions" (90 lbs. of Oxygen to 1/6 oz. of Iron). After all "creation" is simpler and more reasonable.

Before we say anything about the part that these various elements play in the human mechanism, let us note one other interesting feature. If Gen. i. 2 is true, then it is also

true that the surface of the earth has been impregnated with sea water. Now the composition of sea salt is as follows:

Sodium chloride (“Common Salt”) . . .	27.00
Magnesium chloride . . .	3.80
Magnesium sulphate . . .	1.65
Gypsum (Calcium sulphate) . . .	1.25
Potassium sulphate . . .	0.86
Calcium carbonate . . .	0.12
Magnesium bromide . . .	0.07 per 1000 parts.

In addition there are traces of many other elements in sea water, the total number being approximately 40 out of the 90 elements that are known to exist.

We come back now to the elements of the body and their functions. “Lime” or Calcium, as we all know, is used in the composition of bone, and “iron” is essential for healthy blood. The following is a list of some of the other metals, showing their relation to the various parts of the body:

The pancreas.—Nickel, Cobalt and Lead.
The subrenal capsules (connected with the kidneys).—Tin.
The liver and kidneys.—Zinc.
The thyroid, heart, spleen and kidneys.—Silver.
The lungs, kidneys, heart and pancreas.—Aluminum.
The lungs, liver and heart.—Copper.
All organs, especially the thyroid and spleen.—Chromium.
All organs, especially the brain, spleen and thyroid.—Tin.
All organs except the heart.—Zinc.

Note.—It is interesting also to learn that silver is essentially feminine, while aluminum is related to that which is essentially masculine.

The reader may well wonder what all these metals have to do in the economy of the human body. The answer is that their action is mainly “catalytic”—a “catalyst” being a substance in the presence of which a chemical action proceeds, which would otherwise go very slowly or cease altogether. For example, without the presence of copper in the lungs, the interaction between iron and oxygen falls below the rate that is essential to life, whereas if the lungs have their proper supply of copper, the rate of reaction is kept up to a healthy standard. The intelligence of man has made use of this valuable property of catalytic action for a variety of industrial processes—and yet there are many who would deny any evidence of Divine intelligence in creation.

Not only is the human body composed of these wonderful elements and salts, but the food provided for man (as indicated in Gen. i. 29) is rich in these elements and salts in their most assimilable form.

“And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for meat” (Gen. i. 29).

The following table gives some of the elements present in seeds, roots, and fruits:

STEMS, LEAVES AND FRUITS.—Potassium, sodium, iron, sulphur.

SEEDS AND ROOTS.—Potassium, phosphorus, magnesium

SEEDS THEMSELVES.

The outer part.—Calcium, sodium, magnesium, sulphur, fluorine and silicon.

The inner part.—Potassium and phosphorus.

It is interesting to note that there is a similarity between the constitution of the human body and that of seeds. The muscular tissues, like the inner part of the seed, employ potassium and phosphorus, while the blood and skin correspond in composition with the outer part of the seed.

Perhaps the reader would appreciate a few further words on the essential work that some of these elements perform.

POTASSIUM, which figures so largely in the composition of seeds, is the mineral basis of all muscular tissues, and is essential in the formation of proteins. It can be truthfully said: “No life without potassium.”

SODIUM.—This is one of the principal constituents of blood and lymph. Without sodium, lime and magnesium, salts are liable to form injurious deposits in the body.

CALCIUM AND MAGNESIUM.—Magnesium assists in the assimilation of phosphorus, while magnesium, calcium and iron form the albumen of the blood. One percent of magnesium enables the lime taken into the body to harden in the formation of the bones.

MANGANESE.—It has been discovered that animals deprived of manganese lack the maternal instincts.

ZINC is associated with the action of vitamins.

NICKEL is associated with the insulin of the pancreas.

If it be true that there is “no life without Potassium”, it is equally true that there is “no thought without Phosphorus”. The elements Fluorine and Iodine are also important: Fluorine plays an important part in the composition of the iris of the eye, while Iodine in the thyroid gland is essential to growth and development.

The following is a summary of the various functions governed by these constituents of soil, seed and herb:

CALCIUM is a counter to acid, and is *the executive element*.

SULPHUR purifies, and is *the maid of all work*.

POTASSIUM stimulates the liver, and is *the balancer*.

PHOSPHORUS aids the growth of nerve and brain, and is *the thought-medium*.

IRON is the vehicle of oxygen, and is *the master chemical*.

IODINE eliminates toxins, and is the *gland regulator*.

MANGANESE improves resistance, and is *the chemical of poise*.

SILICA gives gloss to the hair, and sparkle to the eyes, and is *the optimist*.

FLUORINE protects against infection, and is *the youth preserver*.

CHLORINE keeps the body supple, and is *the laundryman*.

SODIUM prevents acidosis, and is *the alkaliniser*.

MAGNESIUM is alkaline and sleep-promoting, and is *the refresher*.

When flesh was added as part of man's food after the Flood, no alteration was made in the essential composition of human diet, for all animals that normally provide human food feed upon the green herb. Even in the case of flesh-eating animals, they themselves prey upon animals that eat herbs, so that we may truly say, in the most literal sense of the words, "All flesh is grass".

Let us read again with intelligent faith, with increasing wonder, with glorious certainty, the primitive record of man's creation and sustenance, and realize that only a "science falsely so-called" could withhold the fullest recognition of its inspiration, authority and comprehensiveness.

We trust that the reader has been interested in these brief notes on an intricate subject, and that they have served to throw further light on the inspired record of Gen. i. and ii.

Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth. (Second Series).

#8. The nations of Israel never “lost”.

**Spiritual testimony to the fact that “the Jews” are a people
composed of the twelve tribes of Israel (Kings and Chronicles).**

pp. 13 - 20

In the present series we have so far gone through the history of the Kingdom of Israel in very broad outline, and have explained our reasons for adopting this method. Our next subject must be a study of the Prophets, but before we turn to this great theme, we feel that we should devote one more article to the record of the Kings, and consider briefly the claims of those who believe that the ten tribes were “lost”, and that they are now to be “found” again under another name. We are not allowing ourselves to be drawn into a controversy, and we do not intend filling our pages with criticism. It is a legitimate part of our business, however, to search the Scriptures and to register our findings, and if these findings contradict the theories held by others we have no option but to reject such theories as unscriptural.

We preface our study by asking the question, Does Scripture say that the house of Israel is “lost”? We can at once answer this question with a decided negative. The next question to be asked is, Do the Scriptures tell us where the house of Israel is to be found?—and to this the answer is that they do. In the following pages we give chapter and verse for both these answers.

The division of the nation into “Israel” and “Judah” was consequent upon the idolatrous affinities contracted by Solomon. After revealing the names, nationality and number of his wives, and the fact that Solomon “went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians”, the record continues:

“And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon I will surely rend the kingdom from thee and give it to thy servant I will rend it out of the hand of thy son I will give one tribe to thy son for David My servant’s sake, and for Jerusalem’s sake which I have chosen” (I Kings xi. 9-13).

The actual rending of the kingdom is related in I Kings xii. When Rehoboam, Solomon’s son, ascended the throne of all Israel, Jeroboam, who had fled to Egypt from the presence of Solomon, returned and headed a gathering to protest against the heavy yoke of taxation that had been imposed by Solomon. Instead of granting some measure of relief, Rehoboam listened to the younger men and not only refused to grant relief but threatened to intensify the burden.

“So when all Israel saw that the King hearkened not unto them, the people answered the King, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents” (I Kings xii. 16).

We must next consider the testimony of Scripture with regard to the fate of this divided kingdom, and particularly what is said of the ten-tribed Kingdom of Israel. Before passing on to this, however, we would draw attention to the statement made in the next verse, namely, I Kings xii. 17:

“But as for the children of ISRAEL, which dwelt in the cities of JUDAH, Rehoboam reigned over THEM.”

It is therefore a Scriptural fact that there was a remnant of Israel associated with the House of David. With the flight of years, this remnant, left behind with Rehoboam, would multiply, and so ensure the presence of representatives of all twelve tribes, even though but “one tribe”, intact and undivided, had sided with Rehoboam.

Again, further on in the same chapter, we read:

“Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, King of Judah, and unto all the house of JUDAH and BENJAMIN, and to the REMNANT of the people” (I Kings xii. 23).

Even after this, when Jeroboam had been made King over the ten tribes, he felt uneasy about the attraction that the Temple services at Jerusalem would still exert over all the tribes of Israel.

“And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this people go up to sacrifice in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam King of Judah, and they shall kill me, and go again to Rehoboam King of Judah” (I Kings xii. 26, 27).

To counteract this great attraction, Jeroboam deliberately introduced idolatry into his kingdom:

“The King made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt” (I Kings xii. 28).

This sinful action stemmed the tide, and saved the kingdom as a whole from drifting back to Judah, but we must not assume that it prevented hundreds of those who were faithful to God from leaving Samaria and returning to Judah to join the little remnant of Israel that remained. The Scriptures definitely confirm that this was so.

In the First Book of Chronicles we have the genealogies of those who returned from the Babylonian captivity, and we find therein this entry:

“And in Jerusalem dwelt of the children of Judah, and of the children of Benjamin, and of the children of EPHRAIM, and MANASSEH” (I Chron. ix. 3).

This passage at once raises an interesting point in connection with the so-called “lost tribes”. If there were representatives of Ephraim and Manasseh among the returning captives of Judah, these two tribes obviously could not have been lost. If only one man and his wife in each tribe had returned, they would have been sufficient to continue the line. It is most important in view of the ideas contained in the “British-Israel” theory, that we should remember that the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh at least need not be looked for outside the limits of the people we now call “Jews”. These tribes were evidently never “lost”.

Moreover, we must also take into account the evidence of II Chron. xv.:

“And he gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the sojourners with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon: *for they fell to him out of Israel in abundance*, when they saw that the Lord his God was with him” (II Chron. xv. 9).

Here we not only get four tribes mentioned by name, but we are also assured that “out of Israel” there fell to Asa men “in abundance”. Is it possible, then, that these tribes can be lost?

In the next chapter, we read that Baasah, king of Israel, came up against Judah and built Ramah, “to the intent that he might let none go out or come in to Asa, king of Judah” (II Chron. xvi. 1). This action by the king of Israel shows how seriously he regarded the continuous loss of his people to the kingdom of Judah. We also find, in chapter xix., the king of Judah going through the people “from Beersheba to Ephraim”, and “bringing them back to the Lord God of their fathers” (II Chron. xix. 4).

Again, we read in chapter xxiii., in connection with Jehoiada, the high priest:

“And they went about in Judah, and gathered the Levites out of all the cities of Judah, and the chief of the fathers of Israel, and they came to Jerusalem” (II Chron. xxiii. 2).

And again, in Chapter xxx.:

“And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel” (II Chron. xxx. 1).

“So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout ALL ISRAEL from Beersheba even to Dan” (II Chron. xxx. 5).

“Divers of Asher and Manasseh out of Zebulun humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem” (II Chron. xxx. 11).

“A multitude of people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Isaachar and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves” (II Chron. xxx. 18).

We do not suggest that this great number of the house of Israel severed all connection there and then with the ten-tribed kingdom, for we are told that these Israelites returned to their possessions and cities (II Chron. xxxi. 1). Their hearts were certainly with their inheritance and tribal obligations that needed re-adjusting before they could follow their hearts and take their place with the people of Judah.

We have now discovered that representatives of nine tribes were gathered under the aegis of the King of Judah—Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Manasseh, Simeon, Asher, Zebulun, Isaachar, and Levi. The more we read, the more difficult it becomes to believe that the ten tribes were ever lost.

Following the chronology given in the *Companion Bible*, we find that the ten-tribed kingdom was established under Jeroboam in B.C.800 and carried away into captivity by Shalmanezar in B.C.611. This would give a period of 269 years from its inception to its disruption. If, alternatively, we adopt Ussher's chronology the period will be reduced to 254 years. We have already seen that, before this captivity, the tribes of Israel "in abundance" went back and joined with Judah, and it therefore follows that, when the ten-tribed kingdom was taken into captivity, representatives of all Israel must have remained in the land as part of Judah.

In the days of Josiah (B.C.531—that is 80 years after the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians) we read:

"And when they came to Hilkiah the high priest, they delivered the money that was brought into the house of God, which the Levites that kept the doors had gathered of the hand of Manasseh and Ephraim and of ALL THE REMNANT of Israel, and all Judah and Benjamin" (II Chron. xxxiv. 9).

Here we reach absolute, positive proof, that the ten tribes were never lost. Even though those deported by the Assyrian kings never returned, this does not affect the argument, for the "remnant of Israel" was quite sufficient to perpetuate the seed, and preserve the continuity of the people. The kingdom of Judah went into captivity under Nebuchadnezzar in B.C.496, which would be 115 years after the end of "Israel" under Shalmanezar. This captivity, however, was limited to 70 years, and at the end of this period the people returned to Jerusalem and the land. Towards the close of this captivity, a recorded prayer of Daniel mentions "Judah" and "all Israel", including those that were "near" and those "afar off".

This captive people are called not only "Jews" but "Israel". Ezra, in his second chapter, gives a list of those who came back to Jerusalem at the end of the seventy years' captivity, and he heads the list with the words: "The number of the men of the people of Israel" (Ezra ii. 2). We are given the names of a few who "could not shew their father's house, and their seed, whether they were *of Israel*" (Ezra ii. 59-63), and we therefore infer that all the others in the list were able to establish their claim to be members of one or other of the tribes of Israel. At the end of the list we read of that "all Israel" dwelt in their cities; and we read of "Israel" in Ezra vii. 10, 13; ix. 1; and x. 1, 5. The kingdom of Judah was taken captive by the same line of kings as had taken captive the ten-tribed kingdom, and any one of the ten tribes was as free to go back as were the members of the tribe of Judah. This we find they did (see Ezra vii. 7).

When the returned captives assembled before the rebuilt temple on the third day of the month Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius, "twelve he-goats" were offered "for

all Israel”, “according to the number of the tribes of Israel” (Ezra vi. 15-17). From this time onwards the title “Jew” became a generic one, and was used without discrimination of any member of the nation of Israel. It is a fallacy to imagine that it is unscriptural to use the word “Jew” of an Israelite after the return from the captivity. Paul himself says, “I am a man which am a Jew” (Acts xxii. 3), and yet he also calls himself an “Israelite” (Rom. x. 1). Peter also calls himself a “Jew” (Acts x. 28), in spite of the fact that he was a Galilean (Acts ii. 7). The “Jews” who were assembled on the day of Pentecost were addressed by Peter as “Ye men of Israel”, and “All the house of Israel” (Acts ii. 22, 36), while in Acts iv. we read that “all the people of Israel” were guilty of the death of Christ, not merely Judah (Acts iv. 10, 27). To take further examples from the Acts, can we believe that Gamaliel made a mistake in speaking to the “Jews” as “Ye men of Israel” (Acts v. 35), or that Peter was confusing things that differ when he told Cornelius that “the word” was sent “unto the children of Israel”, “in the land of the Jews” (Acts x. 36, 39)? When Paul stood up in the synagogue in Acts xiii., he spoke to the assembly as “men of Israel and ye that fear God”, while, according to the record further on in the chapter, those that heard him speak were “Jews” (Acts xiii. 16, 42). The tribes of Israel were certainly not lost when Paul stood before Agrippa and said:

“Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come”(Acts xxvi. 7).

The word “instantly” could only be used here of actual service; it could not have been used if any of the twelve tribes had been lost.

James also addresses his epistle: “To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (James i. 1). Could this letter have been so inscribed if the bulk of the ten tribes had by this time lost their identity?

The suggestion that God would preserve the ten-tribed kingdom after their captivity and bless them centuries later in the guise of Gentiles is quite unscriptural. According to Scripture, the Lord said that He would “destroy the sinful kingdom from off the face of the earth”, but would not utterly destroy the “house of Jacob”. The remaining members of the twelve tribes, that had not been deported by the Assyrians, were to be “sifted among all nations as corn is sifted in a sieve” (Amos ix. 8, 9), until the time came for their ultimate restoration—for we read that “*all* Israel shall be saved”. The *northern kingdom*, however, was to be destroyed, and not preserved. There was a sufficient number of every tribe left in the kingdom of Judah to ensure the continuity of the whole house of Israel, and, though scattered for a time among the nations, the twelve tribes are to be preserved until the end. Such is the testimony of Scripture. We have not covered a tithe of the whole ground, but what we have seen of what has been revealed in the Word concerning the fate of the house of Israel allows no room for doubt.

Into the supposed etymological and geographical “identification” of these so-called lost tribes we do not propose to enter. The moment a person who has been falsely reported as “lost” is discovered, all “identification” at once becomes valueless. To those who believe in the inspiration of the Holy Writ, nothing more need be said. We have demonstrated by citations from the Scriptures themselves that the tribes of Israel were

never “lost”, but that many of Israel returned “in abundance” to Judah after the separation.

In conclusion we should like to add one more quotation—this time from Isaiah:

“The Lord of Hosts shall be for a sanctuary; but for a *stone of stumbling* and for a *rock of offence* to both the houses of Israel” (Isa. viii. 13, 14).

This passage looks forward to the cross and discountenances the idea that only “the Jews” were responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. In the Acts Peter speaks of the Lord as “the Stone which was set at nought of you builders” (Acts iv. 8-11), and in his epistles quotes Isa. viii. 13, 14 (I Pet. ii. 8). It is obvious from this passage that Christ became a “stone of stumbling” and a “rock of offence” to *both* houses of Israel, and not merely to the house of Judah.

We are not discussing here the various matters that arise out of this subject, as we are confining our studies to one point only. We know from Scripture that all the blessings of Israel are related to the land promises to Abraham; that Israel will be gathered from the lands into which they have been scattered; that Israel will be *Lo-ammi* for many days, but will return to the Lord and to David their King in the latter days; the Israel shall dwell alone and not be numbered among the peoples. These and many other items of revealed truth we pass over as not essential to our main quest. Having “searched the Scriptures” we intend by grace to abide by our findings. At some future time, under another heading, we hope to show that the tribe of Dan will be antichristian in the last days—a serious fact that should deter any believer from becoming associated with a movement that in any measure prepares the way for such a goal.

ISAIAH.

#1. The Sevenfold Prophecy of Isaiah. pp. 41 - 44

So far in this series we have followed the order of books as given in the A.V. If we continue to follow this order our next study, after the books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, will be the Book of Ezra, which opens with the words: “Now in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia.” This is evidently a continuation of the story given in II Chronicles, for it will be found that the first two verses of Ezra are a repetition of II Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23. We must remind ourselves, however, that during the reign of some of the early kings, certain prophets were raised up, who spoke both of the immediate perils that beset the failing people, and also of their only hope of restoration and peace, centred in the long-promised Messiah. It would seem advisable, therefore, to depart from the canonical order of the A.V. and consider next the testimony of those prophets whose ministry falls within the period covered by the books of Kings and Chronicles. We shall then be better equipped for the study of the restoration under Ezra

and Nehemiah, and the prophecies of Haggai, Zechariah and others that are associated with the return from captivity. We propose, therefore, to ignore the order of the books as set out in the English Bible, and adhere instead to the chronological order. No special study is needed for this, as we merely have to follow the order given in the Hebrew Bible—which is as follows:

The Structure of the Prophets, according to the Hebrew Canon.

- A | JOSHUA. | “The Lord of all the earth.”
Failure to possess the land (xviii. 3).
The Canaanite still in possession (xv. 63).
- B | JUDGES. | Failure. Thirteen judges.
Israel forsaking and returning to God.
“No king” (xxi. 25).
- C | SAMUEL. | Saul (type of Antichrist).
David (type of Christ).
Israel want to be “like the nations”.
- D | KINGS. | Decline and failure under kings.
Removal from the land.
- D | ISAIAH. | Israel’s only hope, final blessing, and restoration.
Messiah—God’s King.
- C | JEREMIAH. | Nebuchadnezzar (type of Antichrist).
David’s “Righteous Branch”; “raised up”; the Deliverer.
Israel sent into captivity among the nations.
- B | EZEKIEL. | The glory of God forsaking and returning to the land and people.
Jehovah Shammah. The Lord is there.
- A | MINOR PROPHETS. | “The Lord of all the earth.”
Joshua, the High Priest.
Restoration of Israel to the.
“No more Canaanite in the house of the Lord of Hosts (Zech. xiv. 21).

We can see from this arrangement of the Prophets that, with the end of the Book of Kings, Israel has reached the depths, the glory has departed, and man, even under the immediate protection of God, has proved a failure. With the prophet Isaiah we start a new movement. Uzziah the King may fail so desperately as to be smitten with incurable leprosy, but Isaiah tells us that in the very year that Uzziah died, he saw the Lord enthroned in the temple (Isa. vi.).

The nation of Israel was called to be the Lord’s “servant-nation” (Isa. xli. 8), but it is the Messiah, Who, in the time of Israel’s failure, is spoken of in the words of Isa. xliii. 1: “Behold My Servant.” Israel is destined to be the Lord’s “witness-nation” (Isa. xliii. 10), but it is the greater than David Who is given as a witness in Isa. lv. 4. And so we have summed up Isaiah’s prophecy in the words of the central member of the structure:

“ISRAEL’S ONLY HOPE, FINAL BLESSING AND RESTORATION.
MESSIAH’S—GOD’S KING.”

The prophecy of Isaiah leads up to the same glorious conclusion as that of Paul's epistle to the Colossians—"Christ is all."

Before we can hope to appreciate the teaching of a book of this length (it has 66 chapters), it is incumbent upon us to discover its structure. This is not an easy task, and yet our experience over the last twenty-five years and more compels us to attempt it, for we have so often in the past been richly rewarded for the hours that the investigation has entailed. Some readers may perhaps be inclined to ask, "Why not accept the structure already set out in the *Companion Bible*?" Our reply is that, valuable as these structures undoubtedly are, we are under a self-imposed obligation to live up to the title of this magazine, and "search and see" for ourselves. In the course of our studies we have obtained, over a period of years, a few helpful books on various parts of the O.T. and among them one or two commentaries on Isaiah. One of these was responsible for starting us off on the present investigation, and although the author, the Rev. T. R. Birks, does not carry his own suggestions to their conclusion, the hint that he throws out with regard to the structure of Isaiah was enough to provide the incentive and direction. The final result we present to the reader below. A detailed analysis of the sixty-six chapters of the book would obviously not be practicable at this stage, and we must therefore ask the reader to be satisfied with the following outline, which can be filled in as the details are given in subsequent articles.

The Sevenfold Prophecy of Isaiah.

- A | PRE-ASSYRIAN INVASION (i.-xxxv.).
 - a | i.-xii. THE REMNANT SHALL RETURN. |
 - (1) i. Zion like a lodge (*Melunah*).
 - (2) ii. - iv. 6. Zion's future glory.
 - (3) v. Zion, the Lord's vineyard.
 - (4) vi. The Tenth. It shall return.
 - (5) vii. - ix. 7. Virgin's Son. Immanuel.
 - (6) ix. 8 - x. 34. Remnant shall return.
 - (7) xi.-xii. The root and offspring of David.
 - b | xiii.-xxvii. BURDENS AND BLESSINGS. |
 - (1) xiii. - xiv. 23. Babylon and Jerusalem.
 - (2) xiv. 24 - xviii. Philistia, Moab, Damascus.
 - (3) xix., xx. Egypt.
 - (4) xxi. Desert. Dumah. Arabia.
 - (5) xxii. Valley of Vision.
 - (6) xxiii. Tyre.
 - (7) xxiv.-xxvii. The earth like a cottage (*Melunah*).
 - c | xxviii.-xxxv. WOES AND GLORIES. |
 - (1) xxviii. Ephraim. Instruction.
 - (2) xxix. Ariel. Redemption.
 - (3) xxx. Egypt. Grace.
 - (4) xxxi., xxxii. Apostates. Righteous King.
 - (5) xxiii. Assyria. King in His Beauty.
 - (6) xxxiv. Idumea. Recompenses.
 - (7) xxxv. 1-10. Wilderness. Glory and Excellency.
- B | ASSYRIAN INVASION AND DELIVERANCE (xxxvi.-xxxix.).

A | POST-ASSYRIAN INVASION (xl.-lxvi.).

a | xl.-xlviii. COMFORT AND CONTROVERSY. |

- (1) xl. 1-11. Good tidings to Zion.
- (2) xl. 12 - xlii. 17. My Servant (Israel and Messiah).
- (3) xlii. 18 - xlv. 15. My Witnesses (Israel).
- (4) xlv. 16-25. God and none else.
- (5) xlvi. Israel My Glory.
- (6) xlvii. Babylon said, I am and none else.
- (7) xlviii. His servant Jacob, redeemed.

b | xlix.-lx. LIGHT AND PEACE. |

- (1) xlix. 1-12. A light to lighten the Gentiles.
- (2) xlix. 13 - lii. 12. Sold for nought. Redeemed without money.
- (3) lii. 13 - lvi. 8. The Lamb of God.
- (4) lvi. 9 - lviii. 1. Peace. No Peace.
- (5) lviii. 2-14. Ceremonialism.
- (6) lix. Redeemer shall come to Zion.
- (7) lx. Gentiles shall come to thy light.

c | lxi.-lxvi. ACCEPTABLE YEAR AND DAY OF VENGEANCE. |

- (1) lxi. Priests of the Lord.
- (2) lxii. A city not forsaken.
- (3) lxiii. 1-6. The day of vengeance.
- (4) lxiii. 7-14. The days of old.
- (5) lxiii. 15 - lxiv. Our Father.
- (6) lxv. 1-16. Recompense.
- (7) lxv. 17 - lxvi. New heavens and new earth.

The focal point in this sevenfold analysis is the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib and the deliverance of Jerusalem in the days of Hezekiah. Three great sections lead up to this point, and three follow, each section being sevenfold in composition. Each one of these 42 subsections is complete in itself, as also is the central section, Isa. xxxvi.-xxxix.

It is obvious that we shall have to do a certain amount of selecting in dealing with these great prophecies of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but we feel sure the reader will agree that the first of these has a very strong claim for the fullest possible hearing. The task would be sufficiently difficult even if we have unlimited space and leisure, and it becomes even more so when we have to select and condense. We remember, however, the words of Isa. xl.: "All flesh is grass but the Word of our God shall stand for ever", and we take courage as we remember that His commands are His enablings.

ISAIAH.

#2. The unity of Isaiah demonstrated.

pp. 86 - 90

We believe we can safely assume that none of our readers will wish for a lengthy disquisition on the so-called “assured results of the Higher Criticism”, nor will they feel that the space at our disposal has been used to profit by filling it with “arguments” for and against the modernist theory of two or more “Isaiahs”. When we can turn to no less than ten passages in the N.T. that quote Isaiah by name as the author of the so-called “former” portion (i.-xxxix.), and eleven passages in the N.T. that just as emphatically quote him by name as the author of the so-called “latter” portion (xl.-lxvi.), and when we also discover that six different speakers are responsible for these statements—namely, the Lord Himself, Matthew, Luke, John, John the Baptist, and Paul—then, for the believer, the matter is at an end. These twenty-one reference to Isaiah *by name* are not, of course, the total number of references to his *prophecy*. Isaiah is quoted 85 times in the N.T., from 61 separate passages (some are repeated by more than one writer), and there are only seven books out of the twenty-seven that form the N.T. canon that are without a reference to his prophecy. Twenty-three of these citations are from Isa. i.-xxxix., and thirty-eight from Isa. xl.-lxvi. The unity of authorship is further demonstrated by the occurrence of certain words in both portions, which, according to the so-called critics, are to be found in one portion only. A selection of these will be found in the *Companion Bible* (Appendix No.79), but a much more exhaustive list is given in the commentary, referred to in our first article, by T. R. Birks.

Turning from the question of the authorship of the prophecy to matters far more helpful, it is important at the outset that we should bear in mind the two great sections of the book—namely, Chapters i.—xxxv. and Chapters xl.-lxvi.

The Relation of Isa. XXXV., to the Latter Portion of the Prophecy.

The former portion of Isaiah ends with chapter xxxv., but this closing chapter is so woven into the fabric of the latter portion that neither can be looked upon as complete without the other.

Isaiah XXXV.	Isaiah XL.-LXVI.
1. “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God” (1, 2).	“The glory of Lebanon” (lx. 13). “Sharon” (lxv. 10). “They shall come and see My glory” (lxvi. 18) “He hath no form nor comeliness”— <i>hadar</i> , the same word as “excellency” (liii. 2).

<p>2. “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not” (3, 4).</p>	<p>“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint” (xl. 31). “The young men shall utterly <i>fall</i>” (xl. 30). “That they should not <i>stumble</i>” (lxiii. 13)—the same word as “feeble” in xxxv. 3. “I will strengthen thee” (xli. 10)—the same word as “confirm” in xxxv. 3.</p>
<p>3. “Behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; He will come and save you” (4).</p>	<p>“He put on garments of vengeance” (lix. 7). “The day of vengeance of our God” (lxi. 2). “The day of vengeance is in Mine heart” (lxiii. 4). “Recompense to His enemies; to the islands He will repay recompense” (lix. 18). “The Lord that rendereth recompense to His enemies” (lxvi. 6).</p>
<p>4. “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped” (5).</p>	<p>“To open the blind eyes” (xlii. 7). “I will bring the blind by a way that they know not” (xlii. 16). “Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind” (xlii. 18). See also xliii. 8.</p>
<p>5. “For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert” (6).</p>	<p>“I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water” (xli. 18). “I give waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (xliii. 20). See also xliv. 3-5 and xlviii. 21.</p>
<p>6. “And a highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called the way of holiness” (8).</p>	<p>“I will bring by a way in paths” (xli. 16). “I will even make a way in the wilderness” (xliii. 19). “I will make all My mountains a way, and My highways shall be exalted” (xlix. 1).</p>
<p>7. “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (10).</p>	<p>“Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away” (li. 11).</p>

It will be seen that the climax which is reached in chapter xxxv. is expanded and amplified in the chapters of the prophecy that constitute the second part.

Let us now take another line of thought. Running through the former part of the prophecy is a sevenfold prediction concerning the “forsaking” of the land and city. In the second part we find a sevenfold reversal of these judgments.

The Predicted Judgment (The former half).

- (1) “A great *forsaking* in the midst of the land” (Isa. vi. 12).
- (2) “The land *forsaken* of both her kings” (Isa. vii. 16).
- (3) “The cities of Aroer are *forsaken*” (Isa. xvii. 2).
- (4) “In that day shall his strong cities be as a *forsaken* bough” (Isa. xvii. 9).
- (5) “Which they *left* because of the children of Israel” (Isa. xvii. 9).
- (6) “The habitation *forsaken* and *left* like a wilderness” (Isa. xxvii. 10).
- (7) “The multitude of the city shall be *left*” (Isa. xxxii. 14).

The Predicted Blessing (The latter half).

- (1) “I, the God of Israel, will not *forsake* them” (Isa. xli. 17).
- (2) “These things will I do unto them, and will not *forsake* them” (Isa. xlii. 16).
- (3) “The Lord hath called thee as a woman *forsaken*” (Isa. lix. 6).
- (4) “For a small moment have I *forsaken* thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee” (Isa. liv. 7).
- (5) “Thou hast been *forsaken* I will make thee a joy” (Isa. lx. 15).
- (6) “Thou shalt no more be termed *Forsaken*” (Isa. lxii. 4).
- (7) “Thou shalt be called, Sought out, a city not *forsaken*” (Isa. lxii. 12).

The structure, which is set out on page 43, shows that the former prophecy is divided into three great groups, the first group ending with x. 33 - xii., the second with xxiv.-xxvii., and the third with chapter xxxv. These three closing portions of the three groups contain a special prophetic message, which finds an echo in the latter part of the prophecy. Taking the earlier chapters first, we have the following:

- (1) “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid the lion shall eat straw like the ox they shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain” (Isa. xi. 6-9).
- (2) “The Lord God shall wipe away tears from off all faces” (Isa. xxv. 8).
- (3) “Everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isa. xxxv. 10).

These early promises are found, inverse order, in the latter portion of the prophecy:

- (3) “Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away” (Isa. li. 11).
- (1) “The voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying” (Isa. lxxv. 19).
- (1) “The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, saith the Lord” (Isa. lxxv. 25).

The forsaking of Israel was consequent upon Israel’s own forsaking of their covenant with God; their restoration will be based upon a New Covenant of grace. The word “covenant” occurs twelve times in Isaiah, and its distribution is in complete harmony with the trend of the prophecy.

The first and last occurrences are in chapter xxiv. and chapter lxi.:

“*They have broken the everlasting covenant*” (Isa. xxiv. 5).
 “*I will make an everlasting covenant with them*” (Isa. lxi. 8).

The full list of occurrences is as follows:

“Covenant” in Isaiah.

	/	A		xxiv. 5.	Covenant broken.
First part of	/	B		xxviii. 15.	Covenant made with death.
Isaiah.—Desolation	\	B		xxviii. 18.	Covenant with death annulled.
(i.-xxxv.).	\	A		xxiv. 5.	Covenant broken.

Historic Interlude (xxxvi.-xxxix.)

	/	A		xlii. 6; xlix. 8.	Messiah given as a covenant .
	/	B		liv. 10.	Covenant of My peace.
Second part of	/	C		lv. 3.	I will make an everlasting covenant .
Isaiah.—Desolation	\	A		lvi. 4, 6.	Take hold of My covenant .
(xl.-lxvi.).	\	B		lix. 21.	This is My covenant .
	\	C		lxi. 8.	I will make an everlasting covenant

We have already observed that the Assyrian invasion casts its shadow over the prophecy and occupies the central historic interlude. The connection between this invasion and the covenant is made clear in II Kings xviii.:

“And the King of Assyria did carry away Israel unto Assyria because they obeyed not the voice of the Lord their God, but *transgressed His covenant*” (11, 12).

We have sought to demonstrate something of the oneness of this great prophecy of Isaiah, and in so doing have been led to see a little of the way in which its glorious theme is unfolded. With this one article on the subject of the unity of the book we must be satisfied. In our subsequent studies we shall be exploring the book itself, and we look forward to many hours of joy and refreshment as we consider together this evangelist among the prophets.

ISAIAH.

#3. Rebellion, ruin, and restoration (i.-v.). pp. 130 - 137

In order to cover the ground fairly rapidly and in such a way that the salient points may be perceived, we propose to devote three articles to the section covering Isa. i.-xii., and to apportion the subject-matter as follows:

- (1) Isa. i.-v. (2) Isa. vi. (3) Isa. vii.-xii.

We therefore turn our attention in the present article to the first five chapters of this prophecy, and endeavour to obtain a comprehensive view of its teaching. We note first, in chapter i., that, on account of her ingratitude and rebellion, Israel is described as “the daughter of Zion, left as a booth in a vineyard”. In chapter v., the “vineyard of the Lord of Hosts” is said to be Israel, and because of the utter failure of this vineyard to bring forth fruit, the Lord says, “I will lay it waste”. In chapter i. we read, “I have brought up children”; in chapter v. the Lord says: “What could have been done more to my vineyard?” In chapter i. we read, “Who hath required this at your hand to tread (*ramas*) my courts?” and in chapter v., “It shall be trodden down (*mirmas*, the substantive form of *ramas*). Again, in chapter i. we read, “Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider”, while in chapter v. we have the parallel charge:

“They regard not neither consider My people are gone away into captivity, because they have no knowledge.”

Going on to chapters ii. and iv., we have a marked parallel between ii. 1-5 and iv. 2-6. The first passage speaks of “the last days” (ii. 2) and the second of “that day” (iv. 2) when Zion shall be restored and glorified, and the nations shall be taught at Jerusalem. Chapters ii. 6-22 and iii. 16 - iv. 1 deal with the exposure of sinful pride and the fact that it will be brought low in the day of the Lord, while iii. 1-15 brings before us the ruin of Jerusalem. If we are not to load our pages unduly, we must refrain from attempting too close an analysis of these five chapters, and we therefore submit the following to the discriminating reader, believing that those who wish to go more into detail will be granted sufficient light and wisdom for the task.

Outline Analysis of Isaiah i.-v.

- A | i. REBELLION. |
 - a | Zion left like a booth in a vineyard. Defenseless.
 - b | Israel did not know, they did not consider.
 - c | I have nourished and brought up children.
 - d | The land desolate; devoured.
 - e | Treading the courts (*ramas*).
 - f | The tow and the spark.
- B | ii. 1-5. RESTORATION. |
 - g | The last days.
 - h | The house of the Lord established.
 - i | The nations shall not learn war.
 - j | Light of the Lord.
- C | ii. 6 - iv. 1. RUIN. |
 - k | ii. 6-22. Pride brought low.
Mean men. Great men.
 - l | iii. 1-15. Jerusalem is ruined.
 - k | iii. 16 - iv. 1. Pride brought low.
Daughter of Zion. Seven women.
- B | iv. 2-6. RESTORATION. |
 - g | In that day.
 - h | The branch of the Lord beautiful.
 - i | “Escaped” and “left”. Glory shall be a defence.
 - j | Shadow and refuge.
- A | v. REJECTION. |
 - a | The house of Israel like a vineyard.
 - b | They regard not, neither consider.
 - c | What could I have done more?
 - d | Vineyard laid waste; eaten up.
 - e | It shall be trodden down (*ramas*).
 - f | The fire and the stubble.

The above is given as an “outline analysis” rather than as a literary structure, for one very obvious reason, namely, that a literary structure of five such chapters as these would be too vast for the limits of our pages. We need not, however, forego the value of the evident correspondence of theme simply because we cannot set out each chapter fully, and we have therefore disregarded the actual order of the passages in chapters i. and v., and have merely indicated a few of the outstanding parallels.

We see from the structure that the main theme of these five chapters may be summarized in words which might well stand as representing the burden of all prophecy—viz., Rebellion, Rejection, Ruin and ultimate Restoration. Even here, in this opening charge against the ingratitude and rebellion of Israel, grace cannot be altogether silent, and so two very small, but very precious anticipations of future glory (ii. 1-5 and iv. 2-6) find a place.

We must now seek to understand more fully the causes of the serious condition in which Israel is found, the remedy provided, and the ultimate restoration that is in view.

Isaiah i. The Indictment.

The first verse of this chapter belongs, not to the opening section, but to the whole book. We learn from this verse that Isaiah's prophecies (or "visions") concern "Judah and Jerusalem", and that they were seen in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. It is probable that this opening chapter describes the condition of the land and people at a time subsequent to the reign of Uzziah, for we know that Judah was not subjected to a foreign invasion until the days of Ahaz. The whole of the former portion of Isaiah seems to be overshadowed by the Assyrian invasion under Sennacherib, and it seems likely that Isaiah has described the state of the land and people during this time, and placed it in the forefront of the whole book, because of its special significance. The invasion under Sennacherib, and the miraculous deliverance from his threatenings, are a forecast of the last great world power that shall bring about the day of Jacob's trouble, and the final overthrow of the oppressor.

When dealing with the Book of Deuteronomy, we drew attention to the way in which the Song of Jehovah's Name (Deut. xxxii.) seems to be the quarry to which most subsequent prophets have gone for their material. Among the parallels noted were twelve instances from Isaiah. We will not repeat what we have already written (see Volume XXIV, page 82), but it may helpful if we mention again the four parallels with Isa. i.:

- "Hear, O heavens" (Deut. xxxii. 1; Isa. i. 2).
- "Nourished children" (Deut. xxxii. 6; Isa. i. 2).
- "Corrupters" (Deut. xxxii. 5; Isa. i. 4).
- "Sodom" (Deut. xxxii. 32; Isa. i. 10).

The Song of Deut. xxxii. proceeds by a series of stages from the perfect work of the Lord, down through Israel's failure, and so on to final restoration. In the same way Isaiah traces the downward path of the chosen people, until grace eventually intervenes.

As we have five sections to review within the confines of a few pages, we must necessarily pass by much that would be profitable. We shall endeavour, however, to give prominence to those points which mark the way, so that the reader may be guided in his own private reading.

The indictment of the people is that they were ungrateful children. In other places we read of Israel breaking their covenant with the Lord, and disobeying the precepts of the law. Here, however, we read:

"I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against Me."

We get a glimpse here of the heart of God as Father, and his feelings towards his children.

In verse 4 the people are spoken of as “corrupters”; in verse 5 their punishment is spoken of in terms of “stripes” (i. 5); and in verse 7 their land and cities are said to be “left desolate” (i. 7). At the heart of this ingratitude and rebellion lies the fact expressed in verse 3: “Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider” (i. 3). The word “consider” we shall meet again in Isa. vi. 9, 10 as “understand”, and we therefore postpone comment until this chapter is reached.

We also note in this chapter that the people who are so corrupt as to be likened to Sodom and Gomorrha (i. 9, 10) are nevertheless deeply “religious”. Sacrifices, oblations, incense, were all enjoined by the law, but the Lord says of them here:

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? Who hath required this at your hand, to tread (or trample) My courts?”

When religious observances have become a refuge from conscience, oblations become “vain”, incense an “abomination”, and solemn assemblies “iniquity”.

It is in this context that we find the first passage in Isaiah that is quoted in the N.T.:

“Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrha” (Isa. i. 9).

This passage forms an integral part of the dispensational argument of Rom. ix., and the reader is referred to the articles on Romans in *The Berean Expositor* for fuller notes on this important passage. A remnant by grace, saved at the time of trouble, was in its turn a pledge that all Israel shall be saved in God’s day of grace.

We reach a climax in chapter i. at verse 18:

“Come now, and let us reason together.”

The Companion Bible, together with several other commentaries, draws attention to the fact that this passage speaks of putting an end to all reasoning rather than inviting it. The Hebrew word *yakash*, which is translated here “reason together”, means primarily “to demonstrate what is right and true”, and in some of its forms can mean “to reprove” (Isa. xi. 4). The form of the verb in Isa. i. 18 is equivalent to our passive, and suggests reproof rather than continued reasoning. The Hebrew *yakash* gives us the word for “the daysman”, whom Job so longed for (Job ix. 33), and we can certainly see thought of the Mediator behind Isa. i. 18:

“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

The idea involved in the simile “as scarlet” is better seen when the Hebrew is consulted. The word *sheni*, meaning “two”, or “double”, in the course of time came to mean “double-dyed”, by virtue of the fact that it was the custom to dip a garment twice when dyeing it purple (See Horace and Pliny). The second word “crimson” refers to a colour made from the Cochineal insect, our English word being derived from the Arabic

Al-Kermes, through the French *cramoisi*. The feminine form of the word occurs in Isa. xli. 14 where it is translated “worm”. Both the colours mentioned by the prophet are deeply bitten into the material, and yet, to pass from the figure to the actuality, such is the grace of God that these double-dyed sinners may actually become “as white as snow”.

After further reference to the nature of Israel’s sin (under such figures as those of a harlot and a murderer) we read in verses 25-27 of the purifying of the people—the words used are very reminiscent of Malachi’s figure of the purification of silver in Mal. iii. 3—and of the glorious restoration that awaits them.

“And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counselors as at the beginning; afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness” (Isa. i. 26, 27).

The closing verses speak of the destruction of the “transgressor and sinner, together” and the consuming of those that forsake the Lord.

“And the strong shall be as tow, and the maker of it as a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none shall quench them” (Isa. i. 31).

These awful words concerning the fire that is not quenched find a solemn echo in the last verse of the prophecy, where we read:

“And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm (the same word as “crimson” in Isa. i. 18) shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched (the same word as in Isa. i. 31); and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh” (Isa. lxvi. 24).

Isaiah ii. 2-5.

This precious glimpse of the days of restoration and blessing is fully expanded in the second part of the prophecy (xl.-lxvi.) and therefore, as our space is limited, we will be content with the following outline.

- A | 2. The true exaltation (Heb. *nasa*). “The Lord’s house.”
- B | 3. | a | Many people.
 - b | Come ye, let us go . . . to the . . . God of Jacob.
 - c | We will walk in His paths.
- C | 3. | d | Out of Zion.
 - e | Shall go forth the law.
 - e | And the word of the Lord.
 - d | From Jerusalem.
- A | 4. False exaltation (Heb. *nasa*). “Not lift up sword.”
- B | 5. | a | House of Jacob.
 - b | Come ye, let us walk.
 - c | In the light of the Lord.

Here, in these few sentences, we have compressed the glorious future that awaits the nations of the earth when Israel shall at last enter into their inheritance and become a

kingdom of priests. Not until the nations cease to “learn” war, will peace be more than an illusion.

Before we come to the sequel to this prophecy of restoration and peace (Isa. iv. 2-6), we must first consider the intervening passage—Isa. ii. 6 - iv. 1—which deals with the cause of Israel’s failure to enter into their inheritance and to become a channel of blessing to the surrounding nations. The structure shows a threefold division of this passage (see page 131) but the theme is one—sinful pride ending in ruin. What a contrast between the Jerusalem of Isaiah’s vision (ii. 1-5), and the Jerusalem he actually knew. Instead of true worship, we see a land full of idols, and instead of the law of the Lord shining forth from Jerusalem—

“They are replenished from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they join hands with the children of strangers” (Isa. ii. 6).

The following is the structure of Isa. ii. 6-22:

Isaiah ii. 6-22.

- A | 6. People forsaken of the Lord.
- B | 7-9. Idols. Silver and gold. The land full. Men abased.
- C | 10. Enter into rock Glory of His majesty.
- D | 11. Lofty humbled.
- E | 11. The Lord alone exalted.
- F | 12-16. The day of the Lord.
- D | 17. Lofty humbled.
- E | 17. The Lord alone exalted.
- C | 19. Go into rocks Glory of His majesty.
- B | 20. Idols. Silver and gold. Cast to moles and bats.
- A | 22. Cease ye from man.

The last sentence here: “Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?” is parallel with the opening section of the second part of Isaiah, where we read that “all flesh is grass”. The “Word of the Lord” is what endures, and He is able to accomplish His purposes without the aid of man. If only we could take to heart the testimony of Isa. ii. 22, we should realize the futility of all human schemes to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. The Lord has forsaken His people “Cease ye from man”.

Chapter iii. gives another terrible picture of Jerusalem as it was, in contrast to what it will be:

“I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them” (iii. 4).
“As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them” (iii. 12).

The word “ruin” in verses 6 and 8 means “stumbling and falling”, and occurs also in Isa. v. 27, xxxv. 3, and xl. 30. The recurrence of the idea of “rule” here (verses 4, 6, 7, and 12), shows that we have in this second view of Israel’s failure, failure in its *political*

aspect, just as in ii. 6-22, we had their failure in the matter of worship and true religion. To complete the picture of Israel's degradation we have their *moral* failure set forth in Isa. iii. 15 - iv. 1. Here the daughters of Zion come before us with their wanton eyes and mincing steps, chains, bracelets, veils, rings, jewels and perfumes. In the case of the men, their idolatry is expressed in terms of treasures, chariots, high towers, fenced walls, and ships of Tarshish (ii. 7, 15, 16); in the case of the women, it is expressed in terms of self-adornment and its immoral accompaniments (iii. 16-23). What a relief to turn from this to Isa. iv. 2-6, where we have another view of the Jerusalem that is to be, when the Lord "shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion" and, "over all the glory shall be a marriage-canopy" (A.V. "defence": verse 5).

Isaiah rounds off this great section of his prophecy with the parable of the vineyard, which, in spite of all the care lavished upon it, brings forth only wild grapes. Following this parable we have a sixfold denunciation (verses 8, 11, 18, 20, 21, and 22), and the chapter concludes with the threat of invasion—a threat which was fulfilled when the Assyrians entered the land.

With such an abundance of material there is always the possibility of creating confusion by elaborate explanations. On the other hand, if any thread of teaching can be discerned in a particular section of such a prophecy as this, it should certainly be seized upon with gratitude. One such thread seems to be provided by the eight references to Zion, and with these we must close.

Zion in Isaiah i.-v.

- A | i. 8. Forsaken. The Remnant (i. 9).
- B | i. 27. Redeemed with judgment.
- C | ii. 3. Law goes forth to nations.
- D | iii. 16. Haughty and vain.
- D | iii. 17. Smitten with scab.
- C | iv. 3. Holy; those that are left in Zion.
- B | iv. 4. Washed spirit of judgment.
- A | iv. 5. Defence. The Escaped (iv. 2).

ISAIAH.

#4. The Prophetic Vision and Commission (vi.). pp. 169 - 176

While we do not suggest that one chapter of this mighty prophecy may be of greater importance than another, because to do so would merely be comparison according to our view of what is important, we can assert that Isa. vi. contains material demanding profound attention. The chapter marks a spiritual crisis in the prophet's own life; it throws light upon the purpose of the ages; it contains a passage that is quoted by the Lord at the time of his rejection by Israel in the Land (Matt. xiii.), and by Paul at Rome of Israel in the dispersion (Acts xxviii.). Moreover it concludes with a pledge of Israel's restoration couched in terms that demand careful analysis.

First we will examine the chapter to discover its place in the ministry of the prophet. Are we to understand that after he had uttered the prophecies of chapters i.-v., he saw the vision of Isa. vi. and confessed his uncleanness? That is the considered opinion of some. We learn from the opening verse of chapter i. that Isaiah's prophetic ministry was exercised in the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. The total period of the last of these three reigns is sixty-one years, so that it is extremely improbable that Isaiah prophesied during many years of the first of the three. There are scriptural reasons for believing that this sixth chapter of Isaiah discloses the call and commission of the prophet, and that that call was received in the last years of Uzziah's reign.

If we compare the account of this call with the features that are recorded in connection with the call and commission of Jeremiah and of Ezekiel, we shall find confirmation of the opinion that Isa. vi. is the initiatory vision of the prophet's commission. Let us see this:

JEREMIAH'S COMMISSION.—*The touched lips.* "Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put My words in thy mouth" (Jer. i. 9).

EZEKIEL'S COMMISSION.—*The Cherubim.* "The word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar the likeness of four living creatures every one had four wings" (Ezek. i. 3-6).

ISAIAH'S COMMISSION.—*The touched lips and the Seraphim* (Isa. vi. 1-7).

It is probable that the vision of Isa. vi. was not made public during the lifetime of Isaiah; it was initially for his personal satisfaction and was not made known until the whole of Isaiah's prophecies were written. In the same way we do not read in Acts ix. what the Lord said to Paul himself on that occasion, but only what the Lord said to Ananias about Paul, the actual words uttered by the Lord to Paul himself not being made known until Paul was imprisoned (Acts xxvi. 16).

Before we proceed to the examination of this most important section of Isaiah's prophecy it will be well for us to get a measure of its structure, so that we may be guided in our study in the direction of the inspired intention. No existing structure appears to give the true place to the two references to the *eretz* (earth, land), nor the threefold response of Isaiah, "Then said I". Accordingly, we approach the chapter afresh, and present to the reader what we believe comprehends the essential features in their structural relationship.

Isaiah vi.

- A | 1. Uzziah. Type of Israel, Failure.
- B | 2, 3. The thrice Holy Lord.
- C | 3, 4. *Eretz* (earth). Fullness of it, the glory of the Lord.
 - D1 | 5-8. |
 - a | *Then said i.* CONFESSIOIN; Unclean.
 - b | *And He said.* CLEANSING; Eyes, lips, hearing.
 - D2 | 8-10. |
 - a | *Then said i.* CONSECRATION; Send me.
 - b | *And He said.* COMMISSION; Hear, eyes, heart.
 - D3 | 11. |
 - a | *Then said i.* COMMISERATION; Lord, how long?
 - b | *And He answered.* COMMINATION; Until wasted, desolate.
- C | 12. *Eretz* (land). Forsaking in midst of it.
- A | 13. Sacred Tithe. Type of Remnant. Return.
- B | 13. The holy seed.

In Volume XXIX, page 208 we have given the whole history of the Kings of Israel and Judah as they are associated with the *House of God*, and it will be seen that the central member of the whole outline is occupied with the reigns of Uzziah and his son Jotham. The history of the Kingdom reaches its lowest level at the presumption and leprosy of King Uzziah who, in his presumption and in his doom himself foreshadowed the future Antichrist. This gives point to the opening words of the vision:

"In the year that King Uzziah died *I saw also* the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple" (Isa. vi. 1).

Here we have a solemn contrast drawn between Uzziah, the King, stricken with leprosy because of his own sin, and the Lord, the King, Who was treated as a leper by the very people for whom He came to die (Isa. liii. 3), and Who will accomplish all that is implied in the office of King and Priest.

John xii. leaves us in no doubt that the "King" seen by Isaiah in this vision was Christ, for after quoting Isa. vi. 9, 10, the Evangelist adds:

"These things said Esaias when he saw His glory, and spake of Him" (John xii. 41).

In Isa. vi. 2 the holy beings that stand above the throne are called Seraphim, which has led many to believe that a different order of celestial being from the Cherubim is indicated. But that this is by no means a necessary deduction, we will seek to show.

Primarily, the word *seraph* means “To burn”, and anything that burns may be a *seraph*, even if it be a city (Isa. i. 7), or an idol (Isa. xliv. 16). Consequently, if it suited the purpose of Isa. vi. to call the Cherubim by a distinctive feature, that of itself would not prove a distinction of being. The description given in the book of Revelation of the four “*zoa*” or “living ones” (wrongly translated “beasts”), shows the Cherubim of Ezekiel to be identical with the Seraphim of Isaiah.

“And the first living one was like a lion, and the second living one like a calf, and the third living one had a face as a man, and the fourth living one was like a flying eagle. And the four living ones had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come” (Rev. iv. 7, 8).

This is of prime importance, for the witness of the Cherubim, which commences, so far as man is concerned, at Gen. iii. continues throughout the Scriptures until its prophetic pledge is realized in the Revelation. Man’s dominion being forfeited in Gen. iii., the Cherubim are placed at the east of the garden as a pledge that the dominion shall be restored. The fact that the next reference to Cherubim is in connection with the Mercy Seat is an added revelation indicating the process whereby this restoration shall be accomplished, and the fact that the prayer of Hezekiah, which occurs in the very centre and climax of Isaiah, is addressed to The Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, *that dwellest between the Cherubim* (Isa. xxxvii. 16) gives point to the theme of restoration, and intensifies the interest which Isaiah, and we with him, must have in the presence of the Seraphim at the beginning of his prophetic ministry.

The Seraphim are described as having six wings, yet only two were used for flying, the remaining four being used in the recognition of the holiness of the One they served. While not introduced to teach positive doctrine concerning the Godhead, their threefold ascription of holiness, together with the change of number in the person of the pronoun in verse 8, “Whom shall *I* send, and who will go for *Us*?” cannot but be observed.

Before leaving the passage dealing with the Seraphim, it may help us to observe the way in which the Hebrew word is used in Isaiah.

Seraph in Isaiah.

- A | i. 7. Country desolate. Cities burned. Not consider (3).
- B | vi. 2, 6. Temple. Seraphim. Live coal. No understanding (9).
- C | ix. 5. War. Burning.
Child born, Prince of Peace (6).
- C | xliv. 16, 19. Idols. Burn in fire.
He that formed thee from the womb (24-28).
- B | xlvii. 14. Babylon. Fire shall burn them. Not lay to heart (7).
- A | lxiv. 10, 11. Jerusalem desolate. House burned. None call on Name (7).

This burning judgment, echoed in Isa. iv. 4, where the cleansing of Jerusalem is in view, gives point to Isaiah's selection in his opening vision of the name of "Seraphim". The very last words of his prophecy end in the same strain: "Neither shall their fire be quenched" (Isa. lvi. 24).

The cry of the Seraphim, "Holy, holy, holy", is associated with a prophetic statement; "The whole earth is full of His glory" (Isa. vi. 6). Let us read once more the parallel passage in Revelation:

"And the four living creatures had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. iv. 8-11).

In Isaiah the Hebrew word *eretz* is translated "earth", "land" and "country" and it is consequently necessary to examine the context before drawing conclusions. There are seven undoubted references to "the whole earth" in Isaiah which will illuminate the prophecy of the Seraphim. Let us observe both the references and their correspondence.

"The Whole Earth" In Isaiah.

- A | vi. 3. The whole earth is full of His glory. A great forsaking (12).
- B | xii. 5. *Excellent* things (Heb. *Geuth*).
Water. Salvation (3).
- C | xiv. 7. Rest (blessing). The grave for king of Babylon (9, 11)
- D | xiv. 26. The purpose upon the whole earth. Assyrian broken (24, 25).
- C | xxv. 8. Rest (judgment, 10). Death swallowed up in victory (8).
- B | xxviii. 22. Crown of *Pride* [Heb. *Geuth* (1, 3)].
Waters (17). Consumption (22).
- A | liv. 5. Husband, Redeemer, God of the whole earth. Forsaken for a moment (7).

The purpose of the ages, set forth in prophetic type by the Cherubim, and foreshadowed by the utterance of the Seraphim, is expressed in this sevenfold reference to the whole earth. The reader is urged to examine the context of each reference and to see the way in which all opposition is broken down; death swallowed up in victory, pride overthrown, and the Lord alone exalted in that day, and how, just as the Assyrian invasion occupies the centre of the whole prophecy, so the Assyrian occupies the centre of this sevenfold reference.

We observe that the A.V. gives in the margin of Isa. vi. 3, the note: "Heb. His glory is the fullness of the whole earth", while Rotherham translates the passage: "The fulness of the whole earth is His glory." Isaiah observed that the train of the Lord's garment *filled* the temple (Isa. vi. 1), and that the house was *filled* with smoke (Isa. vi. 4).

The first occurrence of this phrase in Isa. vi. 3 is found in Numb. xiv. where Israel so signally failed to follow the Lord and triumph over the Canaanites.

“But as truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord”
(Numb. xiv. 21).

This initial promise strikes the key note. The glory of the Lord and the fulness of the whole earth are connected with the overthrow of satanic opposition and the full faith of His people. This is seen in the seven occurrences of the expression “the whole earth” already reviewed.

At the close of that prayer which looks forward to the kingdom of Christ on earth, David said:

“Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, Who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory: Amen and Amen” (Psa. lxxii. 18, 19).

Again, the triumphant twenty-fourth Psalm, which speaks of the entry of the King of glory and the lifting up of the age-abiding doors, opens with the statement: “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof” (Psa. xxiv. 1).

The subject is carried to its completion in the N.T. where the fulness is seen expressed and realized in Christ. It would take us too far afield to examine these N.T. references now, but the reader is directed to the article dealing with the *Pleroma* in Volume XIII, pages 165-170.

In contrast therefore with the failing King Uzziah, Isaiah sees the pledge of final fulness in the Christ of God. There is a comparison also between Isaiah himself, the nation and Uzziah, for he too confesses uncleanness.

“I SAW ALSO THE LORD.”—In the year that King Uzziah died.
“ALSO I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD.”—After Isaiah had confessed
uncleanness.

This “seeing” and “hearing” is in direct contrast to the failure of Israel which is manifested in verse 10.

“Then said I, Woe is me!” (Isa. vi. 5).

The effect of the vision of the Lord upon the beholder has ever been the same. Job, the “perfect” man, said that if he could but stand before the Lord he would maintain his integrity, but when at last his wish was gratified, he said:

“I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eyes seeth Thee.
Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job xlii. 5, 6).

Daniel’s comeliness turned to corruption in the presence of an angel (Dan. x. 8); Peter besought the Lord to depart from him because he was a sinful man (Luke v. 8); and John,

the disciple whom Jesus loved, fell at His feet as one dead, when he beheld His glory (Rev. i. 17).

This attitude and confession of Isaiah is but a blessed anticipation of the attitude and confession of Israel when at last they shall look upon Him Whom they pierced.

“We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away” (Isa. lxiv. 6).

Isaiah, in the course of his commission, stood up before men and pronounced woe to them because of their sins. Twenty times does he pronounce this woe, but before he uttered one note of denunciation upon others, he bowed in the presence of the Lord and confessed:

“Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts” (Isa. vi. 5).

Here is the true spirit of ministry. “Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. vi. 1), is a N.T. equivalent.

Moreover, Isaiah did not first speak of the unclean people among whom he dwelt; he spoke first of himself. This, too, finds parallels in such passages as Dan. ix.: “We have sinned, etc.”; and Neh. i.: “We have dealt very corruptly, etc.”

There are times when we must preach wrath and speak of condemnation, but in doing so let us remember that we are ourselves but brands plucked from the burning. A preacher once told a friend that he was going to preach “hell” to a certain congregation. “I hope you will preach *tenderly*” was the rejoinder. This is the attitude expressed in the reply of Isaiah after his commission of judgment, “Lord, how long?” (Isa. vi. 11). This attitude of mind and heart must have pleased the Lord that sent him.

The threefold “Then said I” of the commission of Isaiah speaks for itself. The structure shows that they include his confession and his cleansing, his consecration and his commission, as well as his commiseration with his people, and the message of commination that he had to pronounce. His confession was specific, “Unclean lips”. His cleansing was equally specific, “This hath touched thy lips”, and Isaiah then heard the voice of the Lord saying:

“Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” (Isa. vi. 8).

Let us pause. God had the sovereign right to command the service of any of His creatures. He could have sent an unclean or an unwilling Isaiah to do His service; He *could*, we say, if might be the only criterion. But God is holy, and He therefore uses clean vessels. He could have ordered Isaiah to take up his commission, He *could*, we say, if omnipotence were His only attribute, but He had made man after His Own image, and

therefore instead of commanding Isaiah, he says in Isaiah's hearing: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And Isaiah's service becomes willing service.

"Then said I, Here am I; send me."

Yet again, notice Isaiah's reply. He, on his side, might have said, "Here am I, I am going", but he did not. Instead, as a child of redeeming grace, he begins to reflect the image of His Lord, and says with a beautiful blend of willingness and submission, "Here am I, send me."

Here we must pause. In our next article we must deal with the nature of his message, and with the pledge of verse 13.

ISAIAH.

#5. The Remnant shall return (vi.).

pp. 195 - 200

We take up our study of Isa. vi. at the commission received by Isaiah, as recorded in verses 9 and 10:

"And He said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isa. vi. 9, 10).

Here we have the intensely solemn message entrusted to the prophet. Even though we allow for the figure of speech—the expression "Make the heart of this people fat" signifying "declare that it will be so"—the prophet must still have felt the great solemnity of his charge.

This passage in Isa. vi. is quoted in the N.T. seven times and on three different occasions:

- (1) Matt. xiii. 14; Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10. King and kingdom rejected.
- (2) John xii. 40. The King and the kingdom. Hosannah. Yet rejection.
- (3) Acts xxviii. 25-27. Israel as a nation rejected.

We read in verse 9, "Go and tell this people". No longer does the Lord say "My people", for the passage prophesies that Israel were to become "Lo-ammi"—"Not My people". In the opening chapter of Isaiah, Israel are referred to as "My people", who "do not consider", "a people laden with iniquity", and "ye people of Gomorrha" (Isa. i. 3, 4, 10). In the opening chapter of the restoration section, on the other hand (Isa. xl.-lxvi.) the very first verse reads: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, My people" (Isa. xl. 1), while in the closing references to Israel as His people, the Lord says that they are a people that have

sought Him, that they are a joy, that His joy is in them, and that their days shall be “as the days of a tree” (Isa. lxx. 10, 18, 19, 22).

Let us now consider a little more closely the words used in Isa. vi. 9 and 10:

“Understand not”; “perceive not”; “make the heart of this people fat”;
“make their ears heavy”; “shut their eyes”; “convert”; “be healed”.

The word “understand” is the Hebrew *bin*, which is rendered “consider” in Isa. i. 3: “My people doth not *consider*.” The word “perceive” is the Hebrew *yada*, which occurs in the same verse (Isa. i. 3) in the sentence: “The ox *knoweth* her owner but Israel doth not *know*.” The Hebrew word translated “to make fat” is *shamon*, and is connected with the word *shemen*, “ointment” (Isa. i. 6). It occurs but five times in the O.T. and always in a bad sense—rather in the same way as we speak of the fatty degeneration of the heart. The five occurrences are as follows:

“Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God” (Deut. xxxii. 15).
“Make the heart of this people fat” (Isa. vi. 10).
“They are waxen fat they overpass the deeds of the wicked” (Jer. v. 28).
“They became fat nevertheless they were disobedient” (Neh. ix. 25, 26).

If the judicial fattening of the heart is connected with the same word that gives us “ointment”, and the anointing of the Messiah, “the making heavy” of Israel’s ears seems to be associated with their failure to recognize and further the Lord’s glory, for the word that gives us “glory” in Isa. vi. 3 (*kabod*) also gives us “heavy” (*kabed*). The underlying link between the words is the conception of “weight”. Riches were conceived of in the terms of weight as in Gen. xiii. 2, and Paul, who had been a “Hebrew of the Hebrews”, uses the same idea when he speaks of the “weight of glory”.

The expression “shut their eyes” in Isa. vi. is rendered, in Young’s literal translation: “And its eyes declare dazzled.” In its various forms, the verb *shaa* is translated “delight” (Psa. cxix. 16, 47, 70; xciv. 19) and “cry ye out and cry” (Margin: *Take your pleasure and riot*: Isa. xxix. 9). Once again it seems that, as Israel did not “delight” or “take their pleasure” in the glorious purposes of the Lord, the very glory dazzled their eyes, just as the glory of the risen Lord resulted in the Apostle’s three days of blindness on the road to Damascus.

The word “convert” is the translation of the Hebrew *shub*, which appears again in verse 13 with special emphasis. The same word (*shub*) occurs several times in Isa. i.:

“And I will *turn* My hand upon thee, and purely purge away they dross and I will *restore* thy judges as at the first Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her *converts* with righteousness” (Isa. i. 25, 26, 27).

The word “heal” in Isa. vi. is the Hebrew *rapha* which occurs in Isaiah seven times, as follows:

The word “heal” in Isaiah.

- A | No hope in themselves |
vi. 10. The judgment upon the people.
- A | The blessing of the people. Only hope in Messiah. |
 - a | xix. 22. EGYPT. Smite and heal. Intreated and heal.
 - b | xxx. 26. Heal the stroke of their wound.
 - b | liii. 5. With His stripes we are healed.
 - a | lvii. 18, 19. ISRAEL. I will heal, restore.

The reader will see from the brief notes we have given above that these verses in Isa. vi. contain, in a condensed form, much that illustrates the progress of the Lord’s purposes in relation to Israel. Peter evidently refers to this usage of “healing” when he explains the typical character of the healing of the lame man:

“Neither is there THE HEALING (A.V. salvation) in any other” (Acts iv. 12).

We must now pass on to the prophet’s answer to this great commission.

“Then said I, Lord, how long?” (Isa. vi. 11).

The prophet does not draw back or refuse to utter the solemn words of judgment committed to him, but he manifests the true spirit of service when he asks “How long?” It was fitting that the man who was to utter woe after woe against his own people should first of all be brought to say of himself “Woe is me”; and so here, even though he perceived the judgment to be just, the prophet must have pleased the Lord by his evident pity. The Lord’s answer is twofold—first, the desolation of judgment; and then, the pledge of restoration:

“And He answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them when they cast their leaves: so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof” (Isa. vi. 11, 12, 13).

Here is no small disturbance among the people, but a laying waste and depopulation that was to reduce the land to “utter desolation”.

The removing “far away” of verse 12 was but the sequel to Israel’s moral and spiritual separation from the Lord:

“Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour Me, but have *removed* their heart *far from Me*” (Isa. xxix. 13).

In contrast to this, when at last Israel are restored and their forsaking is for ever past (Isa. liv. 7), then we read:

“In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou *shalt be far from* oppression”
(Isa. liv. 14).

The verses we are considering in Isa. vi. foreshadow not only the Assyrian and the Babylonian captivities, but also the great dispersion that followed the overthrow of Jerusalem in A.D.70, for at the end of the Acts Isa. vi. 10 is quoted for the last time.

The Lord’s words in verses 11 and 12 indicate a long and severe judgment, but the chapter ends with a note of hope. If we turn back to Isa. i., we learn there that Israel was saved from utter destruction, “as Sodom and Gomorrha”, because of a “remnant” (Isa. i. 9). Similarly in Rom. ix.-xi., we find that the Apostle uses the same argument—the remnant saved in Rom. ix. 27 were a firstfruits, pledging the salvation of all Israel in the future (Rom. xi. 16, 26). So here, it is this same idea of a firstfruits that we find in the last verse of Isa. vi.

We must now pay careful attention to the wording of this last verse. We observe first of all that the words “their leaves” are in italics, and therefore added by the translators. The word “cast”, which precedes the italics, refers to the *felling* of a tree rather than to the *falling* of leaves. Moreover there is no “substance” in leaves that can in any sense be regarded as a pledge of restoration, especially when we learn that the Hebrew word for “substance” is usually translated “pillar”. This latter word suits the idea of the stem of a tree, and this is undoubtedly the intention of the passage.

Some translators have looked upon the words “shall return” in verse 13 as giving the idea of repetition, as though to imply the thought of repeated destruction. This, however, ignores the way in which the Hebrew word *shub* is used by the prophet. We have already seen its use in Isa. i. 27—“her converts”, and it is also found in Isa. vi. itself: “And return, or convert, and be healed” (Isa. vi. 10). The prophetic name given to Isaiah’s firstborn, *Shear-jashub*, or “The remnant shall return” as Isa. x. 21 renders it, also indicates that the words “shall return” must be given their primitive meaning.

If the words: “But yet in it shall be a tenth” are put into parenthesis, we can then read straight on from the end of verse 12 to the second clause of verse 13:

“And the land be utterly desolate (but yet in it shall be a tenth) And it shall return, and shall be eaten”

Even though this returning remnant should again be “eaten”, it is likened to the teal and the oak tree, that in falling, have substance in them, so that, even though cut down to the ground, they will again send forth new shoots and in time produce a new tree. The tenth or tithe is the Lord’s portion, a beautiful title for the remnant according to the election of grace.

So ends the vision of Isaiah. It begins with utter failure, as does the prophecy itself, but, after desolation and forsaking have done their work, it at last reaches restoration and blessing. The vision that Isaiah saw in the year that King Uzziah died is, therefore, practically an epitome of his life’s ministry.

The Gospel of JOHN.

#7. The Word was “with” God (i. 1). pp. 1 - 5

We have already noticed that the truth contained in the opening sentence of this Gospel is beyond anything of which we can have direct experience. “In the beginning was the Word” is a statement simply expressed, and easy to believe, but it speaks of a condition of being entirely removed from our own experience. And what is true of the opening sentence of John i. is also true of each successive link in the chain of revelation that covers the first five verses. All is clear to faith so long as we do not seek to go beyond our limitations, but as soon as we endeavour to measure infinity with the yard-stick of the finite we must inevitably flounder in confusion.

The next link in the chain that is presented to us, is the statement:

“And the Word was with God” (John i. 1)

The Greek language is rich in particles, and in the N.T. there are no less than 14 different Greek prepositions that are translated “with”. If John had been conversant by personal experience with the subject of his opening verse, he would have been obliged to exercise the most scrupulous care in determining which of the fourteen prepositions would express just the precise shade of meaning that suited the case; but when we realize that even the beloved disciple, who had leaned on the Lord’s bosom at the last supper, had no possible personal and experimental acquaintance with the conditions that obtained “in the beginning”, we can readily see that nothing but the superintending inspiration of God could have infallibly selected that one preposition out of the fourteen available, which would express the complete truth.

In what sense, then, was the Logos “with” God? Let us take first the preposition *meta*. This is the word used by Nicodemus in John iii.:

“We know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man could do these miracles except God be *with* him” (John iii. 2).

God was “with” the Lord Jesus Christ in the sense of *meta*, but that is not the meaning of John i. 1, for John does not use this word. *Meta* does not imply so close and intimate a fellowship as some other prepositions which we are to examine. Its root meaning is “after”, as in the word “Metaphysics”, the treatise written by Aristotle “after” the one on Physics. It denotes association, however, for one thing could not come after another unless it were joined in some sort of sequence.

Let us take next the preposition *sun*. Was the Logos “with” God in the sense that *sun* would indicate? *Sun* (*syn*, *sym*) indicates a closer association than is implied by *meta*, and is used largely by the Apostle Paul in speaking of the fellowship that exists between

the members of the One Body and Christ, the Head. It only occurs three times in John's Gospel (John xii. 2, xviii. 1, & xxi. 3) and is not used again in John's epistles or the Apocalypse. Since *sun* is not used in John i. 1, we conclude that the Word is not there represented as being merely "in fellowship" with God.

Another possible preposition could have been *para*. Was the *Logos* "with" God in the sense that *para* would indicate? This word means "beside" as in "parallel", and is used by John in xvi. 27, "I came out from the Father"—i.e. "from beside the Father". *Para* can therefore be used, just as *meta* can, to indicate certain relationships between the Father and the Son, but neither *meta* nor *para* is used in John i. 1.

We will not go on to deal with the remaining possible prepositions, but come at once to the positive teaching of the passage. The word actually used by John is the preposition *pros*. The *Logos*, as revealed in John i. 1, was not simply "with God" in the sense of being co-existent, *einai meta* ("He that was with thee beyond Jordan": John iii. 26); or united by things held in common, *einai sun* ("This man was also with Him": Luke xxii. 56); or in connection with the local relations, *einai para* ("The glory which I had with Thee before the world was": John xvii. 5); but in a sense different from any of these, that could only be expressed by the preposition *pros*.

At this point, let us turn for a moment to Heb. iv., where the same word *pros* is used.

It would seem presumptuous for any one person, unless most fully qualified to speak, to suggest that all existing translations of Heb. iv. 13 have missed the mark; and yet, as we shall see, there is much to be said for a more literal rendering. The Authorized and Revised Versions read "With Whom we have *to do*", while alternative renderings given in other translations are either "To Whom we must give *an account*", or "About Whom is our *discourse*". The original in Heb. iv. 13 is *Pros hon hemin ho logos*, or, translating literally: "With Whom for us the Word." We may compare this with John i. 1: *Kai ho logos en pros ton theon*, "And the Word was with the God". There is so much in common between John i. 1-5 and Heb. i., which we must consider later, that we are compelled to ask why Heb. iv. 13 should not be accepted literally:

"For the word of God is quick and powerful all things are naked and opened in the eyes of Him, *with Whom for us is the Word.*"

The argument in Hebrews concerning Christ is much the same as that of John. Heb. iv. 14-16 follows the reference to the Word that was "with" God (*pros*) by an encouraging statement concerning the sympathy of Him, Who has now passed through the heavens to the place where He was before. However, we must leave this very intricate point, and turn to the wider consideration of the distinctive meaning of the preposition *pros*.

It has been pointed out by others that *pros* is used very much with the verbs *lego*, *laleo*, etc., meaning "to speak". One very common translation of *pros* is "to"—as for example, "He brought him *to* Jesus" (John i. 42). It is also sometimes translated "toward" as in Eph. ii. 7. "Unto" is also a very common translation, as in John i. 29,

and occasionally we meet with “for”, as in the sentence: “If ye have any word of exhortation *for* the people, say on” (Acts xiii. 15).

A very suggestive rendering is found in John xiii. 28: “Now no man at the table knew *for what intent* He spake this unto Him.” Observe also the usage of *pros* in the following passages:

“The Pharisee stood and prayed thus *with himself*” (Luke xviii. 11).

“They reasoned *with themselves*” (Luke xx. 5).

“We have peace *with God*” (Rom. v. 1).

“What communion hath light *with* darkness?” (II Cor. vi. 14).

Now we could easily “prove” that *pros* in Luke xx. 5 implies at least two separate persons—“They reasoned with themselves”; but can we discover two people in Luke xviii. 11: “He prayed *with himself*”? Until we can, let us not be deceived by the show of wisdom that would argue about two separate individuals in John i. 1, because the passage reads “The Word was *with God*.” Man faces a mystery when he faces his own nature. How much more, then, when he is confronted with a revelation that touches upon the nature of God!

We may perhaps catch a glimpse of the meaning of John i. 1 by looking at the last reference in the list above. As II Cor. vi. indicates, there can be no possible communion between light and darkness. We know that God is light, and that the Word was both light and life—and so the Word was “with” God.

We can no more introduce separate personalities into John i. 1 than we can into Luke xviii. 11 or Rom. vii. 15-25. Moreover, we trust that no one will object to the argument that uses the nature of man as a guide to the nature of God, for the Scriptures themselves endorse this viewpoint. Man was made in the image and likeness of his Creator, and in the realm of grace the “new man” is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him (Col. iii. 10). Even with regard to the natural man, Paul could write:

“For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him?
Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God” (I Cor. ii. 11).

Man is a triune being, and is still a mystery to himself. He is but a faint adumbration of the ideal Being, God Himself, and it is surely unbecoming for him to attempt to “explain” the nature of the Divine Essence, when he himself has to confess that he cannot set forth, without the aid of metaphysics, what he discerns regarding even his own personality. We can at least appreciate something of the intention behind the choice of “*pros*” in John i. 1, when we remember how we use the same idea among ourselves, without any suggestion of physical proximity. It is our joy occasionally to receive a letter from a reader whose face we have never seen, perhaps from the ends of the earth, and we certainly have no “problem” of interpretation when he writes concerning our witness for the rightly divided Word, that though separated from us by several thousand miles, he is nevertheless “with” us in our witness.

#8. The Word was God (i. 1). pp. 44 - 48

We now come to the third statement in John i. 1:

“And the Word was God—*Kai Theos en ho logos.*”

We have already seen that man, in his effort to find some explanation of the universe, and some sort of mediator between things seen and unseen, got as far as giving that mediating something the name of the *Logos*, though without realizing that the *Logos* was a Person. We now come to the word *Theos*, the Greek equivalent for “God”.

The following quotation from Dr. Bullinger’s Greek Lexicon will give some idea of the word’s derivation:

“*Theos*, God.—A name reclaimed from the heathen, and used in the N.T. for the true God. Various derivations, ancient and modern, have been proposed, but it is nearly certain that its origin is from the East and comes from the Sanscrit root, DIU-S (pronounced dyus), which means (1) masc.: fire, the sun, (2) fem.: a ray of light, day (Hence Lat. Dies (fem. day), (3) neut.: the sky, heaven.”

The translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the Septuagint, adopted the word *Theos* as the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *Elohim* but, with a few exceptions, the singular *Theos* is used to translate the plural *Elohim*.

“The Talmudists themselves were so persuaded of a plurality expressed in the word *Elohim* as to teach that the LXX interpreters did purposely change the notion . . . lest Ptolemy Philadelphus should conclude that the Jews had a belief in polytheism” (*Allix*).

The N.T. follows the same procedure, and retains the singular *Theos* for the plural *Elohim*. Both the LXX and the N.T. frequently use *Theos* for *Jehovah*, as for example in Matt. iv. 4, which cites Deut. viii. 3.

It should be noted that all the best texts omit the word *Theos* in Mark xii. 32. Instead of “There is but one God”, the passage should read:

“There is but ONE (*Jehovah*, namely, which is the word used in Deut. vi. 4 but for which the Greek language supplied no equivalent term), and there is none other but He” (*Parkhurst*).

We are thankful that we live in a day when revelation is complete, and we can see the full truth as presented by the books of both Covenants. If we were shut up exclusively to the Greek N.T. we might frame an argument as to the nature of the Godhead that would stress the *singular* use of *Theos*. On the other hand, if we had only the Hebrew O.T. we

might stress unduly the *plural* use of *Elohim*. With both testaments before us we have the complete truth, and this alone brings harmony.

Before we attempt to consider the nature of God, however, let us think for a moment of one or two statements concerning ourselves as they would be regarded by a being of another order.

“They two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery” (Eph. v. 31, 32).

“God created man in His Own Image, in the Image of God created He *him*; male and female create He *them*” (Gen. i. 26, 27).

“And called *their* name Adam, and Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son” (Gen. v. 1-3).

We can well imagine beings of another order, when faced with these statements, dividing up into opposing camps, and framing theologies and creeds, which would simply demonstrate their lack of true knowledge. We shall make no such attempts in our studies here. Humanly devised terms may be useful when they relate to matters within our cognizance, but they are almost sure to be misleading and the cause of bitterness and controversy, when used of things outside our ken.

We are *told* by John that “the Word was God”. If John himself had any difficulties or problems with regard to this statement, he has not told us of them. No explanation is offered. We are expected to believe the revelation given, because the One Who speaks is true, and we are also expected to examine His words to discover all the meaning in them of which they are capable. We do not hesitate, therefore, to enquire:

- (1) Why the order of the words is the reverse of the usual one and
- (2) Why the word *Theos* is without the article.

(1) *The order of the words*.—In the second sentence the original is as follows:

Ho logos en pros ton Theon (“The Word was toward the God”).

In the third sentence, however, the order of the words is reversed:

Kai Theos en ho logos (“And God was the Word”).

This change of order is an example of the figure called in Greek *Hyperbaton* (“To step over”) and in English “Transposition”.

“Special attention is desired for some particular word. Placed in its ordinary and usual position, it may not be noticed. But, put out of its usual and placed at the beginning, instead of at the end of a sentence, it is impossible for the reader not to be arrested by it” (Dr. Bullinger’s *Figures of Speech*).

The particular word brought into prominence in this case is *Theos*. The figure therefore emphasizes the fact that the One Who is revealed under the title *Ho Logos* is Himself truly and essentially “God”.

With a few exceptions, we may tell which is the subject or the predicate of a sentence by the presence or absence of the article. In all three clauses here it is “The Word” that is the subject:

- “THE WORD.”—He it is Who was in the beginning.
- “THE WORD.”—He it is Who was with God.
- “THE WORD.”—He it is Who was God.

Parallel with this last form of expression is that found in John iv. 24: *Pneuma ho Theos*. Literally, this would be “Spirit the God”, but if we render it so that the English reader will get the same effect as the original would give to a Greek, we should have: “God is (as to His essence) SPIRIT” (not, “a spirit”). So in John i. 1: “The Word was (as to His essence) GOD” (not “a god”).

(2) *The absence of the article*.—There are some who would translate John i. 1: “The Word was a God”, because *Theos* is without the article. The following references, however, all of which occur in the prologue of John’s Gospel, will be enough to show the incorrectness of such a translation.

- “There was a man sent from a God” (verse 6).
- “Power to become children of a God” (verse 12).
- “Which were born of a God” (verse 13).
- “No man hath seen a God at any time” (verse 18).

The last reference, from verse 18, corresponds with that of verse 1, as is seen by the structure:

- “The Word was God” (as to His substance or essence).
- “No man hath seen God” (as to His substance or essence).

A similar usage of the article, or rather of its absence, is found in verse 14: “The Word was made flesh.” It would be manifestly absurd to translate this “The Word was made a flesh”.

The word *Theos* is used of God in the Scriptures in three different ways:

- (1) Essentially, as in John iv. 24: “God is Spirit.”
- (2) Personally, as of the Father: “God the Father” (Gal. i. 1).
Personally, as of the Son: “Unto the Son, He saith O God” (Heb. i. 8).
Personally, as of the Spirit: “The Holy Ghost God” (Acts v. 3, 5).
- (3) Manifestly, as of the Word: “The Word was God” (John i. 1).

In the narrative section of the Gospel John seizes many opportunities to bring into prominence the controversy concerning the Deity of Christ. These passages will come before us in their order, as we follow the exposition of the Gospel, but there are three that most readers will call to mind, that seem to carry the theme forward from argument and hostility to adoration and worship:

- (1) “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because He not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God” (John v. 18).

- (2) "I and My Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones to stone Him Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God" (John x. 30-33).
- (3) "Thomas answered and said unto Him, my Lord and my God" (John xx. 28).

We have already seen that it is the object of this Gospel to expand and prove the truth revealed in the prologue (John i. 1-18), and we shall hope to deal in detail with the passages quoted above as we come to them in the course of our exposition.

#9. "The Life was the Light of Men" (i. 4). pp. 116 - 122

Our studies up till now have been occupied with the prologue in general (John i. 1-18), and in particular with its opening verse. The majestic simplicity of this opening verse seems to call for worship rather than further scrutiny, and we therefore proceed with our study, without attempting to explain that which lies outside our sphere. Whatever may be the name under which He is revealed, God must always be made known to us *relatively*. We must always remember that the words used are symbols and not the realities themselves. The great object of the Scriptures is not to make us theologians (though the day is coming when we shall "know even as we are known"), but to teach us our own need and God's provision for it, in view of the future day of glory. We believe the statements of John i. 1 without reserve, but this does not mean that we have comprehended the mystery of the Godhead. If John had been inspired to devote several chapters to the exposition of this opening verse, we should have been delighted to follow in his steps, but he has not done so. He leads us from the height of uncreated glory in verse 1 to the "glory as of the only begotten of the Father" in verse 14, and then he travels back again to the closing verse of the prologue, where the introduction of the title "Father" seems to supply the missing feature that we were perhaps unconsciously waiting for as we read the statement of John i. 1.

After the opening reference to the Person of the Creator, John moves on in verse 3 to His work: "All things were made by Him." Then, by a beautiful transition, the writer suggests that what "life" is to the physical creation, "light" must be in the new creation; and so we reach the central point of the prologue (verses 10-13), where some "received Him not", and some "received Him". The narrative then commences its return ascent, placing the new creation of verse 17 over against the material creation of verse 3, and so back to the starting-point, the declaring of God by Him Whom in the beginning was the Word, and Who, since the incarnation, has been made known as "the Son". We shall look in vain in the subsequent story as it is developed in this Gospel, for any further explanation of the title "The Word", and we shall learn nothing further concerning the physical creation of "all things". Instead, we shall be led step by step, from one sign to another, to the great objective of the Gospel, that we might believe that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we might have life through His name". We are led, in effect, from the contemplation of Him, in Whom our *physical* life is found, to Him in Whom alone we may find that life which is *age-abiding*.

With these preliminary remarks, we must now take up our study at John i. 2, remembering amidst all the wealth of detail that thin red line of redeeming love, that not only binds the opening and closing verses of the prologue together (John i. 1 and 18), but runs through the whole Gospel, revealing that He Who made all things is “Love”, and that in the fulness of time He gave His all on our behalf.

Had verse 3 been a direct continuation from verse 1, we might have been uncertain as to whether the phrase: “All things were made by Him” referred to *Theos*, “God” or *Logos*, “the Word”. Verse 2, however, makes it clear that the reference is to “the Word”.

A literal translation of John i. 3 would read: “All things through Him became, and apart from Him became not one thing that has become.” We may not approve of this as a piece of English, but it has the merit of forcing the reader to perceive, in the insistent use of the verb *ginomai*, the intended contrast between the Creator, and all things that He has created. *Ginomai* in verse 3 means “to become”, as in Acts xii. 18—“What was *become* of Peter”. The word is also often used in the sense of “to make” as in John i. 3; and “to come to pass”, “to happen”, “to be born” (Gal. iv. 4). *Ginomai* is essentially a word that denotes origin, and such words as “generations”, “beget”, “parent”, are derived from it. In contrast with *ginomai*, we have the verb *eimi*, “to be”, which meets us in John i. 1 and 2. The reader will perhaps appreciate the contrast better if we turn to John viii. 58:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham came into being (*ginomai*), I am (*ego eimi*).”

The Jews fully understood what such words portended. Such a claim they regarded as “blasphemy” (John x. 31-33), and we read that they took up stones to stone Him (John viii. 59).

There must always be a fundamental distinction between the One Who can say “I am” (John viii. 58), the One Who *was* “in the beginning”, and all who have come into being (*ginomai*) as finite creatures. Further on in our study of this prologue, we shall discover that, after the Word was made flesh, the word *ginomai* is used of Him. This, however, we must leave to be dealt with later in the present series.

We saw, in our introductory articles, that each Gospel has its own point of view, and it is interesting to notice that John is the only one of the four evangelists to put forward the claim represented by John i. 3. Paul also has his own particular point of view, and it is enlightening to compare the way in which he refers to the same truth. Where John says “All things were made by Him”, Paul writes—in Colossians—“All things were created by Him”. John leaves the expression “all things” without further expansion, but Paul, whose theme is Christ as the Head of the Church, and the glory of the dispensation of the Mystery, expands the thought of the creation of all things, and speaks of “things that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible”.

Moreover, in harmony with his theme in Colossians—the sphere of blessing belonging to the Mystery—he continues: “Whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him” (Col. i. 16).

Where John speaks of Christ as “the Word”, Paul speaks of Him as “the Image of the invisible God”. Moreover the reader will notice that, while John defers the title “The Only-begotten of the Father” until the Word is “made flesh”, Paul goes back to the beginning and speaks of Him then as “the Firstborn of every creature”.

In his epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle refers to the Lord and creation in yet another set of terms. He speaks of Christ as “The express image of His person”—or “The external and manifest character of His unseen substance” (Heb. i. 3)—and also refers to the earth, whose foundation He had laid, and the heaven, which His hands had made. The Apostle speaks of these things as being transient and destined to vanish away, so as to enforce the necessary lesson that Christ “remaineth”, a lesson which was much needed by the Hebrews, as they saw all that they had regarded as most vital (the law, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the temple) vanish away. Every book of the Bible resolves itself at last into some fresh aspect of the Person and Work of Christ.

The observant reader will have noticed that when Augustine quotes John i. 1-4 in his Confessions (an extract from which we cited in the third article of this series), he divides verses 3 and 4 in a way which differs a little from that found in the A.V. Instead of the A.V. rendering:

“All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, etc.,”

he reads:

“All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made: that which was made by Him is life.”

This rendering is placed in the R.V. margin. Rotherham, on the other hand, adopts this reading, and puts the A.V. punctuation in the margin, while Alford cites John’s usage and gives grammatical reasons for retaining the A.V. rendering. Webster and Wilkinson comment as follows:

“Many of the ancient commentators place the period at *hen* (one), thus reading, *hō gegonen en hauto zoe en*—‘Whatever hath come into being derives its origin and existence from Him.’”

Whatever punctuation we may at length accept, the meaning of the Apostle remains unchanged. Just as Paul could say that “in Him we live, and move, and have our being”, so John reveals, that in Him, Who was the Word, and Who at the incarnation was made known as the Only-begotten of the Father, was life. And then, transferring his thought from the physical realm to the spiritual, he translates “life” into terms of “light” and says “The life was the light of men”.

Just as God divided the light from the darkness in Gen. i., so we read in John i.:

“And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” (John i. 5).

The word “comprehend” here is a translation of *katalambano*, from *kata*, an intensive, and *lambano*, “to take”. In the middle voice, it is rightly translated “comprehend”, as in Eph. iii. 18; but where it occurs in the active or passive, its meaning is “to grasp”, “to seize”, “to overtake”. So in John viii. 3, 4: “*Taken* in adultery”, or in John xii. 35: “Lest the darkness *come upon* you.” And, in I Thess. v. 4: “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should *overtake* you as a thief.”

Some read John i. 5 as though the thought were that the darkness did not “overpower” or “hold down” the light. The primary meaning “to grasp”, however, seems to be the most fitting here: “The darkness did not *grasp* it.” Physical darkness is dispersed immediately the light shines, but spiritual and mental darkness is more like a dense fog, that remains obscure and dark even though the light of the sun be actually shining. That this is the writer’s meaning seems clear from verse 11: “He came to His own, but His own received (*paralambano*) Him not.”

The sudden transition to the ministry of John the Baptist in verse 6, shows that John is not concerned with the question of the physical realm of life and light, but is using the analogy of creation to enforce the truth of spiritual things. That this is so is confirmed by the structure of the passage (John i. 1-18), which was set out in Volume XXIX, page 174.

C | i. 3. All things were made by Him (*Egeneto dia*).

C | i. 17. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (*Egeneto dia*).

Christ is the Originator in both realms. He is the Spring and Source, both of physical life and light, and of spiritual grace and truth.

While we have this outline before us, let us notice further that verse 4: “*In* Him was life; and the life was the light of men”, is balanced by verse 16: “*Out* of His fulness have all we received.” The later verse is really an expansion of the spiritual principle of the earlier one.

When the prologue is concluded, John returns once more to the witness of John the Baptist and this time deals with it in detail (verses 19-36), focusing our attention on the great purpose for which he came—namely, that the Messiah should be made manifest to Israel (John i. 31).

In the prologue itself, instead of referring to the Lamb of God, or the Messiah of Israel, John keeps to the Logos theme and speaks of “life” and “light”. He tells us in verse 7 that John the Baptist was sent “to bear witness of that Light, that all men through him (i.e. John the Baptist’s witness) might believe”. The same scrupulous care that differentiated between the Word Who “was”, and all creation that “became”, is evident again in verse 8, where our attention is drawn to the fact that John “was not that Light”. Later on in this Gospel we read of John the Baptist that “he was a burning and a shining

light” (John v. 35), but the word “light” here is not *phos*, “light itself”, but *luchnos*, “a lamp”. The distinction is similar to that found in Gen. i., where “light” in verse 3 is *or*, while the word for “lights” in verse 14 (referring to the Sun and Moon) is *maor*, “a light-holder”.

Another very beautiful illustration of the character of John’s service is found in verse 23 (John i.). Christ Himself is described as “the Word”; John on the other hand, describes himself as “a *voice*” (verse 23). What greater service can one render than that which is expressed in this verse? To be a voice to make the Word known, a lamp through which His light may shine, a finger raised to point out the Lamb of God. Such a ministry would lead those who came under its influence to leave the testifier and follow the One testified to. As we read in John iii. 30: “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

In verse 8: “He was sent to bear witness of that light”, the preposition *peri* (“concerning”) is used. The reader will call to mind many words in our own language that begin with these four letters—for example, “perimeter” meaning “circumference”; “period”, a cycle of time; and “periphrasis”, a roundabout form of speech. The idea in John i. 8 is that Christ was the centre around which John’s ministry revolved. His witness was “*concerning*” Him.

There has been much dispute over the Apostle’s meaning in verse 9.

“That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”

The crux of the problem is the verb “cometh”. Does this refer to “every man” or to “the true light”? J. N. Darby’s translation and note are worth quoting as a contribution here:

“The true light was that which, coming into the world, lightens every man.”

“Or, ‘is light to every man’. Not ‘enlightens’ but ‘sheds its light upon’. Not, I judge, ‘every man coming’, in spite of the ancients. ‘Comer into the world’ is a Rabbinical expression for ‘man’, but this refers to the incarnation as ver. 10 shews. The Fathers’ view of it was Platonism which John refutes in every point. The introduction of *anthropon* makes the citing the Rabbinical expression as an argument for the interpretation ‘every one coming into the world’ a mistake: for the Rabbis use ‘Comers into the word’ as equivalent to ‘men’.”

The Lord’s own testimony, as given in John xiii. 46, seems conclusive here:

“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness.”

Or, in John iii. 19:

“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather light, because their deeds were evil.”

A man may be in the light, and yet be unenlightened. Darkness can fail to grasp the light, even though it be shining as brightly as the sun. A glance at the structure confirms

this meaning, for the word *erchomenon*, “cometh” is balanced by *eskenosen*, “dwelt”, both words referring to the incarnation, the coming into the world of “the Word made flesh”.

We now reach the central member of the prologue, the great dividing of the ways. This we shall hope to deal with in our next article.

#10. Revelation, and its reception or rejection (i. 10-13). pp. 147 - 152

We have now descended by a series of six steps, from the “beginning”, down through the fact of creation, and the vital function of light, to the witness of John the Baptist in connection with the true light that “came into the world”. The seventh step (*see* the structure of the prologue, Volume XXIX, page 174) leads us to the great issue of “reception” or “rejection”.

If “revelation” is to prove effective it must be “received”; otherwise it is stultified. The very object for which the Lord came into the world would be rendered void by unbelief. If it were true that not one believer had ever existed or would exist, then the whole scheme of revelation and redemption would have come to an abrupt end. Blessed be God, this has never been the case, and His purpose therefore goes on. It is good for us, however, to visualize the negative side for a moment, if only that we may appreciate more fully the place that faith occupies in the Divine plan. Just as there can be no selling if there be no buyer, no music if there be no listener, no colour if there be no retina, so there can be no revelation if there be no reception. God could have spoken, of course, but the only result would have been a series of echoes down the corridors of time.

Turning back to the structure of the passage, we find that the verses before us occupy a central position and are concerned with the question of receiving and rejecting.

G | i. 10, 11. RECEIVED NOT (*Paraelabon*).

G | i. 12, 13. RECEIVED (*Elabon*).

The reader should note carefully the difference between verses 10 and 11. In the earlier verse we read: “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.” This does not refer to the birth at Bethlehem, but to the fact that the Creator, though “in the world” in His providence and made manifest by the works of His hands to every seeing eye, was nevertheless unknown—“The world knew Him not.” A similar thought is expressed by the Apostle in Acts xiv.

“The living God, Which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things are therein 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).

Yet, in spite of all this outpouring of underserved “goodness”, the world knew Him not.

The revelation of God in creation is again referred to in Rom. i.:

“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. When they knew God they did not like to retain God in their knowledge” (Rom. i. 20, 21, 28).

To come back to John i.—the Apostle, in verse 11, leaves creation (verse 10)—what the Word “was” and “made” and goes on to the incarnation—what the Word “became”: “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not” (John i. 11).

“In the world He WAS”—*En to kosmo en.*
“Unto His own He CAME”—*Eis ta idia elthe.*

The expression “His own” comes twice in verse 11 and is repeated in the A.V. without alteration. There is, however, a difference in the original that is intended and should be noted. The first occurrence—“He came unto His own” is *ta idia* (neuter) while the second occurrence—“His own received Him not” is *hoi idioi* (masculine). The same Greek word is used in John xix. 27 and in Acts xxi. 6, and Moulton gives a number of references to the use of this term in the Papyri. The latter also illustrates the use of the masculine *hoi idioi* for “one’s relations”.

When Christ was born at Bethlehem “He came to His own”, for the land was peculiarly His: “The land shall not be sold for ever, for the land is *Mine*” (Lev. xxv. 23). When Christ came to Jerusalem, He again “came unto His own”, for this city is spoken of by Daniel as “Thy city”, “The city which is called by Thy Name” (Dan. ix. 16, 18). When Christ came to Israel, also, “He came unto His own”, for of the people of Israel we read: “The Lord Thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto Himself” (Deut. vii. 6).

The word “receive” in verse 11 is *parelabon*, and, following the reference to His coming to His own, implies an offer which they would not “accept”. Dr. Weymouth translates the word “gave Him no welcome”. In verse 12 the word “receive” is simply *elabon*, which is parallel with “believe” at the end of the same verse.

If the Lord’s “own people” who “received Him not” are Israel, who, then, are those who did receive Him? If we reply that those who received Him were “some of Israel”, it would seem that the statement of verse 11 is too sweeping. There was certainly a remnant of believers throughout the Acts that were of Israel, but at Acts xxviii. it became manifest that “His own” people as a whole would not receive Him. The other Gospels lead the reader step by step to the crisis of the Lord’s rejection. John, on the other hand, places it in his prologue, and the whole Gospel is written with the previous knowledge that Israel had failed. John speaks of “the world”, and of “other sheep” that

must be sought, and his witness is related to the revelation that had already been made in Paul's epistles.

We read in John i. 12 that to those who did receive Him, the Lord gave "power to become the sons of God". The words "power" and "sons" here need a little revision. The word translated "power" is *exousia*, from *exesti*, "lawful". For example, in John v.: "It is not *lawful* for thee to carry thy bed" (John v. 10). A little further on in the same chapter we meet with *exousia*: "And hath given Him *authority* to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man" (John v. 27). The word is in constant use—for example, "one under *authority*" (Matt. vii. 29), "By what *authority*?" (Matt. xxi. 23). It is often translated "power", as in the phrase "principalities and powers" (Eph. i. 21), and "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. ii. 2). The last occurrence in the N.T. is in Rev. xxii. 14: "That they may have *right* to the tree of life." It is not a question of "power" in John i. 12, but of "right" or "authority". When Israel as a nation was set aside, the Lord gave to all believers, irrespective of nationality, the "right" or "authority" to become "children of God".

The word for "sons" also needs revision. There are two possible words which may be translated "son"—*huios* and *teknos*. *Huios* occurs in John i. 18: "The only begotten Son", and with *thesia* forms the word translated "adoption"—"to be given the standing and dignity of the heir". The word used in John i. 12, is not *huios* but *teknos*. In his epistles John uses *huios* twenty-four times, but never in connection with the believer. The familiar words of I John iii.: "That we should be called the *sons* of God Now are we the *sons* of God", are not a correct translation. In both cases the word used is *teknos*, "a child". On the other hand, the familiar title "The children of Israel" should read: "The sons of Israel." Sonship (or "adoption") belongs on earth to Israel (Rom. ix. 1-4). When Israel failed (Acts xxviii.), the Lord did not give those to whom John ministered Israel's *sonship*, but rather the right to be called "the *children* of God".

John uses the word *teknon* in chapter xi. of his Gospel, where the Lord speaks of "the children of God that were scattered abroad" (xi. 52). It is clear in this passage that those called "children" were outside the nation of Israel, for we read: "And not for that nation only, but that He should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad". Those who receive this wonderful privilege are described in John i. as those that have "believed on His name" (John i. 12). The thought of the "name" in Scripture is a most important one. The "name of the Lord" symbolizes His nature. When the infant Christ was born, He received two names:

- (1) "Thou shalt call His name JESUS; for He shall save His people from their sins."
- (2) "They shall call His name EMMANUEL, which being interpreted, is 'God with us'." (Matt. i. 21, 23).

It will be observed that both names have a definite meaning, and the interpretation is given.

From the way in which John uses the "name" in John xx. 31 it would appear to sum up the Lord's whole Messianic character:

“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.”

In the great prayer of John xvii., there is a fourfold emphasis on the Father’s name.

- A | 6. Thy *name* manifested to those given out of the world.
B | 11. Keep through Thine own *name* those given.
I am no more in the world.
B | 12. Kept in Thy *name*.
While with them in the world.
A | 25, 26. Thy *name* declared. The world hath not known Thee.

To appreciate fully the significance of the “name” we must know something of the conditions and customs in O.T. times. When law and order were not sustained by the same legal machinery as at present, a man in trouble “called on the name” of his kinsman. And so we find (in the Psalm of the name) the “name” of the Lord as something in which the believer can take refuge:

“The *name* of the God of Jacob defend thee” (xx. 1).
“In the *name* of our God will we set up our banners” (xx. 5).
“Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the *name* of the Lord our God” (xx. 7).

Applying all this to John i., we may say that those who “received Him” and “believed on His name”, accepted Him in all the fulness of what His name represented—both as the Word (His name “in the beginning”), and as “Jesus Christ”, His name when “the Word was made flesh”.

The word translated “on” in the expression “believe on His name” here, is *eis* and literally means “unto”. This word usually indicates the believing of a person; the fuller word *eipi* (“upon”) denotes *trust*, which is a step in advance of John i. 12.

In verse 13 we read:

“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John i. 13).

It is interesting to enquire whether this verse completes the statement of verse 12, or introduces the glorious doctrine of verse 14. As the A.V. rendering stands, the words “*were born*”, being plural, must necessarily refer to those that believe, whose new birth is entirely dissociated from “bloods”—that is to say “ancestry”—and from the “will of the flesh”, and the “will of man”. Griesbach, however, has called attention to a different reading. Instead of *Hoi egennethesan*, he reads *Hos egennethe*, “Who was not begotten of blood but of God”. This reading would mean that verse 13 refers to Christ.

The Companion Bible has the following note in connection with this verse:

“But antecedent to any ancient MSS, Irenaeus (A.D.178), Tertullian (A.D.208), Augustus (A.D.395) and other Fathers read ‘Who was begotten’ (Sing. not pl.), the *hos*, ‘Who’ agreeing with *autou* (‘His name’. Gr. *onoma autou*, ‘name of Him’). Verse 14 goes on to speak of the incarnation of Him Who was not begotten by human generation. The Latin Codex *Veronensis* (before Jerome’s Vulgate) reads ‘*Qui natus est*’. Tertullian ascribes the reading of the Received Text to the artifice of the Valentinian Gnostics of the second and third centuries. See *encycl. Brit.* Eleventh (*Camb.*) edn. vol. 27, pp. 852-7.”

It is evident from the above note, that Dr. Bullinger (who personally prepared the notes up to John x. before his death) believed “Who was begotten” to be the true reading. It is too late now for any one to express more than an opinion on this point. It would seem, however, that every word in verse 13 would apply more appropriately to Christ as “made flesh” than to “believers”, for it would hardly seem necessary to say that a believer was not “born of the will of the flesh”. In any case, no doctrinal truth is modified in the slightest degree, whichever reading we adopt. All we can say is that the proximity of the incarnation in verse 14, and the way in which verse 13 leads up to it, is an argument in favour of the reading found by Griesbach and adopted in *The Companion Bible*.

#11. The Word made flesh (i. 14).
“The glory of the Only Begotten of the Father.”
pp. 177 - 181

The structure of the prologue to John’s Gospel is rather like the letter V. It begins with a steady descent, from verse 1, until the lowest point is reached at verse 14; and the, from this point onwards there is a steady rise until the Son of God is “back where He was before”. In our present study we have reached verse 14, where we have the marvelous words:

“And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory was of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth” (John i. 14).

It will be noticed that John makes no reference to the various features in connection with the actual birth of Christ, that are dwelt upon by Matthew and Luke. He does not even mention Mary, the mother of Christ, until the Lord is about to start His public ministry; and although Mary is mentioned ten times in the Gospel nothing is said of the virgin birth or of the fulfillment of prophecy at Bethlehem, except in a discussion among the Jews, who only knew that Christ had come from Galilee. It would seem that John purposely refrains from pointing out the fulfillment of O.T. Scripture—a very definite feature of Matthew’s Gospel which was written particularly for those who knew the O.T.—and instead, brings before us one piece of evidence after another until we are forced by its sheer weight to say, with Thomas, “My Lord and my God”. Thomas was

not convinced by an appeal to O.T. Scripture that Jesus was the Christ, or that He was risen again. He was convinced by the testimony of his own senses.

“Reach hither thy finger, and behold My hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into My side: and be not faithless but believing” (John xx. 27).

In Nathaniel’s case, too, the evidence was personal rather than scriptural. He was convinced that the Lord was the Son of God and the King of Israel, not by the fulfillment of O.T. prophecy, but by evidence of a purely personal character—“Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree” (John i. 50). So here, in the prologue, John says nothing about the prophecy of Isa. vii. 14 that we find stressed in Matthew, and nothing about the revelation made by Gabriel to Mary that we find in Luke. He simply makes a statement of fact: “The Word was made flesh”, and follows it by a personal testimony, “We beheld His glory”. As we proceed in our study of the Gospel we trust that we too will be able to behold His glory, and gladly acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

The occurrences of the word “flesh” in relation to Christ in the Synoptic Gospels are very few indeed. If the words of Matt. xxvi. 41 and Mark xiv. 38: “The flesh is weak” may be taken to be the Lord’s words with reference to Himself and His physical weakness in the garden of Gethsemane, they constitute the only reference to His “flesh” found in those two Gospels, while Luke has only one reference, in xxiv. 29, where the risen Christ says: “A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have.” Over against these three references in the Synoptic Gospels (or one reference only if those cited from Matthew and Mark are of doubtful application), we have seven references in John’s Gospel, and three in his Epistles. The seven in the Gospel are iv. 14; and vi. 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56. The expansion of John i. 14 in vi. 51, where the Lord says: “The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world” shows the essential purpose of the incarnation. We have the same thought in Heb. x. 5: “Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me.”

The three references in the epistles are I John iv. 2, 3 and II John 7. These references are in contexts of great solemnity.

“Hereby know ye the spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is *come in the flesh* is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is *come in the flesh* is not of God” (I John iv. 2, 3).

“For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is *come in the flesh*. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (II John 7).

John uses two different tenses of the verb “to come” in these two epistles. In the earlier passage he is speaking of the historic fact, and so the verb is *eluthota*, the perfect participle, meaning “has come”. In II John 7, on the other hand, it is not in effect a question of time, and the present participle, *erchomenon*, is used. In the first passage it is a question of the *historicity* of the incarnation; in the second it is its *possibility*.

In the very early Church it was not so much the *Deity* of Christ that was the subject of attack, but rather His *humanity*. To-day the pendulum has swung over to the other

extreme, and the “Humanists” have insisted so much on the essential humanity of Christ, that they have to obscure or even deny His equal Deity. Neither the Deity nor the humanity of Jesus Christ can be understood separately. They must be considered together. This essential unity is referred to in I John v. 8, the last clause of which should be rendered, “and the three are unto the one”, viz., unto that unity which obtained between the humanity and Deity of the Son of God. It is also made very clear in Paul’s epistles. In Rom. i. 3, for example, we read that the Lord was “made of the seed of David according to the flesh”, while in Rom. viii. 3 the Apostle safeguards His sinlessness by saying that He came in “the *likeness* of sinful flesh”. In the same epistle we find the strongest terms used in connection with His Deity:

“Of Whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, Who is over all God blessed unto the ages” (Rom. ix. 5).

Both in Ephesians and in Colossians we meet with references to “His flesh”, and “the body of His flesh”, while in Heb. ii. 14 we find that He Who is “God” and “Creator” in Heb. i. 8, 10 becomes a partaker of “flesh and blood”.

Returning to John’s Gospel, we find that there are six references to *soma*, “body”, each referring to the Lord’s physical body (John ii. 21; xix. 31, 38, 40; xx. 12). In John i. 1 where we read that “the Word *was* God” the verb is *eimi*, “to be”, but in John i. 14: “The Word *was made* flesh”, it is *ginomai*, “to become”. The two verbs come together in John viii. 58, where the Lord says of Himself: “Before Abraham came into being (*ginomai*), I, I am (*eimi*).” In John i. 1 and 14 we have two modes of existence, but however much the mode may change, the Person remains. He was just as much the Word after His birth at Bethlehem as He was “in the beginning”.

“*and dwelt among us.*”—The word “dwelt” here is *eskenosen* from *skene*, a “tent”, or “tabernacle”. The word is allied to the Hebrew *shaken*, “to dwell as in a tabernacle”, and gives us the expression—often used without recognition of its true meaning—“The Shekinah glory”. Not only does the Apostle intend by the use of this word to indicate the transient character of this life, in which the Lord for thirty-three years shared (see II Cor. v. 1), but he is also referring to the tabernacle in the wilderness as a type of Christ. When we come to the second chapter of John, we shall find the Lord speaking also of the Temple as a figure of His body. Here it is the tabernacle. All that the tabernacle typified, with its mercy-seat, ark, light, shewbread, altar of incense, laver, brazen altar, and veil, was at length seen in reality in the “Word made flesh”. The words “grace and truth” in verse 17 really signify “true grace” i.e. that which was real and antitypical, in contrast with the shadows of the law. This, however, we must deal with more fully when we come to the verses concerned.

The A.V. places in parenthesis the words:

“And we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten of the Father.”

In the original, the reader is at once struck by the sudden vagueness of the words here, which read literally:

“Glory as of an only begotten from a father.”

The reader will find this noted in the R.V. margin, and in such revised translations as those of Rotherham, Darby, and Cunningham. The Apostle’s intention seems to be:

“We beheld His glory, a glory such as one would associate with one who was an only begotten of a father.”

The word “father”, while ultimately referring to God Himself, is used here in a general sense. The glory that was beheld by the wondering disciples was not the “glory” which the Saviour “had” with the Father “before the world was” (John xvii. 5), for that glory, which is yet to be unveiled and manifested (John xvii. 24), was, while the Saviour lived here and bore the likeness of sinful flesh, tempered and veiled. The “glory” referred to by the Apostle here in John i. 14 is rather the kind of glory that is compatible with the status of being an only begotten one of a father. He Who is Himself God, and Who had made the world, humbles Himself, and speaks of Himself as “The Sent One”. He acknowledges that “My Father is greater than I”, and that as “the Son” He has received power and authority from the Father. None of these acknowledgments, of course, in any way touch His Deity; they merely speak of the humble place that He was pleased to take when He was “made flesh”.

We have no wish to take any part in the controversy concerning the Lord’s Sonship that is wrecking one evangelical witness. The very terms used in this controversy are themselves unscriptural. Nowhere does Scripture say: “In the beginning was the Son.” Only when the Word was made flesh, does His sonship appear. Such phrases, therefore, as the “Eternal Generations of the Son” we cannot regard as being scripturally sound.

The words “The only begotten”, wherever they are used apart from Christ, always refer to a son or a daughter who has been begotten by a father. The words are used of Isaac (Heb. xi. 17), of the only son of the widow of Nain (Luke vii. 12), of the only daughter of Jairus (Luke viii. 42), and of the man whose only child was possessed of an evil spirit (Luke ix. 48). There is nothing unusual about the word *monogenes*. If we remove the word for “only” we have *genes*, which is intimately related to the words translated “begetting” (Matt. i. 2), “born” (Matt. i. 16), and “generation” (Matt. i. 1). If the “generation”, the “birth”, the “begetting” of Jesus Christ are thus attested by Scripture, who are we to put our hands to save the Ark of His Deity, by robbing Him of the glory of His perfect manhood and sonship?

We have said little about the virgin birth, for we are following the line of teaching given by John, but, lest any should misconstrue our silence, we affirm in passing our unwavering faith in the testimony of those Scriptures that insist upon the supernatural conception of the Son of God, His virgin birth and His untainted manhood.

A day is coming, when the Son shall be subject unto Him that subjected all things under Him, “that *God* may be all in all”. We have no right here to read “that the *Father* may be all in all” for we must remember John’s statement that “The Word was God”.

The glorious manhood of Him Who came to be the Mediator and the Sacrifice for sin is vital to our hope and our peace. Let us beware lest, by using unscriptural language when speaking of “the Son”, we should be found denying that “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh”.

Occasional Meditations.

#4. The offering of Isaac.

Genesis xxii.

pp. 91, 92

We may consider this chapter from two different points of view:

- (1) As a record of the testing of Abraham's faith.
- (2) As typical of the work of Christ.

Let us consider each of these aspects in turn.

Abraham had been declared by the Lord to be righteous as far back as Gen. xv. 6, and Paul uses this passage in Rom. iv. as an argument for justification by faith. The apostle James, however, after alluding to the blessedness of enduring temptation or testing (i. 12), speaks of Abraham as being justified *by works*, when he had offered his son upon the altar (ii. 21-23), and says that the scripture was fulfilled, which spoke of his justification by faith in Gen. xv. 6. So with us all—in the lawcourt of the Lord—those who believe into Christ are legally and for ever justified and cannot possibly come into condemnation, but, having received this new life, they must demonstrate it by love and good works, apart from which they will fail of the *enjoyment* of peace with God, and also fail with regard to future reward. Abraham's obedience, or practical righteousness, fulfilled or manifested his imputed righteousness which he had by faith.

We must notice next the character of Abraham's testing and the nature of his obedience. His dearest possession, the one in whom all the promises of God to him were centred, was demanded from him without explanation. Heb. xi. 17-19 shows that Abraham's faith was in *resurrection*—the key to the Christian's victory. His obedience, also, was marked. He rose up early (verse 3) and started off unhesitatingly. Abraham was a man of keen susceptibilities and affection, but he possessed the love and faith which overcomes all, and puts God first. The result of this testing is seen in verses 16-18. So, in our own time, the believer who is willing to deny himself, and take up his cross and follow the Lord, will by no means lose his reward.

We now come to the second aspect of the passage—its typical teaching in relation to the work of Christ. The language used concerning Isaac in verse 2 sets forth very clearly the Lord as the only begotten and well-beloved Son of God; and the place—a mountain in the land of Moriah—at once calls to mind the spot where, years afterwards, David offered a sacrifice and purchased the site for the temple (II Chron. iii. 1). It also reminds us of the "hill called Calvary", where the Lord of glory died in the place of guilty sinners.

In verse 5 the phrase "I and the lad" is suggestive of the truth that that awful transaction on Calvary was between the Lord Jesus and His Father alone. In verse 7 we

have “My Father” and “My Son”. True affection and tender complacency mark these words; even when He was charged with the guilt of His people, and smitten by the sword of Jehovah, the Lord Jesus was as much His Father’s delight as when He was with Him in glory before the world began.

Verse 8 was fulfilled when the Lamb of God was offered as a willing Sacrifice more than nineteen hundred years ago. What wonderful lessons we may learn here! The father offering up his only begotten and beloved son, and, at the same time, a foreshadowing of Israel, the Abraham of the nations, as the people who would be responsible for this awful deed.

In verses 11-13, the angel of the Lord intervenes and points out the “ram caught in a thicket”—another type of the Lord Himself as the One offered *instead* of Isaac. Every member of Israel’s race exists only on the basis of this great substitution, just as every sinner lives only because of the “instead” of Gal. iii. 20.

This chapter ends with the birth of Rebekah, Isaac’s destined bride (verse 23). The spiritual birthplace of the Bride of the Lamb is the death of Christ, just as Eve was taken from Adam during a deep sleep.

May we all seek to exhibit Abraham’s faith and obedience, and realize more fully the depths of grace manifested in the offering of Christ.

#5. Isaiah’s transforming Vision (Isa. vi.). **pp. 122 - 124**

The historical setting of this vision is full of teaching. In II Chron. xxvi. 16-21 we get the sad story of King Uzziah—the story of a presumptuous man who dared to unite the offices of King and Priest. The uniting of these two offices will be the culminating sin of the Antichrist (II Thess. ii. 4), for the true Priest-King is the Messiah Himself (Psa. cx. 4). In the same year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah saw his vision of the One Who was rightly Priest and King, the Lord Jesus Himself (John xii. 41).

Verse 2.—The Seraphim are fully conscious of the holiness of Him Who sits on the throne. Their six wings are not used for flying in His service. Only two are needed for this, the remaining four being used to acknowledge the Holiness of the Lord: “With twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet.” Prayer and worship precede true service.

Verse 3.—The message of Heaven is the Holiness of the Lord. To understand this, is to penetrate the mystery of the Great White Throne, the Lake of Fire, the Work of Calvary, and the Nature of Sin.

Verse 5.—As the believer nearer to the Lord, so will he feel more intensely his own depravity and the sin of others. Salvation does not in any way improve or eradicate the old nature.

Verse 6.—Those who speak of the Holiness of God, who use their wings in reverence and worship, are ready to apply the atonement for the cleansing of sin. The live coal speaks of a sacrifice consumed, and because of the sacrifice there is cleansing.

Verse 7.—The believer's sins are still called "iniquity" and "sin". There is no sanctification apart from the altar. The Spirit of God works along the line of Redemption.

Verse 8: "*Also I heard.*"—Unforgiven, unconfessed sin prevents hearing. Isaiah was about to be sent to those who neither saw nor heard (verse 10). He himself, by contrast, had both *seen* (verse 5) and *heard* (verse 8). Note also in this verse the Divine hint of the plurality of the Godhead: "Whom shall *I* send, and who will go for *Us*?"

Verse 9: "*Go, and tell this people.*"—Isaiah had confessed that he was a "man of unclean lips", but the live coal had touched them and they are now to be used in the Lord's service.

Isaiah uses the expression: "Then said I" three times:

- (1) "Then said I, woe is me."
- (2) "Then said I, Here am I: send me."
- (3) "Then said I, Lord, how long?"

We have here (1) a recognition of failure (2) a willingness for service, after cleansing and sanctification, and (3) a tender concern for the blinded, sinful, and doomed people.

In verses 12 and 13 the words: "But ye in it shall be a tenth" should be placed in brackets, the passage reading straight on from "land" to "and it shall return". In these verses we have the majority of Israel perishing, but Jehovah's portion—the tenth—brought safely through, and finally filling the face of the earth.

Dear fellow-believer, the Holiest of All is accessible to all the redeemed, by virtue of the blood of Christ. Draw near with a true heart, seek to keep a clear conscience, definitely confess your sins, and seek to hear the will of the Lord from above the Mercy Seat. If unsaved, have you ever thought of the holiness of God? His eyes cannot look upon sin. His holiness and wrath are alike a devouring fire to all that is sinful. By nature, we are all unclean, but the soul that seeks pardon through the precious blood is washed whiter than snow.

The Powers That Be.

*(Being a series of studies in Roman history,
and Roman laws and customs,
in so far as they throw light upon the N.T. narrative).*

#14. The Charge of *Majestas*. Christ before Pilate. pp. 21 - 25

The animosity of the Jewish rulers against the Lord is manifest quite early in the gospel narrative, but the fact that they were members of a subject nation, with Roman soldiers always on guard, prevented them from accomplishing the Saviour's destruction early in His public ministry. Even when the Sanhedrin had decided that the Lord must be apprehended, they were in some perplexity as to how to accomplish his arrest without causing a tumult or bringing down upon them the Roman soldiery. The way, however, was opened for them by the betrayal of Judas, and through his instrumentality they accomplished their fell designs.

According to Roman law there were three preliminary proceedings before trial was possible, namely arrest, warrant, and commitment. The authority for the Saviour's arrest was the Sanhedrin, the supreme Council of the Jews. The words of Matt. xxvi. 3: "Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill Him" show that a full meeting of the Sanhedrin was behind the order for arrest. Rome recognized this body, which had full powers within its own province. That the Sanhedrin were fully conscious of their rights is evident from the fact that they applied to the Roman Procurator Pontius Pilate for a band of soldiers to assist in the arrest.

"Judas then, having received a band of men (*spiera* here means a cohort of soldiers, as in Matt. xxvii. 27) and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons" (John xviii. 3).

This cohort was under the command of a "captain" (*chiliarchos*), which means that there were more than a hundred men; otherwise they would have been under a centurion. The Sanhedrin were evidently taking no risks. In addition to the Roman soldiers there were also the "officers from the chief priests and scribes", called by John *apparitors*. Luke, with his usual accuracy and Roman view-point, calls these leaders *stratigoi tou hieron*, "officers of the temple" (Luke xxii. 4, 52). They have already appeared in John xvii. 32, 45, and appear again in Acts v. 22-26. This civil guard formed the Temple "police force", but it was inadequate to deal with an uproar of the people. It was the usual custom for a full military force to be available at the Passover, on account of the tumults that often arose with such throngs of fanatical people gathered in one place. The force concerned in this case was indeed a formidable one for the arrest of one unarmed Man, but the officers of the temple had heard Him speak and had seen exhibitions of His

authority and power, and they were not to be fully trusted by the Sanhedrin at this critical hour. There was a momentary exhibition of the Lord's majesty in the garden of Gethsemane, when the guard were sent backward to the ground, but after this evidence that He was a voluntary prisoner—a fact which is important in connection with the doctrinal aspect of the Lord's death, and one which is too often forgotten—He yielded Himself to the custody of the cohort and the officers, who bound Him and led Him away to Annas. This procedure was in accordance with the law. The accused had to be brought at once before a magistrate, and provided with safe lodging until the opportunity for trial presented itself. Meanwhile he had to be examined, and if there were not sufficient grounds for his detention, he was discharged. If, on the other hand, there seemed to be adequate evidence against him, he was committed for trial.

Much of the Jewish side of the Lord's trial was illegal according to their own laws. According to the Mishna, the examination of witnesses by night was illegal, and capital trials could only be conducted during the day. If the accused was acquitted, sentence had to be pronounced on the same day, but if he was condemned, the sentence had to be postponed to a second day. Hence capital trials could not take place on the day before a Sabbath or a Feast Day. The action of the judges in seeking witnesses was also wrong, and no witness for the defence was brought forward, as there should have been. Finally, it was illegal to condemn an accused person upon his own confession.

“A process begun, continued, and apparently finished in the course of one night, commencing with witnesses against the accused who were sought by the judges, but whose evidences was not sustained even by them; continuing by interrogations which Hebrew law does not sanction; and ending with a demand for confession which its doctrines expressly forbid such a process had neither the form nor the fairness of a judicial trial” (A. T. Innes. “The trial of Jesus Christ”).

As Judæa was at this time a Roman Province, the Sanhedrin had lost the right to pass sentence of death. Such a sentence was *ultra vires*—

“It is not lawful for us to put any man to death” (John xviii. 31).

In general, the Roman rulers were wise, and, provided that a people were quiet, and paid tribute, and remained loyal, a large margin of liberty and self-government was allowed. Judæa, however, by reason of the stubborn adherence of the Jews to the worship of God and their opposition to all forms of idolatry, had to be governed with a tight rein, and the Sanhedrin's power was therefore considerably reduced.

Seeing, then, that the council of the Jews were powerless to carry out their wishes, it was necessary that they should obtain the Roman Governor's approval. There were two courses open to him. He could either give his approval without enquiry, which was what the Jews wanted; or he could open the case again, and hold a *re-cognito*. At first Pilate seemed quite willing to endorse without enquiry, saying:

“Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law” (John xviii. 31).

This, however, did not suit the Jews, for they desired His death. The charge, therefore, was changed from that of blasphemy, with which Pilate had nothing to do, to treason, which immediately placed him under an obligation, as the Emperor's representative, to re-open the trial.

Majestas was an offence against the state—corresponding to “high treason” or “Lese-majesty” in English law—and was punishable either by interdiction from fire or water, or by death. Under Tiberius, the Emperor living at the time of the crucifixion, the law had become a means of oppression.

“The most trifling act of disrespect to the Emperor or even to his statue, even the sale of his statue, or melting it down, would bring a man whenever it was so desired, under the penal clauses of these statutes.”*

With this fact in mind, one can well understand that when the Jews cried:

“If thou let this Man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend; everyone that maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cæsar” (John xix. 12).

Pilate would hesitate. At an early hour in the morning, the Chief Priests and the Council clamoured for an audience with the Procurator (John xviii. 28), and the Saviour was again bound and delivered to Pilate.

We now come to the *Arraignment*. Pilate asks the formal question, “*What accusation bring ye against this man?*” (John xviii. 29). The Jews at first evade the question by answering:

“If He were not an *evil doer*, we should not have delivered Him up to thee” (John xviii. 30).

This however, is too vague for a Roman judge to deal with, and like Gallio, Pilate dismisses the case with the words, “Take ye Him and judge Him according to your law”. But this did not suit the Sanhedrin, and a formal charge that would compel Pilate's serious attention is therefore made.

“They began to accuse Him, saying, We found this fellow:

- (1) Perverting the nation:
- (2) Forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar:
- (3) Saying that He Himself is Christ, a King” (Luke xxiii. 2).

[NOTE: * - All quotations in this article and most technical points, unless otherwise indicated, are from the works of Septimus Buss.]

The first charge—that of “perverting the nation”—was too vague. Was it “perversion” from the Jewish point of view, or from the Roman? And if the Roman, what act could be cited that had actually been witnessed? The second charge, if it could have been substantiated, would have been sufficient to have ensured condemnation, but it was wholly false. The Lord had never refused to pay tribute, and had, that very week, told his questioners to “render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s” (Matt. xxii. 21). The third charge, however, was indeed serious, and Pilate instinctively fixes on this as of vital importance.

We now reach the stage called *Interrogatio*, or the Examination of the Accused. Pilate had placed the Accused and the accusers face to face, as the Roman law required, and he now opens the examination by asking a question which is found word for word in each of the four Gospels: “Art Thou the King of the Jews?” To this the Lord answers, “Thou sayest”. On the surface this appears to be a confession, equivalent to our “pleading guilty”. A reference to John’s Gospel, however, reveals that before our Saviour acknowledged the charge, he asked Pilate the question: “Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it of Me?” (John xviii. 34). In other words, the Lord enquires as to the sense in which the word “King” was used. Is this *your own question* as a Roman Procurator, the representative of the Emperor? Or is it a question prompted by Jewish priests? If you are saying it of yourself, and are asking whether I claim to be a king *in the Roman sense*, so as to be guilty of high treason against Cæsar, I answer “No”. If, on the other hand, the Jewish priests have told it thee concerning Me, and you are asking whether I am a king *in the Jewish sense* then I “plead guilty”, for I *am* “King of the Jews” in that sense. I claim to be the Prophet, *ho Erchomenos*, the Son of God, the King of the Jews.

We now reach the Defence, which falls under two heads:

- (1) The Confession.
- (2) The Avoidance.

The Lord *confessed* that He was a king, and to that end He had been born. But His *avoidance* was that His kingdom was not of this world and was not supported by armed men. Upon hearing the Lord’s defence, Pilate returns to the Praetorium and announces his decision:

“I find in Him no fault at all” (John xviii. 38).

So far as Roman law is concerned the Lord is now acquitted; the trial is over, and He is free. What happens subsequently is the result of the play of human passion on human conscience, and because of Pilate’s fears, the Saviour is handed over to death. Pilate seizes upon the word “Galilee” to rid himself of further responsibility and sends the Saviour to Herod. The offer and refusal of Barsabbas, the washing of the hands, the scourging, the cruel mockery of the soldiers, all these things lay outside the law. Pilate’s fear for his own misdeeds and his dread of coming under the suspicion of Tiberius, in combination with the envy and malice of the Jew, were instrumental in nailing the Son of

God to the cross. It is not within our province at the moment to speak of the Cross of Christ in its doctrinal sense, and we must therefore leave this solemn yet wonderful theme at this point.

#15. The Law of Adoption. pp. 62 - 65

The apostle Paul makes several references to “adoption” in his epistles, and it is impossible to understand these fully without some knowledge of the special meaning that attached to this term. To appreciate the full significance of the Apostle’s figures in Gal. iii. and iv. they must be viewed in the light of the law of adoption—and more particularly, the *Greek* law of adoption. At the same time it must be remembered that Paul also uses the term in Romans, so that we must also bear in mind the *Roman* law on the subject.

There is no “law of adoption” in England. Anyone is free to adopt whom he will, but the act is a purely private matter. In Roman law, however, adoption was a very real undertaking.

“The adopted son became a member of the family, just as if he had been born of the blood of the adopter; and he was invested with all the privileges of a *filius familias*. As a matter of fact it was by this means that the succession amongst the Cæsars was continued. It never descended from father to son. What with poison, divorce, luxury and profligacy, the surviving members of a family were few, the descent suffered constant interruption, and whole families disappeared In no case amongst the Cæsars did the throne pass from father to son Augustus was the great nephew of Julius Cæsar, and was adopted from the Octavian into the Julian *gens*. Tiberius was no relation at all to his predecessor: he was merely the son of Augustus’ wife, Livia, by Tiberius Claudius Nero. Here we have the introduction of another family—the Claudii Nero was the great nephew of his predecessor Claudius, who had adopted him in the year A.D. 50” (*Septimus Buss*).

Adoption was of two kinds: adoption proper, and adrogation.

Adoption proper.—It must be remembered that the father in Roman law had absolute control over his family, possessing the same rights over his children as over his slaves. By this *patria potestas* the son was deprived of the right to own property, and the father could inflict any punishment he thought fit, even to the extent of the death penalty. He could also sell his son into bondage. According to the law of the xii. Tables, however, a father forfeited his *potestas* if he sold his son three times. For this reason, in the case of adoption, a legal ceremony took place in which the father went through the process of selling his son three times, and the son passed over completely to the *potestas* of the adopter. In later times the cumbersome ceremony was substituted by a simple declaration before the Prætor or Governor.

Adrogation.—When the person to be adopted was his own master, he was adopted by the form called *adrogation* (from the word for “ask”, since in this case the adopter, the adopted, and the people were “asked”, *rogatur*). The law demanded that the adopter should be at least eighteen years older than the adopted: for says Justinian:

“Adoption imitates nature, and it seems unnatural that a son should be older than his father” (*Justinian*).

“Adoption was called in law a *capitas diminutio*, which so far annihilated the pre-existing personality who underwent it, that during many centuries it operated as an extinction of debts” (*W. E. Ball*).

The effect of adoption was fourfold:

- (i.) A CHANGE OF FAMILY.—The adopted person was transferred from one *gens* to another.
- (ii.) A CHANGE OF NAME.—The adopted person acquired a new name; for he assumed the name of his adopter, and modifies his own by the termination *-ianus*. Thus, when Caius Octavius of the Octavian *gens* was adopted by Julius Cæsar, he became Caius Julius Cæsar Octavianus.
- (iii.) A CHANGE OF HOME, and (iv.) NEW RESPONSIBILITIES AND PRIVILEGES.—While the adopted person suffered many “losses”, these were more than counterbalanced by his “gains”, for he received a new *capacity to inherit*. In the case of the adopter dying intestate, the adopted son acquired the right of succession.

Paul alludes to the *patria potestas*, the absolute power of the father in the family, in Gal. iv., where he speaks of “the child differing nothing from a slave” and goes on to say “Thou art no longer a slave, but a son” (Gal. iv. 7). Paul also alludes to *tutelage* in Gal. iii. and iv., where we have such phrases as “kept in ward”, “tutor to bring us to Christ”, “under guardians and stewards”, and “children held in bondage” (Gal. iii. 23 - iv. 1).

So far as the ceremony was concerned, the difference between the transferring of a son into slavery, and his becoming a member of the family was very slight. In the one case the adopter said: “I claim this man as my slave”; in the other, “I claim this man as my son”. The *form* was almost the same; it was the *spirit* that differed.

If the adopter died and the adopted son claimed the inheritance, the latter had to testify to the fact that he was the adopter heir. Furthermore—

“the law require corroborative evidence. One of the seven witnesses is called. ‘I was present’, he says ‘at the ceremony. It was I who held the scales and struck them with the ingot of brass. It was an adoption. I heard the words of the vindication, and I say this person was claimed by the deceased, not as a slave but as a son’.” (*W. E. Ball*).

Bearing all these facts in mind, can we not feel something of the thrill with which the Roman Christian would read the words of Rom. viii.?

“Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs” (Rom. viii. 15-17).

It is not so much the Holy Spirit addressing Himself here to the human spirit in confirmation, but rather the joint witness of the Holy Spirit and the spirit of the believer to the same blessed fact.

Closely associated with the law of adoption was that of the Roman will. The Prætorian will was put into writing, and fastened with the seals of seven witnesses (cf. Rev. v. and vi.). There is probably a reference to this type of will in Eph. i. 13, 14:

“In Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory” (Eph. i. 13, 14).

W. E. Ball translates the latter part of the passage: “Until the ransoming accomplished by the act of taking possession (of the inheritance).”

“When a slave was appointed heir, although expressly emancipated by the will which gave Him the inheritance, his freedom commenced not upon the making of the will, nor even immediately upon the death of the testator, but from the moment when he took certain legal steps, which were described as ‘entering upon the inheritance’. This is ‘the ransoming accomplished by act of taking possession’. In the last words of the passage—‘to the praise of His glory’, there is an allusion to a well-known Roman custom. The emancipated slaves who attended the funeral of their emancipator were the praise of his glory. Testamentary emancipation was so fashionable a form of posthumous ostentation, the desire to be followed to the grave by a crowd of freedmen wearing the ‘cap of liberty’ was so strong, that very shortly before the time when St. Paul wrote, the legislature had expressly limited the number of slaves that an owner might manumit by will” (*W. E. Ball*).

In all these things there is necessarily more than one aspect to be remembered. The bearing of the O.T. teaching of the Kinsman-Redeemer and of the Hebrew law must never be forgotten, but for the moment we are limiting ourselves to the laws in force during the period covered by the Acts. Many passages like Rom. viii. and Gal. iii. & iv. are given a much fuller meaning when we are able to understand the allusions to customs and procedure that were everywhere in vogue at the time they were written.

**#16. *Custodia Militaris.* Paul's apprehension at Jerusalem.
pp. 105 - 108**

The second half of the Acts devotes a great deal of space to an account of Paul's apprehension and subsequent trials, culminating in his imprisonment for two years at Rome. When the Apostle arrived at Jerusalem with the contribution for the poor saints there, he was obliged to meet the charge made against him, that he taught all the Jews that were among the Gentiles to forsake Moses. In order to refute this charge publicly, he associates himself with some men who had taken upon themselves the Nazarite vow. While thus engaged, he is recognized by some Jews from Asia, who raise the cry that he has defiled the Holy Place by taking Trophimus into the sacred enclosure. The Romans had given power to the Jews to inflict the death penalty for this act of sacrilege, and the marble slab warning any intruder of the consequences of such an act may still be seen in the British Museum. The last word in the Greek—*Thanaton*, "death"—can easily be deciphered.

The following extract from Josephus' "War of the Jews" will show how serious was the Apostle's position.

"Now Titus was deeply affected with this state of things, and reproached John and his party, and said to them, Have not you, vile creatures that you are, by our permission, put up this partition wall before your sanctuary? Have not ye been allowed to put up the pillars thereto belonging, at due distances, and on it engraved in Greek, and in your own letters, this prohibition, that no foreigner should go beyond that wall? Have we not given you leave to kill such as go beyond it, though he was a Roman?" (Josephus B. J. vi. ii. 4).

Riots over this type of difficulty were a constant source of anxiety to the Roman Governor. Under Cumanus, who preceded Felix, there had been a riot which had resulted in the death of a thousand Jews. And so we read in Acts xxi.:

"All the city was moved, and the people ran together. And they took Paul and drew him out of the Temple" (Acts xxi. 30).

The tumult had by this time attracted the attention of the authorities, and the Temple guard immediately closed the great gate that secured the inner shrine from profanation. They then closed the other three gates, or, as Acts xxi. 30 puts it: "And forthwith the doors were shut."

Paul was now outside the sacred enclosure, and the mob was therefore free to shed his blood without further defiling the Temple. From their stations on the roof of the cloisters, however, the Roman guard had seen what was going on, and tidings were conveyed to the Captain "that all Jerusalem was in an uproar". The Captain evidently did not under-estimate the violence of the people, for we read that he "took soldiers and centurions"—which means that several hundred soldiers were employed—and ran down the steps connecting the castle with the court. And "when they saw the Chief Captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul".

Paul is now immediately bound with “two chains”—that is, he is handcuffed to two soldiers, one on either side of him—and the Captain seeks to discover the cause of the tumult, asking him “who he *was*, and what he had *done*”. As the uproar continues, however, the Captain orders him to be removed to the castle. Fearing that they may lose their prey, the mob now rush for the stairs, and their violence is so great that the soldiers are obliged to “carry” the Apostle. Paul is now under arrest *without warrant*.

According to *Septimus Buss* there were three kinds of custody under Roman law.

- (1) *Custodia Publica*, when the prisoner was committed to gaol, as in the case of Paul and Silas at Philippi.
- (2) *Custodia Libera*, when the accused was placed under surveillance either in his own house, or in the house of a magistrate, who became responsible (*sponsor*) for his production in court on the day of trial, and gave a legal promise (*vadimonium*) for that purpose.
- (3) *Custodia Militaris*, when the accused was given in charge to a guard of soldiers.

Lysias, the Captain, is surprised when Paul addresses him in good Greek, for he evidently thought he had captured an Egyptian who had led over 4000 assassins into the wilderness. A second riot threatens to follow the Apostle’s speech from the stairs, and so the prisoner is taken into the castle, and examined.

Lysias now commands that Paul shall be scourged as a means of extracting a confession from him, but while he is being bound and “bent forward” (*proeteinan*), he quietly says to the Centurion:

“Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a *Roman*, and *uncondemned*?” (Acts xxii. 25).

To apply the *flagellum horribile* at the very outset was in itself illegal: and much more so in the case of a Roman citizen. And so we read:

“When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain saying, Take heed what thou doest, for this man is a Roman” (Acts xxii. 26).

Lysias had first of all mistaken Paul for an Egyptian, and now, learning that he claimed to be a Roman citizen, he hurries back to make sure.

“Tell me he said, Art thou a Roman? He said I am. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was born free. And straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him” (Acts xxii. 27-29).

Lysias could not retain the prisoner in custody without some charge being laid against him, and so we read:

“He loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down and set him before them” (Acts xxii. 30).

At this meeting, the difference of opinion between the Sadducees and the Pharisees is so strong, that Paul once again has to be rescued from their violence by the Roman soldiers.

When Lysias hears of the conspiracy against the Apostle's life, he determines to send him "safe to Felix". Accordingly he calls out two hundred soldiers, seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearman, and bids them be ready by nine o'clock at night for the start to Cæsarea. The number of soldiers decided upon to escort one man a distance of sixty miles, is eloquent testimony to the turbulent character of the people.

The letter which Lysias sends to Felix follows the usual form, but skillfully covers up his error. It implies that Paul was rescued from the Jews after Lysias had learned that he was a Roman.

At this point we must stop for the moment. Before we can go further, we must acquaint ourselves with some of the outstanding features of Roman citizenship, and this we shall hope to do in a subsequent article.

The Epistle to the Romans.

#79. Romans xiv. 1 - xv. 7.

The Lordship of Christ, and its bearing on the attitude of the “strong” and the “weak”.

pp. 7 - 13

One of the evils associated with the judging of one another in the matter of “meats” and “days”, is that we are liable to overstep our legitimate bounds and usurp the place of the Lord. The Apostle has twice as much to say about this question of meats and days as he has already written (See Rom. xiv. 2-5 and xiv. 13-22, and the structure of the whole passage in Volume XXIX, page 110), but for the moment the argument is held up, while he forces upon the consciences of both “strong” and “weak”, i.e. of those who are free to eat all things, and those who are so weak that they eat nothing but herbs—the fact of the Lordship of Christ. This section is marked D1 | xiv. 6-12 in the larger structure, and we must now see it in detail in order to appreciate the bearing of its message upon theme of the chapter.

Romans xiv. 6-12.

- D1 | xiv. 6-12. The Lordship of Christ. “It is written.”
 - C1 | c | To the Lord—he regardeth it.
 - d | To the Lord—he regardeth it not.
 - c | To the Lord—he eateth it.
 - d | To the Lord—he eateth it not.
 - D1 | FOR NONE OF US LIVETH OR DIETH TO HIMSELF.
 - C2 | c | To the Lord—we live.
 - d | To the Lord—we die.
 - c | The Lord’s—we are.
 - d | The Lord—both of dead and living.
 - D2 | FOR WE SHALL ALL STAND BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.
 - C3 | c | Saith the Lord, To Me.
 - d | Every knee shall bow.
 - c | To God.
 - d | Every tongue shall confess.
 - D3 | SO THEN EVERY ONE SHALL GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO GOD.

The value of thus seeking the structural analysis of the passage is at once shown by the way in which it forces upon our attention the fact of the *Lordship of Christ*. Now this is a matter of supreme importance. It is a matter of indifference to God as to whether I eat this or that, or as to whether I observe this day or that, or none at all, but it can never be a matter of indifference to Him as to my relationship with His Son as Lord.

It is often the case that a word of doctrinal, dispensational or practical importance, is emphasized by the number or disposition of its occurrences. We are not, therefore, surprised to find that the word *kurieuo*, “to have dominion”, occurs seven times in the N.T. and not only so, but the occurrences fall into the following most obvious arrangement:

***Kurieuo*, “To have dominion”.**

- A | Luke xxii. 25. The kings of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them.
- B | a | Rom. vi. 9. Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more.
Death hath no more dominion over Him.
- b | Rom. vi. 14. Sin shall not have dominion over you. Grace.
- b | Rom. vii. 1. Law has dominion over a man as long as he lives. Law.
- a | Rom. xiv. 9. Christ died and rose that He might have
 dominion over both the dead and the living.
- A | II Cor. i. 24. The apostles of the church do not exercise dominion over the faith.
- B | I Tim. vi. 15. Christ, Lord of those have dominion, Who only hath
immortality (ref. to death and resurrection).

Here is a further example of the perfection of the Word, an exhibition of the superintending inspiration of God, governing the use of the individual words. Should the reader prefer to follow the chronological order of the books, members A and A would go together, and B & B, so reducing the alternation to one set.

It will be seen from the above that the true exercise of dominion is intimately associated with death and life. The kings of the earth exercise dominion, but it is not true dominion for it is not wielded in virtue of a risen life. The Apostle himself would not exercise dominion over the faith of others, for, as he had already written to the Corinthians:

“Was Paul crucified for you? Or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?” (I Cor. i. 13).

No, instead of claiming the exercise of “lordship”, the Apostle could write:

“We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus *the LORD*, and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (II Cor. iv. 5).

This he follows by a reference to the “judgment seat” similar to that found in Rom. xiv.:

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (II Cor. v. 10).

The “judgment seat”, in principle at least, is not absent even in the Prison Epistles, for we read:

“Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons” (Col. iii. 23-25).

“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the LORD, the righteous JUDGE, shall give me in that day” (II Tim. iv. 7, 8).

Here the Apostle does not hesitate to bring in the title of “Judge”, and yet we know full well that he rejoiced in the wonderful teaching of Rom. viii. 1. This naturally brings us to the enquiry, What is the nature of this “judgment seat”? The word so translated is *bema*, which has twelve occurrences in the N.T., of which nine refer to the “judgment seat” in connection with Pilate, Herod, Gallio, Festus and Cæsar.

There is one occurrence of *bema*, in Acts vii., which needs perhaps a word of explanation.

“And He gave none inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on” (Acts vii. 5).

The words “set on” are the translation of *bema* here, the word being taken by Stephen from Deut. ii. 5, where it occurs in the LXX. The reader who is not acquainted with the growth of language may fail to see how such a word can be so translated. An illustration from our own language may help. We all know that a “cathedral” is the principal church in a diocese, but we may not all know that *cathedra* means “a chair”. A cathedral is so called because the Bishop’s “throne” or “chair” is there, and when he speaks “ex cathedra”, he is speaking not as an individual expressing his private opinions, but as the Bishop. Here, then, is a word that in some contexts could mean simply a chair, but which in course of time has come to indicate a cathedral church. So *bema*, a word derived from *baino*, “to tread”, became in course of time limited to one particular standing place, and the only other occurrence of the word in the O.T. uses it in this sense:

“And Ezra the scribe stood upon a wooden stage” (Neh. viii. 4).

Here it is equivalent to our “pulpit”, while by the time the word is used in the N.T. it has become a “judgment seat”.

It should be noted that the word *bema* was used with a certain amount of latitude. It could mean the judgment seat of Pilate or Cæsar, or alternatively, the raised stand erected for the purpose of adjudicating at the Greek sports. The latter meaning occurs in Acts xii. 21:

“And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.”

We learn from Josephus and others that Herod attended some sports that were in progress at Cæsarea. He was not trying a case, but, as we read, “he made an oration to the people”.

In the two occurrences of *bema* that refer to the Lord, the word is used in this latter sense. There is “no condemnation” for the believer. His trial has already been made, sentence has been pronounced, and, in the person of Another, endured.

In II Cor. v. 10 we have “the judgment seat of *Christ*”, while in Rom. xiv. 10 the R.V. reads “the judgment seat of *God*”, and this reading has the support of the critical texts. There is, of course, no discrepancy here. The very fact that in one passage the reference is to “Christ” and in the other to “God” only emphasizes the Deity of Christ, for we read:

“The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (John v. 22).

It is the Son Who shall sit upon the throne of His glory to judge the nations of the earth (Matt. xxv. 31, 32). It is the Son Who shall come in the glory of the Father with His angels, to reward every man according to his works (Matt. xvi. 27). And it is the Son Who shall sit on the throne of His glory, in the regeneration (Matt. xix. 28).

With regard to the question of judging, the Apostle in I Corinthians refuses either to allow others to judge his motives or to attempt to justify himself:

“Yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified, but He that judgeth me is the Lord. Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, Who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God” (I Cor. iv. 3-5).

The Apostle is referring here to that test of true service that he had enlarged upon in I Cor. iii. 11-15, where he distinguishes between the foundation and the super-structure. A believer whose life’s work is burnt up shall nevertheless “himself be saved”, even though he “suffer loss” (I Cor. iii. 15).

Coming now to Rom. xiv., we observe that the reference to the judgment seat is associated with a quotation from the O.T.:

“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue confess to God” (Rom. xiv. 11).

This is a quotation from Isa. xlv., and if we turn to the passage we shall observe in the context the following important fact. The One Who thus speaks, declares in verses 21 and 22:

“I am God, and there is none else” (Isa. xlv. 21).
“A just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me” (Isa. xlv. 22).

It is this God, beside Whom there is “none else”, Who has sworn that unto Himself every knee shall bow. The Apostle not only knew the passage from Isa. xlv. which he actually quotes, but he also knew its context. In face of this, he uses the names “Christ” (II Cor. v. 10) and “God” (Rom. xiv. 11), which would be inexplicable unless he believed in the Deity of Christ. If the Lord Jesus Christ be “God manifest in the flesh”, then either title is His. The first (Christ) refers to Him as the Man Who was the anointed Prophet,

Priest and King, while the second speaks of His essential nature, for He was more than man. He came in the flesh, but He left the glory to do so.

We remember, moreover, that the Apostle quotes Isa. xlv. 23 in Philippians:

“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him the Name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 6-11).

It is not without significance that Philippians speaks of “the prize”, while II Timothy (which refers to “the righteous Judge”) speaks of “the crown”.

Returning to Rom. xiv., we read:

“For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living” (Rom. xiv. 9 R.V.).

The Revised Text omits the words “and rose”, but resurrection is necessarily implied in the words “died and lived again”, and in that capacity He is Lord of those who are dead and who are living. He Who is Lord of life and death is the only One Who has the right to judge the motives of those for whom He died, and who by grace are reckoned to have died and risen again with Him.

It is to the Lordship of the risen Christ that the Apostle seeks to point the leaders of faction, the men of party spirit, the judges, and those who tend to despise the brethren. While the believer to-day may not be in danger of judging or despising so far as “meats” are concerned, there are many who adopt the attitude here condemned regarding the observance of the so-called “Lord’s Day”. Those of us who are free from the tradition concerning the observance of either the Sabbath or the First Day of the Week, should remember that we are called upon to respect the consciences of those who, though “weak”, “regard the day unto the Lord”. It is not the first part of this sentence that matters, it is the second part: “Unto the Lord.” This we shall find the Apostle turns into a spiritual principle in the next section (Rom. xiv. 13-22, particularly verse 14).

However, we must let the Apostle speak for himself, and not introduce any doctrine into the present section other than that which inspiration has indicted, namely, the Lordship of Christ.

We should receive one another as Christ received us. We should act towards one another in view of the fact that Christ is our Lord, ours and theirs, both dead and living. And we must remember that, while every phase of the purpose of the ages necessitates the death and resurrection of Christ, the Apostle draws particular attention here to the fact

that it was “*to this end* Christ both died and lived again, that He might be the LORD both of the dead and living”.

#80. Romans xiv. 1 - xv. 7.
Principles that should guide us in cases of conscience.
pp. 54 - 59

Having emphasized the Lordship of Christ with respect to *all* believers, whether they be strong or weak, the Apostle passes on to the conclusion of the matter (Rom. xiv. 13 - xv. 7). He counsels the believer to “judge” himself rather than others, so that no stumbling-block should be put in the way of his brethren. In other words he is to “walk according to love”, or as the A.V. puts it, “walk charitably” (Rom. xiv. 15). The tendency to censoriousness and self-pleasing in these things is destructive:

“Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died” (Rom. xiv. 15).

We should ever follow after those things that make for peace and which build up, and not attempt to hold to our “rights” and “liberties” if by so doing we exalt them above Christian love. For while the believer may be “free” to eat this or drink that, it is “good” to refrain and to limit one’s liberty rather than be the occasion of stumbling to a weaker brother.

Such, however, is not a complete statement of the Apostle’s exhortation. He introduces in verses 14, 16, 20, 22 and 23 the principle that, when once grasped, will be an all-sufficient guide for us in any similar case of conscience.

To perceive these verses in their true relationship we must have recourse to the structure of the section.

Romans xiv. 13-22.

- C2 | xiv. 13-22. MEATS, ETC., AND THE ESTIMATE OF FAITH.
- a4 | a | Judge no more.
 - b | Judge this rather.
 - a | No stumbling-block.
 - b | Nor occasion to fall.
 - b4 | NOTHING UNCLEAN OF ITSELF.
BUT TO HIM THAT ESTEEMETH IT.
 - a5 | a | Brother grieved with thy meat.
 - b | Walk not in love.
 - a | Destroy not with thy meat.
 - b | One for whom Christ died.
 - b5 | LET NOT YOUR GOOD BE EVIL SPOKEN OF.
 - a6 | a | Kingdom of God.
 - b | Not meat and drink.
 - b | But righteousness, joy, peace in the holy spirit.
 - a | Acceptable approved.
 - b6 | LET US FOLLOW PEACE AND EDIFYING.
 - a7 | a | For meat destroy not.
 - b | Work of God.
 - b7 | ALL THINGS PURE. EVIL TO HIM THAT OFFENDS.
 - a8 | a | Good, neither to eat flesh or anything.
 - b | To cause stumbling, offence, or make weak.
 - b8 | HAVE FAITH THYSELF BEFORE GOD.
HAPPY IS HE THAT CONDEMNETH NOT HIMSELF
THAT WHICH HE ALLOWETH

The Apostle's principles here are so important, and so often lost sight of, that at the risk of seeming repetition we propose to take the sections labeled b4 to b8 and put them together by themselves:

The Principles of Romans xiv. 13-22.

- A | b4. Nothing is unclean of itself. It becomes unclean to the one that so esteems it.
- B | b5. Let not your good be evil spoken of.
- B | b6. Let us follow after the things that make for peace, and which edify.
- A | b7. All things are pure, but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.
- B | b8. Happy is he who condemns not himself in those things which he allows.

The first of these references is introduced by the words:

"I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus."

There must be some good reason for introducing the name of the Lord here. It cannot simply mean that Paul was speaking by inspiration for that would be equally true of any verse in the epistle. The reader may remember that in Acts xx. the Apostle uses the same title:

“Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts xx. 35).

This statement in the Acts appears to refer to one of the unrecorded utterances of the Lord, of which Luke would necessarily know many (Luke i. 1-3). In Rom. xiv. 14, however, the Apostle may well refer to Mark vii. 18, 19:

“Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him, because it entereth not into his heart (this He said) making ALL MEATS CLEAN” (Mark vii. 18, 19, R.V.).

Nothing is unclean “of itself”. The distinction made in Leviticus between “clean” and “unclean” meats was mainly ceremonial—although it was no doubt true also in a material sense that in giving Israel the ruminating animals such as the ox and the sheep, the Lord was providing them with the best kind of food.

Parallel with this assertion, but approaching the truth from another angle, is the statement in Titus:

“Unto the pure, all things are pure” (Titus i. 15).

We hope that it is unnecessary to prove that the words “all things” here must be governed by the scope of the passage in which they are found. That which is inherently unclean is no more pure under grace than it was under law. The context speaks of “vain talkers and deceivers, specially of the circumcision” and “Jewish fables and commandments of men” (Titus i. 10, 14).

This first principle of Rom. xiv. 14 is well illustrated in the first epistle to the Corinthians, where the Apostle had to meet problems similar to those discussed in Rom. xiv.

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. Meats for the belly and the belly for meats; but God shall destroy both it and them” (I Cor. vi. 12, 13).

It will be seen that there are two reason put forward here, why free moral creatures, washed, sanctified and justified (I Cor. vi. 11) should not use their liberty to the full.

The first reason is that it may not be “expedient” to do so. The word “expedient” is *sumphero* in the original, and is literally translated in Acts xix. 19, “to bring together”. It is in some ways an unfortunate word to introduce into Scripture, for its primitive meaning has been overshadowed by a more modern and less pleasant one. “Expediency” has come to mean a consideration of what is “politic”, as distinct from what is “just”:

“Matters of mere expediency, that affect neither honour, morality, nor religion” (Chatham).

“Following his duty, instead of consulting expediency” (Jane Austen).

“Too fond of the right to pursue the expedient” (Goldsmith).

It need hardly be said that this is not at all the Apostle's meaning. On the contrary, we must repudiate the least approach to subtlety in dealing with Christian things, and must seek to be open, and transparent in all our dealings. Why not then retain the literal rendering of *sumphero* and read, "All things do not bring together"? This is in harmony with Rom. xiv., where the believer is exhorted to seek to "edify", instead of "destroying".

Chapter viii. of this same epistle to the Corinthians might be taken as a running commentary on the principles of Rom. xiv. As a variant to the A.V., we give Weymouth's translation:

"As to eating things which have been sacrificed to idols, we are fully aware that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no God but One. For if so-called gods do exist, either in heaven or on earth—and in fact there are many such gods and many such lords—yet *we* have but one God, the Father, Who is the source of all things and for Whose service we exist, and but one Jesus Christ, through Whom we and all things exist. But all believers do not recognize these facts. Some, from force of habit in relation to the idol, even now eat idol sacrifices as such, and their consciences, being but weak, are polluted. It is true that a particular kind of food will not bring us into God's presence; we are neither inferior to others if we abstain from it, nor superior to them if we eat it. But take care lest this liberty of yours should prove a hindrance to the progress of weak believers. For if any one were to see you, who know the real truth of this matter, reclining at table in an idol's temple, would not his conscience (supposing him to be a weak believer) be emboldened to eat the food which has been sacrificed to the idol? Why, your knowledge becomes the ruin of the weak believer—your brother for whom Christ died. Moreover when you thus sin against the brethren and wound their weak consciences, you are, in reality, sinning against Christ. Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall, never again to the end of my days will I touch any kind of animal food, for fear I should cause my brother to fall" (Rom. viii. *Weymouth*).

The Apostle also puts forward a second reason why the believer may be called upon to limit his freedom. This second reason is expressed in the words: "I will not be brought under the power of any." The word translated "bring under the power of" is *exousiazō*, while the word "awful" is *exestin*. The latter gives us *exousia*, "authority" (as for example, Matt. viii. 9). *Exousiazō* is also found in Luke xxii. 25, where it is translated "exercise authority". By using these words together, the Apostle seems to emphasize the foolishness of boasting of one's authority over a thing, when the thing really exercises authority over oneself. Have we not sometimes heard the remark, "This is a bad habit; it is too strong for me"? Those who have to make such a confession have passed the boundary line beyond which an innocuous thing becomes harmful.

The Apostle returns to this argument again in I Cor. x. 23-33, and points out that the conscience is a far more important matter than the exercise of mere privilege. The statement: "Let no man seek *his own*" anticipates Rom. xv. 1, while the words, "If I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of, for that for which I gave thanks?" anticipate Rom. xiv. 16.

While a thing may be "lawful" and "clean" in itself, there are two conditions that will render it "unclean" or "unlawful":

- (1) If the person thus exercising his liberty “esteems such an act or thing unclean.”
- (2) If the act causes offence. The “good”, if “evil spoken of”, or if it “causes offence” (Rom. xiv. 16, 20), becomes “inexpedient” or “destructive”.

Here we have the attitude of the believer himself, and also the effect of his action upon others, and it is important to notice that both these things can have evil consequences.

The last statement of principle in this section is that of Rom. xiv. 22, which runs on into the separate member *B2* | xiv. 23 (which is in correspondence with *B1* | xiv. 1; see the structure Volume XXIX, page 110).

“As for you and your faith, keep your faith to yourself in the presence of God. The man is to be congratulated who does not pronounce judgment on himself in what his actions sanction. But he who has misgivings and yet eats meat is condemned already, because his conduct is not based on faith; for all conduct not based on faith is sinful” (Rom. xiv. 22, 23. *Weymouth*).

We must beware of falling into the error of applying this last statement, “Whatsoever is not of faith is sin”, to matters that are not in the context. Some readers may be acquainted with Augustine’s “*Omnis Infidelium vita, atum est*”, but this certainly takes the Apostle’s words beyond their legitimate inference. The whole life of “infidels” is nowhere in view in Rom. xiv., while a study of Rom. ii. will reveal that God has His own gracious way of dealing with the “infidel” who has heard neither “law” nor “gospel”. In Rom. xiv. 23, “faith” means “the moral conviction of the rectitude of a mode of action” (Chrys., De Wette, Meyer, etc.).

The Apostle now proceeds once more to bring to bear upon the conscience the relationship of all this to Christ. He has already done this, when he suspended his argument to speak of the Lordship of Christ (*D1* | xiv. 6-12), and he now confirms his argument by referring to the Lord’s humility (*D2* | xv. 1-5).

Romans xv. 1-5.

D2 | xv. 1-5. THE HUMILITY OF CHRIST. IT IS WRITTEN.

c4 | *c* | The strong should bear infirmities of the weak.

d | Not please self.

c | Please neighbour for good and edifying.

d | Christ pleased not Himself.

d4 | REPROACHES FELL ON ME.

c5 | *c* | Things written before for our learning.

d | Patience, Comfort, Hope, Scriptures and God.

The believer has before him the example of Christ, the teaching of the Scriptures, and the revealed character of God to encourage him in the exercise of the Christian spirit inculcated in Rom. xiv. The “strong” of Rom. xiv. 2 are exhorted to bear the infirmities of the “weak”, and in denying what would otherwise be legitimate liberties, they will really be exercising the Christian privilege of “not pleasing ourselves”. There may be many objections put forward to this “invasion of sacred rights of the individual”,

but every murmur must be silenced in the presence of Him Who “pleased not Himself”, even though the Lord from heaven. This is what Philippians describes as the “mind that was in Christ Jesus” (Phil. ii. 4-11).

“In service which Thy love appoints,
There are no bonds for me;
For my secret heart is taught the truth
Which makes Thy children free;
And a life of self-renouncing love
Is a life of liberty.”

#81. Romans xv. 8 - xvi. 23.
Jesus Christ, the Minister of the Circumcision (xv. 8, 9).
pp. 79 - 86

Having dealt with the problem of the reception of believers, irrespective of their “strength” or “weakness”, the Apostle now proceeds to another question that still agitated the Church, namely, the position of the Gentile believer. For us to-day this question does not arise. In the light of the Mystery, with its glorious equality, and the complete obliteration of the distinction between Jew and Gentile, the whole problem disappears, and even for those who have no direct knowledge of this truth, the light of it has penetrated sufficiently on this question, even among the differing sects. Indeed, to-day we should find things reversed in some denominations and have to ask: “Is He the God of the *Gentiles* only?” for there are some whose interpretation of Scripture seems to leave no room for the Jew at all.

The epistle to the Romans is the most fundamental of all Paul’s writings, and its doctrines remain true even when the dispensation changes. And yet, with all its leveling doctrine of “no difference” where sin and salvation are concerned (Rom. iii. 22; x. 12), it is surprising what pre-eminence is still given to the people of Israel. We give below some of the passages in which this pre-eminence is stressed.

The Pre-eminence of the Jew in Romans.

- (1) The gospel was promised before, in the writings of Israel’s prophets (Rom. i. 2).
- (2) The Lord Jesus Christ was, according to the flesh, made of the seed of David (Rom. i. 3).
- (3) The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first (Rom. i. 16).
- (4) The recognition of patient continuance in well doing is for all men, but nevertheless, to the Jew first (Rom. ii. 10).
- (5) The Jew boasted that he rested in the law, made his boast in God, knew God’s will, approved the things “that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law”, was confident that he was a guide to the blind, and a light to those in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having a form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. Here we have ten points of superiority over the Gentile (Rom. ii. 17-20).
- (6) There was much advantage and profit in being a Jew, chiefly, because unto them had been committed the oracles of God (Rom. iii. 1, 2).

- (7) There was no doubt that God was God of the Jews (Rom. iii. 29).
- (8) To the Israelites pertained the adoption, glory, covenants, giving of the law, service of God, promises, fathers, and, as concerning the flesh, Christ, Who is over all, God blessed for ever” (Rom. ix. 4, 5).
- (9) “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated” (Rom. ix. 13).
- (10) Israel is likened to the olive; the believing Gentile to a wild olive (Rom. xi. 17-24).
- (11) All Israel shall be saved, for though, as concerning the gospel, they are enemies, yet, touching the election they are beloved for the fathers’ sakes (Rom. xi. 26-28).

These eleven passages, all from one epistle, and containing, as they do, over twenty-five points of distinction, provide overwhelming evidence as to the place occupied by Israel during the period covered by the Acts.

All this, of course, the Apostle has in mind as he approaches this next section of the epistle. He grants that the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus was exclusively to Israel, but argues that the Gentile was always in view, because of Israel’s peculiar calling. He then turns to his own special calling as a minister of Jesus Christ among the Gentiles, and proceeds to plead for the recognition of these Gentiles by the Jewish section of the Church. The extraordinary fact emerges, that those whose offering up was acceptable to God (Rom. xv. 16), were not acceptable to man (Rom. xv. 30, 31). Such is religious human nature!

This note of “acceptance” punctuates the structure of the whole section, and as it is important that this should be seen, we set out the complete structure below.

xv. 8 - xvi. 23.

A1 | xv. 8-15. THE MINISTRY OF CIRCUMCISION
DOES NOT EXCLUDE GENTILES.

- a1 | 8-9. *Acceptance.* |
 - a | *Diakonos.* Jesus Christ a minister of the circumcision.
 - b | For the truth of God.
 - c | To confirm promises made unto the fathers.
 - d | *And that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.*
- b1 | 9-12. As it is written. *Scripture speaks of fellowship.* |
 - Confess among Gentiles.
 - Rejoice with His people, ye Gentiles.
 - Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles.
 - To reign over the Gentiles.
 - In Him shall the Gentiles hope.
- c1 | 13. NOW THE GOD OF HOPE.—*No division here.*
- d1 | 13-15. Evidences of Gentile blessing. |
 - Fill you with all joy and peace.
 - Full of goodness.
 - Filled with knowledge.

A2 | xv. 16-33. THE MINISTRY OF PAUL.
GENTILES ACCEPTABLE TO GOD.

- a2 | 16-18. *Acceptance.* |
 - a | Paul a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

- b | For the gospel of God.
- c | The offering of the Gentiles.
- d | *Might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit.*
- d2 | 17-20. Evidences of Paul's preaching. |
Fully preached.
Jerusalem and Illyricum.

- b2 | 21. As it is written. *Scripture speaks of Gentile inclusion.* |
To whom not spoken. \
- They shall see. \ Gentiles.
- Those who had not heard. /
- They shall hear. /

- d3 | 22-29. Paul's further plans. |
Fulness of the blessing of the Gospel.
Rome and Spain.

A PARTY SPIRIT RENDERED THEM UNACCEPTABLE TO MAN.

- a3 | 30-32. *Acceptance.* |
c | Strive together with me in prayer.
- b | That I may be delivered.
- a | *Diaknia.* Ministry for Jerusalem.
d | *May be accepted of the saints.*
- c2 | 33. NOW THE GOD OF PEACE.—*No division here.*

A3 | xvi. 1-23. THE MINISTRY OF MANY.
CIRCUMCISION AND UNCIRCUMCISION.
SATAN AND SELF.

- a4 | 1-16. *Acceptance.* |
a | *Diakonos.* Phoebe a minister of Cenchrea.
- b | Priscilla and Aquila. All churches of Gentiles give thanks.
- c | Salutation to and from Circumcision and Uncircumcision.
- d | Holy kiss. Churches of Christ.
- b3 | 17-19. Teaching ye learned. |
Divisions and offences. Mark them.
Self services. Avoid them.
Your obedience is come abroad.
- c3 | 20. NOW THE GOD OF PEACE.—*No division here.*
- d4 | 20. Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.
- a5 | 21-23. *Acceptance.* |
Salutations from different ones of the Circumcision and Uncircumcision.
The whole Church.

Let us now go into this structure a little more fully. We observe first of all that it divides into three large sections A1, A2, A3. In each of these the theme is ministry.

- (1) The ministry of the circumcision must not be so construed as to ignore the Gentile, for (a) the call of Abraham had in view the blessing of the Gentile through Israel, and (b) the O.T. Scriptures are by no means silent on this point (Rom. xv. 8-15).
- (2) The ministry of the apostle Paul was a ministry of Jesus Christ, even though Christ Himself was no longer on earth; and further, it was of such a character as to render the offering up of the Gentiles acceptable, for they were sanctified by the Holy Ghost (Rom. xv. 16-33).

- (3) The ministry of many belonging both to the circumcision and to the uncircumcision, and their mutual service and salutation are further evidence of the acceptance of the Gentile (Rom. xv. 1-23).

In the process of this argument, God is given the titles of “The God of Hope” and “the God of Peace”, both of which make for unity.

In those sections which refer to the Gentile, the Apostle uses the words “fill”, “full”, and “fulness” several times (d1 | 13-15, d2 | 17-20, d3 | 22-29).

The word “acceptance”, or its equivalent teaching, occurs five times, as follows:

- a1 | xv. 8-9. The Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy.
- a2 | xv. 16-18. The offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable.
- a3 | xv. 30-32. That the Gentile service Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints.
- a4 | xvi. 1-16. Salutation. The holy kiss. Circumcision and uncircumcision.
- a5 | xvi. 21-23. The whole church. Circumcision and uncircumcision.

With this analysis before us, let us now return to the opening argument, beginning at verses 8 and 9:

“Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: and that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy” (Rom. xv. 8, 9).

It is quite characteristic of the Apostle to use the phrase “I say”, when he wishes to emphasize a particular point. Here in Romans we find this expression six times, while the phrase “I speak after the manner of men” or “I speak as a man” occurs twice. Three times the expression introduces the pre-eminence of the Jew (ix. 1, xi. 1, xv. 8), and twice it is used to stress the place of the Gentile (xi. 11, xi. 13). The Received Text in Rom. xv. 8 reads *lego de*, “But I say”. The Revised Text, however, gives *lego gar*, “For I say”—which links up the passage with the argument concerning the reception of the believer in Christ.

The Apostle’s statement here is twofold:

- (1) The ministry of Jesus Christ was to the Circumcision.
- (2) It also has the Gentile in mind.

In Israel’s case, it is the truth of God and the promises made to the fathers that are in view, while in the case of the Gentiles, it is simply His mercy that is mentioned.

The recognition of what is implied in Rom. xv. 8 is fundamental to dispensational truth, for it reveals the true dispensational character of the earthly ministry of Christ, and the true dispensational place of the Gospels. This is contrary to orthodox tradition, but is in entire harmony with revealed truth. As an example of this confirming evidence, let us consider Matthew’s testimony to the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ came (*a*) for the

truth of God, (b) to confirm the promises made to the fathers, and (c) that His ministry was limited to the circumcision.

The gospel starts with the genealogy of the Lord, and establishes that He was the true Seed of Abraham and David, both of whom were “fathers” of Israel. The title “patriarch” is used of both Abraham and David (Heb. vii. 4, Acts ii. 29), and Mary, in her song in Luke i., speaks of the Lord remembering His mercy to Israel—“as He spake to our *fathers*, to Abraham and his seed for ever” (Luke i. 55). The angel Gabriel also, when announcing the birth of Christ, says:

“He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. And He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His Kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke i. 32, 33).

The reader should observe that in all this there is not the slightest reference to the calling out of a “church”; it is simply a question of the confirmation of the “promises made unto the fathers”.

Returning to Matt. i. we learn that the birth of Christ fulfilled the promise made in Isa. vii. 14, just as Luke i. 32, 33 fulfils the promise made in Isa. ix. 6, 7. When the wise men came to Jerusalem seeking the infant Christ, they did not ask where the “Head of the Church” should be born, but “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” (Matt. ii. 2).

Moreover, when the Scribes referred to the prophet Micah, they quoted the promise not only that Christ should be born in Bethlehem, but that He should rule the people of Israel (Matt. ii. 6). So closely was Christ identified with Israel, that the passage in Hosea: “When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt” (Hos. xi. 1) is said to have been fulfilled when the Lord was taken by His parents down to Egypt after the massacre of the infants by Herod. Moreover John the Baptist, the forerunner, comes in fulfillment of the promise made in Isa. xl., which is part of that section of the book that has to do with the restoration of Israel. Furthermore, the prayer which the Lord taught the disciples was a prayer *concerning the Kingdom*, and forgiveness of trespasses was “as we forgive” others (Matt. vi. 12, 14). We may also note that Matt. viii. declares that the miracles that the Lord worked were in fulfillment of the promise made in Isa. liii., where we read: “Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (Matt. viii. 17).

In Matt. x. we have the calling of “the twelve” and their commission:

“Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. x. 5, 6).

Such a statement, coming as it does in chapter x., must surely make it clear that the Sermon on the Mount, that occupies chapters v.-vii., is “kingdom truth” and not “church truth”.

This limitation of the Saviour's earthly ministry is evident once more in Matt. xv., where He says to the woman of Canaan: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. xv. 24).

If the presence of the statement in chapter x. quoted above precludes the idea of the church in chapters v.-vii., it is equally clear that the similar statement in chapter xv. must also exclude the church from the parables of Matt. xiii., and a study of their teaching abundantly confirms this. The parable of the unforgiving servant, for example, while in line with "the Lord's prayer" (Matt. vi. 12, 14), is entirely different from the teaching concerning the forgiveness of sins to be found in Paul's epistles to the church. The Lord's advice to the one who enquired what good thing he should do that he might have eternal life, is perfectly in harmony with the dispensation of the law and the kingdom, but it is not in harmony with the dispensation of grace. Evangelically-minded believers who insist that Matthew's gospel is for the church, would hesitate to take these words of inspired truth as their gospel for to-day, and their hesitation only confirms the truth for which the Apostle contends in Rom. xv. 8.

The expression "the truth of God"—in Rom. xv. 8—also occurs in Rom. iii. 7 and is balanced, in that chapter, by "the faith of God" (Rom. iii. 3). Both expressions refer to the faithfulness of God in keeping His covenant promises. The earthly ministry of Christ was "on account of" (*huper*) the faithfulness of God, and was moreover a "confirmation" of promises. Such a confirmation of promises already made is obviously very different from the introduction of something new, as in the constitution of the church.

The promises made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, and David, find their confirmation in Christ. For this He was born, and for this He died. Not until Israel had rejected Him was it made known that His cross was the instrument of a greater salvation than that entertained by the prophets or included in the promises. Israel, and Israel alone, were the "children of the prophets, and of the covenant made with the fathers" (Acts iii. 25), and it was to Israel that the Lord was "first" sent (Acts iii. 26).

The second part of Paul's statement in Rom. xv. 8, 9 is "that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy". Here instead of "truth", "confirmation", "promises", "fathers", stands the simply word "mercy". The Gentiles had no "fathers", no "covenants" and no "promises"; all these belonged exclusively to Israel (Rom. ix. 4, 5).

The same word *huper* is used here in connection with the "mercy of God", as is used in the previous verse in connection with the "truth of God".

The truth of the inclusion of the Gentiles in the mercy of God is confirmed by repeated quotations from the O.T. Scriptures. It should be noted that no quotations are considered necessary to "prove" that the Jews was "first". To-day, however, the reverse would be true. Quotation after quotation is necessary to reinstate the Jew in his true place in the early part of the N.T., and we find that many who are not only believers, but students as well, seem able to interpret the Acts as though chapter xxviii. 20 were

non-existent. It is not for us to judge these things; we can only seek to remain faithful to what God has revealed.

The passages cited by the Apostle in Rom. xv. 9-12 are too important in their dispensational bearing to be relegated to the close of an article, and we must therefore leave them for our next study.

#82. Romans xv. 8 - xvi. 23.
The Hope of the Church during the Acts--Millennial (xv. 10-15).
pp. 111 - 116

We concluded our last article with the assertion that not only did the Saviour come as a minister of the circumcision “to confirm the promises made unto the fathers”, but that He also included the Gentiles in His work of mercy even though the manifestation of that mercy was deferred until Israel had been found wanting. The Apostle finds it necessary to supplement this statement with regard to the Gentiles by three quotations from the O.T.—one from the Law, one from the Prophets, and one from the Psalms.

The first passage quoted is Psalm xviii. 49, The quotation in Rom. xv. 9 agrees word for word with the LXX, but it omits the word *Kurie*, “Lord”, which is the equivalent of the Hebrew “Jehovah”. It may be that the Apostle omitted the sacred name out of deference to the extreme regard that the orthodox Jew had for the *tetragrammaton* (the “word of four letters”, as it was often called). In any case, the Apostle’s purpose is adequately served by the quotation, whatever may be the reason for the omission of the Divine title.

The second reference is to Deut. xxxii. 43. The citation agrees word for word with the LXX, but does not agree strictly with the Hebrew as we have it to-day. Alford says that in several passages where the Gentiles are spoken of prophetically, the Hebrew text has apparently been tampered with by the Jews, and refers the reader to Kitto’s Journal of Sacred Literature for January 1852. There is no word for “with” in the Hebrew of Deut. xxxii. 43, and the margin recognizes this by putting as an alternative “*Praise His people, ye nations*”. Turpie, whose excellent work on quotations from the O.T. in the New, has been referred to before in these pages, gives very sound reasons for believing that the text is untouched, and that the word “with”, though not expressed, is implied. The words “His people” cannot be in apposition with the “nations” for the former title undoubtedly designated the Hebrews, while the latter referred to the nations in general. A copula is obviously not intended, since this would give precedence to the Gentile: “O His nations and people.” If, on the other hand, the copula were translated by “even” it would merely be expletive: “O ye Gentiles—even (i.e. possible equivalent to) His people”—which would certainly not be a possible rendering. If the preposition *eth* had been used here, it might have caused some ambiguity, as it not only represents the preposition “with” but is also a sign of the accusative—which would give us the

rendering found in the margin. The passage is dramatic, and in tense moments words are often omitted. “O nations, rejoice ye” (and then, as it were, His people are pointed to) “see His people”.

The third quotation is from Psalm cxvii. 1 and in this case there is very little difference between the LXX, the Hebrew original, and the Apostle’s own words. Psalm cxvii. has the distinction of being the shortest of all the psalms, and was possibly used as a doxology for other psalms.

The Apostle does not intend to make a close scrutiny of these passages. The bare fact that the O.T. writers included the Gentiles at all is sufficient for his purpose, even though the primary meanings of the passages cited may not always fully coincide with the Apostle’s application. This is entirely in harmony with the usual Rabbinical method of argument. A good example of this is found in Rom. x. 5-10, where the appeal to Deut. xxx. 9, 12, 13 and 14 sounds almost fantastic to Gentile ears.

The Apostle’s fourth quotation, however, is treated more fully and is commended upon a passage that has a most important bearing:

“And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and He that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles: in Him shall the Gentiles trust” (Rom. xv. 12).

The Apostle again quotes here from the LXX, which differs somewhat from the Hebrew, which is as follows:

“And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek” (Isa. xi. 10).

While there are considerable verbal differences in the two renderings, the sense is much the same, the differences resulting largely from the turning of the figurative into the literal. The Hebrew word for “ensign”, *nes*, occurs in the title *Jehovah-Nissi*—“The Lord, my Banner” (Exod. xvii. 15), and is also translated “pole”, “sign”, “banner”, “ensign”, and “standard”. The fact that the “Root of Jesse” was to stand up as an “ensign”, signified that He was to be the Leader, Whose tent would be the rallying-point for the people. Hence He could be called: “The One Who stands up to rule the peoples.” The changing of the word “seek” to “trust” is again but another way of looking at the same idea. However difficult it may appear to us now to justify this translation, it apparently held no difficulties for the Apostle, or for those whom he was addressing.

We return now to Rom. xv. to notice the lesson that the Apostle deduces from this passage in Isa. xi. Before we can fully appreciate his argument, however, we must notice one or two facts that are not immediately obvious.

First of all, the word “trust” in Rom. xv. 12 is *elpizo*, while the word “hope” in verse 13 is *elpis*. It is obviously misleading to translate the verb in verse 12 “trust” and the corresponding noun in verse 13 “hope”, and yet this is what we find in the A.V. Both words, the noun and the verb, occur together in Rom. viii. 24 and are correctly

translated “hope”. Similarly, no one would translate Titus ii. 13: “Looking for that blessed *trust*”, or Acts xxviii. 20: “The *trust* of Israel.” We must therefore revise the translation of Rom. xv. 12 and read: “On (*epi*) Him shall the Gentiles hope.”

The next thing to notice is that the Apostle does not speak of “the God of hope”, but of “the God of *the* hope”. Remembering that the article “the” often carries with it the idea which would be expressed by the English “that”, we may translate as follows:

“On Him shall the Gentiles hope. Now the God of that hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in that hope, in holy spirit power.”

This passage is of great importance because of its bearing upon the hope entertained by the Church during the Acts. If the believing Gentiles in the Church at Rome were to be filled with all joy and peace in believing, and if they were to abound in this hope, then obviously the hope expressed in Isa. xi. must have been the legitimate hope of the Church. Now the hope of Isa. xi. is definitely Millennial, and will be fulfilled after the Lord has “slain the wicked with the breath of His lips” (Isa. xi. 4). Moreover it is associated with the time described in verse 6 when

“the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them” (Isa. xi. 6).

Such conditions will not be brought to pass on the earth until the hope of Israel is realized and, as we read in verse 9:

“They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain” (Isa. xi. 9).

It is “in that day” that the hope of the Church at Rome will be realized.

Romans is not only the most fundamental of Paul’s epistles, but it is also the last epistle to be written before Israel were set aside at Acts xxviii. In the early chapters of the Acts, before Paul’s conversion, we find the hope of Israel uppermost in the minds of the other apostles (Acts i. 6, iii. 19, 26), and this hope remained right through the Acts (until the last few verses of the last chapter). Even after the epistle to the Romans had been written, we find the Apostle declaring before Agrippa that he still entertained “the hope of the promise made unto the fathers” (Acts xxvi. 6, 7); and even when he reached Rome, he could still say without reserve: “For the *hope of Israel* I am bound with this chain” (Acts xxviii. 20).

Though justified by faith, the believing Gentile in Romans was dispensationally but a wild olive graft into the stock of Israel. He had no hope apart from Israel, and not until Israel were set aside at Acts xxviii. was any hope other than “the hope of Israel” possible. It is quite unscriptural to attempt to link up the Church of the Mystery with the hope of I Thess. iv. No amount of argument can alter the plain statement of Rom. xv. 12 & 13 and all that this implies. The interested reader should refer to the charts given in Volume XXV (pages 8 and 65), testing them thoroughly by the rightly divided Word of Truth.

There is one further point that needs attention. In verse 13 we read: “That ye may abound in hope”—*en dunamei pneumatōs hagian*. Many of our readers will be acquainted with Dr. Bullinger’s work entitled “S or s, or The Giver and His gifts” and with Appendix 101 in *The Companion Bible*, which deals with the same point. In the particular case of Rom. xv. 13 the article is absent, indicating that it is the gift referred to, and not the Giver. The passage does not read *To pneuma, to hagian* (“The Spirit, the Holy One”) but *pneuma hagian* (“holy spirit”).

Acts ii. 4 is a good example of this twofold usage:

“They were all filled with *pneuma hagian* (the gift) and began to speak with other tongues as *to Pneuma* (the Giver) gave them utterance.”

To return to Rom. xv.—the Apostle prays in verse 13 that the God of hope would “fill” these believers with all joy and peace in believing, and in the next verse goes on to express his assurance that they had been “filled” with all knowledge. In this connection we must remember that “the word of knowledge” is one of the gifts of the Spirit mentioned in I Cor. xii., and that the next chapter speaks of this as destined to “vanish away” (I Cor. xiii. 8).

The Apostle concludes this section of Rom. xv. with the words:

“Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given me of God” (Rom. xv. 15).

The Apostle felt, perhaps, that he had been unduly insistent upon the place that the Gentiles occupied in the mercy of God, and so he seeks to soften any apparent austerity by these concluding words. We quote below Weymouth’s free rendering of verses 14 and 15, which is worth recording because it seems to express the spirit in which the Apostle links his earlier emphasis upon Gentile acceptance with the immediately following elaboration of his own personal ministry as the Apostle of the Gentiles.

“But as to you brethren, I am convinced—yes, I, Paul am convinced—that, even apart from my teaching, you are already full of goodness of heart, and enriched with complete Christian knowledge, and are competent to instruct one another. But I write to you the more boldly—Partly reminding you of what you already know—because of the authority graciously entrusted to me by God, that I should be a minister of Christ Jesus among the Gentiles”

This introduces us to the central theme of this section—the ministry of Paul and Gentile acceptance (A2 | xv. 16-33). We shall hope to consider this in our next article.

A concordance of the differences in the Authorized and Revised Versions with respect to the title “Christ Jesus”.

	reads in R.V.	A.V. reads.
Acts xix. 4.	“Jesus”	“Christ Jesus”
Acts xxiv. 24.	“Christ Jesus”	“Christ”
Rom. vi. 3.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Rom. vi. 11.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ our Lord”
Rom. viii. 11 and 34.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Rom. xv. 16, 17.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
I Cor. i. 4.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
II Cor. i. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Gal. ii. 16	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Gal. iii. 14.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Gal. v. 6.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Gal. v. 24.	“Christ Jesus”	“Christ”
Eph. i. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Eph. ii. 20.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Eph. iii. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Eph. iii. 6.	“Christ Jesus”	“Christ”
Phil. i. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Phil. 1. 8, 26.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Col. i. 28.	“Christ”	“Christ Jesus”
Col. i. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Col. iv. 12.	“Christ Jesus”	“Christ”
I Tim. i. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ” and “Lord Jesus Christ”
I Tim. iv. 6.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
I Tim. v. 21.	“Christ Jesus”	“The Lord Jesus Christ”
II Tim. i. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
II Tim. i. 10.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
II Tim. ii. 3.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
II Tim. iv. 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“The Lord Jesus Christ”
Titus i. 4.	“Christ Jesus”	“The Lord Jesus Christ”
Philemon 1.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Philemon 6.	“Christ”	“Christ Jesus”
Philemon 9.	“Christ Jesus”	“Jesus Christ”
Heb. iii. 1.	“Jesus”	“Christ Jesus”
I Pet. v. 10, 14.	“Christ”	“Christ Jesus”

This is a complete list of all the changes in connection with the title “Christ Jesus” that have been made from the A.V. to the R.V. The title occurs many more times, but in these cases it is unchanged in the R.V. and so can easily be found. It will be observed that the references to “Christ Jesus” in Hebrews and Peter go out, which means that all the remaining references belong to the ministry of the apostle Paul. The title seems to stress a new aspect of Christ’s position and glory, pointing away to the seated One at the right hand of God, rather than to the One Who walked the earth and came only to Israel. In all this, of course, it is always the same Person; only the title is changed. The title “Son of Man”, for example, has no place in the epistles, but this does not, of course, mean that we deny the Lord’s place there, or that we in any way touch His perfect humanity. So, in the case of the title “Christ Jesus”, it is again the same Person, but we do well to note that this particular title belongs exclusively to the ministry of the apostle Paul.

A simplified analysis of Rom. xv. 16-33 may be helpful at this point. The fuller structure will be found on page 81.

Romans xv. 16-33.

- a2 | 16-18. Paul a minister. Gentile's acceptance.
- d2 | 19-20. Fully preached.
- b2 | 21. Scriptures asserting Gentile blessing.
- d3 | 22-29. Fulness of blessing.
- a3 | 30-32. Ministry at Jerusalem. May it be accepted.
- c2 | 33. The God of Peace.

The uneven appearance of the structure is partly due to the fact that certain members in it correspond with similar members in other parts of the section which are not here shown.

It will be observed that where ministry is mentioned elsewhere in this section of Romans, the word is *diakonos* (Rom. xv. 8 and xvi. 1), or *diakoneo* (Rom. xv. 25), or *diakonia* (Rom. xv. 31). In Rom. xv. 16 and 27, however, the word "minister" is *leitourgos* or *leitourgeo* ("public service") while in Rom. xv. 16 the word "ministering" is *hierougeo* ("priestly ministry"). The choice of word in verses 16 and 27 lies very near the crux of the passage. Paul's ministry was in some measure a priestly act, and therefore the offering of the Gentiles was sanctified. The Gentiles being sanctified, they could in their turn perform a kind of "Levitical" service for their Hebrew brethren. This, however, was offensive to the prejudices of the believing Jews, as the sequel at Jerusalem makes very clear.

We must now go a little more closely into the meaning and usage of the two important words for ministry mentioned above. The word *heirougeo* is a combination of *ergon*, "a work" and *hieron*, "sacred". It occurs nowhere else in the N.T., classical writers use it with reference to "offering sacrifices". The Apostle's intention in using the word in Rom. xv. is to indicate that, through the gospel, Gentile service can be spoken of as a sanctified sacrifice quite as truly as that of a Hebrew believer.

The second word, *leitourgeo*, is used of public ministry (Rom. xiii. 6), ministry in the Church or among the saints (Phil. iil. 30 & Acts xiii. 2), and the ministry of the priests (Heb. x. 11).

In Rom. xv. 16 the Apostle is expanding an aspect of truth that had already been expressed in Rom. xii. In the first verse of this chapter, we read:

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

The Apostle also uses similar terms in connection with the service of the Hebrew believers in Heb. xiii.:

“We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle
By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of
our lips, giving thanks to His name. But to do good and communicate forget not, for with
such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Heb. xiii. 10, 15, 16).

Later on, the Apostle was to write to the Philippians concerning his own service:
“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice
with you all” (Phil. ii. 17). And again, in II Tim. iv.: “I am now about to be offered”
(II Tim. iv. 6).

Sacrifice lies very near the heart of all true service, and the Apostle often uses this
figure. So, in Eph. v., in connection with the believer’s walk, we read:

“Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and given Himself for us an offering and a
sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour” (Eph. v. 2).

The same figure is used by the Apostle when he expressed his appreciation of the
fellowship of the Philippians in connection with his needs as a minister:

“I have all and abound, I am full, having received of Epaphroditus a sacrifice
acceptable, well-pleasing to God” (Phil. iv. 18).

The Gentiles who had believed the gospel through the ministry of Paul and had found
in Christ a Sacrifice all-sufficient for their needs before God, were now, equally with the
Hebrew believers, able to render acceptable service. The outward seal of this acceptance
was that they were “sanctified by the Holy Ghost”. Here again it is necessary to draw
attention to the fact that the words translated “The Holy Ghost” are *pneuma hagion*,
signifying the *gift* of holy spirit, and not the Giver Himself. The gift of “holy spirit” to
the Gentile believer was a sign convincing enough to break down all prejudice. We see
this very clearly in the story of Cornelius. Peter was very diffident about going to
Cornelius at all and explained that it was an unlawful thing for him to do. However, he
begins to rehearse before Cornelius the work and witness of the Lord Jesus “in the land of
the Jews”, and before he gets very far, the Lord intervenes and, to the astonishment of the
believing Jews, the gift of “holy spirit” is given to these believing Gentiles. Whereupon
Peter exclaims, expressing both his previous prejudice and his new conviction:

“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the
holy ghost as well as we?” (Acts x. 47).

In order to do justice to the Apostle’s further statements about his own ministry, we
must consider the remainder of this section, namely, verses 17-33. There are so many
features of importance, however, in this that it does not seem wise to attempt to crowd
them into a few closing paragraphs. We must therefore let this article dealing with the
acceptance of the offering of the Gentiles suffice for the present, and devote our next
article to a consideration of the close of this section and the doubt expressed by the
Apostle that the offering which was quite acceptable to God, might not be so acceptable
to His redeemed people.

#84. Romans xv. 8 - xvi. 23.
Gentiles, acceptable to God, not acceptable to their fellows (xv. 17-33).
pp. 182 - 187

The Apostle supplements his statement that his ministry was like that of a priest, so far as the Gentiles were concerned (Rom. xv. 16), by further evidences both from his own ministry (Rom. xv. 17) and from the Scriptures (Rom. xv. 21) and then outlines his plans, which had in view a visit to Rome and Spain (Rom. xv. 22-24), which, however, were to be preceded by a special journey to Jerusalem for the purpose of taking the gift of the Gentile churches to the poor saints at Jerusalem (Rom. xv. 25-33).

While it humbled him, as he realized his own unworthiness, the gift of grace that made the apostle Paul such a devoted minister of Christ to the Gentiles, gave him good ground for “boasting in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God”. Paul “magnified” his office (Rom. xi. 13).

In verse 15 the Apostle uses the word, *tolmeroteron*, “boldly” and in verse 18 *tolmao*, “dare”. He will venture to speak of what his office is and what, by grace, he has accomplished, but not of anything that Christ had not wrought through him.

To bring about the obedience of the Gentiles, word, deeds, signs and wonders had been pressed into service. There may be an intentional parallel between the “word” and the “power of the spirit of God”, and the “work” and “the mighty signs and wonders”.

In an earlier epistle he had brought forward this same ground of boasting:

“I am become a fool in glorying (boasting); ye have compelled me: for I ought to have been commended of you: for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest of the apostles, though I be nothing. Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds” (II Cor. xii. 11, 12).

Further, the Apostle draws attention to the ground he had covered:

“so that” (i.e. to speak simply of his own labours) “from Jerusalem in a circle as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Rom. xv. 19).

Illyricum is the land lying along the Adriatic Sea opposite the east coast of Italy, and which adjoins Macedonia on its northwest boundary. It marks the furthestmost bounds of the Apostle’s journeys up to the time of writing the epistle to the Romans. A glance at the map will show that, taking Jerusalem as a centre, the missionary journeys of the Apostle were prosecuted in ever widening circles. First, the missionary journey to Cyprus and the Province of Galatia (Antioch and Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe), see maps Volume XVII, page 35. Next, the journey to Troas, whence Macedonia,

Thessalonica, Athens and Corinth were visited. Then, after another visit to Jerusalem, the Apostle went to Ephesus, where he spent three years. In our day, when travel is rendered easy and rapid, we can really only imagine the perils and weariness these journeyings involved. Look, for instance, at the admission of the Apostle in Corinthians when speaking of the ministry from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum. He says:

“thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness” (II Cor. xi. 25-27).

The word translated “fully preached” in Rom. xv. 19 is *pleroo*. It will be seen that there is no word here for “preach”, and the same word *pleroo* has already been used in verses 13 and 14, where it is translated “fill” in the phrases “fill you with all joy” and “filled with all knowledge”. In viii. 4 it is translated “fulfilled” as it is also in xiii. 8. It is used in Col. i. 25 of the mystery which “completes the word of God” and in Col. iv. 17 where the Apostle exhorts Archippus to fulfil his ministry. Inasmuch as the gospel necessitated a preacher (Rom. x. 14, 15) the Apostle could not have “fulfilled” or “completed” it apart from preaching it wherever he went, but the word seems further to imply that the purpose for which the gospel had been given, the sphere in which it should be proclaimed, and the period during which it should be preached, had all been completed. He could contemplate a wider circle, including Rome and Spain, and yet feel that no charge could be laid against him as to the faithful fulfillment of his office so far as the regions previously specified were concerned.

This “fulfilling” of the gospel of Christ, would include the epistles that supplemented his apostolic labours. Did the Apostle learn of the Judaistic attack upon the Galatians? he immediately sent them a letter. Did he learn of the needs of Thessalonica? he wrote them an epistle, and upon hearing that they had been troubled regarding the question of the second coming of the Lord, he wrote a second epistle. So also when tidings were brought to him of the state of affairs at Corinth; he wrote two letters touching all their points of dispute and division. He also wrote a word of exhortation to the Hebrews, wherein he so clearly set forth the fact and the consequences of the one sacrifice of Christ. And now, before he sets forth for Rome, he writes to the Church there this wonderful epistle. He had indeed “fulfilled” the gospel and its claims. Having claimed this high standard of fulfillment, the Apostle draws the saints’ attention to another aspect of his service.

“Yea, so have I striven to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man’s foundation” (Rom. xv. 20).

The word “striven” is the translation of an exceedingly interesting Greek word, *philotimeomai*, which literally means “to love the honour”. While it is not strictly true so to render the word its content should nevertheless be kept in mind. Like many words, it had moved away from its primitive meaning, and had come to mean “to be ambitious”, “to study”, “to labour” (I Thess. iv. 11; II Cor. v. 9). It would be impossible for the Apostle to use a word compounded with *phileo*, “to love” and *time*, “honour” without

remembering that *time* also stood for a public and honourable office (Heb. v. 4), and a reward for a service (I Tim. v. 17).

As an apostle, he said, I have been ambitious to press on into the regions beyond, and to avoid building upon another man's foundation, and, as an apostle, he was right to do this. But are we to understand from this passage that we, too, who follow the Apostle, are to be actuated by same principle? We think not. In our case we awake to the claims of service, surrounded by the fruition of centuries of christian honour, and if all those in christian service felt it incumbent upon them to avoid building upon another man's foundation, they must needs soon go out of the world. Paul was a "master builder" and laid the foundation (I Cor. iii. 10) but so far from thinking that his successors would also be called upon to do such work, the opposite is the fact, for in the passage referred to he immediately adds "and another buildeth thereon".

Paul's work was unique. The foundation of all subsequent ministry has been laid, and we all are, if we are in the will of God, building upon that initial foundation, laid during so much stress and strain by the Apostle of the Gentiles.

There are other cases where statements of the Apostle must not be taken as of universal application, as for example the oft-quoted lamentably misunderstood, statement,

"I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified"
(I Cor. ii. 2).

Returning to Rom. xv., a very precious characteristic of the Apostle is seen where he indicates, by the Scripture which follows his boast, how much he sought to regulate his conduct by the teaching of the Word of God:

"But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand" (Rom. xv. 21).

The LXX suggests the idea: "Men to whom no tidings have been sent concerning Him shall we see", and Paul saw in this enough of the mind of the Lord to justify his action.

It may be an open question whether it be possible or even desirable to probe into the human reasons that prompted the writings of the various epistles, but it looks very much as though the Apostle *began* this mighty epistle merely to prepare the Roman church for his long-deferred visit. This is his theme in chapter i., immediately after the opening salutation of verses 1-7 and the commendation of verses 8 and 9:

"Making request if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you" (Rom. i. 10),

but by easy stages and the most natural transition he passes on from his desire to his indebtedness, and then from his obligation to his theme, and, once started on the gospel and its glorious provision of righteousness, the succeeding chapters flow on until he

comes, full circle, at the close, to the reiterated expression of his desire to visit the saints at Rome.

“But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you” (Rom. xv. 23, 24).

The word “place”, which is a translation of *topos*, primarily means a portion of space occupied by some object, a geographical area, but it is used figuratively in such phrases “give place to the devil”. So here in Rom. xv. 23 it is not the meaning of the Apostle, as Weymouth has it, “As there is no more occupied ground in this part of the world”, but rather as the word is used in such expressions as “a place of repentance” (Heb. xii. 17) or “license to answer” (Acts xxv. 16). The meaning of the Apostle in Rom. xv. is that his work in the parts mentioned was done; he had “fulfilled” his mission, as he had earlier said, and he was now free to travel further afield in the cause of Christ. But, much as he wished to fulfil his desire to “see Rome” (Acts xix. 21) he had one more visit to make to Jerusalem (Acts xix. 21), of which he now apprises the Roman saints: “But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints” (Rom. xv. 25).

Ever since the time when the Apostles at Jerusalem had asked Paul to “remember the poor” he had desired with a great intensity that the Gentile churches should make a definite contribution to the church at Jerusalem. Two chapters in II Corinthians contain words on the subject that seem to burn. In these eighth and ninth chapters the Apostle speaks of the contribution of the Gentile churches for the poor saints of Jerusalem. We wish space could be afforded to print the whole passage, for the partial quotation of such a gracious outpouring is too great a mutilation, but we trust the reader’s interest will compel a perusal of II Cor. viii. and ix. for only so will the statement of the Apostle in Rom. xv. 25-33 be appreciated:

“For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily: and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things” (Rom. xv. 26, 27).

The close of the chapter makes it clear, that, while the Apostle fervently desired this manifestation of fellowship and had laboured hard to bring it to pass, he nevertheless had grave misgivings regarding its reception by the rulers of the church at Jerusalem. He accordingly asks that prayer be made

“That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judæa; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints” (Rom. xv. 31).

“*May be accepted*”: Here, once more, we reach the key thought of this section. The Apostle had shown by a variety of ways that there could be no doubt of the Gentiles’ acceptance with *God*, but, *Religion*, how cruel it can be! God may condescend to accept, but poor, puffed-up, religious flesh, may reject, and the Acts of the Apostles records the justification there was for the Apostle’s fears.

In Acts xxi. 15-21 we see the Apostle arriving at Jerusalem with the gift of the churches, but there is not a single word recorded about this love-gift of the Gentile churches. Whether the church accepted, rejected, tolerated or ignored it we are left to surmise. What is written is that it involved the Apostle in defending himself so that he was found in the temple accused of sacrilege, and taken prisoner.

He had written to the Roman church:

“When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain, and I am sure that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ” (Rom. xv. 28, 29).

But whether the Apostle ever reached Spain is a moot point. Some think there is sufficient testimony for the belief after his liberation at the close of the Acts, he did. Others are equally convinced that he never reached Spain. However that may be, in one thing he was not disappointed. He did go to Rome in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, for though he went a prisoner and not as he expected, a free man, in that Roman prison such fulness of blessing was made known as to eclipse all that had gone before.

The Apostle ends this section with a reference to the God of Peace. The structure throws three similar references into correspondence.

C1 | xv. 13. THE GOD OF HOPE.
C2 | xv. 33. THE GOD OF PEACE.
C3 | xvi. 20. THE GOD OF PEACE.

A common hope bound Jew and Gentile believers together, for the presence of the God of Peace demanded actual acceptance. Whatever failure might result from human weakness, the Apostle could and did rest in that perfect accomplishment that existed already in “Christ”. He desired and prayed and worked for its manifestation, but did not despair when over and over again the “creature” failed. As we shall presently read, this same God of Peace shall shortly bruise Satan under the feet of the saints and then, if not before, acceptance and unity will be perfect and complete.

Some Titles of Scripture.

#1. Wheat.

p. 60

“The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? Saith the Lord” (Jer. xxiii. 28).

If in days when “dreams” were sometimes divinely chosen as a vehicle of inspiration, such language could be used by Jeremiah, how much more should we resolutely set aside all such self-evolved teaching. A glance at the context of Jer. xxiii. 28 is sadly illuminating. The Lord had said: “Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you.” Why?

- (1) “They make you vain” (Jer. xxiii. 16).
- (2) “They speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord” (Jer. xxiii. 16).
- (3) “They use their tongues, and say, HE saith” (Jer. xxiii. 31).
- (4) “They cause My people to err by their lies, and by their lightness” (Jer. xxiii. 32).
- (5) “I sent them not, nor commanded them saith the Lord” (Jer. xxiii. 32).

Here in “the chaff”, by contrast, we may discern the nature and character of “the wheat”. May we exercise this spiritual discernment in a day of lies and lightness, of dreams that make men vain, of tongues—while protesting that what is uttered is the Word of God—that speak a vision of man’s own heart.

#2. The Lamp and the Light.

p. 76

The Psalmist joyously confessed:

“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet And a light unto my path” (Psa. cxix. 105).

Parallel with this passage is the acknowledgment of the writer of the Proverbs:

“The commandment is a lamp; and the law is light: and reproofs of instruction are the way of life” (Prov. vi. 23).

In both passages the *way* is in view, and the Scriptures are likened to a lantern held low, near the feet, in order that the pitfalls which awaited the traveler on an eastern road might be avoided.

The extension in Proverbs regarding “reproofs” and “instruction” indicate how the Word of God, and especially its commandments, may and should be used.

#3. The Sword of the Spirit.

p. 105

The whole armour of God is comprised of six pieces, beginning with the girdle of *truth*, and ending with the sword of the Spirit, which is the *word of God*. It is the believer’s only weapon.

“The weapons of our warfare are not carnal” (II Cor. x. 4).

Our Saviour has shown us the temper of this blade, and how effective is its use in spiritual conflict. Three times was He tempted of the Devil, and three times did he meet the Adversary with the sword of the Spirit, saying: “It is written”, and “It is written again”.

When at last the day of revelation breaks, He will come bearing the name “The Word of God”, and “out of His mouth” will go “a sharp sword” (Rev. xix. 13, 15), so that in the hour of His triumph as in the hour of His humiliation that sword of the Spirit is seen as His trusted weapon. Where He avoided other means and other weapons, how can we hope to succeed if we attempt to substitute any means of victory other than this wondrous word of God?

#4. The Word of the Lord.

p. 124

The Acts of the Apostles uses the expression “The Word of God” twelve times, and “the Word of the Lord” seven times. We have recorded some of the twelve references elsewhere. Let us here note the seven occurrences of “the Word of the Lord”.

“And when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord” (Acts viii. 25).

“And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord” (Acts xiii. 48).

“And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region” (Acts xiii. 49).

“Paul and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord” (Acts xv. 35).

“Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do” (Acts xv. 36).

“And they spake unto him (the Philippian jailor) the word of the Lord” (Acts xvi. 32).

“All they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts xix. 10).

The last reference is explicit: it says “the word of the Lord Jesus”. Are we to understand the other six references in the same way? That is one question the reader may ponder. Another is, what is the difference between the expressions “The Word of *God*” and “the Word of the *Lord*”, or is there no essential difference intended? If not, why is the phrase altered (*see* Acts xix. 10 and 20).

#4. A Correction.

p. 156

This series of short notes was written rapidly and with little thought of critical readings. We are therefore glad to acknowledge the watchful care of a fellow “Berean”, who, referring to the article on page 124 of Volume XXX, points out that the text reads “The Word of the *Lord*” in Acts xix. 20, instead of “The Word of God”. This alteration gives the more significant number of occurrences, viz., fourteen of “The Word of God” and eight of “The Word of the *Lord*”. In the interests of accuracy, readers should make a note of the necessary correction.

#5. The Entrance.

p. 188

When the English reader sees the words: “The *entrance* of Thy words giveth light” (Psa. cxix. 130), it is pardonable if he understands the passage to refer to the entering of the Word of God into the heart of the believer. The word “entrance”, however, means a door, and the translation “entry” would be preferable to “entrance” if ambiguity is to be avoided.

Where we have the translation “entering in” in the A.V. it is usually accompanied by such words as “the door” or “the gate”. While it is perfectly true that only as the Word enters into our own hearts do we receive light, let us not lose the important lesson given here, that the Word is itself the doorway by which we may enter into light, also.

#6. The Reasonable Account.

p. 188

We have already seen that Logos, “The Word”, is associated with “reason” and “account”, and it may be helpful to retranslate some statements, in order to appreciate the impression that this revision makes.

“The *preaching (logos)* of the Cross” (I Cor. i. 18) is the reason for, and account of, the cross.

“The *word (logos)* of reconciliation” (II Cor. vi. 19) will be a reasonable explanation of man’s need through sin, and God’s provision by grace.

“The *word (logos)* of truth” (Eph. i. 13) will be that reasonable account of God’s Will and Way which, when believed, becomes “the gospel of your salvation” (Eph. i. 13).

Merely to introduce the word “cross” many times into a gospel address is neither an evidence of evangelical earnestness nor a guarantee that such preaching will prove to be the power of God unto salvation. There is a “reason why” intimately attached to the Cross, to Reconciliation, to Truth, the answer to which question is implicit in the “Word”.

#7. The Word of God.

p. 208

This title of the Scriptures, which is of constant occurrence in the Acts of the Apostles, is an enlightening testimony to the character of the Apostle's preaching in the power of the Spirit.

- "They spake the word of God" (Acts iv. 31).
- "That they should leave the word of God" (Acts vi. 2).
- "The word of God increased" (Acts vi. 7).
- "They received the word of God" (Acts viii. 14).
- "They preached the word of God" (Acts xiii. 5).
- "They desire to hear the word of God" (Acts xiii. 7).
- "They came to hear the word of God" (Acts xiii. 44).
- "The Jews had knowledge that the word of God was preached" (Acts xvii. 13).
- "So mightily grew the word of God" (Acts xix. 20).

It is evident that the apostolic conception of the gospel found no room for questioning or setting aside the Word of God.

**“The Both”; “The Twain”; “The Joint Body”;
Who are they, and what do these words imply?**

**#3. Showing that the teaching of Ephesians and Colossians
is related to the symbolic teaching of Gen. i. and ii.
pp. 26 - 29**

As we read the two epistles of the Mystery, Ephesians and Colossians, we find ourselves impelled to turn back to the two opening chapters of the Book of Genesis. It is impossible, for instance, to understand the implications of the expression “before the foundation of the world” (Eph. i. 4) apart from Gen. i. 1 and 2. We have shown, in other articles, that the word *katabole* should be translated “overthrow” and that the two Hebrew words *tohu* and *bohu* in Gen. i. 2 (“without form and void”) are applicable to the period to which the Apostle refers. The interested reader will find a fairly full exposition of the subject in Volumes IV, VI, X, XI, XII, XIII, XVI and XVIII, and should consult the Index of Volumes I-XX under the headings “Subject”, “Scripture reference”, and “Hebrew and Greek words explained”. For the moment we merely state, without advancing proof, that Eph. i. 4 is a definite link, binding the revelation of the Mystery with Gen. i. We are not, of course, suggesting that the Mystery was made known in Gen. i.; all we affirm is that one must be acquainted with Genesis if the distinctive calling of the Mystery is to be appreciated.

In Eph. i. 22 we have the expression “all things under His feet” in connection with Christ and His relationship to the Church which is His body. This expression is quoted from Psalm viii., which itself looks back to Adam in his capacity as a shadow of Christ.

The fact of creation is an integral part of Paul’s exposition of the Mystery.

“We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 10).

This is the first of the seven occurrences in Ephesians and Colossians of the verb *ktizo*, “to create”. Let us acquaint ourselves with the remaining references:

“For to *make* (created) in Himself of the twain one new man” (Eph. ii. 15).

“The mystery hid in God, Who *created* all things by Jesus Christ” (Eph. iii. 9).

“The new man, which after God is *created* in righteousness” (Eph. iv. 24).

“By Him all things were *created*, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible all things were *created* by Him and for Him” (Col. i. 16).

“The new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that *created* him” (Col. iii. 10).

It is evident that creation lies behind the truth of the Mystery, and there is a pointed reference to Gen. i. 26—“Let Us make man in Our image”, both in the title of Christ given in Col. i. 16 and in the renewal of the new man in iii. 10.

The verse that immediately follows Gen. i. 26 reads as follows:

“So God created man in His Own image, in the image of God created He HIM; male and female He THEM” (Gen. i. 27).

This important fact is mentioned again in the genealogy of Gen. v.:

“This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness 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).

The conjectures of those who consider that man was originally hermaphrodite in constitution are quite uncalled for, for the inspired Scriptures definitely affirm:

“Adam was first formed, then Eve” (I Tim. ii. 13).

“The man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man” (I Cor. xi. 8, 9).

Adam was permitted to feel his need before the woman was made and presented to him:

“For Adam there was not found a help meet for him” (Gen. ii. 20).

“I will make a help meet for him” (Gen. ii. 18).

The actual process of the formation of the woman is described as follows:

“And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man” (Gen. ii. 21, 22).

Sleep is a recognized symbol of death, both in the Old Testament and in the New. In Psalm xiii. we read: “Lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death” (Psa. xiii. 3), and in the only reference to “sleep” in Ephesians (v. 14) it is again used as a symbol of death.

The Hebrew word translated “rib” in this passage is never so translated again in the A.V. although the word (*tsela*) occurs 42 times. It is mostly translated “side” (19 times) and “side chamber” (9 times). There are ten occurrences in Ezekiel, of which nine are rendered “side chamber”, and one “*one over another*” (literally, “side chamber over side chamber”). It would appear that from Adam was taken a “side chamber” or “cell”, the process of procreation being miraculously carried through without human intervention, just as, in the Gospels, we have the miraculous turning of water into wine.

When the woman was presented to Adam he exclaimed:

“This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” (Gen. ii. 23),

and to this Moses adds the inspired comment:

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. ii. 24).

It is this passage that the Apostle quotes in Eph. v. 31, adding the comment: “This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church” (Eph. v. 32). The husband is exhorted here to consider his wife as his own body and his own flesh. The Apostle refers to this union of husband and wife as a great mystery, but adds that he is concerned with that of which this union was a symbol—“Christ and His church”.

The Apostle uses the word *duo*, “two” or “twain”, only twice in the Epistle to the Ephesians:

“To make in Himself of *the twain* one new man” (Eph. ii. 15).

“They *two* shall be one flesh” (Eph. v. 31).

It is difficult to believe that there is no intentional connection between these two passages.

The statements we have quoted from Genesis are all associated with Paradise, before the entry of the Serpent and before the fall. The Mystery likewise is not associated with the rest of Adam’s story, except for the fact that members of the Body, in common with all men, were by nature children of wrath even as others.

To sum up, then, we have found that the Apostle has most definitely associated the Mystery with the first two chapters of Genesis and that he has actually quoted the reference to “the twain being one flesh” in a practical context, where the literal union of husband and wife is linked with the mystery of Christ and His church. The way in which these things bear upon the question before us must be considered in our next article.

#4. “The Joint Body” in the light of Eph. ii. 15, iv. 13, v. 31, and Gen. i. 27 & ii. 24. pp. 66 - 69

In our exposition of the Epistle to the Ephesians, we drew attention to the fact that the word translated “man” in Eph. iv. 13 is the same as that translated “husband” in Eph. v. 22, 23, 24, 25 and 33. As the word *aner* is translated “husband” as many as fifty times, it would seem that we are right in saying that the Church, which is His body, is to be the perfect “husband”. Now the word “husband” is a relative term, and is meaningless without the related word “wife”. The word *aner* must refer to a man who is either actually married, or is capable of marriage. When, however, the Apostle speaks of the “new man”, he does not use *aner* but *anthropos*, a word which is much wider in its scope, and includes men, women and children. This is the word that is found in Eph. ii. 15 and v. 24, and is implied in Col. iii. 10 (*see* Col. iii. 9, where it is used in the expression “the old man”). It is clear, therefore, that the word *anthropos*, while including the *aner* of Eph. iv. 13, could also include any other company of believers,

such as the Bride, without intruding into the peculiar blessings that attach to the Church of the Mystery. And when we turn to Eph. ii., where the expression “the new man” is used, we find that this “new man” is composed of “the both”, or “the twain”.

In the LXX the word “man” in Gen. i. 26, 27 is *anthropos*, including both “male and female”. This usage is parallel with that of Eph. ii. where the *anthropos*, or “new man” is composed of “the both” or “the twain”, and in contrast with that of Gen. ii. 23, where the LXX uses the restricted word *aner*: “She was taken out of *man*.” The man Adam himself was *aner*, while the man in whom there could be both male and female was *anthropos*, and we observe that these distinctions are maintained by the Apostle in writing to the Ephesians.

We must now ask the reader to exercise a little patience while we endeavour to draw attention to the usage of other terms.

The A.V. rendering: “To make in Himself of twain one new man” (Eph. ii. 15), needs amending in one or two points. The words “to make” should read “to create”, the article should be read before the word “twain”, and the preposition *eis* should appear before the words “one new man”.

The word *eis* means “unto”, and in many places where it is used it suggests a goal towards which something moves. The following occurrences taken from Ephesians itself will show that this is so:

“*Until* the redemption of the purchased possession” (Eph. i. 14).

“*That* ye may know what is the hope” (Eph. i. 18).

“*With* all the fulness of God” (Eph. iii. 19).

“*Throughout* all ages, world without end” (Eph. iii. 21).

“*Until* we all come *in* the unity of the faith *unto* a perfect man” (Eph. iv. 13).

“*Sealed unto* the day of redemption” (Eph. iv. 30).

It can readily be seen that something future is introduced by the word *eis* in each of the instances cited above. The day of redemption, in the first passage, is obviously future, and the knowledge as to what was the hope, in the second, was contingent upon acknowledgment and therefore also future.

The “unity of the faith” and the “perfect man” were also future with respect to the gifts given by the ascended Christ. And so, when we read in Eph. ii. 15: “To create in Himself of the twain *unto* one new man”, the “one new man” is not necessarily to be regarded as being already in existence, but rather as the goal towards which this creative act was directed. The recognition of this untranslated preposition becomes even more important when we discover that there is another untranslated *eis* in Eph. v. 31, to which *The Companion Bible* draws attention. Translated literally, Eph. v. 31 reads: “And they shall be, the two, *unto* one flesh.”

“*Unto* one new man”—“*unto* one flesh”. The “new man” is the goal of this act of creating, and the “one flesh” is the goal of this act of being joined together.

Those who are represented as “the both” and “the twain” are further spoken of as those that were “far off” and those that were “nigh”. We know that the “far off” ones in this passage are the Gentiles, for verse 13 definitely says so:

“But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometimes were afar off are made nigh by the blood of His cross.”

We also know that this gracious work is being accomplished “now”. Those that were “nigh”, therefore, must be the other company which, together with the Gentiles, constitute “the both” and “the twain”.

Let us now turn our attention for the moment to that most important yet difficult passage, Eph. iii. 6—and particularly to the central member, “The same body”. Most readers know that this is an inadequate translation of the word *sussomos*. The R.V. has endeavoured to meet the difficulty by the rendering “fellow-members”, but this is a *private interpretation*, and not a translation, for the Greek word *soma* must always mean a “body” and not a “member”. The translators of both Versions evidently found it difficult to express the meaning of the word they had before them. *Sun* (the first part of *sussomos*) is found in combination with more than eighty different words, but is never translated “the same” except in Eph. iii. 6. We have nothing in our language to express *sussomos* except the words “joint body”, but what a “joint body” can be we have no conception or experience. We could understand a body being made up of fellow-members, but that is not the revelation of Eph. iii. 6. May it not be that this peculiar word was adopted by the Apostle to enshrine the oneness that will be brought about when “the both” become “one new man”? That is the suggestion before us, and it seems to be supported by the references in Eph. ii. and v. to Gen. i. and ii.

Returning to Eph. ii., with this peculiar unity in mind, let us seek to reach a conclusion. The reconciliation and oneness of these two companies has been potentially accomplished “by the cross”, and is already entered “in one spirit”. If the analogy of Gen. ii. be legitimate, this complete oneness will be enjoyed in reality after the “deep sleep” that intervenes before the resurrection, and then, in the glory of the Lord, both John xvii. and Col. iii. will find their fulfillment.

“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 perfected into one* that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovest Me *before the overthrow of the world.*”

The perfect Man (or “husband”) and the perfect Bride will, while retaining the distinctive peculiarities of their respective callings, become in the future “one new man”, even as Adam was, in the beginning, the covering name for both male and female. The full reconciliation which is found only in Ephesians and Colossians (*apokatalasso*, not *katalasso*) goes back beyond the choice of Israel and the “giving up” of the nations, before the alienation of man in the fall, to the primal enmity that brought about the overthrow of the world, as depicted in Gen. i. 2. Just as God’s answer to this overthrow

was the creation of Adam, with its mystery of the twain being nevertheless “one flesh”, so, in the glorious fulfillment of the type, the creation of “the both” as “one new man” will bring the purpose of the ages to completion, and God will be “all in all”.

We do not pretend to have exhausted this great theme. The notes given in these articles are intended simply as an apologetic, while the subject is still fresh in mind and heart. We must return to the subject in subsequent issues when more mature thought has been given to its many details, and when a fuller research has been made into the message of the Epistles. Before this can be undertaken with any hope of further in the Gospel according to John, and these will necessarily take some time to complete.

May the Lord give light and grace, and may we be thankful for every illumination that He grants upon the present constitution of the Mystery, and the future glory of its inheritance.

Things that be of God.

#9. The gift of God.

p. 20

There are nineteen occurrences of the word *doron*, “gift”, in the N.T. Twelve occur in the Gospels, and without exception these references speak of the presentation of gifts or offerings by man *to* God. Five occurrences are found in Hebrews, where in four cases the word is used of the “gifts and sacrifices” offered to God by the priest, and once of the offering made by Abel. Rev. xi. 10 uses the word for gifts sent from one person to another. Thus eighteen out of the total number of nineteen references use the word as of a gift offered by man, either to God or to his fellow-men. The one glorious exception is that of Eph. ii. 8: “It is the gift *of God.*” Here in the dispensation of the Mystery, it is God Who comes out to sinful man with His gift, and not man who brings the gift to God. Let us treasure this evidence of the rich grace that characterizes the dispensation under which we have been called.

The Volume of the Book.

#34. An Examination of Evidences.

The R.V. Readings of Mark xvi. 9-20 and Luke ii. 14. pp. 37 - 40

Let us now examine one or two passages in the R.V. where serious alterations have been made in the actual Greek Text, and discover, if we can, what is the evidence, both for and against the alternative readings.

The Last Twelve Verses of Mark xvi.

Westcott and Hort place these verses in brackets, and in the Revised Version there is a wide space between verse 8 and 9, with the following note in the margin:

“The two oldest Greek manuscripts and some other authorities omit from verse 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel.”

The ordinary reader would naturally assume from this that the evidence in favour of the omission is so strong that it is doubtful whether these verses should be used in any argument or as a basis for teaching. Yet the facts of the case produce a very different effect upon the mind, and one wonders what ulterior motives could have prompted the marginal note and the brackets introduced by Westcott and Hort.

The Vaticanus and Sinaiticus omit the verses concerned, and a few late MSS exhibit a wretched alternative. Eusebius also says that these verses were often omitted. On the other hand, over against this testimony, we have the following consentient voice of antiquity:

2ND CENTURY.—The Old Latin and the Syriac Versions. Papias, Justyn Martyr, Irenaeus and Tertullian.

Before, therefore, the Vatican or the Sinaitic MSS were written, there existed this ancient evidence to the fact that Mark xvi. 9-20 formed a part of the Received Text.

3RD CENTURY.—The Coptic and the Sahidic Versions. Hippolytus, Vincentius and the seventh council of Carthage, the Acta Pilati, and the Apostolical Constitutions.

Here, then, is abundant evidence that these verses were accepted as genuine before ever the Vatican Manuscript saw the light.

The Vaticanus is considered to belong to the fourth century, and it will be interesting to see next what evidence this century has to offer.

4TH CENTURY.—Cureton's Syriac and the Gothic Versions. The Syriac Table of Canons. Eusebius, Macarius Magnes, Aphraates, Didymus, the Syriac "Acts of the Apostles", Epiphanius, Leontius, Ephraem, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine.

Even after the Vatican and Sinaitic MSS were written, the testimony to Mark xvi. 9-20 still continues.

5TH CENTURY.—The Armenian Version. Codices A and C. Leo, Nestorius, Cyril of Alexandria, Victor of Antioch, Patricius, Marius Mercator.

6th and 7th CENTURY.—Codex D. The Gregorian and Æthiopic Versions, Hesychius, Gregentius, Prosper, John Abp. of Thessalonica and Modestus, Bishop of Jerusalem.

Writing to Bishop Ellicott with regard to the last twelve verses of Mark xvi., Dean Burgon says:

"Permit me to declare that I hold your disallowance of S. Mark xvi. 9-20 to be the gravest and most damaging of all the many mistakes which you and your friends have committed. 'The textual facts' say you, 'have been placed before the reader, because the Truth itself demanded it'. This, with Canon Cook, I entirely deny. It is because the textual facts have NOT been placed before the reader that I am offended."

In his "unanswered and unanswerable" work on Mark xvi., Dean Burgon had already written:

"The consentient witness of the manuscripts is even extraordinary. With the exception of the two uncial manuscripts just named, there is not one codex in existence, uncial or cursive (and we are acquainted with at least eighteen other uncials and about six hundred cursives of this gospel) which leaves out the last twelve verses of S. Mark. The omission of these twelve verses, I repeat, in itself destroys our confidence in Codex B (Vaticanus) and Codex Sinaiticus."

Speaking of the R.V. marginal note, he comments:

"But now, for the use of *whom* has this piece of information been volunteered? Not for the learned certainly, it being familiarly known to all, that codices B and Aleph *alone of manuscripts* (to their own effectual condemnation) omit these 12 verses. They also know that these 12 verses have been made the subject of a separate treatise extending to upwards of 300 pages—which treatise has now been before the world for a full decade of years, and for the best of reasons has never yet been answered."

We trust that sufficient has been said to enable the reader to form his own conclusions about Mark xvi. 9-20, and we now pass on to Luke ii. 14.

The Revisers' Reading of Luke ii. 14.

The R.V. of Luke ii. 14 reads as follows:

"On earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased."

A marginal note adds: “*Gr. Men of good pleasure*”, the proposed Greek text being *en anthropois eudokias*. Scrivener, himself one of the Revisers, speaks of this text and translation as one that “can be arrived at, only through some process which would make any phrase bear almost any meaning the translator might like to put upon it”. Every known copy of the Gospels, excepting only the Sinaiticus, Alexandrian, Vaticanus and Bezae, contains the words as found in the Received Text of the A.V. Even the Sinaiticus and the Bezae were corrected in ancient times and brought into conformity with the Received Text; and the Alexandrian on another page perpetuates what is known as the “Morning Hymn”, in which the Received Text is preserved. It will be seen, therefore, that even these MSS cannot be ranged against the A.V. The A.V. reading is found in the two Syriac Versions, and in the Coptic, while the Armenian, Georgian, Æthiopic, Slavonic and Arabian versions all testify to the truth of the A.V. The Latin copies and the Gothic versions alone agree with the R.V. reading.

“It therefore comes to this: We are invited to make our selection between every other copy of the Gospels, every known Lectionary, and (not least of all) the ascertained ecclesiastical usage of the Eastern Church from the beginning, on the one hand; and the testimony of four codices, without a history or a character, which concur in upholding a patent mistake, on the other” (*Dean Burgon*).

Added to this, we have twenty-nine “Fathers”, ranging from the 2nd century to the 8th, as well as eighteen names whose actual identity and date are open to question.

“It will be perceived that 18 ancient authorities have been added to the list, every whit as competent to witness what was the text of Luke ii. 14 at the time when A, B, Aleph and D were written, as Basil or Athanasius, Epiphanius or Chrysostom themselves.”

Moreover, the wide-spread character of the testimony is all in its favour. The “Fathers” who testify to the Received Text lived in Gaul, Constantinople, Asia Minor, Antioch, Syria, Palestine, Alexandria, Cyprus and Crete.

“If the articulate voices of so many illustrious Bishops, coming back to us in this way from every part of ancient Christendom and all delivering the same unfaltering message—if *this* be not allowed as decisive on a point of the kind just now before us, pray let us have it explained to us, what amount of evidence *will* men accept as final . . . The history of the reading advocated by the Revisionists is briefly this. *It emerges into notice in the 2nd Century; and in the 5th disappears from sight entirely*” (*Dean Burgon*).

In order to leave no loophole, “to leave no dark corner standing for the ghost of a respectable doubt hereafter to hide in”, Dean Burgon has patiently compared various readings of the context of Luke ii. 14 as given in the five MSS which have had such an influence over the R.V. We will not weary the reader with an exhibition of this labour of love. The Dean discovered within these 15 verses (Luke ii. 1-15) no less than 56 different “readings” and 70 differences from the cursive MSS. 19 words are omitted, 4 added, 17 substituted, 10 altered, and 24 transposed. With such evidence before us, we can heartily sympathize with the Dean when he says:

“And now—for the last time we ask the question—With what show of reason can the unintelligible *eudokias* (of Aleph A B D) be upheld as genuine, in defiance of *the whole*

body of Manuscripts, uncial and cursive, the great bulk of the Versions, and the mighty array (upwards of fifty) of Fathers exhibited above?"

All this may sound at first hearing very unsettling, but it is only so with regard to the attempts of the Revisionists—and Drs. Westcott and Hort in particular—to uphold the readings of one or two MSS in spite of overwhelming evidence to the integrity of the text of the A.V. We would still urge the reader to use the R.V. as an aid, but he should be extremely careful not to build any doctrine upon its many and serious alterations of the Greek Text, without the most thorough investigation.

#35. The R.V. and its treatment of two important passages.

“God manifest in the flesh” (I Tim. iii. 16).

“Who is over all, God blessed for ever” (Rom. ix. 5).

pp. 93 - 97

It is not our intention to pursue the question of textual criticism, and its bearing upon the Greek Text of the Revised Version, to any great length. We are, however, deeply concerned with regard to the integrity of the Word of God, and it is in order that the reader may be alive to the issues in this connection, that we have said so much already, and say a little more here.

One of the most serious alterations made by the Revisers is that found in I Tim. iii. 16.

The A.V. reads:

“Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh.”

The R.V. reads:

“Great is the mystery of godliness, He Who was manifested in the flesh.”

According to the conditions under which the Revisers worked, none but “plain and clear errors” were to be allowed to justify any alteration in the text, and any such alteration was only to be permitted upon “decidedly preponderating evidence”. It is not easy, without the use of Greek type, to show the English reader how the two words “God” and “Who” can come to be mistaken for one another. In the manuscripts the names and titles of God are always abbreviated—rather as though we used the letters “Gd” to represent “God”. Now the Greek word for “God” is THEOS, while the Greek word for “Who” is OS. The Greek letter for “Th” is a capital “O”, having a horizontal stroke through the centre. If, therefore, the central stroke is removed, the word then reads “Who”, instead of “God”. To indicate that any particular word was abbreviated, the scribe placed a very thin line over it, but, with the lapse of centuries, these thin lines have disappeared in many places owing to the fading of the ink.

To deal adequately with the evidence for I Tim. iii. 16, we must first say something about the Alexandrian Manuscript. This manuscript is now in the British Museum, but it has been so much handled that the passage in question can no longer be read with sufficient clearness to settle the point. Bishop Ellicott is supposed to have satisfied himself that the bar that turns “O” into “Th” in the word for “God” is really a bar from the letter epsilon which stands on the back page. But, as Dean Burgon rightly insists, unless we start with the major premiss that “*Theta* cannot exist on one side of a page, if *epsilon* stands immediately behind it on the other side”, this proves nothing with certainty. Moreover, Tregelles, Scrivener and others also held the same leaf up to the light, and discovered that the sagitta of the epsilon on fol. 145*b* does not cover much more than a third of the area of the *Theta* on fol. 145*a*, and further, that it cuts the circle too high.

We quote below an extract, in connection with this passage, from the writings of Dean Burgon:

“How is it, my Lord Bishop, that you do not perceive that the way to ascertain the reading of Codex A and I Tim. iii. 16 is (1) To investigate, *not* what is found *at the back* of the leaf, but what is written on the *front* of it? and (2) Not so much to enquire what can be deciphered of the original writing by the aid of a powerful lens *now*, as to ascertain what was apparent to the eye of competent observers when the codex was first brought into this country, viz. 250 years ago? That Patrick Young, the first custodian and collator of the Codex (1628-1652) read *Theos*, is certain. Young communicated the ‘various readings’ of A to Abp. Ussher: and the latter, prior to 1653, communicated them to Hammond, who clearly knew nothing of OS. It is plain that *Theos* was the reading seen by Huish—when he sent his collation (made, according to Bentley, with great exactness) to Brian Walton, who published the fifth volume of his Polyglott in 1657. Bp. Pearson, who was very curious in such matters, says, ‘We find not *OS* in any copy’—a sufficient proof of how *he* read the place in 1659. Bp. Fell, who published an edition of the N.T. in 1675 certainly considered *Theos* the reading of Cod. A. Mill, who was at work on the text of the N.T. from 1677 to 1707, expressly declares that he saw the remains of *Theos* in this place. Bentley, who had himself collated the MS with utmost accuracy, knew nothing of any other reading. Emphatic testimony on the subject is borne by Wotton in 1718: ‘There can be no doubt’ (he says) ‘that this MS always exhibited *Theos*’. Of this, *any one may easily convince himself who will be at the pains to examine the place with attention*. Two years earlier (we have it on the testimony of Mr. John Creyk of S. John’s Coll., Cambridge) ‘the old line in the letter Th was plainly to be seen’. It was much about the same time also (viz. about 1716) that Wetstein acknowledged to the Rev. John Kippax,—‘who took it down in writing from his own mouth, that though the middle stroke of the *Theta* has been evidently retouched, yet the fine stroke which was originally in the body of the *Theta* is discoverable at each end of the fuller stroke of the corrector’.

And Berriman himself (who delivered a course of Lectures on the true reading of I Tim. iii. 16 in 1737-8) attests emphatically that he had seen it also.

‘If therefore’, (he adds) ‘at any time hereafter the old line should become altogether undiscoverable, there will never be just cause to doubt but that the genuine and original reading of the MS was *Theos*: and that the new strokes, added to the top and in the middle by the corrector were not designed to counter and falsify (indeed they were clumsily drawn in common black ink) but to preserve and perpetuate the true reading, which was in danger of being lost by the decay of time’.

The sum of the matter is this—That it is too late by 150 years to contend on the negative side of the question. Prebendary Scrivener assures us that in Feb. 7, 1861 he actually discerned, *still lingering*, a faint trace of the diameter of the *Theta* which Berriman in 1741 had seen so plainly. ‘I have examined Codex A at least twenty times within as many years’ (wrote Scrivener in 1874) ‘and seeing (as every one must) with my own eyes, I have always felt convinced that it reads *Theos*.’”

In addition to the testimony adduced by Dean Burgon we may add that of the more recent photographs of the passage, in which the camera replaces not only the missing bar in *Theta*, but also in several letters on either side, notably in the word *eusebeian*, “godliness”.

Without going further into the evidence for *Theos* (which nevertheless is open for all interested students to examine, and is set out in full detail in Dean Burgon’s reply to Bishop Ellicott), we will be content to quote the Dean’s summary.

With regard to the reading adopted by the R.V., he writes:

“This is not found in more than two copies of St. Paul’s epistles, is not certainly supported by a single version, and is not clearly advocated by a single Father.

Behold then the provision which the Author of Scripture has made for the effectual conservation in its integrity of this portion of His written Word! Upwards of eighteen hundred years have run their course since the Holy Ghost by His servant Paul, rehearsed the ‘mystery of Godliness’, declaring this to be the foundation fact, namely, that ‘God was manifest in the flesh’. And lo, out of *two hundred and fifty-four* copies of St. Paul’s epistles, no less than *two hundred and fifty-two* are discovered to have preserved that expression. Such consent amounts to *unanimity*, and unanimity in this subject matter, is conclusive.

The copies of which we speak were produced in every part of ancient Christendom, being derived in every instance from copies older than themselves they have since found their way, without design or contrivance, into the libraries of every country of Europe, where, for hundreds of years they have been jealously guarded For what conceivable reason can this multitude of witnesses be supposed to have entered into a united conspiracy to deceive mankind?”

The A.V. Greek text represents the reading of 289 Manuscripts, 3 Versions, and upwards of 20 Greek fathers. With such overwhelming evidence before us, the reader will understand why, in *The Berean Expositor*, we have consistently ignored the depraved text adopted by the R.V. and have always quoted the A.V. rendering: “God manifest in the flesh.”

We must now pass on to another emendation, which, like that of I Tim. iii. 16, is definitely opposed to the doctrine of the Deity of Christ.

In the R.V. of Rom. ix. 5 we find the following marginal note:

“Some modern interpreters place a full stop after *flesh*, and translate, *He Who is God over all be (is) blessed for ever: or, He Who is over all is God, blessed for ever*. Others punctuate, *flesh, who is over all. God be (is) blessed for ever.*”

To quote Dean Burgon again:

“A grander or more unequivocal testimony to our Lord’s eternal Godhead is nowhere to be found in Scripture. Now this is a matter—let it be clearly observed—which (as Dr. Hort is aware) belongs to *Interpretation*, and not to *Textual Criticism*. What business has it then in these pages at all? Is it then the function of Divines appointed to *revise the Authorized Version*, to give information to the 90 millions of English-speaking Christians scattered throughout the world as to the unfaithfulness of ‘*some modern Interpreters*’? We have hitherto supposed that it was ‘Ancient authorities’ exclusively (whether ‘a few’ or ‘some’ or ‘many’) to which we are invited to submit our judgment. How does it come to pass that the *Socinian gloss* on this grand text (Rom. ix. 5) has been brought into such extraordinary prominence? Did our Revisionists consider that their marginal note would travel to earth’s remotest verge—give universal currency to the view of ‘some modern Interpreters’, and in the end ‘tell it out, among the heathen’ also? We refer to Manuscripts, Versions, Fathers: and what do we find?

(1) It is demonstrable that *the oldest codices, besides the whole body of Cursives*, know nothing about the method of ‘some modern Interpreters’.

(2) There is absolutely not a shadow, *nor a tittle of evidence, in any of the ancient versions* to warrant what they do.

(3) How, then, about the old Fathers? We find that the expression ‘*Who is over all* (things), *God blessed for ever*’ is expressly acknowledged to refer to our Saviour by the following 60 illustrious names.”

Here follow the names of 60 “Fathers”, together with the number of times each has cited Rom. ix. 5 as referring to the Saviour.

The Dean continues:

“Against such an overwhelming torrent of Patristic testimony, it will not surely be pretended that the Socinian interpretation, to which our Revisionists give such prominence, can stand. But why was it introduced *at all*? Indifferent scholarship, and mistaken views of Textual Criticism, are at least venial matters. But a *Socinian gloss gratuitously thrust into the margin* of every Englishman’s N.T. admits of no excuse—is not to be tolerated on *any* terms.

Sufficient has now been said to suggest that the reader should treat the R.V. with care. We are not blind to its excellencies, and in earlier articles we have endeavoured to do them justice. On the other hand, we are also not blind to its extremely dangerous tendencies, which attack both the living Word and the written Word (I Tim. iii. 16; II Tim. iii. 16 R.V.). We have quoted very fully from the writings of Dean Burgon, and we hope that those who need further evidence will be encouraged to give his witness a careful hearing. His book “The Revision Revised”, published by John Murray, can be obtained second-hand at prices ranging from about five to ten shillings, according to condition.

Let no one misunderstand our attitude with regard to this question of the Authorized and Revised Versions. Because we reject, in certain cases, the text substituted by the Revisers, this does not imply either a blind following of the A.V., or any lack of appreciation of the undoubted merits of the R.V. We have endeavoured to put before the

reader the main issues, and we must there leave the matter. May each of us manifest more fully that true *Berean* spirit, that searches to see “whether these things are so”.