

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,

While the Witness of *The Berean Expositor* could be described as the testimony of one man over a period of fifty-five years, it would only be partly true.

The Church of the One Body is a unity with Christ as the Head.

“From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. iv. 16).

The continuance of this witness depends upon two things: (1) That we all hold Christ as Head; (2) Realizing that He alone can use the separate members of this Body if it is to,

“INCREASE WITH THE INCREASE OF GOD” (Col. ii. 19).

Yet another two years of witness have passed, and once again my fellow-trustees join me in giving thanks for all the loving and faithful support we have received during this period.

We go forward in full assurance of faith, looking away to Him Who alone is our sufficiency for all things.

CHARLES H. WELCH,
STUART ALLEN
LEONARD A. CANNING.
GEORGE T. FOSTER,

November 1964.

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The Chapel of the Opened Book Anniversary, 28th September, 1963

We are glad to record once more that the meetings held on 28th September were inspiring and encouraging. As usual the chapel was well filled, and some were obliged to hear the services downstairs relayed to them by loudspeaker. Friends came from long distances, including Scotland and the north of England, while many isolated ones found the fellowship precious and strengthening. One could not help feeling that the over-ruling of the Lord was apparent over every detail, and for this we give Him our heart-felt praise.

In the afternoon service, our Secretary, Mr. G. T. Foster, gave his annual report on the work as a whole. He dwelt largely on the growth of the tape-recorded ministry in America and we were thrilled to hear how this has grown and been blessed by the Lord. The Assistant Principal, Mr. Stuart Allen, then gave an exposition of the Titles of Christ in the prison letters of the Apostle Paul, showing that in all things He has the first place (pre-eminence), and this should be His position in our lives.

The highlight of the evening service was the message given by our Principal, Mr. Charles H. Welch. We rejoice that he has been physically strengthened, so that he was able to be with us and minister the Word. Few will forget the two-fold theme from Job—"I *know* that my Redeemer liveth", and "He *knoweth* the way that I take". Bodily weakness has not lessened our brother's great capability in handling the Word of Truth, and we constantly commend him to the Lord for every need both spiritual and physical.

We would like to thank those who attended to the catering arrangements behind the scenes. This is as much service for the Lord as the ministry of the Scriptures. We commit every detail now to Him Who alone is able to give the "increase" which will be to His glory.

**“The same commit thou to faithful men”
(II Tim. ii. 2).**

Moses and Joshua, Aaron and Eliezer, Paul and Timothy, each in their own sphere make it manifest that a deep concern that the continuance of the ministry entrusted to them should not suffer because of the physical failure of those originally concerned.

The sudden necessity to drop all work and enter hospital made me realize that it was high time for me to follow the examples quoted above.

As surely as Joshua succeeded Moses, or Timothy, Paul, so Stuart Allen was indicated as the one to continue this printed witness. At first in order to avoid even a hint of pressure, I suggested that a new title be thought of, but the Trustees were so insistent that the title *The Berean Expositor* should be continued, that we have agreed, with joy, that the only change will be a new presentation of precious truth already committed to us. Stuart Allen will take up his new responsibilities in connection with *The Berean Expositor* from 1965 onwards.

I hope, most sincerely, that every present supporter of *The Berean Expositor* will continue to uphold and encourage him and his colleagues in this formidable task that they are undertaking in the Name of the Lord.

For some time the series of articles already started in the magazine and unfinished by 1964 will be threaded into the new issue, and the Trustees have a number of smaller booklets still in manuscript form that can help out in the formative days of this venture of faith.

I sincerely hope that every one will renew their subscriptions, so that the human instruments involved, whether retiring or commencing, shall be encouraged to “make full proof” of their ministry, until all witness ceases and all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ. If only His “Well done” is heard in that day, what a joy it will be!

Will you help us to attain that wondrous goal?

CHARLES H. WELCH, introducing

STUART ALLEN.

Faith.
“Salvation-by-grace-through-faith” (Eph. ii. 8, 9).
pp. 159, 160

In a good many minds, it is the acknowledged doctrine that faith is the gift of God. This, of itself, if used and understood Scripturally is a blessed and wholesome teaching. Similarly we could say “thought is the gift of God”, yet no one would advance as the corollary “therefore no one can think apart from some specially wrought miracle”. The passage of Scripture of course which is in mind is that magnificent verse of Eph. ii., where the Apostle says:

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

The word translated ‘that’ is in the neuter gender. The word translated ‘faith’ is in the feminine gender, consequently the word ‘that’ cannot refer in the Greek to ‘faith’. Moreover, salvation can conceivably be ‘of works’ but faith cannot be. We must be careful not to confuse Eph. ii. 8, 9 with I Cor. xii. 9:

“But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom *to another faith by the same Spirit.*”

Here faith is grouped with such Pentecostal gifts as tongues, interpretation of tongues, the discerning of spirits, the gift of prophecy and the working of miracles. These gifts were to *believers* and were given in connection with the practical outworking of the truth as it pertained to the Acts period. Faith, in the context, cannot be lifted out apart from the rest of these evidential gifts. It is important to realize that all of them were for saved people and have no reference to initial salvation by grace or faith in Christ.

Coming back to the passage in Eph. ii., we should understand this to teach that the whole plan and scheme of salvation is one ‘by grace—through faith’, and that *all of it*, not faith by itself, is the gift of God. It is quite erroneous to tell an unsaved person that God must first give him the faith before he can believe in Christ. Nor will any man ever be able to say truthfully “I could not believe because faith was not given to me by God”. A conception such as this is a perversion of truth.

EPHESIANS.

“To make all men see what is the dispensation of the Mystery”
(Eph. iii. 9, R.V.)

No.71. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

The Unity and the Bond (iv. 3).

pp. 1 - 3

In No.66 of this series we showed by a simple outline that the walk alternates with the One Body and with the New Man. Let us now give closer attention to the section devoted to the One Body, placing on either side the references to the walk.

EPHESIANS iv. 1 - 17.

- A | 1-. The prisoner of the Lord. Beseeches.
- B | a | -1. Walk worthy. Positive.
 - b | 2. Humility of mind.
- C1 | c1 | 3-6. *Unity* of Spirit. Keep. Sevenfold.
 - d1 | 7. *Measure*. Gift of Christ.
 - e1 | 8-12. Gifts of Ministry: for perfecting.
- C2 | c2 | 13-. *Unity* of Faith. Arrive. Sevenfold.
 - d2 | -13, 14. *Measure*. Fullness of Christ.
 - e2 | 15. Truth in love: for growth.
- C3 | c3 | 16-. *Unity* of Body. Fitly joined. Sevenfold.
 - d3 | -16-. *Measure*. Every part.
 - e3 | -16. Edify self in love.
- A | 17-. I testify in the Lord.
- B | a | -17-. Walk not. Negative.
 - b | -17. Vanity of mind.

It will be seen by the structure that the unity which the Apostle now approaches is threefold. There is first the unity of the *Spirit* with its bond of peace. Then there is the unity of the *Faith*, and finally the unity of the *One Body*. The parallel passage to Eph. iv. 16 in Colossians, is Col. ii. 19, and there the “bond” of Eph. iv. 3 appear as the “bands” and the “ligaments” of the Body.

The Apostle exhorts us to “endeavour to keep”. In Gal. ii. 10, referring to the suggestion of the leaders at Jerusalem that Paul should “remember the poor”, the Apostle says, “the same which I also was *forward* to do”. We find several allusions to the gatherings for the poor saints at Jerusalem, and when these offerings were ready, Paul undertook the journey in person to bring this evidence of fellowship and reconciliation to Jerusalem. “Forward” is the word *endeavour*. Writing his last letter to Timothy, he gives him among other things this charge:

“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).

“Study” is the word *endeavour*. In the same epistle Paul urges Timothy to come to him in his captivity:

“*Do thy diligence* to come shortly unto me: for Demas hath forsaken me Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. *Do thy diligence* to come before winter” (II Tim. iv. 9-21).

“Do diligence” is the word *endeavour*.

“Let us *labour* therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief” (Heb. iv. 11).

“Let us labour” is the word *endeavour*.

It will be seen that the word used by the Apostle indicates active, watchful diligence. This sacred trust is our concern. We jealously watch for any intrusion, any root of bitterness, any faction or element of strife. We cannot put the responsibility off on to another. Each one must share in the watch, each must honestly and truly endeavour to keep this treasure.

There are many words translated “keep” in the Scripture.

<i>Bosko</i>	=	To keep as a shepherd.
<i>Phulasso</i>	=	To guard as a soldier.
<i>Echo</i>	=	To hold as the servant did the pound.
<i>Poieo</i>	=	To keep as the passover.

Not one of these words is used by Paul in Eph. iv. 3. The word used here is *tereo*, which means to keep as one would a treasure; *diatero* (Luke ii. 51) is used of Mary who treasured up in her heart things spoken of her infant Son. It is used once more in the prison epistles of Paul himself:

“I have kept the faith” (II Tim. iv. 7).

Here then is the sacred trust. We are to *keep* the unity of the Spirit as Paul *kept* the faith. Through good report or evil report, through honour or dishonour, nothing must turn away our attention; we must be ever diligent in our duty, ever studying to keep our treasure intact, ever labouring to preserve this truth complete. Nevertheless, with all this personal sense of responsibility must be the equally important sense of the Lord’s greater care. The same Apostle who so nobly kept the faith was persuaded that the Lord was able to keep that which had been entrusted until that day. The unity of the Spirit may be viewed as part of that good deposit which is so wonderfully spoken of in I Tim. vi. 20 and II Tim. i. 12 & 14.

What therefore are we to keep? The answer is “The unity of the Spirit”. This however is an incomplete statement. We are to keep this unity with the bond of the peace, that is the full statement. Those who joined to the Lord are said to be one spirit with Him (I Cor. vi. 17). Some commentators speak of this unity as being the work of the Holy Spirit; others look upon it as indicating the unanimity of spirit that should actuate all the members of One Body. There is no conflict between these two views. Unanimity of spirit is only possible in that unity made by the Spirit of God. Outside must ever be strife and self-seeking. This unity of spirit is well illustrated and expressed in such passages as Rom. xv. 5, 6 and Phil. i. 17; ii. 1, 2.

This unity can only be kept by *the bond of peace*. What is this bond? What is this peace? It is that peace made by Christ Who made the two conflicting parties “one”, Who destroyed the enmity between them, Who broke down the middle wall of partition, Who, by creating of the twain in Himself one new man “so making peace”, made the bond of peace which effectually binds together the unity of the Spirit.

The things that were set aside were the things belonging to believers as “Jews” or as “Gentiles”. None of these things are carried over. There is no reformation attempted. The unity of the Spirit is part of a new creation. In exercising our diligence over this, we shall see at once the attempt of this one to import some doctrine, or of that one to bring in some practice that belongs to the time before the middle wall was broken down. Nip all such attempts in the bud. Let them not get a foothold. Be willing to be called narrow, proud, anything, however untrue and unmerited, but endeavour to keep that sacred unity as you would defend your life.

We write because of the laxity of many, because of the confusion which exists in the mind of many as to the difference between humility of mind and resolution, of meekness and strength. We cannot be charitable with the goods of another. Stewardship, though exercised with all lowliness, meekness, longsuffering and forbearance, must nevertheless be above all things exercised faithfully. The Lord keep us faithful as the apostasy sets in.

No.72. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).
The Sevenfold Unity of the Spirit (iv. 4 - 6).
pp. 21 - 26

In Eph. iv. 4-6 we have brought before us the sevenfold unity of the spirit, which we are urged to keep.

	One LORD.	
	One HOPE.	
	One SPIRIT.	
One BODY.		One FAITH.
		One BAPTISM.
		One GOD and FATHER.

Some of the elements of this unity are found in chapter ii.:-

“For through Him (the one Lord) we the both (the one Body) have access by one Spirit unto the Father (the one God and Father)” (verse 18).

The Gentiles, being originally “without hope”, can hold but the one hope of their calling. They have no other. They had also been saved by grace through faith, and that not of themselves, it was the gift of God. This accounts for every item except the one baptism. That is found, as we shall see more clearly presently, in the threefold union with the risen Lord expressed in the word “quicken together, raised together, seated together”.

It is important to see that the central feature of this unity is the One Lord. Without the risen and ascended Christ there is no church which can be called the One Body. Not until Christ is seen as Head can the church be seen as body. This is clearly stated in Eph. i. 21-23. Apart from the ascended Son of God the one God would never be known as the one God and Father. Apart from the risen and ascended Lord the one baptism of the one spirit is impossible. The unity of the faith embraces the Son of God, and the one hope is nothing less than Christ Himself. Like the central shaft of the seven branched lampstand of the Tabernacle, all are united together in Him, all receive their fullness from Him. Severed from Him they are worthless. What hope have we outside of Christ? In whom can we have faith apart from Christ?

Let us now, having seen the essential position of Christ in this unity, look at the seven items in detail.

ONE BODY.—It is true that the figure of the body is used in I Cor. xii., but the context reveals that it is used in illustration of the distribution, diversity yet unity of spiritual gifts. The church of the One Body is a new creation, connected with the ascended Christ as its Head, in a sphere of glory that transcends all others, “far above all”, and is directly related to the revelation of the mystery where it is given its peculiarly distinctive character, “a joint-Body” (Eph. iii. 6), a standing unknown before the Mystery

was made known. Such in brief is the first item in this sevenfold unity. This we have to guard.

Some will deny that the one Body is peculiar to the dispensation of the Mystery. Some will teach that the body of I Cor. xii. is “all one and the same”. Some even go so far as to teach that the One Body comprises every saved one from Adam onwards. All such attempts to destroy the testimony of the Lord’s prisoner must be resisted. We must not, however, miss the emphasis on the *one* Body. We can have no connection with “bodies”; such cannot be recognized for one minute. All other unities, bodies, leagues, societies, are outside this sacred circle.

ONE SPIRIT.—The body, without the spirit, is dead, being alone, says James. What is the animating spirit of the One Body? Referring to the mortal body, the apostle says:--

“But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies because of His Spirit that dwelleth in you” (Rom. viii. 11).

The analogy holds good. The Spirit of the risen Christ likewise is the one Spirit of the One Body. In Eph. i. and ii., two mighty energies are opposed. One is that of the spirit that now energizes the children of disobedience, the other, though not called by the name “spirit”, is the Spirit of Him Who wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead. Another facet of this truth is revealed in Eph. ii. 18. It is the Spirit of sonship:--

“For through Him we both have access by One Spirit unto the Father.”

This is the Spirit in Whom we “the both” cry, according once more to Rom. viii., “Abba” (Hebrew), “Father” (Greek). The one Body and the one Spirit anticipate the one God and Father of all. It has been suggested that the apostle’s meaning here is that the Gentiles share in the work and witness of “*one and the self-same Spirit*” of I Cor. xii. When the apostle desired to express that truth he uses the phrase *to hen kai auto pneuma*, whereas in Eph. iv. *to auto*, “the self-same”, is omitted. Had the apostle intended to emphasize “the self-same”, what a weight the sevenfold expression would have! The fact that we have the sevenfold “one” instead is sufficient to decide the apostle’s intention.

ONE HOPE.—This item is extended:--

“Even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.”

This is the one hope of the mystery. If the theme of the mystery pervades Eph. i., then it is possible that the word rendered “his” in i. 18 should be rendered “its”, referring to the mystery:--

“The eyes of your heart having been enlightened: that ye may know what is the hope of its calling”, i.e. the hope of the calling of the Mystery.

“That blessed hope” is the “appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ”, expressed in other words in Col. iii. 4:--

“When Christ Who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

The one hope of our calling is that we shall be manifested with Him *in* glory. The hope of the One Body antedates the second advent. By the time the Lord descends from heaven with a shout, and the saints of the Thessalonian company rise to meet Him in the air, the one hope of our calling will have been realized. We have a prior hope (Eph. i. 12). The signs of the times thicken around us. The movements of the nations and of the nation of Israel are trumpet-tongued. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. If the hope of the *parousia* is near, so much nearer must be the one hope of our calling.

There have been some who have foolishly asserted that we deny the coming of the Lord. We trust that no reader will give credence to such a statement. What we believe is that the coming of the Lord to the air or to the Mount of Olives is not the hope of the one body, which is a very different matter.

ONE LORD.—As we have seen, the Person and Office of Christ as the one Lord is vital to the unity of the Spirit. The title Lord supposes resurrection.

“For to this end Christ both died, and lived again, that He might be Lord of the dead and of the living” (Rom. xiv. 9).

The great confession of things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth is that “Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”. Here again the dominion over both dead and living is manifest.

We do not embark here upon the fact that whoever bears the title “Lord” is the Jehovah of the O.T., as too many and weighty matters arise out of this to be discussed here. We have dealt with this subject in a series entitled “One Lord”. We must not, however, omit one passage, namely, I Cor. viii. 5, 6:--

“For though there be that are called gods, either celestial or terrestrial (as there be gods many, and lords many), yet to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by Whom are all things, and we by Him.”

To understand this passage we must make a digression. When Paul went to Athens and preached the gospel, some said:--

“He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange (or foreign) DEMONS” (Acts xvii. 18).

Now what was there in the gospel as preached by Paul that could have led to such an idea? The Scripture says that the Athenians thought this:--

“Because he preached unto them Jesus, AND THE RESURRECTION” (Acts xvii. 18).

What connection can there be between “Jesus and the resurrection” and “foreign demons”? We must understand that among the Gentiles demons were supposed to be the spirits of men who had died. These demons acted as mediators between men and the far-off celestial gods. They were the “gods terrestrial” and the “lords many” of

I Cor. viii. In the O.T. these terrestrial gods, demons, or mediators are called “Baalim”; which Paul literally translates “lords”. When Paul spoke of “Jesus” Who had died and yet Who lived again, when he spoke of Him as the Lord, and as the Mediator, he was using expressions that implied, to the heathen mind, a foreign demon. “To us”, said the apostle, “there is but one Lord, one Mediator”. The words are used with precision:--

“One God, the Father, OUT OF WHOM (as the originating cause) are the all things (*ta panta*, not ‘all things’ in general, but that particular universe directly brought into being for the purpose of the ages), and we for Him; and one Lord (the Mediator), THROUGH WHOM (the mediating cause) are the all things, and we through Him.”

There is no question raised here of the Deity of Christ, the whole question is one of mediation. This is the great feature in the unity of the Spirit. At either extreme is the One Body and the one God and Father. Access is through the one Lord. As the Lord, too, He rules and has supreme dominion, and all profession of the unity of the Spirit that does not recognize the necessity to obey the one Lord is likely to be an empty profession.

ONE FAITH.—As this item is lifted out for separate treatment in the next section of chapter iv., and space is limited, we pass on to:--

ONE BAPTISM.—The structure of the unity places the one baptism over against the one Spirit. The entire absence of types and shadows from the epistles of the Mystery lends weight to the thought that this is not the baptism in water, but that of the Spirit. The fact that there is “one baptism” is both conclusive and exclusive. John the Baptist baptized in water. This could be called one baptism. During the Acts baptism in water was accompanied by baptism of the Spirit. This cannot be called one baptism, for there were two. If we can speak of two baptisms as one, then how shall we treat the other members of this unity. Are there then two Lords, two Gods, two Bodies?

We occasionally come into touch with companies of believers who, by the prominence which they give to *baptism by water*, refer to themselves as “baptized believer”. Moreover, it is very usual to find those who are members of the One Body and blessed with all spiritual blessings under the dispensation of the Mystery, conceding this point, and allowing others to say of them, *they do not believe in baptism*.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Every member of the One Body is a “baptized believer”, and in no sense should we allow any to say of us that we do not believe in baptism. See the strange argument which is used; while it is conceded by those who practice water baptism that it is a typical rite, nevertheless, we allow those who emphasize *the shadow* to monopolize the claim to baptism, while we who rejoice in *the substance* (the “one baptism”) often appear to undervalue it. It must be one of the objects of our endeavour, for without it the unity of the Spirit is incomplete. “Divers baptisms” are classified as “carnal ordinances” in Heb. ix. 10, which together with the Tabernacle and its offerings, was a representative figure (*parabole*) for the season then present.

If we take the opening verses of Rom. vi. to teach the lesson conveyed by the immersion of the believer in water, we shall be the better able to understand the reality of the one baptism in Eph. iv.:

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into His death, that, like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so also we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.”

When we turn to the epistle to the Ephesians, we find that we have been:

“Made alive together with Christ, and raised together, and made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (ii. 5, 6).

By consulting Eph. iv. 5 we read that there is ONE baptism. It is nothing less than a piece of self-deception to make ONE read TWO, for if one baptism can mean two, then one *Body* may well mean two, one *Spirit* two, etc. During the Acts of the Apostles, there were TWO baptisms, viz. water and Spirit, the type and the reality. *The reality has always been the baptism of the Spirit*, and when the type has no dispensational place the reality still remains untouched and unchanged.

True baptism united the believer with his Lord in His death and resurrection—a unity typically set forth in the ceremony of water baptism. What therefore can have possessed the mind of believers when we find them reasoning that while the reality is the baptism of the Spirit, and the type that of water, the removal of the TYPE removes the REALITY! Is there no true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man, because the earthly type has crumbled to dust? Is there no one sufficient Sacrifice because the typical offerings have ceased? What distorted logic is it that dares to say that those believers who, by the Divine sentence, are united by one Spirit to the death, burial, resurrection and present glory of the ascended Lord, are *un-baptized*? Col. ii. 11, 12 speaks emphatically on this point:

“In whom ye were circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in the putting off the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, having been buried with Him by baptism, wherein also ye were raised with Him through the faith of the inworking of God Who raised Him out from the dead.”

Doubtless in the days of the apostles, and after, there were those who would strenuously deny that the Gentiles were the true circumcision (Phil. iii. 3), simply because they had not submitted to an *external rite*; nevertheless the circumcision without hands was *the real thing*, while many who boasted of the carnal rite were foreigners to the reality. In the same way, *that* baptism which unites the believer with his Lord is independent of the carnal ordinance. When the nature of the dispensation required typical ordinances, God commanded water baptism in association with the real invisible baptism. When the dispensation changed and believers were “no longer children” and “put away childish things”, the external ceremony was not imposed upon them, but the reality remained. The one baptism of the one Spirit is the only baptism that figures in the unity of the Spirit.

If other believers are found biting and devouring one another over the shadow, let us see to it that we do not, for a little peace, yield the true place of the substance. Our stand must be that every member of the church of the One Body is *ipso facto* a “baptized believer”, and that no amount of emphasis on the type can lift it into the place of the reality.

“The things which are seen are temporal, the things that are not seen are age-abiding”
(II Cor. iv. 18).

The underlying meaning of the type of baptism is that of union. This union may be set forth by the immersion of a believer in water, it may be set forth by the baptism of the Spirit, bringing with its supernatural gifts, as in I Cor. xii., or it may not be set forth manifestly and typically at all. The last statement suits the case of the present dispensation. The members of the one Body observe neither days, fasts, feasts, ordinances, nor Sabbath days. These are shadows. The Body is of Christ (Col. ii.). The one baptism unites us to the risen Christ, and we have no command to set forth this union in symbol or type; neither have we any warrant to look for “signs” in connection with our baptism by the Spirit. (*The interested reader is referred to the article entitled “Baptized Believers” on page 158 of Volume XI.*)

Was the baptism of Matt. xx. 21-22 in water? Was the baptism of I Cor. x. 12 in water? See Exod. xiv. 22 “upon *dry ground*”.

ONE GOD AND FATHER.—The purpose of the ages is to bring many sons to glory. Sin has necessitated redemption, and it has been necessary for all the children of God to have been “born again”. The cycle is suggested by the unity of the Spirit. The goal is one God and Father. This member is expanded, like the one dealing with hope:--

“One God and Father of all, Who is over all, and through all, and in all” (Eph. iv. 6).

Are we to gather from this that the last item of the unity of the Spirit teaches the universal fatherhood of God? The “all” is governed by the context. If the word “you” is retained in the clause “in you all”, the idea of the passage is made apparent. It can be translated, the Father is over all, through all, “and in all TO YOU”. Just as Christ is head over all things TO THE CHURCH, though not yet Head over all things manifestly and universally, so the Father is to us.

What a calling is ours! Christ raised and ascended far above all, as Head over all things now to us, and the one God and Father, over all, through all, in all to us, as well. What peace this brings; what triumph, what confidence! Well may we be exhorted to give diligence to keep such a treasure. Let us guard this perfect sevenfold unity of the Spirit in the bond of that peace made by the blood of Christ, until that day comes when stewardship ceases, and the joy of the Lord remains.

(*Mystery 14*, pp.72-77).

No.73. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

The Measure of the Gift of Christ (iv. 7 - 11).

pp. 41 - 44

The unity of the Spirit is followed by the diversity of its members. In the unity the emphasis is upon the fact that there is One Body, one Spirit, and one Lord of all; but in the next section, which comes under the heading "The measure", the theme is the variety of the gifts of the Lord, and the individual responsibility of each member to use the gift as unto the Lord.

We feel a necessity here to correct a wrong impression which our remarks may give. The gift of Christ which is the "measure" must not be confounded with the "gifts" possessed by the early church. If we omit the parenthesis of verses 8-10, we shall find that the gifts are specially qualified *men*, and not "gifts" to individuals:--

"But unto every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the gift of Christ and He gave some, apostles (not apostolic gifts); and some, prophets (not the gift of prophecy); and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. iv. 7, 11).

This fourfold ministry must be looked upon as the gift of the ascended Christ to the church of the One Body, and viewed in a different light from the gifts distributed by the Holy Spirit among the saints during the period of the Acts. Gifts *of* persons rather than gifts *to* persons seems to express the difference. There is, however, one thing common to all the gifts, whether of the earlier or later dispensations. In Eph. iv. 7 it is indicated by the word "measure"; in Rom. xii. 6 the same principle is found in the word "differing"; in I Cor. xii. 11 it is indicated by the word "severally"; in Matt. xxv. 15 it is seen in the expression "several ability". Let us see these verses together:--

"But unto every one of us is given grace, *according to the measure* of the gift of Christ" (Eph. iv. 7).

"Having then gifts *differing according* to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophecy *according to the proportion of faith*" (Rom. xii. 6).

"But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit, dividing to every man *severally as He will*" (I Cor. xii. 11).

"And unto one He gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to everyone *according to his several ability*" (Matt. xxv. 15).

There is great comfort here in the midst of this atmosphere of responsibility. While the Lord expected the man who had five talents to produce another five talents, He was just as pleased with the man who had produced two talents with his two. And had the servant who had but one talent produced another one, he too would have received the "well done", and have entered into the joy of his Lord. It is evident that the principle of "percentage" is recognized by the Lord. The apostle is under the great responsibility of rightly using the apostolic gift, but we, who have no such gift, need not feel concerned because our experiences and the results of our labours do not appear comparable with

those of the apostle. If we are as faithful as the great apostle in any small degree, the “well done” is equally assured. Therefore let us not merely think of the gift, but also of the “measure of the gift”, and according to that measure seek to fulfil the purpose and good pleasure of the Lord.

How often we find those without the necessary qualification occupied in evangelistic work when their “measure” is that of teaching, organizing, interceding or what not. Again, let us give a deaf ear to that bane of the Christian worker, the busybody who is always telling us what we “ought to do”. The Lord knows whether He wants us to be preaching to the unsaved, teaching the saints, ministering to the sick, serving with our hands, using the pen, or praying for others. Let us each one be “fully persuaded in his own mind”, and then seeing our ministry “fulfil it” (Col. iv. 7; II Tim. iv. 5).

Before detailing the ministry which was given by Christ to the church of the One Body, the apostle makes a reference to Psa. lxxviii. 18. We have not here in Eph. iv. 8 a strictly literal quotation either of the Hebrew or the Greek of the LXX. The sense of the passage is preserved, and this manner of reference makes us feel that the apostle wished to take a *thought* from the Psalm rather than intend us to understand that he taught that this Psalm was strictly prophetic of the ascension of Christ and the gift of apostles, prophets, etc. The “ascension on high” of Psa. lxxviii. 18 has reference to the “the hill of God an high hill as the hill of Bashan” (verse 15); the ascension of Eph. iv., as we shall see, is beyond computation in vastness. The apostle decides for us just what part of this quotation he intended to be prominent, for in verse 9 he lifts it out for further consideration:--

“Now that word ‘HE WENT UP’ what saith it, but that He first came down to the earth below?” (*Conybeare and Howson*).

What does it imply? If the Scripture declares that Christ ascended, He must have previously descended first to the lower parts of the earth. Many old expositors interpret this descent of the Lord as a descent into *hell*. Others understand it to refer to the *grave*. Bloomfield, Conybeare & Howson and many others see in the expression, “the lower parts of the earth”, “the lower parts, namely, the earth”. Dr. Bullinger, in *Figures of Speech*, places the expression under the “Genitive of Apposition”, “the lower parts, *that is to say*, the earth”:--

“He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things” (Eph. iv. 10).

Have we appreciated as we should the fact of the ascension and its bearing upon the church of the dispensation of the mystery? “Christ risen” is not sufficient. Israel’s King must be Christ risen, for Psa. ii. 7 declares the decree:--

“The Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee.”

In Heb. iv. 14 the apostle tells us that Christ “passed through the heavens”; in vii. 26 he says of Him, “made higher than the heavens”. These passages, together with that of Eph. iv. 10, give us some idea of the magnitude of that ascension.

Paul has a purpose in this statement as we may well believe. What is it? Christ ascended up far above all heavens “that He might fill (*pleroo*, cf. *pleroma*) all things” (*ta panta*, the all things). We cannot avoid the reference back to Eph. i. 20-23:--

“Seated at His own right hand far above all and gave Him (as) Head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness (*pleroma*) of Him that filleth (*pleroo*) the all things (*ta panta*) with all.”

This reference does something else for us. It explains the meaning of Eph. iv. 7 “the gift of Christ”. We did not discuss the question earlier as to whether this phrase means “a gift that Christ gives”, or that Christ Himself was to be considered as the gift. Eph. i. 22 decides this for us:--

“The gift of Christ” (*Tes doreas tou Christou*).
 “And gave Him to be Head” (*Kai auton edoke kephalen*).

We may now read Eph. iv. 7-10 again:--

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ, i.e., God’s gift of Christ as Head of His Church, and that church the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Seeing that the members are the fullness of Christ, as Christ is the fullness of the all things, we are again reminded that in His ascension, and in the capacity of the One who fills all things, the gifts of ministry to the One Body were given.”

What a different aspect this gives to ministry, to that one of “taking up the profession”! What an unspeakable privilege to receive the very lowest call in this glorious order! Even the humble pastor and teacher of this church is seen to be vitally connected with the great purpose of the ages. His ministry is a part of the great *pleroma*, the all things, that which Christ is making to accomplish the glorious goal of the ages, and to undo the works of the Devil. We can understand the apostle’s allusion in iii. 7-11 the better by seeing this:--

“Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of His power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, according to the purpose of the ages”

If every servant of God realized his stewardship like this, what a difference there would be!

The gifts of the ascended Christ to His church may now be noted.

A APOSTLES.	\	} Inspired and as foundation.
B PROPHETS.	/	
A EVANGELISTS.	\	} Uninspired and subsequent.
B PASTORS and TEACHERS.	/	

(*Mystery14*, pp.86-89).

Who are these apostles? We may first of all reply negatively: they cannot be “the twelve”, for the twelve were appointed by the Lord whilst he was on earth. Their names are given in Matt. x., and the one who fell, Judas, is replaced by Matthias who was “numbered with the eleven”, who received the self-same enduement of the Holy Spirit as they did (Acts ii. 3).

It goes without saying that Paul was one of this new order of apostles, and the chief. We need not labour this point. Who are the others, for it says “apostles”? We shall find that even during the Acts period and before the revelation of the mystery there are others besides the twelve and Paul who bear the title “apostle”.

“When the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard it” (Acts xiv. 14).

If Barnabas was not an apostle of the One Body, he was an apostle to the Gentiles in a way the “twelve” were not.

“These things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos For I think that God hath set forth US the apostles last” (I Cor. iv. 6-9).

Here we find Apollos included in the list of apostles.

“Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles” (Rom. xvi. 7).

We admit that the meaning of this passage may merely be that other apostles knew these fellow-prisoners of Paul very well. Andronicus and Junia *may* have been apostles; there we leave the matter and pass on.

“We might have been burdensome, as the apostles of Christ” (I Thess. ii. 6).

The “We” must refer to the names at the head of the epistle, viz., “Paul, and Silas, and Timothy”. The references in II Cor. viii. 23, and Phil. ii. 25, “apostles of the churches” and “your apostle” we do not press, feeling that in these cases the idea is simply that such were legates of the several churches and not apostles in the sense we are considering. We can however set down the following names of apostles other than “the twelve”: *Paul, Silas, Timothy, Barnabas, Apollos*; if we include *Andronicus* and *Junia*, we have at least seven apostles of a new order than the twelve. If this be so during the dispensation of the Acts of the apostles, it is even more probable that for such a new sphere of service as the dispensation of the Mystery, other apostles, called in harmony with the glorious revelation of the *pleroma*, sent directly from the ascended Head for the benefit of the members, will be given.

(*Mystery14*, pp.101-105).

No.74. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

Readjustment (iv. 12)

pp. 61 - 67

The fourfold gift to the church, which we have already considered, was given with a very special object:--

For (*pros*) the perfecting of the saints:--

1. Unto (*eis*) a work of ministry.
2. Unto (*eis*) a building up of the body of Christ.

Before the work of ministry could be entered upon, or the body built up, something had to be done to meet the dispensational crisis of Acts xxviii. The state of affairs at that time is expressed in the word “perfecting”. Had the church of the One Body been the “perfect” state of which the church of I Cor. xiii. was the immature, this development of doctrine and status could have been expressed by the word so often translated “to perfect” (*teleioo*). This however is not the case. The word used here for the “perfecting” of the saints indicates a rupture, a break, a dislocation, such as we might expect when such a drastic setting aside of the channel of blessing took place, as it did, in Acts xxviii.

Katartismos.—This word according to *Cremer* is used in classical Greek in medical works only. *Katartizo* occurs in Matt. iv. 21, “mending their nets”, where the primary idea *restore* is seen. In I Cor. i. 10 it comes in a context of division:--

“I beseech you that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be *perfectly joined together*.”

So also in Gal. vi. 1:--

“Ye which are spiritual *restore* such an one.”

To *mend* as one would a broken net, to *be perfectly joined together* as contrasted with division, to *restore* as one would a dislocated limb (the medical use of the word), this sense seems uppermost in Eph. iv.

The apostles and prophets of the earlier order were not necessarily fitted to mend the rupture that had been caused by Israel’s rejection. A special set of apostles and prophets was given by the Lord, whose primary business it was to bridge the gulf, and to reset the saints into their new position. These laid the foundation (Eph. ii. 20). Their work was accompanied and also followed by the evangelist and the teacher, and all united together in the one great work of readjustment, for the very gospel took on new aspects, such as the “gospel of peace” and the “gospel of glory”. At such times some old things pass away, some old things are brought over into the new setting, and some new things are

revealed. It is only through the writings of the later ministry of Paul that we can learn these differences.

Take an example, well-known to most students of Scripture. In I Cor. ix. are two important items of church practice:--

1. The position of women in relation to men in the ministry.
2. The Lord's supper.

Apart from the teaching given by the specially equipped ministers whose work it was to readjust the saints, we should not know whether both the above were carried over into the new dispensation, whether both were left behind, whether the Lord's supper only was retained, or whether the relationship of the man and woman only was carried over. Who could possibly decide this but the Lord Himself? In Paul's first epistle to Timothy (ii. 8-15) the relation of the sexes in ministry is repeated and readjusted. Here we stand upon positive teaching. The second item, the Lord's supper, is not repeated, either in this chapter, this epistle, or in any epistle written by Paul for the instruction of the church and its ministry after Acts xxviii.

Let those who feel that they must continue this remembrance of the Lord's death do so as unto the Lord, we have no right to judge them, but let them also acknowledge that we too, who no longer partake of a *typical* feast which is vitally connected with the *new covenant* and so with the Israel's *restoration* and *kingdom*, and closely linked with the *parousia* phase of the Lord's coming, let them acknowledge that we too when we eat not, to the Lord we "eat not" and are "fully persuaded in our own mind" (Rom. xiv. 3-6).

We have already seen, in the sevenfold unity of the Spirit, that the apostle has likewise decided for us whether we observe the baptism of John, or Peter and Paul during the Acts, of the Spirit in His manifest gifts, or of that silent, unseen, yet vital union with the risen Christ, which after all is *the* meaning underlying all the varied baptisms of other dispensations, and which alone gives the typical ordinance its value and power.

This ministry moreover was directed to "the saints" and was a work of "edifying the Body of Christ" rather than world-wide evangelization. The gospel for the unsaved is still the gospel as revealed in Romans. The epistle to the Ephesians assumes that the reader has reached the inner teaching of Rom. v.-viii., "dead to sins". The readjusting of the saints had a twofold goal:--

1. Unto a work of ministry.
2. Unto a building up of the body of Christ.

Work is valueless apart from dispensational truth. Labour expended upon the Body of Christ with undispensational Scriptures does not build up but destroys. The scattered and divided state of the church to-day is largely the result of the attempt to combine dispensations that differ. The reader may be engaged in "a work of ministry", but it is worth while to stop and consider its relation to the various phases of God's purpose. Some of God's children are engaged in phases of kingdom truth. They sometimes

condemn us because we see something different. We do not condemn them however, but readily admit that there are other circles of ministry still open to-day than that of the One Body. The failure is most manifest when one, who professedly belongs to the One Body and seeks to minister in that sphere, for reasons of “usefulness” and through the claims of others descends to an unwholesome blend of Body, Bride, and Kingdom, which cannot but produce a hybrid following. What is true of the particular case of ministry is true in a wider sense, as the parallel of Col. i. 10 shows:--

“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful unto every good work.”

Instead of looking upon dispensational truth as a phase of things that can be taken up as a kind of hobby or left as the case may be, we should look upon it as laying at the base and root of all our actions, doctrine and ministry.

The goal of this readjustment and ministry is the building up of the Body of Christ. Do we appreciate the emphatic place that Scripture gives to that ministry which “builds up”? In Eph. iv. 16 we find it as the great goal of joint service:--

“Unto the building up of itself in love.”

And again in verse 29:--

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying (or building up).”

Look at I Cor. viii. 1:--

“Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.”

This truth is expanded after the chapter of love (xiii.), and in its two forms comes seven times in chapter xiv. (verses 3-5, 12, 17 and 26):--

“He that prophesieth speaketh unto man to *edification* He that speaketh in an unknown tongue *edifieth* himself; but he that prophesieth *edifieth* the church that the church may receive edifying.”

“Forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the *edifying* of the church but the other is not edified Let all things be done unto *edifying*.”

By comparing Eph. iv. with Eph. ii. we may learn something of the sacred fellowship such ministry has with the Spirit of God:--

“In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God in Spirit” (ii. 21, 22).

In the doctrinal section the temple “grows”, and the sphere of that growth is “in Him” and “in Spirit”. In the practical section the body is “built up” by the human instrument given and equipped by the ascended Lord. All ministry is therefore but fellowship in the

great work of God Himself. It is His pleasure that upon the defection of His people Israel, an elect company should be called and gathered together as a holy Temple, a habitation of God. That indicates and limits the sphere and activity of the ministry appointed under those terms. We do not write these words in criticism of the ministry of others, called under other economies, but we do recognize in them our own all-sufficient authority for the work we seek to do and the ministry we seek to fulfil.

To any reader who may be conscious of any indirectness of aim, or who is easily turned aside by the criticism of others, or who is easily plunged into despair because of opposition or non-success, we would suggest a quiet prayerful weighing over of the dispensational grounds of his ministry and stewardship, feeling sure that conviction as to that will carry strength for all that follows. Paul knew Whom he had believed, he was certain of the nature of his call, and the fact that all forsook him, and many misjudged him, then became a light matter. Let us give a résumé of these important features:--

1. PERFECTING.—The first thing to decide as before the Lord is the dispensation in which one is called to serve.
2. MINISTRY.—Then, and only then, can ministry be worthy of the name; all other labour is in vain.
3. EDIFYING.—Never lose sight of this great feature. While others may feel called upon to pull down, and to expose error, let us see to it that we steadily and surely, as in the troublous times of Nehemiah, “build up the Body of Christ”, thereby having blessed fellowship with the great Worker Who is silently building up a habitation of God in Spirit.

(*Mystery15*, pp.17-21).

The Threefold Goal (iv. 13)

(*Mystery15*, pp.21-25).

The first great unity in this chapter is that of the Spirit; the second is that of the faith. The first measure is that of the gift of Christ; the second is the stature of the fullness of Christ. We found that upon mentioning the unity of the Spirit, the apostle immediately proceeded to detail its sevenfold structure (Eph. iv. 3-6). May we expect to find the same help in connection with the unity of the faith? We believe we may:--

“Until we all should arrive unto the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 13).

The word *kai*, translated “and”, is explained by *Dr. Bullinger* in his Analytical Texicon thus:--

“*Kai* (the conjunction of annexation, uniting things strictly co-ordinate), *and*; sometimes not merely annexing, but implying increase, addition, something more, *also*, or only emphasis, *even*.”

If we take the meaning of *kai* to be “even” in this passage, it emphasizes the great centre of the faith toward which the new ministry directed the saints:--

“EVEN the knowledge of the Son of God” (Eph. iv. 13).

No creed was ever so simple. None ever so exhaustive and complete. We might have expected that the Apostle often spoke of Christ as the Son of God, but this is not the case. The passage before us is the only occurrence of the title in the four prison epistles, nay, in any epistle of Paul written after Acts xxviii. It stands therefore the one unique utterance in the dispensation of the Mystery. In his earlier epistles Paul uses the title three times, namely in Gal. ii. 20, which speaks of his identification with the death and the life of the Son of God; in II Cor. i. 19, where he declares that all the promises of God find their yea and their amen in Him; and in Rom. i. 1-4 He is seen as the sum and substance of the gospel of God, marked off as “the Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead”.

There are however other references besides these, for the passages wherein occur the words “His Son” must be included. If the unity of the faith is comprehended in the knowledge of the Son of God, then all that is revealed concerning that Son must go to constitute the oneness of the faith. It is not possible to enter into a careful study of each occurrence, but we can set the passages before the reader who will not fail to appreciate the contribution to a fuller knowledge.

*Gal. i. 16.	The Son revealed in Paul, that He might be preached among the Gentiles.
Gal. ii. 20.	The Son of God. His faith, His life, the life lived by Paul
Gal. iv. 4.	The Son sent in the fullness of time.
Gal. iv. 6.	The Spirit of the Son in the hearts of all God’s sons.
I Thess. i. 10.	The believers wait for His Son from heaven.
I Cor. i. 9.	The fellowship of His Son.
I Co. xv. 28.	The final act of His Son.
II Cor. i. 19, 20.	All the promises of God. Yea and Amen in the Son.
Rom. i. 3.	The gospel of God concerning His Son.
Rom. i. 4.	Declared the Son of God with power, by resurrection.
Rom. i. 9.	The gospel of His Son.
Rom. v. 10.	Reconciliation by the death of His Son.
Rom. viii. 3.	Sent in the likeness of sinful flesh.
Rom. viii. 29.	Conformed to the image of His Son.
Rom. viii. 32.	God spared not His own Son.

**The reasons for placing Galatians first are given in our Book,
“THE APOSTLE OF THE RECONCILIATION”.*

Evangelical truth, church fellowship, individual experience, dispensational truth, age purpose and promises, all find their goal, their assurance, their centre in the Son of God. These are the facets of truth illuminated by the apostle Paul. There is however a vast field in the Gospels and the Acts, where messianic prophecies, the kingship of Israel, *aionian* life, the raising of the dead, and other themes are found associated with the same title. It will be seen that the unity of the faith is a mighty comprehension. The four passages of Paul’s writing which definitely use the title Son of God speak of:--

Life now being by faith of	\	
Promises being Yea and Amen in	\	THE SON OF GOD.
Resurrection declaring with power	/	
Unity of the faith being the knowledge of	/	

and these may well be taken as heads, dividing the revelation concerning Him into their various departments.

The knowledge of the Son of God is really “full knowledge” (*epignosis*). Delitzsch says (*Hebraerbr.* 493, *Cremer*), “We may speak of a false *gnosis*, but not of a false *epignosis*, for *epignosis* seems to suggest that the knowledge gained acts powerfully upon the person”. In Col. iii. 10 it appears that this *epignosis* is not so much the gradual and mental attainment; it is associated with “renewal”, and is according to the “image” of the Creator. In Col. ii. 2 the *epignosis* of the Mystery of God is approached by close fellowship in love and in all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, and here the Mystery of God is Christ, the Vatican MS reading being “the secret of God, Christ, in Whom are hid”. The full knowledge of the will of God is necessary if we would walk worthy of the Lord, pleasing Him in all things (Col. i. 9, 10). *Epignosis* and *epignosko* include the idea of “acknowledging” as in Eph. i. 17, and in the practical outworking of our calling (Eph. iv.-vi.) the “acknowledgment of the Son of God” must be included in all comprehensive knowledge of Him, otherwise we shall have a “body” of truth without the “spirit” which alone makes it live.

Finally, this full knowledge must be sought by prayer. Eph. i. 17 shows that it is the outcome of the gift of the spirit of wisdom and revelation. It is this full knowledge of the Son of God that constitutes the unity of the faith. While the faith rests upon historic fact, it will be realized that in this word we have something deeper than acquaintance with prophecy of fulfillment. The chief priests and scribes, who so readily referred Herod to the prophet’s utterance that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem of Judaea, had *gnosis*, but they had not *epignosis*, for if they had they would have anticipated the wise men with their gifts and their homage. Old Simeon and Anna show the heart-knowledge which seems to be contained in *epignosis*. Looking at the passage once more we observe that it suggests a threefold goal:--

“Until we all should arrive—

Unto (*eis*) the unity of the faith, even the full knowledge of the Son of God.

Unto (*eis*) a perfect (mature) man.

Unto (*eis*) the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ” (Eph. iv. 13).

Consequent upon that *epignosis* of the Son of God is the perfect man. Man, here, is not the usual *anthropos*, but *aner*. Five times in chapter v. this word is translated “husband”. This is a man, full grown, in his prime, fit and complete. The apostle knew that every believer will be presented “holy, and unblameable, and unreprouvable” in the sight of God through the death of Christ, yet he longs for another “presentation”, he longs to be able to “present” every man “perfect” in Christ (Col. i. 22, 28). What can be more perfect than the position of Col. i. 22? Nothing. The highest conception of the idea “perfect” is not that of the Greek *telieios*. This word, derived from *telos*, the end or goal,

suggests the idea of having gone on to the end, having laid hold of that for which one has been laid hold upon, as Phil. iii. 12 puts it.

The *teleios* is often contrasted with the child, as in Heb. v. 12-14 & I Cor. xiii. 10, 11, where the knowledge is elementary, the sight weak, the discernment small, the food milk. The church of the One Body is the *pleroma*, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all, and that, and nothing short of that, is its measure:--

“Unto the measure of the stature of the *pleroma* of Christ.”

The great purpose of the ages, expressed in the word “fullness” and the part that the One Body has in that great restoring work, is the measure of its growth. It is the answer to the prayer of Eph. iii. 19:--

“To know that which surpasses knowledge—the love of Christ, so that you may be filled up to (that is the ‘measure’) all the fullness of God.”

Such is the threefold object of the ministry of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. The readjustment of the saints had “the fullness” in view. The work of ministry had the “perfect man” in mind. The building up of the Body of Christ had the fullness before it, for the Church is the fullness of Christ. This may be better grasped if set out thus:--

Apostles, etc., given:--

- (1). For the readjustment.
- (2). For ministry.
- (3). For building up the *Body of Christ*. (i. 23).

Till we all arrive:--

- (1). Unto the unity of the faith.
- (2). Unto a perfect man.
- (3). Unto the stature of the *pleroma*. (i. 23).

How definite such a ministry is. Here is no beating the air, no uncertain sound; it is the realization in practice of the revelation given in Eph. i. 23.

(*Mystery 15*, pp.21-25).

No.75. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

The Head, *Ta panta* (iv. 15)

pp. 81 - 86

The admonition to “speak the truth in love” taken from the A.V. of Eph. iv. 15 is one that should ever be before the mind of the believer. It is not, however, the meaning of this particular verse. There is no word here for “speaking”, it is rather “being the truth”, i.e., so living that every act and motion and motive shall be in line with “truth”. It is possible that the words “in love” complete the statement, “being the truth in love”, but we believe the true rendering of the passage links the words “in love” with what follows, namely, growth.

We have been warned of the dangers that beset the believer who remains a “babe”. To attain the unity of the faith necessitates the “perfect man” and the “stature or full age” of the fullness of Christ. This therefore demands growth. Over against the sleight of men, the cunning craftiness and the systematic deception of wickedness, the apostle places one simple word, *aletheuontes*. One wishes that our language permitted such a word as “truthing”, it does not, but even “being true” seems weak in comparison with the fullness of the original. Over against the perfect man and the stature, the apostle places “growth”. It can be easily seen if set out thus:--

- A | Faith, knowledge, perfect man, stature of Christ.
- B | Systematic deception.
- B | Being true.
- A | Growth in love into Christ.

The words “in love” we believe should be read with the words “we should be growing”. It will be observed that the section of verses 15 and 16 is bounded by the words “in love”:

“IN LOVE we should be growing unto Him, the all things, Who is the Head—Christ
. . . . unto the building up of itself IN LOVE.”

We have pointed out in other articles of this series that the “Body” of Eph. iv. is the reflection in the practical section of the “Temple” in the doctrinal (Eph. ii.).

- The Temple is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.
- The Body is built up as a result of the ministry of the apostles and prophets.
- The Temple is fitly framed together.
- The Body is fitly joined together.
- The Temple has Christ as its Chief Corner stone.
- The Body has Christ as its Head.
- The Temple grows unto an holy temple in the Lord.
- The Body grows unto Christ.
- The Temple – “In whom ye are builded.”
- The Body – “Out of whom makes for growth.”

Growing and building, figures of Body and Temple, are to be found together in such passages as “rooted and founded” (Eph. iii. 17), and “rooted and built up” (Col. ii. 7). It is important that we remember the fact that the Scripture speaks of the “growth” of the Body. No amount of energy, of meetings, of advertising, can make for growth. Growth is the result of life, health, suitable environment and sound food. Growth can be retarded by the absence of light, air or water. The student of Scripture does not need an exposition of these three types, they are so obvious. Nevertheless, growth is stayed in many a child of God simply because he is not walking in the light.

The passage in the A.V. reads, “May grow up into Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ” (Eph. iv. 15). We find it difficult to accept the translation “in all things”. First.—There is no word for “in”. Secondly.—The words *ta panta* are either the nominative or the accusative plural. In other passages “in all” is *en pasi* (Eph. i. 23; Col. iii. 11), and even though the *en* should be omitted, the dative case *pasi*, would still remain unchanged. Further, we believe that the words *ta panta* express from another point of view that which constitutes the *pleroma*, and indicate that creation which was the work of God, not as revealed in Gen. i. 1, but as revealed in Eph. iii. 9:--

“The dispensation of the mystery, which hath been hidden from the ages that God,
Who (*en Theo to*) the all things (*ta panta*) created.”

Panta is universal, we know that “all things” good and bad, can work together for good to them that love God, but it is not all things, bad as well as good that are “freely given to us”, because of the great gift of Christ. This is *ta panta*, the specific “all things” of the context, “all things” that are the result of redeeming love. Col. iii. 8 rightly translates *ta panta* “all these”, the Colossians were not expected to put off the universe (see also *Just and the Justifier*, pages 230 and 231).

Another phrase needs considering. What do we understand by “growing into Him”? Are we considered as separated from Him, and by slow degrees growing nearer and nearer to Him? This may be possible if we are speaking of the believer’s experimental fellowship with the Lord, but how can a “body” grow into the “head”, for that is the figure before us? Moreover, the very next verse says, “out of whom all the body makes growth”, so that growth is viewed as only possible while Head and members are united.

A somewhat parallel expression occurs in iii. 19, “That ye may be filled (*eis*) unto all the fullness of God”, which means that the believer shall be filled for, or with a view to, that fullness. That he may be able to take his place in that fullness, that as a member of that Body which is itself a “fullness” he may be filled up to the measure of Him that filleth (*ta panta*) with all. So in Eph. iv. the growth is “for” or “with a view to” Him in His capacity as the Head, which is but another way of indicating our “measure”, “the stature of the fullness of Christ”. The fullness is the measure of our stature. “The Head” and “the all things”, is but another way of saying the same thing. Conybeare and Howson in a footnote say, “*Auxanein eis auton* is grow to the standard of His growth”. Christ, the Head, is placed together with “the all things” that are “through Him” (I Cor. viii. 6); the

Lord and His great age purpose are placed before us as our standard and our goal. Should it appear strange thus to link together Christ and *ta panta*, we should remember Col. iii. 11 which says, "*ta panta kai en pasin Christos*", "the all things and in all things (is) Christ". When the scriptural term is understood the sense of strangeness will vanish as we realize how truly the Lord Jesus Christ takes the all things of this mighty purpose into Himself.

To complete the thought of this verse we need to remember one further truth. Running together down the ages are two mysteries. The mystery of godliness, culminating in the exaltation of Jesus Christ as Lord, and the mystery of iniquity, culminating in the man of sin setting himself up as God. In Eph. iv. 4 is the mystery of iniquity, "the systematized deception". In Eph. iv. 15 is the mystery of godliness, with Christ as Head over all things to His church, as He will yet be in heaven and earth to the glory of God the Father.

What an incentive to "grow in grace", may it not be lost upon us.

(*Mystery15*, pp.49-52).

Things that make for Growth (iv. 16).

(*Mystery15*, pp.52-56)

We now come to the central reference to the "body" in Ephesians. In Volume VIII we gave the structure of the seven references. We repeat it here for the sake of new readers:--

- A | a | i. 23. The Body. Christ the Head.
 - b | iv. 4. The Unity. Christ the one Lord.
- B | iv. 12. Gifts for the building.
 - C | iv. 16. Unity. "Fitly joined together."
- B | iv. 16. Each member for the increase.
- A | a | v. 23. The Body. Christ the Head and Saviour.
 - b | v. 30. The Unity. The church the members.

Central place is given to the unity of the body "fitly joined together". The subject is evidently of great importance, judging from its place in the epistle.

We have drawn attention before to the fact that the "Body" in the practical section echoes the "Temple" in the doctrinal section. A glance at the structure above will show that there is only one reference in the doctrinal portion to the Body, the remaining six being found in chapters iv. and v. The Body aspect of the church is essentially practical, and unity is its very life.

"Out of Whom all the Body being fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in measure of each several part, the growth of the body is making unto the building up of itself in love" (Eph. iv. 16).

When the purpose of God in His church is viewed from the Godward standpoint the “Temple” is said to grow “in the Lord”. Further, it does not say that the Temple builds up itself in love, but that it is built up together in spirit. In chapter iv. the theme is practical. The unity of the Spirit is there for us “to keep”. The work of the Spirit is through human channels, apostles, prophets, etc. The building up of the Body of Christ, first wrought by these gifts of the ascended Lord, is followed, after the unity of the faith is reached, by the harmonious working of every member of the Body building itself up in love. A parallel passage is Col. ii. 19:--

“Out of Whom all the Body, being supplied and knit together through the joints and ligaments, groweth with the growth of God.”

The first point to notice is that all grows “out of” Christ, the Head. The next thing is that “growth” depends upon “supply”, and “supply” upon “unity among the members”. We might place the reference to the compactness of the Body and its several members into parenthesis and read:--

“Out of Whom, *origin*, (all the body being fitly framed and knit together) through that which every joint supplieth, *channel*, (according to the working in measure of every part) the growth of the Body, is making unto the building up of itself in love, *goal*.”

The two parenthetical clauses, as it were, are assumed as facts:--

“Taking it for granted that there is no dislocation either of limb, nerve, organ or circulation”, and “taking it for granted that each one part is working proportionately”, then “the growth of the body will take place”.

What a deal is “taken for granted”! Let us note these features carefully.

“ALL THE BODY MAKES FOR GROWTH.”—This is equivalent to saying, “According to the measure of each one part makes for growth.” All the body is concerned with the growth. It is impossible for one member to merely feed itself and further its own growth without wrecking the health if not risking the reason and the life of the Body.

“FITLY FRAMED AND KNIT TOGETHER.”—The word translated “fitly framed together” in ii. 21 and “fitly joined together” in iv. 16 is *sunarmologeō*. This word is composed of “together”, “adapt”, and “collect” and *Dr. Bullinger* in his *Lexicon* well expresses this by saying that it “joins together parts fitted to each other”.

A very slight acquaintance with anatomy or physiology will impress the mind with the perfect adaptation of the various parts of the body. There are no “square pegs in round holes” when the unity is the unity of the *Spirit*; there are, alas, too many such when the unity is of the *flesh*. Unity is fullest when it is unobtrusive. We are not conscious of the many perfectly-fitted and lubricated joints of our bodies until rheumatism spoils their perfect fitness and brings the fact of joints to mind. The healthy man is not conscious of the organs of his body. This is the unity that we desire, but the man-made thing is a source of irritation and trouble all the time. “Leagues”, “unions”, “societies” are well

in their place, but they do not and must not be looked upon in the same light as the unity of the Spirit.

Not only is the Body “fitly framed”, but it is “knit together”. Col. ii. 19 speaks not only of “joints” but “ligaments”. What is the “bond” that shall unite the whole body together as one? Let Col. ii. 2 answer, “being knit together in love”. This is the “bond of perfectness”. The unity of the Spirit is held together by “the bond of peace”, the unity of the body by the “bond of perfectness—love”. “In love” commences and closes this section of Eph. iv. (*see* verses 15, 16). A loveless unity is not of God. If we are members one of another we shall care for one another. When we think of what love is, we can understand what a bond it can be:--

“Love--its longsuffering, its kindliness; its freedom from envy, vaunted self-assertion, inflated arrogance, vulgar indecorum; its superiority to self-seeking; its calm control of temper; its oblivion of wrong; its absence of joy at the wrongs of others; its sympathy with the truth; its gracious tolerance; its trustfulness; its hope; its endurance” (I Cor. xiii. Farrar).

Here is the character of the “perfect man” as I Cor. xiii. 10, 11 indicates. Is it my character and yours, fellow-member? Wherever we fail in this, we fail to maintain unity and check growth. Think how much harm is done among members of the One Body through lack of “longsuffering”. Meditate upon the other attributes of this greatest of gifts. Love forms the ligaments of the Body, without which all is out of joint.

“EVERY JOINT SUPPLIETH.”—Strictly speaking, the words read “through every joint of the supply”. The joints supply nothing of themselves. The supply comes from the Lord, and through the members as a channel. This figure is well illustrated in Phil. i. 19 where the word occurs:--

“And I know that this will result in my deliverance
1. through your prayer
2. and the supply of the spirit of Jesus Christ,
3. according to my earnest expectation and hope.”

Here are fellow-members joined together in love, the one praying, the other expecting, and the Lord supplying. What a beautiful picture of “the joint of supply”. Oh to be honoured as a means and a channel of blessing from our living Head to His beloved members.

“ACCORDING TO THE WORKING.”—Joints and ligaments perfectly adapted, perfectly united, need something else than fitness, they need life. “The body without the spirit is dead, being alone.” What constitutes the life-giving energy of this Body? It is the power of God not as manifested in creation, but in *resurrection*. It is “to usward who believe” (Eph. i. 19, 20). More than that, it is the power of *ascension*, “And set Him far above all” (Eph. i. 21). Still further, it is the power of *victory*, “And hath put all things under His feet” (Eph. i. 22). It is the power that will finally accomplish the purpose of the ages, “The fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 23; i. 11). It is this power that equips for service:--

“Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me according to the energy of His power” (Eph. iii. 7).

“Now unto Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask of think, according to that power energizing us” (Eph. iii. 20).

This mighty power, “the power of His resurrection”, is the life of the One Body:--

“According to the energy in measure of each one part” (Eph. iv. 16).

The distribution of *energeia* and *energeo* in Ephesians is suggestive:--

- A | i. 11. The purpose. Energizing all things with a view to.
- B | i. 19. Exceeding power. “To usward.”
- C | i. 20. Christ the Head. The energy.
- D | ii. 2. The energizing of the children of disobedience.
- A | iii. 7-11. The purpose. Energizing the minister with a view to.
- B | i. 19. Exceeding power. “In us.”
- C | i. 20. The members. The energy.

It will be seen that the energy that actuates every member of the One Body is that same energy that pulsates through *ta panta*, “the all things”, and which raised Christ, the Head, the Fullness, and with Him “the all things” also far above all. The reader may remember that in between the reference to the ascension of Christ and the gifts for men in Eph. iv. 8, and the details of their bestowal and ministry, comes that reference to the fact that the Lord ascended up far above all heavens that He might fill “the all things”. The reader may now better realize the close relation that there is between the church of the One Body, and that great purpose of the ages. Every time we are actuated by the flesh, or the world, we by so much militate against the purpose of God.

This constant association with the purpose of God and its resurrection power is but another way of saying verse 15, “Truthing, in love we all should grow”. There is another energy at work, the *lie*, with Satan at its head. He rules in the lower regions of “the air”, and not “far above all heavens”. His associates are the “rulers of the darkness of this world”, and the “children of disobedience” (Eph. ii. 2; vi. 12).

“THE MEASURE OF EVERY PART.”—It is not sufficient to remember the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Every member of the Body has a part to play, and it is according to the measure of each one part that this Church builds up itself in love.

Here then is a place and a power for each. Let us heartily and gratefully respond.

(*Mystery15*, pp.52-56).

No.76. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

The Satanic Travesty (iv. 14, 15) and contrast to the Unity of Faith. pp. 101 - 103

What a measure is set before us in attaining unto the unity of the faith! Nothing less than the fullness, the *pleroma* of Christ. Nothing but the “perfect man” can reach this standard. In strong contrast to the “perfect” or the full grown adult is the “babe”, as we have observed in Heb. v. and I Cor. xiii. So we find the apostle immediately turning to the negative:--

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. iv. 14).

Perhaps we should be more accurate if we translated *nepios* by “infant”, for the Greek word is derived from *ne* = “not” and *epo* = “to speak”, which thought is retained in the word “infant”, which is from the Latin *infans*, *in* = “not” and *fans* = “speaking”. This meaning gives point to the Lord’s words in Matt. xxi. 16 “out of the mouth of infants (*nepios*) and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise”. So in I Cor. xiii. 11 the apostle says “When I was a child (*nepios*), I spake as a child”.

The Corinthians were called infants (babes) by reason of their carnality and divisions. They had not grown in grace. As a result the apostle was obliged to withhold from them the deeper things of God, “the wisdom of God in a mystery”, which however he said he did speak to those who were “perfect” or full grown adults. The fitness of the word “infant” then will be seen in Eph. iv. There the great feature is the “Unity of the Spirit”, those like the Corinthians were more associated with the “divisions of the flesh”. Eph. iv. contemplates the believer as having reached “the perfect man”, the extreme opposite of the “infant”. Ephesians throughout is the revelation of a “mystery” or secret, and such must be withheld from “infants”.

“Tossed and whirled about with every wind of doctrine”, the word “tossed” (*kludonizomai*) is used in the LXX of Isa. lvii. 20: “The wicked are like the troubled sea.” *Kludon* is used by James, “He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed” (James i. 6). *Katakluzo* is to overwhelm with water (II Pet. iii. 6), and *kataklysmos* is a flood (Matt. xxiv. 38), our English word cataclysm. “Carried about” is *periphero*. We find the word in Heb. xiii. 9, “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines” (though here some MSS read *paraphero*); and again in Jude 12, “Clouds are they without water, carried about of winds” (though here again the truer reading is *paraphero*). Both instances however serve to illustrate the meaning of the word. These two words convey the acme of instability and perplexity. Such a condition is far removed from the serene atmosphere of the unity of the faith, and the perfect man. “Examine yourselves”, said the apostle. Are we carried about by every wind of doctrine?

Do we not know many who seem to have a new doctrine every time we meet them? Such are infants, for such the Mystery remains a “mystery”.

This “wind of doctrine” blows not by chance. Just as surely as the purpose of God moves towards the goal, the *pleroma*, so Satan is ever seeking his own travesty of truth in opposition. The winds of doctrine that bring such confusion are part of a tremendous system of wickedness. Men may throw the loaded dice, but the wiles are the wiles of the Devil. “The sleight of men” is *kubeia*, “to play at dice”, and so “to cheat”. “Cunning craftiness” is *en panourgia*:--

“He perceived their *craftiness*, and said unto them, Why tempt ye Me?” (Luke xx. 23).

Here is the first occurrence of the word, and the context should be studied as a warning and a lesson. Notice how the craftiness is veiled:--

“And they sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of His words, that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the Governor Master, we know that Thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest Thou the person of any man, but teachest the way of God truly. Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?” (Luke xx. 20-22).

It was a deeply-laid plot. The way in which they had been caught on the horns of a dilemma in the matter of John the Baptist rankled, and at last the Chief Priests and Scribes thought to use His own weapon against the Lord Himself. They would make Him impale Himself upon the horns of a dilemma, for see, if He said “Yes”, His reputation as a leader and deliverer, to say nothing of His claim to be the Messiah, would be shattered, for how could the Deliverer of Israel teach them to pay tribute to the Pagan? If He should say “No”, they would immediately charge Him before the Roman Governor as a stirrer up of sedition. They evidently expected “No” for an answer, for they sent the spies “that so they might deliver Him unto the power and authority of the governor”. They reckoned however, without the Lord. He takes the wise in their own craftiness. What was His reply?

“Shew Me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s. And they could not take hold of His words before the people, and they marveled at His answer, and held their peace” (Luke xx. 24-26).

We must be on our guard against those who feign themselves “just men”, who profess to agree with the Word of truth, who flatter us that *we* are not partial or hold men’s persons in respect. The parallels and the contrast to “craftiness” are given in II Cor. iv. 2:--

“We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.”

- A | Hidden things renounced.
- B | Walk in craftiness,
- C | Handle Word of God deceitfully.
- C | Truth manifested.
- B | Commended to conscience.
- A | In the sight of God.

The contrasts are sufficiently obvious, and we commend them to our readers as a commentary upon our subject. II Cor. xi. 3 gives the basic example, origin and energizer of this craftiness:--

“The serpent beguiled Eve through his *subtilty*.” (xi. 3).

Behind the “sleight of men” is the “cunning craftiness” of the devil:--

“Whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Eph. iv. 14).

Aquila translates Exod. xxi. 13 by *methodeuse*, but the word seems to mean more generally a systematic artifice. *Methodeia* comes again in Eph. vi. 11, “the *wiles* of the Devil”. “Systematic deception”, “snares of the cunning”, “deliberate system of error”, “the systematizing of the deception”, “a subtle method of deceit” are some of the many translations offered. They impressed us with the thought that there is deliberate systematic method pursued in this craftiness. Speaking of Satan, II Cor. ii. 11 says, “We are not ignorant of his devices”. He ever continues the same corruption of the Word of truth, the flattery, the temptation, as in the Garden of Eden, and the instance recorded in Luke xx., till cast into the lake of fire. Shakespeare well puts it:--

“The equivocation of the fiend, that lies like truth.”

So then we have the unity of the Spirit set over against the systems of deception, in other words, the mystery of godliness and the mystery of iniquity, the truth and the lie.

The apostle has been saying what we are *not* to be; he now concludes by stating the positive. One word suffices to give complete contrast to all the craft and deceit of the wicked one. *Aletheuontes*.—The word means more than “speaking the truth”, it means “being true”. This has a fuller and deeper meaning than we may at first suppose, but as this is dealt with by the apostle in the same chapter we will follow his own order and wait until we reach the passage. We can see, however, the supreme place of truth in the witness for God. It may not be amiss to exhibit the usage of “truth” in Ephesians:--

Truth.

- A | i. 13. Word of truth. Salvation.
- B | a | iv. 21, 22. Put off.
- b | iv. 24. Righteousness and holiness.
- B | a | iv. 25. Put away.
- b | v. 9. Righteousness and goodness.
- A | vi. 14. Girdle of truth. Warfare.

The whole world is ranged under two heads, the *Truth*, and the *Lie*. Christ stands at the head of one, Satan at the other. Truth makes the weakest invincible. Truth will prevent the ship from being carried by the winds and waves. Truth will deliver from the sleight of men and reveal the systematic deceit of the wicked one.

We shall see presently the close connection between the “old man” and “the lie”, and the “new man” and “the truth”; let us here, while the passage is before us, remember the close association that must ever be between “the perfect man” and “the truth” also.

(*Mystery15*, pp.26-30).

No.77. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

Alienation, the mind and the new man (iv. 17 - 20) pp. 121 - 126

In our previous studies we have seen that the opening of the practical section of this epistle (chapter iv.) sums up all true practice in the exhortation, “walk worthy of your calling”. Practice is the fruit of doctrine and cannot be disassociated from it. It would be useless, for example, to exhort wives and husbands to comply with the practical exhortations of chapter v. if they did not heartily accept the doctrinal basis upon which those exhortations rest. Consequently while it is true that we are now studying the practical section of this epistle, there is no arbitrary exclusion of doctrine, and we shall find much doctrine interwoven with the practical teaching of this section.

The disposition of subject matter must be observed. The positive exhortation of Eph. iv. 1 is followed by a negative testimony as to how not to walk. Between these two phases of truth there is a glorious parenthesis dealing with the *one Body* (verses 3-16), and following the negative testimony (and placed in correspondence) is the teaching concerning the *new man*.

Eph. iv. 1-32.

- A | 1, 2. The walk. Positive. Humility of mind.
- B | 3-16. The one Body.
- A | 17-19. The walk. Negative. Vanity of mind.
- B | 20-32. The new Man.

Aliens -- from Israel, and from the life of God.

The epistle to the Ephesians reveals a twofold Gentile alienation:--

- “Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel” (Eph. ii. 12).
- “Aliens from the life of God” (Eph. iv. 18).

The Gentiles were aliens by birth, quite irrespective of anything they did or thought. To illustrate this: when I stood on the quay at Southampton in April 1955 I was British, but when I stepped on the quay at New York in the same month, without having done anything, I was an alien. In like manner, citizen of New York who boarded the liner with me, automatically became an alien as he stepped ashore at Southampton. An attempt has been made to prove that the alienated Gentiles of Eph. ii. 12 are the far-off dispersion of Israel. But what happens then to the references to “Gentiles” that follow?

The alienation of chapter ii. is expressed in the terms of *distance*; the alienation of chapter iv. is expressed in the terms of *death*. The blood of Christ cancels the former alienation by “making nigh”; the gift and operation of resurrection life reverses the other. In both cases however this twofold truth merges into one expression, *the new man*.

Before we consider the teaching of the new man we must give attention to the negative aspect of the believer’s walk. In verse 17 we read, “That ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk”. The word “other” should be omitted. We are exhorted to walk not as the Gentiles walk. A very definite change is suggested by the words “not henceforth”. The same negative comes in Eph. iv. 28, “Let him that stole steal *no more*”. While the chief feature of the epistle to the Ephesians is the revelation of the mystery and its dispensational peculiarities, we must not forget that it finds its doctrinal basis in Romans. When dealing with Eph. ii. 1 and the words “dead to trespasses and sins”, we were compelled to refer back to Rom. vi. So also we find the true import even of the words “not henceforth” in Rom. vi. 6:--

“Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him that the body of sin might be rendered inoperative, that HENCEFORTH we should NOT serve sin as slaves.”

The service of Rom. vi. 6 and the walk of Eph. iv. 17 are both associated with the old man. In one case it is seen as “crucified”, in the other it has to be “put off”, but both meet in a new “life unto God”. Rom. vi. lays great stress upon “the body of sin”, “the mortal body” and the “members”; Eph. iv. emphasizes “the mind”, and that both positively and negatively:--

“Walk worthy with all humility of mind” (iv. 1, 2).
“Walk no longer in the vanity of mind” (iv. 17).

There are two words here for “mind”. In iv. 2 the word is a compound of *phreen*, and has particular reference to the heart and understanding. In iv. 17 mind is *nous*. The word *nous* has passed into the English language, and is placed in Roget’s *Thesaurus* together with intelligence, comprehension, understanding and sagacity. The word is used by Paul more than any other writer of the New Testament, for it occurs 21 times in his epistles out of a total of 24. It is manifest therefore that an intelligent appreciation of the truth revealed through Paul demands an acquaintance with the usage of this word in his epistles. We find the *nous* connected with both the old and the new man.

The nous of the old man.—Rom. i. 28; vii. 23, 25; Eph. iv. 17; Col. ii. 18;
I Tim. vi. 5; II Tim. iii. 8; Titus i. 15.

The nous of the new man.—Rom. xii. 2; I Cor. ii. 16; Eph. iv. 23; Phil. iv. 7.

The mind and alienation.

Rom. i. 18-32 speaks of the setting aside of the Gentiles consequent upon their idolatrous abandonment of the truth which had been made known to them. Three times in this momentous passage do we read that these Gentiles were “given up” by God (Rom. i. 24, 26 28). In verse 28, by a play upon the sound of the words used (figure of speech called *paranomasia*), the judicial nature of this “giving up” is made prominent. *Conybeare* expresses the figure by translating the verse thus:--

“As they thought fit to *cast out* the acknowledgment of God, God gave them over to a *cast out* mind.”

Alford renders the passage:--

“Because they *reprobated* the knowledge of God, God gave them over to a *reprobate* mind.”

The resulting state of morals, given in the verses that follow, is terrible to the last degree. It is summed up in Eph. iv. 19 by the words, “All uncleanness with greediness”. Such was the condition of the Gentile world; such the outcome of a mind alienated from God and His truth.

In our appreciation of the vital distinction that exists between law and grace, we are apt to slur the equally decided difference that there is between the *light* of the law of God given to Israel and the *darkness* of reprobation that settled down upon the Gentiles. While the law could give neither life nor righteousness, we do read:--

“The law of the Lord is perfect, *converting the soul* The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes” (Psa. xix. 7, 8).

If we keep this fact before us we shall be able to understand the setting of the next reference to the *nous*:--

“I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my *mind* so then with the *mind* I myself serve the law of God” (Rom. vii. 23-25).

This illumination of the law, however, only intensified the bondage of sin and death, for while to will was present, to perform was impossible. So far as justification is concerned, the enlightened Jew stood upon the same platform as the darkened Gentile, but so far as the doctrine of the mind is concerned we perceive that it can be influenced by outside factors, even though the bondage of sin and death may remain. Passing to Col. ii. 18 we learn that there is a ‘fleshly’ *mind* which “puffs up” and leads away from Christ. The three passages that remain speak of:--

“Men, whose *mind* is corrupted and destitute of the truth” (I Tim. vi. 5).

“Men who resist the truth, being corrupt in *mind* and reprobate (cf. Rom. i. 28) as concerning the faith” (II Tim. iii. 8).

“All things indeed are pure to those who are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but both their *mind* and conscience are defiled and unto every good work reprobate” (Titus i. 15, 16).

Such is the testimony of the Apostle to the *nous* of the old man. His teaching concerning the *mind* of the new man is contained in four passages:--

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice be ye transformed by the renewing of your *mind*, that you may *approve* (*dokimazein*, cf. Rom. i. 28) what is the will of God” (Rom. xii. 1, 2).

Here is the great contrast with Rom. i. 18-32; in that passage both mind and body are “given over” to evil, here they are “yielded” to God. This distinction between the natural and the spiritual is brought out markedly in I Cor. ii. 14-16. The natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God, they appear to him foolishness. God reveals His truth “by His Spirit”. The Spirit of God and His relation to God is likened to the intimate relation of “the spirit of man which is in him” (verses 10, 11). In other words, they who are taught by the Spirit can say, “We have the *mind* of Christ” (verse 16).

This connection of spirit and mind is found in Eph. iv. 23, “And be renewed in the spirit of your *mind*”, which may be rendered, “The spirit, that is to say, your *mind*”. The last reference speaks of peace. The mind of the flesh is enmity against God, but Phil. iv. 7 speaks of both heart and *mind* kept in perfect peace by Christ. If we ponder these passages we shall the better understand “the truth” which is taught in Eph. iv. 17 onwards.

Accessories and issues of alienation.

Vanity of mind (Eph. iv. 17).—The first item of alienation given is *vanity of mind*. The *mind* of the old man is like the old creation “subject to vanity” (Rom. viii. 20), and like Babel (Rom. i. 21). The essential connection between this vanity and the idolatrous perversion of Babel is seen not only in Rom. i. 21-23, but in Acts xix. 15, 16, where “vanities” and “the living God” are placed in opposition, and moreover these vanities are connected with the period of Gentile alienation when they were “suffered to walk in their own ways”.

A darkened understanding (Eph. iv. 18).—The sequence “vanity darkness” is observed in Rom. i. 21. “They became *vain* in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was *darkened*”. We are reminded of the past, the change and the consequent walk, in Eph. v. 8:--

“For ye were sometimes *darkness*, but now are ye *light* in the Lord, *walk* as children of light.”

The complete reversal of alienation and its darkness is found in Eph. i. 18:--

“The eyes of your heart (A.V. understanding) having been enlightened.”

A comparison of Rom. i. 21 with Eph. iv. 17, 18 will show that “heart” and “understanding” are practically synonymous.

The ignorance that is in them because of the hardness of their hearts (Eph. iv. 18).— We may gather something concerning this ignorance by reading Paul’s speech at Athens (Acts xvii. 30). There, dealing with the wise of the earth, he speaks of their *ignorant worship*, and of the *unknown god*. To turn from One in Whom we move, live and have our being, from One Who gave fruitful seasons and every reason for gratitude, to turn away from Him and to worship the works of their own hands was the practical expression of their “alienation from the *life of God*”.

In verse 30 we meet the word “ignorance” and find that it characterizes the whole Gentile period, “And at the times of this ignorance God winked at”. This ignorance and alienation are beyond human remedy. No philosopher or orator who ever stood upon Mar’s Hill could dispel its gloom or illuminate its darkness. The darkness, alienation and ignorance of Eph. iv. 18 are the expansion of the words “vanity of mind” of the previous verse (iv. 17). The walk as the Gentiles which was forbidden is expanded in iv. 19:--

“Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”

In this record of the Gentile walk we find the word *paredoken*:--

“God *gave them up* to uncleanness” (Rom. i. 24).

“They *gave themselves up* to uncleanness” (Eph. iv. 19).

The Scripture adds “with greediness”. Here we have the two sides of the solemn truth. The act of God was not without cause:--

“For this cause God *gave them up*” (Rom. i. 26).

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

“The fool hath said in his heart, ‘There is no God’.” (Psa. xiv. 1); the immediate comment is, “They are corrupt; they have done abominable works”.

Life and Truth.

The passages of Scripture brought together here impress us with the important position of the mind in connection with the activities of life. The word “life” (*zoe*) occurs but once in this epistle, namely, in Eph. iv. 18, “the life of God”. It does not appear to be used in any form in any other part of the epistle, except in Eph. ii. 5 where it is a compound and translated “quicken together”. In case any reader should think that we have overlooked Eph. vi. 3 we would point out that the word there is not *zoe*.

How are we to understand this alienation from the life of God? The parallel passage in Col. i. 21 connects this alienation with “wicked works”. We cannot “live *unto* God” without the “life *of* God”, and that life can only be ours as we are “made alive together

with Christ". The sphere of resurrection life is "the truth", even as sin and death are part of the province of "the lie". The Gentiles, we are told in Rom. i. 25, "changed the truth of God for *the lie*", and this led to their alienation. Here in Eph. iv. we are to read of putting away *the lie* and of putting on the truth:--

"Ye however have not thus learned the Christ—if at least it is Him ye have heard, and by Him ye have been taught, even as truth is in Jesus" (Eph. iv. 20, 21).

The presence here of the name "Jesus" instead of the more usual "The Lord Jesus Christ" demands an explanation. While the personal name of the Lord is constantly used in the Gospels, its use without some added title in the Epistles is the exception rather than the rule. Writing to the Hebrews the apostle uses the name "Jesus" eight times (this includes Heb. iv. 8 which does not refer to our Lord but to Joshua). The references are Heb. ii. 9; iv. 14; vi. 20; vii. 22; x. 19; xii. 2, 24; xiii. 12.

In the church epistles the apostle uses the name eleven times in all, three of these references however deal either with unbelievers or the testing of spirits, leaving another series of eight with direct teaching for the church. The references are Rom. iii. 26; viii. 11; II Cor. iv. 5, 10, 11, 14; Eph. iv. 21; and Phil. ii. 10. If these facts stood alone we might feel that there was no spiritual significance in the number of the occurrences, but when we know that the numerical value (*gematria*) of the Greek letters of the word "Jesus" is 888 (a pointed contrast to the number of the name of the beast which is 666), and that the number 8 has the significance of resurrection (a fresh start, as for example Noah and those with him in the ark—*see* II Pet. ii. 5 and I Pet. iii. 20; "the eighth person" and "eight souls"), then the introduction of the name "Jesus" here in Eph. iv. assumes definite meaning.

Most if not all of the references given above are found in contexts of resurrection, and it is because the truth which the apostle is about to teach is vitally related to the Lord as the Head of the new creation, the last man and the second Adam, that he uses this name.

All is now ready for the expansion of "the truth in Jesus". The old man in its total alienation from God necessitates the *new man* and the *new creation*. This therefore is the subject that must occupy our attention in our next study.

(*Mystery15*, pp.99-106).

No.78. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).
The New Man and the Truth (iv. 20 - 24)
pp. 150 - 155

In our last paper we were led, both by the contemplation of the utter alienation of the Gentiles from the life of God, and the significance of the name “Jesus”, to expect the introduction of a new creation. Such is indeed the fact, and without it we should be left without the least hope of ever throwing off the dreadful dominion of the old man. Let us observe the disposition of the subject matter before we go into details.

The new man (Eph. iv. 20 - 24).

- A | 20, 21. Truth in Jesus. Head of new creation.
- B | 22. Put off the old man. Corrupt.
- B | 23, 24-. Put on the new man. Renewed.
- A | -24. Truth (righteousness and holiness of). Sphere of new creation.

“The truth in Jesus” is the truth of the new creation. The old man belongs to “the lie”, the new man to “the truth”. The old man is corrupt, the new man is renewed and holy. The words “put off” are to be referred to the word “taught”, and the passage reads:--

“And by Him ye have been taught (. . . .) to put off the old man.”

We are in the practical section of the epistle, and so are not instructed as to how the old man was put off by Christ, but our attention is directed rather to the outworkings of that doctrine. We are to put off “as regards *the former conversation*” the old man, or as Colossians put it:--

“Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man *with his deeds*”
(Col. iii. 9).

“With his deeds” is equivalent to “the former conversation”, remembering that the A.V. word “conversation” is much more than merely speaking with another, but means the whole manner of life.

The foundation of this teaching is Rom. vi. 6:--

“Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be rendered inoperative, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

The lusts or desires that dominate the unregenerate mind have one characteristic, they are “deceitful”. This is not to be limited to the coarser lusts of the flesh; the higher and finer activities of the mind are marked with the same Satanic brand, for Col. ii. 8 speaks of “philosophy” as being “vain and deceitful”, and essentially so inasmuch as it is “not after Christ”. The new man therefore arises out of the “*truth* in Jesus”, and repudiates

the *lie*, that is, whatever is not “after Christ”. Christ must be foundation and top stone of this erection, even as He is the Alpha, Omega and Amen of the purpose of the ages.

The new creation.

The glorious truth given to the Apostle to make known with such fervour is no mere negation. It does not find its full expression in “putting off” merely, but is only fully expressed when “put off” is succeeded by “put on”. But, just as the old man which has become corrupt implies the creation of Adam at the beginning, so the new man which is to be put on necessitates a new creation. There are two ways whereby this new creation could be attained. Either by an instantaneous act without previous preparation, or by a process beginning here and now in this present life and reaching its consummation in that instantaneous change “in the twinkling of an eye” when this mortal shall put on immortality.

This latter method appears to be the one that describes the work of God. Having said so much, it is necessary to draw attention to just exactly what phase of the new creative work belongs to this present life, and what belongs to the life to come. It will be found upon examination that the Lord begins the work here in connection with the *mind*, reserving until the day of redemption and resurrection His work in connection with the *body*. The body of the saintliest believer is just as mortal as it was before his conversion. Paul had to acknowledge that while the inward man was renewed day by day, the outward man was perishing. This perishing and mortal body is indeed allowed to feel the earnest of the risen life, and many times the earthen vessel is “cast down but not destroyed”, thereby bearing about in the body the “dying of the Lord Jesus” that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in “our mortal flesh”. That is a precious truth, but the flesh is “mortal flesh” just the same. Therefore, seeing these two phases of the new creation and their appointed times, we observe the order in Eph. iv. where the first step is indicated by the words, “And to be renewed in the spirit of your mind” (Eph. iv. 23). The new creation begins *within*. Its present sphere is the *mind*. The body is not changed until the resurrection. The due observance of this sequence is an important factor in the interpretation of the epistle to the Philippians.

“The *mind* of Christ” (Phil. ii.).

“The *body* of His glory” (Phil. iii.).

Ananeo (“to be renewed”) does not occur elsewhere in the N.T. Two words are employed to express the idea of newness—*kainos* and *neos*. *Kainos* looks backward, it excludes the old and the past. *Neos* looks forward, and suggests youth. The two words come together in Col. iii. 10:--

“And having put on the new man (*neos*) being renewed (*anakainoo*).”

In other words, we have put on the new, young, rejuvenate man, fresh, vigorous, prime, with all the glorious future stretching out in its limitless possibilities by the grace of God, and have been renewed with a life that standing beside the empty tomb looks back at a past, dead, buried, excluded, finished. *Neos* turns our faces toward Christ, the last Adam, *kainos* looks back to the first Adam. The one says “life has begun”, the other “that life has finished”. Thus we have the reverse and the obverse of this blessed truth.

The *spirit* of your mind, the subject of this renewal, looks to the doctrine of Rom. vi. There we learn that the seat of sin is in the members of our mortal body (Rom. vi. 6, 12, 13, 19). The mind being held in subjection to the flesh (Rom. vii. 14, 15, 18, 22), even though illuminated by the law of the Lord, finds itself utterly enthralled and under the dominion of sin which is in the members. Hence the battle of the unsaved yet enlightened Jew (Rom. vii. 23).

As we have already said, we have no warrant to believe that the bodies of believers undergo any process of renewal, but rather that these bodies of ours shall returned to dust, to be raised incorruptible, or changed in the case of the living at the time, when the Lord comes.

When the sinner passes from death unto life, from Adam to Christ, from the power of Satan to God, the dominion of sin is broken, the mind is set free, and it becomes possible for the first time to “yield ourselves servants to obey” either sin or God (Rom. vi. 16). Before this we had no option.

The new creation manifested.

The renewal of the mind is an inward operation. It is completed and rounded off by a corresponding outward response:--

“And to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” (Eph. iv. 24).

With this passage we should read the parallel in Col. iii. 10:--

“And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created Him.”

These passages taken together are mutually helpful. Let us notice a few special features.

(1). Creation.

Both emphasize the fact of creation:--

“Created in righteousness and holiness” (Eph. iv. 24).

“Created after the image of Him” (Col. iii. 10).

With these passages we should compare those of Eph. ii.:--

“We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus” (ii. 10).

“For to create in Himself of the twain one new man” (ii. 15).

It is impossible to believe the gospel as preached by Paul and to tolerate any kind of mere reformation. The basic fact and the most decisive in Paul’s witness is that all men,

all doctrine, all works, are ranged under one of two heads, *Adam or Christ*. Quite one half of our problems, whether doctrinal or practical, are to be solved by the recognition of this one great fact. Redemption therefore must eventuate in

(2). The new man.

The goal of the six days' creation was man. The great sun in the heavens is man's servant. To his physical necessities the day of twenty-four hours is exactly adjusted. The earth is proportioned with marvelous accuracy to man's strength. The list could be continued into detailed tabulation of all the sciences. Man created in the image of God, placed upon the earth to have dominion, explains every known phenomenon of nature.

As it is with the old creation, so it is with the new. Its centre is the new man created anew in the image of God. The ecclesiastical unity that results from the reversal of the dispensational alienation of Eph. ii. is called "the new man", and is created so (Eph. ii. 12-15). The practical unity with Christ, as the reverse of alienation from the life of God, is also called "the new man" (iv. 18-24).

A needed corrective.

The dispensation of the Mystery is called "the dispensation of the *grace* of God". The gospel of that same period is called "the gospel of the *grace* of God". Salvation is by grace, and that salvation is at the other extreme to salvation by works. The transcendent character of grace is so overwhelming that we are apt to forget that if this salvation by grace is not *out* of works, it is nevertheless *unto* works. Another feature that is likely to lead to one-sidedness is to emphasize the dispensational standpoint of the new man (Eph. ii. 15) to the exclusion of the practical teaching concerning the same (Eph. iv. 24). Let us not forget that the church which was chosen in Christ before the overthrow of the world, and blessed in the super-heavenlies, was chosen *that it might be holy* (Eph. i. 1-4).

Let us compare Eph. iv. 24 with Col. iii. 10. It is quite manifest that the "new man" of Col. iii. 10 is the same as that of Eph. iv. It is the "practical" view rather than the "dispensational" of Eph. ii. Yet so inseparable are these two concepts of the one truth, that Col. iii. 11 immediately continues, using terms that are comparable to the teaching of Eph. ii., rather than that of Eph. iv.:--

"Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free; but Christ is all and in all."

The ecclesiastical unity is not absent from Eph. iv., however, for verse 25 says:--

"Wherefore putting away the lie, speak every man truth with his neighbour, for we are MEMBERS one of another" (Eph. iv. 25).

The truth is that the church of the One Body should be reflected in each individual member that makes up that unity. If Christ be the Head of the church, He must be the Head of each individual also. If that church be a new creation, so also must each

individual member be. If that church be a new man, each member should put on the new man. If Christ dwells in the temple built by the Spirit (Eph. ii. 20-22), then “Because of this” (Eph. iii. 1 and 14) each individual member should desire to manifest that truth in miniature, and is taught to pray “that Christ may dwell in the heart by faith”. Thus doctrine, dispensation and practice meet together in “the truth in Jesus”.

(3). The Image.

Eph. iv. 24 says that the new man is “according to God”. Col. ii. 10 says it is “according to His image”. It is evident that Gen. i. 26, 27 is in view. The introduction of *the lie* into the garden of Eden rendered the purpose of the image in Adam abortive, but only temporarily, for in Christ, the last Adam, the goal is reached. It is the purpose of God that every one of the true seed shall be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. viii. 29). The church of the One Body, a new creation in that image, is a firstfruits, the greatest and richest earnest of the glorious future.

The goal of Col. iii. 11 that “Christ is all and in all”, foreshadows the goal of the ages “that God may be all in all”. Christ has been given as Head over all things *now* to the church, another anticipation of the day when all things shall be placed under His feet.

(4). Knowledge.

Eph. iv. 24 speaks of righteousness and holiness of truth. Col. iii. 10 speaks of renewal unto a full knowledge of God, the Creator. Is there a difference here? What connection is there between righteousness, holiness and knowledge of the Creator? Have we so soon forgotten the context of Eph. iv. 24? Have we not seen the utter UNrighteousness and UNcleanness of *ignorance*? Have we not seen the degradation that comes from vanity of mind, darkened understanding and ignorance? If there is to be a change, ignorance must give place to knowledge, darkness to light, uncleanness to holiness, wicked works to righteousness. In other words, the complete truth is expressed by the two passage; either Eph. iv. or Col. iii. taken separately implies and necessitates the other. Having touched upon this teaching concerning knowledge we shall realize the condition of things expressed in Rom. i. the more vividly:--

“Because that when they KNEW God they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was DARKENED they did not like to retain God in their KNOWLEDGE, they were given over to a reprobate mind” (Rom. i. 21-23).

We shall also understand the meaning of II Cor. iv. 3-6 the better:--

“But if our gospel be veiled (*see* iii. 14, 15) by those things which are destroyed (*see* iii. 7, 11, 13, 14) it is veiled by which the god of this age hath *blinded the minds* of them that believe not, lest the light of the glory of the gospel of Christ, Who is the *Image* of God (*see* Col. iii. 10), should shine upon them the light of the *knowledge* of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Cor. iv. 3-6).

Here we see the gospel and knowledge used practically as synonymous. The outcome of this teaching is expressed in Eph. iv. 25:--

“Wherefore putting away the lie, speak you truth, each one with his neighbour, because we are members one of another” (Eph. iv. 25).

The reference here to Zech. viii. 16 shows that mere *speaking* will not satisfy the demands of love to our neighbour, for the passage continues thus: “execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates”. “The lie” has brought in its train misery, oppression, death. “The truth” reverses all this and manifests itself in *deed* as well as in word.

The verses that follow expand and apply this exhortation to the whole range of earth’s relationships. As this occupies the whole of chapter v. and part of chapter vi., we must perforce conclude this present study.

Let us seek a tender conscience regarding these things, keeping steadily before us the intimate and vital association that has been revealed to exist between the high calling of the One Body and the walk that is worthy.

(*Mystery15*, pp.136-142).

No.79. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

Put on ... Put off ... Walk accurately (iv. 25 - v. 21) pp. 161 - 169

The conflict of the ages is reflected in the epistle to the Ephesians. It is summed up in the antagonism that is seen between the truth and the lie, and expressed by the new and the old man.

The church of the Mystery has been delivered from the authority of darkness and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. That is the repudiation of the lie. The church has been lifted up from earth and earthly things, quickened, raised and seated in the heavenlies. That is the repudiation of the lie. The members of that church, once energized by the prince of the power of the air, is now energized by the self-same power that raised Christ from the dead. That is the repudiation of the lie.

But what of ourselves? Do we remain passive after grace, as perforce we were compelled to be before? Have we no walk that is to be worthy? Have we no old man to put off? No new man to put on? We have, and doctrinal truth standing alone can no more save, sanctify and bless, than that kind of faith exercised by demons.

The putting away of the lie.

“Wherefore putting away lying” should read “Wherefore putting away *the lie*”. “To put away” (*apotithemi*) is used of putting aside clothing (Acts vii. 58), weight

(Heb. xii. 1), and occurs in Rom. xiii. 12; Eph. iv. 22, 25; Col. iii. 8; James i. 21; and I Pet. ii. 1. Eph. iv. 25 is the only place where we read of putting away the lie. All other passages deal with some of the smaller sub-divisions into which the lie falls, such as “the works of darkness”, “the old man and his manner of life” and such individual manifestations as “anger”, “malice”, “blasphemy”, &c.

In Eph. iv. 25-32 this putting away of the lie is dealt with, and the Spirit of God condescends to details in order that we may be made sensible that in the words of our mouth, the works of our hands, the very tone of our voices, we may manifest the truth and repudiate the lie. Two expressions seem to stand out in this passage as index figures on a dial:--

THE LIE.—“Gives place to the devil” and “Grieves the Holy Spirit of God.”

THE TRUTH.—“Even as God for Christ’s sake hath acted graciously to you.”

Let us see the passage as a whole.

Eph. iv. 25 - 32.

- A | 25. | a | Putting away the lie.
 - b | Speak truth.
 - c | Reason.—“Members.”
- B | 26. Question concerning anger.
- C | 27. Give not place to the devil.
- D | 28. | d | Steal not.
 - e | Labour for that which is good.
- WORKS. | f | Working with hands.
 - g | To supply need.
- D | 29. | d | No corrupt speech.
 - e | But that which is good.
- WORDS. | f | Out of your mouth.
 - g | To build up the need.
- C | 30. Grieve not the Holy Spirit.
- B | 31-. Answer as to anger.
- A | -31, 32. | a | Put away all bitterness, &c.
 - b | Be kind.
 - c | Reason.—“God for Christ’s sake.”

The practical side of the truth.

If we have put away the lie, we shall speak truth with fellow-members. To speak truth may at first sight appear to mean only the bearing of a true witness, but a man who would scorn to tell a lie may fail to speak truth if “corrupt communications” proceed out of his mouth. His remedy is found in the “seasoning” which only the “grace” of God can give (Col. iv. 6).

Or again, the man who eschews corrupt speech may tarnish the fair name of truth by “bitterness”. Even husbands who love their wives in some faint resemblance of the love

of Christ are warned to beware of this evil thing (Col. iii. 19). Anger too must be carefully watched. We know that it is possible for anger to exist without sin, for such is the testimony of Mark iii. 5, and all the passages where *orge* is translated “wrath” when used of God. Nevertheless it is true wisdom to shun anger, to class it with bitterness and wrath and clamour and blasphemy and malice (Eph. iv. 31), for it requires a perfect and sinless being to be angry and sin not. If anger is ever entertained let us hasten to finish with it; let not the sun go down before the difference is settled. Plutarch tells us it was a maxim among the Pythagoreans, that whenever one had given way to anger, the difference was made up before sunset. Would that this same spirit were more common among the Lord’s people.

Not only may truth be expressed in words, it must come out in deeds. Stealing is the lie in practice. This in all its shapes and forms must be put away. In its place let there be labour, working with the hands that which is good. This labour is with the object:--

“That he may HAVE, TO GIVE” (Eph. iv. 28).

Labour merely that one may *have* may be selfishness, and industry of itself may not express “the truth”, but labour that one may have something to *give* is an entire reversal of the lie, that steals from another, and is a manifestation of the truth.

The devil, and the Spirit of God.

Closely associated with the lie is the devil, and with the truth the Holy Spirit of God. It must be kept well in memory that to fail to put off the lie and to put on the new man may “give place to the devil”, and when this takes place we may be sure that there is also another equally sad result, viz., the grieving of the Holy Spirit of God whereby we are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Among the many ways whereby truth may be hindered and a place given to the devil is revealed in such a strange word as “clamour”. That man who, when he gives a command must “shout”; who, when he argues a point of truth must “raise his voice” does not give an *outward* expression of that lowliness and meekness which commends the truth.

“Evil speaking” is in the original “blasphemy”, and is probably derived from *blaptein ten phemen* = “Blasting the reputation or credit” of any one. We may sincerely believe that to take a “text” from Shakespeare or the Poets is to belittle the Scriptures, but we sometimes wonder whether Tennyson’s Knights of King Arthur, who vowed “to speak no slander, nor listen to it” do not put many a believer to shame. “Love thinketh no evil.”

Be ye imitators of God.

The remedy for this and all kindred manifestations of the flesh is found in the next three verses:--

“Be ye kind Be ye imitators of God” (Eph. iv. 32, v. 1).

This after all is but a homely way of expressing the more doctrinal passage:--

“Put on the new man which AFTER GOD is created” (Eph. iv. 24).

“The lie” finds its pattern in the devil:--

“I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father Ye do the deeds of your father If God were your Father, ye would love Me, Ye are of your father the devil he is a liar and the father of it” (i.e. “the lie”) (John viii. 38-44).

It will be seen therefore that to fail to “put away the lie” gives “place to the devil”, while “putting on the new man” is *doctrinally* expressed by the words “after God” and is *practically* shown by becoming “imitators of God”.

The word “follower” in v. 1 is *mimetes*. This word occurs seven times in the N.T. and is therefore marked with the seal of spiritual perfection. The word will be recognized as the source of our English word “mimic”. This element of imitation is expressed in verse 32, where we are exhorted to kindness and forgiveness, “*Even as God* for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you”, and is carried forward into v. 2 in the words, “*As Christ also* hath loved us”.

The love of Christ, the object of our imitation, is not an abstraction. The reader will call to mind many passages speaking of both the Father and the Son, where the words “loved and gave” come together. So here. Christ *loved*, and that love we are to imitate, Christ loved and *gave*, and *that* kind of love we are to imitate. Christ loved and gave *Himself*. This is the essence both of loving and of giving:--

“Praying us with much entreaty that we would receive the gift not as we expected, but *first* gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us” (II Cor. viii. 4, 5).

The love we are to imitate, moreover, has further qualities. He gave Himself *for us* *to God*. All our loving and giving must be of this character. It is not merely philanthropy or what is now called “charity”, that might (though we doubt it) fulfil the first clause “for us”. It is, on the other hand, not that cold and lofty disdain of all things human and kindly that may in self-deception be called an exclusive offering “to God”. We are sure God has no pleasure in monasteries or nunneries, neither in the hypocrite’s claim “It is Corban” (Mark vii. 11); the *twofold* offering “for us to God” alone satisfies the case.

Lastly, this love manifests itself in the giving of an offering and a sacrifice. It will be seen that there is no contradiction of the Psalmist who said, “None of us can by any means redeemed his brother”, for redemption is by blood (Eph. i. 7). Into that part of the Saviour’s work no man enters, but Paul knew what it was to fill up what was behind of the afflictions of Christ in his flesh for the sake of the church, he knew what it was to be offered upon the sacrifice and service of faith (Col. i. 24 and Phil. ii. 17). Moreover,

he uses the same words, “a sweet smelling savour”, to describe the kindly gifts of the Philippians:--

“The things that were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice, well pleasing to God” (Phil. iv. 18).

Christian giving should always have the atmosphere of the altar and the sanctuary. The children of God contribute to this and that, their gifts may be liberal, they may be helpful, they may encourage, but, do not let them miss the highest and the best. Let them be “even as God *for Christ’s sake*”, let them partake of the character of the offering of the sweet savour, then such offerings will be “well pleasing unto God”.

The three-fold walk.

The apostle now brings the exhortation to walk worthy of the calling and to repudiate the old man, to bear upon things of every-day life. He exhorts us to:--

- (1). “Walk in love as children of love” (Eph. v. 1, 2).
- (2). “Walk as children of light” (Eph. v. 8).
- (3). “Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise” (Eph. v. 15).

Each walk is expressed both positively and negatively.

Walk in love.—The positive is expressed in the one great example, “as Christ also hath loved us”. Negatively, the apostle has to run over the six-fold work of the flesh to ensure that the child of God shall not be left without warning.

Three-fold uncleanness in act.—Fornication, all uncleanness, unbridled lust.

Three-fold uncleanness in word.—Filthiness, foolish talking, jesting (suggestive talking).

Concerning the first three, the apostle says:--

“Let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints” (Eph. v. 3).

Concerning the second three, he says:--

“Things not consistent (the modern usage of ‘convenient’ is a little misleading), but rather giving of thanks” (Eph. v. 4).

A further three-fold description bringing together those already named follows, and this time with a warning of great import:--

“For this you know, for you have learned that no fornicator, or impure or lustful man, who is nothing better than an idolator, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. v. 5).

We do not feel called upon here to rake over this awful heap of corruption and bring to light that which we fain would hide, or which should “not once be named among us”

(Eph. v. 3), “for it is a shame even to speak of these things” (Eph. v. 12), nevertheless this epistle is written *to us* and a very slight knowledge of modern life will teach us that these warnings are absolutely up to date. We have translated *pleonexia*, unbridled lust, rather than covetousness, and in this we are but following such as Conybeare and Howson, Jowett, and Trench. The latter shows the meaning of the word in the following passage:--

“Take the sublime commentary on the word which Plato supplies, where he likens the desire of man to the sieve or pierced vessel of the Danaids, which they were ever filling, but might never fill: and it is not too much to say, that the whole longing of the creature, as it has itself abandoned God and by a just retribution is abandoned by Him, to stay its hunger with the swine’s husks, instead of the children’s bread, is contained in this word.”

It is evident that the same comparison had occurred to Shakespeare:--

“The cloyed will. That satiate, yet unsatisfied desire. *That tub both filled and running*” (Cymbeline 1:7).

To these words we would but add that the whole truth is expressed in the first and the tenth commandments:--

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”
“Thou shalt not covet, or desire.”

To imitate God and to walk in love makes such things as detailed by the apostle impossible.

“Jesting” = *eutrapeleia*, refers to that loose talk which by skilful turning of words brings up to the mind far more than the actual wording may appear to intend and is to be shunned by all who put off “the lie”.

The Inheritance.

The words of the apostle that should cause every child of God to stop and consider are that those that do such things:--

“Have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Eph. v. 5).

There is no question but that one phase at least of the inheritance is in the nature of a reward, and consequently may be forfeited. This is clearly expressed in Col. iii. 24 in a passage that exactly corresponds with Eph. v. 5:--

“Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”

Rom. viii. 17 seems to observe the distinction between “heirs of God” because children of God, and “joint heirs with Christ” if so be that these children walk as Christ walked, which must of necessity involve suffering and rejection.

The inheritance which is a matter of predestination and redemption (Eph. i. 11, 14) is one thing, the inheritance that is in the kingdom of Christ and of God is another, and it may be forfeited. Men may emphasize “grace”, they may call such teaching “legal”, they may seek to throw out the idea of reward from the epistles of the Mystery, but the Apostle concludes his words of warning by saying:--

“Let no man deceive you with vain words” (Eph. v. 6).

The parallel in Colossians but endorses or enforces this:--

“Beware lest any man spoil you through vain deceit Let no man beguile you of your reward” (Col. ii. 8-18).

Because of these things the wrath of God is coming on the children of disobedience, and the members of the church are not to be partakers with such. There must be an outward expression of the inward change. Once they too were darkness and walked in darkness, producing the unfruitful works of darkness. Now, however, they are light in the Lord and so the exhortation comes, “*Walk as children of light*”. Love leads to sacrifice, and repudiates lust which is but the expression of selfishness. Light leads to fruitfulness and reproves the unfruitful works of darkness. Where the A.V. reads:--

“For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Eph. v. 9).

the revised text read, “the fruit *of the light*”.

This reading contains a truth which is everywhere confirmed in the works of God around us. The student of Horticulture is early impressed with the essential place that light has in plant growth. The bulk of the food upon our tables daily are carbo-hydrates or starchy foods, such as bread and all cereals, potatoes, sugar, &c. Now this carbon is obtained by plants, not from the soil but from the air. Carbon assimilation, called also Photo-synthesis (“placing together by light”), is the work of the green chlorophyll in the leaves, and is entirely dependent upon the action of sunlight. If a patch of black be put upon a leaf in the morning and the leaf be examined under a microscope at night, it will be found that the exposed cells of the leaf are full of starch grains, whereas the cells beneath the black patch are empty.

It is scientific to the last degree to teach that on the first day of creation God should say, “Light be, and light was”. It is the fuller truth to see in this statement of Genesis a type of the gospel:--

“For God, Who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light the light of the glorious gospel” (II Cor. iv. 4, 6).

Not only does light produce fruit, but darkness has its unfruitful works. We all have seen the varied coloured toadstool that, like the mushroom, do not depend upon the light. No one, however, has seen a green toadstool or mushroom. Such have no power of using sunlight, they are vegetable parasites living upon others, or saprophytes living upon the

decaying tissue of dead plants. Such are nature's pictures of the unfruitful works of darkness. Darkness and death and unfruitfulness are all in the passage before us:--

“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light”
(Eph. v. 14).

The third walk is called “circumspect”. *Akribos* is possibly derived from *eis akron benai* = “going up to the summit” of a hill, and generally carries with it the thought of accuracy and exactness, e.g.:--

Akribeia = “Taught according to the *perfect manner*” (Acts xxii. 3).

Akribestatos = “The *straitest* sect” (Acts xxvi. 5).

Akribesteros = “The way of God *more accurately*” (Acts xviii. 26).

Josephus speaks of the Pharisees as:--

“The sect who are thought to excel others in their *exactness* about their national institutions” (Life 38).

There can be no doubt from the above usage of the word what Paul intends to teach in Eph. v. 15. Grace does not mean laxity or lack of diligence. The same word that describes the zeal for accuracy of the formalist under the law, describes that consecrated zeal which moved Aquila and Priscilla in their endeavours to lead Apollos into the fuller light, and should characterize those of us who have received such a calling as is revealed in Ephesians. The pathway for the saint leads through dark and slippery places. Uncleanness and defilement lie all around, and while there is the blessed provision in Christ for uncleanness contracted in the pilgrim way, we are solemnly warned of the danger of voluntarily entering into any of these things from which redemption has set us free. We have been delivered from the authority of darkness and have been translated into the kingdom of His dear Son. We are therefore enjoined to walk accurately, remembering the pit from which we have been delivered.

This is the last of the seven occurrences of the word “walk” in Ephesians. The first in the practical section says “walk worthy”; the last says “walk accurately”. The first says “with all lowliness”; the last “with wisdom”. Once again the parallel epistle to the Colossians will provide confirmation. Ephesians says:--

“Walk worthy walk accurately as wise be not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is be filled with the Spirit.”

Colossians says:--

“That ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding: that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful”
(Col. i. 9, 10).

“*Redeeming the time.*”—*Exagorazo* means “to buy out of the market” with the meaning of our English “forestall” implied. Forestall means to buy a thing before it is

placed upon the stall in the market and so to exhibit a keen business sense. As stewards and as redeemed ones this keen business sense should be ours in the exercise of our calling and stewardship. “Time” here is not *chronos*—mere duration, but *kairos*, a fitting time, hence an opportunity. It has been said:--

‘Opportunities are *for* eternity, but not *to* eternity.’

Alas that many only recognize opportunity by its back. Think of the opportunities for service, for study, for communion, for helping, that have been allowed to slip this day, or this week. Have you always been prepared to speak that word in season? to give that helping hand? The past is beyond us, and we can but seek the forgiveness that is ours in Christ. The present is here, let us then:--

“Forestall the opportunity, because the days are evil” (Eph. v. 16).

To do this we need wisdom, we need to:--

“Understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. v. 17).

How can this understanding be attained? The answer comes in the next verse:--

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit (when speaking to one another” (Eph. v. 18, 19).

What is it to be filled with the Spirit?

This passage is important enough to warrant a pause and a careful examination. First we can see an intended contrast, a contrast introduced in verse 3 of this same chapter. The Gentiles who knew not God found their enjoyment and inspiration in the intoxication of wine, their speech was corrupt, filthy and unfit for saints. Their drinking songs, accompanied by instruments, resounded with the praise of Bacchus, Venus and the like. The saint is to be a contrast. Instead of wine he is to be filled with the Spirit, instead of unclean mirth and idolatrous songs he is to sing spiritual songs and make melody in his heart. Instead of praising the gods of darkness his melody and praise should be directed to the Lord. What are we to understand by the injunction, “Be filled with the Spirit”.

To understand this statement it is necessary to understand the use of the Greek verb to fill. *Pleroo*, “to fill” takes three cases after it. As an active verb, followed by the Accusative, of the *vessel* or whatever is filled. As an active verb, followed by the Genitive, of what it is *filled with*. As a passive verb, followed by the Dative, of the *filler*, and as a passive verb, followed by the Genitive, of what the vessel is *filled with*.

In the passage before us the verb is *passive*, and “with Spirit”, *en pneumati*, is *dative*. This means that the “Spirit” is the One that “fills”, and not that the believer is filled *with* the Spirit. To make sure that the meaning is clear, let us put it this way. A cup may be filled *with water*, it may be filled *with a pump*. Now, the incongruity of the statement would prevent anyone from imagining that the pump was found afterwards in the cup, but

as there are passages which speak of the filling or baptism of the Spirit, the unguarded reader does not discern the meaning so clearly. Now if the Spirit fills us with something that takes the place of “wine wherein is excess”, we should seek to know what it is. Once again the parallel epistle Colossians supplies the needed information:--

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

This parallel is so complete that we cannot avoid the inference that “to be filled with the Spirit” will be to be filled *by* the Spirit with the *word of Christ*. The Spirit everywhere takes of the things of Christ and applies them to the heart of the believer. That constitutes the inspiration of his renewed conversation, “speaking to yourselves”, and will prevent any corrupt communication from proceeding out of his mouth, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and a heart filled by the Spirit with the word of Christ will speak accordingly. The melody of hearts finds its *Amen* in:--

“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. v. 20).

The lowliness and meekness that adorns this doctrine is expressed by:--

“Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” (Eph. v. 21).

“Fear”, *phobos*, and “reverence”, *phobeomai* (*see* Eph. v. 33) explain one another. Our reverence for Christ places us all in our true relationship one with another. This relationship is threefold and practically covers the whole of human society.

Our next study must be devoted to the application of truth to the domestic and social side of life, a side as important if not more so than that of the ecclesiastical and public. Truth like charity begins at home. The bishop must be able to manage his own house before he can think of ruling the house of God. The Spirit of God has sealed us. The Spirit of God may fill us. Let us walk accurately, for His Word is still a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path, as well as serving to illuminate our mind.

(*Mystery15*, pp.161-172).

No.80. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

**Christ and the church in home and business (v. 22 - vi. 9).
pp. 181 - 187**

The last words of Eph. v. 21 are:--

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

The opening words of the new section are:--

"Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

We are evidently embarking upon an application of teaching of verse 21, and therefore must remember that while the wives are here told specifically to submit to their own husbands, it is only a working out of that spirit that reverences Christ and submits to whatever He shall lay upon us. Further, the submission of the wife to the husband is "as unto the Lord", and this spirit runs throughout the sixfold command. Before tracing this through the section before us, let us seek an understanding of the word "submit", for unless we understand a command our obedience will not be of a very high order.

The meaning of submission.

The word translated "submit" is *hupotasso*, and is used in Ephesians as follows:--

"And hath *put* all things under His feet" (i. 22).

"*Submitting* yourselves one to another" (v. 21).

"Wives *submit* yourselves" (v. 22).

"As the church *is subject* unto Christ" (v. 24).

Tasso properly means to set in order, as in Luke vii. 8. In the passive it carries the idea of "being disposed" as opposed to "judging oneself not worthy", as in Acts xiii. 48.

Taxis indicates order, arrangement (I Cor. xiv. 40; Col. ii. 5). Without multiplying examples, it will be seen that the idea of "submission" in Eph. v. is not of a humiliating or servile description, but of so recognizing the Lordship of Christ as to be willing for the lowest *or the highest* place as He shall will. It will be seen that the husband who acts in his position as "head of the wife" is as *submissive* to the will of the Lord as is the wife who sets forth the relative position of the church. Both attitudes are honourable and necessary.

When we remember that the first occurrence of the word is Luke ii. 51, which refers to the Lord in His childhood, "and came to Nazareth and was *subject* unto them", surely the last shred of rebellion must vanish as we realize what that submission involved.

Submission "as unto Christ".

- A1 | Eph. v. 22-24. Wives *submit*, as the church to Christ.
- B1 | Eph. v. 25-33. Husbands *love*, as Chris the church.
- A2 | Eph. vi. 1-3. Children *obey* in the Lord.
- B2 | Eph. vi. 4. Fathers *train* in nurture of the Lord.
- A3 | Eph. vi. 5-8. Slaves *obey*, as unto the Christ.
- B3 | Eph. vi. 9. Masters *do the same*, for you have a Master in heaven.

A great deal of harmful discussion has revolved around the question, "Should the bride say *obey* at the marriage service?" Paul does not say 'wives obey' when he treats of the social fabric and its inter-relation, he reserves the word "obey" to children and slaves, with their correlatives "bring up" and "forbear threatening", using the higher word "submit" of the wife. This word "submit" is wrongly translated "*obedient to their own husbands*" in Titus ii. 5. The only passage where wives are said to obey is I Pet. iii. 5, 6, which grows out of the submission of verses 1-5. A wife who has submitted to the Divine arrangement will of necessity "obey" when obedience is demanded, but it is the result of a willing compliance with the Lord's will, a grateful seizing of the opportunity to typify the church's relation to the Lord, a very different thing from that obedience of the child, which is "right", and according to commandment.

The relation of wives and husbands.

"Wives submit as the church unto Christ."
"Husbands love as Christ the church."

It will be seen that we are upon higher ground than that of I Cor. xi. & xiv. and I Tim. ii. There the apostle goes back to

Nature and Creation.

"For the man is not of the woman, but woman of the man, neither was man created for the woman; but the woman for the man Doth not even nature itself teach you" (I Cor. xi. 1-16).

Law.

"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be submissive, as also saith the law" (I Cor. xiv. 34).

Creation and Sin.

"For Adam was first formed, then Eve, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived has come to be in transgression" (I Tim. ii. 9-15).

The Apostle had all these courses open before him to enforce his point, but he passes them all by for the greater and higher motive used in Eph. v. To the wife the Apostle says, "The husband is the head of the wife", but to the husband he says, "Love your wives". He feels under no necessity to say, "Husbands *rule* your wives". To each is the

word given tempered with much graciousness. Because the husband is head that does not mean ruthless rule and rough-shod methods. The husband in Christ is "submitted" to an obligation that cannot be computed. He is to love his wife, "even as Christ also loved the church and *gave Himself* for it".

Perhaps when wives are loved with that kind of love, all argument as to submission and obedience will become unnecessary. The love of the husband moreover is to be all in the direction of blessing, not for selfish ends:--

"That he might sanctify, cleanse, present a church in glory, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing: but that it may be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 26, 27).

Take one item, perhaps the lowliest, "not having wrinkle". The word "wrinkle" in the original means exactly the same as the English word, viz., "a corrugation of the skin", and is allied with *rhusa* (old age, the time of wrinkles). Care and anxiety, worry of any description are the chief causes of wrinkles; how this reveals the character of the husband's love, that shields the wife from as many anxieties as is possible.

The physical and the spiritual.

Throughout this passage the physical interchanges with the spiritual as type with antitype.

- A1 | Physical. Wives submit.
- B1 | Spiritual. As the church.
- A2 | Physical. Husbands. So ought men.
- B2 | Spiritual. Even as the Lord the church.
- A3 | Physical. Wives and husbands. One flesh.
- B3 | Spiritual. The mystery. Christ and His church.

The union of husband and wife is looked upon in Scripture as something deeper than a civil or religious joining together of two persons in marriage. Every true marriage harks back to Eden:--

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" (Eph. v. 31).

The same apostle says in I Cor. vi. 17, "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit", which shows the antitype to be mentally supplied in Eph. v. 31, 32. Moreover the argument concerning a man nourishing and cherishing his own body finds its alternative in that sin which is against his own body (I Cor. vi. 18). If I Cor. vi. 15-20 be carefully weighed with Eph. v. 28-32, a great deal of irrelevant matter need never have been written.

It is an established truth that the church of Ephesians is "the Body" and "the New Man". Now the Scriptures uses figures with discretion. The bridal relationship to Christ belongs to another calling; in Ephesians we are dealing with the bridegroom if such a figure is allowable at all. The passage before us is not discussing the title of the church

of the dispensation of the Mystery, it is dealing with the relationship of husbands and wives who belong to this dispensation. If Eph. v. teaches that the church is "the bride", Eph. vi. teaches that the church is "a child" and "a slave", neither of which titles are true. The last two may be true of course of individuals.

The great Mystery.

When the Apostle draws to the conclusion of his exhortation to wives and husbands he says, "This is the great mystery, but I speak with a view to Christ and His church" (Eph. v. 32). That there is a mystery in marriage let anyone decide after reading Matt. xix. 5, 6, "And they twain shall be one flesh". Such is the quotation from Gen. ii.

"Wherefore they are *no more twain*, but one flesh", is the comment of the Lord Himself. But, says the Apostle, granting the sanctity and the mystery of marriage under the thought of "one flesh", the great mystery I have in mind is that union with the Lord which makes "one spirit". Nevertheless, turning back to the typical union of man and wife he continues:--

"Nevertheless let each one of you individually so love his wife as himself: and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Eph. v. 33).

We have not felt called upon to enter into a detailed examination of the idea that the church of the Body is also the Bride, not wishing to spend time disproving an obvious failure to discern things that differ. If, however, we have misjudged our readers and there are those who have misgivings on this point, we draw attention to the booklet *The Bride and the Body*.

Children and their parents.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. vi. 1).

How are we to understand the clause "in the Lord"? Does it imply disobedience to parents if they are not "in the Lord"? Does it mean only obey your parents in those things that you recognize are "in the Lord"? The first suggestion seems to be quite apart from the spirit of the Scriptures, the second presupposes too advanced a stage of spiritual perception. Col. iii. 20 supplies an answer:--

"Children, obey your parents with respect to all things: for this is well pleasing in the Lord."

While the children here addressed would probably be connected with the church (for otherwise they would not hear this passage read at all), they are not placed upon so high a platform as that of husband and wife. The first reason given in Eph. vi. 1 is the primitive one, "for it is right".

In the training of our children, while grace and love and even an appeal to their profession of faith are all legitimate, there is a sense in which it differs from that of the more adult believer. Not only is such obedience "right", but the Apostle even goes back

to the fifth commandment adding as a note of encouragement that it is the first commandment with promise.

We are not to reason from this that an obedient child of parents who are members of the Body is assured a long life on the earth, but to gather from the quotation the marked approval of the Lord upon the obedience of children to parents, even though "the promise" now may be expressed in some other way than "long life upon the earth". On the other hand it is morally certain that seeds sown in childhood by disobedience materially influence their well-being in after years. As we have already indicated, children and slaves are addressed differently from wives, and this may be the better seen by noticing the recurring features:--

- A | vi. 1-3. a | Ye children.
 - b | Be obedient.
 - c | To parents.
 - d | "Right." "Promise."
- B | vi. 4. e | And ye fathers.
 - f | Provoke not.
 - g | Your children.
 - h | Bring them up.
- A | vi. 5-8. a | Ye slaves.
 - b | Be obedient.
 - c | To masters.
 - d | "As unto Christ." "Reward."
- B | vi. 9. e | And ye masters.
 - f | Threaten not.
 - g | Them.
 - h | Your Master is in heaven.

Promise and reward figure more prominently here. While "parents" are spoken of in Eph. vi. 1, and "father and mother" separately mentioned in verse 2, "fathers" are specially addressed in verse 4.

One of the results of modern civilization has been the transference of this responsibility from the father to the mother. To thousands of young children the father is someone who appears on the scene at week-ends, whose name is held up as a kind of bogey as a last recourse, but who does not come into every-day living contact with the growing child. The mother's duties connected with the material and physical well-being of the child often prevent the exercise of those other elements of training that are so necessary.

Mother-love is *protective*. Father-love is *corrective* as well. Mother-love often shields the child from the dire results of its own wrong-doing, whereas father-love looks ahead and sees the dire results in the future. As neither parent can be a substitute for the other, the child needs both, but in "discipline and instruction" (*en paideia kai nouthesia*) the father is the true agent. Heb. xii. 5-11 should be read in this connection. The Apostle explains fairly clearly what he conceives to be the functions of the mother and the father in I Thess. ii. 7-11:--

"We were gentle in the midst of you, as a nursing mother cherisheth her own children."

This motherliness is further expanded in such words as "being affectionately desirous", "willing to impart our very lives", "ye were endeared to us", "labouring night and day so as not be burdensome". Who that knows mother-love cannot sense it here? The Apostle, however, was a father to these saints as well as a mother. So the language changes. He speaks of his deportment as "pious", "righteous", "blameless", and that he "exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you as a father doth his own children, that ye should walk worthy". Such is the necessary combination for true child welfare. Before the Apostle says one word as to how the children were to be disciplined, he gives a caution to the fathers, "and ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath". Col. iii. 21 says, "Father, provoke not your children, lest they be discouraged". Rom. x. 19 uses the expression "provoke to wrath" in the words, "by a foolish nation I will anger you". The lesser word in Col. iii. means "to exasperate".

Have we never entered a home and felt the baneful effects of this "exasperation" and "discouragement"? Children have a keen sense of justice and will take punishment for offences without resentment when they know that they are being dealt with rightly. They have no words oftentimes to explain the motives for their actions, and often that which seems a peculiarly flagrant case of disobedience or malice may prove to be the result of some childish misconstruction or misunderstanding. We appeal to all fathers who may read these words to weigh these passages over before the Lord, seeking to avoid the discouraging attitude and gladly assuming the responsibility of disciplining and instructing those who are dependent upon them.

These things have a serious meaning moreover when considered in the light of ministry, for although none would now speak of themselves as bishops or deacons, yet the principle of I Tim. iii. 1-12 still holds good:--

"One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all dignity. For if a man knows not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?"

Slaves and masters.

The question of "Christianity and slavery" is never raised in the N.T. These things were left for the working of the truth to accomplish in time. The slave of the Apostle's day and the servant of to-day may differ in many things, even to great extremes, but the principle of their service remains unaltered. The child of God then or the child of God now is compelled to serve an earthly master is provided with no lower a standard than:--

"In singleness of your heart, as unto Christ. Not with eye service, as men-pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will doing service as to the Lord and not to men" (Eph. vi. 5-7).

These words were once read by a reader of *The Berean Expositor* to an extremist in social matters who explained passionately, "The man who wrote that was a devil". The

brother said, "Well, what do you say of the man who wrote this?" and read verse 9, "and, ye masters, *do the same things unto them*". We do not know his reply, but it is obvious that the Apostle was no champion of class warfare. That there are crying evils among servants and masters no one can deny, but the child of God is not left here to reform or to patch up, but to witness for the truth, to endure what may come as a result and to leave his case with the Lord:--

"Knowing that whatsoever good things any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free" (Eph. vi. 8).

We have had a very unscriptural idea based upon this verse presented to us. It is this. Only the good we do will be dealt with by the Lord in that day, for this verse says nothing about any bad thing we may have done. The good will be recognized, the evil will have been forgiven. That is a very "comfortable" doctrine no doubt, but as Col. iii. 24, 25 writes upon the same theme and to the *same* people dispensationally, it cannot hold:--

"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."

Masters are exhorted in Ephesians to "do the same things" which in Colossians becomes "give that which is just and equal", which is not incipient communism, but refers to the relation of wages to service, that it must be *equitable*. Further, the master is exhorted to "forbear threatening", a matter of even greater difficulty than to-day. At that time slaves were the personal property of their masters and without redress.

Behold, the dreamer!

Those of us who have received the truth of the Mystery and who have sought to carry out as far as possible its teaching have to submit to the misunderstandings of our fellows, and among the charges made against us is that we have exchanged realities for dreams, that we are no longer a practical force, etc. We wonder how many husbands and wives when faced with Eph. v. would dare to speak of our teaching as unpractical and only stuff for dreamers? We wonder how many fathers, surveying their children's progress, would deny the practical teaching of Eph. vi., to say nothing of the servants and the masters that are forming into hostile camps even though professing the same faith?

The world has a proverb, "*Charity begins at home*", and if home life and business life were permeated with the spirit of Eph. v. and vi. the church life and gospel testimony would look after itself. God is not served by multiplying meetings and neglecting the claims of home. God is not served at the expense of faithful daily service or at the expense of faithful recognition. In many things we offend all. Let us for the remainder of our time seek grace to live in harmony with the practical outcome of being members of that church of which Christ is the Head, and the church His Body.

(*Mystery16*, pp.17-25).

No.81. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

The power of His might (vi. 10).

pp. 201 - 208

"Finally."—At length this wondrous epistle nears its close. In height, depth, length and breadth it stands without a peer in the whole range of inspired Scripture. Readers of *The Berean Expositor* must have sense that our conception of truth makes this epistle to us something akin to what the epistle to the Galatians was to Luther. It has given us a liberty beyond the dreams of man. It reveals a Christ raised far above all, Who fills all in all, Who ascended and descended that He might fill all things, Whose love surpasses knowledge, Whose riches are unsearchable. It has given us a sacred trust: a "good deposit" to guard, a unity to keep. It has brought its blessedness into every department of life. It takes us back before the overthrow of the world, and on to the ages yet to come. Its grace abounds. What then shall be the "Finally" of the Apostle?

He reminds us that we are not yet actually seated in the heavenlies, but beset by foes who at present hold to these very spheres. Though fellow-citizens with the saints, we are yet walking in the wilderness. Though sealed unto the day of redemption, we have to remember that we actually live in an evil day. Hence the Apostle concludes his letter with an exhortation to be strong, to put on the armour of God, to stand, to watch and to pray. The language of faith says, as we look at our inheritance in the heavenlies, "Let us go up at once and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it" (Num. xiii. 30). Caleb, who said these words, tasted something of the strength that Paul refers to here, and knew something of the need for the armour and the sword:--

"And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as He said, these forty and five years as yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me for war" (Joshua xiv. 10, 11).

Before the armour, however, comes the strength, for without the necessary strength armour would be but a death-trap: "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might" (Eph. vi. 10). Philosophers have said to men "Be strong". Psychologists tell us to say to ourselves "Be strong", but the only strength that will avail us in this conflict is the strength that is ours in the Lord.

The power of His resurrection.

No other writer in the N.T. uses the word which is here translated "be strong" except Luke, who in Acts ix. 22 uses it of Paul himself. The exception but proves the rule. The word is peculiar to the teaching of Paul and his own experience of the risen Lord. The eight occurrences of the word *endunamiao* speak of resurrection, and the seven occurrences in the epistles are worth a moment's attention.

Endunamao in Paul's epistles.

A		Rom. iv. 19, 20.	Strong, not weak, in faith.-- <i>O.T.</i>	
B	a	Eph. vi. 10.	Strong in the Lord.--WAR.	\
		b	Phil. iv. 13. Strong in Christ.--ENDURANCE.	\ After
C		I Tim. i. 12.	Christ Jesus.--MINISTRY.	} Acts
B	a	II Tim. ii. 1.	Strong in grace.--WAR.	/ xxviii.
		b	II Tim. iv. 17. Strong in the Lord.--ENDURANCE.	/
A		Heb. xi. 34.	Strong in faith, out of weakness.-- <i>O.T.</i>	

The first example, that of Abraham, is a strong witness for "the power of His resurrection", for it is said that "he believed God Who quickeneth the dead". The words of Eph. vi. 10 look back to Eph. i. 19. In vi. 10 we have *endunamao*, "be strong"; *kratos*, "power"; *ischus*, "might". In i. 19 we have *dunamis*, "power"; *ischus*, "mighty"; *kratos*, "power".

The believer is turned back to the risen and ascended Christ as the source of the power whereby he may stand the shock of battle. There is no other power at present either available or sufficient. All believers, whether conscious of it as an experimental fact or not, "have the sentence of death in themselves that they should not trust in themselves, *but in God which raiseth the dead*" (II Cor. i. 9).

The essential basis.

Before principalities and powers come into view as opponents in Eph. vi., a necessary fact is pre-supposed, and that is the teaching of Rom. v.-viii. This basic portion of Scripture is devoted to the exposition of two laws, viz.,:--

1. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. \ (Rom. viii. 2).
2. The law of sin and death. /

It is not for us to deal with Romans in this article; we simply trace the stream of this law of the spirit of life until it reaches the glorious climax of Rom. viii. 37-39:--

"In all these things we are MORE THAN CONQUERORS through Him that loved us. For I Am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor PRINCIPALITIES, nor POWERS shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Here is the essential basis of Eph. vi. 10. In Christ and by virtue of His resurrection we are already "more than conquerors" over "principalities and powers". We go forth to this unequal conflict in "the power of His resurrection". We go forth to achieve experimentally that victory already accomplished in Christ. So far as He is concerned, He has been raised far above all principality and power (Eph. i. 21, 23). So far as the Lord Himself is concerned, He "stripped off principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, *triumphing over them* in it" (Col. ii. 15). To attempt the conflict of Eph. vi. in any other power than that of the risen Christ is to seek defeat. To attempt it in

that power is to make experimental proof of the fact that in Him we are "more than conquerors".

Are all the saved soldiers?

If we allow the typical history of Israel to influence us, we may conclude that only those who have reached spiritual maturity are called upon to take up the armour:--

"From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth *to war* in Israel"
(Num. i. 3).

It was no light matter to be "chosen as a soldier" as both II Tim. ii. and Num. xiv. will show:--

"Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from *twenty years old* and upward, which murmured against Me" (Num. xiv. 29).

The two exceptions to this statement are Caleb and Joshua. Of Caleb the Lord said:--

"He had another spirit with him, and hath followed Me fully, him will I bring into the land" (Num. xiv. 24).

Now the words "hath followed Me fully" are literally "hath filled after Me", and Col. i. 24 comes to mind as a close parallel:--

"And fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ."

To Joshua the Lord had said:--

"Moses is *dead* *arise* *be strong*" (Joshua i. 2-6).

Just as the inheritance of Israel was in possession of the "giants" who had to be overcome in the strength of the Lord, so the inheritance of the church in the heavenlies is held by spiritual foes of high rank and power. The soldier has something to win or to lose:--

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Tim. ii. 1-3).

A crown is in view and reigning with Christ (ii. 4-12). This recurs in chapter iv., where Paul speaking of himself says:--

"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" (II Tim. iv. 7, 8).

Yet, further, it is in the parallel epistle of the "Prize", namely Philippians, that Paul calls Epaphroditus a "fellow-soldier". We feel therefore with these passages before us that every believer is not necessarily numbered among the ranks of those able to go forth to war.

There are three things, which either separately or together, make for defeat:

- (1) No armour, or armour that is untrustworthy.
- (2) A consciousness that the fight is unrighteous.
- (3) An ignorance of the object of the fight.

Blessed be God, the first two things are assured by the Word. The third is more directly connected with the believer. Let us ask ourselves as before God, *What should we be fighting for?* How many of us can give a consistent, Scriptural answer? Is our inheritance in jeopardy? Can we lose our membership in the One Body? Neither of these possessions can be lost. What then can we gain or lose? The answer is, a crown and a prize.

Immediately following II Tim. ii. which speaks of the soldier, are the words:

“If a man also strive for masteries, *yet is he not crowned*, except he strive lawfully”
(II Tim. ii. 5).

Immediately following Paul’s personal declaration, “I have fought a good fight”, are the words, “*Henceforth a crown*”.

“Let no man beguile you of your reward” (Col. ii. 18).

Satan cannot rob you of your *calling*, but he may rob you of your *crown*. This fact enables us to appreciate better the reference in Numb. xiv., for those who perished in the wilderness were not types of the unsaved, but of those who, being saved, did not go on unto perfection (Heb. iii. and iv.).

The words of Eph. vi. 13 “having done all”, are a translation of *katergazomai*, elsewhere translated “to work out” (Phil. ii. 12, 13 and II Cor. iv. 17). The structure of the epistle as a whole compels us to translate the word accurately. It is the “working out” of the mighty power that was “wrought in” Christ; the only possible power that can counter the “inworking” of the prince of the power of the air (Eph. ii. 2).

Another important fact is that no military terms are used in Eph. vi., so far as the conflict is concerned. We are exhorted to “stand”, to “withstand” and to “wrestle”. Even apart from inspiration, no one of Paul’s calibre would speak of “wrestling” in “armour” without previously explaining the “armour” in such a way as to avoid incongruity. It is common knowledge that the Greeks wrestled naked; our very gymnasium is derived from the Greek *gymnos*, “naked”. Before we can go any further it is incumbent upon us to ascertain what “armour” symbolizes in the teaching of Paul.

“The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light” (Rom. xiii. 12).

It will be observed here that “casting off” is parallel with “putting on”; and “works of darkness” with “armour of light”, “works” on the one hand and “armour” on the other.

Let us read on, watching for any military terms and any further parallel with the armour, endeavouring to discover the battle ground and the opponents.

“Let us walk honestly (decently), as in the day: not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” (Rom. xiii. 13, 14).

Instead of exhorting to fight, the Apostle drops all reference to armour as such, and speaks of “walk”. The opponents are not soldiers or external foes, but “the lusts of the flesh” such as drunkenness and wantonness. To leave the matter beyond dispute, he returns to the theme, and in place of the exhortation, “Let us put on the armour of light”, we have, “Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ”.

If this is what ‘armour’ means to Paul, then it is perfectly fitting for him to speak of ‘wrestling’. In I Thess. v. 7, 8 he speaks of armour once more in a very similar context:

“For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night; but let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.”

The context of this passage will be examined in vain for any allusion to fighting. The only foes are those of Rom. xiii., the foes *within*, the lusts of the flesh and the works of darkness.

In our next reference the word ‘armour’ is translated ‘weapons’; and here at last we find the word ‘warfare’. Perhaps, at last, we shall now see the field of battle and the nature of the conflict:

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds” (II Cor. x. 4).

Here the military terms: weapons, warfare, pulling down strongholds. The next verse reads:

“Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Cor. x. 5).

The fortress that is besieged is that of the ‘imagination’ or ‘reasonings’, prompted by the spiritual power called ‘height’ in Rom. viii. 39. The captives taken are the ‘thoughts’ brought into obedience to Christ. There is nothing here approaching ‘warfare’ in the military sense. The words of Prov. xvi. 32 are still true and can be applied to our present theme:

“He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.”

When we examine the one remaining reference to *hopla*, translated ‘armour’ or ‘weapons’, we shall have further grounds for avoiding the military figure.

“Let not sin, therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments (weapons, armour) of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments (weapons, armour) of righteousness unto God” (Rom. vi. 12, 13).

These references provide conclusive evidence as to what the Apostle intended by the word ‘armour’. Eph. vi. is the last occurrence of the word, which is therefore adequately explained by its earlier usage.

Another important fact, parallel to that concerning the ‘armour’, is the way in which the figure of the soldier and the fight merges into that of the athlete and the race, strengthening our conclusion that the fight is concerned with the prize, and is not so much a question of a campaign or conquest of enemies.

In II Tim. ii. 4, 5 the transition is most clear. “Strive for masteries” (A.V.) becomes, ‘contend in the games’ in the R.V.; the verb *athleo* giving us the word *athlete* and *athletics*. The soldier is mentioned in connection with ‘endurance’; the figure is then set aside for that of the athlete and the crown. Again, in II Tim. iv. 7, 8 we have the fight and the crown, as we have already seen; the word ‘fight’ is *agon*, which is translated ‘race’ in Heb. xii. 1. It is impossible to translate II Tim. iv. 7, ‘I have fought a good race’. Perhaps the best rendering is: “I have contested a good contest.” This keeps the figure within the bounds of athletics, its true setting.

We can now come to some definite conclusions:

- (1) The Apostle’s use of the word ‘armour’ must be our guide as to its meaning, and not our own ideas drawn from military figures.
- (2) His use of the word ‘armour’ is consistent it concerns the putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so makes Eph. vi. echo Eph. iv. where we ‘put on the new man’.
- (3) The figure of the athlete striving for the crown involves the keeping under of the flesh. The flesh, as Eph. ii. 2, 3 has already made plain, is acted upon by the prince of the power of the air, and so brings the believer into conflict with ‘spiritual wickednesses’ who are the ‘rulers of the darkness of this world’.
- (4) The attack of these spiritual foes is not directed against our salvation, our membership of the church or our standing, for these are outside all possible attack. The attack is against the believer’s chance of winning a prize, a crown, or a reward.

With these things made clear from the Word itself, we can now return to Eph. vi. to obtain further light upon its teaching. The ‘high places’ of Eph. vi. 12, as the margin tells us, are, more correctly, ‘heavenly places’. Now the earlier references to ‘heavenly places’ leave no doubt about the fact that they are at the right hand of God. Are these ‘spiritual wickednesses in heavenly places’, then, at the right hand of God? It is imperative that we seek a Scriptural answer to this question, for we must remember that Satan’s authority is limited to the air and that Christ and His church are ‘far above *all* principality’ and therefore far above the realm of Satan himself. In a footnote to an article written years ago by the present writer in *Things to Come*, Dr. Bullinger drew attention to the true disposition of the verse.

“For we wrestle not | BUT WITH PRINCIPALITIES | in heavenly
with flesh and blood | OF THIS WORLD | places.”

We do *not* wrestle with flesh and blood; *neither* do we wrestle in heavenly places. We *do* wrestle with spiritual wickednesses who are the rulers of the darkness of *this* world, not of *that* world at the right hand of God. The reader may appreciate a confirmatory passage where a similar division of subject is necessary. As II Pet. i. 19 stands in the A.V. it lends colour to the erroneous teaching that the Second Coming of Christ is not to be understood as a literal future event, but as the ‘day star’ arising ‘in our hearts’. We get the truth by dividing the verse as we divided Eph. vi. 12:

“Whereunto ye do well | as unto a light and | in your
that ye take heed | the day star arises | hearts.”

What is ‘the evil day’ of Eph. vi. 13? We know that there is yet to be war in heaven between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels (Rev. xii. 7). We know that when Israel crossed the Jordan and entered their inheritance, Jericho was encircled and its walls fell. So, too, there may be a day for which we are now preparing. For the present, however, it is certain that no campaign or conquest is in view in Eph. vi. Our orders are to ‘stand’, to ‘stand against’ and to ‘withstand’. To exceed our orders is as much disobedience as to refuse to obey.

Stand and Withstand.

It is noteworthy that the actual word "fight" does not occur in Eph. vi. We are instructed that our "wrestling" is not towards (*pros*) flesh and blood, but spiritual foes. The word that is most prominent in the description of the conflict is the word "stand":--

"That ye may be able *to stand* against the wiles of the devil-- that ye may be able to *withstand* in the evil day, and having done all, *to stand*. STAND THEREFORE"
(Eph. vi. 11-14).

There appears to be three phases of conflict suggested here:--

1. Standing against the wiles of the devil.
2. Withstanding in the evil day.
3. Having worked out all, to stand.

The wiles of the devil are in active operation at the present time; open warfare is not yet the order of the day. Wiles, stratagems, craft, cunning, snares, wolves in sheep's clothing, ministers of satan like ministers of righteousness, these are some of the devil's devices. Eph. iv. 14 uses the word *methodeia*, translated "lie in wait to deceive", which has been rendered a "systematic deception". We find the system at work in II Cor. iv. There Paul repudiates the "craftiness" and the "deceitful handling of the word of God" by his opponent, and appears clad in the armour of righteousness as he battles for the truth (II Cor. iv. 2-4; vi. 7). The days in which we live are evil (Eph. v. 16), evil is to increase (II Tim. iii. 13). We are at present training for the mighty battle that lies ahead. Some

interpret the words "having done all" by "having overcome all the spiritual foes". While it certainly involves that thought, we shall come nearer to the truth by observing the actual word employed and its usage in other passages. *Katergazomai* means to thoroughly work, or to achieve. Two occurrences of the word in the epistles seem to give light upon its meaning in Eph. vi. The first is:--

"WORK OUT your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. ii. 12).

Salvation was the blessed possession of the Philippians, but the object of that epistle is to urge these believers into practical realization of their position in Christ. It speaks of "striving", of running for a "prize", of "suffering", and of the "power of His resurrection". The other passage is II Cor. iv. 17:--

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, WORKETH for us a far more exceeding eternal weight of glory."

Once again we have suffering connected with glory. So in Eph. vi. 13, "Having *worked out* all, to stand".

We cannot help seeing in this a reference back to Rom. viii. 37-39. We have been saved, let us *work out* this salvation. We have been made more than conquerors in Christ, let us *work out* this victory in our own experience. This appears to be the essence of the passage. More than conquerors in the risen Christ, putting the whole armour of God, withstanding every assault in the "power of His might", and *standing* when all is finished, this is our portion. We must consider in subsequent papers:--

1. The whole armour of God, and
2. The three-fold nature of the conflict.

Meanwhile there is no more important word for the soldier of Christ to-day than "STAND THEREFORE".

(*Mystery16*, pp.81-86).

No.82. The Practical Section (iv. - vi.).

The whole armour of God (vi. 11 - 18).

pp. 221 - 236

The familiar word "panoply" is made up of *pan*, "all", and *hoplon*, "arms". Here in Eph. vi. 11 it is called the whole armour of *God*. The word occurs in but one other place in the N.T., viz., Luke xi. 22, where it is used of the whole armour of *Satan* (verse 18). In Luke xi. 18-22 we have the following words of Eph. vi., viz., "strong", "panoply" and "stand". How is it possible to stand against the wiles of Satan, clad as he is in his whole armour in which he trusts, unless we put on the whole armour of God? Nothing less than this can avail in that conflict. There is reason therefore for the Apostle's full title. "The whole armour of *God*."

This armour of God has two other descriptions given to it by the Apostle in his epistles, and just as the armour of *God* is seen set over against the armour of the *devil*, so in these other titles the devil's armoury is suggested by antithesis.

"The armour of righteousness" (II Cor. vi. 7) suggests the unrighteousness that characterises Satan's warfare. This armour moreover is described as being "on the right hand and on the left" (II Cor. vi. 7). *Schleusner* sees in this a reference to the *amphidexios*, "right-handed on both sides", a Greek name for the soldier fully and completely armed, as we say, head to foot, *cap-à-pie*, or as Paul said to the good soldier Timothy, "thoroughly furnished" (II Tim. iii. 17).

"The armour of light" of Rom. xiii. 12 suggests the powers of darkness against whom the fight is directed. The negative is strongly stated in II Cor. x. 4, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God". What a panoply! The armour of *light*, of *right* and of *might*, the whole armour of God.

The sixfold armour.

The whole armour of God comprises six pieces. Why six? One would have thought that such perfection would have been given a sevenfold presentation. The reason seems to be that warfare belongs to the "evil day", and it is not carried over into "the rest that remaineth to the people of God". There are six, not seven, references to the "Mystery" in Ephesians. The Mystery deals with the present interval of Israel's rejection. Both the armour and the present dispensation are perfect in themselves, but they imply an imperfect period. It has been said that the proximity of the Roman soldiers during the writing of Ephesians suggested the description of the armour to Paul the prisoner, but most if not all of what Paul has said is found in the prophecy of Isaiah and in the Psalms:

"Faithfulness shall be the girdle of His reins" (Isa. xi. 5).

The LXX translates faithfulness by *aletheia*, "truth", and reins by *pleuras*, "the sides" or loins. Here is the girdle of truth.

"He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon His head" (Isa. lix. 17).

Here is the breastplate of righteousness and the helmet of salvation.

"How beautiful are the feet of him that bringeth *good tidings*, that publisheth peace" (Isa. lii. 7).

Here are the feet shod with preparation of the good tidings of peace.

"He that made my mouth like a sharp sword" (Isa. xlix. 2).

Here is the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

"His truth shall be my shield and buckler" (Psa. xci. 4).

"Truth" in the O.T. often stands for God's faithfulness. Here is the shield of faith.

Satan did not commence operations in Eph. vi., neither did God wait until Eph. vi. before providing His people with the panoply of God. Eve must have laid aside the armour when attacked by the Devil. She tampered with truth; she entertained doubts of God's faithfulness; she failed to quench the fiery darts of the wicked, and she handled the sword of the Spirit deceitfully.

The sixfold armour.

- A | The GIRDLE. Truth or faithfulness.
- B | The BREASTPLATE. Righteousness.
- C | The SHOES. Gospel of peace.
- A | The SHIELD. Faith or faithfulness.
- B | The HELMET. Salvation.
- C | The SWORD. The Word of God.

Let us notice some features that come into prominence by this twofold arrangement.

The breastplate and the helmet (heart and head).—There is no more vital connection in either law or gospel than that of righteousness and salvation. A salvation that had not righteousness as its basis would be useless in the conflict with the evil one. This is why in II Cor. vi. 7 Paul calls the whole armour "the armour of righteousness". The breastplate and the helmet are brought together in I Thess. v. 8, where the breastplate is "faith and love", and the helmet "the hope of salvation".

The shoes and the sword (feet and hands).—Both speak of a message. Once the gospel of peace, the other a word of war. The idea conveyed by the word "preparation" seems to be that of a firm footing, the word being sometimes used for a "base" in the LXX. We must fully understand peace if we would succeed in war. The peace here

appears to refer back to Eph. ii. 15 and iv. 3. Anything that breaks the unity of the Spirit, or that introduces the first element of faction, will trip us up in the conflict, and well the evil one well knows it.

The girdle and the shield (under and over all).—To an Eastern whose garments were loose and flowing, the girding of the loins was the initial act of preparation for service. We preserve the figure in our saying “buckle to” when we would urge anyone to diligence. The wiles of the devil can be met only by absolute sincerity. A secret doubt, a double heart, anything outside the single eye entertains a traitor within the camp who will betray us to the enemy. This feature has been brought forward in Eph. iv. 14, 15. The “wiles (*methodeia*) of the devil”, “whereby they lie in wait to deceive”, are met by “speaking the truth”, or as the margin reads, “being sincere”. The reference in Isa. xi. 5 speaks of righteousness and faithfulness in connection with the girdle, and we have observed before that practically every word translated faith and faithful in the O.T. is derived from the Hebrew *amen*, which also means truth. We have already alluded to the LXX translation, and there is no doubt that truth, sincerity and faithfulness are absolutely essential to the soldier of Christ.

The shield of faith.—Is this our faith or the Lord’s faithfulness? The reference to Psa. xci. not only indicates that our shield and buckler is the Lord’s faithfulness, but describes some of the “fiery darts”:-

“Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night; nor of the arrow that flieth by day.”

Proved armour.

We are exhorted to “put on” the armour of God, to “take” the armour, the shield, the helmet and the sword. Like the foolish virgins, it will be too late to start looking for armour in the evil day. How ridiculous young David must have looked with the armour of Saul upon his youthful limbs. David “assayed to go” for he had not proved them, and wisely put them aside. Smooth stones taken from the brook he had proved, and with the help of God they were more than sufficient. David’s example should urge us to realize that if we are going to “withstand in the evil day” we must “stand” now. How shall we quit ourselves in the day of battle if we are strangers to the sword of the Spirit? How can we hope to quench the fiery darts of that fight if we have never proved the efficacy of the shield of faith? Our Lord, when tempted by the Devil in the wilderness, proved for us the power of that sword and the reliability of that shield. We can only be more than conquerors “through Him that loved us”.

The present contest, though not the final battle, is not by any means a mere spectacle. The word “wrestle” comes from *pallo*, “to shake”, and the word wrestle itself means “dust of meal”, “ashes”, “fine powder”, etc. It is a wearing, grinding endurance, rather than the brilliant charge. Patience and unquestioned sincerity are demanded and that continually.

Not flesh and blood, but spiritual wickedness.

Where our feet touch earth we are shod with peace, and while flesh and blood will often be bitterly opposed to us, we do not take up the armour of God against such. The only use of the armour against the flesh is found in Rom. xiii. 12-14:--

“Put on the armour of light put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

The foes against whom we wrestle are spiritual. The title “world-holder” is significant. *Kosmokrator* should be considered with the title of the Lord, *pantokrator*, “omnipotent” and “almighty”. We may obtain a glimpse at the extent of the power and authority of these “world-holders of this darkness” by reading Dan. x. There we read of a messenger sent from heaven (5, 6), whose appearance was so glorious that at the sight Daniel’s comeliness turned to corruption (8), yet this mighty messenger was successfully withstood for twenty-one days by “the prince of Persia”, whose opposition was only overcome by the advent of Michael the archangel (13). Reference is made in verse 20 to another prince, “the prince of Grecia”, and yet again in verse 21 to “Michael your prince”. Now Dan. xii. 1 tells us that Michael is “the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people (Israel)”. It appears therefore that with the exception of Israel, the nations of the earth were under the authority of one of the “world-holders of this darkness”, and these facts cast light upon the present conflict. It is to be observed that the cause of the opposition in Dan. x. was that the heavenly messenger was sent to show Daniel what was noted in “the Scripture of truth”. These principalities, powers and world-holders are summed up as “spiritual things (or forces) of wickedness in the heavenlies”.

Were it not that we can say with the Apostle that we are persuaded “that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. viii. 38, 39), we should doubtless quail before these mighty opponents and sink lower than Daniel did, but Christ is risen and we are “more than conquerors through Him that loved us”, and strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, we shall both stand and withstand, knowing that “the God of peace shall bruise Satan under our feet shortly” (Rom. xvi. 20).

(*Mystery16*, pp.121-125).

The threefold conflict (vi. 12).

(*Mystery16*, pp.138-143)

1. How far are we warranted in speaking of "war" against principalities and powers in the heavenlies, *now*?
2. Are these several phases of this conflict?
3. Can we learn anything from O.T. typical history?

We believe the answer is that the conflict is threefold:

1. We look back to the cross, and there see that Christ triumphed over principalities and powers, thereby rendering us "more than conquerors" in His victory (Col. ii. 15).
2. Our present conflict is with the "world-holders of this darkness", it is described as a wrestling.
3. A conflict upon a more vast scale will take place when the church prepares to enter its inheritance in resurrection.

These three phases of conflict are found in the typical history of Israel.

The victory of the Cross.

The first, which typifies the triumph over principalities and powers by the cross, and which lies at the basis of all victory (Rom. viii. 37-39), is set forth by the victory over Pharaoh, a victory in which Israel did nothing but "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, for the Lord shall fight for you and ye shall hold your peace" (Exod. xiv. 14). This initial victory had far-reaching effects:--

"The people shall hear, and be afraid: sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away they shall be as still as a stone, till Thy people pass over, which Thou hast purchased" (Exod. xv. 14-16).

Rahab, of Jericho, said to the spies:--

"I know that the Lord hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land have melted because of you. For we have heard how the Lord dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt" (Josh. ii. 9, 10).

Here it will be seen that the initial victory at Israel's redemption went before them, melting the opposition of their foes. By reading Joshua ii. 10, 11, and v. 1, we see that the second victory, namely, that of Israel over Amalek, Sihon and Og, all of which be it noted are on "this side of Jordan", likewise carried consternation into the ranks of the Canaanites.

The present conflict.

The present conflict with the "world-holders of this darkness" is typified in Israel's battles with Amalek, Sihon and Og. We must remember that the reason why Israel were led through the wilderness, instead of taking the shorter road through the land of the Philistines, was to prevent the people from being discouraged, "lest peradventure the people repent when they see *war*" (Exod. xiii. 17). Consequently, the battles of the wilderness are not to be reckoned as "war" in the full sense. Our present conflict is spoken of as "wrestling", the shock of battle may be yet future.

It will help us considerably to note a few features of this typical wilderness struggle. The first great victory was immediately subsequent to redemption. After Amalek's attack Israel do not meet Canaanite foes until they have met with God, have been cleansed,

sanctified, and made a covenant people. Readers are already acquainted with the difference that exists between *redemption* and *atonement*. Before Israel could meet either King Og of Bashan or King Sihon of Heshbon, even on this side of Jordan, they needed the instruction and the types of acceptance foreshadowed in the tabernacle. This order is observed in Ephesians.

1. Redemption (Eph. i. 7).
2. Atonement; "made nigh"; "access" (Eph. ii.).
3. The conflict (Eph. vi.).

To invert this order, or to omit one section, is to court dismal failure. Moreover, Joshua, who led the people on to victory, was a man of the Word (Josh. i. 8). He knew the value of the "sword of the Spirit", and of that weapon that was mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of Satan, as at Jericho. Let us now notice the foes of Israel's wilderness period.

Amalek.—Some think that it is an error to suppose that the Amalekites are descendants of Esau who had a grandson of that name (Gen. xxxvi. 10-16), for the country of the Amalekites is mentioned together with Canaanite nations, as that of the Rephaims and Amorites in Gen. xiv. 7, long before the birth of Esau, the grandfather of Amalek. Be this as it may, Amalek's attack is separated from the rest. So far as Israel were concerned Amalek's attack was a treacherous act:--

"He met thee by the way, and smote the hindmost of thee, even all that were feeble behind thee, when thou wast faint and weary" (Deut. xxv. 18).

His opportunity seems to have been provided by the murmuring and rebellious spirit of the people. Conquest no longer lay in "standing still and seeing the salvation of the Lord", but by active and prayerful co-operation. "*Go fight*" were the words of Joshua; "*Go pray*" the words to Moses. The opportunity afforded by murmuring and the power of prayer will not be lightly passed over by those to whom Eph. vi. comes as personal truth.

The essential character of Amalek's opposition, however, is found in the margin of Exod. xvii. 16, "Because the hand of Amalek is against the throne of the Lord". The "world-holders of this darkness" oppose the purpose of the ages, and that purpose involves the very *throne of the Lord*. The enthroned Christ and all His people are the great centre of Satanic attack. This is developed in full in the Book of the Revelation.

Saul, type of Antichrist as he was, the people's choice, the persecutor of the Lord's anointed (David) forfeits his throne through failure to blot out Amalek (I Sam. xxviii. 18). Haman the Agagite almost accomplished the destruction of Israel (Esther iii.). Balaam, however, foretold that Amalek, the first of the nations, should nevertheless end in destruction (Numb. xxiv. 20).

Sihon.—Israel sought no quarrel with Sihon. A request was sent asking Sihon to allow Israel "to pass through", their objective being the territory of Canaan but not of

Sihon. Sihon, however, "would not suffer Israel to pass through his border". Our inheritance lies beyond the borders of this earth, even in the heavenlies, but the conflict started by Amalek is perpetuated by Sihon even here and now. Israel consequently smote Sihon and possessed his land "this side of Jordan" (Deut. iv. 47). In Numb. xxi. 1-3 we have one more encounter recorded:--

"And when King Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south, heard tell that Israel came by way of the spies, then he fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners."

By way of the spies.—We know that Moses sent the spies (Numb. xiii. 17) at the command of the Lord (xiii. 1, 2), but we must not forget the words of Ezek. xx. 6:--

"In the day that I lifted up mine hand unto them, to bring them forth of the land of Egypt into a land that I HAD ESPIED for them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all lands."

Was there any element of unbelief in this spying out of the land? Was it a concession to the weakness of the flesh, much like the law of Moses concerning divorce (Matt. xix. 3-8)? It appears to have made one more opponent, and led to the captivity of some of Israel. There is a lesson for us here. Let us so fully trust the goodness and the word of the Lord that we shall "walk by faith and not by sight", needing neither the evidence of the grapes of Eshcol to encourage us, nor the description of our giant foes to dishearten us, resting in the blessed victory already ours in Christ (Rom. viii. 37, 38), and recognizing that "as our day so shall our strength be". We are *more than* conquerors through Him that loved us.

King Og of Bashan.—This king was the only one left of the giants, thereby connecting him with the seed of the serpent, and fit type of the principalities and powers that war against the purpose of the Lord. The reader may know the book entitled *The Giant Cities of Bashan*, where the literal character of the word "giant" is demonstrated. The destruction of King Og of Bashan is recounted in Psa. cxxxvi. 20 and followed by the refrain, "for His *mercy* endureth for ever". The satanic character of the Canaanites justifies this somewhat strange use of the word mercy.

These opponents, Amalek, Sihon and Og set before us the character of the attack we may expect "this side of Jordan". The full triumph follows the crossing of the Jordan.

The third conquest.

Joshua reaches the banks of the Jordan and lodges there "three days" before passing over (Josh. iii. 1, 2). They were to go on a new journey, "For ye have not passed this way heretofore" (iii. 4). The passage of the ark and of the people through the Jordan was to be taken as a pledge that the Lord was among them, "and that He will not fail to drive out from before you the Canaanite" (iii. 10). Twelve men were chosen, one for each tribe, who took twelve stones from the firm bed of the river as a memorial. All Israel were involved in this crossing, the ark of the covenant also pledging God's word and power in

the victory (iii., iv.). It is most suggestive to read that at the crossing of the Jordan the waters,

"stood—rose up in one mound a great way off, by the city ADAM, which is beside Zarethan, and they which were going down to the sea of the waste plain, the salt sea, failed—were cut off, and the people passed over right against Jericho" (Josh. iii. 16 *Rotherham*).

Stanley translates the passage, "High up, far away in Adam, the city which is beside Zarethan". It seems too clear a type to be put down to mere coincidence that the waters that flowed down from Adam to the salt sea (called to-day *The Dead Sea*) should be so completely cut off. The stream of sin and death which started its course in Eden by one man must be arrested before the people of the Lord can pass over Jordan into their inheritance. Rom. v. 12 - viii. 39 is seen in type and shadow here.

Thus the Red Sea passage sets forth our union with Christ in His triumph over sin and death, and the Jordan passage our actual triumphant passage into literal resurrection glory. The reader may fill in many other parallels, for example, the Lord's baptism in Jordan followed by His genealogy back to Adam, and the calling of the twelve "from the baptism of John", as witnesses, but these details are somewhat apart from our theme.

It is noticeable that Israel pass the Jordan "right against Jericho". Just as the passage through the Red Sea spread consternation among the natives of Canaan, so also did the passage of the Jordan (Josh. v. 1). It is here that Joshua meets "The Captain of the Lord's host" (v. 13-15). This is the beginning of the conquest of Canaan. The first to fall is Jericho and its king, and in the Lord's mercy the initial victory of this third phase is seen to be all of faith. Now follows a series of battles, interspersed with events that have been touched upon in *Fundamentals of Dispensational Truth*, until at the close of chapter xii. a halt is made and a list drawn up comprised of thirty-one kings that had been smitten.

The record of Caleb and Joshua given in Numbers and Joshua may throw light upon the position of those who, like these men of faith, press on to the goal and overcome. Sufficient, however, has been said to point the direction for the child of God that he may realize the past, the present and the future phases of this mighty conflict with principalities, and powers, who, like the Canaanites, are doomed to destruction, who shall be turned out of their possessions in the heavenlies, and who already, like Sihon and Og, seek to prevent us "passing through". Let us not forget the solemn lesson of "then came Amalek", nor the fact that Christ's triumph has traveled on ahead through all spheres, and is the basis of our ultimate victory. The power of His might in Eph. i. 19 and vi. 10 is both His triumph and ours. Both Rom. v.-viii. and I Cor. xv. link the doctrine of Adam, death, and resurrection victory together, a truth so blessedly set forth in the heaped up waters of Jordan near the city of Adam.

(*Mystery16*, pp.138-143).

The mystery of the gospel and its ambassador (vi. 18 - 24),
(*Mystery16*, pp.145-153)

and concluding study of this Epistle.

Immediately following the exhortation to put on the whole armour of God comes prayer. The statement with which this idea of prayer is introduced is somewhat involved:--

"With all prayer and supplication praying in every season in spirit (Gk. *en pneumatic*), and thereunto watching with all perseverance and supplication, for all the saints" (Eph. vi. 18).

The two words "prayer and supplication" have been rendered "supplication and deprecation". That is *asking* for what is good and *deprecating* what is evil. At the root of the former word lies the idea of a *wish*, at the root of the latter a *fear*. The one is the pouring out of the heart's desire, the other the expression of a need.

"Praying in every season": like the preaching of the Word (II Tim. iv. 2), prayer is not to be limited to any one season or occasion. Paul when writing to the Romans could call God to witness that "without ceasing" he made mention of them in his prayers. The solemn appeal to God as a witness prevents any idea of exaggerated language here. Paul "never left off" praying. At the same time he was traversing sea and land preaching the gospel. He was earning his own living, sometimes labouring night and day with his own hands. His sufferings and trials were beyond measure, and upon him came the cares of all the churches. Yet he never left off praying!

The conventions of the faith are safeguards. It is good to kneel or to stand when we pray. It is good to close the eyes and fold the hands—the outside attitude should express the hidden spirit. It is good to turn aside from the things of daily life, withdraw to the quiet room alone in secret. But all these things may be dispensed with without touching the essence of prayer. Paul could pray as he walked, as he talked, as he worked. He could pray without closing the watchful eye, or folding the labouring hand. He could pray without ceasing, serve without ceasing, labour without ceasing. Let us not confound true prayer with mysticism. To kneel for a long time in silence may be the highest form of worship, it may but numb the sensibilities and lay the unguarded spirit open to invasion. In some cases it is a form of self deception and pride:--

"When Moses was gone into the tabernacle of the congregation to speak with Him, then he heard THE VOICE OF ONE speaking *to him*" (Num. vii. 89).

It is never safe to omit the Word of God when we think of prayer. It is the connection seen here in Eph. vi. 17, 18, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying always".

What is prayer? Why do we pray? Can we by prayer cause God to alter one line of His purpose? Can we add or subtract one name from the book of life? Can we alter by one second the "appointed time"? Would the Lord come one moment sooner if all His people prayed that He would? God's purpose will go on to its glorious end whether we pray or whether we remain silent. He is not like the unjust judge who can be worried into

action by sheer importunity. That which sometimes passes for great piety may prove to be sheer unbelief. We remember sometime ago that our little one had prayed in her childish fashion that on some particular day, weeks ahead, the weather might prove fine. Nothing more being mentioned, the mother reminded her saying, "You have not asked God any more about the fine day you want". "Oh no, mother", was the response, "I told Him once, *and He won't forget*".

Prayer does not mean arguing with God, or trying to get our own way. Prayer gives us access to God, fellowship with Himself. Gives us insight into His purposes, sends us out again into the turmoil of life with less anxiety, with greater patience, with more sympathy.

"With a heart at leisure from itself,
To soothe and sympathise."

Prayers are answered because God wishes His children to share His secrets, trust Himself, but prayers never alter God's plans. Prayer comes to God with his own Word and says, "*Do as Thou hast said*". Prayer is never answered that is not in accordance with the will of God. There are some things that God Himself has placed at our disposal upon the condition that we "ask", "seek", and "knock", but there is no more mystery about this than when the child asks its parent for bread, or knocks at the door for entrance.

Watching with all perseverance.

The Lord did not simply say, "Pray lead us not into temptation". He also said, "Watch and pray that ye enter into temptation". Is it right to pray the one prayer, and forget to watch? Will prayer alone avail us, if the Lord has said watch *and* pray? "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark xiii. 37). The word "watch" in Eph. vi. 18 means "sleeplessness". In II Cor. vi. 5 and xi. 27 we have the word in a setting of tumult, prison, weariness, cold and nakedness. It is of the Spirit of the Lord Himself. "Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psa. cxxi. 4). Luke xxi. 34-36 urges watchfulness by such words as "unawares", "snares", "escape".

What should we pray for? In one sense we must all confess with Rom. viii. 26, "we know not what we should pray for as we ought", but that is not exactly our meaning in the question. There are some children of God whose integrity is beyond question, who feel that prayer must be confined to spiritual things only, and that such things as problems of daily business, home, etc. are not proper subjects for prayer. What then should we pray for? Surely the apostle has answered in Phil. iv. 6:--

"Be over-anxious for NOTHING, but in EVERYTHING by prayer and supplication
with thanksgiving let your REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN unto God."

Anxiety for *nothing*, prayer in *everything* seem to allow no neutral ground. When once we are saved, may we not believe that all our affairs are a part of the Lord's concern, that somehow or other where we live, where we work, the friends we have or lose, all the

complex happenings of everyday are part and parcel of His purpose. If the everyday affairs of everyone are outside the scope of prayer, what is there left of human affairs as part of God's purpose? For our own part we want to be more simple, more like child and parent when we pray.

This watchful and prayerful spirit which the Apostle enjoins was not to be spent upon self. It was "for all saints". If one member suffer, all suffer. It is true unselfishness to pray for the rest of the Body the church, for our own individual peace and blessing is largely connected with the blessing of the whole. Is there in all the epistles of the N.T. a more beautiful exhibition of unconscious modesty and humility than the words that follow, "and for me". It is Paul that speaks. Paul, to whom the dispensation of the Mystery had been granted. Paul, who had been caught away to the third heaven. It is such a one that says "and for me". There is a precious mingling of the homely and the sublime in this concluding passage.

Eph. vi. 18 - 24.

A	Prayer. For all the saints (<i>panton ton hagion</i>).	/	a1	Utterance.
		/	b1	Boldness.
B	Paul. Prayer for	/	c1	Make known.
		\	c1	Ambassador.
		\	b1	Boldly.
		\	a1	Speak.
		/	a2	My affairs.
		/	b2	Tychicus.
B	Paul. Affairs for	/	c2	Shall make known.
		\	b2	Whom I have sent.
		\	c2	Ye might know.
		\	a2	Our affairs.
A	Benediction. All who love (<i>panton ton agaponton</i>).			

What is Ministry?

There is an intimate connection between the ministry for which Paul asks prayer, and his "affairs" which he makes known through Tychicus. We are apt to limit our conception of ministry too closely to the actual work of speaking or writing. Were not Paul's private affairs a part of his ministry? Had not his "prospects" been ruined for the truth's sake? When he sometimes laboured with his hands to provide the necessary things of life could he not render that humble service "as unto the Lord"? When the Philippians sent once and again unto his necessities did they feel any need to distinguish between the sacred and the secular? Was it not at the same time "fellowship in the gospel"? (Phil. i. 5; iv. 15, 16). Ministry is simply service, and this includes the whole manner of life, for often the demands of the ministry rendered seriously, deflect the whole current of daily affairs. So it is that Paul could link together the high ministry of the mystery and "how I do" without any feeling of incongruity.

Prayer expresses a sense of need.

His prayer is for "utterance", "boldness", the ability and the courage to speak freely as he "ought". Here is a man of like infirmity as ourselves. He knew what it was to feel a shrinking, and could sympathise with the timid spirit of Timothy (II Tim. i. 4, 7). He knew what it was to be despised (I Tim. iv. 12; II Cor. x. 10), and to have indifferent health (Gal. iv. 14). He knew that whenever there is an "open door" there will be "many adversaries" (I Cor. xvi. 9), and prayer was needed that the opposition may not be allowed to turn him back from the appointed path. Did he never have moments of doubt when with aching limbs and tired brain he laboured and travailed at some lowly occupation for the bare necessities of life? Did no one whisper that he might have served the Lord better by staying in honour and influence at Tarsus? Did he never need the vision at night of the Lord saying:--

"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).

Unless we have made a most critical mistake in our understanding of Paul's temperament and circumstances, we believe he had the scholar's shrinking from the physical blow, the super-sensitiveness to criticism, the knowledge within of his own utter unworthiness, the consciousness that in following his calling he must ever appear in the eyes of many as a presumptuous boaster. Yet he turned not back. This man who shrank from the tumult of Corinth was ready to face the mob at Ephesus (Acts xix. 30), and the enraged Jews at Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 40). He could write to the Philippians:--

"That with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death" (Phil. i. 20).

He could speak of himself as a drink-offering poured out upon the sacrifice and service of faith (Phil. ii. 17). There is some compensation to the sensitive spirit, if he or she "suffer as a *Christian*", but Paul had to face the shame of "suffering as a *malefactor*" (II Tim. ii. 9; Luke xxiii. 32). He understood in measure what the Lord felt when He faced not only death and suffering, but the intense shame of being "numbered with the transgressors" (Mark xv. 28). Compulsory association with the brutal company may be more torture than the stake. And so Paul said "and for me".

The mystery of the gospel.

The utterance and the boldness that Paul desired was that he might make known the mystery of the gospel. There are two sources of help available in seeking the meaning of this expression. We may observe its connection with the use of the word "mystery" in this epistle. We may read it in the light of the parallel passage in Colossians. Now the mystery is mentioned six times in Ephesians:--

- A | i. 9, 10. The dispensation.
- B | iii. 3. THE MYSTERY.
- C | iii. 4. The mystery of Christ.
- A | iii. 9. The dispensation (R.V.).
- B | v. 32. THE GREAT MYSTERY.
- C | vi. 19. The mystery of the gospel.

We have already learned to distinguish between the Mystery itself which was revealed only to Paul, and the Mystery of Christ which had been made known in measure down the age, but in its final and highest sphere, to Paul. It would appear therefore that the Mystery of the gospel was connected specially with the Mystery of Christ. Let us now turn to Col. iv. The context is identical with that of Eph. vi.:-

"Withal praying for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the *mystery of Christ*, for which I am also in bonds, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak" (Col. iv. 3, 4).

This passage confirms our finding. Why should the Apostle lay such stress upon this feature. The reason seems to be this. Every message sent by God in grace to man has been inseparably connected with Christ, and until His person and position were made clear no "good message" could be intelligible. If one would preach the gospel of the kingdom one must preach the advent of the King. If one would preach the gospel of grace, one must preach Christ crucified, dead, risen. If one would preach the good tidings of the Mystery which places the redeemed "far above all", it is essential that before that statement can be received, or even be intelligible, Christ must be preached "far above all" too. Where Paul surpassed all in the revelation he received, was that over and above the accumulated knowledge of the Mystery of Christ, that had grown ever since the first revelation given in the garden of Eden, he had received the climax of truth, viz., that the risen but rejected Messiah was now at the right hand of God, Head of both principalities and the church, and that the Mystery of the union of the church with the ascended Lord constituted the fullness of Him, Who in His turn was designated to fill all in all. It was in order that he might make this message clear, without compromise and without fear, that he asked the prayers of the saints.

We have "boldness" before God (Eph. iii. 12), shall we be fearful before man whose breath is in his nostrils! Yes, we may be; hence the value of intercessory prayer for one another.

An Ambassador.

"In behalf of which I am conducting an embassy in a chain" (Eph. vi. 20).

Speaking as a man, Paul had a passion for liberty. One has only to read Gal. ii. to catch something of his burning spirit. Yet he could rejoice in the honour of his bonds, his prison, his chains, for after all they were the badges of highest honour. The figure of an ambassador provides a very apt illustration of the distinctive spheres of administration given to the apostles Peter and Paul. At the moment of writing the King of England has Ambassadors in France and Germany. Now the ambassador in France, when dealing

officially with Franco-British affairs, speaks with all the authority of the Queen he represents. If however, the ambassador to France should go to Germany, he would of course have the individual's right of personal opinion, but he could no longer act in things of state nor speak with delegated authority. Peter, the Ambassador of the Lord to the circumcision, received power and authority which he exercised, but Peter when dealing with the present interval of the Mystery confesses to things that are hard to be understood, and realizes that they belong to the embassy of Paul, and that he has no jurisdiction in that province (II Pet. iii. 15, 16). Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles. To him had been granted the dispensation of the grace of God to the Gentiles. He was an Ambassador in a chain, and when he spoke as the Ambassador he spoke with full authority.

My affairs and how I do.

It is one thing, however, to pray with a purely doctrinal interest; it is another to pray because of acquaintance with actual needs. When the reader takes up a printed page, his mental image of the writer may be far removed from reality. How can intelligent prayer therefore be offered? The Apostle felt this need, and adds to his request for prayer the means for information. Yet once again, let us observe the delicacy of his method. Here is no harrowing list of details of prison life, no list of privations and hardships, no pose, for we know from his own words that he felt a fool when compelled in sheer defence to appear boastful. What he does do is to give an intimation to those who were desirous of this intelligent fellowship that the necessary information could be obtained from Tychicus. That this was no casual mission to fulfil we may gather from the character of the man who received it:--

"Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord" (Eph. vi. 21).

"Tychicus, who is a beloved brother, and faithful minister fellow-servant in the Lord" (Col. iv. 7).

"Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus" (II Tim. iv. 12).

The last reference is comforting. Demas had forsaken Paul. All in Asia had left him, but Tychicus remained faithful. Tychicus and Trophimus are mentioned in Acts xx. 4, and Trophimus was an "Ephesian" (Acts xxi. 29). Both Tychicus and Trophimus therefore are connected with Ephesus, and this is a strong argument in favour of the retention of the word "Ephesus" in verse 1 of this epistle. If the epistle had been written to "the saints that *are*", as some have suggested, to whom would Tychicus convey the message concerning the personal affairs of Paul? Paul's last thought, however, is for the saints. Not only did he send Tychicus with the necessary information concerning his own affairs, but he concludes, "and that he might comfort your hearts" (Eph. vi. 22). The same is true of Col. iv. 8. A glimpse is given of the intimate relationship between Paul's "affairs", "the Mystery", and the "heart's comfort" of the believer in Col. ii. 1-3:--

"For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you that their hearts might be comforted the full knowledge of the mystery of God—Christ, in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

The Benediction.

The contemplation of this noble spirit falls like a benediction itself in a world of sordid self-interests and covetousness, but the "peace" and the "love with faith" so markedly present come not merely from the heart of man but "from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. vi. 23), and so the benediction falls from Him Who was the strength and the sweetener of Saul of Tarsus,

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

The word translated "sincerity" is *aptharsia* = incorruptibility. Are we to understand that our love to the Lord is "incorruptible", and that this benediction rests upon those only whose love will never change, but is incorruptible? This is the opinion of many. *Dr. Bloomfield*, however, cites the interpretation of Beza to show that the words *en aptharsia* are to be read with the word "grace" and not with "love". It is the grace of the Lord that is imperishable, incorruptible, immortal. It is a point that perhaps we cannot settle. True love is as strong as death. The grace of the Lord is beyond the touch of corruption. Let us seek to love with all sincerity, and rest upon a grace that reaches out beyond the grave. Here is the last word of the epistle—"incorruptibility". Resurrection is stamped on the whole unfolding of the epistle. In chapter i. it is "the power to usward that believe", in chapter ii. it is the sphere of our blessings, in chapter iv. it is seen in the new man, in chapter v. it forms the exhortation to awake from sleep, and in chapter vi. it constitutes the strength of the good soldier.

What shall we say unto these things? Who is sufficient for these things? What shall we render for these things? As we ask these questions in the presence of the Lord there can be but one answer:--

"I follow after, if that I may *laid hold of* that for which also I was *laid hold of* by Christ Jesus but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, according to a mark I press toward the goal, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 12-14).

So concludes a long but happy, and we trust profitable, study. Though we pass from the definite study of this epistle to other parts of Scripture, this one epistle more clearly indicates our peculiar testimony than does any other single book of Scripture. To all who have this precious truth at heart, who value the "good deposits", and realize both its privilege and responsibility and for all who may be called to bear witness to the glorious truth enshrined in the Epistle to the Ephesians, we would humbly but most sincerely repeat the apostle's prayer:--

"And for me, that utterance may be given."

(*Mystery16*, pp.145-153)

The First Principles of the Oracles of God

(A series especially addressed to new readers)

No.40. The Covenant of Sinai (Part 1)

pp. 16 - 20

We have traced the Lord's dealings with Israel from their call in Abraham, and their deliverance from Egypt to their arrival at the wilderness of Sinai (Exod. xix. 1). Sinai marks a crisis in the history of this people, and is of fundamental importance in their typical story. Israel are to show once and for all the utter inability of the flesh to enter into blessing by a covenant of works. This necessitates the New Covenant with its better promises and its better sacrifices, which is the theme of the epistle to the Hebrews. "The law made nothing perfect."

In Exod. xix. 3, 8 and 20 we have recorded three ascents of Sinai by Moses, culminating in the giving of the law. Three more ascents are recorded in Exod. xxiv. 9-xxxii. 14; xxxii. 31-33 and xxxiv. 4-28, culminating in the building of the Tabernacle, the Ark and not the people receiving the tables of stone written the second time, and so bearing witness to Israel's failure and their need of Christ. There is therefore a distinct connection between the old and the new covenants as Jer. xxxi. 31-34 reveals.

The Old and the New Covenants.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah" (Jer. xxxi. 31).

Let us observe how definite the Scripture is with regard to the covenanting parties. "The Lord" on the one hand, and "The house of Israel and the house of Judah" on the other. It is a covenant properly drawn up, and no one who is not of the house of Israel or Judah, or who cannot show full Scriptural warrant for being reckoned with such or 'grafted in', can have part or lot in it. Rom. xi. reveals the method whereby some believing Gentiles came within the bounds of the new covenant. They are spoken of as wild olive branches grafted into the true olive, and, with the branches that remained unbroken, 'partaking of the root and fatness of the olive tree' (Rom. xi. 17). Such is the widest extension of the bounds of this covenant. The moment Israel as a nation passed off the scene, that moment the new covenant and all pertaining to it was withdrawn, to be reserved until the day when:

"All Israel shall be saved For this is MY COVENANT UNTO THEM"
(Rom. xi. 26, 27).

We now proceed with the statement of Jer. xxxi.:

"Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt" (verse 32).

Here we see the connection between the old covenant made at Sinai, and the new covenant to be made in the future. The reference to the Exodus from Egypt is important. Every year this deliverance was remembered by the observance of the feast of the Passover. Israel remembered that old covenant in the very year that our Lord was crucified. It was at the Passover that Christ instituted the memorial of another and greater exodus, by another and greater passover Lamb, and established another and better covenant:

“They made ready the passover and He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying DRINK YE ALL of it; for this is My blood of the NEW COVENANT, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matt. xxvi. 19-30).

The Lord’s supper is a memorial feast exactly similar to the Passover, but differing in that the Passover was a typical memorial connected with the old covenant, whereas the Lord’s supper is connected with the New Covenant. For Gentile believers to partake of this covenant memorial *while unassociated with Israel* appears to be an unwarranted intrusion. Jer. xxxi. continues regarding the first covenant:

“Which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord” (verse 32).

The LXX reads ‘I regarded them not’ instead of ‘I was an husband unto them’. This reading is followed by the N.T. quotation in Heb. viii. 9 which proves that this is the true interpretation. The Hebrew *ba’al* has two meanings (1) to be lord, master, or husband; (2) to disdain, reject, or disregard. The A.V. of Jer. xxxi. chose the wrong meaning. The inspired writer of Hebrews gives the true one. Israel broke the old covenant, and they were disdained, disregarded, all hope being henceforth centred in the Messiah:

“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts and will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jer. xxxi. 33).

It is impossible to read these words without remembering Paul’s argument in II Cor. iii.:

“Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of *stone*, but in fleshy tables of the *heart* God hath made us able ministers of the NEW COVENANT” (II Cor. iii. 3-6).

The Corinthians were already instructed regarding their connection with the New Covenant as I Cor. xi. 25 will show. Here in the second epistle the Apostle feels under the necessity to warn his children concerning those aspects of Judaism that would lead them back to bondage. Therefore he institutes a comparison which it will be helpful to observe.

II Corinthians iii. and iv.	
THE OLD COVENANT	THE NEW COVENANT
The letter that killeth (iii. 6). The ministration of death (iii. 7, 8). The ministration of condemnation (iii. 9). That which is done away (iii. 11). Moses and Israel turn vail removed (iii. 16-18). The glory of God in the face of Moses 'done away' (iii. 7).	The spirit that quickeneth (iii. 6). The ministration of the spirit (iii. 7, 8). The ministration of righteousness (iii. 9). That which remaineth (iii. 11). The vail done away in Christ (iii. 13-15). The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (iv. 6).

II Cor. iv. 3 needs a fuller explanation than we can give in this tabular form:

“But if indeed our gospel be veiled, by those things which are perishing they have been veiled.”

The ‘perishing’ things are the things of the old covenant which are said to be ‘done away’ and ‘abolished’. The god of this age uses the old covenant and ministration of death to veil the light of the glory of the gospel that shone in the face of Christ. One further word from Jer. xxxi. and then we must return to Exod. xix.

“If those ordinances (see verse 35) depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a NATION before Me all the days” (Jer. xxxi. 36).

It is not possible to hold to the inspiration of Scripture and deny the *national* character of the new covenant. We do not wish to be aggressive or controversial, but in an article purporting to deal with fundamentals of dispensational truth we must perforce ‘use great plainness of speech’, and we must state that we have no hesitation or diffidence with regard to our abstention from the observance of the Lord’s supper as a member of that elect company, called into favour during the time of Israel’s rejection. Let us now turn to Exod. xix. and read the terms of the first covenant.

The terms of the first Covenant.

“Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings, and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, IF ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, THEN ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words that thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel” (Exod. xix. 3-6).

Moses descended from the mount, called for the elders of the people and laid before them the words commanded him. There was a unanimous acceptance of the conditions. “And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do” (Exod. xix. 8). From this point on to chapter xxiii. 33 we have the preparation of the people, the descent of the Lord to Sinai, the giving of the ten commandments and the judgments. Then Moses came once more to the people and told them all the words of the Lord and all the judgments, and once more all the people answered with one voice ‘All the words which the Lord hath said we will do’ (Exod. xxiv. 3).

The people having re-asserted their agreement, Moses next put the words of the Lord into writing (Exod. xxiv. 4). He then built an altar on twelve pillars, one for each tribe, and caused sacrifices to be made. Half of the blood shed Moses reserved in basins. He then took the book of the covenant, and read it over in the audience of the people: and they replied, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient" (Exod. xxiv. 7). Moses then took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, saying:

"Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words" (Exod. xxiv. 8).

A covenant instituted with such solemnity, framed with words of such weight and far reaching effect, demands a respectful study. We cannot hope to do more than point the way in articles such as these, but we earnestly trust the reader will be stirred up to see something of the heights and depths of this revelation of the righteousness of God.

The Ten Words (Exod. iii. 28 margin).

The ten commandments are pre-eminently the basis of the covenant:

"And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments" (Exod. xxxiv. 27, 28).

"He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and He wrote them upon two tables of stone" (Deut. iv. 13).

Let us summarize these ten commandments. There are quite a variety of ways in which commandments have been divided and numbered, for it must be remembered that there is no numeration in the original. Some think that numbers 1-4 belong to the first table and relate to God, and numbers 5-10 belong to the second table and relate to man. This would place number 5 as 'the first commandment with promise' at the head of the list, and removes the difficulty created by the apparent promise found in Exod. xx. 6. On the other hand 'that thy days may be long upon the land' (verse 12) is the first definite promise in the covenant.

The Companion Bible draws attention to the fact that the first five commandments contain the title "The Lord thy God", but that no title or name of God appears in the second set. This seems to fall under the natural division of two sets of five, the one dealing with the love to God, the other with love to neighbour. If this be accepted, the honouring of parents is placed upon the table devoted to the honouring of God, and demands serious thought.

The Covenant and the Commandments.

Each of the commandments are vital parts of the covenant, and in many cases passages may be found where this connection is definitely stated. In others it is clearly implied. We will not occupy space in printing the commandments, but the reader with Exod. xx. opens before him may find some help in noting the following facts and particulars.

(1) *No other God.* It is implied in the expressions, “Thy God”, “I will be their God”, “The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob”, that there is a covenant relationship between the two parties named. This is established by such a passage as:

“Behold, I make a *covenant* thou shalt worship no other god lest thou make a *covenant* with the inhabitants of the land” (Exod. iv. 10, 14, 15).

(2) *No graven image.* Had this command been observed by Israel, it alone would have made them a separate people on the earth, for idolatry and image worship was practically universal:

“Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget *the covenant* of the Lord your God, which he made with you, and made you a graven image, or the likeness of anything” (Deut. iv. 32).

“Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this land? because they have forsaken *the covenant* of the Lord God of their fathers FOR THEY WENT and served OTHER GODS” (Deut. xxix. 24-26).

(3) *The covenant Name.* When the Lord bade Moses hew two tables of stone in order that the words of the covenant might be written thereon, we read:

“And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the NAME of the Lord and He said, Behold, I make a covenant” (Exod. xxxiv. 5, 10).

The name here proclaimed is “The Lord God” and the title “The Lord thy God” occurs in each of the commandments on the first table. It is the covenant name, and therefore sacred and central.

(4) *The Sabbath.* The sabbath was a sign of the covenant:

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath for a perpetual *covenant*. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel” (Exod. xxxi. 16, 17).

(5) *The honouring of parents.* The honour due to father and mother is a marked feature of the O.T., and it gains in importance when we see that this command finishes the first table that deals with Israel’s relation to God. We may the better understand the Lord’s words in Matt. xv. 4-6 when we see the place of this fifth commandment. The Pharisees transgressed this commandment by their tradition. They taught that if a man declared that all his possessions were given to God, saying, “It is *Corban*, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free” (Mark vii. 11).

This the Lord condemned as transgressing the commandment of God. It is not possible to honour God by the dishonouring of parents.

We must reserve comment on the second table until the next number.

No.41. The Covenant of Sinai (Part 2)
pp. 34 - 37

We continue our examination of the Covenant of Sinai with the consideration of the laws given on the second table of stone.

(6) *Thou shalt not kill.* Although the name of God is not mentioned in the second table, it becomes abundantly clear upon examination that a right conduct towards our neighbour is governed by, and is a reflection of, our conduct towards the Lord. “Thou shalt not kill” takes our mind back to Gen. ix. 6, “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the *image of God* made He man”. Murder aims at the heart of the purpose of creation, the destruction of the image of God on earth. Murder links man with Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning (John viii. 44), and with Cain, who was of that wicked one (I John iii. 12).

(7) *Thou shalt not commit adultery.* If murder aims at destroying the image of God, adultery is calculated to corrupt the seed:

“Judah hath profaned the holiness of the Lord which He loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The Lord will cut off the man that doeth this The Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, yet she is thy consort, and the wife of thy *covenant*. Truly did He not make (the twain) one (flesh)? Yet he had the residue of the Spirit (and so could have made more than one wife for Adam). And wherefore one (emphatic)? Because He desired a SEED OF GOD” (Mal. ii. 2-15).

The discerning reader will perceive the teaching of Gen. iii. and iv. in a clearer light by remembering this comment of Malachi. The universal association between immorality and idolatry throughout the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation, the story of Gen. vi., the two attacks upon Sarah before Isaac’s birth, the downfall of Solomon, the vehement protests of Nehemiah, these and similar examples reveal the place that adultery takes in the attack upon the purpose of the ages.

So vital is the marriage relationship that the Lord uses it as the most fitting figure of His covenant relationship with Israel. Their very land is to be called Beulah or ‘married’, and the climax of revelation, apart from the Mystery, is ‘the marriage of the Lamb’, with its Satanic counterpart, ‘the whore’ of Rev. xvii. and xviii. Even the members of the church of the One Body may manifest the love of Christ for the church in their own married relationship (Eph. v.). Idolatry and adultery are convertible terms in the Scriptures.

If holiness is involved in the sin of adultery, righteousness is involved in the sin of stealing.

(8) *Thou shalt not steal.* Satan was a murderer from the beginning and has sought down the ages to corrupt the seed. He entered into Judas, who betrayed his Lord, and

Scripture says Judas ‘was a thief’ (John xii. 6). Malachi whose words we have quoted above says, “Will a man rob God?” (Mal. iii. 8).

The weights and measures of Israel were not beneath Divine legislation, for in them were set forth the equity and righteousness of the Lord. “Just balances, just weights, a just ephah and a just hin, shall ye have” (Lev. xix. 36), and this command is immediately followed by a reference to the Lord Who brought them “out of the land of Egypt”. Deut. xxv. 15 puts the same truth in connection with the land of promise:

“Thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have, *that thy days may be lengthened* in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

Righteousness is the foundation of the throne of God, the basis of the covenant with Israel, the bed-rock of the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, the lasting character of the new heavens and earth ‘wherein *dwelleth* righteousness’ when ‘the tabernacle of God will be with men and He will *dwell* with them’. Any system of interpretation that juggles with good and evil, until at last their distinct difference is bedimmed, must stand condemned before the simple example of ‘the just weight and balance’.

(9) *Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.* Satan, the breaker of the commandments already cited, is also the arch-false witness. ‘He is a liar, and abode not in the truth.’ Eph. iv. 25 and 28 bring together two of the commands of this table:

“Wherefore putting away the lie, speak every man truth with his neighbour Let him that stole steal no more.”

Stealing transgresses righteousness, false witness transgresses truth. The new man of Eph. iv. is credited in righteousness and holiness of truth. If Satan entered into Judas the thief, he inspired Ananias, “Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie?” (Acts v. 3). It appears from Zech. v. 3 that among the last phases of the curse of Babylon to the earth is the condoning of stealing and false swearing. The Hebrew word *nakad* should be translated ‘declared innocent’ or ‘let off’:

“For every one that stealeth hath been let off (is written) on the one side according to it (the curse or the scroll), and everyone that sweareth (falsely) hath been let off (is written) on the side according to it.”

(10) *Thou shalt not covet.* It has been said the covetousness breaks all the commandments. It certainly breaks the first, for Mammon is its god. It breaks the second, for Col. iii. 5 calls a covetous man an idolator. We can well see how many if not all of the others can be sacrificed upon the altar of this idol. “The love of money is a root of all evil” (I Tim. vi. 10).

This brief survey enables us to perceive something of the depth of the terms of the covenant made by God, and entered into by Israel. Israel broke that covenant even before Moses could reach them with the two tables of stone. It is a feature of the utmost importance to remember that those broken tables of stone were *re-written*, and placed in the Ark. This Ark is called the Ark of the covenant (Deut. x. 8), and the Ark of the

testimony (Exod. xxx. 6). Exod. xxxi. 18 tells us that the two tables of stone were the tables of testimony. Exod. xxxiv. 28 and 29 calls them both the 'tables of the covenant', the 'two tables of the testimony' and the 'ten words'.

The Ark and the Mercy Seat together represent the perfect redemption of Christ. The New Covenant does not set aside the ten commandments, but fulfils them. As we look through the epistles we find practically every one of the commandments re-stated with one exception, namely, the sabbath.

- (1) No other God. "To us there is but one God" (I Cor. viii. 6).
- (2) Idolatry. "Ye turned to God from idols" (I Thess. i. 9).
- (3) The Name. "That the name of the Lord be not blasphemed" (I Tim. vi. 1).
- (5) Honour parents. "The first commandment with promise" (Eph. vi. 2).
- (6) Not kill. "Love . . . not as Cain who . . . slew his brother" (I John iii. 11, 12).
- (7) No adultery. "Adulterers God will judge" (Heb. xiii. 4).
- (8) Not steal. "Let him that stole steal no more" (Eph. iv. 25).
- (9) Not false witness. "Speak every man truth" (Eph. iv. 25).
- (10) Not covet. "No covetous man hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God" (Eph. v. 5).

The fourth commandment is the exception. During the Acts period Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Ye observe days I am afraid of you" (Gal. iv. 10, 11). To the Romans he wrote, 'One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind' (Rom. xiv. 5). After the Acts period Paul wrote to the Colossians, "Let no man judge you in respect of the sabbath days, which are a shadow" (Col. ii. 16, 17). These words could not have been written had the sabbath observance been obligatory.

Exod. xxxi. 13 tells us that the sabbath is a sign between Israel and the Lord. Like the other sign, namely, circumcision (Rom. iv. 11) and the signs, namely, the miracles wrought during the earthly life of the Lord, and the Acts of the Apostles (I Cor. i. 22; xiv. 22), these together with the sabbath belonged to Israel, and cease with the setting aside of that nation. Let us conclude this survey of the ten commandments with the Apostle's comment in Rom. xiii.:

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandments, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, viz., Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Rom. xiii. 8, 9),

and with the Lord's words in Matt. xxii.:

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. xxii. 37, 40).

We have seen in the 'ten words' the great basis of the covenant made with Israel, and we are yet to see how the whole Tabernacle and its service revolved around the Ark, in which rested the tables of testimony, and the Mercy Seat which covered it. Before we turn our attention to the Tabernacle it seems fitting that we should acquaint ourselves with the judgments that were added to the 'ten words'. It will be found upon examination that they unfold and apply the law given in the tables of stone. It will be remembered that the ten commandments divide the duties of Israel into two sets, five dealing with God and five dealing with man. The N.T. sums up the law and the prophets as love to God and love to neighbour.

The ten-fold exposition.

In Exod. xx. the covenant is given, and in Exod. xxiv. the covenant is ratified, and it will be seen that this covenant is concerned with:

- (1) All the words of the Lord, i.e. the 'ten words' of xx. 1-17.
- (2) All the judgments, i.e. those of xxi.-xxiii.:
"And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do" (Exod. xxiv. 3).

No.42. The Tabernacle. A general survey (Exod. xxv. 1 - 9) pp. 54 - 57

In tracing the history of Israel as a nation we start with redemption, the Passover deliverance from Egypt, where a fresh start was made. The Passover month became 'a beginning of months' unto them (Exod. xii. 1). The Tabernacle was completed on the first day of the first month in the second year (Exod. xl. 17). Further, the first part of Exodus is occupied with building with bricks by slave labour. In the second part, the Tabernacle using gold, silver, and precious materials was built by free men who gave 'willingly' (Exod. xxv. 1-8). We have followed them through the waters of the Red Sea, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. None but the redeemed of the Lord can reach the other side alive. We have seen their trials and temptations, their first great battle with Amalek, and its spiritual teaching. We have seen them enter into covenant relationship with God, both book and people being sprinkled with blood; we have heard the words of the covenant given in solemn grandeur from Sinai, and we have reached that point in the development of their typical history that demands the Tabernacle and its ritual.

While it is gloriously true that our Saviour 'offered one sacrifice for sins for ever' (Heb. x. 12) and 'Died unto sin once' (Rom. vi. 10), yet such is the wonder of that one sacrifice, that it embraces all that the Passover deliverance from Egypt typified, all that the day of Atonement set forth, and all that the varied offerings for cleansing and acceptance indicated. The book of Exodus divides into two great sections, each section

being especially associated with one distinctive aspect of the finished work of Calvary. In Luke ix. 31 where the A.V. reads 'decease' the original has the Greek word *exodus*; in Heb. x. 19 where the A.V. reads 'boldness to enter' the Greek has *eisodus*. The first leads out, the second leads in. Eph. i. 7 gives the *exodus* aspect, the word translated forgiveness being *aphesis* 'set at liberty' (Luke iv. 18). Eph. ii. 13 gives the *eisodus* aspect, 'made nigh'. The Tabernacle and its service is mainly occupied with this second aspect of redeeming love, access into the presence of the Lord, and acceptance by reason of the offering made upon the altar.

The present creation is described in Gen. i. and ii., and the record of that mighty work comprises 34 verses. The Tabernacle is described in Exodus chapters xxv.-xxxi. and xxxv.-xl., and the record comprises 457 verses. This disproportion can be explained only in the light of their relative importance, the understanding of the way into the presence of God being far more important than the understanding of the way in which He created heaven and earth. The new creation is so much greater than the present one, as is the finished temple compared with the scaffolding erected for its building.

The shadow of heavenly things.

In Exod. xxv. 8, 9; xxvi. 30; xxvii. 8 and Numb. viii. 4 Moses is commanded to see that all things in the Tabernacle are made after the pattern that was shown him in the mount, and this is repeated in Heb. viii. 5. In the latter passage the reason for this exactness is given:

"The example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle, for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

Again, in Heb. ix. 23 the Tabernacle is spoken of as 'the pattern of things in the heavens'. The holiest of all in the Tabernacle was evidently a symbol of heaven, for we read:

"We have an High Priest in the heavens, a Minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

It is called 'a greater and more perfect tabernacle' in ix. 11, and the holy places made with hands are called 'figures of the true' and the true is further defined as 'heaven itself' in ix. 24. It is therefore a matter beyond controversy that the Tabernacle and its offerings, its priests and its furniture, are intensely typical, and speak of heaven itself where Christ as the great High Priest has for us entered.

"Of Thine own have we given Thee."

The whole of the material necessary for the construction of the Tabernacle and its furniture was given willingly by the people of Israel.

"Every man that giveth it willingly with his heart" (Exod. xxv. 2).
"And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing" (Exod. xxxv. 21, 29).

The same element of wholehearted willingness entered into the preparation for the Temple in David's day:

“Who then is willing to consecrate his service?”

“Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord” (I Chron. xxix. 5, 9).

The chapter also reveals the secret of this willing offering:

“All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee.”

“All this store that we have prepared to build Thee an house for Thine holy name cometh of Thine hand, and is all Thine own” (I Chron. xxix. 14, 16).

The outer court was 100 cubits long and 50 cubits wide, covering an area of 5,000 square cubits. The 60 pillars of this court multiply the Tabernacle number (5) by the number of tribes (12). The pillars that held the curtains were 5 cubits apart and 5 cubits high; the whole of the outer curtain was divided into squares of 25 cubits. We will not pursue this further, but as we come to individual details we shall find 5 dominating the whole structure. We are distinctly told in Psa. cv. that the offerings made by Israel for the Tabernacle were brought from Egypt at the Exodus:

“He brought them forth also with silver and gold” (Psa. cv. 37).

“They asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and raiment” (Exod. xii. 35).

This was provided for in the covenant made with Abraham:

“And also that nation, whom they serve, will I judge, and afterward they shall come out with great substance” (Gen. xv. 14).

It practically amounted to deferred pay, the taskmaster being compelled at the end to disgorge the wage withheld. The same principle is seen in Isa. lx. 5, 11, 16; lxi. 6. That service and honour due to God, which sin has diverted to itself, shall by virtue of redemption be taken from the usurper and willingly offered to the rightful Lord. The same may be said of the various ascriptions of praise found in the book of the Revelation; they are all so much of the Lord's due held back for a time by sin. When the day of glory arrives:

“The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it” (Rev. xxi. 24).

“Thy people offer themselves willingly in the day of Thy power” (Psa. cx. 3 R.V.).

The first article of the Tabernacle to be specified is the ark. This we will examine later, but first we had better obtain a general survey. The Tabernacle itself was an oblong, 30 cubits in length, and 10 in height and breadth. This was divided by a veil into two parts; the holy place being 20 cubits long, and the most holy, the holy of holies, being a perfect cube of 10 cubits length, breadth and depth. These are referred to in Heb. ix. 2, 6, 7 as the first and second tabernacle, respectively. In the first Tabernacle stood the lampstand, the table of shewbread, and the altar of incense. In the holiest of all

stood the ark and the mercy seat. None but the high priest was allowed to enter into the holiest of all.

The Tabernacle itself was constructed of planks of shittim wood overlaid with gold, which planks were placed upon silver sockets and fastened together by long rods. Inside were woven tapestries containing embroidered cherubim, and outside were successive layers of curtain of goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins. Before the door of the Tabernacle stood the brazen altar and the laver, and the whole was surrounded by the white curtained court. Disposed around this Tabernacle were the priests, the tents, and the tribes. Rabbinical tradition has it that each tribe carried as a sign one of the twelve constellations of the Zodiac. These twelve signs, beginning with the sign of the virgin (Genesis) and ending with the sign of the lion (Revelation), depict the whole story of redemption.

The twelve tribes were distributed according to the four points of the compass, the whole forming a wondrous picture—all Israel grouped around the ark, the mercy seat, and the pillar of cloud or fire, setting forth the day when God shall be all in all. The order here referred to is given in full details in Numb. ii. and *The Companion Bible, Dispensation Truth* (page 106), and Newberry's supplement to *The Englishman's Bible* set the whole before the eye in a diagram. It is of interest to note that the tribes that occupied east, west, south, and north had as their signs the lion, ox, man, and eagle, so that both at the centre (the mercy seat) and at the circumference (the standards) the cherubic pledge of restoration was remembered.

The primary purpose of the Tabernacle.

In Exod. xxv. 8 immediately following the enumeration of the materials necessary for its building, God gives the primary purpose of the construction, "Let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them". "The tents of Shem" were from the days of Noah destined to be the dwelling place of God (Gen. xi. 27), and it is the purpose of redemption and atonement to make the sons of men fit for God to dwell among them. The climax of the book of Revelation is expressed in the words:

"Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God" (Rev. xxi. 3),

and when this takes place tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain, the close attendants upon sin ever since paradise was lost, shall for ever pass away. This blessed time of restoration is expressed in the typical Tabernacle of Israel.

Why a Tabernacle?

A tabernacle is a tent, a dwelling place that belongs to pilgrims. It speaks of the wilderness and its wanderings rather than the kingdom and its peace. Consequently it has an application all down the age to all companies of the redeemed who are pressing on to the hope laid up for them:

“By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac, and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise” (Heb. xi. 9).

Not only so, it represents the willingness of God, in His grace to have no settled place upon this earth until sin is removed, and His pilgrim people are at home in peace. Since Gen. iii. the sabbath rest of creation has been broken by the activities of redemption. The date upon which the Tabernacle was set up is also a typical nature (Exod. xl. 17).

Greater Riches than the Treasures in Egypt

No.3. The only ground of boasting (I Cor. i. 31; iii. 21 - 23). pp. 58 - 60

In the preceding article we were concerned largely with the faction and division that raised the party cries "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos" etc., and realized that this party spirit is in mind right through the section, Paul, Apollos and Cephas being mentioned by name in the closing verses of chapter iii.

'Glorying' or 'boasting' falls into two main groups, namely, those things in which the believer can boast, and those things in which he cannot or must not boast. Those references which do not fall under one or other of these categories will need to be considered separately.

(1) *Legitimate grounds of boasting for the believer.*

This list can be headed with the words of I Cor. i. 31:

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

The only true ground of boasting or glorying for a sinner saved by grace is expressed in the words of Gal. vi. 14:

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

It is the characteristic of the true believer that he is one that:

"Worships God in spirit, boasts or glories in Christ Jesus, and has no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 13).

This boasting, while it may be expressed in faltering tones here and now, will be fully expressed in the day of redemption,

"that I may rejoice, boast or glory, in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain" (Phil. ii. 16).

This relation of the apostle's "boasting" in that day, with the faithfulness of those believers who came under his care, is more fully announced when he said:

"For what is our hope, or joy, or crown or rejoicing (or glorying)? Are not ever ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?" (I Thess. ii. 19).

When the Apostle would bring the first great section of Romans to a conclusion, which he does in Rom. v. 1-11, he writes his exultant praise around three occurrences of *kauchaomai* thus:

A1 | 1, 2. BOASTING in hope.
B | 3-. Not only so.
A2 | -3-10. BOASTING in tribulation also.
B | 11-. Not only so.
A3 | -11. BOASTING in God.

The interposition of the ‘glorying in tribulations also’ brings us to another aspect of truth. It must not be assumed from the rigorous denial of all grounds of boasting in self and the flesh, that Paul was austere or unsympathetic in his dealings with fellow believers—the opposite is the truth. He finds some grounds for thanksgiving in the opening salutation of the epistle to the Corinthians, even though the bulk of the epistle exposes such aberration and folly as to cause the Apostle to weep. After all that he has said to the contrary he said he would ‘boast’ in himself, but not in his prowess his wisdom, his success, but in his infirmities!

“He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me for when I am weak, then I am strong” (II Cor. xii. 9, 10).

He who could glory in tribulations and infirmities as did the Apostle, was no defeatist or cynic; he was an exultant believer delivered once and for ever from the vanity of self-justification, and could, from that standpoint, see that even his own acknowledged frailty but emphasized the power of Christ upon him. In much the same way, the same Apostle who resolutely set aside all boasting in self and in men, could punctuate II Cor. vii.-ix. with this boasting in the generosity of the Corinthian church.

“Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation” (II Cor. vii. 4).

Other references to the same theme are II Cor. vii. 14; viii. 24 and ix. 3, 4. But in all this the discerning reader will see that there is no boasting in the flesh. To this end, the concluding verse of II Cor. ix. should be pondered. When he had said all that could be said about the liberality of the Corinthians and their magnificent response, he gives the whole passage a significant turn at the end by saying:

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift” (II Cor. ix. 15).

Similarly when Paul said that he had whereof he could boast through Jesus Christ, it was ‘in those things which pertain to God’, which the context reveals to be the grace given to him as the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (Rom. xv. 15-20). In like manner, in the self-same chapter of Galatians where he writes ‘God forbid that I should boast’ he says “But let every man prove his own work and then shall he have rejoicing (or a ground of boasting) in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden (or allotted task, pack or load)” (Gal. vi. 4, 5).

(2) The Apostle has brought together a series of reasons to show that boasting in human merit, when the subject is related to sin and salvation, is entirely excluded.

Again we can head this list with quotations from the passages in Corinthians that are before us:

“That no flesh should glory in His presence” (I Cor. i. 29).

“Therefore let no man glory in men” (I Cor. iii. 21).

In his two fundamental epistles, namely Romans and Ephesians, while the dispensations differ and the sphere of blessing differs, they are in accord regarding the question of boasting in self. Having brought the great question of justification by faith without the deeds of the law to its triumphant conclusion in Rom. iii. 19-26, he puts the question and supplies the answer.

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith” (Rom. iii. 27).

In like manner, in Ephesians, he speaks of salvation and boasting:

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

The classic example of Abraham occupies a large portion of the opening section of Rom. i. 1 - v. 11, and there we read:

“What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?” (Rom. iv. 1).

All that Paul has said is summed up in the words of I Cor. i. 29 “That no flesh should glory *in His presence*”.

It might be well if we remember that *enopion* “In His Presence” is translated “in His sight” in Rom. iii. 20:

“There shall be no flesh justified *in His sight*” (Rom. iii. 20).

The intensive form *katenopion* and its usage makes any boasting in the presence of God, excepting boasting in the Lord, impossible. The word occurs but five times. Two references deal with witness (II Cor. ii. 17; xii. 19), the remaining three with complete and unconditional acceptance.

“According as He hath chosen us in Him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame BEFORE Him” (Eph. i. 4).

“In the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His SIGHT” (Col. i. 22).

What more fitting conclusion to an article like this can there be than the doxology of the epistle of Jude:

“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless BEFORE THE PRESENCE of His glory, with exceeding joy, TO the only wise God our Saviour, be glory, and majesty, dominion and power both now and ever. Amen.” (Jude 24, 25).

No.6. Righteousness and the Mosaic Law.

pp. 76 - 78

It is impossible to pursue the teaching of the Scriptures on the matter of righteousness without coming up against the relation of righteousness with the law of Moses. One epistle of Paul, namely, that to the Galatians, is almost entirely devoted to that subject. So emphatic is the Apostle on the incompatibility of the two systems, law and grace, that he has written:

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. v. 4).

Again and again this sentiment is expressed in Paul’s epistles, so that a true understanding of the function of the law is of vital importance. The giving of the law at Mount Sinai took place about 2,400 years after the creation of Adam, but there are many evidences that ‘law’ was known among men during the long period between these two events. Moses himself speaks of making known laws and statutes before Sinai (Exod. xviii. 16); Abraham obeyed God’s “voice” and kept His ‘charge’, ‘commandments’, ‘statutes’ and ‘laws’ (Gen. xxvi. 5). In Genesis alone thirty-four such ‘laws’ have been noted in operation. Moreover Rom. ii. 14, 15, 26, 27 bears evidence to the fact that the nations of the earth had something similar to the law of Sinai ‘written in their hearts’. Finally, the Saviour made it clear that *all* the law and the prophets hung upon the primal law of love to God and to neighbour.

We are therefore right in asking the question, Why was the law specially given at Sinai? What purpose did it serve? Has obedience to this law, either in person or by a substitute, any place in the justification which pertains to the gospel?

Exod. xix. 1-7 and xxiv. 3-8 make it clear that at Sinai, Israel entered into a covenant with God. They would be His peculiar treasure and become a kingdom of priests if they kept *this* law, but the remainder of the O.T. is tragic witness to the utter failure of Israel to keep its terms. The Old Covenant is likened to Hagar and gendereth to bondage, and all under it are likened to those ‘born after the flesh’ (Gal. iv. 21-31).

The epistle to the Hebrews speaks of the ‘weakness and unprofitableness’ of this covenant; it shows that ‘the law’ made nothing perfect; that its ordinances were ‘carnal’; its priests ‘infirm’; its sacrifices utterly without avail either to touch the conscience or to put away sins. It declares that God found fault with this first covenant, but that in Christ He has established a New Covenant with a better Sacrifice, a better Priesthood, a better hope and better promises.

“In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away” (Heb. viii. 13; x. 1-4).

“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight” (Rom. iii. 20).

As if this were not enough, note the answers of the Scriptures to the question, “Wherefore then serveth the law?” (Gal. iii. 19).

- (1) “It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to Whom the promise was made” (Gal. iii. 19).
- (2) “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law” (Gal. iii. 21; ii. 21).
- (3) The return of a believer to the law is described as going back to “weak and beggarly elements” (Gal. iv. 9).
- (4) “As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse” (Gal. iii. 10).
- (5) “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ” (Gal. iii. 24).
- (6) “The law which was 430 years after (the promise to Abraham), cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect” (Gal. iii. 17).
- (7) The Old Covenant is described as “the letter that killeth”, “the ministration of death” and “the ministration of condemnation”. It was destined to be “abolished” (II Cor. iii.).
- (8) The law “worketh wrath” (Rom. iv. 15); and entered that sin “might abound” (Rom. v. 20).
- (9) The Apostle, writing as a faithful Christian man, declared that before his conversion as “touching the righteousness of the law” he was “blameless”. This condition he called “mine own righteousness which is of the law”, yet so poor and futile was it (albeit no reader of these lines has ever reached it) that, when compared with the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, he was constrained to fling aside his own righteousness as so much “refuse” (Phil. iii. 6-9).
- (10) To this law—it claims, its righteousness, its rewards, its works, its promises and its penalties—Paul “died”, that in and with Christ he might “live” unto God (Gal. ii. 19).
- (11) Though the law itself was “holy”, “just”, “good” and “spiritual”, man was carnal and the law was “weak through the flesh” (Rom. vii. 12-14; viii. 3).

Unconditionally and of set purpose, the Apostle sets the law aside as having no place in the plan of the gospel of grace. When this fact is established beyond the possibility of doubt, he returns to the primeval law of love:

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”
(Gal. v. 14).

“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”
(Rom. xiii. 10).

The law of Moses therefore was a covenant destined to fail because of the inability of Israel to fulfil the terms, and so it becomes a demonstration for all time that ‘by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God’.

The Apostle’s earliest recorded Gospel address contains these words:

“Through this Man is preached unto you, the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses” (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

In view of the consistent testimony of Scripture to the character of that righteousness which is of the law, but to which Paul, as a Pharisee had attained (Phil. iii. 6), any system of teaching that maintains that the obedience of Christ to the law of Moses constitutes the righteousness in which the believer stands accepted, must be repudiated. We stand in ‘a righteousness of God’, a righteousness so far above that attainable under the law, that we

must confess that ‘all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags’ in comparison, and like the Apostle, we gladly relinquish all such claim, that we may be found in Christ, not having our own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is by faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

If the reader should still feel that the righteousness that is imputed to the believer is the righteousness attained by the obedience of Christ to the law of Moses, let him consider the following:

- (1) Is it not abundantly clear, that the whole doctrine of imputed righteousness is given its fullest and clearest exposition in Rom. iv.?
- (2) Is it not also as abundantly clear that the great outstanding example and illustration of this doctrine of imputed righteousness is that of Abraham, of whom it is written “And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness” (Gen. xv. 6)?
- (3) Inasmuch as Abraham lived before Moses was born and so before the Mosaic law was instituted, it is utterly impossible that the justification of Abraham can have anything to do with obedience to that law, imputed or otherwise.
- (4) Does an examination of either Gen. xv. or of Rom. iv. permit the slightest intrusion of obedience to law either by Abraham himself or the Lord for him? If the answer must be “No” then the teaching that splits the great work of Christ into His active obedience under the law of Moses, and His passive obedience in death, must be repudiated
- (5) It is written that we are justified “by His blood” (Rom. v. 9).

Let us not by any system of theology veil that simple yet all-embracing fact.

No.7. The basic meaning of righteousness. pp. 117 - 120

We have seen that although salvation is by grace through faith and is not of works, that nevertheless the most exacting claim of even-handed justice has been met. We now continue our study in this fundamental of our faith to discover how this righteousness in which we stand, this righteousness which Christ has been made unto us, becomes our own.

The word which will form the focus of our investigation must be the word ‘justify’. Our first concern must be to discover the primitive meaning of the term as expressed in the Hebrew and Greek equivalents. While we can say ‘glory’ and ‘glorify’ we cannot say ‘righteous’ and ‘righteously’. Nor can we accept the word ‘rectify’ for that today has shades of meaning that do not fit the case. The English borrows from the Anglo-Saxon *riht* for one word, and from the Latin *jus* for the other, and their common origin is demonstrated by an appeal to the Greek original.

Joseph is said to be a ‘just’ man, and the adjective employed is *dikaios* (Matt. i. 19). The same Greek word appears in Matt. ix. 13 where it is translated ‘righteous’. So in John v. 30 we read “My judgment is just” and in John vii. 24 “Judge righteous

judgment”. So the adverb *dikaios* is translated ‘justly’ in I Thess. ii. 10 and ‘righteously’ in Titus ii. 12. *Dikaioo* is generally translated “be righteous” as in Rev. xxii. 11. *Dikaioma* is rendered ‘justification’ in Rom. v. 16 and ‘righteousness’ in Rom. v. 18. The same interchangeability is true of the renderings of the Hebrew equivalent *tsedaqah*, *tsedeq*, *tsadaq* and *tsaddiq*.

The Hebrew word *tsadaq* ‘righteous’ is derived from a root that means ‘straight’, ‘balanced’, ‘equivalent’, which meaning is expanded but not exceeded in the law ‘an eye for an eye’, and is set forth in the figure of the weights and balances, or the plumb-line, both of which figures are employed by the inspired writers of holy Scripture. The usage of the word *tsadaq* can be illustrated by the following passage:

“If there be a controversy between men, and they came unto judgment, that the judges may judge them: then they shall *justify* the righteous, and *condemn* the wicked” (Deut. xxv. 1).

But “they shall condemn the wicked” is literally “they shall make him wicked”, which, by a recognized figure, means, ‘to declare’ him to be so. The truth of this statement can be tested by turning to Gen. xli. 12, 13. The Egyptian butler who had been cast into prison together with the baker, had had his dream interpreted by Joseph. The baker’s dream also foretold his execution, but the butler’s dream foretold his restoration. Upon learning that Pharaoh had been troubled by a dream, the meaning of which none could declare, the butler remembered his faults, and told Pharaoh of Joseph, saying “So it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged” (Gen. xli. 13). If we take this literally then Joseph the prisoner, was also Joseph the hangman, which we know is not only absurd but untrue.

Under the heading *Metonymy*, Dr. E. W. Bullinger, in his book *Figures of Speech used in the Bible*, devotes 69 pages to examples and this figure is used in Gen. xli. 13.

“The Subject (i.e. the thing or action) for that which is connected with it (i.e. the Adjunct), we have the ‘Verb’.”

“Where the ‘action’ is put for the ‘declaration’ concerning it; or where what is said *to be done* is put for what is declared, or permitted, or foretold as *to be done*.”

“Me he restored (i.e. *declared that I should be restored*) unto mine office, and him he hanged (i.e. *declared that he should be hanged*).”

Justification does not impart righteousness, any more than condemnation imparts wickedness, justification is a declaration, it simply declares a person righteous, without in any case telling us how or where the righteousness in which he stands is obtained. Justification looks on the balances. It sees 1 pound on one scale and 16 ounces on the other. It is not concerned who provided the 16 ounces. That is the concern of Grace, Mercy and Love.

There can be no possibility of introducing the idea of *transfusing* righteousness in the following non-doctrinal occurrences of ‘justify’.

“For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. xii. 37).

“But he willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?”
(Luke x. 29).
“Ye are they which justify yourselves before men” (Luke xvi. 15).

Righteousness and justification have been called ‘forensic’ terms, a word derived from the Roman Forum, where the law-courts were held. This law-court atmosphere pervades the teaching on the subject of both of O.T and N.T.

- (1) God is looked upon as a Judge (Rom. viii. 33).
- (2) The person to be justified is ‘guilty’, exposed to ‘judgment’ and without ‘plea’ (Rom. i. 32; iii. 19).
- (3) There are three accusers (a) The Law (John v. 45); (b) Conscience (Rom. ii. 15); (c) Satan (Zech. iii. 2; Rev. xii. 10).
- (4) The charge has been drawn up in legal handwriting (Col. ii. 14).

It is, however, important to remember that while this atmosphere of the law-court is a fact, the procedure and circumstances of our justification are alike unknown to the law of Moses or to any human court.

“When a man is tried before an earthly tribunal he must either be *condemned* or *acquitted*; if he be condemned, he may be *pardoned*, but he cannot be *justified*, if he be acquitted, he may be *justified*, but he cannot stand in the need of *pardon*” (Scott, *Essays*).

In the gospel, our justification is always connected with forgiveness, and implies that we are guilty. God is said to ‘justify the ungodly’, which, in any other court, is both impossible and illegal.

Continuing therefore our list of ‘forensic’ terms, we note that:

- (5) The gospel provides the guilty man with an all-sufficient plea (Rom. iii. 23-25).
- (6) The Lord Himself is the Advocate (I John ii. 1, 2), and occupies the place of the accuser at ‘the right hand’ (Rom. viii. 34; Zech. iii. 1).
- (7) The sentence passed upon all believers is one of complete remission, justification and acceptance, together with a title to life and inheritance (Rom. viii. 1, 33, 34; II Cor. v. 21).

Justification includes the following:

- (1) The remission of sins, viewed as a debt.
- (2) The pardon by a sovereign of a condemned criminal, whose offence is blotted out from his book.
- (3) The “covering by cancellation” which is the essence of the meaning of O.T. word Atonement (see articles in various issues of *The Berean Expositor* and in the doctrinal *Alphabetical Analysis*).
- (4) The imputation of a righteousness of God through the faith of, and through faith in Jesus Christ.

Dewar, in his *Elements*, says:

“Our justification is not by a righteousness performed, but a righteousness received.”
“Justification changes our state; sanctification changes our nature.”

The grounds of our justification in the gospel are:

- (1) We are justified by His (Christ's) blood, through redemption (Rom. v. 9; iii. 24).
- (2) We are justified freely, by grace (Rom. iii. 24; Titus iii. 7).
- (3) We are justified by faith (Acts xiii. 39; Rom. iii. 28).
- (4) Negatively: no flesh can be justified by the deeds of the law or by works of any kind (Rom. iii. 20; iii. 28; iv. 2; Gal. ii. 16; iii. 11; v. 4).

If we inquire what is the *source* of this act of justification, the answer is grace, free unmerited grace.

If we inquire as to what is the *meritorious cause* of such an act; the answer is the Redemptive and Atoning sacrifice of Christ.

If we inquire as to how this righteousness become ours, the answer is twofold (1) by faith and (2) by imputation.

This subdivision of the subject is for the inquirer's benefit, but we must beware of intruding these subdivisions too far into the realm of doctrine. As Scott, in his *Essays* says:

“Justification may therefore be ascribed, either to the source, to the *meritorious cause*, or to the *recipient* thereof, even as (to use a familiar illustration) a drowning person may be said to be saved either by *a man* on the bank of the river, or by the *rope* thrown out to him, or by *the hand* laying hold on the rope.”

In our next article we must consider more closely the receiving end of justification, ‘faith’ and ‘imputation’, but let us not befog our clear conception of salvation by arguing concerning the distinctive merits of ‘the man’, ‘the rope’, or ‘the hand’, for we shall assuredly drown if *either* of the three is missing.

The following attempt to visualize the meaning of the word “justified” is primarily for young people, but the writer believes that many who are advanced in the faith will appreciate the suggestion here offered. It is not original, and has been in use for some time.

Take a strip of paper, say two or three inches in width and about eighteen inches long. On this paper write the words:

JUST AS IF I HAD NEVER DONE IT

Now fold the paper back at the word “just” and before the word “if”, so as to bring together the syllables “JUSTIF”. Repeat the process until only the word “JUSTIFIED” is visible. After explaining the meaning of the word, and how the sinner is justified by grace, extend the slip of paper, until the whole sentence is revealed. God treats the sinner, for Christ's sake, as though he were righteous, but he made Him, the Righteous One, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

No.8. Righteousness, or Faith made Perfect. **pp. 135 - 140**

We have considered the meaning of righteousness, and have seen the way in which it is related to law, faith and grace in the Scriptures. We now turn our attention to the testimony of two apostles to the doctrine of Justification. First we will examine the teaching of James, who wrote:

“Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James ii. 24).

Is the testimony of James a contradiction of the teaching of Paul? Some say that it is and sweep it aside. “No”, says others, “James was not ministering the gospel of Grace: *his* readers were the Circumcision; they were justified by works”! This is equally disastrous, for the Scriptures have declared that ‘by the deeds of the law shall *no flesh* be justified in His sight’. The key to the problem is found in two facts:

(1) Justification by faith, as taught in Romans, finds its basic Scripture in Gen. xv. Justification by works, as taught in James, finds its basic Scripture in Gen. xxii. Between these two passages Abraham has been exhorted to ‘walk before God and be perfect’, and in Gen. xxii., in the offering of Isaac, his faith was tried and found true.

(2) The second fact is found in James ii. 22:

“Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?”
 (“Perfect” is a key word of James.)

JUSTIFICATION AS TAUGHT BY PAUL:

Genesis xv. 6 and Romans iv. 4 - 25.

- (1) *The Negative—How Abraham WAS NOT justified.*
 - (a) Not by works (Rom. iv. 4-8).
 - (b) Not by circumcision (Rom. iv. 9-12).
 - (c) Not by law (Rom. iv. 13-16).
- (2) *The Positive—How Abraham WAS justified.*
 - (a) Faith, related to resurrection power (Rom. iv. 17).
 - (b) Faith, facing human inability (Rom. iv. 19).
 - (c) Faith, related to promise and the Word (Rom. iv. 17, 18, 20).
- (3) *The Personal—How may I be justified?*
 - (a) Not “for his sake alone”. The analogy of Scripture (Rom. iv. 23).
 - (b) If we believe (Rom. iv. 24).
 - (c) Raised again because of our justification (Rom. iv. 25).

JUSTIFICATION AS TAUGHT BY JAMES:

- (1) His basis is Gen. xxii. Abraham’s existing faith was tried and proved to be genuine by the “work of faith”. “Now I know” (Gen. xxii. 12).
- (2) “Perfect” is in the Greek *teleioo*. This word is cognate with *telos*, which means ‘end’, in the sense of ‘goal’ (Rom. vi. 21; I Cor. xv. 24; I Tim. i. 5; James v. 11).

To go on unto perfection was to reach one's goal or aim, and is explained by the language of Phil. iii. 12: "That I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus."

In Gal. iii. 3 'perfected' is placed in antithesis with 'begin'. Faith is 'perfected' by the works that accompany it; they bring faith to its legitimate 'end'. So the love of God can be 'perfected' (I John ii. 5; iv. 12, 17, 18). His strength can be "perfected" (II Cor. xii. 9), and even holiness can be 'perfected' or brought to its logical and practical conclusion (II Cor. vii. 1, see II Cor. vi. 14-18). So Paul desired that he might 'finish' (same word) his course (Acts xx. 24). In chapter i. James speaks more of this 'perfecting'.

"Let patience have her *perfect* work, that ye may be *perfect* and entire, wanting nothing" (James i. 4).

In chapter ii. 14 of his epistle, James asks, "Can *that* faith save him?" and follows by the illustration of verses 15 and 16. Three times James says 'faith without works is dead', and with this Paul would agree. The initial act of justification is 'by faith, without works'. God justifies the 'ungodly' (Rom. iv. 5) whose 'works' would but the more condemn him. But after the ungodly has been 'declared righteous', continuance in sin, unfruitful living, mere lip service, is no more tolerated by Paul than by James. If we distinguish between 'the ground' of our justification as taught by Paul, and the 'perfecting' of faith by our subsequent works as taught by James, we have a balanced presentation of a blessed truth.

Three great epistles of Paul, namely, Romans, Galatians and Hebrews, make reference to Hab. ii. 4, "The just shall live by his faith". A text that appealed so powerfully to the Apostle must be given careful attention by all who would attain to any understanding of that apostle's teaching.

First, we must observe the slight variation from the original that we find in the Septuagint Version and in the epistles.

"Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just by his faith shall live" (Hebrew).

"If any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him; but the just by My faith shall live" (LXX).

"As it is written, The just by faith shall live" (Rom. i. 17).

"For the just by faith shall live" (Gal. iii. 11).

"Now the just by faith shall live; but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. x. 38).

(NOTE—The order of the original wording is followed in all these references.)

It is evident that the translators of the Septuagint Version understood the words "His faith", which in the Hebrew they found to refer to God, as meaning "His faithfulness". This meaning of *pistis* has been dealt with in the previous article.

It is of interest to observe that the three divisions into which the text of Hab. ii. 4 naturally falls, coincides with the main purpose of the quotation in the three epistles:

“*The Just.*” This most certainly fits the teaching of Romans which stresses the righteousness of God which is by faith, the justification both of the sinner and of God Who justifies him.

“*By Faith.*” A reading of Gal. iii. will show the prominent place that faith occupies in the exposition of the distinctive teaching of that epistle.

“*Shall live.*” In Heb. x. and xi. we have the subsequent life of faith that should characterize those who are justified. The emphasis upon the word ‘perfect’ in Hebrews, together with the insistence upon the practical outworking of grace, places the teaching of this epistle on justification on the same platform as that of James.

The verse in Romans that gives the quotation from Habakkuk contains a clause that has given rise to many different ideas. That clause is ‘from faith to faith’. One opinion is that voiced by Theophylact who said:

“Our first faith is not sufficient, but we must ascend from inceptive faith to a more perfect degree of it.”

Clemens Alex. says,

“A common faith is, as it were, a foundation a *teleia* faith is one that can remove mountains.”

This, however, is confusing the teaching of Paul with that of James, and is certainly not the sense intended in Rom. i. 17.

First of all, we can rid ourselves of any false ideas arising out of the expression ‘from faith’ (*ek pisteos*), for it is identical with the words ‘by faith’ that are found in the same verse. Let us consider some parallels in the same epistle:

“A righteousness of God through faith (*dia pisteos*)” (Rom. iii. 22).

“Justify by faith (*ek pisteos*) through faith (*dia pisteos*)” (Rom. iii. 30).

“The righteousness of faith (*dia pisteos*)” (Rom. iv. 13).

“Therefore being justified by faith (*ek pisteos*)” (Rom. v. 1).

In every case (there are many more in Galatians), it is ‘righteousness’ that is ‘by faith’. All that is necessary correctly to translate Rom. i. 17 is to supply the ellipsis of the words ‘righteousness’ and ‘revealed’. The expression ‘revealed *from* faith’ does not make sense.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed (a righteousness) out of faith, revealed unto faith, as it is written, The just by faith shall live” (Rom. i. 17).

“FAITH COUNTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

Justification is ‘by faith’, ‘freely by grace’, ‘by His blood’, ‘in the name of Christ’, ‘by the faith (or faithfulness) of Christ’. Yet the question remains, “How does it become mine?” The answer is provided in Rom. iv. 3 which quotes the words of Gen. xv. 6, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness”. Let us discover more fully the meaning of this word ‘counted’.

Logizomai occurs eleven times in Rom. iv.; it is translated in that chapter by three different English equivalents, ‘count’, ‘reckon’ and ‘impute’. Moreover, it is found in two forms in that chapter. *Logizomai*, “to count, reckon or impute”, and *logizomai eis*, “to count, reckon or impute for”. In the one case the thing itself is ‘counted’, i.e. sin (Rom. iv. 8) which actually existed, and in the other, one thing is counted, or ‘reckoned for’ another, as in Rom. iv. 5, where faith which did exist, was ‘counted for’ a righteousness that did not exist, except as in the gift-by-grace of God.

Logizomai occurs some 40 times in the N.T. Of these all but six occur in Paul’s epistles, and of this remainder, nineteen occur in the one epistle to the Romans. Paul’s use of the term in Rom. ii. 26 makes his meaning clear. Confessedly the Gentiles had not the law in the sense that Israel had, nor were they given the covenant of circumcision; yet the Apostle says:

“If the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision *be counted for* circumcision” (Rom. ii. 26).

Now, keeping ‘the work of the law written in their heart’ (Rom. ii. 15) could by no manner of means be looked upon, or called ‘circumcision’, yet if, in His mercy, God so chose, it could be ‘counted for’ it. In the same way, no man, whether he be Jew or Gentile, has produced or ever can produce righteousness in the sense demanded by God; yet, as an act of free favour, He has been pleased, through the redemption accomplished by His beloved Son, to ‘count’ faith ‘for’ righteousness.

“To impute, in theology, means, To attribute or ascribe (righteousness, guilt, etc.) to a person by vicarious substitution” (*Shorter Oxford Dictionary*).

Let us now set out in two groups the passages in Rom. iv. that us *logizomai*, and *logizomai eis*:

Logizomai.

- “Reward is not *reckoned* of grace, but of debt” (4).
- “God *imputeth* righteousness without works” (6).
- “To whom the Lord will not *impute* sin” (8).
- “How was it then *reckoned*?” (10).
- “Righteousness might be *imputed* unto them” (11).
- “It was *imputed* to him” (23).
- “To whom it hall be *imputed*” (24).

Logizomai eis.

- “It was *counted* unto him *for* righteousness” (3).

“His faith is *counted for* righteousness” (5).
“Faith was *reckoned to* Abraham *for* righteousness” (9).
“Faith was *reckoned to* Abraham *for* righteousness” (22).

Where anything is ‘reckoned’, be it a debt, righteousness or sin, it is conceived as actually existing. Where faith is ‘reckoned *for*’ righteousness, it is manifest that personal righteousness is absent, and that by a gracious dispensation, righteousness is ‘attributed by vicarious substitution’.

The O.T. usage of the word is the same as that set out above.

“Let not my lord *impute* iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely I have sinned” (II Sam. xix. 19, 20).

Here sin was an admitted fact.

“Thou dost *count* me *for* an enemy” (Job xiii. 24).
“He *counts* me *as* an enemy” (Job xix. 11).

Here Job does not admit that he is rightly charged as being an enemy of God, but expresses his perplexity at the treatment he has received.

When the golden sovereign was supplanted by the paper £1 note, so far as *purchasing* power goes both were of equal value. But should either or both be thrown on the fire, the *essential difference* becomes apparent. The sovereign, though melted, retains its worth, but the £1 note vanishes in smoke and ashes and becomes intrinsically valueless. The paper £1 was ‘counted for’ twenty shillings; it purchased twenty shillings-worth, but most certainly it was not twenty shillings. So faith is ‘counted for’ righteousness: it is, and will be accepted at heaven’s bar as if it were ‘twenty shillings-worth’ though, in itself, it merits nothing. So it will be seen that while faith is ‘counted for’ righteousness, God does actually impute righteousness to the believer, “even the righteousness of God which is by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Rom. iii. 22).

The Scriptures speak of justification by *faith* (Rom. v. 1) and justification by *grace* (Rom. iii. 24; Titus iii. 7). It is important to keep these two statements in mind, as otherwise it is easy for the mind to conceive of ‘faith’ as some sort of work that merits recognition or approval. Let us consider the meaning of the two terms ‘grace’ and ‘faith’ and observe the part they play in the blessed process of justification.

Grace *charis*. The classic usage of the word is found in the N.T. words “favour” (Luke i. 30); “grace” (Luke ii. 40); “pleasure” (Acts xxiv. 27), but it is in the epistles of Paul that the word realizes its full import, namely ‘grace, or favour *to the unworthy*’. This highest of all meanings was impossible of attainment or expression until the love of God was made manifest in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The peculiar character of ‘grace’ can be seen in the following passages:

“Reward is not reckoned of grace but of debt” (Rom. iv. 4).
“If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace” (Rom. xi. 6).

Not only is grace placed over against 'works' and 'merit' or 'debt', but it is in juxtaposition with the law:

"Ye are not under law, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14).

"Whosoever of you are justified by law; ye are fallen from grace" (Gal. v. 4).

Grace characterizes the gospel which Paul preached (Acts xx. 24); it reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life (Rom. v. 21); by grace we are justified freely (Rom. iii. 24), and are saved (Eph. ii. 5). The relation of grace to faith is indicated in such a passage as:

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed" (Rom. iv. 16).

Charizomai, which, outside the Scriptures means to do a favour, becomes, when sanctified by association with the Offering of Christ, the blessed word 'forgiveness' (Luke vii. 42; Eph. iv. 32; Col. ii. 13). *Charisma* is translated 'gift', whether supernatural gifts as in I Cor. ii. 9, or the 'free gift' of Rom. v. 15.

Charitoo is translated in Eph. i. 6 'made accepted', which in the A.V. margin, reads 'graced us'.

Faith *pistis*. Faith means credit given to a report or testimony.

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater" (I John v. 9).

"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. x. 17).

The Apostle says in the same chapter, "How shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Rom. x. 14). We must be careful to distinguish between faith, the medium, and the Object of faith, the Lord Jesus, the only ground of salvation.

**No.9. “Behold the goodness and the severity of God.”
pp. 178 - 180**

Let us turn aside for a while, from the direct examination of the terms ‘righteousness’ and ‘justification’ to the consideration of the Lord’s attitude to sin as set forth by the use of one word ‘spare’ Greek *pheidomai*. ‘Both therefore the goodness and severity of God’ said the Apostle as he reviewed the repudiation of Israel by the Lord, and the continued expression of goodness to the Gentile (Rom. xi. 22).

A false sentimentalism has obscured some of the characteristics of God, and has magnified His love at the expense of His holiness and holiness can be ‘a consuming fire’. In the course of His dealings with His creatures, God is said to have ‘spared not’ three classes, and the fourth is warned ‘take heed lest He also spares not thee’ (Rom. xi. 21).

(1) *He spared not the angels that sinned.*

The sum total of what is revealed in the whole of the Scriptures concerning the fall of the angels would probably be less in extent than occupied by the briefest of the minor prophets Obadiah, or the epistle of Jude, and it is to the epistle of Jude and to the parallel passage in II Peter that we instinctively turn to learn something of the nature of their sin and its punishment.

“For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment” (II Pet. ii. 4).

Peter is evidently in the midst of an argument, and he reverts back to the past to warn the present false prophets and their dupes of ‘damnation that slumbereth not’.

Jude omits the reference to ‘hell’ or, as the reference here is, to “Tartarus”, the place named in Greek mythology for the incarceration of the Titans, the giants who attempted to storm heaven. He repeats however the reference to being “reserved”, to “chains”, to “darkness” and to future judgment.

(2) *He spared not the world in the time of Noah.*

Again specific knowledge concerning the actual corruption that brought about the deluge is limited to a few difficult passages of Scripture. Gen. vi. speaks of the corruption that followed the union of the ‘sons of God’ and the ‘daughters of men’ with the result that in the pregnant words of II Pet. ii. 5 ‘bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly’ He spared not the old world.

Here we have the fall and judgment of angels and the destruction of the world with the exception of eight souls. While the actual words ‘spared not’ are not employed in the continued argument of II Pet. ii., the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah as

an example unto those that after should live ungodly (II Pet. ii. 6), or as Jude puts it—they were ‘set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire’.

(3) *He spared not the natural branches of Israel's olive tree.*

Israel however were an elect nation, a covenant people, heirs of the promise made to Abraham, beloved because of the fathers, a people with a peculiar destiny and great glory, yet because of unbelief, which led them to deny the very Messiah sent to them, because of unbelief subsequent to their pardon and the invitation given at Pentecost, Israel, excepting a remnant, were blinded, they were given a spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear. Their table was made a snare, a trap, a stumbling block and a recompense, and their back bowed down. They fell, and were castaway, and became as dead (Rom. xi. 8-15). Some of the branches of Israel's olive tree were broken off, and now comes the warning to the Gentile believer of that dispensation.

“Take heed lest He also spare not thee” (Rom. xi. 21).

Angels, the old world, Sodom and Gomorrah, Israel, and the Gentile believer, all in their turn were compelled to realize ‘the severity of God’. If we stayed here we should have but one side of the picture, rigorous, untempered justice.

There is however another, without which the character of God would be misinterpreted, and His glorious purpose of grace be unknown.

(4) *“He spared not His Own Son”* (Rom. viii. 32).

How often has the Scriptural insistence on the necessity for a sacrifice as a basis for redeeming, forgiving, justifying grace, been the object of attack, not only from the outside unbeliever, but alas, from those who are untaught and misled.

Have we not heard at some time the public orator working himself up into indignant fury as he denounced the Gospel basis of redeeming blood in some such language as the following?

“My friends, I stand here today, to denounce with every fibre of my outraged being, with all the sense of abhorrence that one feels at the exhibition of tyranny in high places, I stand here to denounce I say, the so called Gospel that outrages every sense of decency left to us, by representing the Father refusing to forgive His erring children, apart from the horrors of a bleeding sacrifice. Which one of you would ever dream of such a brutal and inhuman demand”? etc., etc.

One question and one question only needs to be put to all such misrepresentations, and that question is, “*Who supplied, Who gave that bleeding sacrifice?*” The answer is “the God Who *demanded* the sacrifice is the One alone who *made* it”. He did not demand atonement or offering at the hand of the transgressor, “He spared not His Own Son”. It was the God Who had been offended, the Judge Whose righteousness demanded the sentence of death, the Creator Who had been so outrageously treated by His creatures, it

was the Lord God Omnipotent in Whose hand our very breath is, that stooped to be made flesh and to the death of the cross on the behalf of those who had sinned against Him.

A part of the foregoing implies the essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, that He was “God manifest in the flesh”, “The Word (Who) became flesh”, the One Whose hands made the heavens and by Whom all things consist, that emptied Himself, taking upon Him the form of a servant, and being made in the likeness of men, Who still further humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. This we believe to be true, but cannot stay here to attempt to prove this essential doctrine*.

[* - *The Deity of Christ* or *The Form of Sound Words* should be consulted by any reader uncertain of this wondrous subject.]

While God in His essential nature is ‘one’, we creatures whose very constitution limits us to the conditioned and the relative, know Him as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and it was “The Father” Who “sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World”.

John iii. 16 is the direct outcome of the reference made in verse 14 to the lifting up of the brazen serpent. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. When God ‘spared not’ His Own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all, He gave Him up to death. He Who spared not sinners, is here represented as “sparing not” the sinners’ substitutes.

One aspect of this great subject is apt to be missed unless the reader is acquainted both with the original of the N.T. and of the language of the Septuagint version.

The words of Gen. xxii. 12 are:

Ouk epeiso tou huiou sou tou agapetou
Not hast thou spared the son of thine the beloved.

The Greek of Rom. viii. 32 reads:

Tou idiou huiou ouk epheisato
Of the own Son not He spared.

Isaac is called ‘the beloved son’. Christ is called “His Own Son”; both indicate exceeding nearness and dearness. The Apostle who knew his Greek O.T. has purposely thrown us back to the story of Abraham and Isaac so that we may see in the torn heart of Abraham as he took the knife, the fire and the beloved on that strange and awful journey, something of what it cost “The Father” not to spare such a “Son”.

Something exists in righteousness, something pertains to God’s administration of the Universe that cannot allow sin to go unpunished. Yet God is love, and love found a way whereby He might be JUST as well as the JUSTIFIER of the ungodly that believe, and that way was in the giving up of His beloved Son.

So we come back to I Cor. i. 30 and learn that He was 'made' unto us righteousness. In II Cor. v. 21 we read:

"He hath made Him to be sin for us, Who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

May this excursus, this pause and departure from the straight pursuit of our theme warm our hearts as we realize something of the grace that provided the righteousness wherein we stand.

HEBREWS

Perfection or Perdition

No.29. Melchisedek, The Priest of the Perfected (v. 8 - 10).

The Triumph of Gethsemane (v. 8)

pp. 9 - 15

Before seeking the relation of this order of Melchisedec priesthood with the theme of the epistle, we must be clear as to its place in the context, and therefore call the reader's attention to the structure of Heb. v.-vi.:

Hebrews v. - vi.

- A | v. 1-6. Melchisedec. Priest.
- B | v. 7-10. The Priest perfected.
- C | v. 11 - vi. 1. The slothful (dull) *versus* the perfect.
- B | vi. 1-10. The saints. Let us go on unto perfection.
- C | vi. 11-19. The slothful *versus* the overcomers.
- A | vi. 20. Melchisedec. Priest.

It will be seen that the subject enclosed within these references to Melchisedec is that of the two classes under notice through this epistle, namely:

- (1) Those who attain unto perfection.
- (2) Those who fail of it—the slothful.

There must be something peculiarly fitting therefore in this great title of Christ, and we propose to seek its meaning and connection.

The opening reference is in a sphere of suffering:

“Prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, (by these sufferings, ii. 10) He became the author of a salvation which is age-lasting unto all them that obey Him, called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec” (v. 7-10 not AV JP).

The closing reference in this section gives to Christ the further title of “The Forerunner”. The Greek word *prodromos* does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament, but in the LXX it occurs twice. In Isa. xxviii. 4 the Hebrew is unfortunately rendered “hasty fruit”. The Hebrew equivalent *bikkur* is translated elsewhere by the word “first-fruits” seventeen times. Cognates are translated “firstborn”, “firstling” and “birthright”. This reflects upon the teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews, for the saints who go on unto perfection are firstfruits, the Church of the Firstborn, who do not, like Esau, sell their birthright for a little ease in this life. The other occurrence of *prodromos* is found in Numb. xiii. 20 and is very similar; there the word is a translation of the

Hebrew from which we have the English “first-ripe”. It will be seen therefore that if we keep to Scriptural usage we shall not think of our Lord as having gone to heaven as a kind of Forerunner going on before us to clear the way, but as the first-ripened fruit, a pledge to the Father of the harvest that was to follow, a harvest of the many sons that He was leading through suffering to glory. The passage in Heb. xii. 1-3 which speaks of Christ as the Captain and Perfecter of faith, the race to be run, the endurance ending in exaltation and glory, will come before the mind as we think of Christ as the Forerunner; and the Apostle uses the word *dromos* “course”, in the parallel passage of II Tim. iv. 7.

In Heb. vii. we find a further explanation given of the Melchisedec priesthood. We are taken back to Gen. xiv. where Abraham is met by this priest after his victory over the armies of the kings. It was here that Abraham renounced all rights and dues as a result of his triumph, taking neither thread nor shoe latchet, lest the king of Sodom should say “I have made Abram rich”. There he also learned something more of the all-sufficiency of the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth. The Melchisedec priesthood *blesses the overcomer*. That is an important truth to be remembered here.

The greatness of this priesthood is further emphasized by an elaboration of a number of details that occur in the passage in Genesis. The name has a meaning. Melchisedec means King of Righteousness, and King of Salem means King of Peace. The fact that no genealogy is given in Scripture is taken to typify the risen and unending priesthood of the Son of God. The greatness of this priesthood is still further shown by the fact that even Abraham the patriarch gave a tenth of the spoil to Melchisedec, and the blessing of Abraham by Melchisedec shewed that “without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better”. The perfection of which the epistle speaks is not connected with the Levitical priesthood (vii. 11), and the essential difference between the Aaronic order and that of Melchisedec is found in the fact that this priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (vii. 16). The introduction of the Levitical order of priesthood moreover was not accompanied by an oath, but in the case of Christ:

“The Lord SWARE and will not repent by so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (covenant)” (vii. 21, 22).

The subject is summed up in viii. 1, 2 in these words:

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.”

The verse, so often repeated in this section, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”, is taken from Psa. cx., which speaks of Christ sitting at the right hand of the Lord until His foes be made a footstool, and also of His people presenting themselves as free-will offerings in the day of His power, which day seems closely linked with the day of His wrath (Psa. cx. 5) when He shall strike through kings. The first mention of Melchisedec is connected with the slaughter of the kings near Sodom, the last

(in the Old Testament) speaks prophetically of “striking through kings in the day of His wrath”. In the book of the Revelation we have Christ presented to us as both Priest and King. Hebrews dwells mainly on the priestly side, Revelation unites the two offices and shews how this royal Priesthood of Christ in the heavens and the fashioning of that royal priesthood on earth (“kings and priests unto God”, Rev. i. 6; I Pet. ii. 5, 9) are the goal of the “perfecting” of Hebrews and the “overcoming” of the Apocalypse.

The ministry associated with Christ as a Priest after the order of Melchisedec takes us neither to the Tabernacle nor Temple, but to Gethsemane; the offerings here are not sin offerings or trespass offerings, but prayer and supplications, the end “perfecting”, not forgiveness or acceptance.

“Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him” (Heb. v. 8, 9).

How are we to understand the awful agony of the garden of Gethsemane? Albert Barnes voices a common interpretation of the agony of Gethsemane thus:

“The posture of the mind of the Redeemer, perhaps, was something like this. He knew that He was about to be put to death in a most cruel manner. His tender and sensitive nature, as a man shrank from such a death. As a man, He went under the pressure of His great sorrows and pleaded that the cup might be removed and that man might be redeemed by a less fearful scene of suffering. That arrangement, however, could not be made even though the prayer of the pious sufferer is not directly answered, yet that prayer is acceptable to God, and the result of such a trial is worth all that it costs.”

We believe these words present very fairly what is in the mind of many who read the story of Gethsemane. The repeated words “as a man” are put in to soften the apparent shrinking that is implied. We cannot, however, accept this apology for the Son of God in whatever terms of grace and love it may be presented.

First let us consider the place that this experience occupies in the epistle to the Hebrews. Paul is approaching his great exhortation “Let us go *on* unto perfection” which finds its dread alternative in “*drawing back* unto perdition”. Now, however we endeavour to soften the charge, the view expressed by Albert Barnes means in plain terms that the Saviour did, if only temporarily, “draw back”. Yet Gethsemane issues in His “perfecting”. If the common view of Gethsemane be the true one, should we not feel that Paul very unwisely introduced such a subject here?

- (1) Christ your Saviour, your Captain, momentarily drew back.
- (2) You, His followers are expected not to draw back.

Something seems amiss with this argument. If Heb. x. teaches anything, it teaches that Christ fully knew what was involved when He accepted the office of the One Mediator. Setting aside all the typical offerings of the law, He said “A body hast Thou prepared Me”, and that body was destined to be “offered” (Heb. x. 5, 10). These Hebrews were exhorted to look unto Jesus, the Author and the Perfecter of faith, “Who

for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame” (Heb. xii. 2). If Heb. v. 7 be interpreted to mean that the Saviour prayed to be delivered from the awful death that awaited Him on the cross, it will certainly read discordantly with John xii. 27, 28:

“Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? (shall I say?) Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour, (No, I will say) Father, glorify Thy name.”

How does the apparent drawing back of Gethsemane harmonize with the words of John x. 17, 18?

“Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father.”

John xvii. precedes the garden of Gethsemane. In that sublime chapter the Saviour reviewed His life’s work, and said:

“The hour is come I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do.”
“When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden” (John xvii. 1, 4; xviii. 1).

Are we to believe that the strong confidence of chapter xvii. was followed by a temporary drawing back in chapter xviii.? The Saviour knew intimately what awaited Him at the end of His journey:

“He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matt. xvi. 21).

He knew all that the prophets had written concerning His crucifixion and death:

“Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: and they shall scourge Him, and put Him to death: and the third day He shall rise again” (Luke xviii. 31-33).

To suggest that in the garden of Gethsemane the awfulness of Calvary just began to dawn upon the Saviour, is a contradiction of all that is written of Him. He knew, even to the fact that He should be “spitted on”. We certainly read of the disciples, when they were on their way to that last visit to Jerusalem, that they were amazed and afraid, but the Saviour assured them by telling them that He knew already all that could and should be done unto Him (Mark x. 32-34).

Let us return to Heb. v. and read the passage afresh. Let us go to the end of verse 7, and note, *whatever* it was that formed the burden of the Saviour’s prayer, *He was heard*. To “hear” prayer is equivalent in many cases to “answer”.

“Now we know that God heareth not sinners” (John ix. 31).

This does not and cannot mean that God is unable to hear what a sinner says, it means He does not hear with approval or acceptance. "I knew that Thou hearest Me always" (John xi. 42) said the Saviour. Whatever therefore was the subject of Christ's supplication in the garden of Gethsemane was acceptable, was heard, and was answered. We learn moreover that Christ was heard "in that He feared", which the A.V. renders in the margin "for His piety". This is a most necessary correction. On the surface the A.V. gives the impression that the Saviour's prayer was the result of "fear", of His being "afraid", but "piety" points entirely to the opposite direction. *Eulabeia* is found in Heb. xii. 28:

"Let us serve God acceptably with reverence and *godly fear*."

Not only is such service "acceptable", the godly fear is echoed by the word "reverence". Whatever the Saviour asked for, therefore was heard, and that for His godly fear or piety. The burden of His petition is realized in the character given to the Hearer and Answerer of His prayer. He prayed "unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His piety". Here, however, we must anticipate an objection. It may be objected, Christ was not saved from death, He did die on the cross, He was not spared. In this objection lies the root of all the misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the blessed Lord. What He dreaded, and what was threatened was *physical collapse* in the garden of Gethsemane. The bloody sweat is a physical accompaniment and sign of intense agony and exhaustion, and had the Saviour collapsed in a fatal seizure in the garden, the Devil would have triumphed! Let us remember the emphasis that is laid upon the "weakness" of that hour. It is written "He was crucified through weakness" (II Cor. xiii. 4) and Paul said "We also are weak with Him" and could say also "My strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Cor. xii. 9) using the same word *teleioo* that is used of His Lord (Heb. ii. 10; v. 9). The suffering Saviour turned to His disciples and said "What, could ye not watch with Me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. xxvi. 40, 41). Whose spirit was willing? whose flesh weak? Most think He addressed these words to the disciples. No, He spoke of Himself and His bodily weakness in the hour of His agony. The evidence of physical weakness is seen in that the rough soldiery who manifested no traits of human kindness, were obliged nevertheless to transfer the cross from the Saviour's shoulders, to that of a man of Cyrene, Simon by name (Matt. xxvii. 32). Again, death by crucifixion was a lingering death, lasting four, five, or six days, and consequently Pilate "marveled" and could not readily believe that Christ had died so quickly, and called the centurion to get confirmation (Mark xv. 44). The Saviour indeed was crucified through weakness. His spirit was always unalterably willing, it was the flesh that was weak, and the flesh in its physical sense, not in any moral way.

It has been assumed that the "cup", which the Saviour asked might pass from Him, was the death of the cross. This is monstrous and contradicts the whole tenor of the life of Christ. The "cup" was the possibility that it would be the Father's will that He should die in the garden and the cross never be reached. "Nevertheless" if His life's work were to end in such apparent failure the Saviour still as the perfect Servant and obedient Son

bowed before the Father's will. He had done this earlier. When rejection instead of acceptance by Israel was made manifest He said "Even so Father: for so it seemed good in Thy sight", and called upon all who labour and are heavy laden to take His yoke upon them and learn of Him, for said He "I am meek and lowly of heart". We can get some confirmation of this by observing the balancing members of the structure of Matthew's Gospel:

Matthew

- A | i. 1 - iii. 17. Birth to Baptism.
Ministry of John the Baptist.
"Born King of the Jews."
B | iv. 1-16. Threefold Temptation of the King. Triumph.
B | xxvi. 36-44. Threefold agony of the King-Priest. Triumph.
A | xxvii, xxviii. Baptism of suffering to Birth in Resurrection.
Ministry of those who are to baptize all nations.
"This is Jesus the King of the Jews."

This structure is not complete, but the temptation in the wilderness and the agony in the garden perfectly correspond. Will any one dare to suggest that the word "triumph" be altered to temporary hesitation, drawing back or any other derogatory expression? Christ as surely triumphed over the attack of the Devil in the garden, as He had overcome the same Tempter in the wilderness. The word "agony" *agonia*, which is so closely associated with this awful experience in the garden, provides us with the word "race" of Heb. xii. 1 where the Greek word is *agon*. After an unprecedented list of suffering and endurance (Heb. xi. 33-38) in which there is no hint that any drew back, the reader is exhorted to "look away unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith". There is no hint that He drew back for an instant, but rather "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame" and this is followed by an exhortation to:

"Consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. xii. 3),

adding the pregnant words,

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin" (Heb. xii. 4).

Three passages of Hebrews are linked together:

"It became Him to make the Captain (*archegos*) of their salvation—PERFECT (*teleioo*) THROUGH SUFFERINGS" (Heb. ii. 10).

"Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made PERFECT (*teleioo*), He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. v. 8, 9).

"Looking unto Jesus the Captain (*archegos*) and PERFECTER (*teleiotes*) of faith" (Heb. xii. 2 not AV JP).

It is of the very essence of the words translated "perfect" that one goes right on to the end (*telos*), "forgetting the things that are behind". Can we believe that Paul could say,

“None of these things move me”, but his Lord would momentarily have found it difficult to utter these words in the garden? How then could He be both Captain and Perfecter? How could He be said to have learned obedience? *How could His followers be rebuked for “drawing back”?* (Heb. x. 38, 39). Peter drew back, the other disciples forsook their Lord, but the Prophet looking down the age says:

“The Lord GOD hath opened Mine ear, and I was NOT rebellious, NEITHER turned away back therefore have I set My face LIKE A FLINT, and I know that I shall not be ashamed” (Isa. l. 5-7).

“The cup which My Father hath given Me, shall I not drink it?” (John xviii. 11).

In Matt. xvi., when Peter out of misguided love for the Saviour said “Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee”, he was rebuked as an instrument of Satan (Matt. xvi. 22, 23). In Matt. xxvi. Peter said “Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee” (Matt. xxvi. 35) although we know only too well that he would deny the Lord thrice before that day was over. *Are we to believe that Peter, who had thus manifested the frailty of his faith, would be the spectator in the self same night of His Lord’s temporary drawing back?* We trust that no reader will ever attempt to apologize for His Lord, but will maintain in face of all, that in the hour of His mortal weakness, with sweat pouring from Him like drops of blood, He nevertheless prayed to be preserved so that He might finish the work for which He had been born; that He was “saved from” *that death that threatened Him in the garden*, and was “heard for His piety”, being strengthened by the ministering angel, ultimately offering Himself through the eternal spirit to God; remaining all the time, and through all the bitter experience of His earthly ministry—“Holy, harmless, undefiled” and ever well pleasing in the sight of Him Who sent Him.

No.30. Melchisedek, The Priest of the Perfected (v. 8 - 10).

Babes versus Full-grown (v. 8 - 10)

pp. 30 - 34

The reference to the priesthood of Melchisedec which was introduced in Heb. v. 6, is resumed at verse 10:

“Of Whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing” (Heb. v. 11).

The LXX uses the word translated “dull” in Prov. xxii. 29 to translate “mean” in the expression “mean men”, and the verse speaks of one diligent in his business. In Prov. xii. 8 it is used for “perverse”. It would appear from the usage of the word that the A.V. “dull” is hardly strong enough. The Hebrew word in Prov. xxii. 29 is *chashok* “obscure” or “darkened”, and the cognate *chosek* is translated scores of times “darkness”.

The spiritual ear and eye are of the first importance. Peter in his second epistle uses the word *myopia* (“cannot see afar off”) of those who had become forgetful of the purification of old sins (i. 9). We trust our readers will immediately remember the strong emphasis upon “purification for sins” found in Hebrews, especially the fact that in the opening summary this alone is written of the Lord’s work on earth. “When He had made purification for sins” (Heb. i. 3) (see also Volume IX., p. 150). II Pet. i. speaks of “adding to your faith”, a parallel expression to the words of Heb. vi., “things that accompany salvation”. These added things have in view the rich furnishing of the entry into the *aionian* kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (II Pet. i. 11). So in Hebrews the perfecting is connected with the *aionian* salvation.

This reference to the dullness of hearing is additionally a gathering up of the words of the great historic type of chapters iii. and iv. “Today if ye will HEAR His voice.” “Some, when they had HEARD, did provoke.” “The word preached did not profit them, because they were not united by faith with them that HEARD.” Dullness of hearing, moreover, is another mode of expressing the truth of Heb. ii. 1:

“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we drift away.”

“Hearing” together with “seeing” may be reckoned as the chiefest of the senses. How sad to allow any precious sense, even in the physical realm, to be atrophied through lack of use! How doubly sad to have the precious gift of hearing spiritually and then through not having “the senses EXERCISED” (Heb. v. 14) to fail, to come short, to drift! Over against this drifting and dullness the apostle places endurance, obedience, suffering, steadfastness unto the end. Surely we, too, need the exhortation of the Lord, “Take heed *how* you hear”.

Not only were there many things to say about Melchisedec, but the apostle said that they were “hard to be interpreted (not uttered)”. The word translated “uttered” is *dusermeneutos* which is cognate with *hermeneuo* and occurs in Heb. vii. 2 again in connection with this same Melchisedec:

“First being by *interpretation* King of righteousness.”

Paul had no difficulty concerning “utterance”, his difficulty was “to make intelligible to you” (Moffatt). This difficulty of interpretation could reside in the apostle himself, or could arise from some quality or lack in his hearers. This is what he actually said. Their dullness of hearing, made for dullness of teaching. It is good to remember that there could be no “buyers” if there were no “sellers”, no “borrowers” if no “lenders”, and the teacher is dependent upon the hearer. If the hearer be “dull” the “interpretation” will be thereby rendered difficult. That this is an integral part of the Apostle’s lesson here, the structure makes manifest, the words “dull” and “slothful” (Heb. v. 11; vi. 12) being the only occurrences of the Greek word *nothros* in the New Testament. Schrevelius says this word means “to run, race, scud along” and being so, we can see how well it suited the purpose of the Apostle who was urging his readers ‘to go on unto perfection’, to ‘run the race set before them’. These dull and slothful ones were not laying aside every weight, but were evidently cumbered with useless impediments, “the other things” that

choke the word. Not only does this dullness of hearing seriously hinder the growth of the believer, it prevents him from exercising that most blessed office, the ability to teach others. Teaching demands of the teacher many precious gifts, but the most important of all is that he too shall have the “hearing ear”. The “tongue of the learned” is most closely related to the “ear of the learned” (Isa. l. 4) “As I hear I speak” said the greatest Teacher of all. This dullness of hearing the apostle associates with stunted growth and in Heb. v. 12-14 he expands his meaning under six heads:

- (1) It indicates *lack of progress*.
“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you.”
- (2) It indicates *spiritual infancy*.
“Ye have need of milk, and not of solid food.”
- (3) It indicates *lack of experience*.
“For every one that useth milk is without experience of the word of righteousness.”
- (4) It indicates the opposite of being *perfect*.
“But solid food belongeth to them that are perfect.”
- (5) It indicates a *culpable neglect*.
“Perfect, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised.”
- (6) It indicates *lack of discernment*.
“Senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

Let us take these six points and gather their lessons. Teachers are placed together with those who can take solid food, have senses exercised and are perfect or mature. This passage comes to us very solemnly and says that the qualification for teaching is something more than head knowledge and ready speech. In the Sermon on the Mount, breaking the commandments and doing them are associated with teaching men so, and also with losing or gaining a position in the kingdom of heaven. James utters the warning, “My brethren, be not many *teachers*, knowing that we shall receive a greater judgment” (iii. 1). Instead of progress there was retrogression.

“For even when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again certain rudiments of the beginning of the oracles of God” (Heb. v. 12 not AV JP).

Ta stoicheia tes arches, “The rudiments of the beginning”. *Stoicheia* are the initial steps in knowledge, and also the “elements” of the natural world. (See Gal. iv. 3, 9; Col. ii. 8, 20; II Pet. iii. 10, 12). The verb *stoicheo* comes in Acts xxi. 24, “*Walkest orderly*”; Rom. iv. 12, “*Walk in the steps of the faith*”; Gal. v. 25, “*Walk by the Spirit*”; Gal. vi. 16; Phil. iii. 16, “*Walk by rule*”.

These Hebrew believers had progressed no further than the initial steps of the faith, and indeed needed teaching in these things all over again. An intellectual grasp of the teaching of men on any subject may be sufficient, *but a mere intellectual grasp of God’s truth is not sufficient*. The doctrine and faith of the early church was rightly called “The Way”, for it involved *walk* as well as *word*, *life* as well as *lip*.

“Then shall we know, if we *follow on to know* the Lord” (Hosea vi. 3).

What these “first principles” were that they needed to be retaught we shall see better when we come to Heb. vi. The spiritual infancy of these saints is indicated by the figurative use of foods for doctrine, “Ye have need of milk and not of solid food”. The Apostle had occasion to use this same figure when writing to the Corinthian Church, and for similar reasons:

“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ; I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able” (I Cor. iii. 1, 2).

The milk, the rudiments of the beginning of the oracles of God, to them had been “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (ii. 2). “Howbeit,” said the Apostle, “we speak wisdom among them that are PERFECT” (ii. 6). The thought is resumed and developed in chapter xiii. 8-13. Milk diet is natural and right for infants, but it has a purpose and a limit. “As new-born babies desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may GROW thereby.” Peter adds a word to this that links it with Heb. vi. “If so be ye have TASTED that the Lord is gracious” (I Pet. ii. 2, 3).

Some believe that there is a definite reference to the epistle to the Hebrews in II Pet. iii. 15, 16, where Peter speaks of ‘our beloved brother Paul’ who had written unto the readers of Peter’s epistles. In verse 16 there is a word very like the word ‘difficult to interpret’, *dusermeneutos*, of Heb. v. 11, where ‘some things hard to be understood’ translates *dusnoetos*, which those that are unlearned and unstable wrest to their own destruction are spoken of. In contrast Peter urges them to ‘Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ’ (II Pet. iii. 18). There is much in Peter’s two epistles that bears upon the teaching of the epistle to the Hebrews. Such subjects as the saving of the soul, the ‘fiery trial’, ‘suffering and glory’, come to mind at once as obvious parallels.

The outstanding feature of the babe that the Apostle mentions in Heb. v. is that such is ‘without experience’. We have drawn attention in previous articles to the place that ‘temptation’ occupies in the epistle of the race and the crown (see Heb. ii. 18; xi. 17, 37; James i. 2, 12; I Pet. i. 6; Rev. iii. 10, etc.). The Greek word for ‘tempt’ is *peirazo*. The Greek word for unskillful is *apeiros*, and carries with it the thought ‘untested’. Solid food belongs to the perfect or mature. These are placed in opposition to the untested. It is one of the marks of those pressing on to perfection that they endure ‘temptation’. The wilderness journey, we have seen, is the great historical type of the early part of Hebrews, and that wilderness journey was a ‘day of temptation’ in more than one sense.

An important note is struck in the expression ‘senses exercised’. In Phil. i. 9, where Paul prays for the saints who, like the Hebrews, were reaching forward unto perfection (see chapter iii.), he writes:

“And this I pray, that your love may yet abound more and more in knowledge and in all *discernment*, or *perception*.”

The word is *aesthesis*. Luke ix. 45 uses the verb *aisthanomai*, ‘to perceive’. The word ‘senses’ in Heb. v. is *aistheterion*. It will be seen that the senses in their capacity

of discernment, of discrimination, of right division, of trying the things that differ, are intended. These senses are ‘exercised’ in the perfect. The word ‘exercise’ comes from *gumnazo*, which gives us our word gymnasium, etc., In Heb. xii. 11, where the discipline and correction of the son by the father is the subject, the word ‘exercise’ occurs again:

“But all discipline, indeed as to the time being, does not seem to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless afterward it gives back the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been EXERCISED thereby.”

This exercise of the perceptions enables the perfect to discriminate between good and evil. It does not necessarily mean moral good and moral evil. *Agathos* is the usual word for ‘good’, but here it is *kalos*. Those concerning whom the Apostle entertained doubts had ‘tasted the *good (kalos)* word of God’, but had failed to realize the difference between that which belonged to perfection and that which was ‘the word of the beginning’. The two words *kalos* and *kakos* differ only in one letter. The doctrines for which they stand are often confused and said to be ‘all one and the same’. We need ‘senses exercised’ if we are to discriminate, and ‘go on unto perfection’ or full growth.

**No.31. “Leaving . . . Let us go on . . . not laying again” (vi. 1).
pp. 51 - 53**

Whatever view we may entertain as to what constitutes “the principles of the doctrine of Christ”, one thing is beyond controversy, Heb. vi. 1 bids the reader to LEAVE them:

“Therefore *leaving* the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let *us go on* unto perfection.”

“Leaving” is answered by “go on”, “principles” answered by “perfection”. First we observe that this exhortation arises out of and is logically connected with what had already been said about those who were dull of hearing. The Apostle commences his exhortation with the word “therefore”. Seeing that there are many Greek words translated “therefore” in the A.V. of the New Testament, it might be wise to note which of this number is selected here. *Dio* the conjunction used in Heb. vi. 1 is a relative of *dia* “through” and suggests that what follows is a consequence or an inference from what has been already advanced (see its use in Heb. iii. 7, 10; x. 5; xi. 12, 16; xii. 12, 28 and xiii. 12). These believers “for the time” ought to have been teachers, but owing to their sluggishness they needed that one should teach them AGAIN which are the FIRST PRINCIPLES of the oracles of God. The Apostle’s inference in Heb. vi. is that the believer should *leave* these first principles not in the sense of giving them up, but should *go on*, should not *lay them again and again*. It is natural and right that new born “babes” should feed on “milk” (I Pet. ii. 2) but only in order that they may “grow thereby”. These believers to whom Paul writes were stunted “for the time” they should have reached adulthood (full age or perfect Heb. v. 14) and been teaching others. But faculties, whether physical or spiritual, will suffer atrophy if they are not exercised. The “first principles of the oracles of God”, likened to milk, must be left and built upon if

growth is to be maintained. The “principles of the doctrine of Christ” must be left if maturity is to be attained. If Heb. vi. 1 is read in the light of chapter v. 12 no harm will be done by retaining the A.V. translation, but without its context the idea of “leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ” is monstrous. What is apostasy but leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ? Moffatt translates this passage “Let us pass on then to what is mature, leaving elementary Christian doctrine behind”. The margin of the A.V. gives the literal translation:

“The word of the beginning of Christ.”

Looking at these words by themselves, we may entertain a number of possible meanings, but they form part of an argument that has been developing ever since the opening chapter. In Heb. ii. 3 we read:

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord”,

and in this passage lies the key to Heb. vi. 1. First we remember that the Hebrew believers were accused of being “dull”; here in chapter ii. they are warned of the dangers that accompany “negligence”. The reciprocal character of this neglect is actually stated later in Hebrews. The Greek word *ameleo* “neglect” being translated “regard not” in Heb. viii. 9. Israel *neglected* the Lord. He *regarded* them *not*.

“Because they continued not in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.”

When writing to the Corinthians, Paul said that he had delivered unto them “among the first things what I also received” (I Cor. xv. 3) where the word “received” is *paralambano*. In Heb. ii. 3 we have the simpler word *lambano* “receive”, but which is not translated by the A.V., it being considered an idiomatic usage. Where Paul says in I Cor. xv. 3 *en protois* “among first things”, he says in Heb. ii. 3 “which a beginning (*arche*) having received (*lambano*) to be spoken by the Lord”. This, while being an awkward rendering, does set before the reader a parallel with I Cor. xv. 3, and is moreover intensified by the warning in verse 2 “If ye keep in memory (or hold fast)”. The messages referred to were “first principles” of the Gospel, “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures”. J.N.D. reads “having had its commencement in being spoken of by the Lord”, again somewhat awkward, but nearer the truth than the A.V. While fundamental truth is and must be of fundamental importance, it is of no more value than is a solid concrete foundation upon which no building is ever erected. A granite rock may become a first-class foundation, but it remains a granite rock only, unless a building rests upon it. (A foundation after all is a relative term. It presupposes the erection of a building). In all the three hundred and more occurrences of *logos*, it is only translated “doctrine” in this passage, and as *didache* is correctly rendered “doctrine” in verse 2, we must retain the simpler idea of “word”, “saying” or “discourse” in verse 1. *Logos* is translated “account” in Heb. xiii. 17 and again in Phil. iv. 17. To translate *arche* “principles” is a double violation of its meaning. It is singular in number, whereas the A.V. and the R.V. render it by the plural, and in every other occurrence of the word in Hebrews it is rendered either by “first” or “beginning”. If we use the word “account” here in Heb. vi. 1 we read:

“Leaving the account (narrative or treatise) of the beginning of Christ”,

it may turn us to the opening of the Acts of the Apostles. Green translates the passage “The former *account* I composed, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus *began* both to do and to teach”, and this leads us to the Gospel by Luke. Here we arrive at something tangible. The Gospel narratives are a *beginning*, their sequel, “perfection” or completion must be sought elsewhere. Where we are speaking of Israel, the Hebrews, perfection will be found in the New Covenant. The exhortation of Heb. vi. 1 does not speak of the present calling of the church of the Mystery, although, any believing Hebrew, who went all the way with the Apostle in this epistle, would find no barrier that prevented him from taking the step of faith to pass through the broken middle wall and to find himself a member of the One Body. That however is not visualized here.

To all believers whose pasture is mainly the Gospels, we would say “go on”. The Lord Himself told His disciples that He had many things to say which could not be imparted unto them until the Holy Spirit was given, and promised that then He would guide them into “All Truth” (John xvi. 13), and that moreover, this complete body of truth would have as its outstanding characteristic the glorifying of the Saviour, and anything new that might be thus revealed would still be, He said, taking of Mine and showing it to you. What is true of a foundation is true also of a house. A foundation that is never built upon, or is continually being re-laid, taken up and put down is not a foundation at all. “Whose house are we, IF” which implies continuance and endurance until the end be attained. If we receive the elementary doctrines of Christ, but never build upon them, these doctrines will never be, so far as we are concerned, a foundation. Most of our readers are aware that we translate the Greek of Eph. i. 4 *pro kataboles kosmon* “before the overthrow of the world”, and some who endorse this translation would read Heb. vi. 1 similarly “Not overthrowing again a foundation”. The two passages are however not quite comparable. There is no *word* for foundation in Eph. i. 4, but in addition to *kataballo*, Heb. vi. 1 uses the word *themelion*, which does mean a foundation (Eph. ii. 20). Bloomfield, commenting on Erhard’s rendering “not demolishing”, says “Not demolishing is forbidden by the *usus loquendi*, for I cannot find a single example of the middle form in the sense “to demolish”, but only in the sense of *jacere* “to lay down” whether in a literal or figurative sense”. While therefore we leave the new translation of Eph. i. 4 unimpaired, for the actual word “foundation” is not used there, we can and must endorse the translation of the A.V. of Heb. vi. 1 “not laying again”. Paul was not the founder of this company. Peter, not Paul, is the apostle of the circumcision, and the foundation had been laid by him and his associates. Paul had however exercised his privilege as a private believer, and a Hebrew by race, to write to the dispersion, as Peter himself acknowledged in II Pet. iii. 15, 16, and as no other such epistle than Hebrews is known to us, we cannot help but believe that it is to this epistle that Peter refers. Peter uses the figure of blindness as a consequence upon forgetfulness (II Pet. i. 9), and urges his reader to make his calling and election sure. He directs his reader to the “honour and glory” that Christ as “The Beloved Son” received on the Mount. The dissolution of heaven and earth of II Pet. iii., finds an echo in the shaking of heaven and earth in Heb. xii. The preservation through it all, indicated in II Pet. iii. 13, finds its parallel in the kingdom that cannot be shaken of Heb. xii. 28. The doctrines that the Hebrew

believers were not to lay over again, but leave in order to go on unto perfection are six in number, and these we must now consider in subsequent studies.

**No.32. The six-fold Foundation (vi. 1, 2).
pp. 70 - 75**

We have seen that in order to go on unto perfection or full growth certain fundamentals, called “the word of the beginning of Christ” must be left, that it is not reasonable to keep on laying again a foundation, but to proceed to the related building. The sixfold foundation we set out in the preceding number we repeat here, as an introduction to their examination:

/ Repentance	Internal and Doctrinal
\ Faith	
/ Baptisms	External and Confirmatory
\ Laying on of hands	
/ Resurrection	Future.
\ Judgment <i>aionian</i>	

Repentance from Dead Works

I Thess. i. 9 shows how fundamental this must be. “Ye turned to God from idols”. It is manifest that it is not contemplated by the Apostle that this “repentance” should be repeated. This is also true for the Hebrews. Turning from idols and repentance from dead works marked a vital fundamental change. That Galatians was a covering letter to this epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apostle’s words both to Peter and to the Galatians are more than suggestive here.

“For if I *build again* the things which I destroyed, I make my self a transgressor” (Gal. ii. 18).

“Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how *turn ye again* to the weak and beggarly elements (*stoicheia*, same word as “principles” in Heb. v. 12), whereunto ye *desire again* to be in bondage” (Gal. iv. 8, 9).

Does this mean that we are to have no sorrow for sin, no departing from iniquity? No! “Repent” is the keyword of the gospel of the earthly Kingdom. John the Baptist, the Lord Jesus, and Peter alike commenced their ministries with this word. Let the reader turn to Ephesians; let him read through the six chapters, seeking every occurrence of the word “repent” and “repentance”; he will not find one. Let him continue through Philippians and Colossians; the result will be the same. Why is it that this word, so frequent in the Gospels and the Acts, is so rigorously excluded from these epistles which give the foundation teaching of the present dispensation? Is it not that the Lord, by omitting this key-word of the earthly Kingdom, would lead us to observe that we are in an entirely different dispensation?

We shall find by turning to Heb. ix. 14 that the Apostle, who told them to leave “repentance from dead works”, has a very satisfactory reason, and one which glorified the Lord Jesus Christ. “How much more shall the *blood of Christ* purge your conscience from dead works”! Reader, which is better, the oft-repeated repentance, or the once completed purgation? Let Heb. x. 1-14 answer the question. This is in harmony with Col. ii. 13, “Having forgiven you *all* trespasses”. The Apostle’s standard is an infallible test for doctrine so far as we are concerned, and “He shall glorify *Me*” is surely heard here.

Faith Towards God

If it seemed strange to speak of leaving the doctrine of repentance, it must sound doubly strange to speak of not laying again the foundation of “faith toward God”. We may be perfectly sure that the one who so emphasized justification by faith is not advocating its abandonment here. Let us again apply the touchstone. How does the apostle Paul speak of faith in the epistles?

- “The faith of *Jesus Christ*” (Gal. ii. 16).
- “The faith of the *Son of God*” (Gal. ii. 20).
- “By faith of *Jesus Christ*” (Gal. iii. 22).
- “By faith in *Christ Jesus*” (Gal. iii. 26).
- “Your faith in the *Lord Jesus*” (Eph. i. 15).
- “Through the faith of *Christ*” (Phil. iii. 9).
- “Your faith in *Christ*” (Col. ii. 5).
- “The faith which is in *Christ Jesus*” (I Tim. iii. 13).
- “Through faith which is in *Christ Jesus*” (II Tim. iii. 15).

By reading the contexts of the above passages it will be seen that all the blessings of the gospel are not only vitally connected with “faith”, but faith which *rests in Christ!* Justification, resurrection, life, the sonship and salvation, are all spoken of as resulting from faith which has *Christ* for its object.

By birth, by nationality, by their very law, customs, and distinctions, the Jews were continually reminded that Jehovah was the *God of the Jews*. Every Jew prided himself upon that fact, so much so that Paul had to write, “Is He not also (the God) of the Gentiles?” (Rom. iii. 29). But this national faith toward God, though it ministered to their pride, could not save them. In the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican we have a vivid example of this. The Pharisee had “faith toward God”, otherwise he would never have troubled to go to the Temple and say what he did. The Publican, however, realized that this vague, general recognition of God, was not sufficient for his need. Notice the words of his prayer. “God be propitious (merciful upon the ground of sacrifice) to me, the sinner”. Here was faith not only in God, but in the divine provision for sin. The fact that from earliest childhood these Hebrews had heard of God and read His law, was in some measure a stumbling-block to them. They did not realize that they needed a Saviour as much as the Gentiles. The Gentile, on the other hand, had no national faith to rest upon; he cast himself upon the unconditional mercy of God in Christ.

The Lord Jesus when on earth had said, “Ye believe in God, believe *also* in Me” (John xiv. 1). To trust in the God of one’s fathers is a poor substitute for that faith which owns Him as the “God of my salvation”. The epistle to the Hebrews emphasizes the necessity of the sacrificial and high priestly work of Christ. All who come unto God for salvation come unto God “by Him” (Heb. vii. 25).

The Doctrine of Baptisms

The order of the words in the original is “baptisms of doctrine” (or instruction). The word “of” may be the genitive of relation, and mean that these baptisms were related to instruction and doctrine, for the ordinances of every dispensation have always had a deeper value than the mere ritual observance. The most important word for our consideration is “baptisms”. We notice that it is in the plural, contrasting with the one baptism of Eph. iv. The Apostle here says “Leave not laying again the doctrine of baptisms”. In Ephesians he says “Endeavour to keep one baptism”.

We would first direct attention to the two other passages of Scripture where the word “baptisms” occurs. (1) in Heb. ix. 10 it is translated “washings”:

“The first tabernacle was a figure in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the *conscience*; which stood only in meats and drinks, and *divers washings (baptisms)*, and *carnal ordinances*, imposed on them until the time of reformation” (Heb. ix. 6-10).

God has used the same word here as in Heb. vi. 2, and has placed it in such a context that nothing but blindness or wilfulness can bring it into the present dispensation of heavenly and spiritual blessings. It is related to carnal ordinances which touched the flesh but not the conscience, and is placed in full contrast with that which is perfect.

(2) The only other occurrence of this word is in Mark vii. 4-8:

“And when they come from the market, except they wash (baptize), they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing (*baptisms*) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables Howbeit in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines (similar word as in Heb. vi. 2), the commandments of men. For laying aside (same word as *leaving* in Heb. vi. 1) the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men.”

It is striking to see that the inspired author of Hebrews takes up the very words of the Lord in the Gospel. The Lord had said that among the doctrines of men which they held was the “doctrine of baptisms”, and that they had “left” the commandment of God to “hold the traditions of men”. The Apostle says, in effect, “Reverse all this; leave the doctrine of baptisms for the revealed Word of God”. What have we found hitherto? The “baptisms” used in Heb. vi. 1, 2, and ix. 10 have one meaning. They formed part of “carnal ordinances” imposed by God, which made none “perfect”. Again, the word occurs in Mark vii. 4, and designates the “ceremonial cleansings” imposed by the traditions of the elders. Thus, whether imposed by God or men, these baptisms were carnal ordinances, and had no place in “that which is perfect”.

A careful comparison of Heb. ix. 10 with Heb. x. 1-4 will show by the repetition of such words as “conscience” and “perfect” that these ordinances were contemporary with the Levitical sacrifices, and both passed away together. The epistle to the Hebrews is the first Scripture which reveals that the *sacrifices* appointed by God were to cease; so also with the *ordinances* which formed a part of the same appointed service.

The Laying On of Hands

Acts viii. 12-18 makes the connection between water baptism, and the laying on of hands very apparent. “They were baptized”, then “they laid hands upon them, and they received *pneuma hagion*” (holy spirit, the *gifts*). “Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands *pneuma hagion* was given”. Again, in Acts xix. 6 we read, “When Paul had laid his hands upon them, *pneuma hagion* came on them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied”. In Acts xxviii. 8, “Paul prayed and laid hands upon him and healed him”. These things have ceased and passed away. After Acts xxviii., although we have the record of several who were sick, we have no instance of anyone healing them by the laying on of hands. After Acts xxviii. we read of believers receiving the seal of the Holy Spirit of promise, but never that such was given by the laying on of hands. “Not with hands” might be an appropriate inscription written over the present dispensation. As we have seen, the gifts today are directly given by the ascended and glorified Lord (Eph. iv. 8-11), without the interposition of man at all.

Paul reminded Timothy of a past act in I Tim. iv. 14 and in II Tim. i. 6, but when he tells Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist” there is no need or warrant for the “laying on of hands”. The instruction, “lay hands suddenly on no man” (I Tim. v. 22) has reference to the custom which signified approval (as in Acts xiii. 3); no gifts were conferred thereby, and none are specified as necessary in the qualifications given in I Tim. iii. Thus again we see that even in the setting aside of this ceremony, a ceremony which was once accompanied by such mighty power, a confirmation in the true sense of the word (Mark xvi. 20 and Heb. ii. 3), the believer is led to see the fullness that is his in Christ alone.

One has but to read I Cor. xii. to xiv. to understand that the possession of miraculous gifts *was not* a sign of “perfection” but rather of “childhood” (see I Cor. xiii. 8-11).

The Resurrection of the Dead

Nothing can be more certain than that the apostle Paul would never tamper with the “foundation of God”, the “hope” of the believer, which is resurrection. Yet there must be something hidden beneath the surface to account for so remarkable a statement as that given in Heb. vi. in both the A.V. and R.V. We make a great mistake when we assume that the resurrection as taught by the Pharisees, or believed by the generality of the Jews and the disciples, and that proclaimed by the apostles, were all one and the same. We must carefully follow the actual “words which the Holy Ghost teacheth”, if we would understand Heb. vi. 2.

The words translated “the resurrection of the dead” in Heb. vi. 2 are in the original *anastaseos nekron*. Let us trace the use of these words in other passages. We are aware that one of the great differences between the Sadducees and the Pharisees was that the former denied the resurrection, whereas the latter believed it (Matt. xxii. 23). In Acts xxiii. 6 we read, “Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, of the hope and resurrection *of the dead (anastasis nekron)* I am called in question”. Again in Acts xxiv. 21 he says, “touching the resurrection of (the) dead (*anastaseos nekron*) I am called in question”. In reference to this he had said, “believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets, and have hope toward God, *which they themselves* also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust”. These passages give us the belief of the orthodox Jew, founded upon the Law and the Prophets.

John xi. 24 shows us that the sister of Lazarus entertained the same belief. “Martha saith unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection *at the last day*”. The same Gospel gives Christ’s own words on this subject in John v. 28, 29, “The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment”. Hitherto, all the passages quoted are in keeping with Heb. vi. 2. Turning now to Mark ix. 9, 10 we shall discover something which will throw light upon Heb. vi.:

“And as they came down from the mountain, He charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen *from among* the dead (*ek nekron*). And they kept *that* saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising *from* the dead should mean.”

If the Pharisees, Martha and the Jews generally, believed the resurrection of the dead, we may be certain that these disciples believed it too. What then was their difficulty? Wherein was the need for questioning? “*That* saying” certainly contained a problem for them, and it is found in the little word *ek* translated “from”.

They, in common with the majority, believed in a resurrection of the dead *at the last day*, but this statement as to a resurrection “out from among the dead” was something new. In Luke xvi. 31 it is said, “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose *out from among the dead*” (*ek nekron*). The sign of the prophet Jonah was the only sign which God would vouchsafe to that sinful generation. After the Lord Jesus had been crucified, buried, and raised from the dead, the words of Luke xvi. 31 proved only too true.

The apostles, during their ministry in the Acts, emphasized the resurrection of the Lord, but it was rejected. We have such words from Peter concerning Christ, “Whom God raised up”; “this Jesus hath God raised up”. In connection with the healing of the lame man (Acts iii. 13-15) Peter says, “God hath glorified His Son Jesus God hath raised Him *out from among the dead*” (*ek nekron*). The Sadducees were grieved that “they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection *out from among the dead*” (Acts iv. 1, 2, 10).

We find the expression again in Rom. i. 4 “By the resurrection *out from* among the dead”. The epistles of the Mystery reveal, as one of the blessings peculiar to themselves, that the believer in Christ will be raised *out from* the dead, even as was the Lord Himself. Phil. iii. teaches this plainly. Starting at verse 4 the apostle summarizes his position as a Pharisee. Then following his wondrous conversion he declares, “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ”. Among the “gains” he enumerates is this one of resurrection. As a Pharisee he held the orthodox belief in a resurrection *of* the dead. The time came, however, when he gave up that belief, not to become a Sadducee, but to be a participator in the resurrection *out from* among the dead.

Heb. xi. 35 and 40 speak of a “*better* resurrection”, and of being “made *perfect*”. When these Hebrews left the primitive doctrine of the resurrection, it was but to see more clearly what was set before the believer, as contrasted with the Pharaic doctrine of a general resurrection at the last day. Paul speaks of this subject in the same way as he does concerning “baptisms”. There were the divine ordinances, and there were the human traditions connected therewith. The first had to be left because the dispensation had changed, the second, because they made void the Word of God.

Eternal Judgment

Just in the same way does the apostle deal with eternal judgment. In the first place, God is the Judge, not man, and in the second place, much has been read into the Word on that dread subject which is untrue. Note the passages in Hebrews where the word “eternal” is used, every one of which, except Heb. vi. 2, having reference to redemption, and not to judgment.

- “Eternal salvation” (Heb. v. 9).
- “Eternal judgment” (Heb. vi. 2).
- “Eternal redemption” (Heb. ix. 12).
- “Eternal Spirit” (Heb. ix. 14).
- “Eternal inheritance” (Heb. ix. 15).
- “Eternal covenant” (Heb. xiii. 20).

Din olamim is the eleventh fundamental of the Jewish creed. It involves both reward and punishment. The Apostle would urge them to leave their reasonings concerning judgment for the more blessed, and to them, personal realities concerning redemption. “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay”. The Hebrew believers like many Christians today, were perhaps too fond of apportioning out the future judgment upon those who did not believe with them, or belong to their race and creed. This the writer would alter. He says, in effect, leave this with God; see to the “eternal kingdom”, the “eternal life”, the “eternal glory” which you may be missing by your over-zeal concerning “eternal judgment”.

**No.33. “If God permit” (vi. 3 - 6).
pp. 92 - 97**

“*If God permit.*” It is most essential that every believer who contemplates running the race, pressing for the prize, gaining the crown, and being numbered among those who are called “the perfect” or “mature”, should realize the meaning hidden behind the Apostle’s words, “If God permit”. The verses that follow are an explanation, speaking as they do of the impossibility of renewing again unto repentance those who, having tasted the heavenly gift, fall away. The type given later, of Esau, is very explicit.

“Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of REPENTANCE, though he sought it carefully with tears” (xii. 16, 17).

The only occurrences of the word “repentance” in Hebrews are in vi. 1, 6 & xii. 17. It is evident that the case of Esau is an amplification or an illustration of the case of those spoken of in Heb. vi.

The words “If God permit” glance back to that period of Israel’s history that has already provided the great basis of exhortation in chapters iii. and iv., “the day of temptation in the wilderness”. It will be remembered that, upon hearing the evil report of the ten spies, Israel murmured and said, “Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt”. The Lord then bade Moses say: “As truly as I live your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness and the people mourned greatly”. It would appear also that their mourning was in some measure a repentance, for “they rose up early in the morning, and gat them up into the top of the mountain, saying, Lo, we be here, and will go up unto the place which the Lord hath promised: for we have sinned. And Moses said, Wherefore now do ye transgress the commandment of the Lord? but it shall not prosper. Go not up, for the Lord is not among you: that ye be not smitten before your enemies BUT THEY PRESUMED TO GO UP UNTO THE HILL TOP then the Canaanites smote them” (Numb. xiv. 28-45).

In the words “but they presumed”, we have a parallel with the expression in Heb. xi. 29, “the Egyptians *assaying* to do”. This passage together with those of Heb. vi. and xii. causes one to pause and think of the seriousness of the lesson here being taught. Of a similar import is the saying of the Lord:

“No one, having put his hand to the plough, and looking unto *the things that are behind*, is well placed with a view to the kingdom of God” (Luke ix. 62 not AV JP).

The exact repetition of the words “The things that are behind” in Phil. iii. 13 is too pointed to be a coincidence, the context being so closely connected with those we have been considering. Having turned to Phil. iii. it may be as well to observe another parallel before proceeding. In Heb. vi. 6 there occurs that strong expression “having crucified again the Son of God and are exposing Him to shame”, and again in x. 29, “having trampled on the Son of God, and having esteemed the blood of the covenant a

common thing”. So in Phil. iii. we have many walking as the enemies of the cross of Christ.

Returning for a moment to Numb. xiv., we must remember that although that great multitude perished in the wilderness, they were a pardoned people. Moses had prayed:

“Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people and the LORD said, I have pardoned” (verses 19, 20).

Yet it was not possible to renew again unto repentance that people, pardoned though they were. If this had been remembered when dealing with Heb. vi. many would have been spared the awful error that some have taught from this chapter, namely, the possibility of a child of God losing his salvation. This epistle, as we have said again and again, and this chapter particularly, deals with things that *accompany* salvation, things that belong to the perfect or full-grown and the overcomer. These things may be lost or forfeited, but salvation is by grace, and works or reward have no place in it.

“If God permit” therefore reveals that sometimes God may not permit. To attempt to ascend the mountain and enter the land of Canaan without the assurance of His presence was madness and destined to fail. Our first and greatest concern must be to walk with Him. If for any failure on our part the permission to go on unto perfection should be withdrawn, let us humbly bow to the will of God, and in lowliness of mind seek the presence of the Lord. While we feel the crown and the prize will but add to His glory, and therefore we should run with patience the race set before us, the prize is valueless, the crown a bauble if it does not glorify Him.

It is impossible to be too keenly sensitive to the serious nature of the failure dealt with in this chapter. To be “dull of hearing”, to remain “a babe”, to be satisfied with the “milk” of the word, and to make no advance may seem bad but not serious. The inspired Apostle takes another view. To remain a babe is really to go back, and this may be the beginning of apostasy. Let us see how the Scriptures speak of those who failed to go on unto perfection.

“It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance if they should fall away, having crucified again to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame” (Heb. vi. 6).

“If we should voluntarily sin after having received the full knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins having trampled under foot the Son of God” (Heb. x. 26-29 not AV JP).

We must distinguish between the fact that many, if not all saints after conversion, lapse into sin of one sort or another, and the falling away intended here. It is the teaching of the Scriptures that if a man be overtaken in a fault, the spiritual ones of the church must restore him in a spirit of meekness, considering themselves lest they also should be tempted (Gal. vi. 1). The exhortations to the seven churches of Rev. ii. and iii. are further illustrations of the same truth. It is evident that here in the epistle to the Hebrews something more serious is involved.

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost (holy spirit), and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come (coming age), if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame” (Heb. vi. 4-6).

We must first of all seek to understand the nature of these blessings so that we may the better understand the nature of the falling away from them.

(1) *They were once enlightened (photizo)*. In chapter x. this word occurs again and the context is so helpful that we must draw attention to it. To save space we will not quote fully:

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together for if we sin wilfully after receiving the full knowledge of the truth no more sacrifice fearful expectation of judgment consume the adversaries trampled on the Son of God but remember the former days in which having been *enlightened* ye endured a great contest of sufferings cast not away your confidence, which has great recompense of reward if any man draw back we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the acquiring of the soul” (Heb. x. 25-39 not AV JP).

This is a valuable commentary, setting Heb. vi. in its true light and preventing us from making erroneous applications of its solemn teaching. Some who do not realize the setting of Heb. vi. have sought to minimize the force of the word “enlighten”, so that it only means an external, but not a real and inward illumination. If this is proved, then of course we are dealing merely with professors and the problem is ended. But Heb. x. 32, wherein is the only other occurrence of the word *photizo*, does not allow of such an interpretation. These enlightened ones were believers, not empty professors.

(2) *They had tasted of the heavenly gift. They were made partakers of holy spirit.* These two statements explain one another. They moreover look back to the laying on of hands which usually was instrumental in the bestowal of this gift. It will be remembered that when “Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands holy spirit was given he offered them money”, and that Peter said, “Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that THE GIFT OF GOD may be purchased with money”.

(3) *They had tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the coming age.* The promise of restoration from Babylon is thus called in Jer. xxix. 10.

“After seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform *My good word* toward you, in causing you to return to this place.”

The miraculous gifts of the Acts were foretastes of the age to come. It will be seen that a great place is occupied in this list by the Holy Spirit and His gifts. This we find is likewise true of Hebrews. There, as we find in Heb. x., the punishment that followed the violation of the law of Moses is small when compared with that which shall follow the despising of the Holy Spirit’s witness of Christ:

“How shall we escape, if we neglect which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard Him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and distributions of holy spirit, according to His own will? For unto the angels hath He not subjected the world to come, whereof we speak” (Heb. ii. 3-5 not AV JP).

One quotation from Heb. x. we now include, as bearing out the strong emphasis placed upon the Holy Spirit here—“and done despite unto the Spirit of grace” (Heb. x. 29).

This falling away which occupies so large a place in Hebrews is variously referred to as “letting slip”, “neglecting”, “hardening hearts as in the provocation”, “lest any fall under the same example of unbelief”, “forsaking the assembling of selves together”, “sinning wilfully after full knowledge”, “drawing back unto perdition”.

The falling away was after enlightenment and partaking of the Holy Spirit, and herein lies the extreme danger. This aspect of teaching in Hebrews is but the application to the Hebrews of the teaching of the Lord given in Matt. xii. 31, 32:

“All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall NOT BE FORGIVEN unto men. And whoever may speak a word against the Son of man it shall be forgiven: but whoever may speak against the Holy Spirit, it will in no wise be forgiven him, *neither in this age, nor in the coming one*” (not AV JP).

Here is the sore punishment awaiting those who, after having all the confirmation of the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and after having embraced the witness and having become partakers of the Spirit’s gifts, fall away. They echo the fatal words of Numb. xiv., appointing themselves a captain to return to Egypt. The more one penetrates into the structure and atmosphere of Hebrews, the more marked the gracious distinctions of the dispensation of the Mystery become. Let us try the things that differ and approve those things that are more excellent, at the same time learning from these other records the essential need for growth in grace.

“Things that Accompany salvation” (Heb. vi. 7 - 9)

The character of the falling away of Heb. vi. 4-6 may be understood by a consideration of the illustration which immediately follows in verses 7 and 8. The figure is that of a field. The Greek word translated “earth”, *ge*, stands for “land, as distinct from water; or earth as distinct from heaven; or region or territory, used of one special land, or country, as distinct from other countries, in which peoples dwell, each on its own soil” (*The Companion Bible*, Appendix 129/4).

“For land which hath drunk in the rain which often comes upon it, and which bringeth forth vegetation useful to those for whom also it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; but that yielding thorns and thistles is disapproved and near to a curse; the end of which is for burning” (Heb. vi. 7, 8 not AV JP).

Two words are of special importance as indicating the line of teaching that we are to observe here, the word “disapproved”, which in the A.V. is rendered “rejected”, and the

word “near” or “nigh” unto cursing. *Adokimos* = “disapproved” is best understood by observing the context of the word in I Cor. ix. 27. The scene is the Corinthian racecourse.

“Know ye not that they which run in a race course run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. But every one that striveth in the games, in all things useth self-control; They indeed then that a corruptible crown they may receive; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly. I am boxing, as not beating air, but I am beating my body under, and leading it captive, lest by any means having proclaimed the contest to others, *I* myself should become disapproved” (I Cor. ix. 24-27 not AV JP).

The verses that follow, viz. I Cor. x., are very strongly reminiscent of Heb. iii. and iv. The argument hinges upon the “all” and the “many”. All may have passed out from Egypt as the redeemed of the Lord, but all did not enter the promised land. We now see that the whole of Heb. vi. is dealing with the question of “going on unto perfection”, or of being disqualified or disapproved in the race. The entry into the land of promise is placed in the same place as the crown at the end of the race. The showers of God’s love and grace had fallen for many years upon Israel, but comparatively few brought forth fruit.

We must observe that it does not say that the alternatives are blessing or *cursing*, but blessing or *disapproval*, which places such *nigh unto* a curse. Take for example the two servants of Matt. xxiv. 44-51. The one is rewarded by being made ruler over all his Lord’s goods, the other servant is cut asunder, and finds his position with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. The same fate awaits the unprofitable servant of Matt. xxv. who hid his talent in the earth.

Both suffer loss and are certainly perilously “near unto a curse”. In neither case is salvation in view, but service. “The end of which is for burning.” When a field produces thorns and thistles “the end” is burning. *The field itself is not destroyed, but that which it has produced.* This is quite in harmony with I Cor. iii. The foundation remains unchanged whether the building be destroyed by fire or whether it stands the test:

“He shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; YET SO AS BY FIRE” (I Cor. iii. 15).

In Heb. xii. 16, 17, Esau is brought before us as one who forfeited his birthright. There is an evident parallel with Heb. vi., the words “he found no place of repentance” echoing “it is impossible to renew unto repentance”. So also the word *adokimos* (disapproved or rejected) is echoed by Heb. xii. 17, *apodokimazo* (“rejected”).

The “blessing” also is one received “by inheritance”. The chapter ends with the words “For our God is a consuming fire”, which are parallel with the words “whose end is burning”. The whole situation is summed up in Heb. vi. 9 where the Apostle says:

“But, beloved, we are persuaded of you THE BETTER THINGS” (not AV JP).

Readers will remember that the word “better” is a key word of Hebrews, closely associated with “perfect” throughout the epistle. “The *better* resurrection” is expressed by the words, “The spirits of *perfected* righteous ones”. Here in chapter vi., those who

go on unto perfection produce “the better things, even those things which accompany salvation although we thus speak” (verse 9). The word “accompany” is a rendering of the middle voice of *echo*, “to have, to hold”. So in Mark i. 38, “*next towns*”, and Luke xiii. 33, “the *day following*”. The epistle to the Hebrews does not deal with salvation, but the things that *accompany* it; not the “resurrection of the dead” (vi. 2) but the “better resurrection”; not the exodus from Egypt, but the entrance of the land of promise; not justification by faith, but the emphasis upon the fact that the just shall *live* by faith. We find the distinction observed in vi. 9 and throughout the chapter. May we, called though we are with a different calling, produce the better things, even those things that “*follow*” or “*go with salvation*”.

No.34. The work that perfects faith (vi. 10). pp. 108 - 117

The Apostle, though uttering the terrible warnings against apostasy, hastens to tell his readers that though he thus speaks, he is persuaded that they possess those things that *accompany* salvation. He now proceeds to unfold these “better things that accompany salvation” and to consider them from various points of view. It is evident from the very next verse (10) what these “better things” include.

“For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Heb. vi. 10).

In x. 22-24 we have a somewhat similar passage. There we have “full assurance of faith”; in vi. 9-11 we have “full assurance of hope”. In the former the exhortation is based upon the fact that “He is faithful that promised”, whilst in the latter we are told that “God is not unrighteous to forget your work”, etc., and moreover that “He swore by himself” (verse 13) to make the assurance of hope doubly sure. In the former the believers are exhorted to “provoke unto love and good works”, whilst in the latter “your work and love unto His name” is remembered. The things that accompany salvation are those things that indicate the perfecting of faith. We have only to remember Jas. ii. 17, where we learn that “faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone”. The great illustration of James ii. is the faith of Abraham, but not the faith of Gen. xv. when Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness, but the faith of Gen. xxii. when Abraham was willing to offer up his beloved son. Of this James says:

“Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith *made perfect*? And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness” (James ii. 22, 23).

We are here upon exactly the same ground as in Heb. vi. The things that accompany salvation are those things that “perfect faith”. The perfected faith “fulfilled” the promise of its inception. Gen. xv. 6 was filled out when Abraham’s faith manifested itself in acceptable works. If we glance to the end of Heb. vi., we shall find that the same

illustration is used by Paul. There once again Abraham's faith as manifested in Gen. xxii. is brought forward. It is therefore important to remember that a man is *justified without works*, but is *perfected by works* (Rom. v.; James ii.). A man is *saved by faith* "not of works", but he has been saved to *walk* in "good works" (Eph. ii.). While Titus iii. declares that we are saved by faith and "not by works of righteousness which we have done", Titus ii. reveals that we were redeemed in order that we might be a peculiar people "zealous of good works".

It is surprising the antipathy that some of God's children show to any mention of works. We yield to none, we trust, in a steadfast belief that grace and works, so far as salvation is concerned, cannot blend. If we are saved by grace, then that initial salvation cannot be "of works", for grace excludes works as works exclude grace (Rom. xi. 6). We do, however, feel that much vital truth is dimmed to the eyes of many by carrying their opposition to works beyond the limits of truth. It is but another case of failure rightly to divide the Word of truth. What is true in the case of the origin of salvation may not necessarily be true in the case of the *fruits* of that same salvation. The law is excluded as a factor in justification, but the law is nevertheless holy, just, good and spiritual, and it is the will of God that it shall operate in the kingdom yet to come.

"But the God of peace Adjust you by every good work unto the doing of His will, doing in you that which is well pleasing in His presence, through Jesus Christ" (Heb. xiii. 20, 21 not AV JP).

We cannot "do His will" without at the same time "doing good works", but these good works will not take their rise from the flesh, but will be the Lord's own "doing" within us, through Jesus Christ. Heb. x. 24 says, "provoke unto love and good works"; Heb. vi. 10 links works and love together. This reveals the essential character of the good works that are well pleasing to God. It is a good work to bestow all one's goods to feed the poor; it is a good work to suffer one's body to be burned rather than to give up the faith, but only so if love is the spring of such actions; if love be absent "it profiteth nothing".

"For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith through love inworking for all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Gal. v. 6, 14 not AV JP).

The same emphasis upon "serving one another" is found in Rom. xiii. 8:

"Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."

Then follow the commandments that relate to man's relationship with man, adultery, murder, stealing, false witness, coveting. It is surprising to note that both in Gal. v. and Rom. xiii. love which fulfils the law is manifested not to God but to man.

"And if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Rom. xiii. 9).

Are we to understand then that mere philanthropy satisfies the requirements of the case? Not at all. The strong emphasis upon the man-ward side is because of a weakness in human nature. It does not say in I John ii. 9, 10 that he that loveth God is in the light, but:

“He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light.”

Again, I John iii. 14 does not say that the possession of new life is manifested by our love to God, but:

“We know that we have passed from death into life, *because we love the brethren.*”

The same test is applied to the profession of the love of God in verse 17:

“Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in Him?”

The same Apostle brings the argument to a climax in iv. 20, 21, when he says:

“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he *hath* seen, how can he love God Whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”

There is no thought in any of these passages of teaching that the love to our neighbour or brother comes before love to God. This is made clear in I John v. 2:

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments.”

We may trace the same spirit in Mark vii. 10-13. The law said that a man was to honour his father and mother, but the tradition of the Pharisees allowed a man to assume a hypocritical piety, and say, “it is Corban”. He could say to his parents, I have given all to God, and therefore that which I might have allowed you in your old age has been devoted to higher and holier uses. The Lord has only one word for such—*hypocrites!* There is a danger of similar hypocrisy among believers today. We speak about “the Lord’s work”. What is the Lord’s work? When we contribute to *the expenses* of our meeting do we more than the man of the world who pays for *his ticket* for a lecture or concert? When we subscribe for a copy of a magazine have we done more than the man who pays for his morning paper? Let us not be deceived with meaningless words. To withdraw from the claims of those connected with us by ties of flesh and blood because we are devoting our means to the Lord may come under the severe censure of Mark vii. and I John. When we have these things clearly before us we may learn without distraction the true order as given in Heb. vi. 10:

“The love, which ye have shewn forth *unto His Name*, in that ye have ministered *unto the saints.*”

The love shown for the name of God was manifested towards His people.

Unto His name. Why does the Scripture use the “name” and not the “Lord”? What is a name? Is it not the sum of many qualities, and used by us as a convenient means of expression? When we say the word *house* it is the sum of such items as bricks, mortar, wood, glass, etc. Thought would for ever remain unexpressed if it were not for this ability to “sum up” in one name. The names of God express all that He is to us. The varied names of God express His many-sided relations with His creatures. What attributes are expressed in the names *Father, Saviour, Lord and God!* Love shown to His name is love that goes out to One Who possesses those wondrous qualities that have been revealed to us in Christ.

We pray in the name of Christ. We are forgiven for His name’s sake. His name is called upon us. We are enjoined to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Love unto the name of the Lord is *shown* by ministry unto the saints. This does not bring the love of God *down*, but lifts the ministry to the saints up to a higher level. We minister to the saints and we love our brethren because we love the Lord.

“Every one that loveth Him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him”
(1 John v. 1).

We cannot love the Father if we do not love *the Son*, and we cannot love the Father if we do not love *His sons* also. Here then is the practical manifestation of the Apostle’s desire. “Let us go on to perfection”. Faith is perfected in such works of love. These are the things that accompany salvation; these are the things that:

“. . . . adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that *saves teaches us* that we should live looking zealous of good works” (Titus ii. 10-14 not AV JP).

It is one thing to minister to the saints, it is another to continue. This is the feature that is prominent in the passage before us.

“In that ye have ministered unto the saints, and are ministering” (Heb. vi. 10).

Ministry to the saints can involve much more than mere gifts or a pleasant round of visiting; it comes under the heading of enduring a great fight of afflictions:

“But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions; partly, whilst ye were made a gazing-stock both by reproaches and afflictions; and partly, whilst ye became companions of them that were so used” (Heb. x. 32, 33).

Here we see that this ministry unto the saints involves suffering and calls for endurance. The passage continues to show that such ministry leads to confidence which hath great recompense of *reward*:

“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise” (Heb. x. 36).

This is parallel with Heb. vi. 11, 12. They had ministered to the saints, and they were continuing so to do. They had shown (*endeiknumi*) love unto the name of the Lord. Now the Apostle says:

“But we earnestly desire for each one of you to show (*endeiknumi*) the same diligence unto the full assurance of hope unto the end” (Heb. vi. 11 not AV JP).

They *had shown*, may they *continue* to show, for this was closely associated with the great recompense of *reward*. We catch an echo of chapter iii. 6 and 14 here:

“Whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (Heb. iii. 6).

“We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end” (Heb. iii. 14).

These are called “partakers of the heavenly calling” in verse 1 of chapter iii., and the failure to enter into the land of promise, which occupies the remainder of chapters iii. and iv., is again before us in Heb. vi. 11, 12:

“That ye be not slothful, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises” (not AV JP).

The mention of the word “slothful” bids us compare this passage with Heb. v. 11 where the same word is translated “dull”. This has already appeared in the structure given in Volume XXX, page 30. The context is concerning Christ and His people “being made perfect”. The figures used are those of “babes” and “full grown or perfect”. The “dull” had made no progress, they had remained babes. The further lessons connected with their perfecting and with Christ as the Priest after the order of Melchisedec could not be told them in their condition. These things are carried over to Heb. vi. 12. The dull or slothful would fail “after the same example of unbelief” (Heb. iv. 11), for the “inheriting” of promises must not be confounded with those gifts in grace that are ours through Christ alone.

Heb. xi. 33 speaks of those whose faith “wrought righteousness” (which cannot refer to justification without works); who “obtained promises”. Heb. vi. 15 tells us that this “obtaining” is the result of “patient endurance”:

“And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.”

The Hebrews, though saved, were in danger of giving up and going back. The Apostle seeing this, and knowing the history of his people as he did, was allowed the privilege of writing to his kinsmen this word of exhortation (xiii. 22). Throughout the epistle the thought of slipping away, turning back, failing to enter, losing confidence, denying the Lord, bartering the birthright as did Esau, is uppermost. The going on to perfection is enforced and illustrated by the examples of Caleb and Joshua, the elders who obtained a good report, and by the example of the Lord Himself. Work, love, hope, faith, patience; if the word “labour” be retained in verse 10, we have a similar series to that set out in I Thess. i. 3, and expounded in that epistle.

“Faith” and “patience” are the two words used in direct connection with inheriting the promises. In Heb. x. 38, 39 we have “living by faith” placed in contrast with “drawing back”, and the faith that inherits the promises is the faith that believes unto the “acquiring” of the soul (Heb. x. 39). This rendering we must justify when dealing with chapter x. The faith that inherits the promises is further expressed in Heb. xi. 1 as:

“the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

This enabled Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and the rest to overcome and to obtain promises. The whole teaching concerning faith is summed up for us in chapter xii. 2:

“Looking away to Jesus the Author and Perfecter of faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

The sequel expresses the need for continuance:

“lest ye be wearied and faint ye have not yet resisted unto blood” (Heb. xii. 3, 4).

The Apostle urged his readers to become “imitators” of those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. He says in xiii. 7, 8:

“Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow (be imitating), considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever (unto the ages).”

Amidst all the change and decay, the fall and the failure of things seen, the Lord remains the same. Our faith and hope are within the veil. Our anchorage is there. While that remains we must endure.

We usually translate *hupomone* by patience, but this is not the word in Heb. vi. 12, which is *makrothumia*. Patience is distinguished from *makrothumia* in II Tim. iii. 10, *te pistei, te makrothumia, te hupomone*: “faith, longsuffering, patience”. Again in Col. i. 11, “unto all patience and longsuffering”. Longsuffering is ascribed both to God (Rom. ii. 4; ix. 22; I Pet. iii. 20; II Pet. iii. 15) and to Christ (I Tim. i. 16).

The believer reflects the longsuffering that God shows to a world of wickedness by quietly waiting with uncomplaining spirit for God’s good time. The spirit that chafes, murmurs, and complains, is in danger of forfeiting the reward. One of the marks of the perfect is that he bridles his tongue (James iii. 2). Murmuring lost the land of promise to those who were redeemed out of Egypt. The epistle of the prize of the high calling urges all those who would be perfect to “*Do all things without murmurings and disputings*” (Phil. ii. 14).

Two related themes occupy the closing verses of Heb. vi., viz., the Oath and the Hope.

“When (for example) God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself” (Heb. vi. 13).

“For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by (interposed with) an oath: that by two

immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation” (Heb. vi. 16-18).

On several occasions God made covenant and promise to Abraham, but upon one occasion only did He interpose with an oath. The occasion was not that first initial act of justifying faith recorded in Gen. xv., but the crowning act of faith given in Gen. xxii.

The Apostle had said “God is not unrighteous to forget”, and the way in which the Lord responded to Abraham’s implicit trust is surely one element in that strong consolation which our hope in God gives us. The angel of the Lord did not merely say to Abraham, “Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son from Me”, but “seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, THINE ONLY SON from Me”. God did not “forget”. He gives prominence to the sacrifice that Abraham made and in His delight at this great act of faith goes beyond strict necessity and “swears by Himself, saying, Blessing I will bless thee”.

God was willing “more abundantly”. It was, as we have said, beyond strict necessity. It is sufficient for God to speak. A simple promise made by God should be enough to command our fullest faith. Yet so does He condescend, that in this recognition of Abraham’s trust, the Lord goes beyond this, and “swears by Himself”. The intention was to manifest the unchangeability of His counsel. In the expression, “two immutable things”, the word “things” is:

“*Pragma*, an “act or deed” such as we make and deliver, when we convey anything from one to another” (Owen).

Are we to understand by these two immutable things:

- (1) The promise of God originally given,
- (2) The oath superadded afterwards?

We do not think such an answer fully meets the case. If we read on to the end of the chapter we find that the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ is resumed. This priesthood is connected with “hope” (Heb. vi. 18-20). In chapter vii. Abraham is seen together with Melchisedec where the greatness of Melchisedec is established, and then by an easy transition the superiority of the Melchisedec priesthood to that of Levi is shown. This is followed by a reference to a “better hope” and the fact that unlike the Levitical priesthood, Christ was made a Priest with an oath.

“For those priests were made without an oath; but this with an oath by Him that said unto Him, The Lord SWARE and will not repent (cf. the immutable counsel and the oath, vi. 17), Thou art a priest for ever (the age) after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. vii. 21).

This close connection of the two oaths, the one with Abraham, the other with Christ, together with the double reference to hope and to Melchisedec, is too plainly the part of a design to be ignored. There is yet further testimony. The words of vi. 17, “confirmed it by an oath”, are given in the margin as “interposed Himself by an oath”. (The word in the original is *mesiteuo*, “to mediate”). *Mesites* occurs in Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15; xii. 24, and is consistently rendered “mediator”. I Tim. ii. 5 tells us that there is but “one

Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus”. We understand therefore the passage to convey this thought. When God first gave Abraham the promise that he should be the father of many nations, there was not made known to him at the time the fact that the promise was secured in Christ. Nevertheless, even at the beginning, Abraham’s faith went out to God Who quickeneth the dead, and the deadness both of Abraham and Sarah is set forth as a picture of resurrection. So then in Rom. iv. 16 the promise is of faith:

“that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.”

Heb. xi. shows that not only the birth of Isaac, but the offering of Isaac are both closely connected with resurrection:

“Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence he did also in a parable receive him back” (Heb. xi. 19 not AV JP).

It was, we believe, on Mount Moriah that Abraham, in this fellowship with the great gift of God, rejoiced to see the day of Christ, calling the name of the place Jehovah-Jireh. Then it was that the oath was uttered; then it was that the purpose of God was seen secured in Christ as the Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The association of Melchisedec with Abraham we leave until we consider chapter vii., but it is important to remember that Abraham had met Melchisedec and had received a profound impression sometime before the great call of Gen. xxii. came. After the Lord had “mediated with an oath” Abraham returned “and dwelt at Beer-sheba” (Gen. xxii. 19), Beersheba meaning, “the well of the OATH” (Gen. xxi. 31, margin).

One more reference to an oath in Hebrews completes the testimony:

“So I swear in My wrath, If they shall enter into my rest” (Heb. iii. 18; iv. 3).

Here the two references deal with failure to enter into the promised land, or promised rest. Again the subject is not *salvation*, but the things that *accompany* salvation. The three “oaths” of Hebrews therefore are linked together:

- (1) Those who did not overcome, like Israel in the wilderness (Heb. iii. 11; iv. 3).
- (2) Those who do overcome, like Abraham (Heb. vi. 17, 18).
- (3) The Priest of the overcomer (Heb. vii. 21).

These two oaths are the two immutable things of Heb. vi. and refer to the oaths made to Abraham and the Saviour as the High Priest. Abraham’s hope rested upon a covenant that was made sure by the shedding of blood. The oath leads on to the hope:

“That we might have strong consolation who have fled along to grasp the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil” (Heb. vi. 18, 19 not AV JP).

The reader will miss the familiar “fled for refuge” of the A.V. *Katapheugo*, translated “flee for refuge” here, is used by the LXX in several places for fleeing to the city of refuge, and this probably influenced the translators of both the A.V. and R.V. The word,

however, is used in other ways, and does not necessarily indicate fleeing for refuge, unless the context so demands. For instance, the LXX version of Lev. xxvi. 25 renders “gather together”, *katapheugo*, and the Hebrew word so translated is *asaph*, its normal meaning. Jer. l. 5 and Zech. ii. 11 use the word to translate the Hebrew *lavah*, “to join”. Isa. liv. 15 uses *katapheugo* to translate *naphal*, “to fall”. In Isa. lv. 5 the word translates the Hebrew *rutz* “to run”. This Hebrew word is found in Psa. xix. 5 (6) where it is used of “running a race” and in Esther iii. 13, 15; viii. 10, 14 for the “posts” that ran with letters, and Job speaks of his days being “swifter than a post” (ix. 25). This meaning of the word *katapheugo*, viz., “to run”, is in entire harmony with both the context of Heb. vi. and the more remote context of Heb. xii.

The reason why we see a connection in Heb. xii. is found in the recurrence of another word which we must consider. The hope is said to be “set before” us. This word is *prokeimai* and occurs in Heb. xii. 1, 2:

“Let us run with patience the race that is *set before us*” (*prokeimai*).
“Who for the joy that was *set before Him*” (*prokeimai*).

Here the subject is unmistakable. It is a race *with a reward at the end*. It sums up the whole series of overcomers detailed in Heb. xi. It speaks of those who do not draw back but who go on unto perfection, who believe unto the acquiring of the soul. The Apostle, further, urges the believer “to lay hold upon” this hope that is set before him. This word *krateo* appears in Heb. iv. 14, “let us *hold fast* our confession”.

So far then we have seen that those who, like Abraham, were pressing on toward the goal set before them in going on unto spiritual adulthood were comforted and supported by the fact that they had a High Priest Who knew their temptations, Who had passed that way before them, and Who was ever ready to succour them that are tested, even as Abraham was sustained.

Other figures are used and fuller details are given which we must reserve for another article. Let us, however, not forget that in our own case also we have strong consolation and encouragement drawn from Christ, not perhaps as Priest after the order of Melchisedec, but from the sublime statement of Phil. ii. 6-11 where many parallels may be found with the teaching of Hebrews.

“Being confident of this very thing, that He Which hath begun a good work in you will perform (perfect) it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. i. 6).

**No.35. The Anchor and the Forerunner (vi. 19, 20).
pp. 130 - 135**

Having seen that the hope was not to be looked upon as a “refuge”, but rather as something to run for and obtain, this hope is now likened to an anchor:

“Which we have as an anchor of the soul” (Heb. vi. 19).

The use of the figure is most suggestive. It is part of the equipment of a ship that is not ordinarily used until the voyage is ended. If the anchor is called into use before the journey’s end, the suggestion is that ordinary seamanship is of no avail. If we read the context of the only other occurrences of the word anchor in the New Testament we shall appreciate its place in Heb. vi. the better:

“But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven to and fro in the Sea of Adria, about midnight the sailors surmised that they were drawing near to some country, and they sounded, and found twenty fathoms: and after a little space, they sounded again, and found fifteen fathoms. And fearing lest haply we should be cast ashore on the rocky ground, they let go four *anchors* from the stern, and wished for the day” (Acts xxvii. 27-29).

The Hebrews were in the throes of a great “fight of afflictions”. The storm of opposition was rising, and they were in danger of “making shipwreck concerning the faith”. This latter expression is found in I Tim. i. 19. There we find the alternative is “holding faith and a good conscience”, which is parallel with the thought of Heb. vi. This was the anchor that held the worthies of Heb. xi. These are set forth as examples of those who “believe unto the gaining of the soul”, a translation which we shall explain later.

Why is the hope called an anchor of the soul? Why not spirit? Scripture distinguishes between soul and spirit (Heb. iv. 12; I Thess. v. 23; I Cor. xv. 44, 45). The meaning that attaches to the soul in Hebrews we may find by reading Matt. xvi. 24-27 (R.V.):

“If any man will to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me For whosoever is willing to lose his *soul* (*psuche*) for My sake shall find it For the Son of Man shall come then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds.”

Here it will be observed that the Lord bids His disciples to “lose their soul”, not to “save it”! What is involved in the losing of one’s soul? Self-denial, the taking up of one’s cross, and the following of the Lord. When we have a Scriptural conception of the word “soul”, we shall realize that to lose one’s soul means to forfeit many of the pleasures and good things of this life for the truth’s sake. Abraham lost his soul. He left Ur of the Chaldees, and kith and kin, to become a dweller in tents, looking forward to the future when in resurrection he should “find” or “gain” his soul, and under happier and holier conditions enjoy to the full those things which he had foregone in this present evil age. Moses lost his soul, that he might gain it. Before him lay a dazzling prospect. He

was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He evidently had the offer of adoption into the royal family; yet he chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

The epistle of Peter makes use of the “salvation of the soul” in a similar manner. In I Peter i. 3-11 this expression is approached in the following manner:

- (1) An inheritance is in view (verse 4), which is further spoken of as
- (2) Salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (5).
- (3) In view of this the believer was rejoicing even though for a little while being put to grief through manifold temptations (6);
- (4) These trials were in the nature of a test, faith being submitted to a fiery trial, that it may be found unto praise, glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ (7).
- (5) This is spoken of as “receiving the *end* of your faith, even the SALVATION OF YOUR SOULS” (9).
- (6) The whole passage being summed up in verse 11, ‘the sufferings for Christ, and the glories that follow’.

To such, “hope” was an anchor of the soul, called in verse 3, a “living hope”.

Taking Matt. xvi. and I Peter together we learn that the believer must “lose his soul” during this life, and look forward to the “saving of his soul” in the life to come. The context of both passages is reward for faithful service at the Second Coming of the Lord. As we have said so many times, Hebrews does not deal with salvation in its primary evangelical sense, but with things that accompany it. To take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, as the Hebrew believers had, necessitated some such anchor for the soul. In Heb. x. 34 we read:

“For ye took joyfully the spoiling of your goods, knowing in yourselves that ye (that you yourselves) have in heaven *a better and an enduring substance*”,

the words in italics being equivalent to the hope as an anchor of the soul. The anchor for the soul is that better and enduring substance that far outweighs the “light affliction which is but for a moment”. Unlike the vain promises of the world, this hope, this anchor, is “sure and stedfast”. “Sure” is *asphales*. In Acts it is used of the Roman officials in connection with Paul:

“He could not know the *certainty* for the tumult” (xxi. 34).

“He would have known the *certainty* whereof he was accused” (xxii. 30).

“Of whom I have no *certain* thing to write” (xxv. 26).

Asphaleia occurs in the phrase “peace and *safety*” of I Thess. v. 3. *Asphalizo* occurs in Matt. xxvii. 64-66 “to make sure”. The word “safe” in Phil. iii. 1 is *asphales*, a compound of *a*, a negative, and *sphalo* “to supplant, to trip up the heels”. The LXX employs *sphaleros* “slippery” in Prov. v. 6. The Apostle used an apt term therefore when he wrote to the Philippians. He was about to speak of a race and a prize. Moffatt’s translation will be appreciated by the reader, for he gives “the safe course” in Phil. iii. 1. This usage not only adds weight to the idea already put before the reader that the Race

and the Crown rather than initial salvation is in view in Hebrews, but also provides one more linguistic link between Philippians and Hebrews. “Stedfast” (of Heb. vi. 19) is translated “firm” in Heb. iii. 6, “If we hold fast the confidence and hope firm unto the end”. The two words appear to be used to express the properties of the anchor in itself and in its usage. In itself it is “sure”; in its usage it is “reliable”; “hope maketh not ashamed”.

If the inspired statement ended here, the hope of the tired and afflicted believer would be of little avail. For of what use is the strongest anchor if it can find no solid anchorage? Therefore the Apostle continues:

“and which entereth *into that* within the veil” (Heb. vi. 19).

At a meeting for children once we were speaking of “hope” and had this verse before us. The children were asked to express their opinion as to what word of four letters was the most important in the verse. Some said “hope”, some “soul”; others “sure”; yet others, “veil”. Our own choice was the somewhat strange word “that”—

“Which entereth into THAT within the veil.”

When we read chapter ix. we shall have occasion to consider the typical teaching of the Tabernacle at some length; here we only need to remember the Ark and the Mercy Seat which were hidden from view by the Veil. There in the Ark were the unbroken tables of the law, the rod of Aaron that budded, and the golden pot of manna. These spoke of:

RIGHTEOUSNESS—The unbroken tables of stone.
UNCHANGING PRIESTHOOD—The rod that budded.
WILDERNESS PROVISION—The manna.

Resting upon the Ark was the Mercy Seat which spoke of sins forgiven, of atonement, of reconciliation. “*There* I will meet with thee and commune with thee” the Lord had said to Moses, and says to us, “*Here* is the sure anchor ground of the tempest-tossed believer”. If hope enters into THAT, nothing can ever happen in this life that will prove too severe a test. The anchor and the anchorage are sure and stedfast. The “strong consolation” which is ministered to those who run for the hope set before them gathers strength as the fullness of God’s supply is opened up. The hope they have is an anchor for the soul. This hope is both sure in itself and stedfast in its use. Moreover it enters into *that within the veil*, the bedrock of redeeming love.

Yet one more item is added to make the consolation complete. We have already seen that the “oath” sworn to Abraham is echoed by the “oath” sworn to Christ as Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The Apostle therefore appropriately concludes by saying:

“Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever (the age) after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. vi. 20).

As a forerunner, Christ is seen in John xiv. 2, “I go to prepare a place for you”. Dr. Macknight says:

“Here the allusion is to one sent from a ship to fix its anchor in the place to which it is to be drawn as had to be done on such a coast as that of southern Greece.”

The references to Christ as High Priest in this epistle have much to do with the encouragement of the overcomer:

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, *that is passed into (through) the heavens* (where the Forerunner is for us entered), Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession” (iv. 14).

It must also be remembered that the mention of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ at the close of chapter vi. is really a resumption of the theme started in chapter v. If we keep in mind the way it is introduced in chapter v. and the nature of the parenthesis of chapter vi., we may get further light upon the connection of this Priesthood with the believer's hope. In chapter v., after speaking of Christ as Priest after the order of Melchisedec, the Apostle immediately proceeds to speak of the sufferings of Christ, whereby He was “perfected”. The Apostle, however, realized that those to whom he wrote were not sufficiently mature to appreciate the subject:

“Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing” (v. 11).

The dullness of hearing is evidently carried over into vi. 12 where it reappears as “slothful”:

“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

The exhortation of the parenthesis is “go on unto perfection”. We shall find that Melchisedec is essentially connected with the overcomer, and therefore is appropriately mentioned at the close of chapter vi.

There is one meaning of the word “forerunner” that is not mentioned by commentators, but which we feel must be included in our survey. *Prodromos* occurs twice in the LXX but in neither case does it refer to a “forerunner” in the sense usually attaching to the word. The two passages are:

“Now the time was the time of the FIRSTRIPE grapes” (Numb. xiii. 20).

“As the HASTY fruit before the summer” (Isa. xxviii. 4).

In both cases the meaning is the first ripe fruit. The reference in Numb. xiii. 20 is to that occasion when the spies entered into the promised land, the results of which form the background of Heb. iii. and iv., where Caleb and Joshua stand forward as overcomers. Christ as the “Forerunner” is Christ the “First-fruits”. Here He is seen as the pledge and earnest of the overcomer. As the “Forerunner” or “First-fruits” He is seen in Heb. xii. 2:

“Who for the joy that was set before Him (cf. the hope set before us) endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

If then we consider the hope itself, we find it a sure and steadfast anchor; or the anchor ground, we find it to be grounded in “that within the veil”; or the encouragement of example, we find it in Christ the Forerunner and “first ripe Fruit” of the harvest of many sons He is leading “to glory”.

We have now reached that stage in the unfolding of truth that necessitated the fuller mention of the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ. To this the writer now proceeds, and by a series of statements sets forth the superiority of the Priesthood of Christ to that of Aaron, bringing this established fact to bear once more upon the great theme of the epistle, “perfection” (vii. 11, 19). If we keep this before us, we shall be less likely to be overwhelmed with the mass of detail that meets us in this section. Omitting the parenthetical details, the proposition of Heb. vii. 1-3 reads:

“For this Melchisedec abideth a priest continually.”

The intervening details supply the necessary information to establish this proposition.

Melchisedec was first of all KING OF SALEM. Jerome maintains, in his epistle to Evagrius, that this Salem is a city near Shechem, mentioned in Gen. xxxiii. 18 and John iii. 23. Salem, however, is used to indicate Jerusalem in Psa. lxxvi. 2:

“In Salem also is His (God’s) tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion.”

There are some who think that after the Jebusites took possession of the place it was called Jebus-Salem, which became transformed to Jerusalem. We find in Josh. x. 1-4 that the king of Jerusalem was called Adonizedec, which has much the same significance as that of Melchisedec.

Not only was Melchisedec king, but he was “PRIEST OF THE MOST HIGH GOD”. This title *El Elyon*, “The Most High God” is used for the first time in Scripture in connection with this incident (Gen. xiv. 18). The various titles of God are used with precision and with special regard to the relationship intended in each particular passage. For instance, Genesis i. 1 to ii. 3 treats of creation, and the title used through the record is *Elohim*, “God”.

Immediately we commence “the generations”, in verse 4, the title changes to “the Lord God”. Coming to Abraham’s time we have not only the title “The Most High God” but in Gen. xvii. 1:

“I am *El Shaddai*; walk before Me, and be thou perfect”,

and again in Exod. vi. 3 we read:

“I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of *El Shaddai*, but by My name *Jehovah* was I not known to them.”

The Priest upon His throne.

Melchisedec was both king and priest. These two offices were kept distinct under the economy of the law. We may remember the awful judgment that fell upon Uzziah when as king he sought the priesthood also. In Christ alone can these two wondrous offices meet. Zech. vi. 12, 13 says:

“Behold the Man Whose name is The BRANCH He shall be a *Priest* upon His *Throne*.”

The epistle of “suffering and the glory that follows” names those who thus overcome “a royal priesthood” (I Pet. ii. 9), and Revelation, that book of the overcomer, speaks of Christ as:

- (1) Prince of the kings of the earth—KING.
- (2) One Who looses from sin by His blood—PRIEST,

and as a result constitutes those thus blessed:

“Kings and priests unto God and His Father” (Rev. i. 6).

Melchisedec is the priest of the victor, and the Lord is seen in that capacity in Rev. i. This is shown by noticing what particular incident of Melchisedec’s history the Apostle next mentions, the consideration of which we must defer until the next article in this series.

No.36. The Priest of the Overcomer. “Who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings” (vii. 1). pp. 141 - 150

Gen. xiv. gives the names of these kings, and describes the battle which they fought. Lot, type of the worldly believer, type of the one who would not “lose his soul” as Abraham did, became involved in the fate of Sodom, becoming a prisoner.

It is suggestive that the one who escaped and came with tidings tells “Abraham the *Hebrew*”, “Abraham the pilgrim”, a title that suggests the very opposite of Lot’s condition. He it was who overcame these kings, brought back the spoils and rescued Lot. It is here, at this moment of victory, that Melchisedec appears. The effect of this meeting is seen in Abraham’s reply to the king of Sodom:

“I have lift up mine hand unto the LORD, the Most High God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich” (Gen. xiv. 22, 23).

Heb. vii. 1 and 2 does not mention this effect upon Abraham, but says:

“And blessed him; to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all.”

Both these items are expanded by the Apostle in verses 4-10. We leave them for the moment to learn a little more concerning this great priesthood. The Apostle now proceeds to interpret the meaning of the word Melchisedec:

“First being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace” (verse 2).

Many of the names of Old Testament characters seem to be prophetic of their place in the Divine scheme. Adam, Noah and Peleg are examples. Abraham is an example of a man’s name being *changed* to fit changed circumstances. The inspired writer finds design in the order of the titles here:

First, King of righteousness
Then, King of peace.

This he repeats in another form in Heb. xii. 11, where he speaks of the peaceable fruit of righteousness, the righteousness evidently coming first:

“Without father, without mother, without descent” (verse 3).

These words cannot be taken absolutely of Melchisedec, otherwise he could have had no existence at all, but relatively, in connection with his office as priest. Those who could not prove their genealogies in the time of the return from captivity were refused admittance into the priesthood (Ezra ii. 61-63). The words “without descent” strictly rendered should read “without genealogy”. The words of the Apostle by no means teach that Melchisedec absolutely had no “descent”, but that such descent was not *recorded*, which recording is the essence of the word genealogy. Of Melchisedec it is further written that he had:

“Neither beginning of days, nor end of life” (verse 3).

The priests of the Levitical order had both the beginning and the end of their term of office fixed by law. A priest’s term of ministration was called his “days” (Luke i. 23), and the priests, the sons of Kohath, began their service at thirty years of age and ended it at fifty. Summing up these points of resemblance, the Apostle says “but being like unto the Son of God, abides a priest perpetually”. The construction of the whole sentence seems to be as follows:

“This Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God abides a priest perpetually.”

The remaining words are a parenthetic explanation given in order to show a series of comparisons with the Son of God. The greatness of Melchisedec himself, however, is the immediate concern, in order that the infinite greatness of Christ may be the better understood. So the context continues by enlarging on the testimony of the tithe:

“Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils” (verse 4).

The word used for *spoils* (*akrothinion*) is composed of *thin*, “a heap of corn” and *akros*, “the top”. The top of a heap of corn indicates *the best*, and the suggestion is that Abraham gave a tithe of the best. Not that Abraham tithed the best of the spoil only, for Heb. vii. 2 says, “he gave him tithes of all”, but that which he did give as a tithe was taken from the very best. Here therefore is one item which contributes to the impression of greatness which Scripture gives to Melchisedec. But this is not all. Not only is our attention directed to the tithe, and the fact that it was made up of the best of the spoils, but we are called upon to observe *who* it is that gave these tithes:

“Unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils.”

Dr. Owen says that the conjunction “even” is emphatic and, though joined with “the tenth”, yet in construction it must be understood with Abraham; not “unto whom Abraham gave *even a tenth*”, but “unto whom *even Abraham* gave a tenth”.

Abraham is here called “the patriarch”. The Hebrews held that there were three sorts of patriarchs. The heads of the twelve tribes (that is the twelve sons of Jacob) and David also were called patriarchs (Acts vii. 8, 9; ii. 29). Of greater dignity than these were held Isaac and Jacob, but chiefest of all was Abraham, the first father of the race. If therefore one was greater than Abraham, how great he must be! This is the argument of the Apostle.

The sons of Levi in their capacity as priests received tithes from the people according to the law; yet these men, says verse 8, were mortal, but Melchisedec, in type, “liveth”. Levi was in the loins of his father Abraham when the tithe was given, and so, in practice, the whole priesthood of Israel acknowledged the superiority of the order of Melchisedec. Not only is Melchisedec’s greatness manifested in what Abraham gave to him, but also in what he, Melchisedec, gave to Abraham:

“But he whose genealogy is not reckoned from them
(1) received tithes from Abraham, and
(2) blessed him that had the promises” (verse 6).

The greater Abraham is made to appear, the greater must Melchisedec be, for “without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better” (verse 7). Abraham is specially marked out as “the patriarch” and “he who received the promises”. That this receiving of the promises was no small thing Heb. vi. 13-16 bears witness. Nevertheless it was Melchisedec who blessed Abraham.

We have now passed in review the fourth of a series of comparisons instituted with the object of showing the greatness of Christ. We have in:

- (1) Chapter i. His superiority to ANGELS. He the Son. They the ministers.
- (2) Chapter iii. His superiority to MOSES. He the Son. Moses the servant.

- (3) Chapter iv. His superiority to JOSHUA. Jesus, the Son of God (verse 14). Joshua, the son of Nun (verse 8).
- (4) Chapters v. to vii. His superiority to AARON. The Levitical priesthood is filled by men who die. The oath consecrates the Son as priest in the power of endless life.

The way is now clear for the Apostle's teaching concerning *perfection*, which has never been lost sight of, although to our lesser minds, the amount of detail and involved argument may seem to indicate a departure from the original purpose. "If therefore perfection" is the writer's argument from all that has been under review, and this we must now ponder.

The changed order (vii. 11 - 18)

Having considered together verses 1-10 of chapter vii., and having seen the greatness of the Melchisedec priesthood, we are prepared for the transference of that greatness to Christ, and for its connection with the great theme of perfection. Before attempting any further detail it will be a safeguard for us to have the broad outline of that great section which is devoted to the Priesthood and Sacrifice of Christ.

Hebrews vii. 1 to x. 18.

- A | vii. 1-10. This Man (4). A priest—*eis to dienekes*.
- B | vii. 11 - x. 4. PERFECTION. |
 - c1 | vii. 11. *No perfection* by Levitical priesthood and carnal commandment.
 - d1 | vii. 12-18. But by Melchisedec priesthood.
 - c2 | vii. 19. *No perfection* by law.
 - d2 | vii. 20 - ix. 8. But by the oath to the Son.
 - c3 | ix. 9, 10. *No perfection* by carnal ordinances.
 - d3 | ix. 11-28. But by perfect Tabernacle and better sacrifice.
 - c4 | x. 1-4. *No perfection* by sacrifices of the law.
- A | x. 5-18. "But this Man" (12). As Priest sat down—*eis to dienekes*.

To some minds Scriptural structures make no appeal. The subject before us is so solemn and so vital that we feel much blessed truth will lose its force if not seen as a whole. Therefore we tarry to draw attention to the lesson of the above structure. It will be noticed that the opening and closing members are to do with the Melchisedec priesthood of Christ in several important particulars.

- (1) "THIS MAN" Chapter vii. 4, by using the expression, draws attention to the greatness of Melchisedec above both Abraham and Levi.
- (2) "BUT THIS MAN" of chapter x. 12 takes up the theme with reference to the superiority of the Sacrifice and Priesthood of Christ.
- (3) Both passages focus upon one peculiar expression, viz. *eis to dienekes*. This phrase occurs in Heb. vii. 3; x. 1, 12 and 14 and nowhere else in the New Testament. It is translated twice "continually" and twice "for ever". "For a continuance" is a good rendering. In the case of the type, Melchisedec, the silence of Scripture as to his "beginning" of days or "end" of life sets him forth typically as a priest after the power of an endless life. In the case of Christ, the antitype, the contrast is between

the priest who “standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins”, and Christ, “Who, after He had offered *one sacrifice* (in contrast with the "offering oftentimes") for sins (in contrast with those sacrifices which could never take away sins)” “sat down for a continuance” (instead of repeatedly going over the same ritual, “standing daily”).

Things that make for perfection.

If we take note of these opening and closing sections therefore, it becomes evident that “perfection” cannot possibly be attained under the ministry of priests who themselves needed an offering for their own sins, who were made after the law of a commandment which respected their mortal condition, and whose service stood in meats and drinks and baptisms, “carnal ordinances”, that really indicated that the way into the Holiest of all had not as then been opened. Such ordinances and sacrifices failing to touch the conscience, failed altogether, and were only “shadows” and “not the very image” of the good things to come.

To believers who were never brought up under the law, who never boasted in “the glory and the covenant, and the giving of the law, and the service of God”, the turning from the shadow of Aaron, his tabernacle, his priesthood and his sacrifices, to the reality Christ, heaven itself, the one great Sacrifice and the abiding Priesthood, seems a simple act of reasonable faith. To the Hebrew, cradled in the thought that of all nations the nation of Israel alone had the oracles of God, such a turning would be a wrench, a rupture, a counting “gain” as “loss” and as so much “refuse” (Phil. iii. 8). Therefore God in His kindness and His condescension reasons with them step by step, until the last ground of boasting in the law is destroyed and Christ is seen as all in all.

We commence therefore the new section with an argument:

“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another Priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?” (Heb. vii. 11).

In David’s time the service of God’s house was raised to its greatest height. If David himself did not actually build the Temple, the complete revelation was made to him of that house, exceeding magnificent with its golden vessels, its courses of priests, its wonderful psalms. Yet it is David and no other who gives us Psa. cx. saying:

“The Lord said unto my LORD, Sit thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (verses 1 and 4).

The Apostle, therefore, asks a pointed question, what further need for another Priest, of another order, if perfection were attainable under the Levitical priesthood? Of all the reasons that are most trenchant that which is given in parenthesis is the one, viz., “For under it the people received the law” (verse 11).

Perfection and Legalism

It has been objected that the giving of the law from Mount Sinai preceded and did not follow the setting up of the Levitical priesthood. We do not think the expression “received the law” refers to the giving of the law at Sinai, and that it is hardly a good translation. In chapter iv. 2 we find that the people were “evangelized”, here, in vii. 11, we see that with the institution of the Levitical priesthood the people were “legalized”. They were shut up to carnal ordinances, mortal priests, and the blood of bulls and of goats, until Christ should come Who by His offering should “take away the first, that He may establish the second” (Heb. x. 9).

“For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law” (Heb. vii. 12).

This was a sore point with the Jew. Stephen was stoned to death because they said that he taught that:

“Jesus of Nazareth shall change the customs which Moses delivered us” (Acts vi. 14).

The same charge was brought against Paul:

“Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place (the Temple)” (Acts xxi. 28).

Those who had become believers from among Israel still retained their regard for the law:

“Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: and they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs” (Acts xxi. 20, 21).

It is evident that in dealing with the change of law and priesthood, the Apostle had a delicate task before him, and whereas the Gentile could easily grant the whole situation without scruple, the whole constitution of the Jew rebelled against the very idea. So it is that we have so much detail, and the consideration of the subject from so many different points of view. In the section vii. 11-18, the argument revolves round the fact that the Old Testament recognizes a change in the order of priesthood. In the law, priesthood is exclusively connected with one tribe, LEVI. Christ however sprang out of JUDAH, but of this “Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood” (verse 14). “It is evident”, said the Apostle, “that our Lord sprang out of Judah”. It is more abundantly “downright evident” (as the words may be rendered), that the priesthood and the law with it must be set aside, for the Scripture testifies:

“Thou art a Priest for ever *after the order of Melchisedec*” (Heb. vii. 17).

The new Priesthood differs from that of the Levitical order in one grand particular. The Levitical priest was made:

“After the law of a carnal commandment” (verse 16),

but the Melchisedec order was made:

“After the power of an endless life” (verse 16).

One more item is added before this section concludes, and that is, not only does the change of priesthood necessitate the setting aside of the law, but the necessity to have such a change indicates the failure of that law so far as “perfection” is concerned:

“There is, moreover, a setting aside of the preceding law, because it was inefficient and unprofitable” (verse 18).

In verse 16 the law was spoken of as “carnal”. While viewed in itself the law is “holy, just and good”, that same law is “weak through the flesh” and “though ordained to life” will be found “unto death” (Rom. vii.). The sentiment of Heb. vii. 11 is repeated in viii. 7:

- vii. 11-18. a | *Question*—“If perfection were by the Levitical order?”
- b | What need for another priesthood?
- c | The law abrogated, as weak and profitless.
- viii. 7, 8. a | *Question*—“If the first covenant were faultless?”
- b | What need for seeking a second covenant?
- c | Finding fault, He said, “I make a new covenant”.

The theme of the first passage (vii. 11-18) is the better Priesthood, the theme of the second (viii. 7, 8) is the better Covenant.

All this was necessary to clear the way for a faith that would behold with single eye the Lord Jesus Christ as Prophet, Priest, King and Sacrifice, and the “perfecter of faith”.

Salvation unto the uttermost, or what the law could not do (vii. 19-25).

No perfection or maturity is possible under the Levitical priesthood, therefore the greater reason for thankfully believing Him Who is a Priest after the order of Melchisedec. Such is the argument and conclusion of vii. 11-18. In verse 11 there is a parenthesis, viz., “for under it the people received the law”; this parenthesis is now brought forward and dealt with in the same way as was the Levitical priesthood:

“For the law perfected nothing (or no one), but the superinduction of a better hope (did), through which we draw nigh to God” (verse 19 not AV JP).

The three items of this verse characterize the whole section of vii. 19 - ix. 8:

- (1) The failure of the law.
- (2) The better hope, wherewith are connected better promises and a better covenant.
- (3) Access to God. Positively stated to be through Christ (vii. 25). Denied throughout the typical dispensation (ix. 8).

We would draw the attention of the reader to the fact that the analysis of Heb. vii. 1 - x. 18 set out on page 143 of this study *is not a copy of any other existing writing on the subject*. We have sought to follow the theme of the epistle, and the results are set out here for the benefit of all fellow 'Bereans' who value the truth.

Hebrews vii. 19 - ix. 8

- A | vii. 19-21. | a | The law perfected no one.
 b | The oath and the priesthood.
- B | vii. 22. "By so much." Jesus the surety of a better covenant.
- C | vii. 23-27. | c | Salvation to the uttermost.
 d | He needeth not to offer for His own sins.
- A | vii. 28. | a | The law ordains infirm men.
 b | The oath ordains the Son ("consecrated"—Gk. "perfected").
- Note: viii. 1-5 is parenthetical reference to true Tabernacle and ministry.*
- B | viii. 6-13. "By how much." Mediator of the better covenant.
- Note: ix. 1-6 is parenthetical reference to typical Tabernacle and ministry.*
- C | ix. 7, 8. | d | The high priest offered for himself as well as the people.
 c | The way into the holiest not made manifest.

The three items indicated in verse 19 are seen under the three letters "A", "B" and "C".

Access to God is a privilege beyond human computation, and this was not possible under the Levitical priesthood or the law, by reason of the weakness of a system that made such demands on the flesh. Throughout the dispensation of the law is the "fear of death" which Heb. ii. 15 declared held the Old Testament saints in bondage, and the crying need for a Priest Who stood in the power of an endless life, in other words the risen Son of God.

The superinduction of the better hope.

Let us now give attention to verse 19. If it says the law perfected nothing, it leads on to say that something else did. The second part of the verse is elliptical. Something is omitted which we must supply in order to get the sense. A closely parallel passage is that of Rom. viii. 3:

"For what the law could not do God (did by) sending His Own Son",

is the sequel, but the word "did" has to be supplied.

There are some who understand Heb. vii. 19 to mean this:

"The law perfected nothing, but it *was* the bringing in of a better hope through which we draw nigh unto God."

This is true. The law contained type and shadow that ever pointed to Christ. It did not reach the end itself, but it did bring in the better hope that attained unto it. This however,

while being true, is not the teaching of the verse before us so far as we understand it. The better hope is said to have been “superinducted”, *epeisagoge* which this Greek word means. In Gal. iii. 19 the law which was “superadded” was “for the sake of transgressions” and was to operate “till the Seed should come”, when it would be abrogated as being “weak and unprofitable”, failing as it did to touch the conscience.

When the fullness of time came and the Son of God entered into His office, there was the “superinduction” of a better hope which set aside the types and shadows, and actually did give access to God. It is called “a better hope”. This better hope does not look for an entrance into the land of promise, but looks for “a better country, an heavenly”. It is connected with a “better Covenant”, in contrast with the old Covenant that was made after the exodus and before the land of promise was reached. “Better promises” lie behind this hope, a “better resurrection” lies ahead, and “better sacrifices”, or an infinitely better sacrifice, lie beneath.

This better hope brings us nigh unto God. This is what the law could not do, and therefore this access to God must be intimately connected with “perfection”. That this is literally so will be found in the case of Christ:

“We* have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (viii. 1).

[* - While we avoid continual reminders that “we” were never under the old covenant, and that our blessings do not flow from the New Covenant, we nevertheless stress the value to us of the teaching of Hebrews, as *parallel* but not *identical* with the place occupied by Philippians in the dispensation of the Mystery. This parallel will be exhibited at the close of the present series.]

As the Perfecter of faith He is:

“set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (xii. 2).

In the Spirit, we, through Him, draw nigh now, but this only pledges actual access when the day arrives for the redemption of the purchased possession. The superiority of this better hope lies in the superiority of its Mediator. That superiority has been shown in various ways. The particular thought before us in verses 20-22 lies in the fact that the Lord Jesus was made a Priest by oath.

The oath that perfects.

The argument is found in the words:

“Inasmuch by so much” (Heb. vii. 20-22).

The intervening passages give the fact of the oath, and the result, the better Covenant. The hope and the Covenant were “better” in the same proportion that the pre-eminence of the Melchisedec priesthood was above that of Aaron. That preeminence is discovered in the “oath”.

The force of the oath and its bearing upon the subject is found in the added words “and will not repent”. The Priesthood of Christ was immutably secure. Not only was there this attribute of immutability connected with this Priesthood arising out of the nature of the oath sworn by God, but further, it arises out of the fact that He ever liveth:

“And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this Man, because He continues (as a priest) for ever (the age), hath an unchangeable (intransferable) Priesthood” (verses 23 and 24).

Note the argument in the word “continue” or “abide” in verse 3 which speaks of the character of the Priesthood and not of life itself. *Aparabatos* (verse 24) means something more than “unchangeable”; it means incapable of transmission or of transference. Christ as the Melchisedec Priest has no need to secure a successor. His Priesthood is never terminated by death.

“By *so much* was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (covenant)” (verse 22).

The word “surety” is *egguos*, and is allied to *eggizo*, “to draw nigh” of verse 19. As we have before noted, the Old Covenant failed to “bring us to God”, the New Covenant gloriously succeeds. The “us” and the “we” referring to those Hebrews and not to Gentiles as described in Eph. ii. 11, 12. The surety of that New Covenant is not the blood of bulls or goats, but the blood of Christ. Of such a Priest and such a Surety the Apostle says:

“Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (verse 25).

We need to ponder these words, or else we may miss the sense.

“He is able to save” . That is a blessed fact.

“He is able *also* to save” suggests something in addition.

“He is able also to save to the UTTERMOST” reveals what that addition is.

Salvation unto all perfection.

Once more we are not concerned with initial salvation but with the “so great salvation” which the Hebrews were in danger of letting slip (Heb. ii.). This is the “aionian salvation” connected with obedience and suffering that makes perfect (Heb. v.). To the uttermost is *eis to panteles*. *Panteles* is from *pan*, all, and *telos*, end, from which we obtain *teleiosis*, perfection. He is able not only to *save* so that condemnation is avoided, but He is able *ALSO* to *save unto all perfection* those that come unto God by Him. He accomplishes this “uttermost” salvation by “intercession”. This word “intercession” is not limited to the sense of supplication, but to the extension of aid of any sort.

If this “salvation” be taken to indicate salvation in the evangelical sense, shall we not find a difficulty in making *that* salvation depend upon the Lord’s *present intercession*? He is attending to this “uttermost” salvation in His office as High Priest:

“Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, *He is able to succour* them that are tempted” (Heb. ii. 17, 18).

This is salvation *eis to panteles*; the Lord not only saves all that trust in Him, but He is able also to save right through to the end, or goal, through temptation and trial. It is this that makes the “better hope” an anchor for the soul. He Who is its sure anchorage has “suffered being tempted”:

“For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin (sin excepted)” (Heb. iv. 15).

No.37. The principal thing.
A seated Priest in a heavenly sanctuary (viii. 1, 2).
pp. 174 - 178

The ruling theme of this epistle is that of ‘perfection’ and chapters v.-x. are occupied with the office of Christ as Priest after the order of Melchisedec, and with His one great Offering. Both the priesthood the sacrifice and the heavenly tabernacle are verbally connected with ‘perfection’.

The Priest of the perfect.

The reservation of the Apostle manifested in v. 11 indicates that the doctrine associated with this Priesthood is by no means elementary, but can only be appreciated by those of “full age”, or as the word is, “the perfect” (v. 14).

This Priesthood is also closely associated with another aspect of “perfection” namely, that of the “overcomer”. This is indicated by the first appearance of Melchisedec in Scripture when he met Abraham, the overcomer, returning from the slaughter of the kings.

A comparison and a contrast.

Heb. v. opens with a description of the service of the high priest. He offered both gifts and sacrifices, and also had compassion on the ignorant. His limitations are indicated by the fact that:

“He himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins” (v. 2, 3).

The Apostle proceeds to develop in some detail a comparison and a contrast.

The comparison. Chapter v. 7-9 with its reference to Gethsemane reveals in Christ a High Priest Who can have compassion, because He Himself had suffered being tempted. The glorious superiority of Christ's Melchisedec Priesthood occupies chapters vi. & vii. reaching its zenith in the record of that perfected Priest Who is able to save unto all perfection all that come unto God by Him.

The contrast. The Apostle returns after this climax has been reached to point a contrast, taking up the statement made in v. 3 saying:

“For such an high Priest became us, Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; WHO NEEDED NOT daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once, when He offered up Himself” (vii. 26, 27).

This truth has already found expression in Heb. iv. 14, 15; there we find reference to Christ as Priest Who has “passed through the heavens”, Who is touched “by the feeling of infirmities”, Who was nevertheless separate from sinners, “yet without sin” or “sin excepted”, i.e. the temptations of the wilderness pilgrimage are uppermost; *choris*, “without”, is used as in Heb. ix. 28.

Sin and its relation to Christ.

Scripture is never ambiguous where the personal sinlessness of the Lord is involved. If Heb. iv. 14, 15 shows the Lord identifying Himself with His people in their trials, it immediately adds “*sin excepted*”. If II Cor. v. 21 shows the Lord in His sacrifice was identified with sin, it immediately adds, “*Who knew no sin*”. If Rom. viii. 3 shows the Lord identified with flesh and blood, the sinlessness of Christ is expressed in the words “*the likeness of sinful flesh*”. As this subject is one of the first importance, let us pause to examine the words of Heb. vii. 26 concerning the sinlessness of the Lord Jesus.

A fourfold testimony.

HOLY. There are three Greek words which are translated in the A.V. by the word “holy”, they are *hagios*, *hosios* and *hieros*. *Hosios* is the word used here. Its first occurrence in Acts ii. 27:

“Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine *Holy One* to see corruption.”

Hosios is used in the LXX to translate the Hebrew word *chasid*, which is rendered not only by the word “holy”, but also by “merciful”. *Hagios* implies the thought of separation, but *hosios* suggests holiness that can stoop to have mercy upon those who are in themselves defiled, without contracting defilement thereby.

The Syriac version uses a word here that means “pure”. This blessed character was our Saviour's from birth. It is not an acquired holiness, but inherent. We can appreciate the choice of this particular word in the message of the angel to Mary in Luke i. 35:

“The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that HOLY THING which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”

Such was His nature. His acts were in perfect harmony with His inherent holiness.

HARMLESS (*akakos*). This word occurs in but one other passage, viz., Rom. xvi. 18 where it is translated “simple”. In the LXX version of Psa. xxvi., *akakos* occurs in verses 1 and 11, where the A.V. reads “integrity”. The intervening verses 2-10 are a practical expansion of the meaning of *akakos*. Reins and heart examined and tried (verse 2). No fellowship with vain persons and dissemblers, but rather hatred of all wicked works (4, 5), and so throughout the Psalm. All this and more is true of the Lord Jesus.

As concerning *hosios* (“holy”), Scripture declares “He knew no sin”; as concerning *akakos* (“harmless”), Scripture declares “He did no sin, neither was there guile found in His mouth”. The blessed man of Psa. i. and the Holy One of Psalms xv. and xvi. is Christ.

UNDEFILED (*amiantos*). This word occurs in Heb. xiii. 4; James i. 27; I Pet. i. 4. The difference between *akakos* and *amiantos* is that in the former the truth conveyed is that the Lord *did no evil*, while in the latter the truth is that He could not be *contaminated by evil* in any one sense. He *touched* a leper, but He needed no cleansing. A woman with an issue of blood *touched* Him, and while virtue went out of Him to her, no contamination passed from her to Him. In the midst of publicans and harlots, called by the Pharisees, “a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, and friend of publicans and sinners”, He ever remained “the Lamb without blemish and without spot”. Without *natural* blemish (the thought in *akakos*), without *contracted* spot (*amiantos*).

In all this the Lord Jesus transcended the type. The Tabernacle needed an atonement by reason of the uncleanness of Israel (Lev. xvi. 16), but such cleansing was unnecessary to the Lord. The Levitical priesthood sinned and needed a sacrifice. The Lord knew no sin, did no sin, and needed no sacrifice. Earthly priesthood terminates at death. The Lord ever liveth and His Priesthood is intransmissible. In all these respects the Lord was,

SEPARATE FROM SINNERS. This we may see from two points of view.

(1) *As to His manhood*. Born of a woman, yet from birth “that holy thing”, and while being made partaker of flesh and blood, nevertheless coming in the “likeness” only of *sinful* flesh.

The verb *chorizo* “separate”, enforces the translation “sin excepted” or “apart from sin” in Heb. iv. 15.

(2) *As to His manner of life*. He was truly man. He ate, He drank, He slept, worked, suffered, died. To the woman of Samaria He was “a Jew” (John iv. 9). To His fellow-townsmen He was “Joseph’s son” (John vi. 42), yet throughout His Life He was ever “separate from sinners”. Even though a disciple leaned upon the bosom of the Lord

at supper, never once do we find a follower of the Saviour addressing Him as “Jesus”. Shall His condescension, His sympathy, His fellowship warrant unholy familiarity? Believers, let us remember that He is our Lord, and let us render the honour due unto His name.

Thus we have four statements, arranged in two pairs, indicating for our comfort the High Priest that “became us”.

HOLY \
HARMLESS / *As to nature*
UNDEFILED \
SEPARATE FROM SINNERS / *As to practice.*

Heaven itself.

It is evident that this Priest could not be a minister of the earthly and typical Tabernacle. His peculiar separateness proclaims Him to be the minister of the true Tabernacle “heaven itself”. Therefore the Apostle continues, “and made higher than the heavens”.

There is as much stress placed upon the heavenly character of the Lord’s Priesthood as upon His sinlessness. It will be of service to note some of the statements of Scripture under this head:

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into (through) the heavens, Jesus the Son of God” (Heb. iv. 14).

“We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb. viii. 1).

The heavenly Priesthood of Christ receives its fullest exposition in chaps. viii. and ix., and reaches its climax in ix. 24:

“For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into HEAVEN ITSELF, now to appear in the presence of God for us.”

The one Offering once for all.

Before the Apostle can proceed to the expansion of the subject of the heavenly ministry of the Lord, it is necessary that one matter shall be dealt with, which if left ambiguous might lead to deadly error. The earthly high priest not only offered up sacrifice for the sins of the people, but he was obliged also to offer a sacrifice:

“First for his own sins” (Heb. vii. 27 cf. Heb. v. 3).

Here we perceive a strong contrast, for the heavenly Priest was “holy, harmless, undefiled”, and therefore needed no sacrifice for Himself. When He died, He died “the JUST for the unjust”, consequently He:

“He needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people’s: for this He did *once*, when He offered up Himself” (Heb. vii. 27).

In seeking out the argument of this epistle the reader is called upon to exercise continual watchfulness. We found that the consideration of the heavenly ministry of the Lord was postponed in order that the question of His one Offering might be dealt with, and now we shall find that the consideration of two features of that Offering mentioned in vii. 27 is deferred until the heavenly ministry has been more fully opened up.

No.38. Boldness to enter (viii. - x.).
pp. 191 - 196

We have had before us some wonderful statements concerning the office of Christ as the heavenly High Priest, and of His personal character, holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. We must now continue the pursuit of this most important theme, and note that the two features that await exposition are:

- (1) The fact that the Lord offered one Sacrifice once for all.
- (2) The fact that He offered, not bulls and goats, but that He offered up Himself.

One further item is necessary to complete the list of the distinctive features of the Lord’s High Priesthood, and that is:

The law and the oath.

“For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, Who is consecrated for evermore (PERFECTED unto the age)” (Heb. vii. 28).

There are two items here that demonstrate the superiority of the Priesthood of the Son. They are:

- (1) The oath compared with the law as to immutability. The oath is more solemn, and its immutability is indicated in Heb. vi. 17.
- (2) The oath and the law as to sequence. The oath was made “since the law”, and what this implies is explained in Heb. vii. 11:
“If therefore PERFECTION were by the Levitical priesthood what further need was there that another Priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?” (vii. 11).

That question has now received its answer. Perfection could only come through the Priest after the order of Melchisedec whose Priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. All truth, whether dispensational, foundational or experimental, focuses upon the Person of the risen Christ. The whole

fabric of Mosaic ritual vanishes into the shadows before the face of Him Who could say, “I am the resurrection and the life”.

With the “perfecting of the Son” by the oath, we reach the conclusion of the lengthy comparison commenced in chapter v. Before entering into a detailed examination of the Tabernacle and its sacrifices and seeing them as shadows of the true, a short chapter is devoted to bringing the teaching of chapters v.-vii. to a point: “Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum” (viii. 1).

The principal thing.

The teaching of this passage is something more than a summary. The word *kephalaion* (sum) may mean the summing up of a number as in Numb. iv. 2, “Take the sum of the sons of Kohath”, or it may be the principal part as in Numb. v. 7, “He shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof”. The following translation seems to convey the sense of the passage.

“The principal thing, however, amongst those things of which we are speaking is that we have such a high Priest Who is seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man” (Heb. viii. 1, 2).

A seated Priest in a heavenly Sanctuary.

It will be well to prepare the reader for the necessity of a certain amount of close attention. The arguments of this central part of Hebrews are involved, and there are, as the Apostle has said, some things “hard to be understood” concerning this heavenly Priesthood. There is a wealth of detail and a formidable series of sub-divisions to exercise our patience, but at the beginning the Apostle would have us look away from these and let our hearts dwell upon “the principal thing”. We have a *seated* Priest; that tells of a *finished work*. This seated Priest is the Minister of no earthly Tabernacle; He has entered “heaven itself”. The consideration of this finished work and this heavenly Tabernacle occupies the bulk of chapters ix. and x.

Just as all the Tabernacle and its service revolve around the ark and mercy seat, so all that the writer has said concerning the excellence of Christ is concentrated upon His once offered Sacrifice. This is the theme that is immediately introduced in viii. 3:

“For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices: wherefore it is of necessity that this Man have somewhat also to offer.”

The “somewhat” suggests something different from the offerings of the law, and verse 4 puts forward the argument that the Lord could have no priesthood on earth, as the prescribed offerings were already ministered by an earthly and an exclusive priesthood. Their service, however, was typical of a higher and a greater.

“Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things” (viii. 5).

The Levitical economy was one of type and shadow:

“As Moses was admonished (or "warned") of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount” (viii. 5).

The fact that Moses was “warned” (see same word in Matt. ii. 22 and Heb. xi. 7), suggests the importance of this typical representation, whilst the parallel in I Chron. xxviii. 11-19 concerning the pattern of the Temple confirms it. The typical teaching of the Tabernacle is enlarged upon in Heb. ix. For the moment we are occupied with the “principal thing”, a seated Priest in a heavenly Sanctuary.

The Mediator of a better Covenant.

The excellency of the ministry of this seated Priest is further enforced by the superiority of the Covenant which forms the sphere of His activities. The degree of this superiority is gauged “by how much” the New Covenant is superior to the old. This forms a fruitful line of teaching in II Cor. iii. We have, with the re-introduction of the subject of the Covenant, returned to the argument of Heb. vii. 18, but we have returned with fuller knowledge. There, in vii. 18, we learned that the commandment which appointed the Levitical priesthood was “disannulled” because of its “weakness” and “unprofitableness”. Here, in viii. 6-13, we learn that the Covenant with which the Levitical priesthood was associated was likewise set aside as being “not blameless”, the Lord “finding fault” with it and introducing the New Covenant as the better hope founded upon better promises, ministered by a better Priest, and ratified by a better Sacrifice.

A lengthy quotation from Jer. xxxi. occupies Heb. viii. 8-12 which testifies in no uncertain way to the nature and scope of the New Covenant.

The New Covenant.

There are still quite a number of God’s children who have hazy ideas concerning this New Covenant (or testament as it is translated in Matt. xxvi. 28), therefore it will be helpful if we set out its chief features from the passage before us, before passing on to chapter ix.

- (1) The New Covenant is made with *Israel and Judah* and with no other people.
- (2) It was not engraven upon stone as at Sinai, but written upon the heart.
- (3) The Old Covenant was connected with the exodus from Egypt, and its commemorative feast was the Passover, whilst the New Covenant is connected with a greater and a spiritual deliverance, and its commemorative feast was instituted at the Passover by the Lord (Matt. xxvi. 28).
- (4) It is essentially connected with the national restoration of Israel (Jer. xxxi. 35-40).
- (5) The only reference to this New Covenant memorial feast, outside the three synoptic gospels (for John omits it) is in that section of I Corinthians, that is addressed to those whose “Fathers” went through the Red Sea. This section covers chapters x. and xi. With chapter xii. the Apostle addresses those who were “Gentiles” and who had been idolators (I Cor. xii. 1-2).

The Apostle sums up the matter for us in Heb. viii. 13:

“In that He saith, A new covenant, He hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”

But Thou remainest.

In chapter i. the present creation is said to wax old and pass away, and in contrast with this is placed the Lord of Whom it says, “but Thou remainest”. At the end of the epistle the same truth emerges, viz., “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for the age”. This is the blessed truth of chapters viii. and ix. Here in viii. 13 we have the waxing old and the passing away of the Old Covenant in contrast with the unchanging Priesthood and heavenly sanctuary of the New Covenant.

A greater and more perfect Tabernacle.

In the structure of Heb. vii. 1 - x. 18, it will be observed that the member governed by the title, “The oath to the Son”, extends from vii. 20 - ix. 8, where we reach another member entitled, “No perfection by carnal ordinances”. Chapter ix. 1-8 therefore concludes the section commenced in vii. 20.

Hebrews ix. 1 - 8

- A | 1. The first Covenant.
- B | 2-. The Tabernacle prepared (*kataskewazo*).
- C | -2-5. The contents. In the first; in the second.
- B | 6-. These things prepared (*kataskewazo*).
- C | -6, 7. The priests. In the first; in the second.
- A | 8. The first Tabernacle.

Two features of the first Covenant are considered:

- (1) Ordinances of divine service.
- (2) A worldly sanctuary.

A great controversy has arisen over the meaning of “the worldly sanctuary”. The word “worldly” is a translation of *kosmikon*, which occurs in one other place in the N.T. viz., Titus ii. 12. It does not occur in the LXX. One of the causes of diversity in translation is that the “world” and “worldliness” are contrary to anything to do with a “sanctuary”. *Kosmikon* is cognate with *kosmion*, which is translated “modest” in I Tim. ii. 9, and with *kosmeo*, which is translated “adorn” in the same verse. The underlying idea of both words is that of something orderly. Rotherham accordingly translates the passage in Heb. ix. 1:

“Even the holy ritual well arranged.”

Some, because of certain remarks made by Josephus and Philo, consider that the intention of the apostle was to show that the Tabernacle typified the world. Those who desire a detailed examination of the various renderings should consult the note in Bloomfield's Greek Testament, ninth edition, and for an extended reference to the present creation as a tabernacle, the series entitle *The Pleroma* which commenced in Vol. XLI should be considered

Not made with hands.

The simple explanation of the word *kosmikon* ("worldly") is discovered in the purpose of the Apostle, who sets the earthly type over against the heavenly reality, the true, the heavenly Tabernacle, "which the Lord pitched and not man", and which was "not made with hands, that is to say not of this creation". The holy places made with hands are called "figures of the true", the true Tabernacle being called "heaven itself" (Heb. ix. 24).

As the Priest and the Offering constitute "the principal thing", the Apostle passes over without comment for the time being the various articles of furniture used in the Tabernacle, their typical teaching not being contributory to the theme of the epistle. We must stay to observe here that the articles of furniture fall into two groups, viz., (1) those in the holy place, and (2) those in the most holy place.

(I) IN THE HOLY PLACE

- (1) The candlestick
- (2) The table
- (3) The shewbread

(II) IN THE MOST HOLY PLACE

- (1) The censer
- (2) The ark
- (3) The golden pot of manna
- (4) Aaron's rod that budded
- (5) The tables of the covenant
- (6) The cherubim of glory
- (7) The mercy seat

"Of which we cannot now speak particularly."

A lesson enforced.

It will be noticed that the golden altar of incense is omitted from the first list, and that a golden censer is added to the second list. If we interpret the golden censer as the golden altar, as some do, then we make the Apostle to teach that the golden altar was in "the holiest of all", which it certainly was not. The LXX uses the word *thumiaterion* ("censer") in II Chron. xxvi. 19 and Ezek. viii. 11, where both passages read "censer" and can mean nothing else.

It seems to be the intention of the writer to enforce the lesson of the epistle by this somewhat unexpected alteration. Both the golden altar and the censer speak of

intercession, and our hearts are directed upward to the right hand of God, where the great High Priest ever liveth to make intercession, having passed into the heavenly holiest of all. We read in Lev. xvi. 12, 13 that the high priest took a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar and made a cloud of incense to cover the mercy seat, and this type of the interceding priest penetrating beyond the veil is the feature seized upon by the Apostle and emphasized in this way.

The Holy Ghost this signifying.

At Heb. ix. 6 the subject is resumed, saying, "Now when these things were thus ordained". We have drawn attention in the structure to the fact that the words "ordained" in verse 6 and "made" in verse 2 are the same in the original, and should read in both cases "prepared". Immediately the great question of priestly service is brought forward, and contrasts the typical with the true. Into the first Tabernacle the priests had continual access, entering daily in the course of their office, but:

"Into the second went the high priest *alone once* every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (Heb. ix. 7).

The particular period to which this passage refers is that section of Lev. xvi. which speaks of the Day of Atonement. There we read of the censer and its use (verse 13). There we read of the blood:

"Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the vail" (verse 15).

There too we read:

"There shall be *no man* in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement" (verse 17).

From these and similar passages the Apostle draws a *negative* argument, then pursuing the theme through into Heb. x., he rounds off the examination with a *positive* argument. It will make the line of argument clearer for us if we place the two passages together.

The Negative.

"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was *not yet* made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (ix. 8).

The Positive.

"*Having* therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way" (x. 19, 20).

In these two passages lies practically the whole of the argument, and if we can keep this well in mind, the details, instead of bewildering us, will lend point and force to the glorious conclusion.

**No.39. A Figure for the time (vii. 26 - ix. 20).
pp. 212 - 219**

Returning to chapter ix., we learn that the way into the holiest was not made manifest because of the character of the sacrifice and the service connected with that period. It is stimulating to observe the sturdy faith of the Apostle in Holy Scripture—“*The Holy Ghost* this signifying”. How impossible it is for one who denies the inspiration of all Scripture really to benefit by its study! However varied and strange “the sundry times and divers manners” may have been, the teaching of Heb. i. 1 is that “*God* spake”. So in Heb. iii. 7, where Psa. xcv. is quoted, the Apostle says, “As *the Holy Ghost* saith”.

To come now to the peculiar character of the earlier dispensation. Before the coming of Christ all were “shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed” (Gal. iii. 23). The service of the priests is called “the example and shadow of heavenly things” (Heb. viii. 5). The law is said to have “a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image” (x. 1). So here, the Tabernacle and its services are said to be “a figure” (ix. 9). The word is literally a “parable”. A reference to Ezek. xx. 49; Psa. xlix. 4; lxxviii. 2; Matt. xiii. 10:13 and John xvi. 28, 29 will show that an element of obscurity is connected with a parable. Heb. ix. 9 tells us that this particular parable remained “unto the present time” (which we believe to be the true rendering of this passage). Now that Christ has come, the shadows vanish. All the offerings, sacrifices and services of the Tabernacle, while most wonderfully adapted to their purpose, could never lead to the goal of Hebrews:

“That could not make him that did the service PERFECT, as pertaining to the conscience” (Heb. ix. 9).

The purpose of the parable.

The dispensational truth related to the use of the parable is too important to pass over without a fuller note. A type sets forth with more or less clearness the reality which it foreshadows and demands an antitype elsewhere. A parable veils truth. It will be remembered that the parables of Matt. xiii. are closely associated with the Lord’s rejection (Matt. xi. and xii.) and with the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens. We have shown elsewhere that the word “mystery” is introduced as a result of the failure of some of the agents and must be kept distinct from the original plan and will of God. When Israel came out of Egypt, they were led by Moses to Sinai. There they were assembled to enter into solemn covenant with the Lord. Here are the terms of that covenant:

“Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation” (Exod. xix. 5, 6).

When Moses descended from the smoking mountain he spake no word concerning Tabernacle, Ark or Mercy Seat, but solemnly sprinkled the people with the blood of the covenant saying:

“Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words” (Exod. xxiv. 8).

After this, Moses re-ascended the mountain in order to receive the tables of stone. During his absence the people, headed by Aaron, broke the solemn Covenant into which they had entered by worshipping the golden calf, for among the “words” which constituted the Covenant were “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”. This Covenant was broken, and Moses manifested it by breaking the tables of stone (Exod. xxxii. 15-19). When the duplicates were given, they were placed in the Ark of the covenant, which Ark was the nucleus and centre of the whole Tabernacle ritual. Strictly speaking therefore, the ten commandments were never given to Israel. Israel’s destiny is to be a kingdom of priests. The attaining of that destined end is enshrined in the use of and the meaning of “perfect” (*teleios*, which is allied with *telos*, “end”). Israel can never be a kingdom of priests under the Old Covenant that was broken, neither can they reach their goal by the typical ritual of the Tabernacle. “The law made nothing perfect.” Israel’s “perfection”, the attaining unto that for which they had been laid hold of by the Lord (*see* for parallel thought Phil. iii. 12), can only be accomplished under the New Covenant of which Christ, not Moses, is the Mediator. This New Covenant, it will be observed, is immediately introduced after the comparison between the priesthood of Christ and that of Levi has been made, and we are told that the Levitical priesthood and sacrifices:

“Could not make him that did the service PERFECT, as pertaining to the conscience” (Heb. ix. 9).

Carnal ordinances.

The Apostle reduces the ceremonial and typical ordinances to two heads, viz.: (1) Meats and drinks; (2) Divers baptisms. A reading of Lev. xi.-xv. will give some idea of his meaning. Writing to Gentile believers in another connection, he says:

“Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using” (Col. ii. 21, 22),

showing this man-made prohibition is vain. He turns the believer’s attention away from the “shadows”, for, says he, “the body is of Christ”, and directs their hearts and minds to where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. It will be observed that we do not follow the A.V. and translate “divers washings”, but use the word “baptisms”. This brings the Apostle’s argument into line with that of Heb. v. and vi., where, in urging the reader to “go on unto *perfection*”, he says “leave not laying again the doctrine of baptisms”. The one great reason for leaving these gifts and sacrifices, this Tabernacle service, these distinctions between meats and drinks, these washings, dippings and sprinklings, is that they were all “carnal ordinances”, and these ordinances can no more lead on unto perfection than could the “carnal commandment” of Heb. vii. 16 “perfect the Son” (vii. 28) in His office as High Priest after the order of Melchisedec.

Until the time of reformation.

Not only were these ordinances “carnal”, they were temporary, they were “imposed until the time of reformation” (Heb. ix. 10). The word “imposed” suggests a burden. In Luke v. 1 it is “to press upon” as a crowd, or “to lay on” as a stone on a grave (John xi. 38).

Peter expresses this conception when he speaks of the law as “a yoke which neither our forefathers nor we have been able to bear” (Acts xv. 10). This burden was but for a time “until the time of reformation”:

“The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did” (Heb. vii. 19).
“The law was our schoolmaster (pedagogue) unto Christ” (Gal. iii. 24).

REFORMATION. This word bears two meanings:

- (1) The idea of getting back to some primitive simplicity that had become obscured, or
- (2) The idea of a radical change that reforms the subject.

The Greek word *diorthosis* (reformation) does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures, but *diorthoo* comes in Jer. vii. 3 in the command, “amend your ways”. The time of reformation dawned when “grace and truth” came by Jesus Christ, in contrast with the “law that was given by Moses” (John i. 17). This reformation introduced better promises, a better hope, and had as its basis a better Covenant, ministered by Christ the Mediator of the better Covenant. The argument is designed to lead the Hebrew believer to see the temporary character of these laws, which according to the teaching of their Rabbis were eternal and unchanging (*see* Acts vi. 13, 14). The abiding Priest, the once offered Sacrifice, the unchanging Covenant, the sure and steadfast hope, these touched the conscience, led on to perfection and were found only in Christ.

Hebrews ix. 7 - 12.

- A | 7, 8. ONCE every year “not without blood”.
- B | 9-. The present season.
 - C | -9. | a | Gifts and sacrifices.
 - b | No perfection, not touch conscience.
 - C | 10-. | a | Meats, drinks, baptisms.
 - b | Carnal ordinances.
- B | -10. The season of reformation.
- A | 11, 12. ONCE into the holy place, “by His own blood.”

Rom. viii. 3 supplies the true comment “weak because of the flesh”. But what the law could not do, God has done by sending His Son. This is equally the teaching of Hebrews as it is of Romans. The law concerning the priesthood was weak because of the flesh, and no perfection can come that way. God’s answer is Christ, and Christ as the Priest in the power of an endless life. The sacrifices, both in their nature and by their

repetition, failed to touch the conscience. He said, "Lo, I come", and coming, set aside all types and shadows by the offering of Himself.

A blessed change.

A new section is introduced with verse 11 and opens with the words "*But Christ*". Dispensational and doctrinal changes are introduced by some such expression in other places. For example, in Acts xvii. 30:

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; BUT NOW commandeth all men every where to repent."

So, in Rom. iii. 21, when the Apostle had brought the whole world in guilty before God, with no hope of righteousness in themselves, he then introduces the wondrous provision of grace with the words:

"BUT NOW the righteousness of God without the law is manifested."

Both the doctrinal and dispensational portions of Eph. ii. are marked in the same way:

"BUT GOD Who is rich in mercy hath quickened us (made us alive)" (4, 5).
"BUT NOW in Christ Jesus made nigh" (13).

When the Apostle had clearly shown both the weakness and unprofitableness of the dispensation of type and shadow, he swings the door of the new dispensation upon the same hinges, "BUT CHRIST:

"But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come" (Heb. ix. 11).

The good things to come must not be interpreted only of the new life and the glory yet to be; they include, and perhaps principally refer to, the dispensational change which set aside the types and shadows, and provide the antitype, Christ. This may be seen by consulting Heb. x. 1:

"For the law having a *shadow of good things to come*, and not the very image of the things."

We remember the opening words of chapter viii., and that the "principal thing" is a seated Priest in a heavenly sanctuary. This important fact is again prominent. We have such an High Priest of good things to come, in contrast with those priests whose ministry was confined to shadows. At ix. 11 we have the subject of ix. 1-5 resumed in the words, "By a greater and more perfect Tabernacle". Not only is this Tabernacle "greater and more perfect", it is "not of this creation", for so the word rendered "building" should be translated. The use of this word "creation" is noteworthy, for in II Cor. iii.-v. the *New Covenant* is linked with the *new creation*, and both with the *reconciliation*. Israel were a people of types, and in this they foreshadow the purpose of the ages.

The blood of Christ.

We noted in Heb. ix. 6 and 7, that the high priest entered into the holiest of all once every year, “not without blood”. This therefore is the next item to be developed in the argument. Verse 12 continues:

“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained *aeonian* redemption for us.”

Negatively, Christ entered “NOT with blood of goats and calves”. Positively, Christ entered “by His own blood”. As to time Christ entered “once”, in contrast with the type of verse 7, “once every year”. The “aeonian redemption” finds expansion in the succeeding verses.

The importance of the Ascension.

While many are aware of the essential character of the death and resurrection of Christ, all are not so impressed with the importance of His Ascension. Eph. i. 19-23 stresses the ascension of Christ in connection with His present headship of the church which is His Body, and Eph. iv. 8-10 sets forth the triumphant character of His ascension when He led captivity captive. The present dispensation with its fourfold ministry is also essentially related with the ascended Lord (Eph. iv. 11, 12). The high privilege of the believer who has been “made to sit together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus” (Eph. ii. 6), and also the power to walk in newness of life, are related to the fact that Christ now “sitteth at the right hand of God” (Col. iii. 1).

Not only do the epistles of the Mystery stress the fact of the Lord’s ascension, but the epistle to the Hebrews does also. Let us notice some of the references:

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

“We have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God” (Heb. iv. 14).

“We have such an High Priest, Who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens” (Heb. viii. 1).

“Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us” (Heb. ix. 24).

“But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb. x. 12).

“Looking unto Jesus Who is set down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. xii. 2).

These, and all passages which speak of the Lord’s heavenly ministry and intercession necessitate the Ascension. We shall understand our calling the better if we keep this fact before us.

Israel, the aeonian people.

It is necessary to remember that the Apostle makes pointed allusion to the great day of atonement in Heb. ix. To this solemn day refer the statements concerning the blood of bulls and goats, as also the entry into the holiest of the high priest alone once every year. The mediation of the high priest on the day of atonement accomplished a reconciliation for the year. In vivid contrast, the effect of Christ's one Offering is called an aeonian redemption, and as it touched the conscience needs no repetition.

Israel are the aeonian people (Isa. xlv. 7).
Christ is the author of aeonian salvation (Heb. v. 9).
By His blood He obtained aeonian redemption (Heb. ix. 12).
This blood of the New Covenant ensures the aeonian inheritance (Heb. ix. 15).
The New Covenant itself is called the aeonian covenant (Heb. xiii. 20).

Israel are a typical people, and foreshadow in their calling and history the wider dealings of God with man during the course of the ages.

It now becomes necessary to the argument of the Apostle that he should establish the superiority of the offering of Christ, and this he does by a series of comparisons. The first comparison is drawn between the offerings that were provided by the law to sanctify those who had become unclean, and the cleansing power of the blood of Christ.

Hebrews ix. 13, 14.

- A | 13-. For if. The fact assumed.
B | -13-. The blood, and ashes of heifer.
C | -13. Sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh.
A | 14-. How much more. Superiority assumed.
B | -14-. The blood of Christ.
C | -14. Purge conscience from dead works.

The argument cannot be appreciated fully without a knowledge of Numb. xix. There the Lord commands Israel to bring:

- (1) A red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish and upon which never yoke came.
- (2) The heifer was slain, and the blood sprinkled before the Tabernacle.
- (3) The remaining carcass, together with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet, was burned, and the ashes gathered and laid up without the camp, with which the water of separation was made.
- (4) The defilement which necessitated the application of this water of separation is particularly connected with death.
- (5) A person was rendered unclean by touching a dead body, being in a tent wherein a man died, touching a bone or a grave.

It will be seen that some defilement was socially unavoidable. God would not have been pleased with that man who for the avoidance of ceremonial defilement withdrew himself from the dead or the dying. Yet this presses upon us the absolute necessity for the provision for uncleanness, for at times our very duties carry with them defilement,

and though “not of the world” we are nevertheless still “in the world”, and though we are cleansed completely in one sense, we shall, till our pilgrimage is over, be under the necessity to “wash the feet” continually (John xiii. 10). The emphasis upon death and the dead in Numb. xix. provides the argument of Heb. ix. 14.

Covenant or Testament.

While it is a truth worthy of the fullest emphasis that the cleansing power of the blood of Christ excelled the types and shadows as conscience is greater than ceremony and dead works more defiling than dead bodies, yet this truth is placed here to lead on to another which is vital to the argument of the epistle:

“And because of this, He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that death having taken place for a redemption of the transgressions against the first covenant, those having been called might receive the promise of aeternal inheritance. For where a covenant exists, it is necessary to bring in the death of the covenant victim, because a covenant is confirmed over dead victims, since it is never valid when the covenant victim is living” (Heb. ix. 15-17).

This, it will be observed, is not a quotation, but a more literal rendering now to be considered.

To introduce the word “testament” here, with its associated ideas of a “will” and the death of the “testator”, is foreign both to Hebrew thought and the design of this epistle.

Diatheke occurs in Hebrews seventeen times, and in every occurrence other than those of ix. 15-18 it is used of either the Old or the New Covenant. Heb. ix. 20 reads “the blood of the *testament*”. The passage is a quotation from Exod. xxiv. 8, where the same version reads “the blood of the *covenant*”. The A.V. is obliged to introduce the word “men” into Heb. ix. 17; we translate instead “dead victims”, referring to the sacrifices that accompanied the making of the covenant. In Heb. vii. 22 we read:

“By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament (*covenant*).”

In viii. 6:

“By how much also He is the mediator of a better *covenant*.”

In xii. 24, in contrast with Mount Sinai and the Old Covenant, is placed Mount Sion and the New Covenant:

“And to Jesus the mediator of the new *covenant*, and to *the blood of sprinkling*, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

It is clear from these passages that Heb. ix. 15 speaks not of a testament, but of a covenant in the Hebrew sense of the word. In Heb. viii. 8-12 we have a long quotation from Jer. xxxi. concerning the Old and New Covenants.

In Heb. x. 15-17 this selfsame chapter is quoted again. Heb. ix., which comes in between these two quotations, is written expressly to show that Christ is the Mediator of that very covenant of prophecy, and the word “testament” therefore, instead of helping forward the Apostle’s argument, tends to hinder it. After speaking of the sprinkling of the Tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry, he adds:

“And almost all things are by the law cleansed by blood; and apart from the shedding of blood is no forgiveness” (Heb. ix. 22 not AV JP).

Having come so far we shall now be able to appreciate the general structure of the chapter, which will be found to be chiefly concerned with:

The Old and the New Covenants.
Hebrews ix. 1 - 20.

- A | 1. The First Covenant.
- B | 1-10. |
 - a | 1-7. The Tabernacle. *Worldly.*
 - b | 8-10. Its significance. *No way in. Conscience untouched.*
- B | 11-14. |
 - a | 11. Greater and more perfect Tabernacle.
 Not of this creation.
 - b | 12-14. Its significance. *He entered in. Conscience purged.*
- A | 15-20. The New Covenant.

We shall have to extend this structure to include ix. 21 to x. 18, but this is a member too large and too important to be introduced here. May the Lord Who is magnified in this epistle to the Hebrews be magnified also in the daily life and spiritual conception of those who are blessed under other terms than those of this New Covenant, which forms so important a feature of the epistle to the Hebrews.

Meditations on Psalm LI

No.9. A Just God and a Saviour (verses 14, 15). pp. 199, 200

A peculiar feature of Hebrew poetry is the rhyming of thought rather than that of sound. There is no example in the poetry of the Scriptures where 'face' rhymes with 'grace', so far as the actual sound is concerned, but the balancing of thought which is much deeper is a characteristic of Hebrew poetry. For example as we have picked upon 'face' and 'grace' the following will illustrate the point.

"The Lord make *His face* to shine upon thee, *and be* gracious unto thee;
The Lord lift up *His countenance* upon thee, *and give* thee peace."

Examples of this repetition of thought can be found at every turn in Hebrew poetry. It is before us in Psa. li.:

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation;
And uphold me with Thy free spirit.
Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways;
And sinners shall be converted unto Thee.
Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,
And my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness.
O Lord, open Thou my lips;
And my mouth shall shew forth thy praise."

The alternation, correspondence and expansion of thought is evident to all who read, and too beautiful to spoil by any attempt at dissection. The doctrine contained and enforced by this means claims our attention and to its consideration we now turn. As a consequence of being restored and upheld, David could become a teacher of others, who like himself had fallen by the way. As a consequence of being delivered, his tongue he said would sing aloud of the Lord's righteousness, or as a consequence of opened lips, his mouth would declare the praise of the Lord.

"Thy ways Thy righteousness Thy praise."

"Thy ways", taught to transgressors that they may repent, return and walk therein; "Thy righteousness", proclaimed that the plan of salvation may be seen in all its glory; "Thy praise", rendering to such a Saviour and such a God, the glory due to His name. David who knew the law of Moses, as few men have done since, knew that for murder, no provision had been made.

"Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, which is guilty of death: but he shall be surely put to death" (Numb. xxxv. 31).

His own impetuous judgment and Nathan's denunciation would be in his ears:

"As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die"; "And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man" (II Sam. xii. 5-7).

David could have no hope under the law of Moses. He stood doubly condemned. Condemned by the law and condemned by his own judgment. Yet he was to hear the gracious response to his confession given in verse 13:

“And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die” (II Sam. xii. 13).

It was this that enabled David to throw himself upon the tender mercy and loving kindness of the Lord (Psa. li. 1) and to pray.

“Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of Thy righteousness” (Psa. li. 14).

Here is a deliverance that was not provided by the law. Here is a righteousness associated with the salvation that is beyond the law. Here David anticipated the doctrine of the epistle to the Romans, as we learn from Paul himself, for Psa. xxxii. is connected with the same event,

“Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they to whom the Lord will not impute sin” (Rom. iv. 6-8).

David knew the God of Whom Isaiah wrote and Paul testified:

“A Just God and a Saviour.”

The One Mediator

No.3. The basic meaning of the words “Mediator”. pp. 38 - 40

The meaning of the English word “mediator” is self evident. It is one of a group of words derived from the Latin *medio* ‘to be in the middle’. Hence medieval is the Latinized form for “The Middle Ages”; while medial, median, mediant, mediocre and even Mediterranean, will occur to most readers. The position occupied by the Mediator is uppermost in the English word “One who comes between” one who occupies a middle place, an ‘intermediary’. This English word is a very fair translation of the Greek *mesites*, which is a compound made of *mesos* ‘middle’ and *heimi* ‘to go’, ‘a go-between’.

The Greek word *mesites* occurs six times in the N.T. namely in Gal. iii. 19, 20; I Tim. ii. 5; Heb. viii. 6; ix. 15 and xii. 24. To this must be added the word ‘confirm’ of Heb. vi. 17 *mesiteuo*, which the A.V. margin reads ‘interposed’, where we read:

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel confirmed it (or interposed Himself) by an oath.”

Josephus uses this word *mesiteuo* in the passage which deals with the enticement of Israel by the Midianites “This they said with an oath, and called God for an arbitrator of what they had promised”.

The association of the word translated ‘mediator’ in Galatians, I Timothy and Hebrews supply the sacrificial or covenant making conditions that are always mentally attached to the word by Bible students, but the word itself tells us nothing of the office or service rendered, only that it is a position occupied ‘between’ and ‘in the midst’. We must go back to the Hebrew equivalent for a fuller understanding of what is implied in the office of a mediator. This we do by a very slender bridge, for the word *mesites* occurs but once in the Septuagint version, and that in Job ix. 33 “Neither is there any *daysman* betwixt us, that might lay his hand upon us both”. The margin of both A.V. and R.V. reads ‘or Umpire’ for “Daysman”. The choice of this term by the translators is not very clear, some authorities say that a ‘Daysman’ refers to a legal adviser or pleader who appeared daily at the law courts in earlier days, and who could be engaged to arbitrate in any dispute. The Septuagint in their translation of the Hebrew of Job ix. 33 appear to have given a paraphrase “*ho mesites kai elengchon*”, recognizing that in the Hebrew there is something more suggested than who mediates, as an examination of the original reveals.

A following literal rendering of the Hebrew of Job ix. 33 has been offered ‘There is not *between us* a reprover’, which is endorsed by the translation of the LXX version that reads ‘Would that there were (one to be) our mediator and reprover’. The word *mesites* here is evidently the rendering of the Hebrew ‘between us’, while the ‘reprover’ is a recognition of the primary meaning of the word translated ‘daysman’ in our version. It is

evident, we trust, that an examination of the Hebrew word translated ‘mediator’ or ‘daysman’ is incumbent upon all who would endeavour to understand all that is implied by the N.T. terms.

Yakach. The primary meaning of this word is ‘to make manifest, to show plainly’. Gesenius suggests that the word is allied with *nekach* ‘over against’ (Exod. xxvi. 35), where something of the thought of balance is resident, and which is also implicit in the office of mediator or umpire. Something of the meaning of the ‘daysman’ of Job ix. 33 will be seen when we observe that *yakach* is translated ‘come now, and *let us reason together*’ (Isa. i. 18). “*That they may judge betwixt us both*” (Gen. xxxi. 37). The word occurs 17 times in the book of Job itself, and it will be helpful to have some of the passages with their different translations before us.

“What doth your *arguing* reprove” (infinitive of the verb) (Job vi. 25).
“What doth your *arguing reprove*” (future of the verb) (Job vi. 25).
“Do ye imagine to *reprove* words” (Job vi. 26).
“I would desire to *reason* with God” (xiii. 3).
“He will *surely reprove* you” (xiii. 10).
“I will *maintain* mine own ways” (xv. 15).
“*O that one might plead* for a man with God” (xvi. 21).
“There was none of you *that convinced* Job” (xxxii. 12).

When at length Elihu broke silence, he said to Job:

“Behold, I am according to thy wish in God’s stead: I also am formed out of the clay. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee” (Job xxxiii. 6, 7).

Elihu evidently refers to Job’s plaint:

“For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment. Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that he might lay his hand upon us both, let Him take His rod away from me, and let not His fear terrify me” (Job ix. 32-34).

Here a number of terms that the N.T. doctrine have filled out with blessing, anticipate the office of the ‘One Mediator between God and man’. Let us consider them.

“*I am in God’s stead.*” This, said Elihu, was the fulfillment of Job’s wish, ‘I am toward God’ is the R.V. rendering of this passage. Young’s literal translates it simply ‘For God’.

“In stead” when it means substitution uses the Hebrew *tachath* as in Gen. iv. 25 ‘another seed instead of Abel’. But while the Saviour could become a substitute for the sinner, no one can become a substitute for God. The preposition ‘I’ which is here rendered ‘in stead’ means rather ‘on behalf of God’. This expression must be compared with the words of Paul in II Cor. v. 20:

“Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you IN CHRIST’S STEAD, be ye reconciled to God.”

Neither Paul nor his fellow ministers were ‘substitutes’, they spoke ‘on the behalf of’ (*huper*) Christ. As a Mediator Christ is ‘on behalf’ both of God and man, not a substitute for God and man, although He is a substitute for sinful man as the sacrifice for sin “He was made sin for us Who knew no sin”.

“*I also am formed out of the clay.*” Here the frailty of human nature is intended. Eliphaz contrasts ‘angels’ with them that dwell ‘in house of clay, whose foundation is in the dust, which are crushed before the moth’ (Job iv. 19).

Job also refers to the frailty of this mortal body saying:

“Thine hands have made me and fashioned me together round about Thou hast made me of clay; and wilt thou bring me into dust again?” (Job ix. 8, 9).

In all there are seven occurrences of the word *chomer* in the book of Job translated either ‘clay’ or ‘mire’, four of which refer to the lowly origin of man.

Elihu in the type of the mediator assured Job of his essential manhood, even as Paul at a later date, and with fuller light, spoke of “The One Mediator . . . the Man, Christ Jesus”. Elihu places his natural human frailty over against the ‘terror’ induced by the Presence of God apart from mediation. In the passage where Job complained that there was no ‘daysman’ or ‘mediator’ he added:

“Let Him take His rod away from me, and let not His *fear* terrify me: then would I speak, and not fear Him; but it is not so with me” (Job ix. 33-35).

Here the word that is translated ‘terror’ in Job xxxiii. 7 is rendered ‘fear’. In Job xiii. 21 it is translated ‘dread’ and in a similar context:

“Who is he that will plead with me? Withdraw Thine hand far from me; and let not Thy dread make me afraid; then call Thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer Thou me” (Job xiii. 19-22).

The R.V. reads “Neither shall my pressure be heavy upon thee” instead of ‘my hand’ as in the A.V.

Ekeph is ‘a burden’, ‘to put a load on a beast (of burden), so to bend, to make a bow down’ and has an Arabic equivalent that means to tie, to bind on a pack saddle. It is allied with the Hebrew *kaph* which means ‘the palm of the hand’, rarely the whole hand, hence the idea again of pressure. It is this word that is found in Job xiii. 21.

Elihu says much to illuminate the necessary qualifications of a Mediator between God and men, but only fulfilled these qualifications in the measure of a type or shadow. None but Emmanuel “God with us” could lay His hands upon ‘both’, nevertheless as surely as Job knew that His Kinsman-Redeemer lived, so surely does Elihu exemplify in His ministry and teach in his doctrine the need that all men have of Christ in His central capacity as “The One Mediator”.

We must examine a term employed throughout the book of Job in ways that impinge closely upon the office of Mediator in our next study.

No.4. A testimony in its own peculiar season.
pp. 78 - 80

The Apostle Paul follows the statement that Christ is ‘the One Mediator’ by the words, “To be testified in due time” (I Tim. ii. 6).

The proposition is this. Every dispensational change, or every vital link in the purpose of the ages, is the subject of a separate witness in the N.T.

The first witness is John the Baptist (John i. 7, 8, 15, 32, 34).
“Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth” (John v. 33).
John the Apostle is a witness to the finished work (John xix. 35).

The witness of the early Acts is to the Resurrection.

“Ye shall be witness unto Me” (Acts i. 8).
“Beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection” (Acts i. 22).

Here then is an unbroken chain of evidence, from the baptism of John unto the Ascension. To this of course could be added the supplementary witness recorded in Acts v. 29-32 “And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost Whom God hath given to them that obey Him”, or again as it is written in Acts x. 39, 41. At the conversion of the Apostle Paul another phase of witness appears, which was destined to carry the torch of truth to its furthest bounds. The night following his apprehension by the Roman guard, the Lord appeared to Paul and said “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). Here then is a further extension of evidence, linking the apostolic witness at Jerusalem with far off Rome.

At his conversion, Ananias who had been sent by the Lord, said to Paul “The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldst know His will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of His mouth, for thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard” (Acts xxii. 14, 15).

The witness of Paul is twofold. The first part of his testimony ended at Ephesus (Acts xx. 21) “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”. This testimony, however, came to an end.

“And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more” (Acts xx. 25).

The reason for this is given in verses 22-24:

“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem bonds and afflictions abide me, but none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.”

The twofold witness of the Apostle is categorically stated by the Lord Jesus in Acts xxvi. 16:

“I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness BOTH of *these things* which thou hast seen (Acts xxii. 14, 15) and of *those things* in the which I will appear unto thee.”

The testimony here is unmistakable. “Both” must refer to two things. It cannot be used of one only. “These things” are set over against another group called ‘those things’. “I have appeared” is placed in contrast with ‘I *will* appear’, and the whole commission is concluded with a reference to the Gentiles in the present “Unto whom NOW I am sending thee” (as an apostle *apostello*).

This ‘prison ministry to the Gentiles constitutes the final witness of Paul, and leads us to I Tim. ii. 6, 7:

“To be testified in due time, whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (*I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not*); a teacher of the GENTILES in faith and verity.”

Here is a witness which is upon oath—so solemn, so important, so opposed is the testimony here given.

The translation ‘to be testified in due time’ is too tame a rendering to represent the Apostle’s intention. The A.V. margin draws attention to the fact that the original does not use the verb ‘to testify’ but the noun ‘a testimony’, and the words translated ‘in due time’ are in the original *kairois idiois* ‘seasons peculiar’ or ‘its own season’. We meet the same terms in Titus i. 3, where we read:

“Paul a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ (according to the faith of God’s elect; and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began, but hath in due times (*kairois idios*) manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour).”

Again in II Tim. i., Paul writes:

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the *testimony* (the witness still going on) of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner according to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles” (II Tim. i. 8-11).

Both the passage in Titus and the one here go back to a promise and a purpose made ‘before the world began’, literally ‘before age times’, and which finds the time of its testimony NOW, and the instrument of its revelation Paul in his threefold office:

Preacher	\	} of the Gentiles.
Apostle	}	
Teacher	/	

The time had come when ‘all men’ not Jews and proselytes only were to be manifestly the objects of Divine love. The ministry was entrusted to the Apostle Paul, the only one designated ‘the Apostle of the Gentiles’. This testimony had its ‘own peculiar season’ for making its blessed theme known.

The translation ‘in due times’ entirely hides the peculiar character of these times from the reader.

Idios means anything peculiarly one’s own. Thus an *idiograph* means a trade mark, which must of necessity be ‘peculiarly one’s own’. An *idiom* is a note of expression peculiar to a language. An *idiosyncrasy*, is a peculiarity of temperament or constitution, something peculiar to and distinguishing an individual. Even the words *idiot* and *peculiar* when taken to mean one who is of weak intellect, are so used because such persons are ‘on their own’, and different from the normal.

The word ‘peculiar’ in like manner is derived from the Latin *peculium* ‘private property’.

We have it therefore on the highest of all authority, that (1) Dispensational changes are not left to the process of deduction, they are the subjects of witness and testimony. (2) The present dispensation is differentiated from all that goes before it, by the fact that it has its *own peculiar* apostle, Paul, who ministered in his *own peculiar* condition ‘the prisoner of Jesus Christ’, to his *own peculiar* company ‘the Gentiles’, relative to a *peculiar period* ‘before age times’ regarding a calling that had its *own peculiar* seasons, which season is drawing near to its close, as a comparison of the signs of the times with II Tim. iii. and iv. will make clear.

No.5. The Special Announcer for the special testimony. pp. 97 - 100

The testimony to the “one Mediator” and the “Ransom for all” is, as we have seen, a testimony that has ‘its own peculiar season’. This, while demanding a dispensation to itself, demands something more. God uses agents, and stoops to use earthen vessels. ‘How shall they hear?’ says Paul ‘without a preacher?’ Consequently it is not sufficient to realize that there is a special dispensation indicated by the language employed in I Tim. ii., but that of necessity, it implies a special minister. This we believe we could establish by a process of logic from the material supplied in other parts of the Scripture, but happily we have no need to read further than the succeeding verse of the above context, to find that the Apostle himself has anticipated us.

“Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity” (I Tim. ii. 17).

“Whereunto” *eis ho* “unto which” establishes the link, the threefold ministry indicated reveals the human agent, the interposition of the oath, shows how important the matter must be. The peculiar character of this ministry is revealed by the sphere ‘of the Gentiles’ and the contents of this ministry ‘faith and verity’. To this threefold ministry, the Apostle was ‘ordained’. The word chosen for this act is the Greek *tithemi* which is used in John xv. 16. By the use of this word, Paul places himself on the same level as those who were ‘ordained’ by the Lord while on earth.

Tithemi primarily means ‘to place’, ‘to put’, and in its usage takes to itself something of the conception or ordaining or appointing in many passages. For example, Abraham was ‘made’ a father of many nations, and Paul said ‘I have *laid* the foundation’. The word of reconciliation he claimed was ‘committed’ unto him, and that he was ‘put’ into the ministry (Rom. iv. 17; I Cor. iii. 10; II Cor. v. 19; I Tim. i. 12).

In the early days of Paul’s witness, he was obliged to emphasize his apostleship, as a reference to Galatians, I & II Corinthians and Romans will reveal, but as his ministry drew to its close, the apostleship gives place to the ministry of preaching, the fact of being an ambassador yielding place to the importance of his message. The word translated ‘preacher’ is not derived from the same root that provides us with ‘preach’, ‘evangelist’ or ‘gospel’, the word is *kerux* and means ‘a herald’, even as the verb *kerusso* which is also used by Paul for preaching means ‘to make a proclamation’. A *kerux* was ‘a herald, pursuivant, marshal and generally a public messenger, particularly of the character of an ambassador’. It is found in the LXX of Gen. xli. 43 “And a herald (*kerux*) made proclamation (*ekeruxen*) before him”. The only other occurrence in the LXX is Dan. iii. 4:

“And an herald cried aloud, to you it is commanded, O people, nations and languages.”

It will be observed that in the two places where *kerux* is employed in the LXX the ‘herald’ is the servant of a *Gentile* ruler. Moreover, in neither instance can we look upon the ‘heralds’ as preaching. They were not bearers of ‘good things of great joy’ but bearers of the commands of a king. So, the only occurrence of *kerusso* ‘preaching’ in Daniel is in v. 29:

“Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and *made a proclamation* concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.”

The first occurrence of *kerusso* is, as we have seen in the proclamation of Gen. xli. 43. In subsequent Scripture *kerusso* is used of Aaron and Moses in connection with the service of the Tabernacle, and by kings of Israel and Judah and of Persia. It is used of ‘the preaching of Jonah’, who, as we remember, was sent to the Gentiles. Wisdom is personified as ‘crying out’ and this ‘preaching’ or ‘heralding’ is sometimes accompanied by the blowing of trumpets. The only passage which associates this word with the gospel is in Isa. lxi. 1 “The Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings”, and this aspect of ‘heralding’ is carried over into the N.T. So we find it is used of John the Baptist (Matt. iii. 1), and Christ (Matt. iv. 17). It is used very many times in connection with the announcement concerning the kingdom of heaven.

Kerusso is used in Acts eight times, two references being used of Paul himself. The word is found in the earlier epistles of Paul fifteen times, and the later epistles four times. To complete the record, we add that it is used once of Peter (I Pet. iii. 19) and once in the Revelation (Rev. v. 2). *Kerugma* ‘the preaching’ is used of Jonah (Matt. xii. 41; Luke xi. 32), the preaching of Jesus Christ (Rom. xvi. 25) and the preaching of the Apostle Paul (I Cor. i. 21; ii. 4; xv. 14; II Tim. iv. 17; Titus i. 3). This analysis leaves but one other form to be noted, namely *kerux* which occurs three times.

“I am ordained a preacher.” (I Tim. ii. 7).

“I am appointed a preacher.” (II Tim. i. 11).

“A preacher of righteousness” (II Pet. ii. 5).

This collection of occurrences will not be of much use to us unless we take the study further and perceive the intention behind the choice of these terms. Apart from Paul, only one other is called ‘a preacher’ *kerux* and that one is Noah. It is evident that Noah opens an entirely new dispensation, and there is no suggestion that he ever ‘preached’ to the antediluvians in the sense of inviting them to enter the Ark. Noah’s preaching, like Jonah’s, was in the nature of a proclamation. There is something similar in the announcement of Gen. vii. 4 and Jonah iii. 4.

“For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights.”

“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.”

There is, blessed be God, a gospel (*euaggelion*) which must be preached (*euaggelizo*) with all those elements of pity and entreaty with which the preaching of the gospel is associated. This ‘gospel’ is the subject of I Tim. i. 11 and of II Tim. i. 8, 10 and ii. 8, to say nothing of the many references that irradiate the epistles of Paul with their grace and peace.

Timothy himself was enjoined by the Apostle both to do the work of an evangelist (*euaggelistes*) and to preach *kerusso* the Word (II Tim. iv. 2 and 5). It should be remembered that the English word 'preach' is derived from the Latin *proedico* 'to make known in public', and that 'preach' and 'predicate' are doublets, the word 'preach' taking on the evangelizing attributes, leaving 'predicate' to perpetuate the affirmatory characteristic of the original Latin term. As things stand, we have no distinct words in the A.V. to indicate the difference between evangelizing and proclaiming, and therefore the reader should mentally, at least, translate the passages where *kerux*, *kerugma* and *kerusso* occur, into terms that suggest the proclamation of a herald, rather than the invitation or the pleading of an evangelist.

Paul was the herald to whom had been entrusted the proclamation making known 'the testimony in its own peculiar seasons', a subject not for 'preaching', inviting or pleading, but of announcing. As these days come to their close, he exhorts that the Word should be 'proclaimed', fully knowing that in many cases the proclamation will be denied or ignored. Paul could 'beseech' and 'pray' as in Christ's stead that men be 'reconciled to God', but one does not usually 'beseech' or entreat anyone to believe and accept the fact that the day is Saturday or Sunday.

John the Baptist was a 'witness', he was also a 'herald' (John i. 7; Matt. iii. 1). Paul the Apostle was a 'witness', he was also a 'herald' (Acts xxvi. 16; II Tim. i. 11), the one ushering in the dispensation of the kingdom of Heaven, the other ushering in the dispensation of the grace of God for the Gentile. The one baptizing in water only, the other teaching 'one baptism' that of the Spirit, and both separated from their birth to the special ministry they were called to perform.

It is moreover a feature that must not be lightly passed over, that the Apostle paused in the recounting of his threefold office of Preacher, Apostle and Teacher of Gentiles, to interpose the asseveration 'I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not'. On one other momentous occasion he interposed similar strong words 'I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost' (Rom. ix. 1).

Here Paul's theme had been the failure of Israel, and the coming into favour of the Gentiles 'to provoke' had it been possible, the flagging olive tree of Israel 'to emulation'. In I Tim. ii. 7 Israel is no longer in view but throughout the ministry of Paul, there had been continual opposition to his claims, and a resistance to the unfettered preaching of the Gospel to the Gentile. Earlier, he spoke of his own apostleship and 'as a fool', boasting that not only was he a Hebrew, but a minister of Christ. He had more abundant evidence than the rest of the apostles, and said 'as the truth of Christ is in me', while not so strong a term as those employed in Rom. ix. 1 and I Tim. ii. 7, approaches them in seriousness. For matters of less importance the Apostle called upon God as his witness (Rom. i. 9; II Cor. i. 2, 3; Phil. i. 8; I Thess. ii. 5, 10).

When summing up his 'boasting' regarding his apostleship, the Apostle said:

“The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not” (II Cor. xi. 31).

When summing up his distinctive apostleship and commission in the epistle to the Galatians, he says:

“Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not” (Gal. i. 20).

These together with the passages from Rom. ix. and I Tim. ii. space out the great movements in the Apostle’s distinctive ministry.

May the joy of knowing that we have a ‘Daysman betwixt us Who can lay His hand upon us both’, be ever increasing, and may we never cease to testify to the essential and central feature of the Gospel of Grace that:

“There is one Mediator, between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus.”

No.6. The One Appointed Meeting Place. pp. 196 - 199

We have seen in the provision of the One Mediator, that God has answered the deepest need of the human soul, the cry for a “Daysman betwixt us that he might lay his hand upon us both” (Job ix. 33). It is not enough, however, to be conscious of the need, or to be grateful for the provision of this Mediator, we should be concerned to know and to enter into the wondrous results of His Mediation. In this closing study we take up a question put by one of the Minor Prophets, and in its examination and sequel we hope to show further fruits of Mediation. (See also the booklet *Accepted in the Beloved*).

“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?” (Amos iii. 3). In both the Old and New Testament, ‘walk’ indicates manner of life, and the figure has been adopted in our own tongue, when we speak of someone’s “walk” meaning thereby his profession. The text from Amos opens the question of fellowship and its relation to division, and one of the passages that come to mind will be that of Eph. iv. “Walk worthy of the calling . . . keep the Unity of the Spirit”.

Amos, however, is not stressing the ‘walk’ of the people of God here, so much as their ‘walk together’ where ‘unity’ is shown as the word indicates in such a passage as that of Psa. cxxxiii. 1:

“Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

Amos stresses that such ‘walk together’ as he contemplates is impossible without agreement, the adverb of negation translated ‘except’ being the word translated ‘nothing’ in verse four. It is evident that the full meaning of the passage depends largely upon the word ‘agreed’, and as agreement may arise from a variety of causes, we must consult

once again the original before we can attempt an explanation. The Hebrew *yaad* which is translated 'agree' means primarily 'to appoint' and is translated by such terms as agree, set time, assemble, gather, meet and betroth. The fact that this agreement is one that arises from an appointment, lends an element of solemnity about it especially when we remember that the appointment is made by God Himself.

The connection between this verse in Amos and the sacrificial work of the One Mediator becomes apparent when we realize that the word translated 'agreed' is found in Exodus and Numbers where it is used of the 'meeting of God and man in the Tabernacle and at the Mercy Seat.

AT THE MERCY SEAT

"Thou shalt make a mercy seat and there I will MEET with thee" (Exod. xxv. 17-22).

AT THE DOOR

"There shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord: where I will MEET with you, to speak there with you. And there I will MEET with the children of Israel" (Exod. xxix. 42, 43).

COVERED BY THE INCENSE

"Take unto thee spices beat some of it very small, and put it before the testimony where I will MEET with thee" (Exod. xxx. 34-36).

THE LIVING PRIEST

"Take of every one of them a rod lay them up where I will MEET with you" (Numb. xvii. 2-4).

We can, therefore, retranslated the question of Amos:

"Can two walk together except they have MET?",

and the meeting place is of Divine Appointment. The Mercy Seat is mentioned once in the N.T. namely in Heb. ix. 5, where the Greek equivalent is the word *hilasterion*. This word occurs but once elsewhere, namely in Rom. iii., where it is translated 'propitiation'.

"Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25).

There can be no possible fellowship between man and God apart from this great appointed way. To ignore this is fatal. Notice the insistence upon the appointed place, by the recurrence of the words 'there' and 'where' in the passages quoted above. They all concur in the testimony of Peter that there is none other Name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. The first passage, Exod. xxv. 17-22, takes us within the veil. The second, Exod. xxix. 42, 43, takes us without to the door of the Tabernacle. The first is related to an offering made once a year on the day of atonement, the second is related to offerings that were made daily, continually, throughout the generation, morning and evening. In both access is in view, in both access is alone possible through the sacrifice offered and accepted. The third passage does not speak of sacrifice, but of holy fragrance. There is a connection between the sacrifice and the incense, even as there is a connection between the Ark and the Mercy Seat within the veil, and the door of the Tabernacle and the other extreme. The first article of furniture

for the Tabernacle that is specified is the Ark, the last is the Altar of incense. The Ark, together with the Mercy Seat, speaks of righteousness and atonement; the Altar of incense speaks of intercession and acceptance. Prayer is likened to incense in Psa. cxli. 2: "Let my prayer be set forth before Thee as incense." This incense is called 'perpetual', which like the shewbread and the breastplate was 'always' or 'continually' before the Lord, for of Christ it is written "He EVER liveth to make intercession for us" (Heb. vii. 25). This incense is called 'sweet' which refers to the spices of which it was compounded. The relation of the incense with the meeting of the Lord and His people at the Mercy Seat suggests that fellowship with God commences with the death of Christ, but continues through His ever present intercession at the right hand of God. No strange incense was permitted, the holy oil associated with it was never put upon a 'stranger' (Exod. xxx. 33). All of which testifies to the preciousness of that sweet smelling savour that ascends through the work of Christ to God on our behalf, and through Him *alone*.

We may appreciate therefore the better, the literal rendering of I Pet. ii. 7.

"Unto you therefore which believe IS THE PRECIOUSNESS."

The fourth passage quoted above emphasizes, not so much the death of the sacrifice, but the ever living Priesthood of Christ. This command, to lay up the rods of the tribes before the Lord arose out of the rebellion of Korah, which occupies Numb. xvi. There is but ONE sacrifice for sin, and there can be but ONE Mediator between God and Man, even as there is but ONE Lord in the Unity of the Spirit. Christ stands alone, unchallenged and unchallengeable, His own testimony was "No man cometh unto the Father, BUT BY ME".

The fact that of the twelve patriarchal rods, that of Aaron alone 'budded', emphasized the great truth of the ever living Head of the redeemed, and the fact that the Ark contained but three things (1) The tables of stone, (2) The pot of manna, (3) The rod that budded shows what an important place this truth occupies. He Who died now lives, even as Paul wrote to the Romans:

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 34).

Keeping still before us the question of Amos "How shall two walk together except they have met?" Let us in conclusion turn to Isa. liii., for there we shall not find a promise or an invitation to meet the Lord, but the twofold ground upon which that meeting rests. The two verses in Isa. liii., to which we refer are verses 6 and 12. In the A.V. they read thus:

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord had laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

"He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

At first sight these passages do not appear to speak specifically of 'meeting' which is the theme we are pursuing, but a reference to the original reveals that one Hebrew word *paga* occurs in both verses 6 and 12, and the verse could be revised to read:

“The Lord hath made to MEET on Him the iniquity of us all.”
“And made a MEETING PLACE for transgressors.”

Here therefore is a twofold meeting place, the one a place where our sins and God’s judgment, but met not on our heads, but upon Him Who died ‘the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God’; the other a meeting place where the transgressor now reconciled may find access and acceptance, might be ‘numbered’ or ‘reckoned’ with the righteous, because He, His Lord and Saviour, stooped to be ‘numbered’ or ‘reckoned’ with transgressors.

Blessed be God. Who spared not His Son; blessed be the Lord Who gave Himself; blessed be the Spirit Who takes of these things of Christ and reveals them unto us; blessed be God for “The One Mediator between God and man”.

On the Threshold pp. 219, 220

“Ye also ought to wash one another’s feet” (John xiii. 14).

John xiii. commences a fresh section. John xii. has concluded with the solemn words of Isa. vi. and the rejection of Israel. The Lord now turns to His disciples. In chapter i. He came to His own and His own received Him not. Chapter xiii. 1 shows us another ‘own’. Almost the first recorded incident in this new section is the washing of the disciples’ feet. Verse 10 is full of blessed teaching. “He who *hath been bathed*, (needeth not save to wash his feet) but is *clean every whit*.”

The Lord now tells His disciples that what He did to them, they are to do for one another. It is evident that He did not mean literally *washing the feet* by the question of verse 12 and the statement of verse, for they knew the literal fact; it was the symbolic meaning they may not then have grasped. Forgiveness of sins is a thing once and for ever accomplished. Clean every whit, but the walk through life brings us into contact with defilement when we leave the way of the Lord Psa. cxix. 1. There are some who seek to point out and to remove the sins of the child of God who forget that the Lord “took a towel and girded Himself” that is humbled Himself as servant, not to dictate but to serve, see Gal. vi. 1. May we do as He did and in the same spirit of meekness.

“Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord” (Matt. xxi. 9).

Psa. cxviii. 20-26 should be read in connection with this verse, and it will appear that its fulfillment is yet future. It speaks of the *Stone rejected becoming Head of the corner*, which was the rejection of Christ by the Jews (cf. Acts and I Pet. ii.). Hence we find that after the solemn words of Matt. xxiii. 37, 38, the Lord repeats these words in verse 39, Israel are yet to say unfeignedly, those words which were then but empty sayings. Verses 17-20 give the miracle of the fig tree. The fig tree is a type of Israel, and how fittingly it comes in here, “*He came to it and found nothing thereon presently it withered away*”. Israel’s Hossanah’s were *leaves* merely, for within a few days they cried “Away with Him, crucify Him”. The Stone was rejected, and will be so until, having smitten the feet of the Great Gentile Image (cf. Dan. ii.), the Stone, i.e. the Lord Jesus, accepted by the saved remnant of Israel, will fill the earth and rule from sea to sea. May we in the interval, *our time of grace*, seek to please Him Who is at the right hand of God, waiting for ‘that Day’ of Matt. xxiii. 39.

On the Threshold

p. 240

“My soul wait thou only upon God” (Psa. lxii. 5).

The word translated ‘wait’ is exceedingly expressive, it means ‘silence’ and ‘to be silent’. Psa. xxxvii. 7 “Rest in the Lord” (margin ‘be silent’). True prayer has more of this expressive silence than we are apt to think. Prayer asks, but not with worrying repetition. We know that if we do those things that please Him, and ask according to His will, He heareth us, then let us wait, rest, be silent. Already in verse one the Psalmist has said that his soul waited or was silent to the Lord, and in verse 5 he again, as it were, exhorts himself to this attitude of faith. Notice the emphasis on the word *only*. When we realize that He *only* is our rock and salvation, we shall do so (verses 2, 6). Verse 2 says “I shall not be *greatly* moved”; verse 6 says “I shall not be moved”. This continuance of patient, restful trust in God, to be silent to Him (verse 1) and to further be silent *only* to Him, not only gives the assurance of not being *greatly* moved, but of not being moved at all. Note verse 7 “in God”, just so far as we can appropriate the ‘onlys’ and “in God’s” of the Psalm, so far shall we truly pray and receive the blessed answer.

*“We have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities”
(Heb. iv. 15).*

The inference from this wondrous verse is (16) “Therefore let us come boldly unto the throne of grace”. It is well to have learned to sorrow for sin, to confess sin, to forsake sin, but there is a lesson which few can learn fully, and which many learn wrongly to their own undoing, that is, sin must not keep us away from the throne of grace but should rather lead us there. There is at the right hand of God, One Who, sinless Himself, passed through this world, suffered its trials and temptations, and is now able to succour them that are tempted. He is touched with a feeling of our weakness; what a statement! He Who is God over all, Who overcame death and the devil, Who has all power in heaven and earth, that One Who was and is perfect righteousness and holiness, yet He can be touched with the feeling of our weakness. Gracious Lord, lead me more frequently to that throne of grace, where as the Great High Priest Thou dost sit, Thy work finished, and thy wondrous office now to present and meet Thy erring peoples’ need. “Therefore let us come.”

The Pleroma

No.5. The Age-Times, when do they begin?

pp. 3 - 9

In the great majority of cases the translations “everlasting”, “eternal” and “forever”, in the A.V., are renderings of the Greek *aionios*, *aion* and the Hebrew *olam*. The A.V., however, renders *aion* by “world”, “course”, “age”, “eternal” as well as “ever”, and in conjunction with various prepositions it gives as translations “since the world began”, “from the beginning of the world” and “while the world standeth”.

Such translations of a word that can range from a “world” which had a “beginning” and will have an end, to “eternity” which confessedly has neither, are too wide to be of service, especially when the choice depends largely upon the theological views of the translator.

Olam, the Hebrew word, comes from a root meaning something hidden or secret (Psa. xix. 12) and suggests a period of time of undefined limits. *Aion* is used in the Septuagint to translate the Hebrew *olam*, and this we must take as our guide.

In the book of Ecclesiastes the word *olam* occurs seven times, and is translated in the A.V. as follows:

- “The earth abideth *for ever*” (i. 4).
- “It hath been already of *old time*” (i. 10).
- “No remembrance *for ever*” (ii. 16).
- “Set the *world* in their heart” (iii. 11).
- “It shall be *for ever*” (iii. 14).
- “A portion *for ever*” (ix. 6).
- “Man goeth to his *long home*” (xii. 5).

Such variety provides no connected thought, but a consistent translation of *olam* reveals a definite line of teaching.

Olam in Ecclesiastes.

- A | i. 4. The earth abideth to the *age*.—The passing generation.
- B | i. 10. It hath been already in or to the *ages*.—
Nothing new under the sun.
- C | ii. 16. No remembrance of the wise more than of the fool to the *age*.—
Forgotten in the days to come.
- D | iii. 11. He hath set the *age* in their heart.—
Beginning to end of God’s work past finding out.
- C | iii. 14. Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be to the *age*.—
God’s work remains.
- B | ix. 6. Neither have they any more a portion to the *age*.—
No portion under the sun.
- A | xii. 5. Man goeth to his *age* home.—The passing generation.

Leaving these passages until we are more prepared to consider their teaching in detail, we pass to another group, this time in the N.T., namely, in the epistle to the Ephesians. There the word *aion* is translated as inconsistently as we found its parallel *olam* in Ecclesiastes.

- “This *world*” (i. 21).
- “The *course* of this world” (ii. 2).
- “The *ages* to come” (ii. 7).
- “From the beginning of the *world*” (iii. 9).
- “*Eternal* purpose” (iii. 11).
- “Throughout all ages, *world without end*” (iii. 21).
- “Rulers of the darkness of this *world*” (vi. 12).

Here we have a strange assortment. This *world*, which had a *beginning*, but which has *no end*, and the *course* of this world, and the *eternal* purpose which terms are hardly comparable. Translate the word *aion* consistently, and order, light and instruction take the place of human tradition and confusion.

***Aiōn* in Ephesians.**

- A | i. 21. Rulers of this and the coming *age*.—
Subject to Christ in resurrection.
- B | ii. 2. The *age* of the world.—Satanic energy (*energeō*).
- C | ii. 7. *Ages* to come.—Display of divine grace (future).
- D | iii. 9. Hid since the *ages*.—The mystery.
- C | iii. 11. The purpose of the *ages*.—Display of divine wisdom (now).
- B | iii. 21. The generations of the *age* of the *ages*.—Divine energy (*energeō*).
- A | vi. 12. Rulers of the darkness of this *age*.—
Withstood by believers in resurrection power.

All lovers of the Word must see how great is the loss which we have sustained through the traditional translation. “The eternal purpose” sounds very grand, it gives a certain sound of reality and indefectibility to the purpose of God, yet it is a double violation. The noun *aion* is translated as though it were the adjective *aionion*, apart from the mistake of putting eternity where age should have been. What we have to learn is that the Bible does not speak of “eternity”. It was not written to tell us of eternity. Such a consideration is entirely outside the scope of revelation. Many, many undreamed wonders will doubtless be unfolded when the ages are no more. What they will be and what they will involve is idle and profitless speculation. The Word of God as it has been given is a complete system of teaching *for us*; it does not treat fully of the creation around us, much less of the time before or after the present six days’ creation. While we acknowledge that there is much which our curiosity would tempt us to ask, we do most readily acknowledge the divine boundaries of our studies, realizing that by the repeated emphasis upon the teaching of the *ages*, and the absence of teaching concerning *eternity*, the Lord is still showing us (as is expressed in Ecclesiastes) that the time has not yet arrived when we may “find out the work that God maketh *from the beginning to the end*”.

Our Immediate Enquiry.

Accepting the fact of the ages and of the age-times, we now enquire from the Scripture an answer to the question “when did they commence?”

As a fuller contribution to the subject, we place before the reader some of the most important expressions that are found in the N.T. dealing with the time factor of the ages. Such expressions as “the end of the world”; “since the world began”; “this world”; “the world to come” are known to all; we now propose to submit them to a more careful scrutiny, so that the Scriptural association of time with the ages shall be better seen. The reader already knows that *aion* is often translated “world” in the A.V.; and while it is a good rendering, meaning etymologically “the age of man” (*vir-eld*), it simplifies the enquiry if we agree to translate *kosmos* by “world” and *aion* by “age”, thereby preserving the distinction that must be maintained between words of *place* and words of *time*.

“*The end of the world.*” There are more words than one that can be translated “end”; the word used in this phrase is *sunteleia*. In Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 2 & xxviii. 20 *aion* is in the singular, but in the one remaining occurrence, namely in Heb. ix. 26, *aion* is used in the plural. What the significance of this change may be we do not pause at the moment to consider, but just make a note of the fact that nowhere else except in Matthew or Hebrews do we meet the expression *sunteleia tou aionos*. If there is a period that can be called “the end of the world”, there is also a period which speaks of a time “since the world began” or “from the beginning of the world”. We should remember when reading this expression that the word *arche* “beginning” does not occur in the phrase, all that is found in the original being the words *ap aionos* “from (an) age”, when used in Luke i. 70; Acts iii. 21 and xv. 18; and *apo ton aionon* the plural with the article, in Eph. iii. 9 and Col. i. 26. We observe that in the last reference the ages are coupled with the generations a term which we must consider separately.

“*The world to come*” translates two forms, one in which *aion* is spoken of as *erchomenon* “coming”, Luke xviii. 30; and *aion* spoken of as *mello* “about to be” Matt. xii. 32; Eph i. 21 and Heb. vi. 5.

“This world” and “that world” are contrasted, the former expression using *toutou* with *aion*, the latter using *ekeinos*. “That world” occurs but once, namely in Luke xx. 35, but “this world” occurs some fourteen times, and these will be given fuller consideration when the occurrences are being examined in detail. Variations of this expression are found in Gal. i. 4 which adds the words “present” and “evil”, and I Tim. vi. 17, II Tim. iv. 10 and Titus ii. 12, where the word *nun* “now” is added.

One passage contains the phrase “before the ages” (plural) *pro ton aionon*, I Cor. ii. 7, the other passages which speak of “before the world” employ the word *kosmos* not *aion*.

The word “generation” is used in association with the ages. *Genea* has three meanings in the N.T. It means the simple succession from father to son (Matt. i. 17); it means a company of men living at the same time and sharing similar characteristics; and thirdly it

means a mark of time, “the successive lives of offspring being taken to indicate so many stages in the world’s history”.

Aion “age” belongs to no one particular dispensation or line of teaching. It occurs in all but five of the twenty seven books of the N.T., the epistles that contain no reference are I & II Thessalonians, James, Philemon and III John. *Aionios* the adjective translated “eternal” and “everlasting” occurs in nineteen books of the N.T., being omitted in I Corinthians, I Thessalonians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, James and II & III John. The books therefore which contain both *aion* and *aionios* are the four Gospels, Acts, Galatians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Hebrews, I & II Peter, I John, Jude and the Revelation. We must examine some of these occurrences in detail, and we shall have to consider the bearing of *apo* “from”, *pro* “before”, and *eis* “unto” or “for”, before we can even begin to come to any conclusion as to when the age-times began.

What does the Scripture mean by “age-times”? Is such a term a correct translation of the original? What light do parallel constructions throw upon the phrase? Where does the expression occur? What light do we get from the context? Are there parallel, though different expressions, that should be considered? Let us address ourselves to these and any related questions that may occur during the investigation.

The rendering “age-times” is not found in either the A.V. or the R.V. In the A.V. the translation reads “before or since the world began” and in the R.V. the rendering is “through” or “before times eternal”. “Before the world began” is at least understandable, but “before times eternal” cannot be understood without a very drastic revision of the meaning ascribed to “eternal”. If eternal thing have neither beginning nor end, then it is impossible to speak of a period before times eternal—the translation is figurative, and does not contribute to our understanding or add to our knowledge.

The occurrences of the expression are three in number, and we give them first of all as they occur in the A.V.

“Now to Him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret *since the world began*, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.” (Rom. xvi. 25-27).

“Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus *before the world began*, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Tim. i. 8-10).

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised *before the world began*; but hath in due times manifested His word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour” (Titus i. 2, 3).

The Greek words translated “before” or “since” the world began, are *chronois aioniois* in Rom. xvi. 25, and *pro chronon aionion* in II Tim. i. 9 and Titus i. 2. We observe

that the expression in either form is exclusive to Paul, and that such an exclusive character is emphasized in the context by such added terms as “my gospel”; “through the gospel whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles”; “through preaching which is committed unto me”.

Our first note therefore is that the term “before the world began” or “since the world began”, however we are obliged ultimately to translate the original, belongs exclusively to the ministry of Paul.

Secondly we note that there is a difference between the phrase found in Rom. xvi., and those found in II Timothy and Titus. The former speaks of a period “since”, the latter of a period “before” the beginning of the world. We must be careful therefore to keep these two periods distinct, together with the revelations associated with them.

Ignoring for the time being the preposition *pro* “before” or the dative case, translated by the A.V. ‘since’, let us examine the words *chronon aionion*. It is not a matter of debate that *aionios* is an adjective derived from *aion* the noun, or that *chronos* is a noun. If we read in Matt. xxv. 19 *meta de chronon polun* we naturally translate “but after a long time”. If we find the order of the words reversed as in John v. 6 *polun chronon*, while the emphasis may be shifted, the translation must remain the same, *polun* still remains an adjective, *chronon* still remains a noun. The word *chronos* ‘time’ is not of frequent use in the epistles, occurring only twelve times in the fourteen written by Paul, and when we turn to Romans, II Timothy and Titus in the hope of observing the usage of *chronos* in those three epistles which use the phrase ‘since’ or ‘before’ the world began, we find but one passage, namely Rom. vii. 1 “the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth”, literally ‘for a long time’ *eph hoson chronon*.

Aionios the adjective, is derived from *aion*, and must retain whatever essential meaning pertains to the noun. It is impossible that the noun should be translated ‘age’, which most certainly had a beginning, and will certainly have an end, and to translate the adjective ‘everlasting’ or ‘eternal’. Keeping to Paul’s epistles we find *aionion* translated ‘eternal’, ‘everlasting’, and ‘for ever’, except in the three passages before us, Rom. xvi. 25; II Tim. i. 9; and Titus i. 2, where we read ‘since, or before, the world began’. If *chronos* is translated ‘world’, then *aionios* must have been translated ‘began’, or if *chronos* has been translated ‘began’ because of its association with time, then *aionios* has been translated ‘world’. In any case the translation is exceedingly wide. The Revisers were evidently unsatisfied with this rendering for in the three passages they substitute ‘times eternal’, which though it adheres more to the actual words so translated, is still too poetic to be of use, for ‘times’ belong to one category and ‘eternal’ to another. We can speak of ‘a living death’ but only in a figure; we can speak of ‘times eternal’ but only in a figure. For the purpose of discovering at what point in the outworking of the purpose of the ages these ‘times eternal’ commence, such a translation is valueless. There is nothing for it but to adopt either the foreign-sounding phrase ‘eonian times’, or the cumbersome expression ‘age-times’. This latter has the advantage of presenting to the eye the fact that we are still within the bounds of the ages, and not dealing with either ‘the world’ as in the A.V. or ‘eternity’ as in the R.V.

We must now return to those passages that are under review, to observe any particular features that will help us in our attempt to place them in the outworking of the Divine purpose.

First, we will give Weymouth's rendering of Rom. xvi. 25-27, with our own emphasis of each occurrence of *aion* and *aiionios*.

“To Him Who has it in His power to make you strong, as declared in the Good News which I am spreading, and the proclamation concerning Jesus Christ, in harmony with the unveiling of the Truth which IN THE PERIOD OF PAST AGES remained unuttered, but has now been brought fully to light, and by the command of THE GOD OF THE AGES has been made known by the writings of the Prophets among all the Gentiles to win them to obedience to the faith—to God, the only wise, through Jesus Christ, even to Him be the glory THROUGH ALL THE AGES” (Rom. xvi. 25-27. *Weymouth*).

The words *chronois aiionios* in Rom. xvi. 25 are in the dative case. This case is used to denote ‘a space of time’, ‘for’, as in Acts xiii. 20; John ii. 20. (The A.V. use of the word ‘since’ is without precedent; this demands the preposition *apo*, or its equivalent.) In the space of time known as the ‘age times’, a truth had been ‘kept secret’. As the word *musterion* and its derivations express the idea of something ‘secret’, and as the word translated ‘kept secret’ in the original of Rom. xvi. 25 is *sigao* ‘to keep silence’ (see I Cor. xiv. 28, 34), the translation of the A.V. is misleading. The word does not indicate that the truth in view was never made known *at all*, or *at any time*, but that during the space of time known as the age-times it was ‘hushed’, that period ending with the revelation found in the epistle to the Romans, and referring, not to the Mystery of Ephesians, but to the inner portion of Romans, namely Rom. v. 12 - viii. 39, where instead of the law of Moses and personal transgression being the dominant theme, Moses retires into the background and Sinai is exchanged for ‘the law of sin and death’. Adam now takes the place of Moses, and the ruin of the creature is stressed rather than personal transgressions, ‘sin’ rather than ‘sins’. Since the call of Abraham, and during the period of Israel's discipline this inner teaching of Romans remained unemphasized, but with the commission of the Apostle, the hour struck for its proclamation. A comparison of Rom. i. 1-7 with Rom. xvi. 25-27, will reveal some things in common, and some that differ.

The structure of the epistle to the Romans is exceedingly complex, as we can well believe of so mighty an epistle. Simplified to the extreme it appears somewhat like this:

- A | i. - v. 11. Sins, rather than sin.
(Outer) Law of Sinai.
Abraham, Israel, Jew and Gentile.
- B | v. 12 - viii. 39. *Sin, rather than sins.*
Adam, not Abraham.
Law of sin and death.
- A | ix. - xvi. 24. Dispensational and Practical problems.
Abraham, Israel, Jew and Gentile.
- B | xvi. 25-27. *The mystery that had been “hushed”.*
No doctrine of Adam outside of the epistles of Paul.

No.6. Paradise Lost and Restored. pp. 27 - 30

If 'before the overthrow of the world' and 'before the age times' refers to the same datum line, and if the 'overthrow' be Gen. i. 2, then Gen. i. 2 must have taken place before the ages began, and consequently we have an indication that the ages are coincident with the present temporary creation which, together with its 'firmament', will pass away when the purpose of the ages shall be accomplished. The opening and closing members of the purpose of the ages may be set out as follows:

- A | The Beginning. Before Age times. |
 - a | Christ. Firstborn of all creation. Image of invisible God.
 - b | Satan. Cherub (Ezek. xxviii. 12-19).
 - c | The overthrow (Gen. i. 2).
- * * * * *
- A | The End. Age finish. |
 - a | Christ. Head. Every knee shall bow.
 - b | Church. In the heavenlies. Satan destroyed.
 - c | Reconciliation achieved.

The space indicated by the (* * * * *) is spanned by the ages. The first of the series of fullnesses that fill this gap is, as we have seen, the six-day creation of Gen. i. 3 - ii. 14. The opening generation is NOT that of Adam, as recorded in Gen. v. 1, but of "the heavens and the earth" which occupies Gen. ii. 4 - iv. 6. This is followed by twelve generations, which open with "The book of the generations of Adam" (Gen. v. 1), and closes with "the book of the generation of Jesus Christ". The relationship of these generations may be set out as follows:

- A | "The generations of the heavens and of the earth" (Gen. ii. 4 - iv. 26).
- A | a | The BOOK of the generations (plural) of Adam. (Gen. v. 1 - vi. 8).
- b | The generations of Noah. (Gen. vi. 9 - ix. 29).
- c | The generations of the sons of Noah. (Gen. x. 1 - xi. 9).
- d | The generations of Shem. The line of the seed (Gen. xi. 10-26).
- e | The generations of Terah (in Mesopotamia and Canaan). (Gen. xi. 27 - xxv. 11).
- f | The generations of Ishmael, son of bond-woman. (Gen. xxv. 12-18).
- f | The generations of Isaac, son of free woman. (Gen. xxv. 19 - xxxv. 29).
- e | The generations of Esau (in Canaan and Mount Seir). (Gen. xxxvi. 1-43).
- d | The generations of Jacob the line of the seed (Gen. xxxvii. 1 - l. 26).
- c | The generations of Aaron and Moses. (Numb. iii. 1-4).
- b | The generations of Pharez. (Ruth iv. 18-22).
- a | The BOOK of the generations (singular) of Jesus Christ. (Matt. i. 1-17).

It will be observed that the word “generation” is used in the plural of each except the last. The generations refer to the descendants, as may be seen by an isolated generation like that of Ruth iv. 18-22; the generation of Jesus Christ however refers to his human ancestry not to His descendants, for He had none. In the generations of the heavens and the earth, are recorded the following features:

- (1) The forming of man from the dust, and his becoming a living soul.
- (2) The planting of the garden eastward in Eden.
- (3) The prohibition concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- (4) The naming of the animals and Adam’s conscious loneliness.
- (5) The formation of the woman as a help meet for him.
- (6) The temptation and the fall, the curse and sorrow.
- (7) The promise of the seed of the woman and ultimate victory.
- (8) The return of man to the dust from whence he had been taken.
- (9) The expulsion from Eden and the placing of the sword and cherubim.
- (10) The two seeds as manifested in Abel and Cain.
- (11) The appointment of Seth instead of Abel.

Fuller details could of course be included, and the reader must remember that there is no significance in the number that we have indicated. In view of the balancing feature in the book of the Revelation, we can write over this period the words “Paradise Lost”, without borrowing any ideas from Milton, even as we can write over the closing chapter of the Revelation “Paradise Restored”. The book of the Revelation does not reach as far as “The end” of I Cor. xv. 24.

Two main themes commences in Gen. iii. that continue to the end of time, and which constitute the conflict of the ages. These are (1) The promise of the woman’s Seed, (2) The continuous enmity between the two seeds until ultimate victory is achieved. For long after the New heavens and earth, death will still be an enemy (I Cor. xv. 24-28). The loss sustained as a consequence of the Fall is symbolized in the expulsion from the garden with the consequent denial of access to the tree of life, but restoration is pledged by the placing of the cherubim together with a flaming sword to keep the way of the tree of life. In the sequel, when the intervening gap is filled by the fruits of redemption, we are taken by a series of steps back to Eden and its blessedness, as is made manifest by the following extract from the close of Revelation.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away and he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life and there shall be no more curse that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. xxi. 4; xxii. 1-3, 14).

Here is the complete reversal of the consequences of the fall of man in Eden, and we have surveyed yet another “fullness”, the fullness of Redemption that spans the ages and their burden of sin and death. One feature demands a somewhat fuller treatment here, and that is the cherubim and their purport. The several occasions when the cherubim are

introduced into the Scriptures are as follows. Beginning with the passage in Ezekiel which antedates Eden we have the following:

Ezek. viii.	Eden. Profaned. Cast out. The anointed.
Gen. iii.	Eden. Pledge of life and restoration.
Exod. xxv.	The Tabernacle and the Mercy Seat.
I Kings. vi.-viii.	The glory and the Temple.
Ezek. i.-xi. & xli.	The glory departing and returning.
Rev.	“The four beasts.” The pledge fulfilled.

If we set out these passages in the form of a correspondence, we immediately become aware of some member that is missing. It will be worth the space if this necessity can be demonstrated and felt.

A		Ezek. viii.	The anointed cherub, his pride, his fall.	
B		Gen. iii.	Paradise lost. The pledge of restoration.	
C		Exod. xxv.	Tabernacle.	\
		I Kings. vi.-viii.	Temple.	} Israel.
		Ezek. i.-xi. & xli.	Glory.	/
A		?	<i>Nothing recorded.</i>	
B		Rev.	Paradise restored.	

Something is missing that will counterbalance the pride and the fall of the anointed cherub at the beginning. The very fact that the word “anointed” might be included, points us to Christ, the true anointed, for that is the meaning of the Hebrew “Messiah” and the Greek “Christos”. We remember that when the cherubim in the O.T. or the living creatures in the Revelation are described, we have mention of four faces, that of a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle, and these symbols have from earliest times been associated with the four Gospels.

Matthew	The LION	The King
Mark	The OX	The Servant
Luke	The MAN	Genealogy of Adam
John	The EAGLE	The Word

Where the anointed cherub aspired with blasphemous attempt to be like the Most High, the Son of God voluntary left the glory that was His by right and stooped down to death, even to the death of the cross. In this He ‘undid’ (*luo*) the works of the devil (I John iii. 8). Into the space marked A therefore we can put the missing line.

A | The Anointed, His humiliation, His Triumph,

and the record is complete. Thus the outstretched firmament coincides with the outstretched wing of the cherubim, the whole span of the ages being “under the Redeeming Ægis”. “The term ‘ægis’, really a Latin word, means a ‘goat skin’ and later a shield this redeeming conception took a primeval form in the cherubim set up, together with the sword of flame, at the gate of the lost Eden the idea of atonement,

therefore is as old as the Bible, nay, as redemption itself this ‘Day of Atonement’ itself was called ‘Yom Kippur’ i.e. the ‘Day of Covering’ ours is at bottom an evangelical universe, no other form was ever conceived for it in the mind of God" (*Under the Redeeming Ægis* by H. C. Mabie, D.D., LL.D.). The next pair of corresponding passages will be as follows:

- B | Gen. iii. The ages begin. Paradise Lost. |
Earth. Remade and blessed (Gen. i. 2 - ii. 4)
 Subjected to curse, Thorns and thistles (Gen. iii.).
Man. For a little lower than angels (Psa. viii.).
 The first Adam, living soul, the image of God.
 Dominion over the earth.
Usurper. The serpent. The shining one *Nachash* (Gen. iii.).
 Ye shall not surely die. Ye shall be as God.
Hope. The seed of the woman.
- B | Rev. The consummation of the ages. Paradise Restored. |
Earth. Restored and blessed (Hosea ii. 18-23)
 Curse removed (Rev. xxii. 3; Isa. lv. 13).
Man. Christ, made much better than angels (Heb. i. 4).
 Last Adam, Quickening Spirit, Image.
Heir. Lamb is the light, brightness of glory.
 Immortality conferred (I Cor. xv.). Every knee shall bow.
Hope. Creation’s groan hushed (Rom. viii. 21; xvi. 20).

No.7. The Nature of Angels.

pp. 44 - 50

Man, we learn from the Scriptures, was made a little lower than the angels, but is destined by grace eventually to be made higher than these celestial spirits. In Heb. ii., this twofold relationship is spoken of Christ Himself. The section of the epistle that deals with this phase of the redemptive purpose is introduced by the words.

“For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak” (Heb. ii. 5).

If “the sons of God” and “the morning stars” sang together and shouted for joy at creation were angels (Job xxxviii. 7), then it would appear that they had some administrative power in the world that has passed away. If, as we learn, some of the angels fell, that again would suggest a gap which the creation and redemption of man was designed to fill.

In order to follow the implications of Heb. ii. 5, and of the several references to angels that are found in Heb. i. and ii., a careful examination of the Scriptures on the nature, sphere and relationship of angels with the purpose of the ages seem called for.

Four Hebrew words and one Greek word are translated “angel” in the A.V. which we will first of all consider:

- (1) *Abbir* “mighty”. “Man did eat angel’s food” (margin the bread of the mighty) (Psa. lxxviii. 25). The translation ‘angels’ here is by reason of the employment of that word by the Septuagint, but there is nothing in the context or in the general usage of the word to warrant this rendering. The expression seems rather to draw attention to the miraculous sustenance provided by the manna that fell from heaven throughout Israel’s wilderness journeys.
- (2) *Elohim* “God, or gods”. “For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels.” This translation is confirmed by the rendering in Heb. ii. 7. While *elohim* in the bulk of occurrences is rightly translated “God”, it is rendered ‘gods’ 240 times, ‘judges’ 5 times, ‘great’, ‘mighty’ and ‘very great’ once each.

Upon consulting the Septuagint we find that *elohim* is rendered in that version ‘angel’ on four occasions, namely Gen. xxxi. 24; Psa. viii. 5; xcvi. 7; and cxxxviii. 1. Of these translations, Heb. i. 6 “And let all the angels of God worship Him” endorses the LXX rendering of Psa. xcvi. 7. Thus in two passages quoted in Hebrews, namely in Heb. i. 6 and 7 the word ‘angel’ is in the original Hebrew *elohim*.

- (3) *Shinan* “repetition”. “The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels” (Psa. lxxviii. 17). The employment of the word ‘angels’ here is gratuitous. *Shinan* is a term indicating ‘repetition’ and refers to the preceding enumeration. It must be remembered that neither the Hebrews nor the Greeks had the use of the numerals employed by us today in our arithmetic. They used the letters of the alphabet, and the Greeks were able to represent any sum up to 9,999 but after that they were obliged to resort to the expedient of prefixing the letter “M” which turned the number into a “myriad”. By this method the ancient Greek could represent any number up to 99,999,999 but he could get no further. Ten thousand times ten thousand is a multitude ‘which no man can number’. Similarly, different expedients were employed by the Hebrews, and Psa. lxxviii. 17 is an example.

A literal translation is “The chariots of God are myriads twice told thousands of repetition”. While angels may be intended in this passage, it cannot be legitimately quoted as a proof text.

Before we take up the examination of the two main words *malak* and *angelos* that are translated ‘angel’ in the O.T. and in the N.T., there are buried in the Septuagint version a number of references that must be included in our survey in order that the fullest light upon this subject shall be obtained.

We wish to avoid overloading this article with transliterations of either Hebrew or Greek words, and will dispense with their citations wherever it can be done without endangering the argument, believing that any reader who desires, can verify every reference with ease.

We have seen that *elohim* is rendered ‘angel’ in the LXX and to this, one or two other references must be added.

El (Job xx. 15). No reason is offered for translating this by the word angel, we merely record the fact. The title ‘sons of God’ found in Job i. 6 and xxxviii. 7 is translated

‘angels’; in Deut. xxxii. 8 where the original reads ‘according to the number of the sons of Israel’, the LXX reads ‘according to the number of the angels of God’.

Speaking of Leviathan, the Lord says to Job, according to the LXX:

“This is the chief of the creation of the Lord; made to be played with by His angels”
(Job xl. 14).

Again it is beyond our present knowledge to explain the great divergence manifested here between the Hebrew original and the LXX. In Job xl. 6 where the A.V. reads (in verse 11, the enumeration is not similar throughout) “Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath”, the LXX reads ‘Sent forth angels with wrath’. Lastly, so far as Job xxxvi. 14 is concerned, it reads in the LXX:

“Therefore let their soul die in youth, and their life be wounded by angels (*of death*).”

The underlying link between these various and strange renderings is the substitution of the “angel” as the instrument or agent for the personal activity of God Himself. Where the modern man speaks of ‘forces of nature’, the Hebrew speaks of ‘angels’. In both cases instruments or agents are intended.

In II Sam. xv. 13 the word *nagad* is translated ‘angel’ in the LXX, which word in slightly different forms appear in this same chapter as ‘certify’, ‘told’ and ‘tell’ (verses 28, 31 and 35). This rendering bears out the ordinary meaning that attaches to both the Hebrew and the Greek words which are generally translated ‘angel’, namely ‘a messenger’.

There remains just the translation by the word ‘angel’ of the word ‘servant’ (Isa. xxxvii. 24); of the word for ‘ambassador’ (Jer. xxix. 14); and ‘by the hand’ (Prov. xxvi. 6).

These somewhat curious examples of translation may not, it is true, contribute much to our understanding, but the very fact that in them is exhibited every existing reference in the LXX to the word *angelos* (except of course those which now await our examination), means that no light or truth that might have been revealed has been neglected. We can now turn our attention to the most important words that are translated ‘angel’ namely *malak* in the Hebrew and *angelos* in the Greek. *Malak* occurs 213 times, of which 111 occurrences are translated ‘angel’; 98 ‘messenger’, and 4 ‘ambassador’. *Angelos* occurs 188 times, of which 181 occurrences are translated ‘angel’ and ‘messenger’ 7 times.

The first fact to be recorded and to remember throughout this study is that angels belong to the spiritual world. “He maketh His angels spirits” (Psa. civ. 4) and are numbered among ‘things in heaven’ as contrasted with ‘things on earth’ (Matt. xviii. 10; xxiv. 36; xxviii. 2). Those that attain to the resurrection are said to be ‘as the angels which are in heaven’ so far as the matter of marriage is concerned (Mark xii. 25). Scripture moreover insists upon the vastness of the number of these ‘holy myriads’, speaking of ‘the heavenly host’ (Luke ii. 13); and as the Saviour Himself said that he

had but to ask and the Father would send Him ‘more than twelve legions of angels’ (Matt. xxvi. 53). When Jacob was met by the angels while on his way to meet Esau, he said “This is God’s host” (Gen. xxxii. 2) and although a different word is used, much the same meaning is intended when the Scriptures speak of God as “The Lord of Hosts”, and it will be observed that angels are placed in correspondence with hosts in Psa. cxlviii. 2:

“Praise ye Him, all His angels
Praise ye Him, all His hosts.”

Angels are said to be ‘mighty’, to ‘excel in strength’, and ‘holy’, even to so great a saint as Daniel (II Thess. i. 7; Psa. ciii. 20; Acts x. 22 and Dan. x. 5-8), and are of superhuman intelligence (Mark xiii. 32). Some angels are called ‘the elect’, and some angels ‘fell’ (I Tim. v. 21; Jude 6). There are indications in Scripture that there is some kind of order among the ranks of angels, Michael is called ‘The archangel’ and Gabriel is deputed on several specific and important occasions to bear a message (Dan. xii. 1; Jude 9; Rev. xii. 7; and Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21; Luke i. 19, 26).

Not only are there differences of rank among the angels, but the angels appear to be one section of a vast spiritual world consisting of ‘angels, principalities and powers’ (I Pet. iii. 22). Neither the Hebrew *ruach* nor the Greek *pneuma* go so far as the modern use of the word ‘spirit’, which is immaterial, as one philosopher wrote:

“If we seclude space there will remain in the world but matter and mind, or body and spirit.”

The Hebrews when they called angels ‘spirits’, did not deny that they were endued with ‘bodies’, even as the Apostle, speaking of the resurrection, when believers will be like unto the angels of heaven, says ‘there is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body’, and we may, with sufficient safety, assume that angels are spiritual bodies, rather than pure spirits in the modern acceptance of the word’ (Kitto).

The oldest book in the Canon, together with the last book in the N.T. uses the figure of the stars to represent angels.

“The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God (LXX ‘angels’) shouted for joy” (Job xxxviii. 7).

“The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches” (Rev. i. 20).

A star is used prophetically to symbolize the coming Saviour and Ruler, Christ:

“There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall arise out of Israel” (Numb. xxiv. 17).

This too finds its echo in the Revelation:

“I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright and morning Star” (Rev. xxii. 16).

In Rev. ix. 1 a star is seen to fall from heaven, to whom was given the keys of the abyss. It is obvious that an angel is here intended. So also in Rev. viii. 10, 11 “A great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp” is named ‘Wormwood’. Once again a star

in the astronomical sense cannot be intended. Yet again in Rev. xii. 4 we read that the tail of the dragon 'drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth'. It is a physical impossibility for 'a third part of the stars of heaven' to fall upon the earth, and the whole passage is symbolical of the fall of the angels through the influence of Satan. A somewhat similar passage is that of Dan. viii. 10 where we read:

"And it waxed great, even to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and of the stars to the ground, and stamped upon them."

It was evidently an accepted teaching in the days of Job, that 'the stars' were not pure in the sight of God (Job xxv. 5), a belief expressed in other words by Eliphaz (Job xv. 15), where 'His saints' are placed in parallel correspondence with 'the heavens' which he declared 'are not clean in His sight', and this is more definitely stated in Job iv. 18 where Eliphaz says 'Behold, He put no trust in His servants; and His angels He charged with folly'.

The same epistle that reveals that the angels kept not their first estate but left their own habitation, who are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, likens those who came under that baleful influence to 'wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever' (Jude 6, 11).

The Chaldeans and early races of mankind appear to have had a knowledge of the association of the stars with both the angels and with rule which became distorted and perverted, leading them to extravagances of Astrology and the association of the planets with their gods Astarte and Baal, which later appear as Jupiter and Venus.

What are we to understand by 'the star' which led the Magi to the cradle of the infant Christ? *The Companion Bible* comments "all questions are settled if we regard this as miraculous. (Cp. Numb. xxiv. 15-19)". This is true, and recognizes the peculiar nature of the phenomenon. We are all doubtless aware of the many attempts that have been made by astronomers and divines alike to solve the mystery of this peculiar star. Kepler, by observing the conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars, which took place in the year 1604, made calculations that led him back to a conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the constellation of the Fishes (a fish is the astronomical symbol of Judaea), and so to the first year of the Christian era. While all this is very interesting, we must in all fairness reject it as an explanation of the words of the Holy Writ.

This star which the wise men saw in the East 'went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was' (Matt. ii. 9). Such a statement cannot by any explanation be made to refer either to a star in the heavens or to any conjunction of the planets. But if angels are so often called 'stars', if one star at least was described as falling from heaven to the earth 'burning as it were a lamp' for the purposes of judgment; if moreover it is no new thing for an angel to lead the people of God, accompanied by a pillar of cloud by day, and by a burning fire by night (Exod. xiv. 19; xxiii. 23); if an angel can ascend in a flame (Judg. xiii. 20), and finally if it is within the power of a man, to kindle a lamp to guide a friend, or to devise an artificial 'moon' to encircle the earth, is it not within the power of an angel of God to guide the Magi to the house in which the

Infant Christ could be found? The angel Gabriel was especially sent to Mary to announce the miracle of the Incarnation, and a multitude of the heavenly host heralded His birth. Is it not reasonable to believe that an angel led the Magi by means of the star which they had seen in the East, and so deliver the whole subject from the astronomical problems that beset the ordinary interpretation?

We have done little more than survey the material contained in Scripture. Our next study must be directed to the place which angels occupied in the ages that are past and what part they will play in the world to come. Anticipating our findings, we believe that we shall discover that the 'gap' occasioned by angelic fall was 'filled' by the creation and subsequent redemption of man made 'for a little lower than the angels'.

One further note upon these references to angels and this article must close. We refer to Heb. ii. 16 which reads as follows in the A.V. and the R.V.

“For verily He took not on *Him the nature of* angels, but He took on *Him* the seed of Abraham.”

A.V. margin Gr. reads: “He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold.” The R.V. follows the A.V. margin.

A great mass of conflicting opinions will be found in commentaries upon this verse, some seeking to prove that Christ did not *assume* angelic form, but human, some seeking to prove that the passage means that He did not *succour* or *assist* angels, but men. As there is no agreement, either among commentators or the A.V. and the R.V., we must turn once more to the Fountain Head. One writer complains that the usage of the word 'to take hold' does not help him; the reason seems that the references do not help his idea of what it means. Let us examine the word afresh, *epilambanomai*.

Matt. xiv. 31	“Stretched forth His hand, and <i>caught</i> him.”
Mark viii. 23	“He <i>took</i> the blind man by the hand.”
Luke ix. 47	“And Jesus <i>took</i> a child.”
Luke xiv. 4	“He <i>took</i> him, and healed him.”
Luke xx. 20, 26	“ <i>Take hold</i> of His words.”
Luke xxiii. 26	“They <i>laid hold</i> upon one Simon.”
Acts ix. 27	“But Barnabas <i>took</i> him.”
Acts xvi. 19	“They <i>caught</i> Paul and Silas.”
Acts xvii. 19	“They <i>took</i> him.”
Acts xviii. 17	“The Greeks <i>took</i> Sosthenes.”
Acts xxi. 30, 33	“They <i>took</i> Paul.”
Acts xxiii. 19	“ <i>Took</i> him by the hand.”
I Tim. vi. 12, 19	“ <i>Lay hold</i> on eternal life.”
Heb. ii. 16	<i>The passage under consideration.</i>
Heb. viii. 9	“I <i>took</i> them by the hand.”

An impartial examination shews that the word is colourless. There is no moral meaning inherent to it. The same word can be used when Christ takes a man by the hand to heal him, as when the Roman soldiers take hold on Simon to compel him to bear the cross. The same word can be used for Barnabas' kindly act in taking hold of Paul to bring him to the apostles, as for the mob who took Paul with intent to kill him. The characteristic use of the word precludes the idea of 'assisting, helping, succouring'. It

also seems to preclude the idea of *assuming*, as in the rendering ‘assuming the nature of angels’. It simply means to take hold upon, whether good or evil motives and objects.

We have already observed that the A.V. italics make Heb. ii. 16 a somewhat needless repetition. May there not be some meaning which has been on the surface all the while? We believe there is. There is a footnote in *The Emphatic Diaglott* which reads, “For truly it”, i.e., the fear of death, or death itself, ‘does not lay hold of, or seize on angels, but of the seed of Abraham it does lay hold’. (*Theolog Ref. and Kneeland*). Those of our readers who are not conversant with the original must know that the ‘he’ or the ‘it’ is contained within the verb *epilambanomai*, and *epilambanetai* means equally *it*, as well as *he*, takes hold. Let us look at the structure again, verses 14-16 are included together there under one member:

- C | 14-16. Oneness in death and deliverance. |
- a | The *death* of Christ.
- The destruction of the Devil who had the strength of *death*.
- a | The deliverance of those subject to bondage of fear of *death*.
- The seed of Abraham laid hold of by fear of *death*.

With the exception of the fourth line, the emphatic word is *death*. If the A.V. reading be retained it introduces a discordant note. If the idea of ‘assisting’ is adopted it harmonizes with ‘deliverance’, but has no relation with the emphatic word ‘death’. What has Scripture to say about angels and death? Luke xx. 35, 36 says:

“But they which are accounted worthy to obtain that age (the very pith and marrow of Hebrews) and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage NEITHER CAN THEY DIE ANY MORE FOR THEY ARE EQUAL TO THE ANGELS.”

If the seed of Abraham, and flesh and blood, were laid hold of by the fear of death and thereby brought into bondage, Christ’s becoming flesh and delivering them from that bondage is a fitting sequel.

“Wherefore in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest” (verse 17).

**No.8. Angels, their relation with the Divine Purpose
as indicated in Heb. i. and ii.
pp. 67 - 69**

In our last study together we did little more than to sort out the usage of the word 'angel', observing the different words that are so translated both in the A.V. and the LXX. With the information thus gathered, we can now devote our time to those passages which treat of the place that the angels have had in the past and may yet have in the working out of the Divine purpose in the future, and how far man is intended under grace to take the place, or 'fill the gap' that the default of the angels occasioned in the beginning. No book of the N.T. treats with this matter so thoroughly as does the epistle to the Hebrews, and therefore to that epistle we now turn.

It is impossible to read Heb. i. and ii. with any attention, and fail to be impressed by the fact that the argument of these chapters is most intimately linked together by the references to angels which abound in this part of the epistle. A brief analysis of this section is as follows:

Hebrews i. and ii.

- A | i. 1, 2. God once spoke by **prophets**. Now by His **Son**.
- B | i. 2-14. The **Son**. His Glories. *Better than angels*.
- A | ii. 1-4. God once spoke by **angels**. Now by the **Lord**.
- B | ii. 5-18. The **Son**. His Sufferings. *Lower than angels*.

The epistle in these two chapters compares and contrasts the ministry of the prophets and of angels with the ministry of the Son, and uses the word 'angel' ten times in this brief compass. Not only so, the argument of chapter i. is enforced by the quotation of seven Psalms, which quotation is distributed in such a way as to compel the reader to admit the presence of a plan and design.

The Seven Psalms of Heb. i.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| A ii. 7. The King on Zion. The decree. | Heb. i.6 |
| B lxxxix. 26, 27. The King. | i. 5 |
| C xcvi. 7. Worship Him all ye gods. | i. 6 |
| D civ. 4. His angels spirits, His ministers a flaming fire. | i. 7 |
| C xlv. 6, 7. Thy throne, O God is for ever and ever. | i. 8 |
| B cii. 25. The Creator. | i. 10, 11 |
| A cx. 1. The Priest on Zion. The oath. | i. 13 |

The argument of this chapter is further enforced by two questions:

- "For unto which of the angels said He at any time, Thou art My Son?" (5).
- "But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand?" (13),

and to remember of the passage quoted and the whole purpose of the chapter is to provide the answer. We must now return to the beginning of this epistle and see how and with what terms these comparisons with angels are introduced. Over against the revelation given in times past through the instrumentality of the prophets, the Apostle places the immeasurable superiority of the ministry of the Son. In chapter iii. Christ as the Son is set over against Moses the servant (iii. 6) and Jesus the Son of God is set forth as the great High Priest Who has 'passed through the heavens' (iv. 14), and as the Son, He is consecrated for evermore (vii. 28).

We have already learned that angels are called 'sons of God', and consequently it may appear at first reading that the language of the Apostle is a little forced, but we are dealing with the inspired Scriptures and know before we go any further that no such conclusion is possible. The contrast between angels and the Saviour is not so much between One who is a Son and those who are not, but a contrast between those who are sons by creation, and the One Who is called "The only-begotten Son", for Heb. i. 5 not only says "Unto which of the angles said He at any time, 'Thou art My Son', but 'Thou art My Son; this day have I BEGOTTEN Thee'."

We must therefore pursue this subject further. Christ is called 'The only-begotten Son' four times in John's Gospel (John i. 14, 18; iii. 16, 18), and once in the first epistle (I John iv. 9). When reading these passages we are not conscious of any problem as we read of the Saviour as the only begotten Son—but the moment we add the final reference to this term, a problem presents itself.

"By faith Abraham when he was tried offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his *only begotten son*" (Heb. xi. 17). Now it is a matter of common knowledge that Abraham was the father, not only of Isaac, but of Ishmael (Gen. xvi. 15) and of other children by Keturah (Gen. xxv. 1). Unless therefore some factor is implied though unexpressed, Heb. xi. 17 presents a difficulty. As we discovered, so we find words employed in the context of Heb. xi. 17 that enable us to perceive something yet more wonderful in the title of the Lord. Abraham is spoken of as 'he that had received the promise', and of the son whom he offered it had been said 'That in Isaac shall thy seed be called' (Heb. xi. 17, 18). Ishmael was as truly begotten by Abraham as was Isaac, but Ishmael is called 'the son of a bondwoman' but Sarah herself as well as Abraham was given a promise by the Lord:

"Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age because she judged Him faithful Who had promised" (Heb. xi. 11).

Sarah too was peculiarly distinguished by the changing of her name, even as was Abraham (Gen. xvii. 5, 14, 16). It is moreover written that the Lord 'visited Sarah as He had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as He had spoke' (Gen. xxi. 1). Sarah was in the blessed line of the true seed, and so carried the promise of Eden forward towards its goal.

Gennaio the verb translated ‘to beget’ is used of the mother also, and is then translated ‘to conceive’, ‘be delivered of’, ‘bear’, ‘be born’, ‘be made’ and ‘to bring forth’. For example:

“Jacob *begat* Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom *was born* Jesus Who is called Christ” (Matt. i. 16).

The word translated ‘only-begotten’ is *monogenes*, and refers to the birth of the Saviour in the fullness of time ‘made of a woman’ (Gal. iv. 4). Another comfortable title is found in Heb. i. 6 ‘First-begotten’ which in the original is *prototokos*.

“And again, when He bringeth in the First-begotten into the world He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him.”

Translators are divided regarding the intention of the Apostle here. The A.V. ‘and again’ makes verse 6 another link in the chain of references quoted by the Apostle. The R.V. “And when He again” makes the word ‘again’ refer to the future.

We observe that the word translated ‘world’ in this verse is the Greek *oikoumene* ‘the habitable world’, and that this word occurs once more in Hebrews, namely in chapter ii., where we read:

“For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak” (Heb. ii. 5).

By reading these two references together, it appears that the world to come will be subjected to Christ as the Firstborn, and not to the angels, and that moreover, the angels will at that great investiture ‘worship Him’. He is ‘the Firstborn of all creation’, ‘the Firstborn from the dead’, ‘the Firstborn among many brethren’. *Pre-eminence* as the ‘first’ is uppermost in the word *prototokos*.

Further comparisons are made in Heb. i. between Christ as the Son and angels. Angels are spirits who minister, but the Son is addressed by the title “God”, and has a ‘throne’ and ‘sceptre’. Not only so He occupies a unique position at the right hand of God, a position never occupied by an angel ‘at any time’. In our next article we shall pursue this theme further.

**No.9. The more excellent name (Heb. i. 4).
pp. 86 - 91**

It is a part of the argument of the epistle to the Hebrews, that the Apostle shall establish a series of ‘better’ things, for he is exhorting his readers ‘to go on unto perfection’, and having been a Pharisee by conviction and a Hebrew by birth, he knew how strong was the hold upon the Jewish believer of the things that belonged to the past.

“Better” in the epistle to the Hebrews.

- A | i. 4. Christ at the right hand (verse 3).
Better than angels. More excellent name.
- B | vi. 9. Things that accompany salvation.
- C | vii. 7, 19, 22. Better priesthood, hope and covenant.
- A | viii. 6. Christ at the right hand (verse 1).
ix. 23. Better covenant, better promises, more excellent ministry,
better sacrifice.
- B | x. 34; xi. 16, 35, 40. Things that accompany salvation.
- C | xii. 24. Better things than the blood of Abel.

In the above outline, the thirteen occurrences of the word ‘better’ are grouped together, and their study is of course a theme in itself. We are concerned at the moment with the opening ‘better’ thing, but it will be impossible for us to forget that such a word is a key thought of the epistle, and that this must have a bearing upon its interpretation.

The first ‘better’ thing of the epistle is the exaltation of Christ (“having become *by so much* better than angels, *by how much* having inherited a more excellent name than they”). This sentence has an un-English sound, and yet it brings out the comparison that is intended. The becoming better than the angels is not by virtue of the Lord’s deity. Looked at from the divine standpoint, He Who is addressed as God (verse 8), must of necessity be better than angels; but looked at from the human standpoint, He was made for a little while lower than the angels, and in that capacity as Son He could be and has been highly exalted. *The measure of His excellence above angels is His inherited name: by how much He has inherited, by so much He is greater.*

The question then has to do with the inherited name. But first, we might pause to ask: Why should such an argument be necessary, and in what way does it contribute to the theme of the epistle?

Writing as he was to Hebrews, the Apostle had in mind their veneration of angels. Stephen alludes to the place that angels hold in Israel, in Acts vii. 53, “who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it”. The epistle to the Galatians says of the law, “it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator” (Gal. iii. 19). Some of the Jews went so far as to contend that Malachi, the last of the prophets was an angel, his name meaning ‘My messenger’ or ‘My angel’. It is part of the

purpose of this epistle to place the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son, far above every other name and dignity. To have commenced with Moses as the law-giver would not have gone back far enough; Moses the mediator received the law by the disposition of angels. It must therefore be shown that Christ is much better than they, to establish His complete superiority. The exaltation of the Lord to the right hand of the Majesty on high marks the time when the Son was given the name that is above every name. It was at the resurrection that He was declared 'Son of God with power'; it was as the risen One that He claimed 'all power' in heaven and in earth; the superiority of the Son above angels is one of degree, 'by so much', and is to be understood in the light of His inherited name. The Lord Jesus by His birth at Bethlehem became 'the Son of God', for said the angel to Mary, "the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). When the Word became flesh, then was seen the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. All through the spotless years of His life up to that dread crisis of the cross, the Father's testimony remained true and unchanged, 'This is My beloved Son'. He vindicated His claim to the name He bore, and the name becomes His by inheritance.

In order to appreciate the emphasis that should be placed upon the 'inherited' name, we take this study a little further in the epistle, and not that in Heb. i. 14 the believer is spoken of as an 'heir of salvation'. All who believe are saved, saved by grace through faith, but some (and this is one of the great themes of Hebrews), will receive salvation as an inheritance also. Christ died for the ungodly, He also learned obedience by the things which He suffered, and though from His birth, 'Holy, harmless and undefiled', He nevertheless was perfected through these sufferings, and became the Author of *aionian* salvation, not simply to those who believe, but to those who 'obey' Him (Heb. v. 7-9). Not only did He become the 'Author' but He became the 'Finisher' or 'Perfecter' of faith. "Who for the joy set before Him endured a cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God" (Heb. xii. 2). There is a 'race' to be run, not only a gospel to be believed.

Those who thus inherit salvation, not only believe, but suffer, endure, run the race set before them, and 'have respect unto the recompense of the reward'. It is useless to speak of glory where there is not life. It is equally useless to speak of an inheritance unless one is already a child "If children, then heirs" is the order of Scripture, and the epistle to the Hebrews does not teach the way of salvation for the ungodly sinner, but deals rather with the pilgrim journey of the saint, with the evil heart of unbelief that can possess a believer at times, of things that accompany salvation, of a salvation that may be inherited.

Soteria "salvation" occurs in Hebrews seven times, and the occurrences are as follows:

- Heirs salvation (i. 14).
- Neglecting so great salvation (ii. 3).
- The Captain of salvation (ii. 10).
- The Author of *aionian* salvation (v. 9).
- Things that accompany salvation (vi. 9).
- Without sin unto salvation (ix. 28).
- Unto the salvation of his house (xi. 7).

Salvation in its primary aspect is so removed from anything that the sinner can do, and is so infinitely beyond the touch of any failure on his part, that to speak of 'neglecting' is to misapply the word. Timothy could be urged not to neglect a gift which he already possessed (I Tim. iv. 14), and these Hebrews could be warned by the example of their fathers in the wilderness of the possibility of failing to reach salvation in its fullest meaning, and that is in view in Heb. ii. 3.

No sinner is saved from the guilt of sin by Christ as a 'Captain'. The figure that sets forth initial salvation is the Passover. Joshua is the type of the Captain of salvation, but he leads a redeemed people on to the promised possession, so the Captain of salvation in Heb. ii. 10 is seen 'bringing many sons (not to life), but *to glory*'. So with the rest of the occurrences of 'salvation' in Hebrews. This is true even with the last which deals with Noah and the Flood. The ungodly were not saved in the Ark. Noah was a saved and justified believer, only eight souls were saved, and the rest of the world destroyed. One can no more use the Ark as a type of initial salvation than one can use the type of the 'Captain' of the salvation that will be manifested at His Second Coming (Heb. ix. 28).

While salvation is found 7 times in Hebrews, the title "Saviour" does not occur. Acts v. 31 speaks of Him as 'A Prince and a Saviour'. Hebrews retains the word 'Prince' (ii. 10; xii. 2, same Greek word) but omits the title 'Saviour'. In the epistle He is Captain, Leader, High Priest and Perfecter, titles that deal with the land of promise rather than with the exodus from Egypt.

Let us now turn our attention to Heb. i. 4:

"Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Let us first of all note the terms of comparison 'by so much', 'by how much', represented in the A.V. of Heb. i. 4 by the words 'so much' and 'as'.

The Apostle employs 'by so much' again in Heb. vii. 22 where we read in connection with the Melchisedec priesthood 'By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament'. The two words *tosoutos* and *hosos* came together in Heb. x. 25 "Exhorting one another and so much the more as ye see the day approaching". We do not need an inspired revelation to assure us that *He* Who is set forth as 'Son' and 'Brightness of His glory', 'Express image of His person', 'Upholder of all things', heir of all things and maker of the worlds, must of necessity be 'better than angels', and the epistle does not say any such unnecessary thing. What Hebrews is concerned to enforce is that he Who was so high, stooped so low, and as Man He became 'lower than the angels', but by virtue of His triumph over sin and death, that is by 'inheritance' and not by absolute inherent right, this same Redeemer has now been raised so much above angels as the inherited Name excels every name that is named in this world and that which is to come. For at the Name of Jesus every knee shall one day bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord.

The Saviour as the Heir of all things, the One Who by reason of His finished work has obtained by inheritance the Name which is above every name, will not enjoy this inheritance alone. He was made one with those who shall share His glory that they may be made one with Him. They too become heirs of salvation, they too, by the exercise of faith and patience ‘inherit the promises’ (Heb. vi. 12) and find in both Noah and Abraham (Heb. xi. 7, 8) examples of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for.

While the bulk of the references to angels occur in Heb. i. and ii., there are two other occurrences that must be included to complete the tale, namely Heb. xii. 22 and xiii. 2. Heb. xii. 5-24 is occupied with a twofold theme: “sons” 5-14, “firstborn sons” 15-24. The first section speaks of that in which all partake if they be true children; the second speaks of that which relates only to the firstborn.

The structure of this second section is as follows:

Hebrews xii. 15 - 25.

- A | 15. | a | Looking diligently.
 - b | Lest any man fall from or fail.
- B | 16, 17. The birthright bartered (*Prototokia*).
- C | 18-21. Ye are not come. Six “ands”. SINAI.
- C | 22, 23. But ye are come. Seven “ands”. SION.
- B | 23, 24. The birthright enjoyed (*Prototokos*).
- A | 25. | a | See.
 - b | Lest ye refuse.

The section opens with a warning: “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God”. It does not say ‘fall from the grace of God’, but ‘fail of the grace of God’. *Hustereo* ‘to come short’ occurs in Heb. iv. 1, and that passage partially explains what we are considering here: “Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.” The context speaks of Israel’s forty years’ wandering in the wilderness, and their failure, though redeemed, to ‘go on unto perfection’. We are not dealing with sonship, but with birthright; not salvation, but possession, not deliverance from Egypt, but entry into Canaan. The warning is for the Hebrews who, like their fathers and like Esau, were in danger of drawing back, turning aside, losing the heavenly for the sake of the earthly. Heb. viii. 7 continues, ‘Then should no place have been sought for the second’, showing that the two covenants are here in view. The Apostle now brings before the mind the two mountains, Sinai and Sion, which are explained in Gal. iv. as representing the two covenants, Sinai standing for ‘Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children’, and Sion for ‘Jerusalem that is above is free, which is our mother’ (Gal. iv. 21-23 R.V.).

We have in Heb. xii. 18-21 Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, and in Heb. xii. 22-24 Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, and it is under the new covenant, and not under the old, that the birthright can be enjoyed.

The figure called *Polysyndeton* (or ‘many ands’), is employed in the description of both covenants. Let us notice it:

“For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, AND that burned with fire, AND unto blackness, AND darkness, AND tempest, AND the sound of a trumpet, AND the voice of words.”

“But ye are come unto Mount Sion, AND unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, AND to myriads of angels, a full assembly, AND to a church of firstborn ones having been enrolled in heaven, AND to God the Judge of all, AND to the spirits of righteous ones having been perfected, AND to the Mediator of the new covenant—Jesus, AND to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel.”

It will be seen that a due observation of these ‘ands’ will help us to keep each feature in its place.

The A.V. leads one to read “To the general assembly and church of the firstborn”, as though it were one company. *Paneguris*, the word translated ‘general assembly’, means an assembly met together for some festal or joyful occasion, and the construction of the passage necessitates the translation: “And to myriads, a festal assembly of angels.”

We learn that myriads of angels were associated with Sinai and the giving of the law: “The chariots of the Lord are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place” (Psa. lxxviii. 17; see also Deut. xxxiii. 2). If these angels were at mount Sinai, they will also be at mount Sion, and there they will be a ‘festal assembly’, for ‘the marriage of the Lamb’ will have come.

This church is the church of the firstborn, a special company, those who did not despise their birthright, nor barter it away for a morsel of meat. This same company is referred to as ‘The spirits of just men made perfect’, each expression having been used in the context of chapters xi. or xii. In xii. 9 we read of “The Father of spirits”; in x. and xi. ‘the righteous’ are in view (x. 38; xi. 4, 7, 8), and in xi. 40 it is their perfecting: “God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be perfected.”

The close association of the ‘better thing’, the ‘better country’, and the ‘better resurrection’, with this perfecting shows that here in Heb. xii. we are taken to that time when the church of the firstborn shall be completed and enter into its inheritance. Here Abraham will set foot in that city for which he looked; Moses will receive that reward unto which he had respect; all who believed, yet died, not having received the promise, will enter into their birthright. The Mediator is not Moses, neither is the blood the blood of bulls and goats; Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant, and this blood of sprinkling speaks better things than that of Abel.

The heavenly Sion is before the Apostle right through the epistle. The ‘so great salvation’ of ii. 3 is connected with the ‘world to come’ of which the Apostle spoke in ii. 5, and the ‘glory’ unto which the Captain of salvation was leading (ii. 10). The words: “He is not ashamed to call them brethren” (ii. 11), the thought of the Captain being ‘perfected’ through sufferings (ii. 10), find their echo in the words: “God is not ashamed

to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city”, and the ‘perfecting’ of the spirits of just men in xi. 16; xii. 23.

It was toward this goal that the Apostle urged the Hebrew believers to ‘go on unto perfection’. The ‘weight’ which they were counseled to ‘lay aside’ would include those things mentioned in vi. 2, a passage we have already seen in close connection with Esau and his vain seeking for repentance (vi. 4-6; xii.16, 17).

By assembling the different passages together in the epistle to the Hebrews where an inheritance is in view, we realize something of the purport of chapter i. 4. He, the Lord, is the great Inheritor, and all who follow in His steps, who run with patience the race set before them, will not only be saved by grace, but ‘inherit’ salvation, ‘inherit’ promises, and ‘reign’ as well as live with Him in glory.

What the glory of the world was over which the angels had authority we can only guess; we know however, that as surely as Christ has by His finished Work obtained a more excellent name than they, so surely will the inheritance that is His excel in glory. This is once again the outworking of that principle which we have seen all along, the principle of the *Pleroma*.

No.10. Behold the fig tree, and all the trees. **pp. 104 - 108**

The reader may at times have wondered why the whole issue of life and death should have ‘hung upon a tree’ in the garden of Eden, and as the choice of this emblem manifests something of the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord, it may not be amiss if we turn our attention to the place that ‘trees’ occupy in the working out of the purpose of the ages.

It is only within our own times that the extensive importance of trees to the well being of the world has been recognized as the following extracts will show:

“Every moment that he draws breath here below man is dependent on the grass of the field for his very being. Sir Thomas Browne knew this and pointed it out in *Religio Medici*. ‘*All flesh is grass*, is not only metaphorically, but literally true; for all those creatures that we behold are but the herbs of the field digested into flesh in them, or more remotely in ourselves’. In the fourth chapter of this present book, Mr. Baker puts the same thought into a few words ‘Thus the tree, with the help of plant life, controls the food supply and life of man and of the animal kingdom’.

A great deal of Mr. Baker’s writing in all his books has been concerned with the disasters that follow when man forgets that he is not the world’s master, but one of many tenants. The tenants are animate and inanimate—or so we chose to call them, though the animation of a tree is an inescapable thing, and some trees take on the proportions of majestic personality. But, call them what we may, the further we go into the matter the more deeply we apprehend that men and trees, grass and birds, the beasts of the field and all living things are held in a balance that may not lightly be disturbed We find in

this book some truly terrifying pictures of man flying in the face of Nature, ruthlessly uprooting and burning the very stuff that holds the world together: and no less terrible pictures of Nature making her implacable reply. Man strips the forests of China: Nature swirls away in the Yellow River every year 2,500,000 tons of the soil on which man might live. Man strips the western prairies to the bone; Nature hands him a dust bowl When improvidence goes so far that one edition of an American newspaper consumes twenty-four acres of forest, it is not difficult to imagine a too-near time when the plight of those Negroes (a tragedy on the Gold Coast) shall be the plight of millions of mankind. Only knowledge, implementing a rational co-operation with Nature, can avert such a disaster; and I am not aware of any writer today who spreads that knowledge more fruitfully than Mr. St. Barbe Baker” (Howard Spring).

A distinguished engineer some twelve years ago, warned America that unless something drastic and immediate was done to prevent the squandering of the soil, that America had not another 100 years before it of virile national existence. Another authority as late as 1946 pointed out that one-eighth of the crop land of the U.S.A. had been ruined by erosion, another eighth almost ruined, on a further quarter erosion is at work, and that in 100 years from now the United States will not be able to sustain a living man.

Mr. St. Barbe Baker says:

“The red lights are against us in our reckless career. To continue to rape the earth and fight for dwindling supplies of food and timber, spells destruction Let us remember that the empires of Babylon, Syria, Persia and Carthage were destroyed by the advance of floods and deserts caused by the increasing clearing of forests for farmland.”

Much more to the same effect could be quoted, but what has been given is sufficient, not only to emphasize the extreme importance that must be attached to trees in their influence upon climate, soil and fertility, but to reveal once more to our wondering eyes, how completely abreast of the times is the Word of the living God. He knew what man is but now learning through centuries of folly for food or ill man’s destiny was intimately associated with trees.

When the great day of the Lord shall come and judgment is about to fall on the earth we read:

“Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads” (Rev. vii. 3).

When the storm breaks, we read:

“The first angel sounded and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up” (Rev. viii. 7).

Again when the bottomless pit is opened and the scourge of supernatural locusts is let loose on the earth, we read:

“And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads” (Rev. ix. 4).

From whence came this knowledge of the superlative value of trees but from the Lord Himself?

The wisdom of Solomon is proverbial, and it is written that his wisdom excelled that of all the children of the east country and of Egypt, and of what did Solomon speak?

“And he spake three thousand proverbs, and his sons were a thousand and five, and he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall” (I Kings iv. 29-34).

The book of Psalms opens with the blessedness of the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, and says “He shall be like a tree planted by rivers of water” (Psa. i. 3). Jeremiah uses the same figure to describe the man whose hope is in the Lord (Jer. xvii. 8).

Much has been said by adverse critics of the Bible concerning the barbarity of the wars that are described in its pages, but moderns could learn with profit the humanitarian law of Deut. xx. 19:

“When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof thou shalt not cut them down to employ them in the siege (for the tree of the field is man’s life)” (Deut. xx. 19).

Here again the recognition of the extreme value of trees in the law of Moses anticipates modern science by centuries. The purpose of the ages may be said to hang upon three trees:

The Tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
The Tree upon which Christ was crucified.
The Tree of Life.

The curse came in with reference to the first, and it is written ‘no more curse’ when the last is made accessible. The middle one, the cross, is where Saviour was made a curse for us, as it is written “Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree” (Gal. iii. 13).

The book of Proverbs uses the figure of the “Tree of life” four times, and indeed speaks of a tree in no other way. There are two other occurrences of the Hebrews *ets* but these are translated ‘wood’ in relation to a fire.

Wisdom. “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom she is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her” (Prov. iii. 13-18).

Righteousness. “The righteous shall flourish as a branch (for ‘leaf’). The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life” (Prov. xi. 28-30).

Desire. “When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life” (Prov. xiii. 12).

Heading. “A wholesome tongue is a tree of life” (margin: The healing of the tongue) (Prov. xv. 4). “The tongue, as a healing thing” (Miller’s translation).

These, together with Gen. ii. 9 and iii. 22, are all the passages of the O.T. that speak of the Tree of Life. To these we may add the three references that are found in the Revelation.

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Rev. ii. 7).

“In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river was there the tree of life the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations” (Rev. xxii. 2).

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life” (Rev. xxii. 14). The texts read ‘Wash their robes’ instead of ‘do His commandments’ *stole* ‘robe’ instead of *entole*.

It will be seen that the tree of life does not stand for life in the abstract but in its outgoings. Wisdom that is held fast, righteousness that bears fruit, a healing tongue, and a fulfilled desire.

Let us now turn to the record of Gen. ii. and iii.:

“The tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. ii. 9).

“Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it” (Gen. ii. 17).

It will be observed that the tree of life is said to have been ‘in the midst of the garden’. Now when the woman refers to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, she says “Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden” which means either that the two trees stood together, side by side, or that the two trees must be considered as representing one thing from two aspects.

How was it that neither Adam nor his wife partook of the tree of life? There was no prohibition, but two things seem clear from Gen. iii. 22:

- (1) Man had partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- (2) He might then have gone further and have taken of the tree of life, but was prevented. A flaming sword was placed at the east of the garden to keep the way of the tree of life.

Let us summarize what we have elsewhere discovered regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. An undue emphasis upon evil is untrue, there should be as much stress laid upon the word ‘good’, and if every ‘good’ is balanced by an ‘evil’ and this is known, no thought of temptation, a bait or a snare is tolerable. Angels evidently know ‘good and evil’ and a comparison of II Sam. xiv. 17 and 20, will show ‘good and evil’ is synonymous with ‘all things’, and it is obvious that if one knew all that is good and all that is evil, he would have all knowledge.

That there were two trees in the midst of the garden, Gen. ii. 9, iii. 3 and iii. 22 make clear, but if we confine ourselves simply to ‘trees’ and pay no regard to meaning or typical teaching, of what interest can two trees planted centuries ago, be to us? It is what those two trees stand for, and the consequences of Adam’s attitude to the Divine prohibition that bears upon us all. How can we explain why it was that man in his

innocency, did not put forth his hand and eat of the tree of life, and live for ever? What was to stop him?

In our endeavour to find a reasonable explanation of this somewhat strange fact, our mind returns to the group of references to the tree of life in Proverbs. We observe that the coming of 'desire' is likened to a tree of life (Prov. xiii. 12) and that this word 'desire' is a translation of the same Hebrew word that comes in Gen. iii. 6 "*pleasant* (margin 'a desire') to the eyes". We also note that 'the desire accomplished is sweet to the soul' (Prov. xiii. 19). We learn that 'the desire of the righteous shall be granted' (Prov. x. 24) and that 'the desire of the righteous is only good' (Prov. xi. 23).

All desires, however, are not good, nor can their attainment be likened unto a tree of life. Some desires are but 'coveting', as Prov. xxi. 26 (margin) will show. Wisdom also is associated with the tree of life in Proverbs (iii. 13-18), and it will be remembered that when the woman saw that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she succumbed to the temptation. The word translated 'wisdom' in Prov. iii. 13 is defined by Wilson as among other things, 'the discrimination of good and evil'. In following the 'desire' and seeking to be 'wise' our first parents did not fulfil one other condition indicated in Proverbs. They were not 'righteous' (Prov. xi. 30) for in taking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they transgressed. It would appear that so far as the typical teaching is concerned, what needed two separate trees to set forth the truth, can be represented in the spirit by two aspects of the same action.

Had our first parents obeyed God, desire would have been righteous and the tree of life would have been taken; but inasmuch as they disobeyed, desire was unrighteous and death came in its train. There is much more that lies behind the references to these two trees; but we shall be unable to include one or two equally important references if we stay longer.

A tree is associated with the bearing of a curse (Deut. xxi. 23) and so points on to the 'tree' upon which the Saviour died the just for the unjust (Gal. iii. 13). In three passages in the Acts the cross of Christ is spoken of as a 'tree' (Acts v. 30; x. 39; xiii. 29), and is so called by Peter in his epistle (I Pet. ii. 24), who never mentions the word 'cross' once. Paul in Galatians speaks both of the 'tree', as it touched the Jew under the law, and the 'cross' as it touched Gentiles by nature.

The 'healing' that is associated with the tree of life (Rev. xxii. 2) and the 'healing' brought about by the 'tree' shown to Moses (Exod. xv. 25) alike point to that salvation which was accomplished by the cross, for the word 'salvation' *soteria* is derived from *sozo* which is often used to speak of "healing" or making "whole" (Matt. ix. 21; Acts iv. 9, 12).

When the prophet would describe the blessed change that will take place when the day of glory dawns, he finds the imagery of the trees at his hand.

“For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree” (Isa. lv. 12, 13).

“The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree and the box together and I will make the place of My feet glorious” (Isa. lx. 13).

“The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose” (Isa. xxxv. 1).

“Until the spirit be poured upon us from on high and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest” (Isa. xxxii. 15).

“He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (Isa. xxvii. 6).

Here then is another *pleroma*, a story of grace and glory caused by the trees of Scripture. Like the Apostle in another context, we are obliged to write ‘time would fail me’ to speak of the symbolism of “The Fig, the Vine and the Olive”, of the ‘unconspicuous’ or *aseptic* (LXX) trees from which the Ark was made (Exod. xxv. 10), or what is implied by the promise “as the days of a tree are the days of My people” (Isa. lxv. 22), or the ‘two olive trees’ of Zech. iv., or the parable of Jotham of Judg. ix. Neither can we ponder the question of resurrection with Job (xiv. 7), the pictures of antichristian pride assembled by Ezekiel (xxxii.), nor the vision of the great tree granted to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iv.), but if the reader will but explore these sylvan stretches of inspired imagery, a wealth of refreshing truths will be gathered as from a veritable “tree of life”.

No.11. Two attitudes to the curse---Civilization or Redemption. pp. 126 - 130

While it is the responsibility of the teacher to deal with positive truth rather than pursue all the possible and impossible side lines of controversy, we must not forget that occasionally the purpose of grace is served by pausing in the pursuit of truth, in order that a necessary warning may be given. So the Apostle, in Col. i. 28, combines ‘warning with ‘teaching’ and in II Tim. iii. 16 ‘instruction’ is associated with ‘correction’. It is sometimes as important, when giving directions, to warn not to turn to the left, as it is to instruct to turn to the right.

If the *pleroma* is God’s consequent reaction to the failure brought about by the enemy, and if the attack of the enemy is characterized by deceit and counterfeit more than by open warfare, it should not surprise us to discover early in the record of truth, that an attempt was made to substitute a false *pleroma* for the true.

When Jude wrote in his epistle of the prophecy uttered by Enoch, he is careful to designate him as ‘the seventh from Adam’, the reason being that there was another of the same name in the line of Cain. This was a part of the deceiver’s attempt to foist a substitute for truth upon the earth.

The A.V. margin of Gen. iv. 17 draws the reader's attention to the fact that the Hebrew is *chanock* and as there is no such note at Gen. v. 18 he may suspect that the names are not identical. The same spelling is employed in Gen. iv. 17 as in Gen. v. 18, and when the genealogy is repeated in I Chron. i. 3, it is spelt *henoch*.

To Enoch in the line of Cain was born *Irada* which is similar, though not identical with *Jared*, the son of Mahalaleel (Gen. v. 15). The difference between these two names is that of one letter, *Irada* employing one letter more than *Jared* in the original. Another pair of names that suggest substitution is *Methusael* (Gen. iv. 18) & *Methuselah* (Gen. v. 21), which differs only in the conclusion of the word. At the close of Cain's line is *Lamech*, whose boast introduces the words 'sevenfold' and 'seventy and seven fold' (Gen. iv. 24), while Lamech the father of Noah, lived "seven hundred, seventy and seven years". There is sufficient superficial likeness in these names to suggest intention, and that intention coming through the line of Cain would be evil.

The record of Cain's descendants opens with a reference to the curse that had fallen upon the earth (Gen. iv. 11) and Cain's attempt to palliate the effects of the curse is CIVILIZATION, "He builded a city" (Gen. iv. 17). Lamech, the descendant of Seth also speaks of the curse which rested upon the ground, but instead of attempting to minimize the curse by human expedients, he looked for 'rest' through the ministry of his son Noah, whom he so named, because the word means 'comfort' or 'rest'. Lamech looked to REDEMPTION where Cain looked to civilization.

The first cities of the Bible are associated with evil and rebellion.

- (1) Enoch, the city built by Cain after the curse (Gen. iv. 17).
- (2) Nineveh, the city built by Nimrod, the mighty Rebel (Gen. x. 11).
- (3) Babel, the city and tower built in rebellion (Gen. xi. 4).
- (4) Sodom, the city which was destroyed by fire (Gen. xix. 24).

Meanwhile Abraham had left Ur of the Chaldees, and had become a pilgrim and a stranger, dwelling in tents, having here 'no continuing city' but seeking 'one to come' (Heb. xi. 10, 16; xiii. 14).

Let us ponder the record of Lamech, his reference to Noah and his typical work of deliverance. The primary significance of the Hebrew preposition *min*, translated 'because' in Gen. v. 29, is that of 'a part or portion', hence something arising out of, or caused by, anything, as for example Israel who sighed 'by reason of' the bondage they endured (Exod. ii. 23). Lamech had no doubt but that the 'work and toil' which life imposed, was 'because' of the curse that had fallen upon the ground.

The story of Gen. i.-ix., from Adam to Noah, is bounded by references to the "ground", Hebrew *adamah*.

A | i. 26. "Every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth (ground)."

B | ii. 5. "There was not a man to till the ground."

* * * * *

A | ix. 2. "All that moveth (creepeth) upon the earth (ground)."

B | ix. 20. "Noah began to be an husbandman (lit. a man of the ground)."

In between these two sets of references is the curse, the flood, and the new start under Noah. The impression which this survey leaves in the mind is that Lamech was right. Not the building of a city, but the building of an Ark was God's *pleroma* to fill the gap or rent occasioned by the curse. The way of Cain is still markedly different from the way of Abel.

The parallels between Adam and Noah are so many and so clear, that the reader who once perceives them cannot avoid the conclusion that with Noah, God was making a new start.

Before setting out the parallel passages, we note one or two more features of interest concerning Lamech.

"In naming his son Noah, Lamech emphasized his felt need of rest. Noah is derived from *nuach* which means 'to be at rest', and occurs in Gen. viii. 4, 'and the ark *rested* in the seventh month'. Again in Exod. xx. 11, 'for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and *rested* the seventh day'. When we read in Gen. viii. 9, 'the dove found no *rest*', the word is *manoch*, or in viii. 21, 'the Lord smelled a *sweet* savour', the word 'sweet' is *nichoach*, and literally the passage reads, 'a savour of rest'.

Thus it will be seen that for God as well as man there is a place of rest, and that rest is Christ, of whom Noah and the ark are prophetic.

Lamech in naming his son said, 'this same shall comfort us (*nacham*, or give us rest) concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed'. The word rendered 'toil' is twice rendered 'sorrow' in Gen. iii. where the curse is first pronounced, 'I will greatly multiply thy sorrow', and 'in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life' (verses 16, 17). The words 'work and toil' may be a figure, meaning very grievous work; the work and the toil are clearly specified as being the work and toil of the *hands*, and in connection with the *ground*, that under the curse yielded but thorns and thistles of itself, and bread only by 'sweat of face'.

Lamech, 'the seventh from Adam', in the line of Cain, has three sons, one (Jabal) kept cattle, and so continued in the work of the ground, but Jubal was the father of all such as handle the harp and organ, and Tubal-cain an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron. It would appear that the veneer which has spread over the curse, and which is variously named culture, civilization, etc., to-day, was originated by the sons of Lamech in Cain's line; the Lamech who begat Noah, however, is in direct contrast, he does not appear to have attempted to evade the weary toil that must be experienced by those who, by sweat of face, eat the bread that is produced by the ground that is cursed. Lamech longed for rest, but he did not accept the vain travesties of Cain's descendants. There are many to-day who, surrounded by the comforts and inventions of man could scarcely believe that there is truth in the record of the curse on the ground. The products of the

earth and sea are brought to their door; no thought passes through their mind as to the sorrow and the toil that someone, somewhere, must endure to provide them with the necessities of life. Lamech knew no such deadening influence; the toil of his hands was hard and wearying because of the ground that the Lord had cursed. A friend writing recently gave an unconscious echo of Lamech's words, saying, "When one, from the back of the land, sees the toil of man and beast, there come to the lips no more fitting words than, 'Even so, Come, Lord Jesus'."

Harp and organs, however, melodious and charming, brass and iron, modeled and designed into the most wonderful of machines and inventions, though they may 'prove' to the natural man the upward development of man's attainments, afford no rest for those in whose hearts the truth of God abides. Rest for them is found in the true Noah, whose witness and whose experiences testify of the resurrection, and a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (From Volume VIII of *The Berean Expositor*, pages 101-103).

Let us now set out the evident parallelism that the record of Genesis provides between the lift story of Adam and that of Noah.

List of parallels and contrasts between the dispensations headed by:	
<i>A D A M</i>	<i>N O A H</i>
A judgment in the background which left the earth without form and void (Gen. i. 2; Isa. xlv. 18).	A flood in the background that left the earth a ruin (Gen. vii. 17-24).
(The parallel between these two passages is so close that commentators are divided as to which of them II Pet. iii. 5, 6 refers.)	
The dry land appears on the third day, grass and trees grow (Gen. i. 9-13).	The dry land appears in Noah's 601st year, and the plucked olive leaf indicated to Noah that this was so (Gen. viii. 11-13).
Living creatures are 'brought forth' from the water and from the earth, and God blessed them saying, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth" (Gen. i. 20-25).	Living creatures are "brought forth with Noah out of the Ark that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful and multiply in the earth" (Gen. viii. 15-19).
Man made in the image of God to have "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it" (Gen. i. 26-28).	"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered." "In the image of God made He man" (Gen. ix. 1, 2, 6).

Food.—“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).	Food.—“Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things”, but not blood (Gen. ix. 3, 4).
The seventh day rest (Gen. ii. 1-3).	Every flood date (except Gen. vii. 5) is a sabbath. <i>Companion Bible note:</i> The Ark rested in the seventeenth day of the month which was a Sabbath (viii. 4).
Adam has three sons, Cain, Abel and Seth (Gen. iv. 1, 2, 25). One Son, Cain, is cursed more than the earth, and becomes a fugitive and a vagabond (iv. 12).	Noah has three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth (Gen. v. 32). One Son, Ham, the father of Canaan, is cursed, even though God had promised not to curse the ground any more, and Canaan becomes a servant of servants (ix. 25; viii. 21).
God curses Cain for shedding his brother’s blood but does not sanction vengeance by human hands (Gen. iv. 10-15).	God will require the life blood from every beast and man, but now delegates the execution of judgment to man himself. “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed” (Gen. ix. 5, 6).
The Lord sets a ‘mark’ (<i>oth</i>) to protect Cain (Gen. iv. 15).	The Lord sets a bow in the cloud for a ‘token’ (<i>oth</i>) to assure all flesh (Gen. ix. 13).
God planted a garden (Gen. ii. 8).	Noah planted a garden (Gen. ix. 20).
Nakedness and shame are linked together in connection with Adam (Gen. iii. 10, 11).	Nakedness and shame are linked together in connection with Noah (Gen. ix. 21-24).
The fruit of the tree, and the fig (Gen. ii. 8; iii. 6, 7, 10).	The wine, and the vineyard (Gen. ix. 20-23).
The redemption of both man and his lost dominion is symbolized by the cherubim (Gen. iii. 24).	The redemption of both man and his lost dominion is symbolized by the animals preserved alive in the ark (Gen. vi. 13-16; viii. 1, 17-19).
The serpent beguiled the woman and brought about the curse (Gen. iii. 24; II Cor. xi. 3).	The sons of God by their actions towards the daughters of men, bring about the Flood (Gen. vi. 1-4).
All the days of Adam were 930 years (Gen. v. 5).	All the days of Noah were 950 years (Gen. ix. 29).

**No.12. “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.”
pp. 155 - 159**

The principle, that a movement toward the goal of the ages is followed by a rupture and a gap, which in its turn is followed by another movement in the nature of ‘fullness’ or *pleroma*, has now been established. The cataclysm of Gen. i. 2 is succeeded by the six-day creation which in its turn ends with the expulsion of man from the garden and his ultimate return to the dust from which he was taken. This lesser creation, with its stretched out heaven, the firmament, is the first of a series of fullnesses that pave the way for the advent of Him in Whom “All the fullness” dwells.

The reader will be familiar with the words: “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof”, but may not be aware that in addition to these, there are several passages which read “and all that is therein”, these two must be included in the references to the great ‘fullness’. In most cases, the A.V. gives a marginal note to guide the student, but no theory that involves the number of references should be built without personal investigation of the original.

This conception of ‘fullness’ is not limited to the earth, for the sea, the world and the land are also included. In some instances the ‘earth’ is limited to the land of Israel, as for example the reference in Deut. xxxiii. 16 where we read of the precious things of the ‘earth’ and by the fact that the Hebrew *eretz* is used, we might assume that this passage refers to the wide ‘earth’. A glance at the context however will show that *eretz* is here used in its more restricted sense for it occurs in verse 13 “Blessed of the Lord be His land” and the whole chapter is devoted to ‘the blessing, wherewith Moses the man of God blessed the children of Israel’. In nearly every case, however, what is said of the ‘land’ of Israel is but a type and shadow of what shall one day be true of the earth.

No such limitation however is attached to Psa. xxiv. 1, 2 for we read not only that the earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, but ‘the world, and all they that dwell therein. For He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods’.

Expositors and commentators have given scant attention to these words, and many appear to have looked at them and ‘passed by on the other side’. There is more here however than at first appears. In Psa. cxxxvi. we read:

“To Him that by wisdom, made the heavens:
For His mercy endureth for ever.
To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters;
For His mercy endureth for ever” (Psa. cxxxvi. 5, 6).

That the creation of the six days is in view, the subsequent references to ‘great lights’, ‘the sun to rule by day and the moon and stars to rule by night’, make clear.

In article No.4 of this series we observed that the ‘firmament’ or that which for the time is ‘called heaven’ (Gen. i. 6) is the translation of the Hebrew *raqia* “thinness” or “expansion”. It is the verb *raqa* ‘to stretch out’ that is employed of the earth in Psa. cxxxvi. 6. Not only so, but Isaiah on two occasions uses the same verb in the same context:

“He that created the heavens, and stretched them out; He that *spread forth (raqa)* the earth” (Isa. xlii. 5).

“That stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that *spreadeth abroad (raqa)* the earth by Himself” (Isa. xliv. 24).

Whatever meaning therefore we attach to the stretching out of the firmament over the earth we must also attach to the stretching out of the earth over the waters.

This is not the only passage that speaks in this wise.

“The heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water” (II Pet. iii. 5).

The Lord said to Job:

“Whereupon are the foundations fastened?” (Job xxxviii. 6).

Here, as we have remarked earlier, the word ‘foundations’ is the same as the word ‘socket’ used of the Tabernacle, and we now observe that the word translated ‘fastened’ is the Hebrew *taba* which means ‘to sink’ as in mire (Psa. lxxix. 2, 14) or as when one is ‘drowned’ (Exod. xv. 4), and so most clearly visualizes the earth as stretched out over the waters and anchored by some means to the earth beneath. This necessitates further explanation. One might object to such a statement and say “How can the *earth* be anchored to the earth?” but such an objection is not valid for it ignores an essential principle of all interpretation, namely, to use terms according to any explanation that may have been attached by authority or custom. Now just as the ‘firmament’ was ‘called’ heaven, so the ‘dry land’ that appeared above the waters on the third day is ‘called’ by a similar concession ‘earth’ (Gen. i. 10), but this is by no means commensurate with the original ‘earth’ of Gen. i. 1. Just as the firmament is stretched out *under* the true heaven, so the dry land is the earth that is stretched out *over* the waters. If the reader is at all abreast of scientific discovery, he will know that these references to the stretching out of the earth’s crust upon the waters are a most wonderful evidence of their inspiration.

“For He hath formed it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods” (Psa. xxiv. 2).

Punch, which is a very sure index of contemporary thought, makes it very evident that the possibility of the movement of the continents has so far become a matter of common knowledge that it can form the basis of the following pleasantry.

From *Punch*, May 19, 1948.

Lost Touch

(A scientific expedition is hoping to establish the fact that

north Russia and the American Continent were once joined)

It doesn't seem tactful to make such a move
At rather a delicate juncture, to prove
That once the U.S.—though in ages afar
Was once with what now is the U.S.S.R.

W.K.H.

From *Punch*, July 7, 1948.

“A geologist thinks that Britain is slowly tilting towards the south. Holiday makers are asked not to crowd together on the end of Brighton pier.”

To return seriously to the matter in hand, the following extracts are taken from the work entitled *The Origin of Continents and Oceans* by Alfred Wegener, Professor of Geophysics and Meteorology at the University of Graz, Austria.

In the introduction to the English translation, John W. Evans, C.B.E., F.R.S., President of the Geological Society, makes the following observation:

One of the most interesting questions raised by Professor Wegener is the possibility of actually detecting the relative movement of land masses at the present time by instrumental means In 1922, Lt.-Col. Jensen made a careful determination of the longitude by means of wireless signals from Naven he considered that this was a confirmation of the westward movement of Greenland.”

The reader will note the words ‘the relative movement of land masses’ and ‘the westward movement of Greenland’. These are words of a scientist who apparently had no intention of relating his findings to the teaching of the Word. Professor Wegener calls his views ‘The Displacement Theory’ and draws attention to the similarity of the contours of the coast line of Brazil and Africa.

“Not only does the great right-angled bend formed by the Brazilian coast at Cape San Roque find its exact counterpart in the re-entrant angle of the African coast line near the Cameroons, but also, south of these two corresponding points, every projection of the Brazilian side corresponds to a similarly shaped bay in the African, and conversely each indentation on the Brazilian coast has a complementary protuberance on the African. Experiment with a compass on a globe shows that their dimensions agree accurately. This new idea is called the theory of the displacement of continents, or more shortly, the displacement theory, since its prominent component is the assumption of great horizontal drifting movements which the continental blocks underwent in the course of geological time and which presumably continue even today. According to this idea, to take a particular case, millions of years ago, the South American continental plateau lay directly adjoining the African plateau, even forming one large continental mass. This first split in cretaceous* (* - Cretaceous = chalk like. A geological term for certain rock formations.) time into two parts, which then like floating icebergs drifted farther and farther apart.”

The reader will not fail to mark the figure employed here. How different from the conception of a solid earth, and how near an approximation to the Scriptural teaching of the earth spread out on sea and flood, is the figure ‘like floating icebergs’, yet this figure occurs in a scientific and non-Biblical treatise.

“It is assumed that the continental blocks with a thickness of about 100km. swim in a magma out of which they only project about 5km.”

Note the words ‘swim in a magma’. A magma is a crude mixture of mineral or organic matter in a thin paste, a confection. How did Job, Isaiah and the Psalmist know that the dry land ‘swam in a magma’ apart from revelation? And how the so-called ‘man in the street’ would scoff at such an idea today as unscientific!

“The floors of the ocean, form the surface of the next layer of the body of the earth which is also assumed to exist under the continental blocks.”

“The rotation of the entire crust of the earth—but whose parts however did not alter their relative positions—has already been assumed by many authors, as Sir John Evans, Loffelholz von Colberg, Kreichgauer and others.”

After several pages of complicated mathematics, Wegener continues:

“From this it must be concluded that there are already undisturbed levels, and from this the step seems inevitable, that in the continents and the floors of the ocean we have two different layers of the body of the earth, which expressed in a somewhat exaggerated form, act as water does between great sheets of ice.”

Gen. i. 9, 10 draws attention to the fact that ‘God called the dry land earth’ and that it ‘appeared’ when the waters were gathered together which He called ‘seas’, which fact is often expanded by the references already given from Psa. cxxxvi. 6; Isa. xlii. 5 and Psa. xxiv. 2.

Speaking of the phenomenon, the movement of the magnetic poles, Wegener says, “In the matter of the displacement of the pole relative to the intercover of the earth we need a viscous earth. Laplace has shown that the axes in a rigid earth cannot be displaced”. Viscous means, in physics, imperfectly fluid; adhesively soft.

A Further testimony is reported by Reuter 22/6/48. Dr. F. W. Whitehouse, Queensland University lecturer in geology told a meeting in Brisbane that from calculations made in the U.S. it had been estimated that the sea level was rising about four inches a century on a world-wide average. Four inches per century, means that at the time of Christ, nineteen hundred years ago, the level of the land was 6 ft. 4 ins. higher than it was today, and that if the sinkage continues, it will not be long before some lands will be endangered and disappear. Everything points to a not far distant future when this exhausted earth will have reached its foreknown limits, and be ready for the great purging and the still greater renewal. Such is the testimony of modern science to the veracity and to the inspiration of the Scriptures, and to statements of Scripture which some years ago would have been held up to ridicule by the ‘science of the day’. This earth, the habitable world (Psa. xxiv. 1, Heb. *tebel*, Greek *oikoumene*), this earth over which the heaven stretches like the curtains of the Tabernacle and whose sockets, like the silver sockets of the Tabernacle speak of redemptive purpose, this, ‘the dry land’ of Gen. i. 10 is associated with ‘fullness’ as we have already seen, and with the glory of God as we must now consider.

“The whole earth is full of His glory” (Isa. vi. 3).

This cry of the Seraphim when they beheld His glory (i.e. the glory of Christ, John xii. 41) is variously translated. The A.V. margin reads ‘His glory is the fullness of the whole earth’ whereas the R.V. margin reads ‘The fullness of the whole earth is His glory’ and this follows most clearly the order of the Hebrew original.

It is beyond the power of man to decide whether the words ‘the whole earth’ embrace the whole world, or whether in the first instance they mean the whole land, for the same word which is translated ‘earth’ is also translated ‘land’ (Isa. i. 19; ii. 7, 8; v. 30; vi. 12, etc.) but even so, the lesser ‘land’ of Israel is a type or symbol of the whole earth, and so whatever is said of the ultimate blessing of ‘the land’ but foreshadows the greater blessing of ‘the earth’ in the Lord’s good time.

So, when Israel were crossing the Jordan in order to ‘divide for an inheritance the LAND’ (Heb. *eretz* Josh i. 6, 11, 13, 14, 15), the Lord is called “The Lord of all the EARTH” (Heb. *eretz* Josh. iii. 11, 13), and when at the other end of their history, under another “Joshua” (Zech. iii. 1) Israel return from their captivity to the same land (Zech. iii. 9; vii. 14), once again the Lord is called ‘the Lord of all the earth’ (Zech. vi. 5) even though in the very next verse, *eretz* is translated ‘country’.

The twenty-fourth Psalm that speaks of the earth being the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, uses the word ‘glory’ more than any other of the Psalms. Five times it speaks of “The King of glory”, Who is to be “King over all the earth” (Zech. xiv. 9). A further link between Psa. xxiv., Isa. vi. and Zech. xiv., is found in the reference to the earthquake which took place in the days of Uzziah king of Judah (Zech. xiv. 5), which appears by the context to have been one of the many foreshadowings of the Second Coming of the Lord. The fullness of the earth and the glory of the Lord are bound up together; he that furthers the one, enhances the other, and that which ‘comes short of the glory of God’ militates against the blessing of man.

Since the first great gap (Gen. i. 2) other lesser gaps have come, as Adam, Noah, Abraham and the successive stories of their stand or fall are unfolded. Equally so, a succession of ‘fullnesses’ follow, until all is headed up in Him, in Whom ‘all fullness’ dwells. Let us pursue this theme, for in its understanding is enshrined the heart of God’s age-long purpose.

No.13. The Testimony of Peter to the days of Noah.
pp. 169 - 174

After the great gap formed by the loss of Paradise, the record divides into two according as the false and the true seed are spoken of, until we come to the next great crisis, the Deluge. Here history seems to repeat itself. The deep (Heb. *tehom*) of Gen. i. 2, is not referred to again until we reach the record of the Flood (Gen. vii. 11; viii. 2). The 'dry land' (Heb. *yabbashah* Gen. i. 9, 10) which appeared on the third day from beneath the waters, finds an echo in the 'drying up' of the earth after the Flood (Heb. *yabesh* Gen. viii. 7, 14). There are a number of interesting parallel features between Adam and Noah, which establish that the relationship is intended. For example both Adam and Noah are commanded to replenish the earth, both have three sons, one of whom becomes involved in a curse and is either 'of that wicked one' or the father of Canaan, who in his turn is seen to be of the evil seed. These parallels are so close that we have accepted without question that Peter, in his second epistle, chapter iii. refers to Gen. i. 1 and 2, whereas a careful study of his epistles will show that he had, primarily, the days of Noah before his mind. This testimony is important, and the examination of it will necessitate a fairly intensive study, but the subject matter is of the deepest solemnity and fully justifies all the time and space which we have devoted to its elucidation. Just as the primal creation is balanced after the gap of the ages by the "End" that succeeds the New Heaven and the New Earth, and just as Paradise lost is balanced by Paradise restored, so the structure persists and another pair of corresponding members can be added to the outline already presented in articles that have previously appeared.

C | The days of Noah.

The nations just before the call of Abraham. |

- a | The irruption of the sons of God (Gen. vi.).
- b | Preservation in the Ark. Noah uncontaminated (Gen. vi. 9).
- c | Punishment by flood (Gen. vii. 8).
- d | Spirits in prison (I Pet. iii. 19-22; Jude 6).

* * * * *

C | As it was in the days of Noah.

The nations just before Israel are saved and blessed. |

- a | Antichrist and the son of Perdition.
- b | Preservation, the Lamb's book of life. Uncontaminated (Rev. xiii. 8).
- c | Punishment by fire (Rev. xiv. 9, 10).
- d | Spirits liberated for a season (Rev. ix. 4-15).

Let us now attend to the teaching of Scripture with regard to this great epoch.

Much light can be obtained on matters that are beyond our ken or experience but the use of analogy, and much of Israel's history and hope foreshadows the wider purpose of the ages.

Most teachers have found Peter's words in II Pet. iii. of great service in visualizing the great unfolding of this purpose, and to this we first of all address ourselves. In the volume entitled *Dispensational Truth* the reader will find set out in structural form, the Purpose of the Ages, beginning with Gen. i., ending with I Cor. xv. 28 and revealing the dispensation of the Mystery as central. We will not reproduce the whole outline, the following abridged extract is all that will be needed.

The Purpose of the Ages.

“IN THE BEGINNING, GOD” (Gen. i. 1).

A | *The Beginning.* Before age-times. |

a | Christ.

b | Satan.

c | The Overthrow (Gen. i. 2).

B | THE AGES BEGIN. Paradise Lost. |

Earth (Gen. i. 2 - iii. 15).

Man.

Usurper.

Hope.

* * * * * * *

B | THE CONSUMMATION OF THE AGES. Paradise Restored. |

Earth.

Man.

True Heir.

Hope.

A | *The End* (I Cor. xv. 24). The purpose of the ages finished. |

a | Christ.

b | The Church.

c | Reconciliation of all things.

“*GOD ALL IN ALL*” (I Cor. xv. 28).

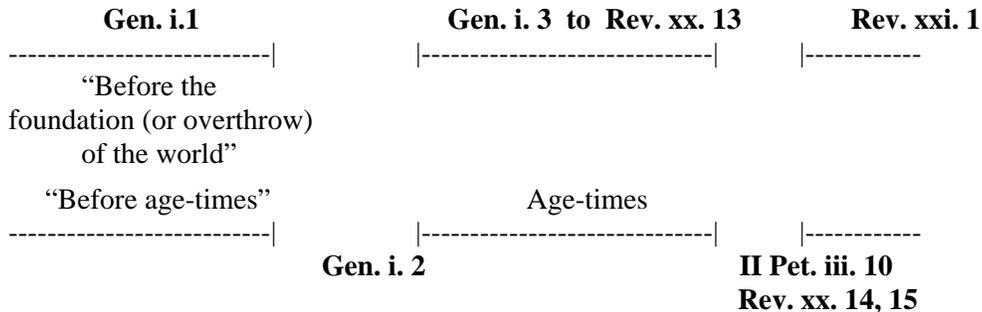
It is clear from this extract that we believe that the ages *began* with the present creation. The question of what we believe however is of minor importance, the supreme question is What saith the Scriptures? As pioneers in the sphere of Dispensational Truth, the Mystery and related subjects, we must be the first to admit to repeated necessity of revision, and the present seems an opportune moment to give this and related matters a somewhat fuller examination than has hitherto been possible.

The moment we attempt to place the age-times, the question of the three creations of Scripture presses for fuller consideration, for unless we entertain Scriptural views concerning these three great acts of creation, all contention as to ‘before’ and ‘since’ any one of them will necessarily be futile.

A very superficial reading of Scripture will convince the student that there are revealed three great creative movements—one past, one present and one future.

- (1) “In the beginning” (Gen. i. 1) Primal Creation.
- (2) “In six days” (Gen. i. 3 - ii. 3) Present Creation.
- (3) “In the day of God” (II Pet. iii. 12, 13). New Heavens and new earth.

The primal creation of Gen. i. 1 is separated by the chaos of Gen. i. 2 from the present creation; this statement has yet to be proved, while the present creation is again separated from the New Heavens and Earth by the dissolution of II Pet. iii. 10, and the following diagram visualizes this feature in the great purpose of the ages.



Peter, as a minister of the Circumcision, is particularly concerned with that portion of the purpose of the ages that impinges upon the hope of Israel. There is however in the history of Israel much that is typical of vaster things, and we are not surprised therefore to discover features that foreshadow the larger issues dealt with by Paul alone. This vast sweep of the ages which we have suggested in the diagram given above, finds an echo in the words of Peter when he speaks of past, present and future heavens and earth, as they appear in the prophetic view of Israel and its hope.

We may use Peter’s language as a guide to the wider purposes of the age thus:

- For Gen. i. 1
we may use the words, “The world that then was”.
- For Gen. i. 3 to Rev. xx. 13
we may use the words “the heavens and the earth which are now”.
- For Rev. xxi. 1 onwards
the words “the new heavens and the new earth”,

providing we remember all the time that vaster issues than those visualized in II Peter are in view. Peter wrote his epistles to:

“The strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia”
(I Pet. i. 1).

As II Pet. iii. opens with the words “This second epistle, I now write unto you” it is evident that the chapter before us was addressed to the ‘circumcision’. The term *diaspora* ‘scattered’ became a name to designate ‘the twelve tribes scattered abroad’ (James i. 1), or the ‘dispersed among the Gentiles’ (John vii. 35 R.V. margin). This term had become fixed during the two hundred years before Christ that the Septuagint had been in use, for

in such passages as Deut. xxx. 4, Neh. i. 9, Psa. cxlvii. 2 *diaspora* is used of the ‘outcasts of Israel’.

As we shall have occasion to compare some of the language of Peter with the Gospel according to Mark, it will be well to make sure that the reader is aware of the close association of these two servants of the Lord.

From Acts xii. 12 we learn that Peter was friendly with Mark’s mother and in I Pet. v. 13 he speaks of “Marcus my son”. Jerome speaks of both Paul and Peter with their assistants thus:

“Therefore he (Paul) had Titus for a Secretary, as the blessed Peter, had Mark, whose Gospel was composed by him after the dictation of Peter.”

To this may be added the testimony of Eusebius:

“After the departure of Peter and Paul, Mark the disciple and secretary (*hermeneutes* or ‘interpreter’) of Peter, transmitted to us in writing what Peter had preached.”

The four Gospels therefore stand related to one another as follows:

A		Matthew.	Independent.
B		Mark.	Interpreter of Peter.
B		Luke.	Fellow-worker with Paul.
A		John.	Independent.

We are now free to examine II Pet. iii., and we shall remember as we do it, that Peter, the minister of the circumcision, admits in the same chapter that the Apostle Paul has many things to say which were hard to be understood both by himself (Peter) and his hearers, and we shall not expect to find the sweep backward beyond Gen. i. 2 in Peter’s most far flung statement, that we find in Paul’s great epistles of the Mystery. We must make a preliminary enquiry into the testimony of II Pet. iii. 1-14 and discover the scope of Peter’s Ministry and Epistle. We note that chapters i. and ii. must be considered as introductory, for it is chapter iii. that opens with the words “This second Epistle, beloved, I now write unto you”, and the burden of the chapter is the denial by scoffers of the possibility of the Lord’s return by an appeal to the supposed “Uniformity of Natural Law”, and the exposure of the weakness of this objection by the Apostle. An examination of the first chapter will show that this was prominently in his mind all the time. II Pet. i. 16-21 is an anticipation of II Pet. iii. 2, 3 and II Pet. ii. 1-22 is an anticipation of II Pet. iii. 3-13 and corresponds in the structure which will be given later. These selfsame scoffers, or their predecessors, have evidently charged the believer who expected the personal return of the Lord with following ‘cunningly devised fables’ (II Pet. i. 16), and from this he proceeds to the nature and trustworthiness of prophecy, recalling in passing the conviction he himself had received of its truth when upon the Mount of Transfiguration.

The structure of the passage is as follows:

II Peter i. 16 - 21.

- A | 16-. What the Apostle's witness was NOT. "Cunningly devised fables."
- B | -16, 17-. What it WAS. "Honour and glory."
- C | -17, 18. HOW it CAME. "The voice from heaven."
- B | 19. What the Prophetic Word IS. "A light, till the day dawn."
- A | 20. What it is NOT. "Not of its own unfolding."
- C | 21. HOW it CAME. "Moved by the Holy Ghost."

In this opening argument we have similar features that are re-stated or amplified in chapter iii.

The Second Coming of Christ.
The charge made 'cunningly devised fables'.
The testimony of apostle and prophet.
The introductory phrase 'knowing this first'.

In II Pet. iii. we have:

The Second Coming of Christ.
The scoffers' charge 'where is the promise of His coming?'.
The testimony of prophets and apostles.
The introductory phrase 'knowing this first'.

To piece together the complete structure in all its details would take us too long and is not necessary for our present purpose. The following abridged outline will be all that is required to demonstrate the scope of the epistle and particularly the correspondence that exists between II Pet. i. 16-21 & iii. 2, 3 and II Pet. ii. 1-22 with iii. 3-13. If this is realized, we shall have reached the first step in our enquiry. We draw special attention to the two words 'overthrow' *katastrophe* and 'overflow' *katakluzo*, and the correspondence established between the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, with the dissolution of the elements.

The Second Epistle of Peter.

- A | i. 1-4. Opening Benediction. Grace, peace, through the knowledge of God.
Called to His own glory.
- B | i. 5-11. Give all diligence, never fall (*ptaio*).
Give diligence, make sure.
- C | a | i. 12-15. “Stir up.” “remembrance.”
- b | i. 16-21. The Apostles and Prophets (details given above).
 “Knowing this first.”
- c | ii. 1-22. False prophets and false teachers.
 Reference to fall of angels, the Flood and
 the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 An overthrow (*katastrophe*).
 Lusts of flesh and uncleanness.
- C | a | iii. 1. “This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you:
 In both which I *stir up* your pure minds by way of *remembrance*.”
- b | iii. 2, 3-. The Prophets and Apostles.
 “Knowing this first.”
- c | iii. -3-13. Scoffers.
 Reference to Creation and Flood.
 Dissolution of elements.
 Overflow (*kataklyzo*).
 Walking after their own lusts.
- B | iii. 14-17. Be diligent, fall (*ekpipto*).
 Stedfastness.
- A | iii. 18. Closing Benediction. Grow in grace and knowledge of Lord and Saviour.
 To Him be glory.

In the second chapter which corresponds with the section dealing with the scoffers and their condemnation, Peter speaks of the following recorded interventions of the Lord, showing how untrue the intervention of the Lord’s return by saying “since the fathers fell asleep all things continue *as they were*”. Four instances are given by the Apostle of judgments that could not be the mere working of natural law.

The casting down of the angels that sinned (II Pet. ii. 4).

The bringing in a flood in the days of Noah (II Pet. ii. 5).

The turning of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemning them by an ‘overthrow’ *katastrophe* (II Pet. ii. 6).

The rebuking of Balaam by the speaking of a dumb ass (II Pet. ii. 15, 16).

From these examples the Apostle draws the conclusion:

“The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished” (II Pet. ii. 9).

We have now advanced a step in our pursuit of the truth. In the first part of the study the fact was established that there were three creative movements recorded in Scripture, and that Peter, whose reference to creation is occupying our attention, was a minister of the circumcision. To this we have now added some idea of the general scope of this epistle, and of II Pet. iii. 3-14 in particular. We are, therefore, now ready, to give II Pet. iii. 3-14 a fuller and more detailed examination.

**No.14. A preliminary enquiry into the testimony of II Pet. iii. 1-14.
Proofs that Peter makes no direct reference beyond Gen. i. 3.
pp. 187 - 191**

Before we can come to any definite conclusion about the intention of the Apostle in II Pet. iii. 3-14, we must arrive at some certain understanding of the terms he uses. There are few students of Scripture but who, when they read the words of II Pet. iii. 4 “the BEGINNING of creation” will go back in mind immediately to Gen. i. 1 and John i. 1, where the same word *arche* ‘beginning’ is found either in the Septuagint or in the original Greek N.T. Yet upon examination, such a reference back is proved to be untrue. We have already spoken of Mark the ‘interpreter’ of Peter, and the present is an opportunity to test his words. Mark uses the word *arche* ‘beginning’ four times thus:

- A | The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God (i. 1).
- B | *From the beginning of the creation* (x. 6).
- A | The beginning of sorrows (xiii. 8).
- B | *The beginning of the creation which God created* (xii. 19).

The two references to creation challenge our attention, and we are sure that the established meaning of these two passages in Mark’s Gospel must influence most profoundly our interpretation of the same words in II Pet. iii. Here therefore is the first passage in full.

“But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female” (Mark x. 6).

It is not a matter of debate therefore that Mark uses the expression ‘the beginning of the creation’ to refer exclusively to the creation of Gen. i. 3, and so by logical necessity *cannot* include Gen. i. 1.

Let us read the second reference:

“For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be” (Mark xiii. 19).

All we need to do to show that the same limitation must be observed is to place beside this reference, two parallel passages.

“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be” (Matt. xxiv. 21).

“There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time” (Dan. xii. 1).

We cannot conceive that any reader with these passages before him, would wish to read into Mark xiii. 19 a reference back to Gen. i. 1, the words ‘Since there was a nation’ being the earliest statement, out of which the others have grown.

We are therefore certain that the words quoted by Peter ‘from the beginning of the creation’ are limited to the Adamic Earth. The context moreover of any expression has a part to play in deciding its meaning, so we must now observe the way in which it is introduced and with what other terms it is associated.

“Since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.”

It is strange enough to think of linking up the death of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (the fathers) with the six days creation; it is unthinkable when we attempt to link such events with the remote period of Gen. i. 1.

The argument of these opposers appears to be that just as the ‘fathers’ died one after the other, and no interference with ‘nature’ has yet broken the hold of death, so, from the beginning of the world all things have continued without break, and ever will, so rendering either the hope of resurrection, the Second Coming or the Day of Judgment, unreasonable.

Peter, however, has already met this argument. Did all things continue as they were in the days of Noah? Was there no Divine intervention in the days of Sodom? Is there no import in the use of the two distinctive words *katastrophe* and *kataklyzo*?

Further, we must not forget that the words in question were spoken by the ‘scoffers’. What did they know of the ‘overthrow of the world’? Not one of them so far as there is any record had ever seen the skeleton of a brontosaurus or a fossilized ichthyosaurus. The science of their day made creation originate from chaos (see Hislop’s *Two Babylons*), and these scoffers most certainly did not know more of ancient history than the inspired Apostle.

In his opening rejoinder Peter says “For this they willingly are ignorant of” a sentence that does not do justice to either the English language or the inspired original. The R.V. read “For this they willfully forget” and Dr. Weymouth renders the passage “For they are willfully blind to the fact”. No person can be charged with ‘willful forgetfulness’ if the matter lies beyond his ken. The heathen world was without excuse in their idolatry because of the witness of creation around them, but not even the scoffers could ‘wilfully neglect’ the evidences of the primal creation because they were unrevealed and unattainable by human search at that time. These scoffers, however, could be charged with willful neglect of the Divine record of Genesis which shows how the selfsame water that played so prominent a part in the six days creation was actually used to bring about

the Flood in the days of Noah. This they could have known, and with its neglect they could be charged. *Lanthano*, the word translated ‘ignorant’ in II Pet. iii. 5 A.V. occurs again in verse 8 “Be not ignorant of this one thing”. This fact must not be ignored by ourselves, as it is evident that such a recurrence indicates a structural feature, and is of consequence to true interpretation. The word *lanthano* seems to demand an English equivalent that lies somewhere between the ‘ignorance’ of the A.V. and the ‘forgetting’ of the R.V., and Moffatt seems to have chosen wisely here, for he renders the word in both passages ‘ignore’. Ignorance of any fact modifies the culpability of a person; forgetfulness, while serious, nevertheless modifies the guilt of an act, but to ‘wilfully ignore’ leaves no such margin of excuse, and that is the thought here. Without making too great a diversion by dealing with the structure of II Pet. iii. 1-13 as a whole, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to confine ourselves to verses 4-9.

- A | 4. *The Promise*. Where is this promised Advent?
False argument derived from misconception as to time.
- B | 5-7. *They wilfully ignore*. |
 - a | Heavens of old and Earth \
 - b | The Word \ Water
 - c | The World /
 - d | Perished /
 - a | Present Heaven and Earth \
 - b | Same Word \ Fire
 - c | Ungodly Men /
 - d | Destruction /
- B | 8. *Do you not ignore*. The argument concerning relative time.
- A | 9. *The Promise*. The apparent “slowness” of the Lord
must not be misconstrued as “slackness”.
The day of the Lord will come.

God does not hold men accountable where knowledge is unattainable. Knowledge concerning things that happened during the primal creation of Gen. i. 1 could not be ‘ignored’ by anyone, because no details are given in the revealed Word. These men, however, could, and evidently did, wilfully ignore the testimony of Gen. i. 3-8, and so were without excuse.

The reference to ‘the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished’ must *either* refer to the chaos of Gen. i. 2 and must exclude the Flood in the days of Noah, *or* it must refer to the Flood and exclude Gen. i. 2; *it cannot refer to both*. We have positive evidence that Peter makes reference to the Deluge of Noah’s day as part of his teaching and while this does not prove anything so far as II Pet. iii. 6 is concerned, it is a weight in the scale. We must continue our study of the terms used by Peter.

“The heavens were of old.” Do these words refer to the primal creation of Gen. i. 1? Or do they refer to the creation of the world Adam and his race? *Ekpalai* occurs in but one other passage in the N.T. namely in II Pet. ii. 3:

“Whose judgment now *a long time* lingereth not.”

There is no need for argument here. These false prophets *must* belong to the Adamic creation, and consequently there is added reason to believe that Peter's second use of the term will be but an expansion of the first, and that II Pet. iii. 6 refers back as far as Gen. i. 3 but no farther.

Palai simply means 'old', *palaios*, *palaiotes* and *palaioo* also occur and should be examined. We give just two examples:

"But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his *old* sins" (II Pet. i. 9).

"God Who at sundry times and in diverse manners, spake in *time* past" (Heb. i. 1).

The expression "the heavens were of old" therefore refers quite legitimately to Gen. i. 6. This 'firmament' was temporary and is to pass away, as many passages of Scripture testify. There is no passage, however, that teaches that *heaven itself*, the dwelling place of the Most High, will ever pass away, and this is an added reason for limiting Peter's words to the present creation.

The earth 'standing' out of the water, appears to refer to the way in which the present system was brought into being. *Sunistemi* is translated 'consist' in Col. i. 17, and while it would take a scientist to explain the meaning of II Pet. iii. 5, the reference is so evidently back to Gen. i. 3 onwards that scientific proof is not necessary to our argument.

The association of the 'water' and creation, with the 'water' that caused the 'overflow' of II Pet. iii. 6, is emphasized when one observes that after the many references to water in Gen. i., no further mention is made until the ominous words of Gen. vi. 17 are reached "I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth". These things the scoffers 'wilfully ignored'.

The future dissolution will involve the heavens as well as the earth (II Pet. iii. 10), whereas it was 'the world' not the heaven and the earth that 'perished' in the days of Noah. The heavens and the earth remained, and so could be called by Peter 'The heavens and the earth which are now'.

In the second chapter of the epistle Peter refers to the Flood and speaks of 'the old world' and 'the world of the ungodly' (II Pet. ii. 5), similarly in both II Pet. ii. 4 & iii. 7 he uses the word 'reserved' in reference to judgment.

Again in II Pet. iii. 6 the Greek word *kataklyzomai* is used where the translation reads "*being overflowed* with water". In II Pet. ii. 5 he uses the word *kataklysmos* (which becomes in English 'cataclysm') "bringing in the *flood* upon the world of the ungodly" which makes the parallel between these two chapters even more obvious.

**No.15. “The filling up of the nations”
(Gen. xlviii. 19 Rotherham).
pp. 208 - 212**

The family of Noah after the Flood were told to ‘replenish’ the earth, which had this replenishing been accompanied by grace and righteousness, would have constituted a fullness. Alas, by the time we read to the eleventh chapter of Genesis, the evil character of the world was made manifest at Babel, and the scattering of the people brought another movement in the purpose of the ages to a close. Babel in Gen. xi. will yet find its corresponding member when great Babylon comes up for judgment, but the gap formed by the rebellion of Nimrod and the introduction of idolatry which is so closely associated with this mighty hunter before the Lord, was filled by the calling of Abraham and the promises made to him concerning the great nation Israel. In Gen. xlviii. 19 we read ‘his seed shall become a multitude of nations’. It so happens that the word ‘multitude’ occurs earlier in this same chapter namely in verse 4, where we read:

“Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people” (Gen. xlviii. 4).

Two words are found in the Hebrew original which are here translated ‘multitude’ and these must be distinguished. The word translated ‘multitude’ in verse 4 is the Hebrew word *qahal* ‘to call’ or ‘to assemble’, but the word translated ‘multitude’ in verse 19 is entirely different, it is the Hebrew word *melo* ‘fullness’*.

[* - Readers who use *The Companion Bible* in early editions should observe that the note against “multitude” in verse 19 should be transferred to the margin of verse 4 in the same chapter.]

Let us bring together the four passages which make the promise that Israel shall be a multitude or company of people or nations.

“And GOD ALMIGHTY bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people” (Gen. xxviii. 3).

“And God said unto him, I am GOD ALMIGHTY: be fruitful and multiply: a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee” (Gen. xxxv. 11).

“Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people” (Gen. xlviii. 4).

In these passages ‘multitude’ translates the Hebrew word *qahal*. When Jacob blessed Joseph’s younger son Ephraim, putting his right hand upon his head instead of upon the head of Manasseh his elder brother, when Joseph said “Not so, my father” (Gen. xlviii. 18), Jacob replied:

“I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great; but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations” (Gen. xlviii. 19).

Here, we have already observed, the Hebrew word translated ‘multitude’ is *melo*, ‘fullness’. We must therefore become acquainted with the usage and meaning of these two words which are translated ‘multitude’ before we can proceed with our study.

Qahal means ‘to call together’, ‘to assemble’, and the noun form is translated ‘congregation’, ‘assembly’ and ‘company’. In seventy passages the Septuagint renders the Hebrew *qahal* by *ekklesia*, and Stephen speaks of “the church in the wilderness” (Acts vii. 38). In the three passages quoted from Genesis, “multitude” and ‘company’ are represented by ‘synagogue’ in the Septuagint. In Gen. xlviii. 19 *melo* which is translated ‘multitude’ is rendered in the Septuagint *plethos*, which in the N.T. is rendered by the A.V. ‘multitude’ 30 times, ‘company’ once and ‘bundle’ once. Unfortunately the English word ‘multitude’ has to stand for two very different conceptions. *Plethos* is from the same root as *pleroma* and retains the idea of fullness or filling, but there is another Greek word translated multitude, namely *ochlos* which means rather ‘a crowd’ or ‘a mob’, the unruly nature of which is reflected in the verbal forms which mean ‘to vex’ or ‘to trouble’ (Acts v. 16; xv. 12; xvii. 5; Heb. xii. 15). While, therefore we are compelled to use the English word ‘multitude’ in these passages of Genesis, we must dismiss the thought of a ‘mob’ or of an unruly ‘crowd’, and retain the idea of a properly assembled gathering and a filling. Returning to the usage ‘the whole assembly’, the word is used of Israel as a nation, but in Genesis, before Israel as a nation existed, it is usually prophetically, looking down the ages to the day when the seed of Abraham shall indeed become ‘a filling up of the nations’ (Rotherham). The four occurrences of *qahal* fall into their place in the structure which can be seen set out in full in *The Companion Bible*. The following extract will be sufficient to demonstrate this fitness here.

Gen. xxvii. 42 - xxviii. 5.	Departure. Jacob to Padan-aram.
	<i>“That thou mayest be a multitude of people.”</i>
* * * * *	
Gen. xxxv. 1-15.	Return. Jacob from Padan-aram.
	<i>“A nation and a company of nations.”</i>
* * * * *	
Gen. xlviii. 1-20.	Blessings of Joseph and his sons
	<i>“I will make thee a multitude of people.”</i>
* * * * *	
Gen. xlix. 1-28.	Blessings of all his sons.
	<i>“Unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united.”</i>

It will be remembered that in the endeavour to obtain the birthright and the Abrahamic blessing, Jacob, at the instigation of his mother who knew that ‘the elder shall serve the younger’ (Gen. xxv. 23), attempted by fraud to make the prophecy sure, but failed. When Jacob, as a consequence, was obliged to leave home, the coveted blessing for which both he and his mother had schemed, was given to him freely:

“And GOD ALMIGHTY bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people; and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee and

to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham” (Gen. xxviii. 3, 4).

Not only is ‘the land’ a definite feature of this promise, but a peculiar character attaches to it, it is called ‘the land wherein thou art a stranger’. This is repeated in Gen. xxxvii. 1, and in xlvi. 9 Jacob uses the same word which is there translated ‘pilgrimage’. The margin of Gen. xxviii. 4, reads ‘the land of thy sojournings’. This term is used seven times in the law, and is repeated in Heb. xi. 9, 13. After the formation of Israel and the giving of the law, the nation is not again reminded that they were strangers and sojourners except in one passage, namely in Lev. xxv. 23, where the laws governing the sale of land showed that the Lord Himself was the true Owner, Israel only holding the land as it were on lease. One further note is necessary before we attempt a conclusion, and that concerns that a certain popular theory might be supported, to show that Ephraim was to become “Gentilized”. The Hebrew word translated ‘nations’ is *goyim*, the plural of *goi*. This word is translated in the A.V. as follows: “Gentile” thirty times, ‘heathen’ one hundred and forty two times, ‘nation’ 373 times, ‘people’ 11 times. It is easy, when we are reading the passages where ‘Gentile’ and ‘heathen’ occur, to jump to the conclusion that the word means ‘all nations of the world, excepting the Jews’, but this is an error. The first six occurrences of *goyim* occurs in Gen. x. and as Israel *was not in existence* at the time, it is evident that the word can only mean ‘nations’, the inclusion of the word ‘Gentiles’ in Gen. x. 5 being an anticipation and having no immediate meaning until placed over against the word “Jew”. The R.V. has recognized this, and inserted ‘nations’ instead.

In Gen. xii. 2 we read the words of the great prophetic promise to Abraham concerning his seed, Israel, ‘I will make of thee a great nation’, while in Gen. xvii. 4, 5, 6 this promise is expanded to include ‘many nations’ returning in verse 20 once more to the ‘great nation’. So in Gen. xxxv. 11 we read ‘a nation and a company of nations’, the only distinction between Jew and Gentile being, not in the use of a different word, but in the use of the *singular* for the Jew, and the *plural* for the Gentile. Again in Deut. iv., we have interchangeably ‘this great nation’, ‘what nation is so great’, ‘the heathen’, ‘a nation from the midst of another nation’ and ‘the nations’ that were to be driven out of Canaan, all being translations of the one Hebrew word. Even in the Greek N.T. when the distinction between Jew and Gentile is acute, we still find *ethnos* used both of the Gentiles and of Israel (Acts xxii. 21; xxvi. 4, 17; xxviii. 19, 28). While therefore *goyim* means at times Gentile or heathen, it always means ‘nation’ whether the nations outside the covenant, or the great nation of promise. The promise that Israel should be ‘great’ must not be misunderstood. With us, ‘greatness’ is associated with nobility of mind, but originally the word *gadol* translated ‘great’ means ‘growth’ or ‘augmentation’. So we read of ‘great lights’, ‘great whales’, a ‘great city’ in Genesis. The word moreover is used to indicate ‘the elder’ son (Gen. x. 21; xxvii. 1; xxix. 16) who may not necessarily have been ‘greater’. Israel are indeed at the present day ‘minished and brought low through oppression’ (Psa. cvii. 39), but it is an integral part of the promise to Abraham, that Israel should not only be great in spiritual qualities, but great in numbers. The promise reads, ‘I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered’ (Gen. xiii. 16). The figure is changed in Gen. xv. 5 to the innumerable stars of heaven, with the added

words 'so shall thy seed be'. Yet once again the figure is changed to 'the sand upon the sea shore' (Gen. xxii. 17).

“Sir Arthur Eddington is of the opinion that one hundred thousand million stars make one galaxy, and one hundred thousand million galaxies, make one universe. The number of stars in a universe therefore would be ten thousand trillion, or expressed in figures 10,000,000,000,000,000,000,000, that is equal to the number of drops of water in all the oceans of the world, or grains of fine sand sufficient to cover the whole of England and Wales to a depth of a foot, and each one of them comparable in size to our sun” (*The Endless Quest*, Westaway).

While it is not intended that Israel are ever to reach such astronomical figures, the contemplation of the possible number of stars, compels us to admit that an extraordinary increase in number constitutes an essential feature of the Divine purpose for this 'great nation'. According to Deut. i. 10 these promises were on the way to fulfillment even when Israel stood upon the borders of the promised land, and the present drop in their numbers is coincident with their being in disfavour 'If ye walk contrary to Me, I will make you *few in number*' (Lev. xxvi. 21, 22). When the Lord at length causes the captivity of both Judah and of Israel to return 'as at the first', when He performs that good thing which He has promised unto the house of Israel and of Judah, then 'as the host of heaven cannot be numbered, neither the sand of the sea measured: so will I multiply the seed of David My servant, and the Levites that minister unto Me" (Jer. xxxiii. 7, 14, 21).

At the time of the end this world will be so ravaged and desolated by the destructive method of atomic or other super-scientific weapons that the prophet Zechariah speaks of 'everyone that is *left* of all the nations which came against Jerusalem' (Zech. xiv. 16) which suggests a terrible depletion in the number of the inhabitants of the earth at that day. In Zech. xiii. 8 the prophet's meaning is made very clear, when he says, "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein". Something of what may be expected when atomic warfare breaks out over this devoted earth can be sensed by the words of the Apocalypse:

"A *third part* of the trees were burnt up."
"A *third part* of the sea became blood."
"A *third part* of the ships were destroyed."
"The *third part* of men, slain." (Rev. viii. 7, 8, 9; ix. 15).

The day is passed when these catastrophic times could be brushed aside as mere figures of speech, we have lived through days when 'a third part of the ships' were well nigh literally destroyed. We have seen that following the desolation of Gen. i. 2 came the creation of man and the command 'replenish the earth'. We have seen that the same command was given to Noah after the cataclysm of the Flood. This same command will be fulfilled in Israel, when they too, shall 'blossom and bud, and fill the world with fruit' (Isa. xxvii. 6). Ephraim, as the 'firstborn' will indeed be great, and his seed 'shall become a FILLING UP of the nations' (Gen. xlviii. 19). Once again we see the principle of the *Pleroma* at work, with its promise of a better day, when sorrow and sighing shall have fled away, when the true seed shall flourish, and the seed of the serpent be no more.

**No.16. “The fullness of the Gentiles” (Rom. xi. 25).
pp. 236 - 239**

We have seen that the promise to Abraham concerning his seed has followed the same pattern that has characterized the earlier moves in the outworking of the purpose. Their failure came to a head just before the Babylonian captivity, and with Nebuchadnezzar, ‘the times of the Gentiles’ began.

**The testimony of Daniel
The times of the Gentiles begin (Dan. i. 1, 2).**

“In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god” (Dan. i. 1, 2).

With these words the book of Daniel opens, and it may not be too much to say that they are only paralleled by the words of Acts xxviii. in their burden of crisis and dispensational change. With such vast issues hanging upon these momentous words, vast because they cover the whole sweep of Gentile dominion and vaster still because they lead steadily on to the kingdom of Christ which is to last for ever, with such issues and such a burden, no pains should be spared in acquainting ourselves with all that God has written for our learning in relation to this crisis in the history of man. Space will not permit of the full quotation of Jer. xxv. 1-26. We can but point out one or two features that connect this passage with the opening words of Daniel.

The reader will be struck by the fact that whereas Dan. i. 1 speaks of the ‘third’ year of Jehoiakim, Jer. xxv. 1 speaks of the ‘fourth’ year of that same king in connection with the coming of Nebuchadnezzar against Jerusalem. This apparent discrepancy has not passed unnoticed by the critic, and is one of his many ‘proofs’ of the untrustworthiness of the book of Daniel.

The Hebrew word translated ‘came’ in Dan. i. 1 is *bo*, and it frequently has the sense of ‘went’ or ‘marched’. This, however, has been denied. Dr. Samuel Davidson says: “The verb *bo* does not mean *to set out* but *to arrive at*” (Introduction to the O.T. Vol. III, page 181), and when men of such standing and authority speak thus, who are we to oppose them? Humility is indeed a grace to seek and preserve, but while Gal. ii. remains for our encouragement, we may still dare to bring all statements to the touchstone of the Word. Dr. Davidson’s statement but illustrates the uncritical character of so-called ‘higher criticism’, for it has been computed that the Hebrew word *bo* is used in the sense of ‘to set out’ in each of the five books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and six out of the twelve minor prophets.

Let us look at Jonah i. 3 and translate it as Dr. Davidson would have it: “And Jonah went down to Joppa, and he found a ship *arriving* at Tarshish.” If this could be sense, then in some miraculous way Jonah would have no sooner set foot on board at Joppa than he would have ‘arrived’ at Tarshish. Doubtless this would have made the journey far more pleasant than it actually was, but the simple fact is that the Hebrew word *bo* does mean that the ship was ‘going’ or ‘setting out’ for Tarshish. The plain fact of Dan. i. and Jer. xxv. is that the former writer tells us the year in which Nebuchadnezzar ‘set out’ from Babylon, while the latter tells us when he arrived. Moreover, Jeremiah tells us what occupied Nebuchadnezzar on his journey from one capital to the other:

“Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaoh-necho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon smote in the *fourth year of Jehoiakim* the son of Josiah king of Judah” (Jer. xlvi. 2).

Instead therefore of discovering a discrepancy in the narrative of Scripture, we have the obvious fact that Nebuchadnezzar took time to accomplish his march from Babylon to Jerusalem, and was obliged to meet and overcome Pharaoh at Carchemish by the Euphrates before he could arrive.

In Jer. xxv. 3 the prophet reminded Israel that since the thirteenth year of Josiah (*see* Jer. i. 1, 2) the word of the Lord had come urging them to turn from their evil, and because they had not turned He said:

“Behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land and this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years” (Jer. xxv. 9-11).

What God therefore had threatened, He brought to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, and the historic record of the captivity of Jehoiakim is found in II Chron. xxxvi., *the last chapter of the Hebrew Bible*.

Yet with all this apparent on the surface of Scripture, and needing no more scholarship than ability to read in one’s mother tongue, Kuenen in his *Historic Critique de l’Ancien Testament* has the audacity to say:

“We know by the book of Jeremiah that no such event (as the siege of Jerusalem, Dan. i. 1) took place in the reign of Jehoiakim.”

“We know.” We also know that it is written: “Professing themselves to be wise they became fools”, and by such statements they demonstrate that they are but ‘blind leaders of the blind’.

Jehoiakim was appointed king of Judah by Pharaoh-necho in the place of Jehoahaz (II Kings xxiii. 34). He did evil in the sight of the Lord, and filled Jerusalem with innocent blood. He was succeeded by Jehoiachin. In the reign of the latter,

Nebuchadnezzar carried out thence *all* the treasures of the house of the Lord, whereas Dan. i. 1, 2 tells us that at the first he only carried away *a part*.

Jehoiachin or Jeconiah is deprived of the Jehovah element in his name, and as Coniah is utterly rejected by the Lord:

“Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days; for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah” (Jer. xxii. 30).

It is evident that Israel is passing; dominion is leaving them and is being transferred for the time being to the Gentiles. This is emphasized by such statements as Dan. i. 2, “And the Lord gave into his hand” or Jer. xxv. 1, “The fourth year of Jehoiakim that was the *first* year of Nebuchadnezzar”. The times of the Gentiles had therefore begun. And so with Zedekiah the glory departs, and Ezek. xxi. reveals the condition of things that will obtain ‘until He come’:

“And thou, profane wicked prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end, thus saith the Lord God; Remove the diadem, and take off the crown: this shall not be the same: exalt him that is low, and abase him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until He come Whose right it is, and I will give it Him” (Ezek. xxi. 25-27).

Daniel’s prophecies are occupied with this period of overturning, of the exalting of the base and abasing of the high. “This shall not be the same”, saith the Lord—“This shall not be His” as the Hebrew reads, i.e. Nebuchadnezzar’s dominion and dynasty would not be a real continuance of the throne of David. It would be in character rather a rule and dominion of wild beasts. The words ‘It shall be no more, until He come’ leave us in no doubt that the throne thus vacated shall be occupied by none other than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

The times of the Gentiles are characterized by one great feature, marked by the Lord in Luke xxi. 24: “And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” The kingdoms that succeeded Babylon may have been larger or smaller, more powerful or weaker, more autocratic or less so, but the one essential characteristic of Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, Turkey, and the present mandatory power, is the Gentile domination of Jerusalem. *That* is the great distinguishable feature, and will only be removed when “He comes Whose right it is”.

We have therefore a period of time which fills the ‘gap’ caused by Israel’s failure, which gap is filled by the dynasty started with Nebuchadnezzar and which will persist until, in the Day of the Lord, ‘the stone cut out without hand’ strikes this colossus, and ‘the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ’. One of the characteristics of the times of the Gentiles is the ‘treading down of Jerusalem’. Those times will not end until Jerusalem is free from the yoke of Gentile dominion, surveillance or protection. Each succeeding ruler of the Gentiles has dominated Jerusalem. Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Turkey, the League of Nations, the British Mandate, the United Nations, and so on to the last Dictator and his ten subservient kings at the time of

the end. When Jerusalem is at length free, the times of the Gentiles will be 'fulfilled' (*pleroo*), and 'the fullness' (*pleroma*) of the Gentiles will have come (Luke xxi. 24; Rom. xi. 25). Immediately following this statement concerning the times of the Gentiles, the epistle to the Romans goes on to say 'and so' or 'thus' "All Israel shall be saved" (Rom. xi. 26). The 'gap' in the outworking of the Divine purpose in Israel is stressed in Rom. ix.-xi., because of their failure, but a 'remnant' shall be saved at the beginning, and had the Lord not left them a 'seed' they would have been like Sodom and Gomorrha. Throughout the period covered by the Acts, 'all day long' the Lord stretched out His hands 'to a disobedient and gainsaying people' (Rom. x. 21). However low Israel may have fallen during this period, the answer of God to Elijah was a parallel 'I have reserved unto Myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal' (Rom. xi. 4). Yet such is the grace of God, the very 'diminishing of them' led to the enriching of the Gentiles, and leads the Apostle to ask 'How much more their fullness'? The figure of the olive tree, with its broken branches but emphasizes the 'gap' that is in view, and the fullness of the Gentiles occupies the interval occasioned by Israel's blindness (Rom. xi. 25). Israel's failure in the days of Nebuchadnezzar led to the times of the Gentiles speaking nationally, but Israel's spiritual failure registered in Acts xxviii. led to the present dispensation of Gentile blessing, the church which is called by the wondrous title "The fullness of Him that filleth all in all". This, however, is so great a theme that it must be considered in a separate study.