

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,

It hardly seems possible that two years have gone by, thus completing yet another volume of *The Berean Expositor*. Much has happened during this time, but one thing has remained constant, namely the exceeding grace of God which has supplied all our needs.

To all who have assisted in any way, both here and abroad, we tender our grateful thanks. It is only by practical fellowship in so many ways that makes the production of this Scriptural magazine possible. The days darken around us, making the need for such a witness the more urgent. The only light that can pierce this darkness is the light of the Word of God “rightly divided”.

Once again we ask all who value the Truth to join with us in the circulation of this magazine, seeking to extend it if possible, and may we by lip and life “shine as lights in the world, holding forth the Word of life” (Phil. ii. 15, 16).

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**God is the strength of my heart,
and my portion for ever (Psa. lxxiii. 26).**

p. 20

What strength one has, if this be true! God is the strength of my heart, not merely of my hands or my brain, but at the very seat of all, my heart, but let it be observed that the one who makes this boast in God, also realizes his own weakness and failure. “*My flesh and my heart FAILETH BUT*”—the verse before shows how the lessons of adversity and trouble had led away from human aid; none in heaven or earth to be desired like unto Him, and He, the portion for ever. It is easy to write; it is easy to speak beautiful words on these things, but it requires great grace to take the position of “when I am weak, then am I strong—most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities” (II Cor. xii. 10). Such was the experience of Paul and of numbers of the saints of differing dispensations. May we know this Divine strength in our weakness.

CHARLES H. WELCH

The “Amen” of Prayer

p. 60

What does a believer mean when he says “amen” at the end of a prayer (perhaps especially when the prayer has been spoken by someone else)? The answer generally given to this question is, “so be it”, that is to say, “I agree with the prayer and *also* desire the performance of the things asked”. But should the response, “amen”, convey only this?

The word “amen” derives from the Hebrew *aman*, as does the general word used for faith (or faithfulness) in the O.T. (*emunah*). Underlying these words are at least three basic, inter-connected ideas, which ought to be taken into consideration in the usage of the response “amen”:

(1) Stability. In Exod. xvii. 2 Moses’ hands “were *steady* (*emunah*) until the going down of the sun”. As Joshua fought with Amalek, so Moses (with Aaron and Hur staying up his hands) sat on the top of the hill with the rod of God. This is surely a picture of *unwavering* prayer before God—the “steady” hands of Moses.

(2) Truth. Deut. xxxii. 4 refers to God as “The Rock”, emphasizing the *reliance* Israel may place upon Him because of His *stability*. He is also called “A God of *truth* (*emunah*)” in the same verse.

(3) Faith or Faithfulness. In the same chapter the Lord’s complaint against Israel is concerned with their forsaking of “The Rock” that bare them, and He calls them a perverse generation, “children in whom is no *faith* (*emun*)” (verses 18, 20).

In the N.T. *amen* is mostly translated “verily” (an emphatic assertion of *truth*) as in the Lord’s “Verily, verily, I say unto you” (John i. 51, etc.). Paul emphasized the truth of his words by the negative “I lie not”, and perhaps also, “This is a *faithful* (*true*) saying” (Rom. ix. 1; I Tim. i. 15; iii. 1).

Applying these thoughts to the “amen” of prayer it may be said that in responding so, the believer ought to be assured: (a) That the prayer expresses *truth* (otherwise no ‘amen’ should be said) for it is possible to ‘ask amiss’ (James iv. 3). In fact, the response “amen” at the end of a prayer is an assertion that the believer *agrees that the prayer is truth*. (b) That the prayer, since it is truth, will be heard by the God on Whom one can *rely*, in Whom one can *trust* (*faith*).

Hence prayer is seen as an aspect of *resting* in the Lord, and “amen” the expression of that *trust* which submits all its desires to the furtherance of the *truth* (Thy will be done). All prayer should be asked in Christ’s name, and it is not without point that He is called, “The *Amen*, the *faithful* and *true* witness” (Rev. iii. 14).

BRIAN E. SHERRING

He Shall Glorify Me

p. 80

One of the most unhealthy aspects of present-day evangelical movements is their over-emphasis of the Spirit and spiritual gifts (especially “tongues”). We say *over-emphasis*, because it is right and proper that a place should be found in our theology for the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit, providing it is the *right* place. Unfortunately, the continuing failure to recognize the change of dispensation at Acts xxviii. 28 is leading more and more Christians into a position where the spiritual gifts of the Acts period (I Cor. xii.) are fast taking the place of Christ, and if He is mentioned at all it is only in an emotional whisper or a rowdy chorus, and then usually as “Jesus”.

Over against this the Scriptural position stands in strong contrast:

“He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (John xvi. 14).

The Spirit’s ministry is to glorify Christ, by announcing the things which belong to Him. This “Comforter” is also called “The Spirit of Truth”; the Father’s word, given through the Son, being truth (xvii. 8, 14, 17). By comparing Eph. v. 18 with Col. iii. 16 (in context) it is seen that the *present* ministry of the Spirit is to fill the believer with the word of Christ; the believer’s responsibility being to let that word dwell in him richly in all wisdom. (See further *The Berean Expositor*, Volume XLV, p.218).

That it was right to desire spiritual gifts *during the Acts period* is evident from I Cor. xii. 31, and yet even then Paul spoke of “a more excellent way” (“love”, I Cor. xiii.). The gift of tongues in particular seems to have appealed to the ‘carnal’ Corinthians, but its proper place, *as given to Gentiles*, is seen in I Cor. xiv. 21, 22, a ‘sign’ to “this people” (the Jew, the sign people—I Cor. i. 22). What relevance has it then today?

Things ordained of God are right in their proper dispensation, but take them out of that setting and they become no more than “the tradition of men” (see Col. ii.). The present “tongues-movement” seems to be part of the old cry that goes up from time to time under such phrases as, “Back to Pentecost . . . the Primitive Church . . . the words of Jesus . . .”, but it is perhaps more dangerous. One cannot help remembering the words of Paul in II Thess. ii. 9 (“power and signs and *lying* wonders”), reflecting upon whether the present situation is perhaps a precursor to that day of delusion which accompanies the presence of the Lawless One himself.

The only safe way for the true believer is to apply the acid test of all ministry—“does it glorify Christ?” If it does then it is truly of the Holy Spirit; otherwise it should be avoided at all costs as the deception of the Evil One.

BRIAN E. SHERRING

Herein is Love

p. 100

The origin of true love lies beyond humanity. Sinful man is incapable in himself of producing such love, for it springs from a source outside of himself—"God is love". But thanks be to Him this love has been lavished upon man in the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and man may now, through the acceptance of Him, responded to and give back, something of that same love "shed abroad in our hearts".

Love, *as a response*, can only ever be that which is produced in man, "We love, *because He first loved us*" (I John iv. 19 R.V.). It requires His initiative to trigger off any spark of true love in ourselves, and this is surely the right order in an understanding of its real meaning; He initiates, we respond. True love in us is the fire kindled by the love of God. C. S. Lewis wrote:

"Our role must always be that of patient to agent, female to male, mirror to light, echo to voice. Our highest victory must be response, not initiative. To experience the love of God in a true, and not an illusory form, is therefore to experience it as our surrender to His demand, our conformity to His desire" (*The Problem of Pain*).

But for all this it must never be imagined that our love is to be negative or passive, for we are called upon to "Walk in love" (positive action), and the example of Christ before us (Eph. v. 1, 2). God may have *given* His Son (John iii. 16), even *sent* His Son (I John iv. 10), but in the final analysis, "Christ loved and *gave up Himself* for us; this being the evidence not only of His obedience (Phil. ii. 8) but of His oneness with the Father (John x. 11, 30).

In a very much smaller measure our *response* to the love of God should partake of the same nature; not response from a feeling of duty (although we most certainly owe Him all), but that which is drawn from us as a result of our appreciation of *His* love, and our unity with Him.

The true nature of the love of God may be seen pictured in the beautiful story of Abraham and Isaac:

"Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; *and they went both of them together*" (Gen. xxii. 6).

The love manifested here involved tremendous cost to *both* father and son; any love we seek to manifest (whilst it can never hope to approach that shown in *the* Father and Son) must reflect the same image. If it cost God much, will it not also involve the same in us?

BRIAN E. SHERRING

Like Passions As We **pp. 119, 120**

One of the evidences for the “inspiration” of Scripture is surely seen in that the Bible does not whitewash its heroes, nor present them in a light untrue to the realities of life as we know it. The men and women who are presented to us as examples of the life of faith are not superhuman beings exempted from the stresses, strains and failures of which we ordinary mortals know so much, but were (as Elijah) “subject to like passions” (Greek *homoiopathees*, from *homoios* like and *pathos* being affected, suffer).

Abraham, set forth for our consideration in the gallery of faith, was by no means without blame in the light of his earthly life revealed in more detail in the O.T. For all the fact that he went out, not knowing whither he went sojourned in the land of promise as in a strange country offered up Isaac with the conviction that God would raise him from the dead (Heb. xi. 8-10, 17-19), he nevertheless was a man who on two occasions falsely represented the relationship he had with Sarah, thereby placing her in danger of corruption (Gen. xii. 11-20; xx. 2-18).

Moses was disobedient before the rock in Horeb, when he struck it twice and thereby forfeited the position of leading Israel into Canaan (Numb. xx. 8, 11, 12), and he another example of Heb. xi. So likewise David, who descended to the very depths of sin when he committed both adultery and murder in the affair with Bathsheba and Uriah (II Sam. xi.) and yet for all that he was nevertheless, a man after God’s own heart to the One Who knows what is in man.

In the N.T., the leader and spokesman of the Twelve Apostles, Peter, a man who was eventually to lay down his life for Christ (John xxi. 18, 19), denied His Lord thrice (John xviii. 17, 25, 27) and was later (even after the Resurrection and Pentecost) “to be blamed” in the matter of his actions at Antioch (Gal. ii. 11, 12).

Paul and Barnabas were in sharp contention over the ministry of John Mark, so much so that they “departed asunder one from the other” (Acts xv. 36-39). The same apostle Paul made no claim to being any different from other men in this respect, recognizing himself as being subject to the same pressures common to all:

“. . . We also are men of like passions (*homoiopathees*) with you . . .” (Acts xiv. 15).
“Temptation such as is common to man” (I Cor. x. 13).
“The sin which doth so easily beset us” (Heb. xii. 1).

In the light of these things, we may perhaps draw a measure of comfort from the fact that God does not await our perfection before He can use us; “He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust” (Psa. ciii. 14). He could well do all His work without

us, but chooses not to do so. He is prepared to work through frail, imperfect humans such as we all know ourselves basically to be, a fact that becomes evident from the number of times we have to pick ourselves up from the dust, having failed Him again in some way or other. What a God of grace we have our dealings with!

As a corrective to what has so far been said, it must not be imagined that failure can be in any way condoned, or sin treated lightly. “Easily-surrounding sin” and temptation may be part of the experience of man, whether believer or otherwise, but for the former there exists a power to overcome even under the most extreme pressure:

“There hath no temptation (or trial) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation (trial) also make the issue, for you to be able to bear it” (I Cor. x. 13).

A realization of what is involved in the believer’s position “in Christ” is the answer to all temptation and trial; the truth of Rom. xi. must become experimentally true for the believer, if victory is to be his experience.

As with all subjects, *balance* must characterize our understanding of ourselves before God. Our old man *was* crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be made ineffective, but to claim (as some alas do) that sinless perfection has been thereby achieved, is to contradict experience in the Christian life. The lives of God’s saints, in both Old Testament and New give the lie to it, and an honest stocktaking of our own life will leave us in no doubt.

But on the other hand we can rejoice in this, that He can still use us, and indeed wants to use us, for all the fact that we fail him in thought, word and deed. May we be imbued with the same desire, confident of this fact, that the God Who looks upon the heart knows our inmost motives. Fail Him, we most certainly will, but never let us ever lose the endeavour to serve Him to the end. The great men of Scripture did just this, and they were men “of like passions as we”.

BRIAN E. SHERRING

What God Cannot Do pp. 179, 180

It has often been maintained that “God can do anything”. No doubt such a statement has been based on Luke i. 37 (“with God nothing shall be impossible”) or Matt. xix. 26 (“with God all things are possible”), but it has been made without regard to the nearer and remoter contexts of these passages, and without a thought of the implications involved. The plain fact of the matter is that Scripture clearly declares that,

“God *cannot* lie” (Titus i. 2).

If this were not so; if in fact God *could* do literally anything, then we who have believed would have no security in salvation, nor confidence in any of the promises made by God with respect to our calling and hope. But here (in the context of the promise of eternal life) we are told that He *cannot* lie.

Similarly in II Tim. ii. 13 we read of Christ that “He *remains* faithful; He *is not able* to deny Himself”, or as Moffatt puts it,

“He *cannot* be untrue to Himself”,

and this quite independently of the behaviour of the believer, who may be *faithful* or *faithless* (“If we believe not” A.V., “If we are faithless” Moffatt). *Faithlessness* in a believer, an unwillingness to endure (A.V. ‘suffer’) for the Lord, will cost him the reward of reigning with Christ—this he will be denied (12)—but his “life” is secure, being linked in identification with Christ (11), which the Lord cannot undo.

The God with Whom we have to do, revealed to us in Christ, not only acts in a *true* manner, but is Himself the embodiment of *truth* (“I am the truth” John xiv. 6). He cannot in any way be untrue to Himself, nor be associated with anything other than truth. Further it follows that He cannot produce any situation that is a lie or a contradiction, so that the argument (so often heard on the lips of disbelievers) “If God is why doesn’t He?”, falls down in that it demands that He produces something contradictory to what He is. He is *already* working out His purpose in creation in harmony with His own nature and Being, in harmony with truth; to demand that He act differently is to deny this, and to accuse Him of association with the lie.

“The lie” is the child of the devil; it did *not* originate in God, Who is truth:

“The devil he has no place in the truth because there is no truth in him: when he tells a lie, he is expressing his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (John viii. 44, Moffatt).

The conception of “father” here may be taken in the same sense as in Gen. iv. 20, 21, where “Jabal was the *father* of such as dwell in tents” and “Jubal was the *father* of all such as handle the harp and organ”, i.e. *originator, inventor, author, the first to introduce*. The lie was sired by the devil; he first introduced it. With that system God Himself has nothing in common, for He *cannot* lie.

How important it is then not to make unthinking statements concerning what God *can* do, plausible though they may seem before examination. To do so is to play straight into the hands of the critics of truth, who so often accuse our God for “allowing” this or that, for not “stepping in” to stop violence, suffering, etc. If we believe in a God of truth, we believe also that He has, is, and will act only according to truth, however difficult it may be for us to appreciate it at the time. The devil’s “lies” may seem attractive, seem to offer so much (they did to Eve, Gen. iii.), but they will only bring unhappiness, failure and death, and they will all come eventually to nought.

It may at first seem a strange thing for the believer to rejoice that God *cannot* do something, but it is only the expression of joy in the security and confidence that we can have in a God of truth, Who is *unable* to act in any other way than in harmony with what He is.

“Steadfast—He rules aright, His methods all in order due, a God trusty and wholly true, upright and honest” (Deut. xxxii. 4, Moffatt).

BRIAN E. SHERRING

**My cup runneth over
Salvation to the uttermost (Heb. vii. 25).
p. 192**

Salvation is the immediate result of believing the gospel of grace:

“The gospel of Christ the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom. i. 16).

“Behold now is the day of salvation” (II Cor. vi. 2).

Nevertheless, salvation is also spoken of as a future blessing:

“For now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Rom. xiii. 11).

“For an helmet the hope of salvation” (I Thess. v. 8).

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for” (Rom. viii. 24).

There is not only a salvation “from”, but a salvation “to”. The children of Israel were not only delivered *out of the land* of Egypt, but were preserved during the forty years wandering of their elders, and shown the salvation of the Lord, when they entered *into the land* of promise” (Ps. xci. 16).

The cup of salvation truly runneth over. Faith looks back to the cross and sees salvation accomplished. Hope looks forward to the future glory and sees salvation realized. The salvation which is by His “life” is a salvation “to” a goal, whereas the salvation which is by His death is that which is “from” a condition of bondage of death.

The Hebrews were taught this glorious truth, for in Heb. vii. the Apostle wrote:

“Wherefore He is able to save them *to the uttermost* that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. vii. 25).

This cannot be the initial salvation which is consequent upon believing the gospel. The sinner is not saved because Christ “ever liveth”, he is first of all saved because “Christ died for the ungodly”. The sinner who believes is saved from sin and its consequences, but the believer is saved all along the way until he enters glory, because the Saviour Who once died now lives to die no more. Surely those who know a peace that passes knowledge, joy that is unspeakable, and a salvation that covers past, present and future, surely these can take the cup of their salvation, and as they call on the name of the Lord can confess with full hearts,

“My cup runneth over”.

CHARLES H. WELCH

The Church of Matt. xvi.

No.6. Does the singular “church” of Matt. xvi. 18 rule out the idea of distinct churches? pp. 199, 200

We have taught, and we believe it to be true, that the church of the epistle to the Ephesians belongs to a completely different calling and dispensation from the church of the early Acts period. However, although both rest on the all-sufficiency of the one Offering of Christ on the cross, there are some readers who feel that if this be so, then we should expect the Saviour to have said in Matt. xvi. 18 “My churches” rather than “My church”.

The word church, as we know, is the Anglicized form of *kuriakon* “belonging to the Lord”, which also gives the northern “Kirk”. The Greek word translated “church” in the N.T. is *ekklesia*, a word made up of *ek* “out” and *kaleo* “to call”. In secular usage it referred to an assembly of the people called out by a civil magistrate (Acts xix. 39), or even an assembly of people not lawfully called out (Acts xix. 32, 40).

The assembly of the redeemed in any particular place is called “The Church at Jerusalem” (Acts viii. 1), and in this local sense it is used in the plural:

“Then had the churches rest” (Acts ix. 31).

“The churches of Galatia, of Asia, of Macedonia” (I Cor. xvi. 1, 19; II Cor. viii. 1).

In the LXX the word *ekklesia* is almost constantly employed to translate the Hebrew *qahal*, which is rendered in the O.T. “assembly” and “congregation”. Now *qahal* occurs in the Hebrew O.T. as a noun 123 times, and of this number 69 are translated *ekklesia* by the LXX.

It is abundantly clear therefore that the word *ekklesia*, was of frequent use among the Jews long before Christ and would have a very definite meaning when used by them or used in speech to them. In like manner, Stephen called the assembled and redeemed nation of Israel “The church in the wilderness” (Acts vii. 38).

“This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in Mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us.”

The reference is to the man Moses, and the place Sinai and the giving of the law.

“Moses truly said unto the fathers. A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you” (Acts iii. 22).

Uppermost in the hearts and minds of the disciples both before and after Pentecost was the restoration of the kingdom of Israel (Acts i. 6; iii. 19-26), and this earthly kingdom the gospel according to Matthew makes its central theme.

Matthew's gospel is divided into two main sections by the two "time notes" of iv. 17 and xvi. 21:

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

"From that time forth began Jesus to show unto His disciples, how 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. Then Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him."

Two facts of great importance emerge here:

- (1) The pronouncement of the Lord concerning His church falls at the close of the section devoted to the kingdom of heaven, and before He revealed that He must suffer, die and be raised again.
- (2) Peter's attitude makes it clear that he had no conception of the crucifixion and death of Christ as fundamental to the standing of the Church, consequently we are compelled to acknowledge that the church of Matt. xvi. 18 could have had no reference to the church of the epistles, for there, the death and resurrection of Christ is of fundamental importance.

Further, immediately following the statement concerning the Church in Matt. xvi. 18, the Lord tells Peter that He will give to him "the keys of the *kingdom of heaven*", establishing the relationship of this church with the earthly kingdom purposes of God. The Church in which there is neither Jew nor Greek, the church which is the Body of Christ, was not made known during the earthly ministry of the Lord, and it would have been confusing the issues before them to have introduced that which came into being consequent upon Israel's failure to acknowledge the Messiahship of the Saviour at the end of the Acts.

We are sure that with these facts before the mind, the very idea of "churches" in the place of "church" in Matt. xvi. 18 becomes impossible.

CHARLES H. WELCH

Keys to the Understanding of Scripture pp. 219, 220

The interpretation of Scripture is difficult enough, but it is made more difficult when we ignore the keys given to us by the Holy Spirit which help to unlock the truth. Very often those keys hang at the door of each book, and properly heeded provide an understanding of Scripture which would otherwise not be ours. Consider some examples.

The book of the Revelation has provided commentators with enough enigmas to bring forth a variety of interpretations, some of them very fanciful. But at the head of that book hangs a key to its correct interpretation:

“I (John) was in the spirit on the Lord’s day” (i. 10).

This key has been neglected by those who will insist that the expression, “the Lord’s day” refers to Sunday, the “Christian Sabbath”, and fail to see that, interpreted in the light of other Scripture, it must rather refer to “the day of the Lord”, that great prophetic period referred to in Joel ii. 31 and etc. The Revelation was written concerning “things which must shortly come to pass” (i. 1), and the situation during the Acts period, when Peter quoted the prophecy of Joel referred to above (Acts ii. 16-21), was ripe for the coming of “the day of the Lord” and the “things which must shortly come to pass”.

Consider the epistle of James as a further example. In the A.V. we have the heading, “The *General* Epistle of James”, and yet when we heed the *actual heading* given to us by James himself we note that, far from being a “general” epistle it is rather a *specific* epistle:

“James to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad” (i. 1).

To a “church” which reckoned itself to be “spiritual Israel”, the twelve tribes may well have been interpreted as referring to that catholic, universal church, but to those who wish to allow Scripture to mean what it says, the twelve tribes can only refer to a literal Israel, such as Paul had in mind in Acts xxvi. 7. (It is granted that “the twelve tribes” referred to in James i. 1 may be limited to believers amongst Israel on the basis of James ii. 1.)

Consider the so called “Sermon on the Mount”, thought by many to set forth the code of practice for believers today. However it may legitimately in part be applied today, it must first be interpreted in its context, using the keys provided. We note:

“He went up into a mountain *His disciples came unto Him: And He taught them*” (Matt. v. 1, 2).

Not to the multitude here, but to an inner company, who were to pass through a time of persecution (v. 10-12) and whose forgiveness depended upon their forgiveness of others (vi. 12, 14, 15). Seen in its proper setting this 'sermon' belongs to the period with the bread which comes down upon them ("daily bread" vi. 11 reminiscent of the O.T. manna). Compare the *conditional* forgiveness with Paul's later statement relevant to the Body of Christ in Eph. iv. 32.

Such then are some of the keys which help our understanding of truth. Many of them are provided in the title of a book, as for example, "The vision of Isaiah which he saw *concerning* Judah and Jerusalem" (i. 1). Other keys appear in the body of a work. The Lord once complained about some in Israel that they had "taken away the key of knowledge". Let us see that we neglect not those keys given us to unlock the understanding of God's Word.

BRIAN E. SHERRING

All the fullness of God pp. 233 - 236

The church of the One Body is the great outstanding anticipation of the goal of the ages. It is associated with Him under Whose feet are *all things*; it is associated with a dispensation of the fullness of the seasons when *all things* are to be summed up in Him, and it is itself called,

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

How are we to understand this statement? It falls into line with the last occurrence of *pleroma* in Colossians, and for that matter in the N.T.

“For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. ii. 9).

The first occurrence of *pleroma* in Ephesians stands by itself (Eph. i. 10); the remainder form a group that expand the theme thus:

- A | “The church which is His body,
the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” (Eph. i. 22, 23).
- B | “The whole family in heaven and earth . . .
that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith . . .
filled unto all the fullness of God” (Eph. iii. 14-19).
- C | “He ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things . . .
Unto a perfect man,
unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. iv. 8-13).
- B | “For in Him were all things created . . .
all things were created by Him, and for Him . . .
He is the Head of the Body, the church . . .
for it pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell . . .
to reconcile all things . . . in earth and things in heaven” (Col. i. 16-20).
- A | “For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;
and ye are filled to the full in Him,
Which is the Head of all principality and power” (Col. ii. 9, 10).

Here is a very complete conspectus of this mighty theme, point answering point with such precision, that no approach to one corresponding member can be undertaken without due consideration of the other. This the reader will perceive is fraught with immediate consequences. It forces a comparison between Eph. i. 22, 23 and Col. ii. 9, 10. The church of the one Body is “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” and the second prayer of Eph. iii. is that the believer may be “filled with all the fullness of God”. Identical language *Pan to pleroma* “all the fullness”, is found in Eph. iii. 19, Col. i. 19 and ii. 9, and these passages cannot be separated and interpreted independently of each

other. The “fullness” of Christ dwells “bodily” in the church, even as the “fullness” of the Godhead dwells “bodily” in Him.

There are moreover many contextual links that bind these references together as one whole. In Eph. i. 21-23, the stress is upon the headship of Christ as the risen and ascended One, with all things under His feet, the church which is His body, being the fullness of Him, Who in His turn filleth all in all. In Col. i. 15-20 the two creations are brought together, with Christ as “Firstborn” in each (Col. i. 15, 18), and as pre-eminent in both (Col. i. 17, 18). Things in heaven and earth were His creation (Col. i. 16) and they are the objects of reconciliation (Col. i. 20). When we come to Col. ii. 4-23, we have left the positive revelation of truth, and have entered into the sphere of conflict with error. For our present purpose we will give the opening and closing members of this great correspondence.

R | a | 4-8-. Plausible speech. Philosophy (*sophos*).
b | -8-. Traditions of men.
c | -8-. Rudiments of the world.
CORRECTIVE. | -8. Not after Christ. Fullness *pleroma*
9, 10. Ye are filled full in Him. *pleroo*
* * * * *
R | c | 20-22. Rudiments of the world.
b | 22. Teaching of men.
a | 23-. Wordy show of wisdom (*sophos*).
CORRECTIVE. | -23-. Not in any honour.
-23. Filling of the flesh. *plesmone*

Whatever is intended by Col. ii. 9 “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” is closely and intentionally carried forward into verse 10, for the word translated “complete” is *pepleromenoi*, even as conversely, the title of the church as “the fullness” is carried upward to Christ as the One Who is filling (*pleroumeno*) “the all things in all”. Col. iv. 4-23 combats the invasion of a vain and deceitful philosophy, supplied by tradition and the rudiments of the world and “not after Christ”, and later in the same argument, not only intruding philosophies and traditions, but even divinely appointed “new moons and sabbath days” are alike as “shadows of things to come” because “the body is of Christ”. The whole Fullness toward which every age and dispensation has pointed since the overthrow of the world, is at last seen to be Christ Himself. All types and shadows that once filled the gap caused by sin, are now seen to be transient, and of value only as they point the way to Him, and then disappear. He is Head, He is Preeminent, He is Creator and Redeemer, He is the Firstborn of all creation, and the Firstborn from the dead. He is the beginning of the creation of God (Revelation iii. 14; Col. i. 18), the Alpha and Omega, The First and the Last. In deed and in fact “Christ is all and in all” (Col. iii. 11) in the church of the one Body now, as He will yet be in the whole redeemed universe in the future.

No more glorious position for the redeemed is conceivable than that revealed in Ephesians i. 23. To be one of a kingdom of priests on the earth is a dignity so great, that O.T. prophets have piled imagery upon imagery in setting it forth. Yet when we come to

the Bride of the Lamb, and the description of the heavenly Jerusalem, we realize how much more glorious is that calling as compared with the highest calling on earth. What shall be said then of that company of the redeemed, blessed neither on earth nor in the New Jerusalem, blessed neither as a kingdom nor as a Bride, but blessed “in Christ” where He now sits “far above all”, blessed not only as the members of His Body which is dignity indeed, but actually destined to be “the fullness of Him” in Whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

It is evident from what we have discovered in the Word, that the term “fullness” is vital to the accomplishment of the Divine purpose and there is one point more that must be considered before we close. Head and members, or Head and Body, are relative terms. The one cannot exert or function without the other. This we all recognize must be true of the members, but is it not also necessarily true of the Head? Christ AS HEAD needs the complement of His Body, just as surely as the church. His Body, needs the complement of the Head. In the words “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all” the words thus translated *to pleroma tou* “The fullness of Him” are cast in the form known as “The genitive of relation”. Words ending in *ma* often have a passive significance. Chrysostom, in his commentary says:

“The fullness of the head is the body, and the fullness of the body is the head that is just as the head is filled (or fulfilled) by the body.”

Beza says something very similar:

“However complete He is in Himself, yet as Head He is not complete without His Body.”

Pleromenou “That filleth” is not passive but middle voice “To fill up or complete for Himself”.

The very fact that God has a goal, and is moving toward the goal, implies that this relationship of the redeemed with the Redeemer is essential to the glorious achievement of the ages. God is moving from the status of God Who is Creator, to God Who is Father, and the title Father is itself relative, it necessitates a family. While therefore the redeemed are nothing in themselves, they are precious by reason of His gracious purpose.

CHARLES H. WELCH

A Case for Right Division

A Distinctive Purpose of the
Gospels according to Matthew and Luke demonstrated.

pp. 239, 240

The words used by Luke and Paul have been tabulated and it has been found that “every second word in the Gospel of Luke is also used by Paul” and so close is the language of the Acts of the Apostles to the diction of Paul’s epistles, that there is actually a volume of considerable interest published, entitled “Paul, the author of the Acts” (H. Heber Evans). The human authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews is problematic, and there are those who maintain that its amanuensis was Luke. This may have been so, but we have every confidence that Hebrews is one of Paul’s fourteen epistles—yet the closeness of language between Paul and Luke is emphasized by this suggestion.

The message which was given to the Apostle Paul for the Gentiles, and the ministry of the reconciliation committed to him, arose out of the failure of Israel (speaking after the manner of men) to repent and believe the good news of the kingdom. The great teaching of the Apostle, which included the Gentile within the sphere of the promise of Abraham (Romans and Galatians), is scarcely suggested by Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew’s Gospel is divided into two parts, each part being connected with the relationship and covenants indicated in Matt. i. 1. The first part, covering Matt. iv. 7 - xvi. 20, is associated with the kingly title “Son of David”; the second portion, commencing with the announcement of suffering, death and resurrection (xvi. 21), is the fulfilling of the title “Son of Abraham”. The second phase of the Lord’s ministry could not be made a matter of public proclamation until the great transaction of Calvary had removed the curse, and made it possible for the blessing of Abraham to flow out to the Gentiles (Gal. iii. 13, 14).

The Acts opens with a renewed witness concerning the kingdom of Israel and David’s throne, but also links with it the wider covenant made with Abraham. Luke, who wrote the “Acts”, had already written a “former treatise of all that Jesus began to do and teach” and in that treatise he laid a foundation for Paul’s Gospel of the reconciliation. He does not stay at Abraham when he gives the genealogy of the Lord, but goes back to Adam.

The unfolding of the divine purpose is closely connected with the revelation of Christ Himself. It will be found that the circle of truth widens and deepens as the time arrives for some richer title of Christ to come forth. The inner circle, latest in time of revelation, and first to be fulfilled and exhausted is associated with *David*. To this the first portion of Matthew is devoted (i.-xvi.). The next circle, which goes *back* in history, and looks *forward* beyond the confines of the rule of David, is connected with *Abraham*. The second portion of Matthew (xvii.-xxviii.) and the Acts belong to this section of the

purpose. Luke's gospel goes back beyond *both* Abraham and David, and traces the genealogy of the Saviour back to *Adam*. This forms the basis for Paul's message to the Gentiles; and indeed it is Paul alone of all the New Testament writers who makes known the wondrous and far-reaching connection that is established in the purpose of God between Adam, mankind (including Jew and Gentile) and Christ.

(to be continued)

CHARLES H. WELCH

Add to your faith knowledge

No.1. Showing how II Peter adds “knowledge” to the “faith” of I Peter. pp. 117 - 119

Sometimes we meet with good Christian folk who seem to have a real horror of knowledge, looking upon it as a work of the flesh, and antagonistic to faith. There is, of course, a specious form of knowledge that puffeth up (I Cor. viii. 1), but there is also an empty faith that cannot save (James ii. 17). While we give no place to the “oppositions of science falsely so called”, it is mischievous to assert that true science can ever be antagonistic to true faith. We are, however, not contemplating the adjustment of physical science to the faith, but considering the many passages in which knowledge is associated with faith as a second step.

We have borrowed the title for this study from II Peter, and we observe that the epistle which opens with the exhortation “add to your faith . . . knowledge” (II Pet. i. 5), concludes with the exhortation to “grow in grace and in knowledge” (II Pet. iii. 18). Peter, indeed, says much more in his opening exhortation, than that knowledge should be added to faith; in full his words are,

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” (IIPet.i.5-7).

These added graces are all to be looked upon as so much “fruit”, for the Apostle says that if these things be present, and abound, they make us that we be neither “barren nor unfruitful” in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To examine every item in this great addition would take us too far afield so, while remembering that the exhortation would be incomplete without them, we will devote this study to the association of faith and knowledge.

If we examine Peter’s two epistles we shall discover that the first stresses “faith”, while the second stresses “knowledge”.

Here are the references to faith in the first epistle:

- “Kept through faith unto salvation” (i. 5).
- “The trial of your faith” (i. 7).
- “Though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice” (i. 8).
- “Receiving the end of your faith” (i. 9).
- “Who by Him do believe in God, that raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God” (i. 21).
- “Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious” (ii. 6, 7).

“Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator” (iv. 19).

“The devil . . . seeketh whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith” (v. 8, 9).

“A faithful brother” (v. 12).

The only references to faith in the second epistle are in i. 1 and 5.

The second epistle stresses knowledge:

“To them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the *knowledge* of God, and of Jesus our Lord. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the *knowledge* of him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (II Pet. i. 1-3).

Salvation is by faith, but things that pertain to life and godliness are here associated with the *knowledge* of the Lord. After all, we shall discover that faith and knowledge are but two sides of one great subject. If I believe a rumour, I cannot really say “I know”, but if I believe a statement made by one who is infallibly and indubitably true, can I hesitate to say “I know”? If I do, I deny the reality of my faith. Such knowledge is experimental faith.

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge” (II Pet. i. 5).

Paraesphero, translated “giving” and meaning literally “to bring in beside” (from *para* beside, and *phero* to bring), is used here by the Apostle as though he would say “Besides those precious promises on God’s part, bring in, by grace, your co-operation, by using all diligence to furnish virtue”, etc.

“Add” *Epichoregeo*, literally means to supply the cost of leading the chorus or theatrical entertainment. The person who thus defrayed the cost was usually a public-spirited person of means, and was called the *choregos*. Visitors to the British Museum may remember “the Choragic monument”, a beautiful specimen of the Corinthian order of architecture, in the Greek gallery.

En. Where our versions reads “add *to* your faith virtue”, etc. the original uses the preposition *en*, and Alford and others give it its full value, in each case translating,

“Furnish in your faith virtue, in your virtue knowledge, etc.”

It will be seen therefore that no mere mechanical addition is to be attempted. Faith must be virtuous; virtue must be informed with knowledge; knowledge must be held in temperance, and temperance must be accompanied by patience, and so on.

“If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (II Pet. i. 8).

Fruit is an evidence of life, and these things “make our calling and election sure” (IIPet.i.10).

Mere knowledge, unaccompanied by such evidences of grace, is no evidence of election. The Apostle speaks in I Pet. ii. of those who had escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but had afterwards become entangled and overcome, and, said the Apostle, it would have been better for them not to have *known* the way of righteousness than that, after they had *known* it, they should turn from the holy commandment. He likens such to dogs or to swine who “return” to their uncleanness, a contrast with the “sheep” of I Pet. ii. 25, who “return” to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. These were evidently “barren and unfruitful” in their knowledge. However, the main theme of this second epistle is not reached until chapter iii., when Peter deals with the postponement of the Second Coming of Christ, the attitude of the scoffers and the reason for the apparent “slackness”.

“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye *know* these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness, but grow in grace, and in the *knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Pet. iii. 17, 18).

This article is but introductory and written with a view to help us to realize the important place this “added knowledge” has in the great scheme of revelation. We believe a collection of passages where this addition is a part of inspired teaching will be helpful to all our readers, and in the succeeding articles such passages will therefore form the basis of our meditation.

No.2. Some examples culled from the Epistle to the Romans. pp. 133 - 135

Let us turn to the Epistle to the Romans, and see how “knowledge” is added to faith. Most of our readers are aware of the fact that this epistle presents its teaching from two points of view. There is the teaching which deals with Jew and Gentile; that appeals to the Law and the Prophets; that traces the theme of the epistle back to Abraham; and that uses the word *pistis*, “faith”, twenty-seven times in Rom. i.-v. 11, and thirteen times in Rom. ix.-xvi. There is also the teaching that deals with man, which makes no reference to Jew and Gentile as such, but traces its theme back to Adam, and makes scarcely any quotation from the Law and the Prophets. In this section (Rom. v. 12-viii.) the word *pistis*, “faith”, is not found. *Pisteuo*, “to believe”, occurs in the outside sections (Rom.i.-v.11, and Rom.ix.-xvi.), twenty times, but is found only once in the inner section (Rom. v. 12-viii.). This one reference reads:

“Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him” (Rom. vi. 8).

Apart from this one statement, “faith” and “believe” are limited to the outer portion of the epistle. Before we turn to the inner portion, and before we can “add” knowledge to faith, we must have some idea of how faith is used, and in what associations, for we cannot be said to “add” to anything which we do not already possess.

Rom. i. 16 is the first recorded act of believing, and is intimately associated with the Gospel and with salvation.

“The Gospel of Christ the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom. i. 16).

This is the simple issue. The next reference is Rom. iii. 22, where the subject is the righteousness of God:

“The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe” (Rom. iii. 22).

Here we have advanced a great step. Between Rom. i. 16 and iii. 22 is a marvelous unfolding of the depth of human need, and the fullness of Divine provision. To appreciate this we must go back to the first chapter and look at the reference to “faith” in verse 17. The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.

“For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. i. 17).

Rom. iii. 22 tells us that this righteousness of God is “by faith of Jesus Christ”, and the conclusion come to is that,

“A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Rom. iii. 28).

In some of the passages, law and its works are set aside, and in Rom. iii. 24, 25 we have the fundamental reference to “faith in His blood”. Without redemption and without propitiation (atonement) justification by faith is impossible.

Coming to chapter iv., we discover Who, or what it is that is believed:

“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 3).

God is the object of faith, and particularly God as the One that quickeneth the dead (Rom. iv. 5, 17, 24). This faith is “counted for righteousness” (Rom. iv. 5, 9, 11, 13, 16). We are therefore prepared for the summing up of Rom. v. 1, 2:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. v. 1, 2).

Rom. v. leads us up to the double fruit of faith, Justification and Access. What more can be provided or enjoyed? Nothing, for a righteous standing before God which results in peace with God, access into grace that is all sufficient for salvation, preservation and presentation, covers all our need, past, present and future. Yet, if we would experimentally enter into this grace; if we would have no lurking distrust; if we are not, at times, to be overwhelmed with the evil of the flesh; if we are not, sometimes, to despair of sanctification, we must KNOW something. We must add to our faith KNOWLEDGE.

“Knowing this, that our old man was (and is, *Aorist passive*) crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be rendered inoperative, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Rom. vi. 6).

“Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him” (Rom. vi. 9).

The former we “know” (*ginosko*), the latter we “perceive” (*eideo*). Unless we both “know” and “perceive” this glorious truth, our own unsanctified, unregenerate, unaltered old nature will continue to cause us alarm, anxiety, and possibly lead us either to despair or to attempt some means of improving, chaining, or eradicating the old man, all of which is impossible and wrong. We must “know” that in our flesh, even though we are justified and at peace, there dwelleth no good thing:

“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing” (Rom. vii. 18).

We must “know” that the flesh cannot render satisfactory obedience to the law of God:

“For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin” (Rom. vii. 14).

Further, we should add to our faith the knowledge that, even though we are saved, justified and accepted, this does not exempt us from sharing the groans of a suffering creation. Salvation from sin does not mean exemption from the troubles of this life and unless we “know” this we may entertain doubts regarding the validity of our salvation.

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Rom. viii. 22, 23).

This knowledge is most essential to our peace.

Again, even though we “have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand” (Rom.v.2), it does not follow that we shall always have such an understanding of the Lord’s will, or of the hundred events that go to make up our daily experiences, that we shall be able at all times, to be sure what to ask in prayer. This “knowledge” is vital, for we shall either, in our mute anguish, blame ourselves for lack of spirituality, which may be untrue, or we may force ourselves to a fluency in prayer which, if heard with the ear of an angel, would sound perilously near blasphemy. For our peace of mind we should realize that sometimes, this uncertainty, is our sanity.

“For we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered and He knoweth what is the mind (or bent) of the Spirit” (Rom. viii. 26, 27).

Though saved, we are yet subject to “infirmities” (Rom. viii. 26), and it is an unspeakable comfort “to know” that, though words fail us, the “bent” of our spirits is understood. The Holy Spirit fulfils His blessed office as the “other Advocate”, and to know this is to enter into peace.

Again, and in conclusion, the Apostle directs the mind of the believer away from the flesh, in which will be found no good thing; away from this creation, with its groan and travail; away from our own ability to pray, through lack of knowledge; away to the Lord Himself, Who does know, and Who will perform.

“And *we know* that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. viii. 28).

Here, then, in the epistle to the Romans, is a glorious example of the blessed results of adding to faith knowledge, and so of reaching the “persuasion” with which this inner section of Romans finishes (Rom. viii. 38, 39).

No.3. “Added knowledge” associated with the Prize (Philippians). pp. 193, 194

Let us give our attention for a while to the bearing of the teaching of the Epistle to the Philippians on this subject. There we find Paul speaking of faith not only doctrinally, but also in a practical sense. Had he been free to think only of himself, he confesses that he would have been glad to depart and to be with Christ, but realizing that the churches still needed his ministry, for a time at least, he was willing to abide in the flesh for their sakes:

“And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith” (Phil. i. 25).

This ‘furtherance and joy of faith’ however is an active expression and not merely a passive reception. The Philippians were exhorted to:

“Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel” (Phil. i. 27).

“For”, continued the Apostle,

“unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only *to believe* on Him, but also to suffer for His sake” (Phil. i. 29).

But Paul was not the man to enjoin endurance upon others, while he himself went free. Throughout his ministry he was able to appeal to his ‘manner of life’ as a living example of the doctrine he taught and professed, so that we are not surprised to find that the next reference to faith alludes once more to his endurance for the gospel:

“Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all” (Phil. ii. 17).

The only other occurrences of ‘faith’ in Philippians are in that wonderful summary of the doctrine of justification by faith, which is found in Phil. iii. 9. After the Apostle had

enumerate all the advantages which he had as an Israelite under law, and how he had counted them all as refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, he continued:

“and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (iii. 9).

On either side of this verse, he speaks of knowledge:

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the *knowledge* of Christ Jesus my Lord That *I may know Him*, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death; if by any means I might attain unto the out-resurrection, out from among the dead” (Phil. iii. 8-11).

Here is something beyond salvation for sin and the gift of life; here is something toward which the Apostle pressed as for a prize (Phil. iii. 14).

In Rom. vi. 6, there is a conformity to the death of Christ that has been accomplished by grace, without our effort, a conformity which lies at the root of our acceptance. In Phil. iii. 10, however, there is a voluntary association with that death, consequent upon a fuller knowledge of the Lord, and the *power* of His resurrection. By using the same word in Phil. iii. 10 and 21, translated in A.V. “conform” and “fashion”, Paul links the out-resurrection, the prize and its “conformity” with the body of His glory, with the “conformity” of the believer here and now in the body of this humiliation, and with the rejection for which the Cross of Christ stands in the experience of the believer.

As an extension of this added knowledge, the Apostle says in the closing chapter:

“*I know* both how to be abased, and *I know* how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Phil. iv. 12, 13).

So Paul adds to faith, knowledge, and knowledge of a very precious and searching sort. An experience not to be lightly sought, and one that is fraught with many trials. He had a goal in view, and moreover found strength in Christ for all things, and so his faith IN Christ, led to fuller knowledge OF Christ, and, while retaining to the full his glorious acceptance in the Beloved, he pressed on to “win Christ” and to attain unto that for which he had been apprehended (Phil. iii. 12).

The Background to the New Testament.

No.9. The Synagogue. pp. 12 - 16

The Greek *sunagoge*, “synagogue”, derives from the verb *sunago*, “to gather together”, and there are many occurrences of the word both in the LXX and N.T. In the LXX the word is mostly translated by the words “congregation”, “assembly” and “company”, but apart from Acts xiii. 43 (“congregation”) and James ii. 2 (“assembly”), the N.T. renders consistently “synagogue”. The A.V. translation of the word in James is most unfortunate, as it obscures the close connection of the early believers with the synagogue, which is an important consideration for a correct understanding of things at this time.

It is possible to use the word “synagogue” in much the same way as “church” is used today, i.e. of the *company* met together, or the *building* in which they meet. Rev. ii. 9 is an example of the former usage, when it refers to “a synagogue of Satan”. Here it is not a building which is in view, but a company of people who promote the cause of Satan.

Origin of the Synagogue.

Although the synagogue as a building did not appear until late on in the history of Israel, the custom of resorting to the “men of God” on the sabbath for the reading and exposition of the Law, was of great antiquity. This is suggested in Acts xv. 21:

“For Moses *from generations of old*, in every city, has those proclaiming him in the synagogues, being read every sabbath” (lit.).

Dr. John Lightfoot identified the “high places”, mentioned in the O.T. *in a good sense*, with the synagogue.

“And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: go up before me unto *the high place*” (I Sam. ix. 19).

“Thou shalt come to the hill of God thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from *the high place* and they shall prophesy: And the Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee” (I Sam. x. 5, 6).

These “high places” must not be confused with others used for idolatrous purposes (e.g. I Kings xi. 7).

The gathering together in companies of the people of Israel came about gradually over a period of time. With the division of the land amongst the twelve tribes, and the choice of Jerusalem as the accepted centre of worship, the people found themselves at varying distances from the place where the Lord had put His name. It was only natural that those at a distance from this centre, and required to present themselves there three times a year, should desire to meet together for prayer, reading and edification at other times. So was

born the synagogue; first simply a company of people meeting in the open, but later (after the return from Babylon), in a building erected for this purpose.

The object of the synagogue was not to supplant the Temple, which was the House of Prayer, but to provide houses of prayer for those at a distance from the Temple, who were not able to attend as often as they would like to have done. Eventually, as the synagogue came to play a bigger and bigger part in the life of Israel, and with the rise of Rabbinism, synagogues were built in Jerusalem itself, until at the time of Christ, a great number existed there. Prayer was still offered with due recognition of the Temple as the dwelling place of God, the worshipper turning towards Jerusalem to pray.

“Daniel his windows being open in his chamber *toward Jerusalem*, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God” (Dan. vi. 10).

It is probable that the Lord’s prayer (Matt. vi. 9-13) when first given, was prayed with the same attitude.

Synagogues were very often built beside running water, no doubt to provide for the “divers washings”, and in towns where no synagogue existed, it was customary to gather by the side of a river if possible. The N.T. Philippi seems not to have possessed a synagogue, although many of the towns of the dispersion did, so Luke testifies:

“On the sabbath we went out of the city *by a river side*, where prayer was wont to be made” (Acts xvi. 13).

The interested reader may also like to compare Ezra viii. 15, 21 and Psa. cxxxvii. 1.

When the N.T. period opened, a great number of synagogues existed both in Israel, and many towns of the dispersion. It is claimed by one authority that there were 480 in Jerusalem alone, and although this is no doubt an exaggeration (or may even be a symbolic number), a great number almost certainly did exist in Jerusalem. This factor led, as would be expected, to many differences of doctrine, and this is suggested by Acts vi. 9:

“Then there arose certain of the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.”

When the Acts church arose, it was looked upon as simply another sect or synagogue of the Jews:

“As concerning *this sect*, we know that everywhere it is spoken against” (Acts xxviii. 22).

Constitution of the Synagogue.

The basic division of the N.T. synagogue was into three parts, dealing with worship, education and government. There were the ordinary services of worship, which included prayer, the reading of the Law and Prophets, and the word of exhortation. Then followed the Rabbinic school concerned with the exposition of the word, although some Rabbis

had their own schools of divinity, unattached to the synagogue. The teaching of children was also undertaken in the synagogues. Thirdly, the ‘council’ of elders sat in judgment over the affairs of the community.

The synagogue service provided for the “word of exhortation” from one of the congregation or a stranger, and an invitation to some to take part in the service by reading the Scriptures, possibly with comments. This accounts for the invitations given to the Lord at Nazareth, and Paul in Pisidian Antioch:

“And He came to Nazareth and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias” (Luke iv. 16, 17).

“They came to Antioch and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. And after the reading of the law and the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on” (Acts xiii. 14, 15).

Officials of the Synagogue.

The officials of the synagogue were the elders or “rulers” (*archontes*), whose chief was the *archisunagogos* (“chief ruler”), the “minister” (*huperetes*), whose duty it was to keep the sacred books, and possibly a number of clerks (akin to the N.T. “deacons”), who took charge of alms, etc.

Besides these regular officials were those who participated in the service itself. The *Sheliach Tsibbor*, or angel of the congregation was chosen by the chief ruler to conduct the devotions, as were also those who read in the Law and Prophets or gave a word of exhortation. There was also the Interpreter, who translated or paraphrased the reading of the Law and Prophets into Aramaic, for the Hebrew was little understood.

The rulers were elected by the congregation, but they must satisfy certain requirements of knowledge, and possess special qualifications, of which humility and gentleness were two. These rulers, elders or shepherds, formed the local “council” or tribunal, already referred to in the previous article, and acted in a judicial capacity.

Upon the chief ruler divulged the whole responsibility of the synagogue, and he would see that all was done “decently and in order”, as well as making sure that nothing improper took place. The attitude of the *archisunagogos* (“ruler of the synagogue”) in Luke xiii. 14 is in line with this duty:

“And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day.”

In the eyes of this “ruler”, the Lord may teach, but not heal in the synagogue on the sabbath. This was an “improper” act.

Arrangement in the Synagogue.

Synagogues were built so that the worshippers would face the right direction during prayers. This was, as has been seen, toward Jerusalem. The Temple, however, was so built that the worshippers faced west, with the rising sun at their backs (see Ezek.viii.16), and it seems that some synagogues were patterned on this.

Inside the synagogue, and generally in the middle, was the *bema* (probably “Moses seat” in Matt. xxiii. 2), an elevated platform from which was read the Law in a standing position, whilst the address was delivered seated (Luke iv. 16, 20).

Also in the synagogue was the “Ark”, a moveable box containing the Scriptures, and in front of this the “chief seats” on which sat the elders and notables facing the congregation. These seats were coveted by the “hypocrites” of Matt. xxiii. 6.

The veiled women were separated from the men, being accommodated in a gallery, although some authorities claim that the men and women sat in opposite aisles, separated by a low wall or lattice.

The alms chests, in which were made collections for the relief of the poor of the district, were probably near the entrance, and it was into these that the “hypocrites” cast their gifts with great ostentation (Matt. vi. 2).

Ten persons were required to form “a congregation” and so constitute an assembly recognized by God, and at a later date in some larger cities, ten persons were paid so as to be free from secular employment and always ready to form a congregation. Thus was the “presence of God” assured. In contrast to this the reader might note the word of the Lord to His disciples that “where *two or three* are gathered together (*sunago*) in My name, there am I in the midst of them”.

Discipline in the Synagogue.

It seems strange to modern church-goers that a place of worship was used to deal with certain offences, and that the council of elders could discipline their flock in the synagogue, and yet it was so. The Lord warned His disciples that scourgings in the synagogues awaited them (Matt. x. 17), and the Apostle Paul, before his conversion, beat believers in the synagogues where he found them (Acts xxii. 19), as well as later suffering the same himself at the hands of his own people (II Cor. xi. 24). Forty stripes were allowed (Deut. xxv. 3), but the Jews, always careful not to exceed this, reduced it to thirty nine.

There were also degrees of excommunication which might be inflicted according to the nature of the offence. These ranged from the lightest, which forbade intercourse with others during a period of thirty days, after which, upon the repentance of the guilty person, restoration was made, to the most serious, which cut the person off from all the privileges of being an Israelite, and in effect handed them over to the judgment of God.

These two extremes have a parallel in the affairs of the Christian communities during the Acts period:

“Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye *withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly*, and not after the tradition which he received of us” (II Thess. iii. 6).

“I have written unto you *not to keep company*, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat” (I Cor. v. 11).

The object of this break of fellowship with disorderly believers, was that they might be “ashamed” and come to repentance, but they were not to be counted as “enemies” (II Thess. iii. 14, 15).

The more serious offences, dealt with only by the Apostles themselves led to “the destruction of the flesh” (I Cor. v. 5), and were probably the “sin unto death” of I John v. 16, seen in the experience of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.), and suggested in I Cor. xi. 29-31.

Excommunication from the synagogue was the experience of the blind man (John ix. 34). It was a constant deterrent to confessing faith in Christ (John xii. 42), and was to be the lot of the disciples of the Lord before His return to the earth (John xvi. 2).

No.10. Relationship of Christ’s Coming and the Acts Church to Judaism. pp. 29 - 33

The Lord Jesus Christ came unto His own. He came not to overthrow, but to fulfil. His ministry assumed a continuance of the Jewish institutions of the day, but reformed to His standard of righteousness. The Law was given a new, deeper, inner meaning, which touched not simply the outward man (Thou shalt do no murder), but the inner also (Thou shalt not hate). His formula was, “Ye have heard but I say unto you”.

The disciples of Christ, who formed the Acts church, were not the first-fruits of some new, predominately Gentile church, whose sway was to be largely exercised in Europe and the Americas, but a nucleus, centred in Jerusalem, from whence the good news of the “kingdom of the heavens” was to be carried into all the earth. And so, at the return of Christ (looked upon then as being imminent), would the earth be governed from Jerusalem through the redeemed nation of Israel, who would stand to the other nations as priests of God, and carry “the knowledge of the Lord” to the ends of the earth. The great hope before these disciples was the restoration of the kingdom to Israel (Acts i. 6), with all that implied.

The failure of Orthodoxy to appreciate the true position.

Nearly 2,000 years of so-called 'Orthodoxy' (and 'Heresy'), have obscured the truth of the above, by the failure to distinguish things that are different, and hence have confused together two aspects of the plan of God, the earthly and the heavenly.

The emphasis placed on the Gospels, with the implication (sometimes an assertion) that their teaching is superior to that of the Epistles, since they record the "actual words of Christ Himself", has demonstrated this confusion, and the cries which have gone up from time to time, "Back to the primitive church", "Back to Pentecost", have shown that the peculiar dispensation committed to the Apostle Paul has not been appreciated. It has not been perceived that He Who once spoke on earth, has since spoken from heaven.

Hence the words of the Gospels and Acts have been torn out of their true setting and forced to fit a Gentile environment, which has nothing to do with the institutions of Israel, or the promises made unto the fathers.

It is the purpose of this article to try and show how the earthly ministry of Christ, and the Acts church, were a continuation and a completion of the *true* O.T. Judaism, and could, had Israel responded, have led to this "people of God" at last being God's channel of blessing in the earth, under their King-Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. That they failed to become so is a matter of history, but the assurance of prophecy is that this is yet to be. Israel have indeed a glorious future.

Christ came to fulfil.

"Think not that I came to abolish the law or the prophets: I came not to abolish, but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17 English-Greek translation).

The O.T. Law has been likened to the initial, rough sketch of the painter, which disappears from view as it is filled out with colour. The silhouette is not rubbed out, but "filled out". Such was the relationship of Christ's teaching to the Law; it did not do away with that law, but so filled it out, that the original sketch was lost to view in the glory of its fullness. An inner, deeper meaning was given to the law; a higher standard of righteousness, which exceeded (lit. "abounded above") that of the scribes and Pharisees, and which was necessary for entry into the "kingdom of the heavens" (verse 20). This righteousness was described by the Lord:

"Ye have heard that it was said to the ancients, Thou shalt not commit murder; but whoever shall commit murder, shall be liable to the judgment. *But I say unto you*, That everyone who is angry with his brother lightly, shall be liable to the judgment; but whoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be liable to the Sanhedrin; but whoever shall say, Fool, shall be liable to the Gehenna of fire" (verses 21, 22 English-Greek translation).

As has already been stated, the ministry of the Lord "assumed a continuance of the Jewish institutions", and this is seen here when the Lord refers to "the Judgment" and "the Sanhedrin". It surely makes more sense to allow that he was referring to the *literal*

institutions familiar to the Jews, than to spiritualize them away as some do. The synagogue with its council of judgment, and the Temple and Sanhedrin, were not to be done away with but reformed, and in keeping with this, the Acts church continued to frequent both Temple and synagogue, and did not try to overthrow them as something contrary to the teachings of the Lord.

By the Lord's standard of righteousness, a man was to be liable to the Judgment not simply for murder, but also for anger without due cause. The more severe offence of saying to one's brother, "Raca" (i.e. "empty head", a term of contempt probably from the Chaldee *reqa*, Hebrew *req*, 'empty'—Gen. xxxvii. 24, etc.), would lead to appearance before the Sanhedrin at Jerusalem, and to further attribute to one's brother wickedness by calling him "Fool" (cp. Psa. xiv. 1 where the 'fool' is not a simpleton, but a wicked man), would render the offender liable to be denied a proper burial after death, his corpse being cast into the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna) where it would be destroyed by worms or fire.

If it be objected that *this* standard of righteousness does not leave one with the feeling of a "fullness", it should be remembered that the Lord's words here represent only the negative side of one aspect of the great law which He propounded, and under which all laws are included:

"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. xix. 19).

The *outline* of God's great law contained basically in ten commandments (lit. 'words', Deut. x. 4 A.V. margin) is *filled out* by this one word, as the Apostle Paul indicated in Rom. xiii. 8, 9:

"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 commandment, it is briefly comprehended [summed up] in this saying [lit. 'word'], namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

They who kept *this* "word", would be barely conscious of the original outline, for the Law, insofar as it may be considered in negative terms, "Thou shalt not", is not laid down for the righteous but for the lawless (I Tim. i. 9). So these actions referred to in Matt. v. 22, which sprang not from love (unjustified anger, contempt and slander), were to be duly dealt with by the judicial system of Israel, the "Judgment" and the "Sanhedrin".

Jerusalem --- centre of authority.

Judaism was centred around Jerusalem. There at the first was the Temple built where the Lord put His name (I Kings ix. 3). It was around this centre that the life of Israel revolved.

When the Acts church came into being it began at Jerusalem, and the authority of the Apostles was exercised from this centre. It was not until persecution broke out after the death of Stephen, that (according to Scripture) the Gospel was proclaimed outside of Jerusalem, and even then the Apostles remained within the city (Acts viii. 1). This was

strictly in accordance with the Divine order, Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria and then the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts i. 8), and was a fulfillment of prophecy:

“Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name unto all nations, beginning from Jerusalem” (Luke xxiv. 46, 47 R.V.).

It is not difficult to find O.T. allusions to the death and resurrection of Christ, but what passage did the Lord have in mind in His reference to Jerusalem? Possibly Isa. ii. 3:

“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.”

Jerusalem was to be the centre of authority, and it was in harmony with this, and the Lord’s command, that the Apostles concentrated their attentions there. The original Twelve (including Matthias), who expected to sit on “twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. xix. 28), even when for some reason they traveled outside of Jerusalem, seem always, at this period, to have returned to the city (cp. Acts viii. 14-25; x. 19 - xi. 2). The primary concern was to prepare Israel for their role in world blessing, and the Apostles therefore concentrated attention on this people, beginning at Jerusalem. The editor of the third edition of Dr. Weymouth’s New Testament makes the following observation (on Acts i. 8):

“There does not appear to be any positive historical evidence that any Apostle, except Paul, ever preached outside Palestine. Indeed Matt. 10:23 seems to preclude the possibility of their having done so.”

Granting that the expression “any Apostle” is to be limited here to the Twelve (for Barnabas, Silas and others were apostles who undoubtedly did preach outside the land), this comment is in harmony with the aim before the Apostles, and is most probably true of the whole of the Acts period at least. That John spent his last days in Asia Minor is strongly attested by tradition, but this was *after* the period when the “hope of Israel” was no longer a possibility. All the time however, that this “hope” was before the minds of the Apostles, their concern was the people of Israel, with Jerusalem as the acknowledged centre. When the Gentiles were, through the ministry of Paul, evangelized during the Acts period, this was looked upon even by him as “contrary to nature” (Rom. xi. 24), and intended to “provoke them [the Jews] to jealousy” (Rom. xi. 11).

It may therefore be realized why the destruction of Jerusalem in 70A.D. caused so much confusion amongst those believers who had not understood, or would not accept, the teaching of the Apostle Paul on the subject, when he pronounced judgment upon Israel and indicated a turn to the Gentiles (Acts xxviii. 28).

James, the bishop of Jerusalem.

James, the Lord’s brother, who was apparently an unbeliever until after the resurrection of Christ (John vii. 5; I Cor. xv. 7), was a leading member of the church at

Jerusalem, and seems to have performed the function of bishop (overseer) there. This much appears from Acts xii. 17 and xv. 13, 19:

“Go show these things *unto James*, and to the brethren.”
“And after they had held their peace, *James answered my sentence is*”

See also Gal. ii. 9, 12, and note that James is still established in a position of authority at Jerusalem as late as Acts xxi. 17, 18.

James presided over the body of Apostles and elders at Jerusalem when the question of the circumcision of the Gentiles was considered. Having listened to the experiences of Peter, Barnabas and Paul with the Gentiles, he gave his judgment on the matter, which was then put into effect. The “decrees” that were formulated as a result of this judgment, were acceptable, not only to “the Apostles and elders”, but also to “the Holy Spirit” (Acts xv. 28), and they were apparently binding upon the churches to which they were carried, which included Gentiles as far from Jerusalem as South Galatia (Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, etc.). The effect of these ‘decrees’ was to establish these churches “in the faith” (Acts xvi. 1-5). The judgment of James on this occasion was still recognized by him as binding as late as Acts xxi. 25, nearly thirty years after Pentecost.

Some time after the dispersion of Acts viii. 1, James wrote the Epistle which bears his name to the dispersed who had “the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ”, instructing them how to behave in the synagogue:

“If there come into your synagogue a man in fine clothing also a poor man in vile clothing; and ye have regard to him that weareth the fine clothing do ye not make distinctions among yourselves?” (James ii. 1-4 R.V. margin).

These words presume that some at least of the readers had a say in the affairs of certain synagogues, being in a position to delegate seats. An epistle from James at Jerusalem would carry authority and correct the tendency of some to favour the rich in the synagogues. The Epistle also was to encourage the “Dispersion” through the “manifold trials” of the time then present (i. 2), as well as to give instruction in other matters.

Both the position of James and the acknowledgment of Jerusalem as centre at this time, give a setting to the Acts period which cannot properly be understood unless connected intimately with the background and hopes of the O.T. To imagine that at this time God had cast away His people Israel, is to have failed to appreciate the environment of the Acts, and to accuse the Apostles of deception or ignorance. “Restoration” is the key word at the beginning of the Acts period, “rejection” belongs to the end.

No.11. The Apostles. **pp. 45 - 49**

The relationship of the twelve apostles of the circumcision to Israel, was much the same as that of the O.T. prophets. They were the “sent ones”, and they proclaimed a message of restoration upon the grounds of repentance; a message intended to prepare the people to fulfil their calling of God. The parallel is further extended in the treatment that each received at the hands of their countrymen:

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees ye say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets Fill ye up the measure of your fathers behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city” (Matt. xxiii. 29-34).

The message of hope which the Apostles carried, was borne witness to by signs and wonders. The miracles of healing they performed were a foretaste of the coming age of restoration (Heb. vi. 5), and the judgment they effected on such as Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v.), a reminder of that future day when “every one shall die for his own iniquity” (Jer. xxxi. 29 30).

Authority to “forgive sins”.

Something of the authority given to the Apostles may be seen from John xx. 21-23:

“Jesus said to them again, Peace be unto you: *as the Father hath sent Me, even so send I you.* And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye holy spirit (margin): *Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained*” (R.V.).

This authority, which was never transferred by any so called “Apostolic succession”, must not be minimized because it may present difficulties. The ‘as’ and ‘so’ of verse 21 relate the Apostles’ ministry directly to that of the Lord. He demonstrated His authority to forgive sins from His ability to heal (Luke v. 24), and it seems reasonable to suppose that the Apostles exercised something of that same authority, for they also could heal.

But the connection between forgiveness of sins and healing at this time, was not apparently limited to the sphere of action of the Apostles.

“Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and *the prayer of faith shall save the sick,* and the Lord shall raise him up; *and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him*” (James v. 14, 15).

Such a connection was also prophesied of the inhabitants of Jerusalem:

“And the inhabitant *shall not say, I am sick:* the people that dwell therein shall be *forgiven their iniquity*” (Isa. xxxiii. 24).

For a people with an earthly hope and earthly blessings, such an association is natural. The effects of salvation must include a cancellation of sin *and its accompaniments* (disease, pain, sorrow and death). The miracles of the Acts period were a foretaste of the coming age when sin and judgment will be directly related, and when righteousness will have a direct reward. This subject will be referred to again when the N.T. miracles are considered. At the moment the question to be answered is, in what way could the Apostles “forgive” sins? Also, how did their authority differ from that of other believers at this time who could also heal?

In the absolute sense of “forgiveness”, God alone can act; none can forgive but Him. This much was recognized by the scribes and Pharisees when the Lord healed and forgave the man sick of the palsy (Luke v. 21). In what way then are the words of John xx. 21-23 to be taken?

The writer does not pretend to have the complete answer to this question, but the recognition that the Apostles stood to Israel in much the same way as did the O.T. prophets, is a step towards a solution. The prophets of old spoke *for* the Lord, promising blessing, promising judgment. They were the Lord’s mouthpiece to the people of Israel, and He filled their mouths with words (Jer. i. 6-9).

The N.T. Apostles could forgive sins only in this respect, *insofar as they spoke for the Lord*. They pronounced forgiveness, but *He* forgave. This authority was conferred by the gift of holy spirit (John xx. 22), which they in turn could convey to others, by prayer and laying on of hands:

“Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive holy spirit (lit.): (for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then laid they their hands on them, and they received holy spirit” (Acts viii. 14-17).

The “gift of holy spirit” at this time was a confirmation that the “belief” and “baptism” of converts was genuine, and the outward evidence of the gift having been given was “speaking in tongues”, etc., according to the word of the Lord:

“He that *believeth* and is *baptized* shall be saved and *these signs shall follow* them that believe; In My name shall they cast out demons speak with new tongues” (Mark xvi. 16-18).

In this way the “forgiveness of sins” could be confirmed or otherwise by the Apostles, by the laying on of their hands, but note how prayer (the seeking of God’s will) preceded this action (Acts viii. 15).

Although the Apostles had the God-given authority to confer the gift of holy spirit (with its “signs” following) upon others, there is no evidence that they could transfer the authority itself. Otherwise why was it necessary for the journey of Peter and John to the Samaritan believers, for Philip, who had first evangelized them (Acts viii. 5-8), and was himself “full of spirit and wisdom” (Acts vi. 3-6), could have conveyed the gift to them?

The Apostle Paul was also able to confer the gift of holy spirit through the laying on of hands (Acts xix. 5, 6), for he was “not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles” (II Cor. xi. 5).

The receiving of holy spirit *without* the laying on of hands, recorded in Acts x. 44 of the Gentiles, must be looked upon in the light of being confirmation of the Lord to Peter and the circumcision, that the Gentiles were now being called out. A reading of the whole of the events which led up to this passage, will demonstrate that the inclusion of the Gentiles at this time was quite contrary to the expectations of Peter and the Jewish believers, and was a step which the Lord found necessary to take in order to “stir up” Israel. [See Rom. xi. 11-14 and note the expression used by Paul of the Gentile inclusion, “contrary to nature” (verse 24) and his description of himself as “one born out of due time” (lit. “an abortion”) I Cor. xv. 8. The latter expression may suggest that Paul was called to apostleship *previous* to what had been intended, owing to the attitude of the Jews to the gospel.]

Authority to “bind” and “loose”.

“Thou art Peter And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. xvi. 18, 19).

“Verily I say unto you (plural, so the ‘disciples’ of verse 1), Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matt. xviii. 18).

To Peter were committed the “keys of the kingdom of the heavens”; to *all* the Apostles the authority to “bind” and “loose”. What did this authority represent?

The word ‘key’ (*kleis*) is used in only one other place in the Gospels, but significantly:

“Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the *key* of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered” (Luke xi. 52).

To what the “entering in” here refers, may be gathered from a similar passage where the verbal form of *kleis* (key) is used:

“Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye *shut up* (*kleio*) the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in” (Matt. xxiii. 13).

The kingdom of the heavens may be looked upon as a house of which Peter (as leader of the Apostles) was given the “keys”. He was as it were, the door-keeper or house steward of that house which was built upon the rock; the confession which Peter himself had just voiced:

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matt. xvi. 16).

Peter was empowered to determine who were to belong to, and who to be excluded from, the house of His Master, Who had entrusted him with the “keys”. In close

association with this, all the Apostles were given authority to “bind” and “loose”, the explanation of which appears to be, “*to forbid* and *to allow*” (H. A. Meyer following Lightfoot). That is to say, the Apostles were authorized to declare what was, or was not lawful, with respect to the kingdom of the heavens.

Those in authority at the time of Christ, the “rulers” or “shepherds” of Israel (largely the scribes and Pharisees) had failed. Instead of preparing the people for their Messiah, they hindered them. When His kingdom was “in the midst of” them (Luke xvii. 21 R.V. margin), they neither entered themselves, nor suffered others to do so. They completely failed in their stewardship, and the people were left “as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. ix. 36).

The Apostles, with Peter at their head, were sent to this people having all the authority of the Lord upon them. They commanded repentance (Acts ii. 38; iii. 19) and pronounced forgiveness of sins. So came into being the Acts “church” (a *called out* company from the people, compare Acts ii. 40), who awaited the early return of the Lord and the establishment of “the kingdom of the heavens” upon earth. The Apostles were to have an authoritative and responsible position in that kingdom, under the Lordship of Christ:

“In the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. xix. 28).

This “judgment” was somewhat to be anticipated during the Acts period in the authority invested in the Apostles to “bind” and “loose”.

Bishops and deacons.

When the “number of the disciples multiplied”, and the “churches” were formed in various places, it became necessary to place over these assemblies men who could “shepherd the sheep”. So were appointed the “bishops” (overseers).

There is no record of the inauguration of this office in the N.T., and it is probable that it was simply a continuation of the office of “chief ruler” in the synagogue. (The close connection of the early believers with the synagogue has already been noted.) The appointment of James as overseer to the Jerusalem assembly was early required, and the authority he exercised has already been considered.

The office carried with it the responsibility of the affairs of the assembly, rather in the same way as did the position of “chief ruler” to a synagogue. Those who served seem also to have been called “elders” and “shepherds” or “pastors”. This much appears from a literal rendering of I Pet. v. 1, 2:

“The *elders* among you I exhort *shepherd* the flock of God among you, *exercising oversight* willingly.”

It is possible that the office was variously referred to according as it was viewed with respect to authority (“bishop”) or ministry (“shepherd”); the appellation “elder” being applied in recognition of age or maturity.

A bishop must be able to teach (I Tim. iii. 1, 2) and this accounts for the connection “pastors and teachers” in Eph. iv. 11. That there was just as much need for this office after Acts xxviii. 28 cannot surely be doubted.

A “deacon” (Greek *diakonos*) was simply a servant, who was concerned with the less spectacular, but equally essential duties in the assembly, that the “clerks” had dealt with in the synagogue. The deacons of Acts vi. were a special company who apparently existed only for a time, but the duties divulging upon them give some idea of the work these men were intended to do.

When the “hope of Israel” was succeeded by the hope of the Body of Christ, there was still the need for organization within the assemblies, and so the offices of bishop and deacon continued. But with the turning away from the teaching of Paul, and hence the truth (II Tim. i. 15; iv. 4), a confused darkness settled over the assemblies, and out of it eventually arose the Catholic church. Pretending to the authority of the Apostles, it exalted the office of bishop (and to a less extent that of deacon) above all that was ever intended by the Lord, until at the present time that office bears no resemblance to the N.T. ideal.

No.12. Miracles. **pp. 66 - 71**

When the true setting of the Acts period is perceived, it may be understood why miracles continued throughout that time, but ceased abruptly after Acts xxviii. 28. Apart from their prophetic import as the credentials of the Messiah (Luke vii. 19-23; Isaiah xxxv. 4-6), miracles are intimately bound up with the earthly purpose of God. They were a foretaste of restoration of earthly blessing, when the effects of sin are removed. They do not belong to a heavenly calling with “spiritual blessings”.

A useful comment on the true meaning of a miracle, which may help to show why they were found in connection with the earthly, but not heavenly purpose of God, is given in *The Unrealized Logic of Religion* by W. H. Fitchett:

“The old crude, not to say false, definition of a miracle described it as ‘a suspension, or violation, of the ordinary laws of nature’. Most of the objections against miracles hold only against this false conception of them. In the sense of a ‘violation of the natural order’, sin is the true miracle. It is essentially a breach of the divine order of the universe, and Christ’s acts of supernatural healing are the restoration of law to its kingdom; the arrest of that disorder in man’s physical nature which sin produces. His miracles are not a breach of the divine order, but its reassertion. They are prophetic hints, in physical terms, of the great ends of His redemption.”

Salvation, for a people with an earthly hope, includes complete restoration in the physical realm, and most of the miracles of Scripture can be clearly seen to be a foretaste of that age of restoration to come. The Hebrew believers were said to have,

“tasted the good word of God and the miracles (*dunameis*) of the age to come” (vi. 5 lit.).

The close association between salvation and healing is seen in a number of N.T. passages. The woman with the issue of blood expressed an assurance in the Lord when she said:

“If I may touch but His clothes, I shall be whole” (Mark v. 28).

But the verb translated here “I shall be whole” is the Greek *sozo*, “to be saved”. When the Lord had perceived who it was that had touched Him, He said to her, “Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole” (*sozo*, ‘hath saved thee’). This very same verb was used by the Apostle Paul, when he wrote to a company with a calling “in heavenly places”,

“for by grace are ye *saved* through faith” (Eph. ii. 8),

yet there is no suggestion here that physical salvation is involved.

It is a matter of distinguishing things that differ. The miracles of healing recorded in the N.T. are explicable when seen as a foretaste of coming good things: they do not belong to a company whose blessings are all spiritual. Hence such miracles ended abruptly with the change of dispensation at Acts xxviii. 28.

There is however one miracle which did not belong solely to the earthly purpose of God, and which continues its influence today:

“The gospel of Christ it is the power (*dunamis*, ‘miracle’) of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Rom. i. 16).

Nothing short of a miracle is necessary to change the heart of man, who has turned his back upon God, and corrupted His ways.

This miracle of God, which is effected through the gospel of Christ, is also to be looked upon as a foretaste of restoration. Already it gives to the believer “the spirit of a sound mind” (II Tim. i. 7). He is enabled to see things as they really are, and not through the eyes of the world. By the renewing of the mind the believer is being “transfigured” (Rom. xii. 2), and the goal is associated with the “image” of God, the Creator of the “new man” (Col. iii. 10). All that was lost in Adam is more than “restored” in Christ.

Effect of the destruction of the Temple on believers living at the time.

It has been shown that the Acts believers, who had an earthly hope and expected the early return of the Lord to the earth, looked towards Jerusalem as their centre. This was not simply that the city was convenient in this respect, but because it was to become the

centre of God's administration on the earth, from which the Word of the Lord would go forth. Already, during the Acts period, and in anticipation of that future day, the Apostles of the circumcision exercised their authority from here, and their word was considered binding.

Miracles of healing and judgment were commonplace at this time, and were a "taste" of the miracles of the coming age of restoration. The gift of "holy spirit", which conferred the ability to speak in tongues, to heal, etc., was expected to follow belief and baptism, and was a continuation of true conversion.

The position of the Gentile at this time was as of a "wild olive branch" grafted into the stock of Israel, "contrary to nature", and intended to provoke the people of God into bringing forth fruit, to fulfil their calling of God.

It can therefore be appreciated why the destruction of the Temple and the overthrow of Jerusalem in 70A.D., together with those other factors which must already have been thrusting themselves upon the attention (viz. the lack of miracles and the increase of Gentile converts over the Jewish), caused so much confusion amongst believers at the time. To those who had not understood, or would not accepted the change of dispensation announced by the Apostle Paul (Acts xxviii. 28; Eph. iii.), the position was inexplicable.

"With the overthrow of Jerusalem the visible centre of the Church was removed. The keystone of the fabric was withdrawn, and the whole edifice threatened with ruin" (*The Christian Ministry* by J. B. Lightfoot).

The Gospel of John.

From the nature of the system which eventually emerged from the darkness, it is quite evident that the later ministry of Paul was little understood. He lived long enough himself to see the beginnings of a turning from his teaching, and consequently a loss of the truth:

"All they which are in Asia be turned away from me" (II Tim. i. 15).

The Apostle John, who lived to a great age, almost certainly spent his latter days at Ephesus, the centre of this area that "turned away" from Paul.

"Nothing is better attested in early Church history than the residence and work of St. John at Ephesus" (*The Gospel of John* by B. F. Westcott).

This being so, it was probably here that the Apostle wrote the Gospel which is generally attributed to him.

There are at least three aspects of that Gospel which bear upon the subject being considered, and which suggest a *secondary* object in its writing. (The *primary* object is plainly stated in xx. 31).

- (1) The position of Jerusalem with respect to worship (iv. 19-24).
- (2) The relationship of John's "tarrying" to the Second Coming (xxi. 20-23).
- (3) The presentation of the Holy Spirit's ministry (xiv. and xvi.).

Further to the second point may be observed the remarks of the Lord (not recorded by the other Evangelists) on His "coming to them" (chapter xiv.).

(1) The position of Jerusalem with respect to worship.

"The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth" (iv. 21, 23).

When was this hour to be? All the expectations of the Acts period were centred in Jerusalem. During the coming age all nations were to flow there to worship:

"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came up against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts unto Jerusalem" (Zech. xiv. 16, 17).

The reader is urged to read the whole of Zech. xiv., when it will be seen that this "worship" at Jerusalem is presented *after* the Second Coming to the Mount of Olives (verse 4).

To what period then does the prophecy in John iv. refer? The Apostle clarifies the position by the insertion of the words "and now is" (verse 23), i.e. "at the time of writing (post Acts xxviii.)". In recording this prophecy of the Lord (no other Gospel writer does), John indicates that a time had now arrived when Jerusalem was no longer to be looked upon as a centre of worship; the "hope of Israel" had been succeeded by another hope, the prior position of the Jew had gone. Without actually intruding into the exclusive ministry of Paul, John seeks to explain that the overthrow of Jerusalem was a consequence of the rejection by Israel of their Messiah ("His own received Him not"—i. 11), an event suggested by the Lord in His conversation with the Samaritan woman, and an evidence that a new dispensation now obtained in which the 'true' replaced the typical (iv. 23, 24). This dispensation concerned the 'world' irrespective of the Jew; the 'children of God' were 'as many as' received the "True Light" (i. 9-12).

(2) The relationship of John's "tarrying" to the Second Coming.

The Lord had suggested the possibility that John might remain alive unto His coming again. This had led to the false assumption that this was *necessarily* so. There was however an "if" attached to the Lord's words.

"Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come" (xxi. 22).

Any who have appreciated the position during the Acts period will realize that an "if" conditioned the Lord's return at that time, the "if" of repentance on the part of Israel (see Acts iii. 19, 20). The "coming" was imminent and expected throughout the Acts, as an examination of the epistles written at that time will reveal. When after constant rejection

of the truth Israel were laid aside in unbelief (Acts xxviii.), the coming (*parousia*) of the Lord faded as a near possibility.

John, conscious of the change of dispensation, and writing his Gospel partly to explain that change, would find it necessary to clarify the position with regard to his demise, which was now certain to his mind. So he wrote:

“Yet Jesus said not unto him (Peter), he (John) shall not die; but if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?” (xxi. 23).

The destruction of the Temple and overthrow of Jerusalem (the Temple is standing at the Lord’s return—Matt. xxiv. 15-30) was the evidence that the Second Coming had been put off indefinitely, and hence there was now no “if” attached to John’s death.

Further to the “coming” of the Lord, the reader should note how John, in his Gospel, although he makes reference to the *literal* coming (xiv. 3), records how the Lord promised His presence in another way:

“I will not leave you comfortless: *I will come to you* If a man love Me My Father will love him, and *We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him*” (xiv. 18, 23).

Add to the above promise the words of verse 16, and it will be seen that the presence of Father, Son and Holy Spirit are here promised. Here is an aspect of the “coming” of the Lord which the other Evangelists barely touch (but compare Matt. xxviii. 20 and Mark xvi. 20), but which John seems to emphasize because of the postponement of the *parousia*.

(3) The presentation of the Holy Spirit’s ministry.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit during the Acts period was intimately connected with “spiritual gifts” (tongues, healing, etc.). The “promise of the Father” was to be “endued with power from on high” (Luke xxiv. 49; Acts i. 8).

The aspect of the Holy Spirit’s ministry which John emphasizes in his Gospel is different, and is in keeping with a dispensation during which “spiritual gifts”, such as are observed in Acts, do not obtain:

“The Comforter, which is *the Holy Spirit*, Whom the Father will send in My name, *He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*” (xiv. 26).

“When He, *the Spirit of truth*, is come, *He will guide you into all truth He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you*” (xvi. 13, 14).

To sum up the emphasis of John on the ‘coming’ of the Lord and the Holy Spirit’s ministry, the words of B. F. Westcott on the last discourses of the Lord (recorded only by John in chapters xiv.-xvi. of his Gospel) are to the point:

“At first they (the last discourses) could not have been intelligible in their full bearing. The fall of Jerusalem at length placed them in their proper light, and then they were recorded” (*Gospel of John*).

Confusion, darkness and the emergence of Catholicism.

With the destruction of Jerusalem, “the overthrow of the visible centre”, a period which J. B. Lightfoot describes as “shrouded in darkness” (with respect to Church government) ensued. It was not until early in the second century that the episcopal office became established, and the first signs of Catholicism arose. But that it was very different from anything which the Apostle Paul envisaged, is manifest from a reading of the writings of “The Fathers”. Even Lightfoot has to admit:

“The magnitude of the change effected during this period may be measured by the difference in the constitution and conception of the Christian Church as presented in the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul and the letters of St. Ignatius respectively” (*The Christian Ministry*).

So began the long years of confusion and darkness when the truth became buried under an accumulating mass of tradition and error. This however goes beyond the present subject and the interested reader is referred to the articles on *The Early Centuries and the Truth* by S. Allen (*The Berean Expositor*, Vols. XLIV. and XLV.).

With this concluding article in the series *The Background to the New Testament*, is sent forth the prayer that it may have helped some to catch the environment of the Acts period, and so appreciate better the situation at that time with its hopes and failures, and the hope of the present calling outlined first by the Apostle Paul, the “prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles” (Eph. iii. 1).

The First Epistle to the Corinthians.

No.13. pp. 6 - 10

In our exposition we have reached one of the problem verses of the N.T.:

“For this cause ought the woman to have a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels” (I Cor. xi. 10 R.V.).

We must remember that social customs are bound to play a part and affect Christian witness, and unless they are definitely contrary to Biblical doctrine, they cannot be ignored by the believer in his daily life. The social customs at Corinth during N.T. times are, of course, different from ours, but the factors involved, specially in public worship, are the same, namely modesty, propriety and orderliness. Among the Greeks, only prostitutes, so numerous in Corinth, went about unveiled in public. If Christian women discarded the veil in the assembly, they automatically placed themselves on this level, thus losing their reputation, and bringing the whole assembly into disgrace.

The Greeks wore no head covering in private prayer, whereas the Jewish men wore the *tallith*, “a four-cornered shawl having fringes consisting of eight threads, each knotted five times” (Vincent) to show reverence to God and their unworthiness to look on Him. However, Maimonides (*Mishna*) excepts cases where (as in Greece) the custom of the place was different. But the Apostle has more than custom to consider in his regulation of conduct in the Corinthian assembly. His first regard was for truth and the right relationship between God, man, and then woman. Hence the argument of verses 3-16.

As we have seen, the relationship between Christian men and women is not one of superiority or otherwise, but of God-given position, and this, the Apostle argues, should be evident in dress and deportment. A man ought not to have his head veiled inasmuch as he is a representation of the image and glory of God. If the *tallith* was customary *at this particular time* for Jewish men in worship (we are not absolutely sure about this) then this was revolutionary teaching so far as they were concerned. But not so with the woman, as we have seen. It would have been revolutionary for her *not* to wear a veil in public, and as man was constituted by God to be her “head” (verse 3), the wearing of a veil, showing this symbolically, made it even more right and proper.

This is what Paul means when he says she should have “a sign of authority on her head”, where “authority” is put by metonymy for “the veil” or head-covering. The Apostle does not stop here, but adds “because of the angels” (verse 10). The explanations of this clause have been legion. Here are some of them:

- (1) The angels are “presidents” or leaders of the assembly, just as some interpret the “angels of the seven churches” in Rev. i. 20.
- (2) They are good angels who are present at worship and would be offended by indecorous conduct of women.

- (3) They are good angels who might be ensnared as the “sons of God” were in Gen. vi., when they contemplated unveiled women.
- (4) They are the fallen angels of Gen. vi. who worked such havoc with humanity which finally resulted in the Flood.

No.1 we can reject outright. When the Lord Jesus interprets the symbol of “stars” as “angels” in Rev. i. 20, we have no right to re-interpret his interpretation and make them human leaders. This is opening the door to error and not light and understanding.

No.2 is popular with many evangelical expositors, but when we take it to the test of Scripture, what do we find? Just where do we have any command in the Old or New Testament to avoid offending angels? And even if angels were offended by the behaviour of some of the Corinthian believers, what practical effect would this have had on this church? To avoid offending God is of supreme importance, but we have no divine commands concerning the effect of human conduct upon angels.

View No.3 may be possible, but again, we have no clear teaching of Scripture as to the attitude of angels towards humanity, and therefore we cannot accept this idea.

We are left therefore with view No.4, and lest any should think that this is one of the cranky ideas of modern dispensationalists, we would point out that it was put forward as early as Tertullian (160-222A.D.). The Apostle has already used Gen. i.-iii. in his arguments concerning the relationship of the sexes. What more natural that his thoughts should travel on to chapter vi. of the same book where, in the Septuagint, *angeloi*, angels are used of the “sons of God”? These “kept not their first estate” (Jude 6) and co-habited with women, which resulted in the evil Satanic seed who were physical monstrosities (giants Gen. vi. 4), and finally produced the conditions which necessitated the Flood.

If this is what Paul is referring to, it will fit in with his arguments and the context we are now considering. It should be clear that neither men or women are safe in the spiritual conflict that surrounds us unless they abide in the position that God has placed them in, the one to the other. If a woman steps out of her God-appointed relationship with the man, then she puts herself in danger. Refusal to wear the veil would have been tantamount to doing this, and such a woman would then have been open to the powers of darkness who would not have been slow to take advantage. There is plenty of evidence in the Acts of active demonism, and the time was not without its dangers, just as it will be at the end of this age (II Tim. iii. 1).

Paul goes on to state the right relationship of the sexes (verses 11 and 12) and to point out that all these things (*ta panta*) have their origin in God. Even naturally and bodily, the man has been made different to the woman. Relating to the hair of the head, women grow considerably longer hair than men, so nature (or the God of nature) teaches us that woman has been given a natural covering which men lack (15). Nothing is clearer than the fact that, whatever similarities men and women may have, they also have definite differences which distinguish them and this is according to God’s will.

Many modern tendencies and fashions in the way the hair is treated and in dress, obliterate these distinctions between the sexes and are definitely bad. Believers should take care with such modern fashions, and see to it that they are not being enslaved by these things and so becoming conformed to this age (Rom. xii. 1, 2).

Having made the relationship between men and women clear (even appealing to nature and custom of the Greek world at the time of writing), he now asks:

“Judge ye in yourselves: is it seemly that a woman pray unto God unveiled? but if any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God” (I Cor. 13-16 R.V.).

The Apostle does not say that it was unseemly for any woman to engage in prayer, but to do so *unveiled* would be unseemly and even dangerous, because of the evil spirit world. In addition there was no other church doing these things in this way, so the Corinthians who were doing this, could not appeal to such action elsewhere in support of their own.

Paul, all through this section, is regulating the conduct of the Corinthian assembly. The Holy Spirit had distributed his evidential gifts to both men and women (xii. 4-6). The Apostle had written to the Thessalonian church that these gifts must not be quenched (I Thess. v. 19). There is no possibility of man quenching God here. “Spirit” is put for His gift which could be neglected. However, the *way* these gifts were used in the meetings together, must be regulated so that all was done decently and in order. Later on in this epistle Paul returns to the use of these gifts, with special reference to tongues and prophecy.

A new section commences with verse 17, where, instead of commending as in verse 2, the Apostle is compelled to censure them for their bad conduct in connection with the Lord’s Supper:

“But in giving you this charge, I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that divisions exist among you, and I partly believe it” (xi. 17, 18 R.V.).

The situation was so bad that Paul tells them that their coming together in assembly, instead of being a help, had become a hindrance by reason of their behaviour. We need not assume that the divisions here were the same as those mentioned in iii. 3. They seem to have arisen in the context of chapter xi. out of pure selfishness and greed. It is essential to remember that the Supper itself was preceded by the communal meal, the *agape*, which has its origin in Acts ii. 42-47. This we have dealt with in a previously study to which the reader is referred. The abuses obviously commenced with this love-feast, which, instead of being a practical expression of love and sharing, became an opportunity to indulge in gluttony and disgraceful conduct. Paul said that he had heard of all this (doubtless from Chloe’s house, i. 11; or from Stephanas and his friends, xvi. 17), and he partly believed it. Most people believe *more* than they hear. The gracious Apostle believes *less* than has been reported to him. On the surface, it seemed impossible

that such scandalous behaviour could occur among Christians, but Paul knew to what depths such could sink when the old sinful nature is indulged.

He uses two words for divisions, *schisma* and *hairesis*, which, while having different shades of meaning, can only refer to the same thing here. Divisions resulted in separate parties being formed, evidently antagonistic to each other. The only good thing about this sorry state of affairs was “there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved (*dokimoi*) may be made manifest among you” (verse 19). In other words, people’s true characters are exposed in such a situation; those walking worthy and therefore approved by the Lord, being manifestly distinct from the backsliders. The Lord Jesus, in His lifetime, had hinted that such divisions would occur, but that those responsible would come under judgment (Matt. xviii. 7). Alas, the history of the professing church right through the centuries, has been strewn with such happenings.

The Corinthian communal meal was certainly a meal of sorts, but it was not the *Lord’s* Super in the way the believers at Corinth were treating it. The word *Lord’s* is the adjective *kuriakon*, “relating to the Lord”, and here is emphatic. Instead of the Lord being in control, the sinful flesh as dominating, and this meal, which could have beautifully set forth their practical oneness in Christ, was being used for gluttony and selfishness. No wonder Paul was so indignant. The chief offenders appeared to be the rich, who were in a position to set an example in generosity and thoughtfulness for the poorer brethren. Instead of this, they were grossly over-eating and drinking, even to the point of getting drunk, with the result that the poor were left without food and went hungry (verses 20 & 21).

“What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not” (I Cor. xi. 22 R.V.).

This disgraceful behaviour was bringing Christianity into contempt and Paul charged them to remedy this at once.

No.14. pp. 26 - 29

The Apostle Paul has been severely reprimanding the Corinthian believers for their gross abuses of the Church's common meal, the *agape*, and the Lord's Supper that followed it. This behaviour was even worse in view of the fact that the love feast was so closely connected with the New Covenant feast, which was a memorial of the Lord's atoning death for them; and to link such conduct with such rich and solemn symbols was intolerable.

The Apostle now elaborates this:

“For I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, This is My body, which is for you: this do in remembrance of Me”
(I Cor. xi. 23, 24 R.V.).

That the actual words of the Lord Jesus at this Passover supper were handed down from the apostles to their disciples and then to others there is no doubt, and it is possible that they could have reached Paul in this way. But in view of Gal. i. 12, with its great stress on the Lord's revelation to Paul independently of any human source, it is better to take the words “I received of the Lord” as meaning that the Apostle received this record directly from Christ.

There should be no need to stress that this meal was directly connected with the Passover, as all the four evangelists make perfectly clear. Likewise its connection with the New Covenant of Jer. xxxi. is plain, and that covenant is specially related to Israel and Judah (Jer. xxxi. 31). It is tradition that wrenches this feast away from its divinely Israelitish setting, so much so that many Christians have never realized that, in its inception, it was connected with the Passover at all!

The Lord gives the symbolical meaning to the broken bread and the wine by the figure *Metaphor*, in which the verb “to be” means “represents” (see *Figures of Speech used in the Bible* by E. W. Bullinger, D.D., p.738). “This (broken bread) *represents* My body, which is for you”. The ghastly failure of the Roman Church to recognize this fact has resulted in the blasphemy and bondage of the Mass that has enslaved and deceived thousands down the centuries.

The twelve apostles were exhorted to keep this feast as a “memorial”—“do this as My memorial” (I Cor. xi. 25 literally). Now both the Passover and this feast were memorials, the one reminding Israel of their miraculous deliverance from the bondage of Egypt (Exod. xiii. 9), and the other of a greater deliverance at Calvary from the bondage of sin and death. In both cases blood was shed stressing death, the former a type of the great reality, the precious life of Christ, voluntarily laid down in bearing the penalty of the sins of His people. This figure *Metaphor* would have been readily understood by these

twelve Jews, to whom the eating of the literal flesh and blood of the Lord would have been revolting and utterly contrary to the Law.

These symbols not only looked back by faith into the past. They looked forward too, to the *completion* of the saving work which they represented, at the expected early coming of Christ, when the goal of salvation would be attained.

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord’s death till He come” (xi. 26 R.V.).

It should hardly be necessary to say, in view of our past studies, that the second advent of Christ, *as yet future to us*, could not have been in their minds. During the Acts, the coming of the Lord was imminent as practically all the early epistles clearly teach (cp. Acts iii. 19-26). Paul, together with the Christian groups of believers, expected to see and participate in this great event. Therefore this supper was a *proclamation of the nearness and reality of the second Advent*. This sacrificial meal then linked *both* the comings together, and had real point at this time.

Moreover, this typical meal was not one-sided. If it spoke of basic truths which conferred eternal blessings, it also brought great responsibility upon those who partook of it and it was this that Paul wanted to bring home to those in the Corinthian assembly who were so grossly abusing their great privileges. One of the big mistakes that evangelists have made is to teach that the *age of grace* commenced at Calvary. God certainly *acted in grace* and longsuffering to Israel during the Acts period in giving them yet another opportunity to repent and turn back to Him. The gospel Paul preached was one based upon grace, but as a dispensation, grace did not operate in all its fullness until after the laying aside in unbelief of the chosen nation, and as such it was then made known in the first letter written after this event which occurred at Acts xxviii., namely Ephesians (Eph. iii. 2).

During the Acts, divine judgment was as much manifest as it had been in O.T. days. James, stressing the imminent return of Christ, had declared that His coming drew near, and as Judge, He was then standing before the door (v. 7-9). It is quite wrong to regard the second Advent as one of blessing only. Many Scriptures reveal the fact that it is also a time of judgment for sin. During the time we are considering (the period covered by the Acts), the Lord was already judging among His people. His severe dealings with Ananias and Sapphira were typical. We remember this resulted from their telling lies, not the worst of sins in the estimation of many people, and one wonders what would happen amongst Christians today if we were still living in the same dispensation! And yet this *would* be happening if the present dispensation had commenced at the Cross.

The Apostle is now going to warn the sinning Christians that their abuses of the supper of the Lord would certainly come under His direct judgment, and had already done so in a solemn way on some of them.

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and

drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body. For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep" (xi. 27-30 R.V.).

Those in the Corinthian assembly who were so grossly indulging the sinful old nature by gluttony and drunkenness were playing with fire. The Lord could not be indifferent to such conduct, and as a result, a great number of them were ill, and some had actually been visited with death.

This was the Lord's judgment indeed beginning at the house of God (I Pet. iv. 17), and was an earnest of the Kingdom age when, not only will there be world-wide blessing, but divine judgment and discipline too so that sin may be restrained, and without this, such a Kingdom and blessing would be impossible of realization.

Again we would point out that this direct judgment for sin is not typical of this present age of grace. When one considers the errors in connection with the Roman Mass participated in by many thousands; the many unbelievers who regularly have taken communion over the centuries, "not discerning the Lord's body", one wonders again just what would have happened in Christendom down the centuries had the Lord been dealing with His people in the same way as the time we are here considering. As one has said, undertakers could not have coped with the work! Yet Paul warned the Corinthians that he who did not discern the spiritual teaching underlying the meal relating to the Lord's body "eats and drinks judgment unto himself", and this judgment was not one in the far future at the last day, but *was taking place at that very time in a drastic way.*

This fact, together with other features, should make it clear to the discerning believer, that the Acts is a separate dispensation, even though we have the fundamental gospel of grace, true for all time dealing with sin and death, preached throughout the period. The solemn conclusion of all this is stated in verse 31:

"But if we discerned ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world. Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, wait one for another. If any man is hungry, let him eat at home; that your coming together be not unto judgment. And the rest will I set in order whensoever I come" (xi. 31-34 R.V.).

If the believers at Corinth would only turn the searchlight of judgment upon themselves instead of on others, they would have disciplined themselves and avoided the Lord having to discipline them, although this discipline, even if severe, was better than being condemned with the unsaved world around them.

It is still true today, believers should never judge or harshly condemn one another. It is easier and more pleasant to judge someone else than to rigorously judge and discipline ourselves, but this is the only condemnation that God allows us! How much more pleasant the history of the professing Church would have been if only this had been carried out consistently! In this blatant age, when self-discipline is so little known, it behoves the believer to give a witness that his faith in Christ has taught him to control himself, remembering that this is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v. 23, where

‘temperance’ should read ‘self-control’), which should be on the ‘tree’ of our lives, bringing glory to the Lord.

A new section dealing with spiritual gifts commences with the next chapter, and to this we will address ourselves in our next study.

No.15. pp. 50 - 52

After reprimanding the Corinthian assembly for their abuses of the *agape*, the shared love-feast, the Apostle Paul adds to the solemnity of his warning by recalling the words and acts of the Lord Jesus when He instituted the New Covenant Supper under the shadow of Calvary. This occupies xi. 23-30. There is no need to debate whether the Apostle received the facts in unbroken tradition from the Twelve, or whether he received it from the Lord without any mediation. In view of his strong language in Gal. i., where he discounts any human origin in his knowledge of the Gospel, having received it directly from the risen Lord Himself, we see no good reason why it is not so in this particular case.

The facts of the ritual are in accordance with the Gospel records. We have already seen its direct link with the Passover, both being *memorial* feasts, one looking forward to the real deliverance at the Cross by the real Passover Lamb (“Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us”, v. 7), and the other looking back in faith to the same great act. Paul reinforces his warning by impressing on them that to partake of this ritual feast unworthily, that is with the moral failings of selfishness and gluttony rampant among them, was to eat and drink God’s judgment to themselves rather than to receive His blessings (verses 27-29).

This judgment was already evident in their midst:

“For this cause many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep” (xi. 30 R.V.).

We have already pointed out that this Divine discipline was typical of the Acts period, where the possibility of the earthly kingdom was still in view. It is not typical of this age of grace where grace is reigning and direct judgment is held back. While this is a fact, we would point out that the normal consequences of sowing to the flesh or the spirit remain unchanged (Gal. vi. 7-9).

This section of the epistle ends with the Apostle exhorting the believers at Corinth to wait for one another (33). It is obvious that there was no spiritual hierarchy in the Corinthian set-up who could have forced obedience of the rank and file. They were not told to wait for their leaders to arrive, but each to wait for the other, thus bringing responsibility to all. Any undue hunger should be first satisfied at home (34), so that their conduct might be worthy, and the painful experience of the Lord’s judgment avoided.

Paul now commences an important section dealing with spiritual gifts. It is clear that the Corinthian church had an abundance of these gifts, and this in spite of their carnal state. To teach that the possession of these gifts today is a mark of spirituality, or of some special filling of the Spirit, is quite contrary to Scriptural facts, as we shall see. It is possible that the believers at Corinth had raised the matter concerning gifts in their communication with him. As this matter was directly connected with their public worship, the Apostle now deals with it.

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that when ye were Gentiles, ye were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking in the Spirit of God saith, Jesus is anathema; and no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit”
(xii. 1-3 R.V.).

The word ‘gifts’ is not in the original; it could be rendered “spiritual matters”, but as the context makes clear that it is special gifts of the Holy Spirit which are being discussed, it is better to supply the word “gifts”. There was evidently a large Gentile section in the Corinthian assembly, for the Apostle refers to their pre-conversion days as idolaters under the domination of the evil Satanic spirits that were behind the dumb idols they worshipped.

While redemption had delivered them from this bondage, it was a mistake to suppose that there was no danger now from Satanic activity. In one sense these gifts constituted a danger, for Paul makes it clear in this epistles and the one that was to follow, that Satan, as an angel of light, can travesty these gifts and so deceive the unwary. It is quite wrong to imagine that the great enemy of God and His children, gave believers a holiday, as it were, till the second century with its developed Gnosticism. The battle between light and darkness never ceases, and the error that the Apostle combated at Colossae, the warnings contained in the Pastoral epistles and the command of the Apostle John to “test the spirits whether they are of God, *because many false prophets are gone out into the world* (I John iv. 1) and that the spirit of antichrist was *already present* (ii. 18), show quite clearly that this was so, and therefore the danger existed of being led astray.

We wish that those today who are anxious to bring back *some* of these gifts, in particular tongue speaking, would bear in mind the danger of what they are seeking to do.

In N.T. times ecstatic heathen worship was a *fact*, as it is still today in dark centres of heathendom. Paul either knew that this had already entered the Corinthian church, or there was the possibility of it doing so.

Thus he states categorically that no one under the influence of God’s Spirit can say that Jesus is accursed, nor would anyone under Satanic domination own His lordship, for this is the very thing that Satan covets for himself, and he certainly would not allow any of his dupes to advertise the supremacy of Christ!

It seems clear that the Apostle had the worship of the assembly in mind in this long section dealing with spiritual gifts, which occupies this chapter and also chapters xiii. &

xiv. In consequence, he is not referring to every day speech (although what he said would cover this) but speech in the assembly, which would be either under the guidance of God, or under the Satanic influence. Anyone of course at any time could *pronounce* the words “Lord Jesus”, whether saved or unsaved, but no one in the assembly’s worship could use this phrase in *teaching or witness* and be under the control of the evil one.

Having made this clear, Paul now goes on to discuss the spiritual gifts themselves:

“There are distributions of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are distributions of services, and the same Lord; and these are distributions of operations, but the same God who operates all things in all men. To each one is given his own manifestation of the Spirit, with a view to mutual profit. For to one there is given, through the Spirit, a word of wisdom; to another, in accordance with the same Spirit, a word of Knowledge; to another faith, in the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing, in the one Spirit; to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the power to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these things the same one Spirit puts into operation, distributing individually to each one as He wills” (I Cor. xii. 4-11, C. K. Barrett).

There is no difficulty with the main theme of this section. Note that Spirit, Lord and God are used interchangeably. However varied the gifts may be, they have one source, the Holy Spirit of God. They were not distributed to give any feeling of superiority, but for the mutual profit of the whole church (7). Just as there was no uniformity of experience, neither was there of gifts. Nor were these gifts the privilege of the few who had had some *special* spiritual experience. *To each one* of the assembly is given his own manifestation of the Spirit (7) and the Spirit divided these gifts exactly “as He willed”. No believer was responsible for the kind of gift he received, but he was certainly responsible for the way he used it, which primarily was meant for the Lord’s glory and the common good. In view of the attempts to revive tongues speaking today apart from the gifts *as a whole*, it is significant that Paul puts speaking in tongues at the bottom of the list. It was probably coveted by some because of its outward showiness, but the Apostle commences with one that is infinitely more important, but without any external attraction, that of *wisdom*. Why? *Because wisdom is fundamental in the practical outworking of any gift or service for the Lord*. Who is going to give away anything of real value to foolish people who will only misuse it?

It is noteworthy that, in his prayer for the Ephesian believers, Paul again puts wisdom first (Eph. i. 17). “If any man lack wisdom (and we all do to some extent) let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally” (James i. 5), so there is no excuse for any believer to remain foolish, or to think or act foolishly. This only hinders the Truth, and lets the Lord down before an unbelieving world.

No.16. pp. 77 - 80

In the section of the epistle now before us, the Apostle Paul is dealing with the various gifts of the Holy Spirit, among believers of the Acts period, distributed according to His will. We have seen the all-important gift of wisdom comes first, whereas the more showy gift of tongues is put at *the bottom of the list*. The idea of some who have a leaning towards tongue-speaking, that this is a mark of spirituality or of a special baptism or filling of the Spirit, is shown up as false when one remembers that, of all the churches Paul dealt with, the Corinthian assembly was the most carnal! We shall have more to say about speaking in tongues later on.

The next evidential gift of the Spirit in chapter xii. is *knowledge*. That this was given without human mediation is clear by the context, where the gifts come directly from the Spirit of God. I John ii. 20 refers to this by saying, "But ye have an unction (anointing) from the Holy One (i.e. The Holy Spirit) and *ye know all things*". And again in ii. 27, "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, *and ye need not that any man teach you*".

One of the gifts of the ascended Christ for His Body is 'teachers' (Eph. iv. 11), but there is no mention in this epistle of any supernatural gift of knowledge without human effort, such as existed in the church at Corinth. We may wish there was such today, but now we find we have to search the Scriptures patiently, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; we need to pray for enlightenment too before such Divine knowledge becomes our personal possession. While there were teachers in the churches during the period covered by the Acts, it is evident that some who had the special gift of knowledge were independent of them, though not in a schismatic sense, for the will of God was for all to work together as members of a body, in united witness.

Faith is the next special gift, and it is obvious this cannot be the initiatory faith of the sinner believing in Christ as Saviour, for such a faith could not be possessed by some believers but not others. It would be rather the faith of the pioneer, willing to undertake new and possibly difficult work for Christ, not only in the assembly, but outside. We have a modern example of this in George Muller and his work for destitute children.

Now follows gifts of healing, and the Act is full of concrete examples of this. (Acts iii. 7, 8; iv. 16, 30; v. 15, 16; viii. 6, 7; ix. 33, 34; xiv. 8-10; xix. 11, 12; xxviii. 8, 9). Note that the healing was *instantaneous and complete*, and we may be sure that there was no relapse! When modern healing campaigns are compared to this, their pitiful inadequacy is only too obvious. And yet they claim to be fulfilling the same ministry as obtained in the Acts! How folk can be so duped as to believe this only goes to show the utter ignorance of the N.T. that abounds today.

The healing ministry we are dealing with has its roots in the O.T. in God's promises to Israel:

“. . . . If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God *I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians*” (Exod. xv. 26).

“And ye shall serve the Lord thy God, and He shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and *I will take sickness away from the midst of thee*” (Exod. xxiii. 25).

“Thou shalt be blessed *above all people and the Lord will take away from thee all sickness*” (Deut. vii. 14, 15).

There is no doubt that definite Divine healing was promised to this earthly people of God. This was repeated in the Lord’s commission of the Twelve to Israel:

“And as ye go, preach, saying, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. *Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons*” (Matt. x. 5-8).

This very healing ministry was also performed by the Lord day by day, as the Gospel records clearly show, and the same ministry continues without a break till Israel is laid aside at the end of the Acts. After this, Paul’s healing ministry, so effective before (see Acts xix. 11, 12), no longer obtains (Phil. ii. 25-27; I Tim. v. 23; II Tim. iv. 20).

This divine healing was one of the foretastes of the coming earthly kingdom, where there will not only be abundant spiritual blessing but physical health and blessing as well. If we are aiming for truth and not wishful thinking, we shall keep this ministry where the Bible places it—with Israel and God’s earthly kingdom purposes. To wrench it from this setting as so many have done is to get difficulty, and disillusionment, as well as confusion in our understanding of the Divine plan of the ages.

The next of the Spirit’s evidential gifts is the working of miracles, and again there is no need to argue as to what today can be regarded as miraculous. The Acts of the Apostles is full of what the Holy Spirit means by the working of miracles and the following Scriptures should be carefully verified as they are too long to quote in full here. (Acts ii. 22, 43; iv. 29, 30; v. 12; vi. 8; viii. 5-7, 39; ix. 37-41; xii. 7; xiii. 10, 11; xiv. 3; xvi. 16-18, 25, 26; xx. 9-11; xxviii. 3-9).

There can be no doubt that we do not live in such an age today. The power to work such miracles was another earthly kingdom evidence, and to some at Corinth this divine gift was given by the Holy Spirit. There is another reference to this gift in Paul’s early letter to Galatians:

“He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and *worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*” (Gal. iii. 5).

It is important to note that these miracles were not just displays of great power which overwhelmed or stupefied those who saw them. They were *signs*, that is they signified and gave a special message; hence their evidential value to Israel who had the countersign, the O.T. Scriptures.

The reader who has carefully perused the above list of references, cannot fail to note the number of times the word ‘sign’ is connected with the word ‘miracle’.

The Apostle follows this gift with that of *prophecy*, and it is important to remember that a Bible prophet was a *forth-teller* as well as being a *foreteller*. Prophets in the N.T. were linked with apostles as a foundation ministry by the risen Christ (Eph. iv. 11), and this was essential for the delivery of truth to God's people until the great foundation of inspired Scripture was complete, through which God could speak to men and meet every need by the Holy Spirit's enlightenment. No further additions to God's complete Word are necessary or can be allowed. Our task is the *proclamation* of this completed revelation, and we no longer need the ministry either of the apostle or prophet, the sure foundation now being the Word of God and the Christ of the Word.

The ministry of the prophet during the Acts ranked high in the Apostle Paul's estimation (I Cor. xiv. 3-5) in importance above the gift of tongues.

In view of the satanic spirit of deception concerning which Christ so clearly warned (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24 and see II Thess. ii. 7-10), a divine gift of discrimination was needed at this time to distinguish the true from the false; thus *discerning of spirits* was an important gift and we have already seen the Apostle John's command to test the spirits in view of false prophets (I John iv. 1-3). Thus those who claimed to give a word of wisdom, or knowledge, or prophecy could be infallibly sorted out as to whether their utterances were actuated by the Spirit of God or by some satanic and demonic power.

The last on Paul's list is tongues and their interpretation. We shall have more to say about this gift when we read chapter xiv. where the Apostle deals with tongue speaking and its proper place in the assembly, so that everything could be done "decently and in order".

The Apostle now stresses the *source* of all gifts—the Holy Spirit Himself who is sovereign in his distribution of them:

"But all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as He will" (xii. 11 R.V.).

He alone chooses what gift *each believer* should have, so that none should have ground either for boasting or for being inferior. Nor were they given just to the "spiritual". All were necessary at this time for the great Kingdom testimony. This naturally leads to the thought of the Pentecostal church as a whole and what the working of every part could achieve for the Lord. What better illustration could be given than a human body, with its various members working together harmoniously for the body and the person as a whole? This the following verses elaborate.

No.17. pp. 86 - 89

Having described the various sign gifts distributed sovereignly by the Holy Spirit to believers in the Acts period, the Apostle Paul now deals with their functioning with regard to the churches as a whole, and for a concrete example, what better illustration can he use than a human body, which is a unity in diversity? This illustration was by no means unique. It was frequently employed in the ancient world and we find allusions to it in Socrates, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, and Marcus Antoninus. The Apostle writes:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is *the* Christ” (I Cor. xii. 12).

The A.V. and R.V. omit the expressed definite article before “Christ”. Many expositors can see that “the Christ” cannot refer just to Christ *personally*, for how can He be likened to a human body which has uncomely as well as comely parts? (23). “Christ” (*Christos*) means anointed, and “the Christ” can be used as the title of a church which has been specially anointed. The believers to whom the Apostle John wrote were told “Ye have an anointing” (*chrisma*) (I John ii. 20, 27), and this gave them the supernatural gift of knowledge which we have already seen is contained in the list detailed in verses 8-10 of the chapter with which we are dealing. In his second letter to the Corinthian church the Apostle wrote:

“Now He that *confirmeth* us with you in Christ, and *hath anointed us (chrismo)*, is God” (II Cor. i. 21).

This ‘anointing’ is very much to the point in I Cor. xii. 12. Moreover, the above reference acquaints us with the fact that these supernatural gifts were *confirmatory* in character as well as being *signs*. The teaching then in I Cor. xii. 12 is clear. Just as a human body has many members, and each member has a particular part to play, not independently, but for the well-being of the body as a whole, so should the Corinthian assembly have functioned. The cliques which had come into being at Corinth and the misusing of some of the spiritual gifts were rendering this unity null and void in practice, and it is this unity which was so important and which Paul has stressed from various angles.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (xii. 13).

To be baptized into a special company was no new truth. We have already had the baptism of all Israel unto Moses in I Cor. x., and this baptism was a *spiritual* baptism without water, which united them with Moses and all for which He stood, and had its origin in God’s action, not in anything that Israel did. So it is here. The words ‘baptized’ and ‘made to drink’ are in the aorist tense denoting that the action is past (not something future to be sought) and was true of *all* believers at that time irrespective of their condition. It was an action never to be repeated, being the work of the Holy Spirit.

It cannot refer to water baptism, for Paul had already told the Corinthians that water baptism *did not form part of His Christ-directed ministry* (I Cor. i. 17), and no kind of water baptism would ever effect this *spiritual unity of the believer with God*. Nothing less than the Holy Spirit's work could do this. Such a unity certainly did *not* depend upon the work of man in carrying out any external ritual.

In proceeding with the illustration of a human body, Paul stresses the inter-dependence of the various members. We have seen that this usage of the word 'body' was not confined to the Scriptures. In spite of a superficial likeness, the Apostle is not describing the Body of Christ, yet to be revealed in all its fullness after the Acts in Ephesians and Colossians. At this time it was still a secret, hid in God from all past ages and generations of people (Eph. iii. 9 R.V., Col. i. 26 R.V.) and there is not a hint in these Corinthian epistles, or for that matter in *any* epistle written during the Acts, that such a secret of God is being unfolded. If we carefully note the language of I Cor. xii. and Rom. xii., we shall note differences from Ephesians. One which should be obvious is that the one Body of Ephesians is distinguished from Christ as the Head. The likeness of the Corinthian church to a human body and its members, speaks of eyes, ears and nose, all members of the human head and illustrative of those in the Corinthian church (17-24). Every member of the Body of Christ in Ephesians is "accepted in the Beloved", but the body of I Cor. xii. has "uncomely" parts which certainly is not true of the former. If Paul is teaching here Ephesian truth, then he is using the figure of a human body in a very careless way and we cannot accept this for a moment.

Moreover, he asserts in Ephesians that the Church related to the Mystery is a "joint-Body" (*sussoma*), a unique word (iii. 6). No such body, *where every member is equal in size and importance* had ever existed before, either naturally or spiritually. It never occurs in any Acts epistle, and in fact could not be used while the position at this time symbolized by the olive tree (Israel) and the wild grafts (Gentiles), was true (Rom. xi. 16, and note verses 18 and 22). We should also realize that the gifts set by God in the Corinthian assembly are different from those of Eph. iv. 11, insomuch that gifts of healing, helps, governments and diversities of tongues are omitted in the Ephesian list, healings and tongues being specially linked, as we have seen again and again, with the earthly kingdom ministry of which Israel is the centre and form no part of the heavenly calling of Ephesians. Apostles, prophets, and teachers *are* repeated after Acts xxviii. which shows clearly that there is a definite selection by the Holy Spirit, repeating what was *continuous*, and leaving out that which was *transitory*, for so many of these Acts gifts were such, and never intended to be permanent (I Cor. xiii. 8).

The whole point of Paul's argument concerning these gifts is that no one is responsible for the *kind* of gift he has, and even if some are more important, *all* are necessary for the proper functioning of the assembly in Christian witness. None should feel any sense of superiority or inferiority whatever gift he possesses, and all should lead, above all, to *unity*. After showing the diversity in unity of the human body, he says:

"Now you are Christ's body, and, individually members" (xii. 27, C. K. Barrett).

Both the A.V. and R.V. translate “Now ye are *the* body of Christ”, but there is no definite article in the Greek. We cannot translate it baldly “you are *a* body of Christ”, for this does not give the sense. The only way is, as Dr. C. K. Barrett renders it, “you are Christ’s body”.

At first sight this seems to upset the distinction between the Pentecostal church and the Body of Christ after the Acts period, but we should ask ourselves, how could one of the many assemblies existing at this time be *The Body* of Christ? What of the rest? Paul uses the phrase “one body” again in Romans, and this helps us to understand the usage of the word “body” in the Acts as applied to believers. “So we, being many, are one body IN Christ, and every one members one of another” (Rom. xii. 5). Note he did NOT say “we are the one Body OF Christ”, but “one body (of believers) IN Christ”, which is a very different thing and shows *the standing* by grace of the Roman church in Christ. So with the Corinthian assembly. They were a company (body) of believers belonging to Christ (Christ’s body); like all the other churches; they were not part of the *sussoma*, the joint-Body of which Christ is the Head. Nothing is said about the Headship of Christ in these Acts epistles. If we are absolutely accurate in our reading and note just what the Apostle wrote under inspiration, not adding in our minds what was to be revealed later, we shall have no difficulty with this context, or try to identify what God has made to differ.

The God-given human gifts of ministry commence with the foundation work of apostles and prophets. As we have seen, these were necessary to lay the foundation of truth until the written Word of God was complete and then the completed inspired Word took over. The gifts that follow are secondary and fall in line with the super-natural gifts already detailed. “Helps” *antilempseis* is a common word in the papyri, but only used here in the N.T. It probably referred to the work of the deacons, assisting the poor and the sick. “Governments” (*kuberneseis*), speak of ruling or leading, and Paul doubtless has in mind the overseers (bishops), the outstanding leaders of the local assembly.

The questions asked by the Apostle refer back to verse 14 and its argument that the human body is not one member, but many and all essential. In each question *me* in the Greek demands the answer “no”. It is significant that ‘tongues’ comes at the bottom of the list and the answer “no” deals a death-blow to the modern Pentecostal argument that tongue speaking is a sign of the fullness or special baptism of the Spirit for spiritual Christians. “Eagerly desire the *greater* gifts” said the Apostle (verse 31) and there can be no doubt that Paul unhesitatingly ranks some spiritual gifts above others and tongue speaking certainly is not one, as this context and chapter xiv. clearly reveal. But there is something even better. “I show you a supremely excellent way” a way *par excellence* which exceeds all that has been given before. *It is the way of Divine love*, and those who have the mind of the Spirit will always put the emphasis on this first and foremost. Just what this involves is made clear in the poetic hymn to love which follows.

No.18. pp. 113 - 116

The Apostle Paul has been dealing with the supernatural sign-gifts of the Holy Spirit which were characteristic of the period covered by the Acts of the Apostles. We have seen that the Corinthian church, on Paul's own declaration, was mostly carnal, yet it abounded with these gifts, which clearly shows that they were not a mark of spirituality or of some special "filling of the Spirit", as Pentecostals today so often assert.

What is definitely more important in God's eyes is the practical "fruit of the Spirit" of Gal. v. 22, 23. It is *fruit* that the Lord wants upon the tree of our lives, and without this our heavenly Father cannot be glorified by us (John xv. 1-8). The first in the list of fruit is *love*, and to the church at Corinth, Paul is now going to show that "supremely excellent way", which was better even than the evidential gifts they possessed.

This "way" is now set out in the wonderful hymn to love of chapter xiii. In this poem, a contrast is first made with the gifts and one great and essential difference is stressed, namely, that the gifts including that of tongues, were temporal and passing, whereas love abides and is eternal:

"If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal" (xiii. 1 R.V.).

It is clear from chapters xii.-xiv. that the Apostle did not rate the gift of tongues highly. Even if the believers at Corinth were able to understand the speech of angels, and all other languages, this would be meaningless and valueless without practicing love. It would be no better than the paganism that surrounded them, just an empty noise. Let this be made clear from the start. We must empty our minds of all human conceptions of love if we wish to understand I Cor. xiii. If ever a word has been misunderstood and grossly debased and misrepresented it is the word "love". Today it has sunk so low as to mean little more than the physical.

The character of divine love is clearly stated in the Scripture. It is pure unselfishness which gives to the limit for others. "A studied denial of self in the interests of others." "God so loved *that He gave His only begotten Son*" (John iii. 16). "Walk in love, as Christ also hath *loved* us, and *hath given Himself* for us" (Eph. v. 2). Real love does not merely give of one's possession; *it gives no less than one's self* for others. The Lord Jesus not only gave *out* of His inexhaustible fullness, but even more, He gave no less than *Himself* for us.

It is this conception of love that obtains in I Cor. xiii. Anything less is a mockery, and this was what so lacking in the Corinthian assembly. Plenty of gifts, plenty of show, but so little real fruit of the Spirit evidenced in the practical out-working of Divine love. Speaking in tongues without such love was just a jangling noise that accomplished nothing.

“And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries (secrets) and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing” (xiii. 2 R.V.).

The Apostle ranked prophecy much higher than the gift of tongues (xiv. 1-4), but even prophecy or such faith that could accomplish what was seemingly impossible (‘remove mountains’), was useless without love, and rendered such a person as nothing, an absolute zero.

One could give away all one’s goods to the poor and needy, and even be willing to suffer a martyr’s death (whether by being burned or by self-immolation is not clear), *and it would profit nothing*. There is an alternative reading “that I may glory”, as the reason for acts of charity, which would nullify its virtue by the wrong motive of self-aggrandizement (note the R.V. margin).

There is no record of martyrdom by fire before the persecutions under Nero, but in spite of this it is quite likely that the Byzantine text of the A.V. is right and that Paul is taking his instruction to a climax in saying in effect, “Even if I give myself up to the most painful of deaths in some great cause, but have no divine love, it would do me no good.” This is startling but true, and it means to say that all of us should be honest with ourselves and make sure of our *motives* for Christian service. Is it being done to please ourselves in some way, because it appeals to us? Are we doing it in order to please others? Do we want to give an impression before others of being a splendid charitable character? All these motives are wrong, and in the Lord’s assessment for service, will profit NOTHING. There is only ONE motive that the Lord will accept, and that is *real love for Him*. It is the “love of Christ” that “constraineth us”, said the Apostle (II Cor. v. 14) and this is the only reason for service that counts with our Master.

Paul now proceeds to describe such a love *in action*. It is easier to say what love will or will not *do*, rather than to state what it *is*.

“Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked, taketh not account of evil; rejoiceth not in unrighteousness, but rejoiceth with the truth” (xiii. 4-6 R.V.).

This love does not lose patience with others, however provoking they may be (“long-suffering”). It is always kind (*chrestos* from *chraomai*, to use), meaning gracious, useful. Love is not envious or jealous, a bad sin that can creep insidiously into the heart of a believer and blight his thinking and Christian activities.

Love does not brag (“vaunteth not itself”), is not arrogant and full of self-importance (“puffed up”). It does not behave in an unseemly or indecent way, nor is it selfish, seeking its own interests. Love does not get irritable (“provoked”), or put evil down to any one’s account. It does not rejoice at unrighteousness, taking pleasure at being censorious, or having a sense of superiority, but rather rejoices in what is opposite, namely, the truth.

The Apostle now treats with the *extent* to which love operates and uses *panta*, all things, four times. This is a word that always needs great care in the N.T. All sorts of false conclusions can be adduced from this word unless the nearer and remoter context is carefully considered. “All things” is not equivalent to “everything universally”. Here we are told “love believeth all things” (verse 7). Does divine love believe *everything*? If so, it must believe the false as well as the true! Is it just credulous, or does it carefully select what it believes? Surely it should be obvious that “all things” here is limited to everything that is in accord with *truth*, and nothing outside of it.

Divine love covers, protects, supports all things that relate to truth (“beareth all things”). It never ceases to hope (“hopeth all things”); it endures all things. No hardship or rebuff affects it. In other words, *love never fails* (verse 8). It survives everything, and like God Himself (I John iv. 8), it is eternal: in contrast to the evidential gifts which were only temporary and destined to pass away:

“Whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away: whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away” (xiii. 8-10 R.V.).

The modern revivers of tongue-speaking and those who mistakenly wish to emulate them, should consider these statements seriously. Tongues shall cease. The verb is the future middle indicative and means they shall make themselves cease, or cease automatically and we know from the testimony of the Acts and the Pauline epistles written afterwards that this is what actually did occur. There may have been a few sporadic outbursts late on but these were confined to heretical groups like the Montanists. As we have seen, there was no more need of prophecy when the N.T. and the whole of the Scriptures were completed, neither was there for tongues when the earthly kingdom testimony ceases. This was when Israel finally failed and was temporarily set aside by God at Acts xxviii.

The Corinthian believers who were putting a false value on tongues and possibly the gifts as a whole, were reminded again that this was a mark of spiritual babyhood (see iii. 1-3). “That which is perfect”, *to teleion*, refers to maturity, full-growth, not merely to a *future* period of time when the Lord returns—as some teach, but a *present* personal possibility (compare ii. 6 and xiv. 20 margin). This is reinforced by Paul’s *personal experience* which he now gives, contrasting his thinking and speaking as a child to his present adulthood. He can now put away the things that once were necessary to him when he was an infant. This was also true spiritually. He is now well on the way to full growth (Phil. iii. 12-14). He can walk by *faith* and not by *sight or sense*. He can indeed come into the category of blessing which the risen Lord indicated, when He said to Thomas, so limited by his *sense experience*: “Because thou hast *seen* me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that *have not seen, and yet have believed*” (John xx. 29).

No.19. pp. 123 - 125

We have been considering the “more excellent way” of Divine love that the Apostle Paul had set forth to the Corinthian believers, being far superior to all the evidential gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of tongues, which apparently this assembly was rating far too highly. This gift, with the others, was transient and passing, but the love which comes from God is eternal and abiding.

Moreover, these gifts were not necessary to spiritual maturity. When one grows up, one can put away the things of childhood (I Cor. xiii. 9-11). This maturity is a reflection of the complete perfection of the glorified state in resurrection.

“For now we see in a mirror, darkly (lit. in an enigma); but then face to face: now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I have been known” (xiii. 12 R.V.).

This verse gives facts that must ever be borne in mind. However much we know of God’s truth *it is partial*, not complete, and will not be so until our hope is realized and we are with the Lord with bodies fashioned like the body of His glory (Phil. iii.), and the present limitations of comprehension gone for ever. It is this very human limitation that causes so many of our present problems, specially in regard to our understanding of the Scriptures. What we are seeing now is likened to a reflection in a mirror and often puzzling at that (“in an enigma” literally).

This should stop us from acting and talking as though we have *all* knowledge now and can solve every problem that comes our way, specially those concerning God’s person and His being! In this present life, God has been stooping in condescension in His revelation of Himself and His ways, having respect to our great limitations of comprehension. We can only know a small part *now*. What is beyond us can be covered by faith in Him, for we know that He has the answer to all problems, and in the next life He will justify all His dealings with mankind which are incomprehensible now.

Meanwhile we can thank Him for the *abiding* gifts of faith (in Him and His word), hope (the certain fulfillment of all His promises) and love, the supreme expression of the Lord and His gracious purposes which is now shed abroad in our hearts. This must ever be the fruit of all fruits, dominating our lives and witness for Him.

In chapter xiv., the Apostle returns to the evidential gifts, specially that of tongues. First of all we shall note his assessment of this gift, and the way it should be controlled in the Corinthian assembly. In view of the fact that Pentecostalism and tongue speaking in particular seems on the increase today, we shall give this too a Scriptural consideration as to whether it is a bad thing, or a good thing to be sought after.

Actually the Apostle never counsels the Corinthians to seek for the gift of tongues separately as though it was the highest and best of the gifts (as most Pentecostalists assert). What he does do is to emphasize once more the importance of *love*.

“Pursue love as you aim. Strive for spiritual gifts, and specially that you may prophesy” (xiv. 1, C. K. Barrett).

Love must be sought for with the eagerness of pursuit. No half-hearted regard will do. This comes first always in importance where Christian witness and service is concerned. It is quite obvious from what follows, that Paul is down-grading the gift of tongues; not that it had no value, but it was *not* the most important gift, and the Corinthian believers were over-rating it.

We must first of all point out there is no justification for the word “unknown” in the A.V. throughout this chapter. The word is not in the original and should be omitted as in the R.V. and modern translations for it is misleading. How are we to understand the word “tongue”? There are two divergent views on this. One is that it refers to *languages*. Another is that the reference is to *ecstatic speech*. The best way to decide this is to go back to the inception of tongues at Pentecost, and here there is no doubt whatsoever that languages or dialects are meant. The opening verses declare that there were Jews gathered at Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost from “every nation under heaven” (Acts ii. 5). Luke goes on to tell us that they were confounded because “every man heard them speak in his own dialect (language)”. They ask, “how hear we every man *in our own dialect* (language), wherein we were born?” (verses 8 and 11).

The Lord had told the eleven disciples that they were to be witnesses for Him “in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (i. 8).

In order that this should be rapidly accomplished, God removed the speech barrier to the spread of the Gospel and the Kingdom message. This was a reversal of the confusion of tongues at Babel. Seen in this light, the gift of tongues makes sense and was one of the miraculous signs that accompanied the earthly Kingdom ministry in the Acts, first to Israel and later on to the Gentiles who were admitted as wild olive grafts into the true olive tree, Israel, in order to “provoke them to jealousy” and stir them up to obey the Divine command to repent and turn to God (Acts iii. 19-26) so that, through their mediation, the restoration of the earthly Kingdom to them might become a fact and then be realized all over the earth, with the Lord’s Second Advent an accomplished fact.

Some insist that the gift of tongues at Pentecost was recognized languages, but at Corinth it was different, being akin to ecstatic speech. But this is by no means proved; Corinth was a port and would have a mixed flow of races passing through it. That strangers visited the assembly is clear from I Cor. xiv. 23, where the Apostle refers to “unlearned and unbelieving” coming in. These would certainly need a message in their own language if of foreign extraction, and a believer with the gift of tongues could minister this, followed by another with the gift of interpretation so that the whole assembly could benefit. It is interesting to note that *hermeneuo* can mean “translate” as well as “interpret” (see Arntd and Gingrich). *The New Bible Dictionary* states that the Greek words for “interpret” always mean “translate” except Luke xxiv. 27 (p.1287). It is a good principle of interpretation that the unknown should be interpreted by the known,

in which case I Corinthians should be interpreted by the Acts of the Apostles, which is the historical book dealing with this church from its beginning.

Paul's and Luke's terminology agree, for both use the word *glossa*, "tongue", and Luke further defines it as being a *dialektos* (Acts i. 19; ii. 6, 8; xxi. 40; xxii. 2; xxvi. 14), which in every case refers to a language of a nation or region, and it is most unlikely that the experience of tongue speaking, described by the two writers in identical terms, would be dissimilar.

Moreover, the Divine intention was that this gift should be a sign to Israel (I Cor. xiv. 21, 22) as prophesied in Isa. xxviii. 11, and took its place with the other Kingdom signs of the Acts period. In what way could unintelligible ecstatic speech be such a sign? Such speech occurred in the excitable worship in the pagan temples around and therefore would not speak with Divine conviction to any Jew.

When one sees *glossalia*, or speaking in tongues *in its Scriptural setting*, it makes sense and falls in line with the evidential miracles of the Acts period, when Israel was being tested after the Lord's earthly ministry to them, giving them a further opportunity of repenting and becoming useable, in order that they might take the knowledge of the Lord as Saviour and King to the ends of the earth. To take the gift of tongues out of the place that God put it originally is misleading and dangerous, and this is just what Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals have done. We shall look at some of their arguments in the next article in this series.

No.20. pp. 147 - 151

We have been dealing with the Divine setting of the gift of tongues in our exposition of the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians. We found that it was one of the evidential sign gifts of the Acts period accrediting the earthly Kingdom message, and speaking in a special way to the unbelieving among Israel. Today, however, we see it being revived without the other gifts which accompanied it, and at a time when the nation of Israel, the centre of the earthly Kingdom, is spiritually blinded and hardened and declared by God to be *Lo-Ammi*, not my people.

Not only does speaking in tongues occupy an important place in the present day Pentecostal movement, we see it now occurring in other denominations and certain evangelicals are doing their best to promote it in every Christian quarter.

Pentecostals, for the most part, teach that one may be saved apart from the baptism of the Spirit, but without this experience which they claim is subsequent to salvation, one does not have full consecration or power for service, so that one's Christian life is incomplete and one's ministry hampered. If this is true, one has a right to ask *why such spiritual giants as Luther, Calvin and many others accomplished so much for the Lord*

without the gift of tongues? Pentecostals should honestly face up to this. They are often exhorted to “tarry before the Lord” in order to receive this special baptism of the Spirit, the outward evidence of which, they teach, is speaking in tongues.

Luke xxiv. 49 is adduced as Scriptural ground for this, but this is a misuse of this verse. The eleven were not kept waiting to prove them or to encourage them to ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit accompanied by tongues. They had to wait *because the feast of Pentecost was Divinely dated*, being 50 days after Passover (Calvary, Lev. xxiii. 15, 16).

What Scriptural backing has the Pentecostal view that the baptism of the Spirit should *follow* salvation? Some turn to Eph. i. 13:

“ Christ, in Whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of Truth, the gospel of your salvation: in Whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”

On the surface, this looks as though there is some ground for such teaching but the A.V. is not accurate. Here we have a verb in the aorist tense (*esphragisthete*), preceded by an aorist participle (*pisteusantes*). Professor F. F. Bruce writes:

“The words ‘having also believed’ mean when you Gentiles believed in your turn, as we Jewish Christians had already done. The participle ‘having believed’ is identical with that occurring in Paul’s question to the disciples at Ephesus in Acts 19:2 ‘Did ye receive the Holy Ghost *when ye believed?*’ it is called by grammarians the coincident aorist participle because it denotes an action coincident in time with that of the main verb” (*The Epistle to the Ephesians*, p.36).

In other words the believing and the sealing *occurred at the same time*, not at some future date. This is made clear by the R.V. and many modern versions. If Pentecostals would carefully read Acts x. 46 they would see that the bestowal of the Spirit’s gift of tongues was *simultaneous* with the coming to faith both of Cornelius and his group. It was an extension of Pentecost, as was the experience of the disciples at Ephesus in chapter xix., who had only heard of John the Baptist’s ministry.

There is no clear Scriptural teaching for the idea that the Spirit’s baptism, evidenced by tongues, is something to be sought for *after* salvation. Nor in the Scriptural record do we find *glossalia* always following the work or filling of the Holy Spirit. If the reader will consult the following passages in the Acts which refer to the filling of the Holy Spirit, *he will not find one occurrence that is accompanied by tongues*—Acts iv. 8, 31; vi. 3, 5; vii. 55; ix. 17; xi. 24; xiii. 9, 52, and he certainly will not find any occurrence in Scripture of tongue speaking after the Acts period.

It should be quite clear for every unbiased student of the Word that the Holy Spirit, far from aiming to give the gift of tongues to all believers as a special experience after salvation, *did not intend all the saved to have this gift*. As we have seen, the seven questions of the Apostle in I Cor. xii. 29, 30 demand, in the Greek, a *negative answer*. “Do all speak with tongues?” The answer is “no”, and God never intended that all should do so, but distributed tongues with other gifts, some more important, like prophecy, “severally as He willed” (I Cor. xii. 11).

Nor was the ability to speak in tongues a necessary requirement for leaders and teachers in the N.T., *nor do we find one instance of any believer specially seeking this gift*. In I Tim. iii., there is a list of “musts” for the office of a bishop or overseer, but tongues are not mentioned. Some Pentecostalists link their conception of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with sinless perfection, what they call “entire sanctification”, and so one error leads to another.

We are amazed that any true believer who loves the Word of God and bases his all upon it, could ever accept what is so patently unscriptural and also false to experience. If what these people say is really true then they have advanced far beyond the great characters of the Bible and the great saints that followed.

A fine upright character as the prophet Isaiah saw a vision of the Lord in glory, and we take it that his character was up to the standard of any modern believer, and the result was to make him confess “Woe is me! for *I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts*” (Isa. vi. 1-5). The Apostle Paul declared that “in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth (present tense) *no good thing*” (Rom. vii. 18). The Apostle John wrote “if we say that we have no sin, *we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*” (I John i. 8). Pentecostalists who claim sinless perfection have obviously advanced in experience beyond these outstanding children of God.

The trouble with these so-called sinless Pentecostalists is that, unlike Isaiah, they have never really seen the Lord Jesus in the blaze of His glory and holiness (see I Tim. vi. 15, 16). Had they done so, they would have nothing but shame for what that searching light would inevitably reveal. They can have little conception of the burning holiness of God. Sinlessness and incorruption is *put on at resurrection* (I Cor. xv. 53, 54) *and not before*, and it is self-deception to think otherwise. If tongues and holiness go together, then the Corinthian church should have been the holiest, but in reality they were the most carnal and immature (I Cor. iii. 1-3), which gives the lie to such Pentecostal pretensions.

One danger that results from the teaching that tongue speaking is an outward evidence of a special baptism of the spirit, subsequent to salvation, and that believers are sadly lacking without this, is the psychological and spiritual tensions which this teaching creates. When a believer does not receive this “baptism”, he tries a little harder to get it. When, after several attempts he still does not receive it, he begins to feel frustrated and depressed and many have become physically and mentally ill because they failed to “receive”.

One hears too of such people being accused of some hidden sin or failure which accounts for this, all of which is deplorable and unnecessary, and is in itself the sin of judgment which we are warned against. Another danger is the emphasis this kind of teaching gives to “*feeling*” *and emotional experiences* at the expense of faith. “We walk by faith and not by sight”, said the Apostle, but this doctrine leads to the opposite. One can see very little difference between the unsaved doing things for “thrills” and the

believer who hankers after the special spiritual thrill of the separate “baptism of the Spirit”. When one grows spiritually, feelings give way to absolute trust in *what the Lord is in Himself* and this is changeless.

We should know too, that *glossalia* can be psychologically induced and therefore is no proof whatsoever of the Holy Spirit’s work. A Christian psychiatrist writes:

“The product of our analysis is the demonstration of the very natural mechanisms which produced glossalia. As a psychological phenomenon, glossalia is easy to produce and readily understandable.”

(E. Mansell Pattison, “*Speaking in Tongues and about Tongues*”).

The Encyclopaedia Britannica has this to say:

“The gift of tongues and their interpretation was not peculiar to the Christian Church, but was a repetition in it of a phase common in ancient religions. The very phrase *glosais lalein*, ‘to speak with tongues’, was not invented by the New Testament writers, but borrowed from ordinary speech. Virgil (Aen. vi. 46,97) draws a life-like picture of the ancient prophetess ‘speaking with tongues’ the same morbid and abnormal trance utterances occur in Christian revivals of every age, e.g. among the mendicant friars of the 13th century, among the Jansenites, the early Quakers, the converts of Wesley and Whitefield, the persecuted Protestants of the Cevennes, the Irvingites and the revivalists of Wales and America. Oracular possession of the kind above described is also common among savages and people of lower culture” (pp. 288, 289, 1963 edition).

No wonder then Satan can use tongue speaking in order to deceive! With regard to the Irvingite movement which was the beginning of modern Pentecostalism, Sir Robert Anderson gives a detailed account in his *Spirit Manifestations and the Gift of Tongues*.

Edward Irving (1792-1834), a pastor of a London church, founded the Catholic Apostolic Church and began to introduce tongue speaking into his ministry. Sir Robert Anderson shows the excesses to which this finally led. Richard Baxter, a lawyer, first took an active part in the movement, but when prophecies made failed to be fulfilled, his eyes were opened and he broke away after telling Irving “we had all been speaking by a lying spirit and not by the Spirit of the Lord”. Scores of people were deceived by this ‘angel of light’ teaching.

Irving relates that the power of the Holy Spirit came upon him irresistibly, so much so that he was compelled to put his handkerchief into his mouth to stop the sound so that he should not alarm others. This in itself should have been a warning to him for “the spirits of the prophets *are subject to the prophets*” (I Cor. xiv. 32); in other words the power is *controllable* by the prophet. The Holy Spirit does not force people or lead to such excesses that have occurred from time to time in Pentecostal meetings.

One of the great dangers of such Pentecostal teaching is that it exalts the Holy Spirit *at the expense of Christ*, so that the Lord Jesus in effect is subordinated to the Holy Spirit. The Saviour said:

“He shall *not* speak of Himself *He shall glorify me*: for He shall *receive of mine: and shall show it unto you*” (John xvi. 13, 14).

The main object of the Holy Spirit then is to *glorify and exalt the Lord Jesus*, so that in *all things He might have the preeminence* (Col. i. 18), and whenever He is put in His rightful place of ALL (Col. iii. 11) and “First and Last”, the Holy Spirit is certainly there. Where the Spirit is unduly stressed and the Lordship of Christ unknown we have not truth, but error which comes from the father of lies.

If modern tongue speaking is really of God, where are those who undeniably have the gift of interpretation (without which tongues are useless) and also *the discerning of spirits*, that is the divine ability to sift the true from the false? (I Cor. xii. 10). This was God’s check against the work of Satan during the Acts when tongues were valid. Without this, the whole thing can be highly dangerous, for as we know so well, Satan can travesty and copy the work of God. Not even miracles, by themselves, are a proof of divine origin:

“Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name?
and in Thy Name have cast out devils? and in Thy Name done many wonderful works?
And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me”
(Matt. vii. 22, 23).

The Apostles Paul and John warn us of the *deceptive miracles* of Satan at the end time of this age so that, even in the Acts period, tongue speaking was not without its dangers (II Thess. ii. 8-10; Rev. xiii. 11-14) and the Lord Jesus Himself likewise forewarned of the terrible deception of this most dangerous time (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24), and many believers feel, as they look around on world conditions, that we are fast approaching such a period.

But some will say, many Pentecostals testify to the blessing they have received from speaking in tongues. The answer to this is simple and clear. If we want nothing but Truth and to avoid such deception, *we must base our beliefs solely on the Word of God which is Truth, and not on human experience*. We may not begin with a certain type of religious experience and then proceed to build a doctrine on it. We dare not build on *any experience primarily, but on the teaching of Holy Scripture which is true and changeless*.

If the importance of a doctrine in the N.T. is shown by the Divine emphasis upon it (and this is surely true) then we must face the fact that tongue speaking is only mentioned in *one* of the 21 epistles and even then it is not held up as a mark of spiritual growth, or something to be sought after.

Those believers who go on to know and enjoy the exceeding riches of grace and glory revealed in the prison epistles of Paul will certainly not be attracted by speaking in tongues. When one has tasted the best, one does not want the second-best! In the high and holy calling revealed therein Christ is ALL and each believer FILLED TO THE FULL in Him (Col. ii. 10; iii. 10, 11) to which nothing can be added, for there is nothing higher or possible beyond this revealed in the whole length and breadth of God’s Word. In our long Christian experience *we have never known anyone grounded in this glorious truth and in conscious enjoyment of it, ever to desire or turn to tongue speaking*.

While we are forced to be critical of the Pentecostal doctrine of Spirit baptism and glossalia, we readily acknowledge that many Pentecostals are keen to proclaim the gospel and bring others to a saving knowledge of the Lord. If only they would put more emphasis on the *fruit of the Spirit* (Gal. v. 22, 23) rather than isolated *gifts* of the Spirit which belonged to the Acts period!

The gift of tongues was temporal and was to cease (I Cor. xiii. 8). It was put at the bottom of the list in importance by the Apostle Paul. Prophecy was certainly of more value (I Cor. xiv. 4). Taken out of its Divine setting tongues can be highly dangerous and those attracted to it should ponder over the words of the Apostle:

“Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding *than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue*” (I Cor. xiv. 19).

No.21. pp. 165 - 170

Having considered the N.T. teaching concerning the gift of tongues and seen the false importance the Corinthian church were placing on this gift, we next note that the Apostle Paul makes perfectly clear that prophecy was preferable if only for the fact that it edified *others* as well as the speaker. Tongue speaking by itself at the best only brought benefit to the one who uttered it:

“For he that speaketh in a tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; *for no man understandeth*; but in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men edification, and comfort, and consolation. He that speaketh in a tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church” (I Cor. xiv. 2-4 R.V.).

From this it is perfectly clear that that the gift of tongues without interpretation was of no benefit to the church as a whole, whereas prophecy gave a message of comfort and edification to all who heard it. When explained by the Divine gift of interpretation so that all could benefit, it was acceptable; otherwise it remained true that he who prophesied was greater than any who spoke in tongues (5). As this was so why is it that Pentecostals do not put more value on prophets rather than tongue-speakers? The Apostle reinforces this point by saying that even if he himself gave them a message in another tongue, what good would it do them unless it was accompanied by revelation, knowledge, prophecy or teaching? (6). This is stressed still further by the illustration of a musical instrument, which can either produce distinguishable notes or just a noise. Furthermore each instrument has its own “tone colour”. If this was not so, it would be impossible to distinguish between them (verses 6-12). Tongue speaking, unless understood by others, was merely “speaking into the air” (9) and made the one who uttered it as a foreigner (barbarian), someone who could not be understood by others. The real value of all the evidential gifts of the Acts period was their *witness to other people and the building up of the church as a whole*.

“So also ye, since ye are zealous of Spiritual gifts, seek that ye may abound *unto the edifying of the church*” (xiv. 12 R.V.).

This was the crucial test, not what each individual got out of the experience for himself.

Tongue-speaking in connection with prayer.

The Apostle now deals with tongue speaking as it affected prayer. He wrote:

“For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding (or mind) is unfruitful” (xiv. 14).

Paul seems to be using here the word “spirit” for the new nature. In this case the mind was unfruitful or inactive, that is, it contributed nothing to the process. Now the mind is extremely important to the believer as a study of the word *nous* as used by Paul will make clear. When writing to the Roman church, he insisted that the believer should be “transformed by the renewing of the mind” (Rom. xii. 2) and it is only by this mind that one can prove what is “that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”; and thus render service and witness that is well-pleasing to Him.

Intercession for others is one of the highest expressions of the prayer life of the believer, and how can one engage in this effectively without the renewed mind being consciously employed? The Apostle puts his finger on a danger point when a tongue was employed in prayer without the conscious use of the Spirit-renewed mind. This would mean that a most important part of the believer remained out of action, which would be neither good for him or for his fellow-believers and others with whom he came into contact.

“What is to be done then? I will pray with the spirit, *but I will pray with the mind too.* I will sing praise with the spirit, *but I will sing praise with the mind too*” (I Cor. xiv. 15, C. K. Barrett).

We ask again, how can the ministry of intercession be engaged in, when, knowing the needs of others, something unintelligible goes on in the believer concerned and his mind is completely inactive?

When Paul asks for prayer for himself, he tells the assemblies of his needs in plain words, showing them what to pray for on his behalf. (Rom. xiv. 30-32; Eph. vi. 18-20; Col. iv. 2-4). There is not the slightest idea in these contexts that such prayer could be rendered automatically in an unknown tongue, with the believers concerned being unconscious of what they uttered. Furthermore, such a condition would be one of real danger. There cannot be a hiatus or blank in the human mind and its activities. It must be controlled by *somebody* or *something*. If the believer’s thinking is not consciously controlled by the renewed mind produced by the Holy Spirit, then Satan and the powers of darkness have an opportunity which they will not be slow to use.

That a believer's mind and words can be activated by the evil one is clear from what the Lord said to Peter in Matt. xvi. 22, 23. One moment Peter's words expressed the revelation of the Father (17); a moment later *Satan was directing his thoughts and his words!* (23). This is solemn indeed. So many keen Pentecostals seem to be very ignorant of Satan and his wiles (Eph. vi. 11, 12) and the warning that Scripture gives the believer of this great enemy and his deception, which is going to be world-wide at the time of the end, inasmuch that, if possible, the very elect will be deceived (Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11, 24). Hence, the importance of the Divine gift of *discernment* in the Acts which separated the true from the false (I Cor. xii. 10). Where is this gift today without controversy or argument?

The Apostle Paul insists, therefore, that the believer's *mind* must be actively engaged either in prayer or praise (I Cor. xiv. 15). He goes on to argue that if a Corinthian believer utters a blessing and someone who is a simpler listener (unlearned A.V. and R.V.) hears it, how can he respond intelligently with an Amen? for he does not *understand* what is being said. It is therefore perfectly clear that Paul expected the Corinthian assembly as a whole, to hear, understand, test and control all that took place in their gatherings and this would be impossible without words being spoken that could be understood by all. He continues:

“For thou verily gives thanks well (in a tongue), but the other (man) is not edified (built up)” (xiv. 17).

The whole value of the gift was not what it did for the one who uttered it, *but what benefit it conferred upon others*. Even with himself Paul, who could speak in tongues more than any of them, states most definitely:

“Nevertheless, in church I would rather speak *five words with my mind, in order to instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue*” (xiv. 19 R.S.V.).

In other words, *the employment of the mind was essential for fruitful witness and was infinitely of more importance than the act of speaking in a tongue*.

We cannot help but note the insistence of this context that *the renewed mind* must be employed with the spirit. “I will pray with the spirit, but *I will pray with the mind too*. I will sing praise with the spirit, but *I will sing praise with the mind too*” (I Cor. xiv. 15, C. K. Barret), and also verse 19 “I had rather *speak five words with my mind than ten thousand words in a tongue*”. Keeping this in the forefront we are amazed to read in a booklet entitled *Speaking in Tongues* by Larry Christenson, a pastor of a Californian Lutheran church:

“. . . . what possible value can speaking in tongues have, if a person has no idea what he is saying? According to the Bible even though one does not understand what he is saying, his spirit is in a state of prayer (I Cor. 14:14). In other words, for the person himself, *speaking in tongues is praying not with the mind, but with the spirit*” (page 4 italics ours).

“One speaks with tongues, for the most part in his private devotions. *This is by far its most important use and value* Although one does not know what he is saying as he prays in tongues, he does have a clear sense that he is praying to God” (page 8).

Much of this is obviously a direct negation of the teaching of Scripture above. Yet it is “according to the Bible” we are told! Moreover how the mind can be completely inactive and words used which are not understood by the speaker yet “he has a clear sense he is praying to God”, is past comprehending.

On page 9 the writer continues:

“In order to speak in tongues, you have to quit praying in English you simply lapse into silence and resolve to speak not a syllable of any language you have ever learned. *Your thoughts are focused on Christ* you take no thought of what you are saying. As far as you are concerned it is just a series of sounds” (italics ours).

Again we ask, how can the *thoughts* be focused on Christ, and yet the mind be bypassed or remain inactive? There is surely confusion here and we can say with certainty that *the N.T. knows nothing of such methods of prayer*. There is not a single command to the believer in the N.T. to connect tongue-speaking with prayer. Did the disciples on the day of Pentecost have to prepare themselves and practice in this way in order to receive the gift of tongues? Was not this rather the sovereign act of the Holy Spirit, distributing this gift “as He willed” (I Cor. xii. 11), this being the N.T. way this gift was always received? There is not the slightest indication that there had to be practice and effort in order to obtain this gift as the booklet suggests.

We do not believe that anywhere in the Bible can God’s truth and blessing be received apart from faith and *understanding*. “*With all thy getting, get understanding*” (Prov. iv. 7) and note carefully the following passages:

“Jesus saith unto them, Have ye *understood* all these things? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord” (Matt. xiii. 51).

“Then opened He their *understanding, that they might understand the scriptures*” (Luke xxiv. 45).

“. . . . the eyes of your *understanding* being enlightened; that ye may know” (Eph. i. 18).

“Whereby, when ye read, ye may *understand* my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Eph. iii. 4).

“Wherefore be ye not unwise, but *understanding* what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. v. 17).

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

“Being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of *understanding*” (Col. ii. 2).

“. . . . the Lord give thee *understanding in all things*” (II Tim. ii. 7).

These verses and contexts make it quite clear that a measure of understanding is absolutely vital both to the reception of truth and its practice. This being so, if the Lord wills to teach anyone, He will do so in the language that person uses and can understand and receive His truth, otherwise it would be meaningless. This was surely the object of the original gift of tongues at Pentecost, for the hearers said, “how hear we every man *in our own tongues, wherein we were born?*” (Acts ii. 8) not “what are all these unintelligible sounds we hear?”

Moreover those at Corinth who placed so much value on tongues were still in the infant stage spiritually. In iii. 1-3 he had severely reprimanded them for their immaturity and carnality, and the over emphasis they were placing on a showy gift, like tongue speaking, was only another evidence of this.

“Brothers, do not be children in intelligence. In wickedness be mere infants, but in intelligence be mature” (xiv. 20, C. K. Barrett).

Teleios, mature (‘men’, A.V. and R.V.) is one of an important group of words, signifying adulthood or maturity as opposed to babyhood. The N.T. has some very stringent things to say about believers who do not grow up spiritually (see Heb. v. 12-14). The things of the nursery can be very delightful for infants, but for grown-ups they are entirely out of place and unbecoming. Moreover, what can babies achieve in Christian witness? The need for constant growth in grace and knowledge of the truth should be a continual challenge to us all.

Paul does not hesitate to back up his argument by an appeal to the O.T.:

“In the law it is written, by men of strange tongues and by the lips of strangers will I speak unto this people; and not even thus will they hear Me, saith the Lord” (xiv. 21 R.V.).

Here the ‘law’ is a term for the whole O.T. rather than the Pentateuch, as it is also in John x. 34, where a citation from the Psalms is termed the ‘law’ (see also xii. 34, xv. 25 and Rom. iii. 19). The Apostle quotes freely from the LXX of Isa. xxviii. 11. Possibly he was using another version known also to the later O.T. translator Aquila. In Isaiah’s day, God is saying that Israel would not listen to Him in obedience, even though He spoke in a tongue that was familiar to them. He will therefore speak to them in an unfamiliar tongue, that of their enemies, the Assyrians, but even then they would not hear. It is very important to notice that God is speaking to *Israel* in warning and judgment, not to Gentiles and *so it was in the Acts period*. The gift of tongues was primarily for *unbelievers among Israel*.

“Wherefore tongues are for a sign, *not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving*” (xiv. 22 R.V.).

To the Jew, who had the counter-sign, the O.T., tongues should have spoken as a *sign* and a warning to unbelief. It is clear that known languages, such as were used at Pentecost, would be the only forceful sign to hard-hearted Israelites. Ecstatic language admits of too many natural explanations, as we have seen, not the least being the historical fact that the pagans were acquainted with such speech in their temples. The divine reason for the gift of tongues is clearly given in the chapter we are studying, “wherefore tongues are for a sign, *not to them that believe, but to the unbelieving*” (22).

Tongue-speaking in the N.T. takes its place among the signs of Mark xvi. that confirmed the earthly kingdom purpose throughout the Acts. Modern Pentecostalism takes it out of its Divine setting and message to the *unbeliever*, and to a large extent, reverses the teaching of Scripture, making it an evidence of spirituality, and “entire

sanctification” *of the believer*. This is dangerous, indeed and will be avoided by all who seek to base their doctrine and practice on a rightly-divided Word alone. The gift of tongues, by itself, would have been highly inadequate, for even the striking exhibition of tongues on the day of Pentecost, was put down to drunkenness on the part of some (Acts ii. 12, 13).

As a warning to the unbelieving Jew and a means of the rapid spread of the gospel and the Kingdom message (Acts iii. 19-26), this gift had its place, but taken out of its Divine context, it can be dangerous. When Satan, at the end time of this age, produces his *deceiving miracles and signs* (II Thess. ii. 7-12) who can say that he will not use tongue-speaking to seek to deceive the very elect? He *has already used tongue speaking in the past in the worship of the pagan temples of old*. And if he does so in the future, what can the Pentecostals offer in the way of Scriptural refutation, and protection of those who are exposed to such terrible deception?

To sum up—not all the miraculous evidential gifts of the Acts period were of equal importance: Prophecy was greater than speaking in tongues (I Cor. xiv. 5). Some of them, like tongues, were to “cease” (xiii. 8); others were “to abide”, the three principal ones being “faith, hope and love”, with love as the crown of them all (xiii. 13).

This gift of love, said the Apostle Paul must be sought after with the eagerness of pursuit (xiv. 1). What a difference we might see today in the Christian world if this was put into practice! It is surely a question of getting our priorities right.

No.22. pp. 184 - 187

Having clearly taught that the gifts of prophecy and tongues were directed to the *unbelieving*, specially among Israel during the Acts (I Cor. xiv. 22), the Apostle Paul now gives explicit directions to the Corinthian church as to how these gifts were to be used when they assembled together.

They had to consider not only the effect on themselves, but also on any outsiders who might come in.

“If therefore the whole church be assembled together, and all speak with tongues, and there come in men unlearned or unbelieving, will they not say that ye are mad?”
(I Cor. xiv. 23 R.V.).

Those who were “unlearned or unbelieving”, probably refer to one group, namely “unbelieving outsiders”. That such found their way into the Christian assemblies, there is no doubt. If more than one believer spoke at once, there could be nothing but confusion, and such new fold would be disgusted and deem them to be insane. That this happened is evident from the context. We must not suppose that the church’s meetings always took place indoors. Some Jewish communities had no building to meet in.

Whether out-of-doors or inside a building, there was every likelihood that unbelievers might arrive or be brought in by other Christians. In these circumstances the gift of tongues, properly controlled, could be a help. If they were foreigners they would possibly hear a message delivered in their own language and the rest of the group would share in it when it was interpreted by someone with this Divine gift. But this could only happen with profit when these gifts were controlled by those who possessed them No one was forced to use them against their will (verse 32), so that anything that approached confusion because more than one was speaking at a time, was inexcusable.

If the gift of prophecy alone was being used when any stranger entered, then conviction would surely follow, with the result that such would own the fact that God was truly with them (24, 25).

Paul now sums up his instructions concerning the exercise of tongues and prophecy in the assembly:

“What is to be done, then, brothers? When you assemble, each one of you has a hymn, a piece of teaching, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation. Let all these be exercised for the building up of the community” (xiv 26, C. K. Barrett).

As we have before seen, the exercise of these gifts was principally for the benefit of the church *as a whole*, not for the individual. Any shifting of this emphasis was dangerous and still is, and is not according to truth. It has been said that in verses 26, 27 we have a small glimpse of the simplicity of early church meetings.

It is noteworthy that there was no one in charge like the modern clergyman and when one considers the ornate modes of service and ritual that we see all around us in modern Christendom, we can judge how far this has gone astray from the Divine set-up at the beginning.

However, we must not fall into the error of assuming that this gives *in every detail* the example for assemblies today, for, despite Pentecostal claims, we have not the confirmatory gifts of the earthly Kingdom that were prominent during the Acts. When these lapsed after Israel’s failure at Acts xxviii., no doubt the order of service and worship was modified and God-given leaders, humble men drawn from the ranks, took their place in ministering the truth of the Word of God. We can be perfectly sure that all conformed to the administration of the Truth of the Mystery and that nothing was added or detracted from this climax truth and the gospel of God’s grace upon which it is based.

Coming back to the Apostle’s instructions to the Corinthian church, tongue speaking was limited to two or at the most three speakers on each occasion, and then only one at a time, to be followed by another member interpreting (verse 27). If no interpreter was present, the tongue speaker was commanded to keep quiet. Regarding prophets, they were also limited to two or three and then the important injunction is “let the others test what they say” (verse 29, C. K. Barrett). Here was God’s check against the deceiving work of Satan. In no case were the early Christians expected to swallow uncritically everything they heard (I Thess. v. 21; I John iv. 1). This Divine check is conspicuously

absent today, specially among those who profess to have these kingdom gifts. No wonder we read of excesses from time to time. Satan can have a “field-day” when Christian gatherings are not directly controlled by a rightly-divided Word, and the result is deception, confusion and division.

The Corinthian were further told that prophecy must be controlled as with tongues, and while it was possible that all *could* prophesy, if the Spirit willed, yet it did not mean that all *would* necessarily take part in this activity (verses 30 and 31). And then follows the important statement:

“The spirits by which prophets speak are under the control of the prophets, for God’s is not a God of disorder but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints” (I Cor. xiv. 32, 33, C. K. Barrett).

No one could plead that he was *compelled* to speak by the Holy Spirit. When one sometimes reads that a Pentecostal leader or speaker was dominated by the Holy Spirit and was not able to keep silent (e.g. Edward Irving, one of the founders of the modern Pentecostal movement), one can be assured that such experiences do not come from God but from the old deceiver of mankind.

Paul now reverts to the attitude of women in the assembly and we must be careful that we do not interpret the verses to conflict with what has already been said in chapter xi. 5. Apart from inspiration, one would not expect a logically-minded man as Paul to contradict himself. In the eleventh chapter it is not the *gift* that women are using which is the point at issue, but *how they are dressed* for the occasion. Acts xxi. 9 shows that women prophets existed, though possibly rarely.

What Paul is now going to say is that, apart from the teaching given in chapter xi., women should be silent in Christian gatherings, in just the same way as the male tongue speaker or prophet was enjoined to be silent, all being in the interests of peace and good order. If this was not so, then uncontrolled discussion and argument would take place which would become heated and give the enemy an opportunity of taking control and spoiling the witness. Such discussion should take place at home and not in the assembly.

Whether discussion should ever be allowed in a public meeting is indeed a difficult one to settle. We have seen meetings ruined by this. On the other hand if love and self-controlled prevails, then such discussion can prove helpful. No rigid rule today can be laid down on this point, but we may be assured of one thing, that no Christian woman who is versed in God’s truth will ever want to push herself into a position that is not according to his will. The relationship of the sexes in God’s sight has already been dealt with, and this should be the dominating factor in any problems that is related to a public assembly.

Paul now reminds the believers at Corinth that they should consider Christian practice generally. They had no monopoly of the gospel, Divine gifts, or truth as a whole.

“What? was it from you that the word of God went forth? or came it unto you alone”
(xiv. 36 R.V.).

They should therefore consider how other assemblies were behaving and not suppose that they were right and every one else wrong. The Apostle, who had before stressed the need of testing and checking all they heard, now gives another important test:

“If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or a spiritual person, he should recognize that what I am writing to you comes from the Lord” or, as some MSS “is the Lord’s command” (xiv. 37, C. K. Barrett).

This does not mean that Paul is quoting from the words Christ uttered on earth, but that all was in accordance with the truth deposited with him by revelation from the risen Lord (cp. Gal. i. 11, 12). If this is not inspiration in the fullest sense, what is it? This verse and the statement in I Thess. ii. 13 makes it perfectly clear that there is no such thing as *Pauline* doctrine, that is, doctrine founded on Paul’s ideas. There are indeed *distinctive* truths given by God through Paul the channel, but in no sense are we dealing with Paul’s opinions or conceptions. *It is God’s truth*, and neither we nor the early churches follow a man pure and simple.

If Paul exhorts us to follow him, he immediately adds “even as I follow Christ”. We have *one Lord*, who only has the right to teach and control us and we cannot acknowledge anyone else as such. But no one at Corinth could claim to have reached this position who denied the Apostle Paul’s ministry and authority. There are those today who think they can by-pass Paul and as long as they adhere to the “teaching of Jesus” in the Gospels, they imagine they are receiving the Truth in all its fullness. Such deceive themselves and others whom they seek to influence.

The mark of spirituality which the Apostle gives in the context we are studying, is still true. The majority of Christendom today have little place for, still less an understanding of the truth given through the Apostle. Is it any wonder that we see it divided, powerless, with no divine answer to the enormous problems that face us?

Paul now closes this section by stating that while tongues should not be suppressed (the earthly kingdom was still a possibility—Acts iii. 19-26), yet prophecy, the greater gift, should be sought after (I Cor. xiv. 39). The overriding consideration was that all should be done in a decent and orderly manner (verse 40), for only in this way could the God of law and order be honoured and a witness given to the outsider that would be likely to impress and convict him of its truth.

The Apostle now turns to another vital subject concerning which they had possibly written him, that of resurrection. In the whole range of inspired revelation this is one of the most important subjects, for it underlies the whole purpose of God. No wonder then he devotes a long section to its consideration.

No.23. pp. 203 - 207

It is evident that the first epistle to the Corinthians came into being by reason of the problems of the church at Corinth, made known to Paul by the household of Chloe (i. 11) or by the questions they themselves had sent him (vii. 1). Chapter xv. 12 informs us that there were some at Corinth who disbelieved the resurrection from the dead, and as this great doctrine is fundamental to the whole purpose of God, the Apostle devotes a long section to its consideration. The fifteenth chapter is divided into three parts:

- (1) verses 1-11, the evidence and the importance of the resurrection of Christ in connection with the gospel.
- (2) verses 12-34, deal with the fact of the resurrection of Christ and of man.
- (3) verses 35-58, the manner of the resurrection.

Paul commences by drawing attention to the gospel he preached. In his first letter, Galatians, he had made it quite clear that he had received it directly by the Lord's revelation, and not through any human instrumentality (i. 11, 12). The resurrection of Christ was the fundamental basis of this good news:

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” (I Cor. xv. 3, 4 R.V.).

This good news he had handed on to them “first of all”. “First” here may indicate priority in importance, as well as time and this gospel was clearly made known in the O.T. Scriptures. Paul does not quote any particular passage, but redemption and atonement in the O.T. is clearly linked with death and could not be experienced apart from it. The Passover is directly mentioned in I Cor. v. 7 and the Apostle evidently felt there was no need to back his statement up with O.T. details, for it was so obvious.

It is interesting to note the stress on *burial*, for this confirmed the reality of both death and resurrection. Christ must have *really* died, if He was buried, and resurrection was the taking up again of the life He laid down voluntarily on our behalf (John x. 17, 18). As both sin and death are the great enemies of God, His age-long purpose, and His people, the death of Christ and His resurrection is obviously God's answer to these tremendous problems. Nor could they have been dealt with and abolished in any other way.

Paul now brings forward the testimony of eye-witnesses, many of whom would have been still alive at this time. To gainsay this, the Corinthian objectors would have to maintain that the whole of the number were either deceived or liars upon whom no reliance could be placed. First in the list of appearances of the Lord is that to Peter (Cephas). Peter was certainly known at Corinth as i. 12 and ix. 5 clearly indicate: Luke xxiv. 34 reveals that Christ did appear to him. It may be that Peter is put first, because of the prominent position he held in the affairs related in the early chapters of the Acts of the Apostles, as the Apostle of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 7, 8).

After this the Lord appeared to the Twelve (I Cor. xv. 5). This is Paul's only reference to the Twelve and it makes quite clear that *he did not consider himself to be one of them*. Those who like to talk about "apostolic mistakes", may try and place Paul amongst the Twelve, but when they do this it is obvious that they have not gripped the place the Apostle and his ministry have in the Divine programme. Nor can the consummation of his ministry, expressed in his prison letters, ever be understood if Paul is linked with the Twelve and Israel, of whom they were representatives (cp. Rev. xxi. 10-14).

Next we have the witness of 500 brothers at once, the majority living at the time Paul was writing (verse 6), which was some twenty years later than the resurrection appearances. We can find no reference to this in the Gospels, nor should we expect it, for they are a concentrated account of the earthly life and witness of our Lord and make no pretence of being exhaustive. In exactly the same way the appearance to James is not mentioned in the Gospels and it seems that by the phrase "All the apostles", Paul is going wider than the Twelve, as it seems unlikely he would repeat what he has already said (5).

Last of all was the Apostle's own witness—the dramatic appearance of the Lord Jesus to him on the road to Damascus, "as one born out of due time" (literally, an abortion). This is a strange word to use. It sounds as though, from a natural standpoint, he was hurried into the world to take his important place in the outworking of God's mighty purpose.

It may be that the thought behind the word had already been used by his enemies, who not only ridiculed his ministry, but even his physical appearance (II Cor. x. 10). They dismissed him as a freak. But in spite of this, his apostleship was one of reality (cp. Gal. i.), although, whenever Paul thought about it, he marveled at the exceeding grace and love of the Lord that should choose and call him to such a service and witness.

"For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am"
(I Cor. xv. 9, 10 R.V.).

If we compare Eph. iii. 8 and I Tim. i. 15, the Apostle expresses similar thoughts. The contrast is of course between himself and the Lord, not himself and other apostles, for in this case, he was in no way inferior to the superlative apostles (II Cor. xi. 5; xii. 11). Concerning himself, Paul had no illusions, he was once "a blasphemer, and persecutor and injurious" (I Tim. i. 13), one who could have no claim on God. It was nothing less than God's rich grace that saved and called him and he never forgot it. No wonder then that he refers to grace more frequently than any other N.T. writer. He was indeed the apostle of grace and this was manifest in his faithful and unremitting labours for the Lord and His people after his conversion. This was indeed not "in vain". He could say truthfully that he laboured more abundantly than all the other apostles (10). II Cor. xi. 23-27 gives only an abbreviated summing up of all his faithful witness for the Lord and at what tremendous cost! Yet the Apostle did not want to take the credit:

"Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (xv. 10 R.V.).

This section is now summed up by saying that all the apostles, including himself, had had practical experience of the Lord's resurrection. All had truthfully testified to this and the Corinthians had accepted this and believed, except a minority that Paul is now going to deal with.

“Now if Christ is preached that He hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” (xv. 12 R.V.).

If the resurrection was not an historical fact, then the inescapable conclusion was that Christ was still dead, and in that case the gospel proclamation was empty, their faith useless, and the apostles were deceivers in proclaiming such a message. “No one can give himself to a dead man; no one can expect anything or receive anything from a dead man” (Schlatter). In other words, the Christian faith was completely destroyed. This would not only affect living believers, but those who had died.

“Then they also which are fallen asleep in Chris have perished” (xv. 18 R.V.).

This is an unfortunate verse for the traditionalist who bases his hope for the future on the pagan conception of the immortality of the soul. Nothing could make the resurrection of the believer more basic or fundamental. Instead of considering dead believers as being consciously in the presence of the Lord and being safe for ever, this verse states the exact opposite. When will the Christian world really believe this and not give the resurrection of the saved just a nominal adherence? How often do we hear addresses emphasizing that without resurrection, a saved person is PERISHED, the same fact that is accorded to the unbeliever according to John iii. 16?

Cannot we see that the great doctrine of resurrection is absolutely fundamental to the whole redeeming purpose of God and without it, the plan collapses? Paul now continues the argument by saying that if Christian hope pertains to this only, then we are the most pitiable of all men (19).

The Apostle now leaves unreality for fact, with one of his magnificent “buts” (compare Eph. ii. 4 & 13 and note what has gone before).

“*But* now in fact Christ has been raised from the dead as the firstfruits of those who are asleep. Since by man came death, by Man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be brought to life” (xv. 20,21, C. K. Barrett).

Christ and Adam are here regarded as heads of the *race*. Here we have resurrection and its *racial* aspect. Paul now goes beyond those who have been touched by the gospel, and deals with the connection which the Lord's resurrection has with the whole race in Adam, in relation to the matter of headship. “The head of every man is Christ”, even as the head of every woman is man which obviously goes further than those who are saved.

We must be very careful with the terms “in Adam” and “in Christ”. The latter phrase, as we have seen, stands for those in relation with Christ. Does every human being that has ever been born come with the scope of “in Adam”? But for the Scriptural doctrine of the two seeds, the answer would be “yes”. However one may dislike the thought of some

being designated as “tares” by the Lord, the fact remains that he used this term in the parable of the tares and Gen. iii. 15 clearly teaches that there is a seed of God and a seed of the Devil. The parable of the Tares and the Lord’s explanation of it should be carefully studied in Matt. xiii. 24-30, 36-42. It should be noted that the tares are quite separate from the true wheat from their inception to their destruction at the end. *In no case are the ‘tare’ “wheat” that has gone wrong.* Their introduction is by Satan to counterfeit and seek to overthrow God’s purpose for the “wheat”. Those that are represented by “wheat” cannot become “tares”, neither can ‘tares’ be changed into “wheat”, if we carefully regard the plain teaching of this parable.

From the human standpoint their appearance was identical, and looking at them from this standpoint one could assume that they were all one and the same company; but their origin was from Satan (John viii. 42-44 and note *ek pratos tou diabolou* “of your father the devil”, *ek* being characteristic of John’s writing to denote *origin*, both in his Gospel and epistles).

They were not “of God”, *ek tou Theon* (John viii. 47), or of the Father (42) but were positively of “their father the devil” (44). If the ‘tares’ did not find their origin, being and end in God, we have no right to include them in the true “wheat”. In other words we should not include the seed of the devil among those truly “in Adam”.

We should also not that Paul does not deal with the subject of resurrection from *every* angle in I Cor. xv. Nothing is said of the special resurrection of Luke xx. 35 (note the personal “worthiness”, and the preposition *ek*, out from the dead). Neither is resurrection expounded as it applies to Israel in the future. Likewise it does not deal with the theme as it applies to unbelievers. This obviously did not come within the scope of the problem started at Corinth by some who denied resurrection. The Apostle is concerned to show the falsity of this and that resurrection was absolutely fundamental to the hope of believers who had died.

No.24. pp. 224 - 228

In dealing with the great truth of resurrection which underlies the whole redemptive purpose of God, we have reached the section where the Apostle Paul deals with it from a *racial* aspect:

“For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive” (I Cor. xv. 22 R.V.).

In our last study we considered the doctrine of the two seeds, one of God and the other of Satan, and its bearing upon the phrase “all in Adam”, which we believe must be limited to the true seed of God. Just how many this comprises, we have no means of knowing, but God knows and as *He* does the sorting out at the end, there will be no mistakes made (Matt. xiii. 30, 41, 42). “All in Adam” goes wider than the elective purpose now in operation, either for the earthly kingdom or the heavenly Body of Christ.

It must include millions who have died in heathen lands not ever having the opportunity of hearing the Word of God or the Christ of the Word. These are dealt with in resurrection along the lines of Rom. xii. 12-16.

It should be hardly necessary to say that this is *not* universalism. Adam and Christ are the respective 'heads' of this company and as all the true seed are "in Adam", even so they will all be made alive in Christ. *But not all at once*. There is no Scriptural basis for one general resurrection as is often held, for the next verse in the chapter we are studying says:

"Each one, however, will be brought to life *in his own rank*: Christ Himself as the firstfruits, then, at His coming, those who belong to Christ" (xv. 23, C. K. Barrett).

Let us not forget that I Corinthians was written during the Acts period when the Second Coming of Christ was imminent. The resurrection of the Lord having taken place, the next thing that believers eagerly awaited was His early return and the bringing to life of those believers who had already died. I Thess. iv. 13-18 makes this quite clear. The truth of the Mystery in Ephesians and Colossians had yet to be revealed and therefore finds no direct reference in I Cor. xv.

The Apostle continues:

"Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have abolished all rule, and all authority and power. For He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet" (I Cor. xv. 24, 25 R.V.).

Verse 24 reads literally, "then the end" and if we stop reading here we might assume that directly after the second Advent of Christ the termination of all things take place. It is however important to note that *telos*, end, means *goal* as well as end in time, the completion or conclusion of a purpose or object. Matt. xxvi. 58 and James v. 11 are examples of this.

The goal the Apostle had in view is stated in verse 28 "that God may be all in all", but the intervening verses make it clear that this is not attained at once. "Then" of verse 24 is dependent upon the two occurrences of "when" which follow. There is the abolishing of all rule and the subjugation of all enemies and until this is secured, *Christ reigns* (verse 25) which must cover a period of time.

Allowance must therefore be made for this reign with the objects stated, namely to put "all things under His feet". There is no ground for the amillennial view that the winding up of all things takes place immediately at the Second Advent. The goal is not arrived at in an unbroken sequence. The Lord Jesus we repeat, reigns as King until all enemies are subdued. These are included in the words "all rule and authority and power". Col. ii. 15 teaches that the work on the cross is the basis for the destruction of "principalities and powers" who are hostile to God and His children. They are linked with death in the closing verses of Rom. viii., over which the believer is "more than conqueror". On the other hand Col. i. 16-20 shows that some principalities will be reconciled. When all enemies of God have been abolished and all the redeemed brought into line or

“subjected” to the great purpose of God, then the goal is reached and God is “all in all” (28). The word *hupotasso*, subdue, is linked with *tagma*, “order” or “rank” of verse 23. It is not a harsh word meaning despotic rule, but suggests the perfect alignment of all the redeemed in heaven and earth to the will and plan of the ages devised by the Lord.

This takes man back into the place intended for him in that great plan, for which sin and death had unfitted him. We can say that the whole of revelation is largely concerned with this object, namely the removal of all things that bar the accomplishment of the Divine purpose and this is what redemption and resurrection are all about and without them, such fruition would be impossible.

It is important to note that all enemies go under the *feet* of Christ (an Eastern figure of a conqueror), whereas the redeemed go under His *headship*, and the reign of Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords will not cease until this is accomplished. When this state of things has been reached:

“ When all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subjected unto Him that did subject all things unto Him, that God may be all in all”
(xv. 28 R.V.).

Here we must take great care to note exactly what is said, for all sorts of wrong conceptions have sprung from a misreading of this verse. Many misread it as reading “. . . . then shall the Son also Himself be subjected unto Him that did subject all things unto Him, that *the Father* may be all in all”. This is the result of an erroneous conception of the Godhead in which the Father is God and the Son takes a lesser place in the Godhead. This is a confusing of *status* with *role* and *operation*. Oscar Cullman is right when he states “to speak of the Son has meaning only in reference to *God’s revelatory action*, not in reference to *God’s being*”.

The revelation of the Trinity was necessary to carry out the great plan of redemption and victory over Satan, sin and death. We have no means of knowing whether this relationship obtains right throughout eternity, for Scripture does not inform us and it is foolish to speculate. Some have made up their minds that such a relationship is eternal, hence their substituting, in their minds at least, the Father in place of God in verse 28.

When the great goal has been reached at the end of the ages, it is not the *Father*, *Son*, or *Holy Spirit* that is said to be “all in all”, but GOD, without any reference to any such relationship or need of mediation in the realized Kingdom of God and we should be content to leave it there.

The verse that follows is problematic and has led to all sorts of extraordinary ideas in interpretation:

“Else what shall they do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are they baptized for them?” (xv. 29 R.V.).

Some, like the Mormons, think this teaches baptism for the dead by proxy. Others teach that Paul is referring to those who were baptized on the basis of the testimony of

some who had died. Yet another view postulates that such baptism refers to young converts who took the place of older brethren who had died. The difficulty lies in the preposition *huper*, “on behalf of”. With regard to the Mormon view, there is no evidence that a rite of this kind arose at any time in the first century. There is nothing like it till the second century and then only in connection with heretics like the Marcionites, and in any case, knowing the Apostle’s horror of false teaching, we should expect him to expose its falsity had it occurred at Corinth.

One thing is quite clear, namely that water baptism, symbolizing death, burial, and resurrection, would have no point if there was no resurrection. The rite would have been empty and meaningless. Dr. E. W. Bullinger suggests there is the figure *Ellipsis* here and by supplying the words “it is” as the translators have done in Rom. viii. 34, the verse then reads “What shall they do who are being baptized? It is on behalf of the dead if the dead rise not at all”. He points out that *nekros* ‘dead’, with the article as is the verse we are considering, usually means dead *bodies*, whereas without the article it refers to dead *people*.

We believe this to be the best solution of the difficulty that confronts us in verse 29. It fits perfectly with the context and is in harmony with the verse that follows, “why do we also stand in jeopardy every hour?” What point would there be in incurring continual dangers that accompanied his apostleship if death was the end of everything? “In death off” he wrote in his second letter to the Corinthian church (II Cor. xi. 23). We come to another problem in verse 32. What did he mean by fighting with beasts at Ephesus? He could not have been exposed literally to wild animals in the arena unless he had lost his Roman citizenship, of which there is no evidence whatsoever. It looks as though he was using it metaphorically of his enemies. “I die daily”, he declared, that is, he was daily exposed to the risk of death, and if “merely as a man” he faced this then there was no point in it without the Christian hope.

Heroditus, of Ephesus, had described his countrymen as “wild beasts” 400 years before. Likewise Epimenedes called the Cretans “beasts” (Titus i. 12), and Ignatius, later on, described himself as “fighting with wild beasts, being bound to ten leopards” by which he meant a detachment of soldiers who were guarding him. The whole point is that such experiences were valueless if there was not the hope of resurrection; why not seek to avoid all such difficulty and danger? Why not “eat and drink, for tomorrow we die”? (32). This is a quotation from Isa. xxii. 13, but with a different context. Note Paul does not add the words “and be merry”, as many do who misquote it without the solid hope of eternal life. There is little to be merry about in a world that is dominated by sin, death and disappointment.

From Darkness to Light

No.1. Two Covenants Compared. pp. 213 - 216

Just as hyper-Calvinism has led some of its advocates to take II Cor. iii. 5 out of its context and, shorn of its place in the Apostle's argument, make it bolster up their doctrine of decrees, extending what Paul here refers to the matter of sufficiency in ministry, to practically everything, so there are those who have seized upon the words "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life" to justify their attitude to the Word of God, deriding a faithful adherence to the actual language and grammar of holy Writ as a slavish bondage to "the mere letter" and magnifying their supposed enlightened and independent attitude to "the spirit". The Apostle is not speaking of the Scriptures, but of *two covenants*, the one having been written on tables of stone, the other being written on the heart, the one being denominated "letter" and the other "spirit".

The two essential differences between these two covenants is the difference of life and death:

"For the letter KILLETH, but the spirit QUICKENETH."

Writing out of his own experience, Paul said later concerning the law:

"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Rom. vii. 9).

Just as he places the two covenants in such strong antithesis in II Cor. iii., so in Rom. viii., he says:

"For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2),

and in Galatians he said:

"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God" (Gal. ii. 19),

and again:

"If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. iii. 21).

The comparison between the two covenants that commences with the contrasting features of life and death, pass by an easy transition to a comparison between the transient glory of the one to the lasting glory of the other, summed up in the last verse of the chapter in the words "From glory to glory".

The Old Covenant is called	The New Covenant is called
(1) The ministration of death.	The ministration of the Spirit.
(2) The ministration of condemnation.	The ministration of righteousness.

Related to these comparisons is the word “glory”. The law of Mount Sinai “was glorious”, not only in the magnificence and terror that accompanied the giving of the law, but in the extraordinary effect the receiving of the law had upon Moses. “His face shone” so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses “for the glory of his countenance”. Yet that glory was transient, “which glory was to be done away”. The glory of the New Covenant is expressed in such terms as “rather glorious”, “exceed in glory”, “the glory that excelleth”, and the difference between the two covenants is summed up in the words:

“For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious” (II Cor. iii. 11).

To enforce this fact upon the heart and conscience of his hearer, Paul proceeds to enlarge the reference to the glory of the face of Moses:

“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face” (II Cor. iii. 12, 13).

The word translated “plainness of speech” *parrhesia* is rendered many times “boldness” as in Eph. iii. 12, but the actual composition of the word and its usage here in II Cor. iii. and elsewhere indicate that “plainness” is the prime meaning of the term.

“And He spake that saying *openly*” (Mark viii. 32).

“For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known *openly*. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world” (John vii. 4).

“Howbeit no man spake *openly* of Him for fear of the Jews” (John vii. 13).

Speaking “openly” in the face of foes becomes speaking “boldly”, but the primary idea of something open, frank, sincere, plain must never be forgotten.

“These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father” (John xvi. 25). Here proverbial and parabolic speech is put over against speaking “plainly”. So the reference to Moses in no way implies that Moses was cowardly and that Paul was “bold”, but that Moses used a “veil” and that Paul spoke “plainly”.

“And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished.”

The word translated ‘abolish’ is *katargeo*, from *kata* intensive, and *argos* inactive, useless, inoperative. Into the word ‘abolish’ there has crept in modern use, the idea of destruction which does not reside in the etymology of the word, or in its usage. “Abolish” is derived by some etymologists from the Latin *aboleo* “To grow out of use” and is synonymous with “abrogate, annul, disannul, cancel and revoke, and is applied especially to laws, customs, institutions or offices”. By Greek writers the word *katargeo* was particularly applied to land, as in Luke xiii. 7 “Why combereth it the ground?” Like practically every word in human speech, *katargeo* is used not only in the primary sense of abrogation, but in the derived senses that are the consequences of this abrogation, namely “to be destroyed”, “to be delivered”, “to be done away”.

The primary sense is found in such a passage as:

“Do we then make void the law?” (Rom. iii. 31).

In such passages as “she is loosed from the law of her husband” and “Now we are delivered from the law”, the consequences of this abrogation are stated. The primary meaning of *katargeo* is restored if the sentence is put in reverse:

“The law of her husband has been abrogated (by his death)” (Rom. vii. 2).

“That law which held us is abrogated, because we have died to it” (Rom. vii. 6).

The use of *katargeo* in I Corinthians should be studied as a preparation for its use here in II Cor. iii.:

“Whether there be prophecies, they SHALL FAIL.”

“Whether there be knowledge, it SHALL VANISH AWAY.”

“When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part SHALL BE DONE AWAY.”

“When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I PUT AWAY childish things” (I Cor. xiii. 8-11).

Here the Apostle places in contrast Pentecostal gifts and love, illustrating the point by the comparison between the thoughts and ways of infancy with those of a man, or contrasting the perfect with the partial. This method he employs in II Cor. iii. and iv., but in this passage he contrasts the transient glory of the Old Covenant with the glory that excelleth of the New Covenant, and finds an illustration in the fact that Moses veiled his face to prevent Israel from perceiving that the glory received on Sinai was passing, in contrast with the face of Jesus Christ, Whose glory abides.

The introduction of the figure of the veil at verse 13, like the mention of the tables of stone in verse 3, leads to a development of the new idea. The presence of the word “veil” in I Cor. iii. 14, 15 and 16 is evident, but it is itself veiled by the A.V. in verse 18, where we read “open face”, and in II Cor. iv. 3 where it is translated “hid”.

To the more careful consideration of the “veil” in these passages and the true intention of II Cor. iv. 3 and 4 we must devote ourselves in another study.

No.2. The Veil. pp. 221 - 224

In the physical world darkness is just absence of light. No effort is needed to dispel the darkness of a room before light can be admitted. So, in the passage before us, darkness is brought about by interception, and the interception is set forth under the figure of a veil. Veils in the Scripture are used either for covering, as the veil used by Ruth, the same word being translated “mantle” in Isa. iii. 22. Another kind of veil is mentioned in Isa. iii. 23, the Hebrew word here used *radid* means “to descend”, and then “to subdue, and bring into subjection”. This veil not only reached down to the feet, but suggested at the same time some element of subordination. The veil of the Tabernacle and Temple was a “separator”, the Hebrew *baroketh* meaning to break, to interrupt, “the Holy Ghost thus signifying that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest”. The veil used by Rebekah is called a *tsaiph*, from a Hebrew word meaning to double. The figure of a veil is used by Isaiah in much the same way as it is used by Paul in II Cor. iv.

“And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations” (Isa. xxv. 7).

This passage not only provides a parallel with II Cor. iv., but a closer examination reveals connections that, though obvious to a Hebrew using his native tongue, would be for ever “veiled” to an English reader.

The word veil that is found in Isa. xxv. is the Hebrew word *masekah*. *Masak* “to mingle” gives us the word meaning a veil, from the idea of the weaving or mingling of the threads, and so an unpenetrable hedge of thorns is *mesukah* (Micah vii. 4). All this is on the surface, and needs no great intimacy with the Hebrew language to discover. But no one but a Hebrew speaking his own language would see any connection between Isa. xxv. 7 which speaks of a veil, and Isa. xxv. 6 which speaks of wine purified from its lees or dregs, and no one but a Hebrew could have associated the adulteration of wine, as Paul has done in II Cor. ii. 17, with a veil (II Cor. iii. 13 - iv.6). Yet the ‘mingled’ wine of Isa. v. 22; the cup in the hand of the Lord full of “mixture” (Psa. lxxv. 8); the ‘hanging’ for the door of the Tabernacle (Exod. xxvi. 36) and the very “covering” of the King of Tyre (Ezek. xxviii. 13) are all variants of the same word in the original. *He who mingles water with the wine of the Word, is friend and associate with him who mingles the threads of doctrine so that they form a veil.*

We have already emphasized, when commenting on II Cor. ii. 17, that the Apostle was not dealing so much with a flat denial of the truth, but with the more specious, yet none the less deadly “watering down” of the truth. The alternating differences exhibited in II Cor. iii. between the transient glory of the Old Covenant, with the exceeding glory of the New, is after all but the principle of “Right Division” in process of application. This we shall see more clearly when we suggest a new translation of II Cor. iv. 3, 4. Moses placed a veil over his face so that the children of Israel should not perceive that

the glory of the Old Covenant was transient, transient, because the covenant itself was to be annulled, abrogated, done away. The custom of wearing the *Talith* or “Prayer Cloth” over the head when reading the law is highly suggestive. Israel have a veil over their heart, and only when they turn to the Lord shall that veil be taken away. With this reflection, the Apostle turns to the believer, and continues his allegory. He has already emphasized the difference between the letter and the spirit (II Cor. iii. 6) this he now repeats, but turns the mind away from all covenants, whether old or new, to Christ Himself.

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty”
(II Cor. iii. 17).

Some have taken these words out of their context, and used them as a proof text for the deity of the Holy Ghost, a doctrine, although true, that is not in view in this passage. The “Spirit” *pneuma* is mentioned seven times in II Cor. iii., and it will be a help in our understanding of verse 17 if we see these passages together. These seven references fall into a pattern and carry the theme of this chapter like a thread carries a string of pearls.

***Pneuma* in II Cor. iii.**

A		3. Epistle, written with the Spirit of the living God.	PNEUMA
B		6. New Covenant. Not letter but Spirit. The Spirit giveth life.	LIFE
C		8. The ministration of the Spirit, rather Glorious.	GLORY
A		17. The Lord is the Spirit.	PNEUMA
B		17. Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.	LIBERTY
C		18. Transfigured from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord.	GLORY

It will be seen, that the gift of life is balanced by the gift of liberty and that the “more glorious” character of the New Covenant, is balanced by the change “from glory to glory”. Christ, the Lord is the Spirit of the New Covenant, in contrast with Moses whose sphere was in the letter or the Law. To speak of the Lord Jesus Christ as “The Spirit” may seem at first, a trifle confusing. *The Companion Bible* has a valuable appendix which shows that the word “Spirit” is used of “God” (John iv. 24); of “Christ” (I Cor. vi. 17; xv. 45; and especially II Cor. iii. 17, 18); of “The Holy Spirit”, generally with the article denoting the Giver, as distinguished from His gifts.

In I Cor. xv. 45 Christ is placed in contrast with Adam. Adam was made a living “soul”, Christ was made a life-giving “Spirit”. This statement coming in a chapter devoted to resurrection, which includes a ‘body’ and in which Christ is called “the firstfruits”, shows that the word ‘spirit’ here must not be taken to indicate incorporeality. The Apostle indeed seems to go out of his way after speaking of a spiritual body, to add “There is a natural (soul-ical) body, and there is a spiritual body” (I Cor. xv. 44). Here the contrast is between Adam and Christ; in II Cor. iii. the contrast is between Moses and Christ. Christ is the Spirit of the New Covenant.

In Rom. viii. 2 we read of “the law of the spirit of life” which is in Christ Jesus, and this “spirit” is expressed in other ways in this chapter, as “the spirit of adoption” as contrasted with “the spirit of bondage”, and “the spirit of Christ” without which we are none of His. We have the spirit of “His Son” in association with “the adoption” in Gal.iv.4,5.

In II Cor. v. 16 the Apostle takes us into the realm of the new creation, and says:

“Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him no more.”

“They call us mad—well, if so, it is for God; or if we be soberminded, it is for you. Our one constraining motive is Christ’s love. Since He died for all, all in His death died to sin, and therefore the reason of His death was that we may not live to ourselves, but to Him Who died and rose again for us. From henceforth then, we recognize no relation to Him which is not purely spiritual. Your Jerusalem emissaries boast that they knew the living Christ; and in consequence maintain their superiority to us. If we ever recognized any such claim—if we ever relied on having seen the living Christ—we renounce all such views from this moment. He who is in Christ is a new creation; the old things passed away; lo! all things become new” (II Cor. v. 13-17, Farrar).

The reader will not miss the fact that whereas II Cor. iii. and iv. speaks of the Old and New Covenants, II Cor. v. speaks of the old and new Creations. In both, the old “passes away”, in both there is a ministration, “a ministration of the Spirit” (II Cor. iii. 8), “the ministration of reconciliation” (II Cor. v. 18).

In these epistles to the Corinthians Paul has on three occasions adopted similar arguments.

Creation.	The old passes away. Christ after the flesh known no more.
Adam.	In contrast, Christ is a life-giving Spirit.
Moses.	The Old Covenant passes away, Christ is the Spirit of the New.

While each passage has its own set of terms and proceeds along its own lines, there is enough of similarity between them to demand attention.

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (II Cor. iii. 17). No proof is needed to substantiate the statement “where the sun shines, there is light”, and apparently the statement “where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty” should be just as evidently true to the believer. In the context the “Spirit” is opposed to the “letter”, the New Covenant to the Old, and consequently bring with them their associated categories “death” and “life”. In verse 7 the Apostle calls the Old Covenant “the ministration of death”, and we might have expected in the sequel the words “How shall not the ministration of *life* be rather glorious?” in verse 8, but Paul uses the phrase “the ministration of the *Spirit*” because “spirit” and “life” were synonymous. Life, light and liberty belong to each other as surely as death, darkness and bondage belong to each other. The blessed deliverance effected by the Gospel can be described as a passing from “death unto life” (John v. 24),

or it may be spoken of as being called from “darkness to light” (I Pet. ii. 9); or yet again it may be spoken of as a turning “from Satan unto God” (Acts xxvi. 18); or once again it can be described as a deliverance from “the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 15). The word ‘there’ while used as an adverb of place in English, is also used idiomatically in such statements as “There’s a dear”, “Breathes there a man with soul so dead” and in other ways. It should be remembered that the word here in II Cor. iii. 17 is the adverb ‘there’ “in that place”, and when reading the sentence a slight stress should be put on the words “where” and “there”. This leads us to verse 18, the open face, the seeing through a glass darkly, the change, and the transition “from glory to glory” which are important enough to demand a study to themselves.

The Glorious Liberty of the Children of God

No.1. pp. 136 - 140

“Ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews’ religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it but when it pleased God, Who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me” (Gal. i. 13-16).

If we were addicted to making pilgrimages, we might include Rome and Athens, but we should certainly visit the little town of Berea, and the site if possible of the synagogue of the Libertines at Jerusalem. It may be surprising to discover from the Talmud that there were over four hundred synagogues in Jerusalem, and even though we may suspect the customary exaggeration here, yet when we read that there were “Jews out of every nation under heaven” assembled at Jerusalem to keep the feast of Pentecost, and that they were astonished to hear the apostles speak in the language of the country in which they had been born, it would be most natural that each would make his way to that synagogue, however small and remote, where the service would be conducted and the address given in their native language, and one such would be “The synagogue of the Libertines and of them of Cilicia” (Acts vi. 9). When we read in Acts vi. 9 of the synagogue of the “Libertines” we must not invest the name with the modern dictionary definition “Loose, licentious or lewd”. Dr. Wiesler shows from Tacitus and Philo, that great numbers of Jews of the Provinces had been made slaves during the civil wars, but were afterward given their freedom, and many of them thus “manumitted” with due formalities became Roman citizens, and transmitted this freedom to their children. It is highly probable that Paul himself was a *Cilician Libertinus*, “a citizen of no mean city”, and as he himself said “Born Free”.

Acts vi. 9 could be translated:

“Libertines or freemen from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and Asia.”

We read of our Saviour, that “as His custom was”, He attended the synagogue of Nazareth, and it would be the most natural thing in the world of Saul of Tarsus, a citizen of Cilicia to attend “the synagogue of the Libertines them of Cilicia”, and by so doing, all unconscious of the heart that had planned and the hand that now guided his steps, he was to make that epoch making acquaintance with Stephen and the first principles of the Christian faith, that, ultimately would turn the persecuting self-righteous Pharisee, into the humblest yet boldest champion of the faith, “which once he destroyed”.

Here in this synagogue of free men, it pleased God to awaken in Saul of Tarsus those prickings of conscience that were only stilled and sanctified by the interposition of the Lord Himself on that road to Damascus, a spot unmarked by any monument or inscription, but nevertheless one of the most sacred spots on earth to those who being Gentiles, aliens and strangers, having no hope and without God in the world, were to owe under God, the blessed possibility not only of salvation by grace, but of glories

undreamed and unrevealed until made known for the first time to “Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles”. Paul must have visited that synagogue many times, and it was on one of those visits that he heard Stephen, disputing with the Jews, a dispute that crowned Stephen as the first Christian martyr and changed Saul of Tarsus into the Apostle of the Gentiles. If we compare Stephen’s speech with that of Paul’s, as recorded in Acts xiii., we shall not be able to resist the feeling that Paul was, perhaps unconsciously following the same pattern. Stephen made three points:

- (1) Joseph. “The second time” (Acts vii. 13).
- (2) Moses. “The second time” (vii. 35).
- (3) Israel. “As your fathers did, so do ye” (vii. 51).

“And Saul was consenting unto his death” (Acts viii. 1). None could resist the wisdom and the spirit in which Stephen spoke. Paul saw Stephen’s face as it had been the face of an angel. He heard Stephen declare that he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God. He heard him use the title “The Son of Man” and “The Lord Jesus”, and he heard Stephen pray for his murderers “Lord lay not this sin to their charge”, and yet, he consented unto his death! Nevertheless, it must have burdened the conscience of Saul of Tarsus, a self-righteous Pharisee, that he was obliged to side with such brutality, and stand against such lovely grace, and he found, himself “kicking against the pricks”, and so to stifle his conscience, and to ‘prove’ to all that he had no sympathy with this heresy, he desired letters to Damascus to stamp out this superstition; letters however that led straight to that spot “near Damascus” where Saul the Pharisee died and Paul the Apostle was born. In Acts xxii. Paul rehearsed this dreadful experience, saying:

“Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee, and when the blood of Thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him” (Acts xxii. 18-20).

When in that speech the Apostle reached the words “I will send thee far off to the Gentiles”, the storm broke, and he lived again in his own person the martyrdom of Stephen. When Paul saw them “cast off their clothes”, he must have remembered that earlier he once had the clothes of those who stoned Stephen laid at his feet. The reference in Acts ix. 5 to “kicking against the pricks” is to the ox-goad, against which a rebellious or back-sliding animal at the plough would be brought up suddenly. We must however remember that our present theme is “Liberty” and attractive as the early days of Paul ever must be, we must move from the synagogue of the Libertines, to become acquainted with a richer liberty than any “freed man” of the time ever knew.

Liberty

The words used in the Original.

There are two forms of the Greek *eleutheroo* “to set free” found in the N.T., namely *eleutheria*, and *eleutheros*.

When we lived at 33, Union Road, Clapham, London, our telephone exchange was Macaulay, and many roads in the vicinity were named after the “Clapham Sect” which under the leadership of Wilberforce brought about the freeing of slaves under the British flag. While this is something for which we must ever be thankful we are conscious that the whole human race, under any and every flag is in bondage, a bondage that no sect or Parliament can touch. We must remember too, that there were many slaves who were members of the early church. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul said:

“You were a slave when you were called? Never mind. Of course, if you find it possible to get free, you had better avail yourself of the opportunity. But a slave who is called to be in the Lord is a freedom of the Lord, just as a free man who is called is a slave of Christ” (I Cor. vii. 21-23, Moffatt).

When, he said “I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus” (Gal. vi. 17), he referred to the “slave owners’ stamp” the *stigmata*, and, champion of liberty as he was, he gladly confessed that he was not merely a “servant” but a “bondslave (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ” (Rom. i. 1).

Bondage

In the Apostle’s day he could speak of Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, and while some forms of slavery are now obsolete, the bondage of corruption, the yoke of bondage, the bondage of ordinances, the bondage of the fear of death and the bondage of sin, are all alas as evident today as ever.

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves bondslaves to obey, his bondmen ye are to whom ye obey: whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness” (Rom. vi. 6).

It will “put us in the picture” if we consider the law and custom connected with the freeing of a slave, the privileges of a freeman, and the bearing of all this upon the term “adoption”. While this has been considered elsewhere, the subject is of such importance that it bears repetition. A slave could be freed by a process called “manumission”. North, translating Plutarch, says this about manumission:

“Then Valerius judging that Vindicius the bond man, had well deserved also some recompense, caused him not only to be *manumitted* by the whole grant of the people, but made him a freeman of the city besides; and he was the first bondman manumitted that was made a citizen of Rome.”

There is a slab in the walls of Delphi that records such a manumission, and contains some terms that are found in the N.T.:

“Date. Apollo, the Pythian *bought* from Sosistus of Amphisa *for freedom*, a female slave, whose name is Nicaea, by race a Roman, *with a price* of three and half minae of silver.”

Note the words “bought with a price”, which are actually quoted in I Cor. vi. 20, and would speak movingly to any slaves or freedman in the Church at Corinth. In numerous records of manumission, the enfranchised person is said to be free “to do the things that

he will”, to which Gal. v. 17 and Rom. vii. 19 are evident allusions. The word *exogorazo* translated “redeem” in Gal. iii. 13 and iv. 5, Eph. v. 16 and Col. iv. 5, and *agorazo* refer to the *agora* or ‘market’ (Matt. xi. 16).

“As slaves were bought and sold in the forum (Gk. *agora*) among other things, the word came to signify also to *redeem*, and be used of slaves who were bought at a fixed price and set at liberty, whence it is applied to our redemption by the precious blood of Christ” (Parkhurst).

To ‘redeem’ time, suggests the readiness to snap up a bargain, “to fore-stall” for Christ’s sake, even as keen buyers spend many hours waiting for the ‘sales’ to commence. A “freeman” could be either (1) *Liber*; (2) *Ingennus* or “born free”; or (3) *Libertinus* “made free”. One born free could be either (1) *civis* (citizen) or (2) a *Latinus*, i.e. occupying a position intermediate between that of a true-born Roman and a foreigner. All this and more would be common knowledge to Paul and to the Church of his day.

The privileges of a free citizen included:

- (1) The right of voting in the *comitea* (*Jus Suffragii*).
- (2) Eligibility for all public offices and magistracies, (*Jus Honorium*), and
- (3) The right of appeal (*Jus Provocationis*).

This latter right was exercised by Paul when he “appealed” unto Caesar, a right which could not be denied. The Apostle himself was a free-born Roman citizen, and also being a Tarsian “a citizen of no mean city”. These features are in the background of those references in the epistles to bondage, freedom, ransom, emancipation and citizenship, and would be more vividly seen and appreciated than they are at the present time.

Now the “glorious liberty of the children of God” involves “the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body” (Rom. viii. 23). To appreciate the Apostle’s argument in Galatians iii. and iv., as also that of Rom. viii. 17-23, we must understand the law of adoption, and particularly the Greek law that obtained in Paul’s day.

“The adopted son became a member of the family, just as if he had been born of the blood of the adopter As a matter of fact it was by this means that a succession amongst the Caesars was continued. It never descended from father to son Nero was the great nephew of his predecessor Claudius, who had adopted him in the year 50A.D.” (Septimus Buss).

“Adoption was called a *capitas diminutio*, which so far annihilated the pre-existing personality who underwent it, that during many centuries it operated as an extinction of debts” (W. E. Ball).

The reader will not fail to re-read this legal “annihilation” and “extinction of all debts”, in a spiritual emancipation as one redeemed by precious blood. Eph. i. 13, 14 probably refers to a Roman form of will. W. G. Ball translates the latter part of the passage:

“Until the ransoming accomplished by the act of taking possession (of the inheritance).”

“When a slave was appointed heir, although expressly emancipated by the will which gave him the inheritance, his freedom commenced, *not* upon the making of the will, *not even* immediately upon the death of the testator, *but from the moment* when he took certain legal steps, which were described as ‘entering upon the inheritance’.”

The Epistle of Liberty. GALATIANS.

Elsewhere (in *The Apostle of the Reconciliation*, and in *The Berean Expositor*, Volume XXI, pages 207-211), we have set forth the evidence which appears to justify the assertion that Galatians was the first epistle written by the Apostle Paul, and while “Justification by Faith without the works of Law” is easily the prime doctrine there safe-guarded, the words ‘liberty’ and ‘freedom’ are key words of this epistle.

Eleutheria/as/oo in Galatians.

- A | ii. 4. “Spy out liberty.” Paul’s stand.
- B | iii. 28. “Bond or Free.” All one in Christ Jesus.
- C | iv. 23, 26, 30, 31. Sinai and Sion. An allegory.
- A | v. 1. “Liberty.” “Made us free.” Stand fast.
- B | v. 13. “Serve (as slaves) one another.” Not flesh.

After the uncompromising defence of his independent apostleship set forth in chap. i., and indicated by the thrice repeated words “Not, Neither, But” (i. 1; 11, 12; 16, 17), we might have expected that the great doctrine that was being challenged, namely Justification by Faith, would immediately follow in chapter ii. This however does not appear until we read verse 15, the earlier part of this chapter being devoted to the Apostle’s stand for freedom.

Paul tells us that he adopted certain measures because:

“Of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (ii. 4, 5).

Let us notice the tactics of those who oppose Christian liberty.

“Brought in unawares” *pareisaktos*. We can sense the insidious character of these false brethren, for Peter also speaks of such saying:

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily (*pareisago* same word as above in different grammatical form) shall bring in damnable heresies” (II Pet. ii. 1).

“*Crept in unawares*” (Jude 4).

This preposition *para* “beside, alongside” comes in the next word *pareiserchomai* “to come in privily, or on the side”. In purposed contrast we read that Paul “withstood” Peter “to the face” and what he had to say he said unto Peter “before them all” (Gal. ii. 11-14).

“To spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.”

No.2. pp. 141 - 146

The Berean Forward Movement need not fear a frontal attack. What has to be watched is the appeal to charity, to not be too “narrow”, etc., etc., which will surely come as time goes on. Our safeguard is that we are under an obligation to have a “Form of sound words” given by the Lord to the Apostle Paul, and to pass them on to “faithful men who shall be able to teach”. If we keep to this we shall be safe. The one thing that these false brethren in Galatia detested, and which led them to stoop so low, was “the liberty” which these Galatian Christians enjoyed “in Christ Jesus”. That their insidious efforts were unhappily successful for a time, we learn from Gal. iv. 9-11:

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggary elements, whereunto ye desire again *to be in bondage?* Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain” (Gal. iv. 9-11).

These “elements” to which these Galatians were in bondage, belonged to the status of “children”:

“Even so we, when we were children, were bondage under the elements of the world” (Gal. iv. 3),

but from this condition they had been redeemed, and had received “the adoption of sons”:

“Wherefore thou art no more a servant (a bond servant), but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (Gal. iv. 1-7).

“No, not for an hour.”

Upon what a knife edge, sometimes, mighty issues are balanced!

“To whom we gave place by subjection, NO, NOT FOR AN HOUR; that the truth of the gospel might continue (right through *dia meno*) with you” (Gal. ii. 5).

What the history of Christian witness would have been had Paul yielded is too distressing to imagine. Thank God that this contingency did not arise—but at what a cost!

The next reference to freedom in this epistle is in chapter iii.,

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. iii. 27, 28).

There is an allusion here to the Jewish Prayer Book, which contains the following:

“O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
 I thank Thee I was not born a GENTILE.
 O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
 I thank Thee I was not born a SLAVE.
 “O Lord our God, King of the Universe,
 I thank Thee I was not born a WOMAN.”

Paul, since the age of twelve, when he became “a son of the law”, had prayed this prayer. Here, in Gal. ii. 28, he sets all such distinctions aside for ever. All in Christ are “ONE”. With the opening of chapter v., and arising out of the allegory of the story of Isaac and Ishmael, comes the clarion cry:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you as justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace” (Gal. v. 1-4).

Before he reaches the conclusion of this epistle, the Apostle refers to some of the dangers that accompany emancipation. It is only too possible to spell “liberty” as though it means “license”.

“Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve (*douleuo* ‘serve as a slave’) one another” (Gal. v. 13).

Paul could have sung the hymn with a good conscience which contains the words:

“I would not try my soul to save
 By works that I have done
 But I would work LIKE ANY SLAVE
 For love of God’s own Son.”

It is therefore gloriously consistent for an epistle devoted so passionately to liberty to close with the words:

“From henceforth let no man trouble me: For I bear in my body the marks (*stigmata*) of the Lord Jesus” (Gal. vi. 17).

Luther’s translation of Galatians was one of the main instruments in promoting the Reformation, and all who have the responsibility of teaching and preaching are urged to give this epistle a prominent place in their witness. We do well to bear in mind always the clarion call of Gal. v.:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Gal. v. 1).

Let us now turn our attention to the Greek word *eleutheroo* “to make free”, which includes the verse quoted above. There is a joy that cannot be realized at second hand, in watching the evident superintendence of the Holy Spirit of the very words of inspired truth fall into a recognizable pattern. However, the reader can nevertheless appreciate what is here set out. Here are all the occurrences of,

ELEUTHEROO

- A | John viii. 32. The truth shall make you free.
Expansion in verse 34, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin".
- B | John viii. 36. The Son makes free indeed.
C | Gal. v. 1. Stand fast. Yoke of bondage.
- A | Rom. vi. 18, 22. Ye became servants of righteousness.
Ye became servants of God "Being made free from sin."
- B | Rom. viii. 2. In Christ Jesus, free from sin and death.
C | Rom. viii. 21. Made free from the bondage of corruption.

The key to the involved argument of John viii. 31-58 is the allegory built upon the history of Isaac and Ishmael, developed by the Apostle in Gal. iv., but well known to the Jewish reader. The A.V. prints the word Son with a capital S assuming that John viii. 35 refers to Christ. This is altered in the R.V. The argument is borrowed from Gen. xxi. 10 and quoted in Gal. iv. 30:

"Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

In the verse following in John viii., The Son Who sets us free is of course Christ. The truth makes us free. The Son makes us free. Rom. vi. 18 and 22 repeat, in more doctrinal language, what is recorded in John viii. 32-36. Rom. viii. 2 says:

"For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."

Sonship is the antithesis of slavery, and the key word of Rom. viii. is "sonship". The Greek words *huios* "son" and *huiiothesia* "to place as a son" or "adoption" are of course linked.

SONSHIP in Rom. viii.

- A | 1-5-. No condemnation. God sent *His Own Son*. (*huios*)
- B | -5-15-. Led by Spirit. *Sons now*. (*huios*)
- C | -15-17-. Spirit itself. *Sonship* (adoption). (*huiiothesia*)
- D | -17-21. Suffering and Glory. *Sons manifested*. (*huios*)
- C | 22-28. Spirit itself. *Sonship* (adoption). (*huiiothesia*)
- B | 29, 30. Conformed to image of His Son. Then. (*huios*)
- A | 31-39. Who condemns? God spare not *His Own Son*. (*huios*)

In considering the expression "The law of the spirit of life" or "the law of sin and death", we must remember that the word "law" is often used in Scripture in a sense fuller and deeper than the law of Moses. While in the earlier chapters of Romans (ii.-vii.) we are mainly concerned with the law of Moses, at verse 21 of chapter vii., we pass on to the discovery of another law.

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."

From this domination, those who are in Christ Jesus have been set free. Note the emphasis on freedom in Rom. vi. 18, 20, 21, 22; vii. 1; viii. 2 and 21. The apex and crowning glory of the eighth chapter is the central section, Rom. viii. 17-21 which contains the words:

“The glorious liberty of the children of God.”

We will reserve final comments on Rom. viii. until we reach the end of this study, for the glorious liberty there revealed of the children of God is the goal to which we press. For the moment, let us pause. We have seen how false brethren brought in unawares could menace our liberty, but we shall only be partly guarded if we do not include the salutary warnings that we find in the closing passages of Galatians, and to which we have made a slight reference.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty: only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal. v. 13, 14).

The word translated “occasion” is found in Rom. vii. 8, 11 and means:

“the solid ground from which an impetus is derived: such as a place from which a spring is taken, hence generally a basis of operation. Make not your liberty a position to be taken advantage of by the flesh” (Glynne).

Instead of thus abusing your liberty, rather by love serve one another, and the reason that Paul gives is remarkable, after what he has said concerning the law in the opening verses of chapter v., namely that love “fulfils the law”. The superficial believer would take exception to this; he would object that if Paul had occupied four whole chapters in repudiating the law, he would scarcely stultify his argument by now speaking of “fulfilling” it. Such an objection however makes it manifest how little the Apostle’s teaching has been appreciated. True the law has been entirely set aside as *a means of justification*, but it does not mean that the ensuing liberty of the believer is to be a state of lawless license. Far from it. We have been partly prepared for this by the statement that:

“Faith worketh by love.”

Let us hear the Apostle speak for and of his own attitude, as he does in ICor.ix.19-21:

“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant
unto all, that I might gain the more.
And unto the Jews I became as a Jew,
that I might gain the Jews.
To them that are under the law,
as under the law,
that I might gain them that are under the law,
To them that are without law,
as without law,
(being not without law to God, but under
the law to Christ).”

Notice Paul's reserve here. Though free from the law and saved only by grace, he was not "lawless", as he reminded the Galatians, who also were not "under the law", that by their attitude to an erring brother, they could bear one another's burdens, and SO FULFIL THE LAW OF CHRIST (Gal. vi. 1, 2).

Again in I Cor. x. 23 he said:

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not."

"Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake" (I Cor. x. 25).

He gives no *carte blanche* to ride rough shod over the weaker conscience of others.

"In matters where a little consideration and self-denial would save offence, there the strong should give up, and do less than they might; but in matters which affected every day of the year, like the purchase of meat in the open market, or the acceptance of ordinary invitations, then the weak must not attempt to be obtrusive or to dominate."

"Here as usual, Paul shows himself transcendently superior to the Rabbis. In *Abhoda Zara* f.8, Rabbi Ishmael lays down the rule that if Israelites 'outside the land' are asked to a Gentile funeral they 'eat the sacrifices of the dead' even if they take with them *their own food* and are waited on by *their own servants*" (Farrar).

What about conscientious scruples?

What a wonderful conception of Christian liberty as opposed to bigoted license is the Apostle's word:

"Conscience, I say, NOT THINE OWN, but of the other",

and the injunction:

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (I Cor. x. 29, 32).

If these words were uttered by some, they might have the appearance of laxity, but he who yielded subjection, *no, not for an hour*, when the truth of the gospel was at stake, shows how possible it is to be "All things to all men" without compromise. Tempered steel bends without breaking.

Another sore point with many believers is the question of holy days and their observance. The comments of Dean Farrar on Rom. xiv. are helpful and somewhat drastic, and have the merit of putting the familiar in unfamiliar dress.

"Let each party follow their own course if they believe it to be the best but let each abstain from the guilt and folly of condemning one another."

"Concerted illuminism is as deep an offence against charity as saintly self-satisfaction."

"Let there be no intolerant scrupulosity, and no uncharitable disdain, but an avoidance of dispute and a reciprocal recognition of honest convictions."

"It is in short, condescension towards the weakness of others, a willingness to take less than our due, and a readiness to waive our own rights."

"Christian love is a thing more precious than even (so-called) Christian liberty."

As to the observance of “days”, the Apostle has expressed himself with no uncertain sound in Gal. iv. 10, 11 and in Col. ii. 16, but in Rom. xiv., to quote Farrar again, Paul is seen as:

“Broad yet sympathetic, inflexible in conviction yet considerate towards prejudice.”

In this connection the following from the writings of Dean Alford is interesting, particularly in view of the fact that as Dean of Canterbury, he would naturally be obliged to uphold the observance of Sunday as “the Lord’s Day”.

“One man (the weak) esteems (*selects for honour*) one day above another. Another man (the strong) esteems every day.

Let each be fully satisfied in his own mind. It is an interesting question, what indication is here found of the observance or non-observance of a day of obligation in the Apostolic times. The Apostle decides nothing, leaving every man’s mind to guide him on the point.

The obvious inference from this strain of arguing is that he *knew no such obligation*, but believed that *all times and days to be*, to the Christian strong in faith ALIKE.”

Truth out of balance becomes error. We have been called into liberty, we are to stand fast in that liberty, we are to be “stedfast”, “unmoveable”, yielding in subjection “no, not for an hour” and yet to have consideration for the weak, the bigoted, the ritualist, the rutualist, to be ready to limit our freedom and yield many of our “rights” for the greater claim of the law of Christ, and the law of love, which “stoops to conquer”. It is easy for many natures to be rigidly stedfast and yet bitter. It is easy for others to be so yielding as to be too sweet. Grace alone can give us the happy blend.

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”

No.3. Bondage and Liberty in the O.T. pp. 161 - 164

There are more ways than one adopted by the writers of the Scriptures to enforce the truth of the doctrines of the faith, and we have reviewed some of the key texts on the subject of Christian liberty in the Gospels and Epistles of the N.T. There is however a rich supply of teaching in the types and shadows of the Law and Prophets, and to a selection of these we now draw the reader’s attention. Egypt is called “The house of bondage” ten times in the O.T., eight of these references are found in Exodus and Deuteronomy. Joshua refers to Egypt once under this head and Judges once. It is evident therefore that Israel’s sojourn in Egypt and their deliverance by the Lord at the Passover must be given a place in any study of liberty in the Scriptures. A reference to Egypt as a symbol of bondage, is incorporated in the Ten Commandments, for the first commandment of the ten reads,

“I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exod. xx. 2).

In the book of Deuteronomy, the law given a “second time”, Israel is called to remember that they were bondmen (Deut. v. 15; xvi. 12; xxiv. 18, 22). This “remembrance” was to influence their attitude to any of their brethren who, because of adverse circumstances, had become bond-servants for a period, and similar attitudes of mercy are based upon the fact that Israel had known what bondage meant in Egypt. The reason why Israel should keep the law, do right and good, and observe to do all the commandments is stated:

“. . . . Then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh’s bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand” (Deut. vi. 20-25).

This is repeated in Deut. vii. 8 with the addition of the words “redeemed out of the house of bondage”. This deliverance from bondage is expressed in several ways:

“To let go” (Exod. v. 1); “to bring out” (Exod. vi. 6); “to deliver” (Exod. iii. 8).

The Exodus.

The twelfth chapter of the book of Exodus is devoted to the deliverance of Israel from Egypt by the blood of the Passover lamb, and to this great type of liberation we now turn.

“And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you” (Exod. xii. 1, 2).

Towards the close of this chapter another reminder of time is introduced:

“Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, *even the self same day it came to pass*, that all the hosts of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. IT IS A NIGHT TO BE MUCH OBSERVED unto the Lord” (Exod. xii. 40-42).

The Passover chapter begins (Exod. xii. 1, 2) and ends on this note of time (xii. 51). We shall evidently gain something for our good if we become more acquainted with what lies behind this section. In Gen. xv. 13-16 the Lord revealed to Abraham that Israel would be a stranger in a land that was not theirs, and they would be afflicted four hundred years, but that in the fourth generation they should return. The reader will observe that in Gen. xv. 13, 400 years are mentioned, whereas in Exod. xii. 40, 430 years are recorded.

<i>Periods.</i>	<i>The 400 yrs.</i>	<i>The 430 yrs.</i>
From call, promise and covenant of Abraham to the marriage of Hagar.		10
From marriage of Hagar to birth of Ishmael.		1
From birth of Ishmael to birth of Isaac.		14
From birth of Isaac to his being weaned and becoming the seed at the casting out of Ishmael.		5
From the weaning of Isaac, to the going down into Egypt.	185	185

		215
From the going down into Egypt to the Exodus, to make up the 400 years of Gen. xv. 13 and the 430 years of Exod. xii. 40, 41.	215	215
	-----	-----
	400	430

This computation is taken from Anstey's *The Romance of Biblical Chronology*, but there are several ways in which the problem has been settled which we will not produce here.

If we were dealing especially with chronology, several other features would need to be considered, but for the moment we learn from Exod. xii. 40, 41 that in spite of all the resistance put up by Pharaoh, "at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, even the self same day" Israel were delivered. What is of importance to us is to realize that Habakkuk who was baffled because no answer seemed to come to his prayers, and no intervention to the crying wrongs that were his burden, uses the *same words* "at the end", for the Lord spoke to him, saying:

"The vision is yet for an appointed time, but *at the end* it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab. ii. 1-3).

We return to the time note at the opening of Exod. xii.:

"This month shall be UNTO YOU the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to YOU."

The stress on the words "to you" indicate some radical change that was being made. The first month of the Jewish year was originally *Tisri* corresponding with our October, and the Jews still keep their New Year at this date in spite of the insistence of change and the time of their redemption. God begins with Redemption; the believer begins a new life when Christ is seen as his "Passover" (I Cor. v. 7).

The Lamb without blemish.

"A lamb", "The lamb", "Your lamb", such is the progression in verses 3, 4 and 5, as they speak of the shadow and type of the Lamb of God.

"The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it" (Exod. xii. 6).

So even then the type with its many lambs, merges into the one great Passover Lamb of God.

“Your lamb shall be without blemish” (Exod. xii. 5).

The Levitical law is most particular, descending to minute details, that the holiness and perfection of the great Antitype should be ever before the mind:

“Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen, or scurvy, or scabbed bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut” (Lev. xxii. 22-24),

were all rejected. The Lamb was taken on the tenth day of the month and kept until the fourteenth, so that it could be carefully inspected. Luke xxiii. contains a parallel examination of the Lamb of God:

Pilate	“I find <i>no fault</i> in this man.”
Herod	“ <i>Nothing worthy of death</i> is done unto Him.”
Malefactor	“This man <i>hath done nothing amiss.</i> ”
Centurion	“This was a <i>righteous</i> man.”

Matt. xxvii. adds further evidence:

Judas	“I have betrayed <i>innocent</i> blood.”
Pilate’s Wife	“ <i>That just man.</i> ”

The blood a token.

Where the A.V. reads “The Lord set a mark (token) upon Cain” (Gen. iv. 15) it should read “for Cain”, as it was for his protection. The bow in the cloud is called the token of the covenant (Gen. ix. 12). This word *oth* is translated ‘sign’ many times in Exodus when speaking of the plagues, as in Exod. vii. 3. Moses also used miraculous powers as a sign or token that he had been sent by God (Exod. iv. 8). “The blood” sprinkled on the door post “signified” that life had been taken or laid down, and that in sacrifice.

“The soul (*nephesh*) of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement BY REASON OF THE SOUL (or life)” (Lev. xvii. 11, *see R.V.*).

“I will pass over you.”

As the words stand, the impression that the Lord ‘passed over’ the houses and went on to the houses of the Egyptians. In verse 23 however this idea does not seem fully to fit the statement there made:

“The Lord will pass over the door, and will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.”

Here the “passing over” is synonymous with “protecting” and when we read in I Kings xviii. 21 “How long *halt* ye between two opinions”? Or in Isa. xxxi. 5:

“As birds flying, so will the Lord of Hosts DEFEND Jerusalem: defending also He will deliver it; and *passing over* He will preserve it”,

we perceive that PAUSE OVER is more fitting term. The figure of an eagle “fluttering over” her young (Deut. xxxii. 11) is an evident allusion to the Passover protection. The two *side posts* and the *upper* door post were sprinkled, but not the threshold nor the floor. Israel’s apostasy is characterized by “Trampling *under foot* the Son of God, and counting the blood common” (Heb. x. 29).

The immediate result of the Passover deliverance was to turn the whole nation into pilgrims:

“And thus shall ye eat it:
with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste” (Exod. xii. 11).

The nature of the liberation brought about by the Passover is further expanded in such passages as Exod. vi. 6-8:

“I will *bring you out from under* the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will *rid you out of* their bondage, and I will redeem you I will bring you in I will give it you for an heritage.”

Fourteen times we read in Exodus how the Lord “brought out” Israel from Egypt; the last occurrence (Exod. xxxii. 12) being Moses pleading with God:

“Wherefore should the Egyptians say, For mischief did He bring them out.”

“To rid” in Exod. vi. 6 is the translation of the Hebrew *natsal* and is used of “spoiling” the Egyptians (Exod. iii. 22; xii. 36) and means to snatch out of danger, to pull away. “To redeem” in Exod. vi. is the Hebrew *gaal* to free by avenging, as in the office of the “Kinsman-Redeemer” (Numb. v. 8). Such is the foreshadowed basis of our “glorious liberty”.

No.4. The Jubilee. pp. 181 - 184

Another picture of release from bondage is set forth in Israel’s “Jubilee”. The A.V. spelling Jubile is ignored in Young’s Concordance and we adopt the spelling here as it makes for easier pronunciation. The word, comes from the Hebrew *yobel*, which is derived from *yabal* to *flow* or to *go forth* as in Isaiah,

“For ye shall go out (*yatsa*, as in Exod. xiv. 8 and in the Jubilee, Exod. xxi. 2, 3) with joy, and be led forth (*yabal*) with peace” (Isa. lv. 12).

The first and last occurrence of the word *yobel* are Exod. xix. 13 and Josh. vi. 4, 5, 6, 8 and 13, where it is translated in the A.V. “trumpet” and “ram’s horns”. The remaining twenty occurrences, all of which are found in Leviticus and Numbers are

translated by the word “jubilee”. The Greek word used in the Septuagint throughout Leviticus and Numbers is *aphesis*:

“And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and *proclaim liberty*” (Lev. xxv. 10).
“The spirit of the Lord is upon Me to *proclaim liberty* to the captives to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord” (Isa. lxi. 1, 2).

This “year” is called in Isa. lxiii. 4 “the year of the redeemed”. Ezek. xlvi. 17 speaks of “the year of liberty”. The N.T. uses the word *aphesis* as follows:

Forgiveness	Eph. i. 7; Col. i. 14 (and four other occurrences).
Deliverance	Luke iv. 18.
Liberty	Luke iv. 18.
Remission	Heb. ix. 22 (and eight other occurrences).

The Institution of the Jubilee.

“And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years. Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of Jubile to sound on the tenth day of the seventh month, in the day of Atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land. And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubile unto you; and ye shall return every man unto his possession, and ye shall return every man unto his family” (Lev. xxv. 8-19).

The Jubilee and the day of Atonement belong to Israel as a *redeemed people* and not otherwise. The year of Jubilee was ushered in by the sound of a trumpet (Lev. xxv. 9). The sounding of the trumpet on the 10th day of the seventh month is “the last trump” of Israel’s festal year, and the type of the “last trump” of I Cor. xv. 50-57. The Jubilee trumpet not only means deliverance for Israel, but the overthrow of Israel’s enemies, for the very word which is translated “Jubilee” is translated “ram’s horns” in Josh. vi. And here again the seven times encompassing of the city and the blowing of the seven trumpets perpetuates the symbolism. The symbolism of the Jubilee anticipates:

“The glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 21),

in several particulars.

The bondage suffered was limited in duration to the fiftieth year, and of the freed man it is said:

- (1) He shall go out (because redeemed Exod. xii. 41).
- (2) He shall return to his possessions and to his family (Lev. xxv. 10).

These blessed results find an echo in Ephesians, for there we read not only of release (“forgiveness” Eph. i. 7), but of the redemption of a purchased possession, and “the day” of redemption (Eph. i. 14; iv. 30), and also of the family to which restoration was promised (Eph. iii. 15). We turn therefore from the O.T. type to the N.T. reality, and consider what is involved in the words of Rom. viii. 21:

“The glorious liberty of the children of God.”

Children of God (*teknon*) are mentioned three times in Rom. viii.:

- (1) “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. viii. 16).
- (2) “If children then heirs” (Rom. viii. 17).
- (3) “The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God” (Rom. viii. 21).

The ‘bondage’ here, is called “the bondage of corruption”, and for this reason, that when this glorious liberty is entered it will also be “the redemption of the body” in resurrection.

In the course of answering the question “How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” the Apostle used a term in I Cor. xv. 37 that should be given careful consideration. First he utters a truth, which is all important:

“That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die” (I Cor. xv. 36).

This is in line with the words of Christ:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit” (John xii. 24).

We quote from the writings of Professor Godet here:

“The death of the seed, the condition of its return to life, consists in the dissolution of its material wrappings under the action of the earth’s moisture and heat. It is by this process of destruction that the impalpable germ of life which dwells in it, and which no anatomist’s scalpel can reach, is set free. In proportion to the putrefaction of all the material elements takes place, this force awakes and shows itself by the simultaneous appearance, in opposite directions of two vital shoots, the stem and the root.”

Now the Greek word translated “grain” in I Cor. xv. 37 is *kokkos*, the word translated ‘corn’ in John xii. 24. The etymology of the French language is not our province, but we understand that the Greek *kokkos* gives us the word *cocoon*, which we have borrowed from the French. A cocoon, as we all know, is the outer covering of silky hairs with which the pupa or chrysalis of many insects, the silkworm for example, is protected. While the Apostle limits his example to the miracle of seed growth via death, God in nature has set before us a most wonderful illustration and answer to the question “How are the dead raised up and with what body do they come?”

- | | |
|---------|---|
| First. | The depositing of the egg. |
| Second. | The caterpillar stage. |
| Third. | The chrysalis or pupa stage. |
| Fourth. | The emergence of the perfect butterfly or moth. |

These four stages are repeated in the movement from the natural man’s conversion until the entry into resurrection life and glory.

Stage one. The deposit of the egg.

When a natural man becomes a believer, a new life commences:

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin: for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (I John iii. 9).

We remember that John has previously said:

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”
“If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us”
(I John i. 8, 9).

Here the “truth” and the “Word” abiding in us does not mean that we never fall into sin.

It should be noticed that I John iii. 9 does not say whosoever is born of God never falls into sin, but does not COMMIT sin, and an examination of John’s use of the Greek verb *poieo* will be helpful here. We find that John in his epistle is but expanding and applying what the Saviour said and what John himself recorded in his “Gospel”.

***Poieo* in John viii. 34 - 44.**

“Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.”
“I speak that which I have seen with My Father: and ye *do* (commit) that which ye have seen with your father.”
“If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would *do* (commit) the works of Abraham.”
“This *did* (committed) not Abraham.”
“Ye *do* (commit) the deeds of your father.”
“Ye are of your father the Devil, and the deeds of your father ye will to *do* (commit)”
(John viii. 34, 39, 40, 41, 44).

So in I John iii. 8, 9, the same doctrine is maintained, “He that *committeth* sin is of the Devil; for the Devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the Devil”. “Whosoever is born of God doth not *commit* sin: for his seed remaineth in him.” “In this the children of God are manifested, and the children of the devil.” Here we are face to face with the “two seeds” once again, a subject of profound difficulty that meets us in the primeval prophecy of Gen. iii. 15, and in parable form in Matt. xiii. 36-42.

No.5. pp. 201 - 203

We move on now to Rom. viii. where the actual words “The glorious liberty of the children of God” are found. We shall find upon studying this majestic chapter that it is dominated by the word *huios* “son” or *huiiothesia* “adoption” or “the placing of a son as heir”; and as “the glorious liberty” which is contained in the title of these studies is taken from Rom. viii., so it is fitting that all that has been here written should lead up to and be crowned by the teaching of this great passage. We repeat the outline of Rom. viii.:

SONSHIP in Rom. viii.

- A | 1-5-. No condemnation. God sent *His Own Son*. (*huios*)
- B | -5-15-. Led by Spirit. *Sons now*. (*huios*)
- C | -15-17-. Spirit itself. *Sonship* (adoption). (*huiiothesia*)
- D | -17-21. Suffering and Glory. Manifestation. (*huios*)
- C | 22-28. Spirit itself. *Sonship* (adoption). (*huiiothesia*)
- B | 29, 30. Conformed to image of His Son. Then. (*huios*)
- A | 31-39. Who condemns? God spare not *His Own Son*. (*huios*)

While every section of this mighty chapter is of supreme importance, we must limit ourselves in the study to the central section of the structure, which contains the reference “The glorious liberty of the children of God” namely “D | viii. -17-21. Suffering and Glory. Manifestation. (*huios*).” The doctrinal portion of Romans (chapters i.-viii.) contain references to “hope”, and they are as follows:

Hope in Rom. i. - viii.

- A | iv. 18. HOPE in spite of deadness of self. A Son.
- B | v. 2. HOPE arising out of peace and justification.
- C | v. 4. HOPE realized in experience and patience.
- D | v. 5. HOPE and Love of God. Unashamed.
- A | viii. 20. HOPE in spite of vanity and corruption. Sonship.
- B | viii. 24. HOPE leading to complete salvation.
- C | viii. 25. HOPE express in patient and waiting.

These seven references have this in common, they all speak of resurrection, and the utter failure of the flesh.

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Rom. viii. 24, 25).

The outstanding quality of this hope is that it is not seen. The faith which is “the substance of things hoped for” in Heb. xi. is linked with “the evidence of things not seen”.

In II Cor. v., in connection with “the groan” of creation and the believer, we find the earnest expectation of resurrection, and in II Cor. iv. we shall find the same sequence as in Rom. viii., sufferings not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed.

“For the which cause we faint not; but though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; *while we look not at the things which are seen*, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal: but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God For in this we groan, earnestly desiring our house from heaven God hath given us the *earnest of the spirit*” (II Cor. iv. 16 - v. 8).

If everyday’s experience presses upon us the consciousness of creation groan, may it also cause us to appreciate more fully the blessed teaching represented by the fruits of the spirit, the spirit of sonship, the unseen pledge of things to come. It will help us to see the structure of the section that contains the reference to the glorious liberty of the children of God, Rom. viii. 17-21.

Romans viii. 17 - 21.

- A | 17. SUFFERING and GLORY. |
 - a | Joint heirs *sun.*
 - b | Suffer together *sun.*
 - a | Glorified together *sun.*
- B | 18. REVELATION of GLORY. (*apokalupto*). |
 - c | Reckoning.
 - d | Present suffering.
 - c | Comparing.
- B | 19. REVELATION of SONS. (*apokalupsis*). |
 - c | Expectation.
 - d | of creature.
 - c | Revelation.
- A | 20, 21. LIBERTY and GLORY. |
 - a1 | Subjection of creature.
 - b | In hope.
 - a2 | Emancipation of creature.
 - b | From bondage.
 - a3 | Liberty of children.

“I reckon” said the Apostle, and before we hear him belittle the things which he endured for Christ’s sake, let us extract but one passage out of many:

“In labours more abundant,
In stripes above measure.
In prisons more frequent.
In death oft.
Of the Jews five times received I
Forty stripes save one.
Thrice was I beaten with rods,
Once was I stoned,
Thrice I suffered shipwreck,
A night and a day I have been in the deep;
In journeyings often,
In perils of waters,
In perils of robbers,
In perils by mine own countrymen,
In perils by the heathen,
In perils in the city,
In perils in the wilderness,
In perils in the sea,
In perils among false brethren,
In weariness and painfulness,
In watchings often,
In hunger and thirst,
In fastings often,
In cold and nakedness.
Beside those things that are without,
that which cometh upon me daily,
The care of all the churches” (II Cor. xi. 23-28).

Here Paul gives one side of his balance account. The other side was the glorious liberty to which stood fast, and for which he counted all things but loss. His sufferings were a light affliction, and but for a moment, but were completely eclipsed by the far more exceeding weight of glory that is yet to be experienced in resurrection life.

STAND FAST TO THE LIBERTY.

The Inspiration and Canon of the Scriptures.

No.3. pp. 10 - 12

“Canon.” Both ‘canon’ and ‘cannon’ come from the same Greek word which primarily meant something “straight”, thus a ‘cane’ or ‘reed’ and so a ‘rule’ (Gal. vi. 16; Phil. iii. 16). Three terms used in this connection must be understood. They are *genuine*, *authentic*, and *authoritative*.

Genuine. A book is genuine if it was actually written by the person whose name it bears; or, if it be anonymous, it is genuine if it contains evidence that it was written at the time when it purports to have been written.

Authentic. A book is authentic if the matters of fact with which it deals actually occurred.

Authoritative. If any book of Scripture is either genuine or authentic or both, then it must necessarily be authoritative by its very nature.

Before the Christian era, the canon of the O.T. was fixed, “The Law, the Prophets and the Psalms” (Luke xxiv. 44). To this we have many witnesses. One is Josephus, who lived during the time of Paul, and of whom Scalinger says he “deserves more credit than all the Greek and Roman writers put together”. Josephus says:

“Nothing can be better attested than the writings authorized among us. In fact, they were never subject to any difference of opinion. It is therefore impossible to see among us, as among the Greeks, a vast multitude of books disagreeing with and combating one another. We have only twenty-two, which comprehend all that has taken place among us and which we have just ground for believing. Although so many centuries have already passed away, no person has ever dared to add, or to take away, or transpose anything” (Critia Apion, Bk. 1 par. 8).

Origen, Athanasius and Cyril give the same testimony.

Twenty-two books. In the English Bible there are 39 books. The difference is due to the fact that whereas we reckon the twelve Minor Prophets “twelve”; in the Hebrew they count as one. So also Ruth is reckoned with Judges, I and II Samuel reckon as one. We will set the O.T. books according to the Hebrew canon.

THE LAW (*Torah*).

- A | GENESIS. The Beginning.
The nations and “the great nation”.
- B | EXODUS. Redemption.
The nation formed and separated.
- C | LEVITICUS. Worship.
The nation trained “a kingdom of Priests”.
- B | NUMBERS. Wandering.
The nation’s failure—finally blessed.
- A | DEUTERONOMY. The End.
“The second time.” Ready to enter the land.

The Prophets (*Nebi'im*).

- A | JOSHUA.—“The Lord of all the earth.”
Joshua the leader.
- B | JUDGES AND RUTH.—Forsaking and returning. Israel.
- C | SAMUEL.—Man’s king rejected.
- D | KINGS.—Failure of kings of Israel and Judah.
- D | ISAIAH.—Blessing only under God’s king, the Messiah.
- C | JEREMIAH AND LAMENTATIONS.—Human kings rejected.
- B | EZEKIEL.—Forsaking and Returning. The Lord.
- A | THE MINOR PROPHETS.—“The Lord of all the earth.”
Joshua the High Priest.

The Psalms (*Kethubim. The Writings*).

- A | THE PSALMS.—Personal experience and future prophecy.
- B | PROVERBS.—God’s moral government.
- C | JOB.—“The end of the Lord.” Defeat of Satan.
- D | SONG OF SOLOMON.—A faithful woman. Read at Passover.
- E | ECCLESIASTES.—Vanity under the sun. Read at Tabernacles.
- D | ESTHER.—A faithful woman. Read at Purim.
- C | DANIEL.—The time of the end. Defeat of Antichrist.
- B | EZRA-NEHEMIAH.—Men who governed for God.
- A | CHRONICLES.—Past history and foreshadowed future.

Gausсен, in his book on the Canon, adduces sixteen facts. We give a summary here:

- (1) Almost every crime is charged against Israel except one. They were never charged with the falsification of the sacred books. "To them were entrusted the oracles of God."
- (2) Christ said that they did not 'believe' Moses, but that they 'trusted' Moses who condemned them.
- (3) The Apostles never accused Israel of unfaithfulness to their trust as custodians of the Holy Scriptures.
- (4) Two witnesses of repute confirm this: Josephus and Philo. Both of them were learned men, both men of repute, both Pharisees, both of the line of Aaron.
- (5) From the dawn of the Christian era, for nineteen centuries of rebellion, scattering and persecution, Israel has never relinquished the Scriptures.
- (6) After thirty four centuries, the Jews from every quarter of the world receive only one canon. This identity of the copies of the Hebrew Scriptures is an astonishing phenomenon.
- (7) In contrast stands the rapid deterioration of the many versions.
- (8) While the Jews are divided into different and conflicting sects, all alike hold the canonical Scriptures.
- (9) The law was placed in the Ark; death penalty was pronounced against the false prophet; the law was publicly read every seven years; the newly crowned king had to make a copy with his own hand.
- (10) An unbroken chain of witnesses (the prophets) kept the canon alive.
- (11) The calamities of the Jews: (a) Destruction of the Temple; this gave rise to "the synagogue in every city". (b) Their signatures; this gives a check on the text. (c) Loss of their language; this led to the formation of the class called "Scribes", the Targums (Chaldee paraphrases). (d) Oppression led to the Greek version known as the Septuagint. (e) The dispersion led to the *Massorah*, a collection of traditions, grammatical and other details relative to the sacred text, or called "The Fence of the Law".
- (12) The miraculous preservation of the Jew is a pledge that his sacred Scriptures will be as faithfully preserved.
- (13) No pressure or inducement could persuade the Jew to accept the Apocryphal books foisted upon the canon by Rome.
- (14) "The Trent Catechism of the Orthodox Catholic Eastern Church" protests against including the Apocrypha.
- (15) This was also the testimony of the whole Western Church until the Council of Trent.
- (16) Neither the Septuagint nor the Latin versions could keep the Apocrypha out, but Israel did.

No.3. The Canon of the N.T. pp. 37 - 40

There are twenty-seven books in the N.T. canon, and Michaelis says that, in the case of the N.T., the testimony is much stronger than in the case of any other ancient writings, for the books of the N.T. were addressed to large societies in many distant parts of the world, in whose presence they were often read, and who acknowledged them as the autographs of the writers themselves. Unlike other writings that have come down to us from antiquity, those of the N.T. were read over three-quarters of the known world, and an unbroken succession of writers, from the very age of the apostles to our own time, both friend and foe, make continual reference to them and give quotations from them.

Translations.

Before the close of the second century, translations of the N.T. had been made. This would effectively prevent alterations, additions, or subtractions, for such a fraud would immediately become known and exposed.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica, third edition, says:

“This argument is so strong, that, if we deny the authenticity of the N.T., we may with a thousand times greater propriety reject all the other writings in the world.”

A few facts.

- (1) It cannot be shown that any one doubted the authenticity of any book of the N.T. in the period when such books appeared.
- (2) There is no record that would lead one to reject any such books as spurious.
- (3) No great length of time elapsed after the death of the writer before the N.T. was widely known.
- (4) The books of the N.T. are actually mentioned by writers living at or near the same time as the Apostles.
- (5) No facts are recorded of what actually happened after the deaths of the writers, apart, of course, from prophecy.

Some outstanding witnesses.

Irenaeus, born 120A.D., calls the books of the N.T. “The Rule of Truth”, Tertullian said of Marcion, the Gnostic, that he appeared to make use of “a complete document”. Clement of Alexandria exclaims against any other authority besides “the true evangelical canon”. Origen was zealous in maintaining the “Ecclesiastical Canon”, and recognized “Four Gospels only, which alone are received without controversy in the universal church spread over the whole earth”.

Athanasius speaks of three sorts of books:

- (1) The canonical, those recognized at the present time.
- (2) The ecclesiastical, which were allowed to be read in assemblies.
- (3) The apocryphal, which had no place in the canon at all.

Irenaeus (120-202A.D.), educated under Polycarp who knew the Apostle John personally, Clement of Alexandria (150-215A.D.), Tertullian (155-230A.D.), are three men representing three great areas, Greek, Coptic and Latin, who are witnesses that cannot be decried.

Irenaeus speaks of the four Gospels as “the gospel with the four faces”. He quotes the Acts over sixty times and shows the harmony of the Acts with Paul’s epistles. He cites I Corinthians over 100 times, Romans over 80 times, Ephesians over 30 times, Galatians nearly 20 times, Colossians 20 times, II Corinthians 18 times, Philippians 11 times, I Peter 11 times, II Thessalonians 10 times, I Timothy 5 times, II Timothy 4 times, Titus thrice, I John thrice and I Thessalonians twice.

As it is impossible to quote books that do not exist, it is evident that all these books of the N.T. were well known early in the second century.

The testimony of enemies.

Irenaeus wrote a book against Heresies. As an example let us take the heretic Valentine and his disciples. In order to uphold their peculiar fables about “Aeons” they quote or make use of the following books of the N.T.:

The Gospels—Matt. 5:13, 14, 18; 8:9; 10:21, 34; 13:33; 20:1-16; 26:38, 39, 46; Mark 5:31; Luke 2:28, 36, 42; 3:17, 23; 6:13; 7:8, 35; 8:41; 9:37, 38, 60-62; 14:27; 15:4-8; 19:5; John 1:1-5, 14; 12:37.

The Epistles—Rom. 11:16, 36; I Cor. 1:18; 2:6, 14, 15; 11:10; 15:8, 48; Gal. 6:14; Eph. 1:10; 3:21; 5:13, 32; Col. 1:16; 2:9; 3:11.

Twenty-one other heretics are named, and their mishandling of the N.T. exposed, but how could Irenaeus expose this mishandling if the N.T. books were not already in existence and of recognized authority?

Further witnesses.

Barnabas, 71A.D.; Clement of Rome, 69-100A.D.; Hermas, 100A.D.; Ignatius, 107A.D.; Polycarp, 71-166A.D. Dr. Lardner in his *Credibility of the Gospel History*, found allusions or quotations in these five early writers to every book of the N.T.

Catalogues.

There are three ancient catalogues, written before the Council of Nice. The first goes back to about the time of the death of John. The second, to the beginning of the third century, the last to the beginning of the fourth. The first is derived from the ancient Syriac version of the N.T. called the *Peshitto*, or "Simple". The second is supplied by Origen. The third by Eusebius in the third book of *Ecclesiastical History*.

The Peshitto version contains the whole of the N.T. except the Apocalypse, and the later epistles of Jude, Peter and John. The arrangement of the sacred books is as found in the N.T. today. The omitted books were written too late and at too great a distance for inclusion.

Origen catalogue.

In a commentary alluding to the sounding of the trumpets and the walls of Jericho, Origen makes an allegorical use of the books of the N.T. and enumerates without exception the twenty-seven books of the Canon.

Eusebius.

This historian divides the N.T. into two parts. The *homologomena*, "The Scriptures universally, unrestrictedly and uniformly recognized from the first as Divine by all churches or ecclesiastical witness", and the *Antilogomena*, denotes books which, though recognized by most churches or ecclesiastical witness, were not recognized by all such. These are five in number: II Peter, James, Jude, II John and III John. "These though publicly read experience some opposition or were less quoted by ancient witness."

The transmission and preservation of the Hebrew text.

"*Some ancient authorities read.*" These words meet the student of Scripture both in Commentaries and the margin of the R.V. What do they involve? To appreciate their meaning we must be acquainted with the history of the Manuscripts, their transmission, their preservation, their differences and their combined testimony.

The transmission of the Hebrew text.

Every book was of necessity written by hand, and the scribe was hedged about by scruples and directions, which even though to modern minds are petti-fogging, nevertheless preserved the text in a marvelous manner.

A synagogue scroll must be written on the skins of clean animals. The fastenings must be sinews taken from clean animals. Every skin must contain a fixed number of columns throughout the entire scroll. Each column must not be less than forty-eight or more than sixty lines. The breadth must consist of thirty letters. The whole copy must be first lined. If three words be written outside a line it is worthless. Black ink, prepared

according to a definite recipe, must be used. Only an authentic copy must be used, and no deviation is permissible. Not the smallest word or letter may be written from memory. Between every consonant must be a hairs breadth. Between every word the breadth of a narrow consonant. Between every new section the breadth of nine consonants. Between every book three lines. The fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line. The copyist must sit in full Jewish dress, wash his whole body, and not begin to write the name of God with a pen not newly dipped in ink. Should even the King address him, he must take no notice of him. Rolls not prepared according to these rules, must not be used in the synagogue, but must be buried or burned, or used as reading books in schools.

A peculiarity that sometimes led to various readings.

Hebrew contains no vowels. Modern Hebrew uses a system of vowel points resembling those used in shorthand. An English illustration may help:

The letters BLL may mean Bill, Bell or Bull. There would be no uncertainty in a sentence that said the Bll was pd or the Bll was tld or the Bll was fd with grss. Some momentary hesitation may occur if we read that the Bll was Rng, as a bell may be rung, but also may a bull by a ring in the nose, but the context would decide.

No.5. pp. 53 - 56

Owing to the scrupulous care put into these Scrolls, no Hebrew manuscript was allowed to become badly worn before it was discarded; consequently until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls we did not possess Hebrew MSS earlier than the eighth century. We can go back to the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases to the time between Nehemiah and Christ and eleven such Targums are known.

The Targum of Onkelos is described as “A very simple and literal translation of the Pentateuch, and for that reason the more useful as evidence for the Hebrew text from which it was taken” (Kenyon). Onkelos was the disciple of Hillel and Hillel was the grandfather of Gamaliel, at whose feet sat Saul the Pharisee.

The Talmud.

This word is the equivalent to our word “doctrine”. The Talmud embodies all that had previously been written, in a series of rules, laws and institutions governing the civil and religious life of Israel.

The Talmud consists of two parts: (1) the *Mishna*, “the text”; (2) the *Gemara*, “the completion”. Taken together with the Scriptures their testimony is final.

The Sopherim.

The work of the *Sopherim* dates from the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. Ezra himself was called a "Scribe" (Neh. vii. 4), or one of the *Sopherim*. The custom of having an interpreter in the synagogue at the reading of the law is referred by the *Gemara* to Nehemiah viii. 8.

The *Sopherim* in effect produced an A.V. of the Hebrew Scriptures. The Rabbinical work named *Kiddush* says "The ancients were called *Sopherim* 'numberers' because they numbered all the letters of the law; for they said that in *Gachon* 'belly' (Lev. xi. 42) is the middle letter of the whole book of the law.

The Massorah.

It was the business of the Massorites to preserve this version for all time. With the labour of the Massorites the final stage in the history of the Hebrew text is reached. *Masar* means "to deliver something into the hand of another". It was a sacred trust. The Massorites had a twofold object:

- (1) To preserve a perfect orthoepic standard (i.e. correct pronunciations) of the Hebrew tongue.
- (2) To the reading of a correct or inviolate text of the Hebrew Scriptures.

To accomplish this task the Massorites:

- (1) Collect all that could be found in the Talmud concerning the traditional vowel points and punctuations, and produced a text with a series of points indicating vowel sounds.
- (2) As the Hebrew Bible at that time had neither chapter nor verse, the Massorites divided the several books into: *parashiotts* "greater sections", *sedarim* "orders", *perakin* "chapters" and *pesikin* "verses".
- (3) When the division was completed, the number of verses to each book was notified by a technical word. The middle verse, or clause, or the middle letter were registered, and the number of letters in each book counted.
- (4) Notes were made of places where words or letters appeared to have been altered, omitted or added, and the results of this prodigious labour were placed in the margins of the Scrolls.
- (5) The Massorites, moreover, introduced a series of accents which were intended to answer four purposes:
 - (a) To certify the meaning of words.
 - (b) To indicate true syllables.
 - (c) To regulate the cantillation (or chanting) of synagogue reading.
 - (d) To show the emphasis of an expression.

The Massorah does not contain comment, and that scrupulous care, even to counting of letters, means that "not one jot or tittle" could be lost without knowledge. Consequently we have in our hands today the standard or Canonical Scriptures as they left the hands of Ezra over 2,360 years ago.

The Versions and Manuscripts.

(1) *The Samaritan Pentateuch*. This strictly speaking is not a version. It is written in ancient Hebrew, being the oldest Hebrew MSS in existence. The characteristics of the Samaritan Pentateuch point to the circumstances of II Kings xvii. 24-41 for its origin. The adoption of the square Hebrew letters of the Jews was partly because of their antipathy to the Samaritans. This MSS is a most valuable check upon the veracity of the existing Hebrew Books of the Law.

(2) *The Septuagint*. This version was made in Egypt by Alexandrian Jews, and it was in common use a century before Christ. At the time of Christ, Greek was the literary language of Palestine, Aramaic the spoken language, and Hebrew the tongue of the Rabbis and Students. A large proportion of the O.T. quotations that are given in the N.T. are from the Septuagint (generally abbreviated to LXX).

When the Jews realized what a powerful instrument this version was to the Christians, they repudiated it and another was prepared by a certain Aquila. This is an exceeding literal rendering of the Hebrew, so much so as to be sometimes unintelligible. It is valuable, however, as it indicates clearly the Hebrew text he had before him. This version is dated 150A.D. Another version by a Christian named Theodotion was produced to off-set that of Aquila, but this version is very free in its rendering. Theodotion's version of Daniel was so much better than that in the original Septuagint that it took its place.

About 200A.D. a version was prepared by Symmachus.

“The special feature of this translation is the literary skill and taste with which the Hebrew phrases of the original are rendered with good and idiomatic Greek” (Kenyon).

(3) *The Hexapla of Origen*. The great Alexandrian scholar Origen (168-253A.D.), using these versions, produced his monumental work “The Hexapla” or the “Six-fold” version of O.T. Scripture.

As a result of the quickened interest in the LXX, three further editions appeared, one by Eusebius, one by Lucian and one by Hesychius.

Some Ancient Greek MSS.

We have already seen that the oldest Hebrew MSS goes back no further than eighth century. The Greek Manuscripts fortunately go back much further, and of these the most important are:

Codex Sinaiticus (4th century). Indicated by the Hebrew letter Aleph.

Codex Alexandrinus (5th century). Indicated by the letter A.

Codex Vaticanus (4th century). Indicated by the letter B.

Codex Ephraemi (5th century). Indicated by the letter C.

The Cotton Genesis (5th century). Indicated by the letter D.

Some Ancient Versions in other languages.

As the Gospel spread from Palestine, adjoining countries demanded the Scriptures in their own tongues. Accordingly we have:

The Syriac Version. Known as the *Peshitto* or “Simple” version. This was made about the second or third century after Christ. The copy in the British Museum was made in 464A.D., and is the oldest copy of the Bible of which the exact date is known.

The Coptic Versions. These were produced for use in Egypt. They are important as witnesses to the true text of the Greek N.T., and are of considerable help to the student of the LXX. The two most important are the one prepared for northern Egypt called the *Memphitic*, and the one prepared for southern Egypt, called the *Thebaic*, about the third century.

Ethiopic, Armenian, Arabic, Georgian and Slavonic versions appeared.

The Latin Versions.

These versions were demanded by the Roman provinces of Africa. They were defective and contained many pronunciations and defects of African translators. To remedy this a version called the *Itala* appeared in the second century.

Jerome. What Origen did for the Greek versions, Jerome did for the Latin. He prepared a translation of the O.T. in Latin direct from the original Hebrew, a work that occupied twenty years. This version became known as the Vulgate and was the Bible of the Roman Catholic church and of Europe until the Reformation.

We shall devote a separate study to the Septuagint and to other ancient manuscripts.

**No.6. Further notes of the MSS
and the pedigree of the R.V.
pp. 75 - 77**

The MSS of the Greek N.T. fall into two classes, uncials and cursives. Uncials (from a word meaning "inch") are large capital letters with each letter formed separately; cursives (from a word meaning "running") are smaller letters, written in a running hand and joined together.

Kenyon, Paterson-Smyth, Young's Concordance, The Books and Parchments by F. F. Bruce, M.A., gives plates that exhibits these two forms of writing.

The uncials are the more ancient of the two, the cursives not appearing until the ninth century. The chief uncials are three in number, the Sinaiticus, the Vaticanus, the Alexandrinus. The cursives MSS run into over 2,000.

Codex Vaticanus (4th century). The reader should weigh very carefully any reading favoured by this most venerable MSS. Originally containing the complete Scriptures, it has suffered losses, and now commences at Gen. xlvi. 28. Psa. cvi.-cxxxviii. are missing also. The N.T. ends at Heb. ix. 4.

Codex Sinaiticus (4th century). Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf in the Monastery of St. Catherine, Mt. Sinai. It passed into the Imperial Russian Library at St. Petersburg, and subsequently was purchased by the British Government. The MSS bears evidence of careful correction from some earlier MSS, and four different scribes were employed upon its original production. As the "corrections" so often agree with the text of the *Codex Vaticanus*, their united testimony must be considered of extreme weight. Much of the O.T. is missing owing to the ignorance of the monks who used some of the precious pages as fuel!

Codex Alexandrinus (5th century). Like the Vaticanus this originally contained the complete Scriptures, but has suffered some losses in the course of time.

The material of which these ancient manuscripts are composed is parchment. This was not unknown in the days of the Apostles (II Tim. iv. 13), but papyrus was much more common (II John 12). The frail and brittle character of papyrus accounts for the lack of manuscripts of the opening century of the Christian era. Later, the process of preparing the skins of calves was improved, and the use of parchment or vellum became practically universal. The earlier MSS are characterized by the exceeding delicacy of the texture of the vellum used and is one of the evidences of the age of the manuscript. So much was vellum in demand, that earlier writing was erased or "blotted out", and the new writing written across. In many cases however, the older writing can be deciphered. These manuscripts are known as *codices rescripti* or *palimpsest*.

The style of writing varied considerably in different periods, and provide very useful criteria as to the age of the manuscript. We have already mentioned the uncials and the cursives. While it is impossible in this study to exhibit to the eye the many details that go to make up this evidence, the student should be aware of their existence. We give two of such forms of evidence here. They are (1) The variations that occur in the construction of the letters of the alphabet, of which alpha, delta, theta, xi, pi and omega provide the clearest evidence. Upright square uncials are more ancient than those which are narrow, oblong or leaning. (2) The formation of diphthongs, the iota ascript, the aspirates, punctuation and various devices for abbreviation, play a considerable part in providing evidence of age.

Ancient versions in various languages.

As no extant Greek MSS is earlier than the fourth century, the versions made in foreign tongues from originals now lost are of extreme value in arriving at the true text. We have already referred to the Peshitto, Egyptian and Latin Versions.

The Syriac Versions. The Peshitto. This language is distinct from Hebrew (Gen. xxxi. 47 margin), and was spoken in Babylon and subsequently throughout Palestine. The Philoxenian Syriac Version, is greatly inferior to the Peshitto both in accuracy and in style; it is however of great value to the textual critic.

The Curetonian Syriac. Dean Alford says of this version “perhaps the earliest and most important of all the versions”.

The Latin Versions. A branch of the Church existed in Rome many years before Paul visited this city (Rom. xv. 23), and it is reasonable to suppose that among the earlier versions to be made would be one in Latin. Jerome and Augustine, together with the variations found in the old Latin manuscripts now in our possession, testify to “an original diversity of versions”. Jerome, in his Latin version of the O.T., is not founded on the old Latin which in its turn was made from the Greek Septuagint, but, the Psalter excepted, was translated directly from the Hebrew. At length Jerome’s translation of the O.T., his Psalter and the N.T. as revised from the Old Latin took shape as the Latin Vulgate. The history of the Latin Vulgate is practically the history of the Church during the Middle Ages.

The History of the English Version.

- (1) The Paraphrase of Caedmon, written in Anglo-Saxon, 670A.D.
- (2) The Psalter of Aldhelm, 700. The first true translation in English.
- (3) Bede, 674-735.
- (4) The Gospels of the Tenth Century. The oldest MSS written by Aelfric of Bath about 1000.
- (5) The Old Testament of Aelfric, 990.
- (6) Wycliffe's Translation, 1324-1384.
- (7) Tyndale's Bible, 1525.
- (8) Coverdale's Bible, 1535.
- (9) Matthew's Bible, 1537.
- (10) The Great Bible, Time of Thomas Cromwell, 1539.
- (11) The Geneva Bible, 1557-1560.
- (12) The Bishop's Bible, 1568.
- (13) The Authorized Version, 1611.
- (14) The Revised Version, 1885.

Such is the simple outline of our inheritance, its marvelous preservation and its widespread translation. Also its unanimity in all matters of faith and practice.

No.7. The Apocrypha. pp. 94 - 96

The word *Apocrypha* is probably derived from *apokrupto* "to hide", although another derivation is suggestive, *apo tes kruptes* "away from the crypt, chest or ark" in which were deposited the sacred books of Israel. All writers use the term "to denote some kind of inferiority to the canonical Scriptures" (Churton).

(1) With the exception of Esdras, Judith, Todit and 1st Maccabees, the Apocryphal books were written by Alexandrian Jews in Greek:

"It is an historical fact that the Greek language was not known to the Jews until long after inspiration had ceased, and the canon of the O.T. was closed" (Home).

Mal. iv. 4-6 intimates that no prophet would arise until the forerunner of the Messiah, and the Jews called Malachi, "The seal of the prophets" in consequence. In order that the Apocryphal book of "Wisdom" should gain acceptance, the author adopted the name of Solomon. He betrays himself by quoting Isaiah, by revealing that Israel was subject to their enemies, and by borrowing expressions from the Grecian games.

(2) In marked contrast with the canonical Scriptures, no writer of the Apocrypha claims inspiration. The Son of Sirach in his prologue to Ecclesiasticus asks pardon for

any failure in interpretation. In 1 Maccabees 4:26, 9:27 and 14:41 is an express admission that there was no prophet among them.

The Apocrypha contains many *fabulous* statements, some *unscriptural* statements, and some serious *doctrinal* inaccuracies. Josephus says:

“It is true, our history has been written since Artaxerxes, very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been a succession of prophets since that time” (*Against Apion* 1:8).

(3) There are evidences that a great literary activity sprang into being during the Apostle’s lifetime. (See Luke i. 1 and II Thess. ii. 2). Some of these writings have been collected under the title “The Apocryphal New Testament”, and the best refutation of them is found in comparing them with the writings of the N.T.

(4) *Supposed quotations of Apocrypha in N.T.* The Apostle Paul speaks of “Jannes and Jambres” in II Tim. iii. 8, and it has been suggested that he quoted from the Targum of Jonathan. There is however reason to believe that this Targum was not in existence in the Apostle’s day, and the fact that Numenius, Artapanus and Pliny mention these names, makes it evident that it was a matter of common knowledge. Jude is supposed to have quoted from the Apocryphal prophecy of Enoch (Jude 9 and 14), but once again the passages are to be found loosely expressed in Rabbinical writings (see Surenhusius, 699-702). However, should Jude have actually quoted from an Apocryphal book, it would no more place that book in the canon, than Paul’s quotation from a heathen poet (Acts xvii. 28) would put Aratus among the prophets or Apostles.

(5) *The value of the Apocrypha.* The value of the Apocrypha is twofold. It supplies a link that unites the days of Malachi with the dawn of the Christian era and it uses the *Koine* Greek of the common people in which the N.T. was written. Unless therefore the N.T. writers were going to invent a new language, it would be impossible for them to avoid the phraseology of such popular religious writings.

(6) *The Book of Wisdom and the Apostle Paul.* To appreciate the extent of the influence of this Apocryphal book upon the mind and language of the Apostle Paul, a personal comparison of books and epistles is imperative, as in many instances the influence though seen and felt defies quotation. The book of Wisdom is about the same size as the Epistle to the Romans, and there are many parallels between these two writings. For sake of space we will quote only from the book of Wisdom, leaving the student to read the corresponding passages of the Epistle.

In Rom. i. 19-23 the Apostle speaks of the heathen world and the evidences of the being and nature of God, that are made clear from creation. The thirteenth chapter of Wisdom contains the following:

“Surely vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen know Him that is; neither by considering the works did they acknowledge the workmaster” (1,2). “For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures, proportionally (*analogus* ‘by analogy’) the Maker of them is seen” (5).

Notice the echo of the word “invention” in Rom. i. 30.

“For the devising of idols was the beginning of fornication and the invention of them the corruption of life” (Wisdom 14:12).

Other echoes in Rom. i. can be heard as we read:

“They held them for gods, which even among the beasts of their enemies were despised” (12:24).

“Shall feel a judgment worthy of God” (12:26).

“Being corruptible, it was called a god” (14:8).

“They thought not well of God” (14:30).

Again “Seeking God, and desirous to find Him” (Wisdom 13:6), is reminiscent of Acts xvii. 27 while “And winkest at the sins of men, because they should amend” (or with a view to repentance) (Wisdom 11:23) cannot be read without calling Acts xvii. 30 to mind.

Further where no actual word is similar, there is often a most evident parallelism of thought. Keep in mind I Cor. xiii. and read this on “Wisdom”:

“For in her is an understand spirit,
Holy, one only, manifold, subtil,
Lively, clear, undefiled,
Plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick,
Which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man,
Steadfast, sure, free from care,
Having all power, overseeing all things,
And going through all understanding, pure, and most subtil of spirits” (Wisdom 7:22,23).

Again think of Heb. i. 3 as you read:

“For she is the brightness of the everlasting light,
The unspotted mirror of the power of God” (Wisdom 7:26).

“Wisdom” speaks of “A glorious Kingdom” and a “crown of beauty” which shall be the reward of the overcoming righteous (Wisdom 5:16).

Without naming Enoch, “Wisdom” says:

“He pleased God, and was beloved of Him;
So that living among sinners he was translated” (Wisdom 4:10).

These are superficial gleanings. The deeper and richer correspondences wait upon the diligent reader of the originals.

No one with a love for freedom and a hatred of tyranny can read the books of the Maccabees unmoved. Coleridge said of the story of Judas Maccabeus that it was “inspiring enough to be inspired”.

The Prayer Book of the Church of England orders the Apocrypha to be read in public,

“For example of life and instruction of manners, but yet it doth not apply them to teach any doctrine.”

John Bunyan sought for more than a year “a text” which had helped him:

“Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded?”

He found it at last in Ecclesiasticus 2:10.

“The Song of the Three Children”, “Bel and the Dragon”, and “The History of Susannah” are additions to the book of Daniel. In the *History of Delection*, Dorothy Sayer included the two last books in her earliest examples. Shakespeare makes Shylock refer to “Susannah” when he said “A Daniel came to judgment”.

Old Bibles often have the Apocrypha bound up with them.

No.8. The Witness of Archaeology. pp. 111 - 113

The Bible is its own witness. Proof of its truth comes with its study. Nevertheless it is a valuable asset to know and to be able to refer to the findings of the archaeologist as he brings to light records of the past.

We content ourselves in this paper with a reference to some of the most outstanding evidences of Scripture accuracy which the spade of the archaeologist has brought to light, but nothing less than a personal and painstaking acquaintance both with material and with method can give a true sense of the conviction which these evidences convey.

Archaeological Evidence.

The Flood. A Fact (Gen. vi.-ix.).

One of “the most important historical documents of its kind” is the description given by Dr. Stephen Langdon to the prism catalogued W.B.444, a cuneiform tablet purchased by Mr. H. Weld-Blundell in Baghdad. It contains 379 lines of which we give the following:

Line 1 -- Rulership which from heaven descended.

Line 2 -- At Eriden rulership began.

* * * * *

Line 39 -- The Deluge came up.

Line 40 -- After the Deluge had come.

Line 41 -- The Rulership which descended from heaven.

Line 42 -- At Kish was the Rulership.

Dr. C. L. Woolley excavating at Ur of the Chaldees said that after going through strata of pottery and rubbish the diggers came to a bed of clean clay:

“Uniform throughout, the texture of which showed that it had been laid there by water the clean clay continued without change until it had attained a thickness of a little over eight feet, then as suddenly as it had begun, it stopped the flood which deposited it must have been of a magnitude unparalleled in local history.”

Amraphel. A Fact (Gen. xiv.).

Chedorlaomer, and Arioch have been proved as historic persons, and the great Hammurabi has been proved to be the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. In the British Museum stood the famous Code of Laws written for this King, many of which can be discovered in operation in the book of Genesis. Nearly nineteen documents of Amraphel have been brought to light.

Abraham's City. A Fact (Gen. xi. 28).

Dr. C. L. Woolley has brought to light that Ur of the Chaldees was a city of great importance, inhabited by a highly civilized population, having schools, libraries, temples and well-built houses.

The Tower of Babel. A Fact (Gen. xi.).

Nebuchadnezzar restored the tower of Borsippa, of which he has left a record. He says of this tower:

“As it was ages before I built anew; as it was in remote days I erected its pinnacle.”

The name given to these towers is Zikkurat (*Zokor*—to remember as in Zechariah) so in Gen. xi., “To make us a name”. The mound of ruins covers over 49,000sq.ft. and is nearly 300ft. high. It is made of “brick burned throughly” united together by “slime” or “bitumen”.

Belshazzar. A Fact (Dan. v.).

His father's prayer naming “Belshazzar, my first born son” is in the British Museum.

The Fall of Jericho. A Fact (Joshua vi.).

Professor J. Garstang's discoveries.

Moses in Egypt. A Fact (Gen. and Exod.).

The testimony of Dr. A. S. Yahuda, gives abundant proof that whoever wrote Genesis and Exodus knew Egypt throughly and personally. Then there are the Tell-el-Amarna tablets, mentioning cities named in Joshua and showing that the names El and Jehovah were in use.

The Moabite Stone confirms II Kings i.-iii.

Sennacherib's Cylinder speaks of “Hezekiah” shut up “like a caged bird” in Jerusalem.

The Black Obelisk mentions “Jehu, the Son of Omri”.

So far as N.T. Archaeology is concerned the following are important:

- (1) The taxation of Luke ii. 1-3 is proved to be a fact.
- (2) Officials and events named by Luke are Facts:
 - (a) Sergius Paulus.
 - (b) The Town Clerk of Ephesus.
 - (c) Politarchs and Asiarchs (Acts xvii. 6, 8; xix. 31).
 - (d) The Famine in the days of Claudius.
 - (e) Herod. His reign and death, and its bearing upon the date of the Acts.

Then there is the testimony of the Papyrus. Bishop Lightfoot wrote in 1863:

“If we could only recover letter that ordinary people wrote to each other without any thought of being literary, we should have the greatest possible help for the understanding of the language of the N.T. generally.”

This desire has been answered by the recovery from the sand of Egypt of heaps of papyrus, using the language of the people and of the N.T. and dating from round about the time of the Apostles.

In ordinary course, questions can be set, knowing that the student has his Bible into which he may search to provide the answers. With archaeology the case is different. Most Bible students have some references, but the ground covered by the subject is vast. We accordingly give a list of some valuable books that should be consulted where possible.

The New Biblical Guide. Urquhart.

Ur of the Chaldees. Woolley.

The Bible and the Monuments. Boscawven.

Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments. Sayce.

Syria and Egypt, the Tell-el-Amarna Tablets. Petrie.

Light from the Ancient East. Deissmann.

New Light on the New Testament. Deissmann.

The Bible and Ancient Manuscripts. Kenyon.

The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the N.T. Ramsay.

The New Archaeological Discoveries. Cobern.

Male and Female Created He Them

(A consideration of the God-ordained positions of man and woman.)

No.1. Order.

pp. 89 - 93

The creation of mankind was the topstone of God's work in the earth, after which He could pronounce upon all that He had made, "It is very good" (Gen. i. 31). The superior position of man over the rest of that creation was shown in that he was created "in the image of God" and given "dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. i. 27, 28; Psa. viii. 4-8).

But mankind was created "male and female", and it is quite evident from Scripture that God ordained a relationship between the two sexes, according to His own purpose, which just as much reflected His desire for *order*, as did the subjection of the animal creation under man as a whole, in God's "very good" creation.

That relationship, which far transcended any that existed between male and female of other creatures, has alas been misunderstood, abused, degraded and challenged by all manner of persons. The tendency of the past has been largely toward treating the woman as very inferior to the man (this being still so in some parts of the world), but the pendulum has now swung too far. The God-given position of the man is now being undermined (under the much bandied about terms of "equality" and "emancipation"), and disaster can only be the outcome.

To stand against the modern tendency is to be branded as old-fashioned, unenlightened and denying the equality of womanhood, and the unpopularity of such a position is inclined to influence men against their better judgment. Surely, it is sometimes argued, if a woman can do a job as well as (or even better than) a man, then it must be right that she should do it? But this is not the ground upon which the right relationship between the sexes ought to be determined, at least not for the believer. There can be but one appeal for him, "What saith the Scripture?" This then must be the sole source from which the respective positions of "male and female", and their relationship to each other, is judged, and it will be the only ground of argument presented in this series of articles.

Kosmos

It is clear from a reading of Scripture, that whatever else God desires it must include *order*. Disorder and lawlessness are quite contrary to His purposes in any part of His creation, but they have come in with the entrance of sin; in fact "sin is lawlessness" (I John iii. 4 R.V.). Such a desire for *order* on the part of God is seen in the word *kosmos*, "world", behind which word is the idea of regular disposition and arrangement.

“*Kosmos* denotes the order of the world, the ordered universe, the ordered entirety of God’s creation, *but considered as separated from God*. Then, the abode of humanity, *or that order of things in which humanity moves or of which man is the centre*” (*English and Greek Lexicon*—Bullinger).

John’s testimony to the *kosmos* is that “it came into being through Him (The Word)”, whilst Paul noted that, “Sin came into the *kosmos*” (John i. 10; Rom. v. 12). An original *order* thus became spoilt.

But this is not the end of the story, for “God loved the *kosmos* so, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”; He sent His Son “into the *kosmos* that the *kosmos* through Him might be saved”. That same Son, as the “Lamb of God” is the One Who “takes away the sin of the *kosmos*” (John iii. 16, 17; i. 29).

Whilst it would take a whole series of articles to do justice to the meaning of *kosmos*, enough for the present subject to note that behind the word is the suggestion of *order*; an *order* which proceeded originally from God, but which has become spoilt by sin and is now considered as separated from, and antagonistic to, God. To be “of the *kosmos*” is opposite to being “of God”; “the whole *kosmos* lies in the wicked one” (I John iv. 4-6; v. 19). But through God’s great love, a work of salvation has been wrought in the *kosmos*, a work amongst men, by the Son of God. Through the Gospel of Christ men are being called back to *order*, called to be “in the *kosmos*” but not of it (John xvii. 14-16; James i. 27; II Pet. i. 4, etc.), called to exhibit already in this life God’s intended *order*, by their manner of life:

“For by grace are ye saved not of works we are His workmanship (Gr. *poiema*), created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. ii. 8-10).

‘For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your *order* (Gr. *taxis*), and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ” (Col. ii. 5).

The Greek word *poiema* (related to the English “poem”) is used in only two places in the N.T.; in the passage quoted above and Rom. i. 20. The connection between these two occurrences is worthy of note, and bears upon the thought of *order*.

In Rom. i. 20 the old creation (coming from the hand of God as “very good” and exhibiting *order*) is considered evidence for perceiving “the invisible things” of God:

“. . . . ever since the world (*kosmos*) was created, His invisible nature, His everlasting power and Divine Being, have been quite perceptible in what He has made (*poiema*)” (Moffatt).

It is of course true that since “sin came into the *kosmos*” disorder has come in with it, but there is still enough of the original *order* left to testify to even “His eternal power and Godhead”.

The new creation likewise is to testify to God’s *order*. The members of the Body of Christ, as part already of that new creation “in Christ Jesus”, by their orderly lives, their

“good works”, demonstrate that they are God’s poem (A.V. ‘workmanship’). These “good works” and such a manner of life were part of God’s original intention; they were “afore prepared that we should walk in them” (Eph. ii. 10 R.V.).

The work of salvation in the hearts of men is a work of restoration to *order*, God’s original intention for every part of His creation. That salvation is to be lived out by the believer in demonstration that the effects of sin (lawlessness and disorder) have been dealt with in his life by the work of Christ. He no longer has to follow the dictates of “the age of this *kosmos*” controlled by “the prince of the authority of the air” (Eph. ii. 2 lit.), he is part of God’s *new* poem, a *new* creation in Christ Jesus. As such he seeks God’s *order* in his life.

It ought to be pointed out that there are dispensational differences between the ministry of John and that of Paul. Both use the word *kosmos* frequently and not necessarily identically. Also whereas Paul uses the conception of a “new creation” with regard to the salvation of man, John speaks rather of being “born of God”, a “new birth” (II Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15; Eph. ii. 10; Col. iii. 10; John i. 13; iii. 3, 7; I John iii. 9). Peter, also an apostle of the circumcision (Gal. ii. 9), is on very similar lines to John, referring to “being born again” and “begotten again” (I Pet. i. 23; i. 3). Peter also uses *kosmos*.

Whilst these differences must be recognized and taken into consideration in exposition, they do not detract from the fundamental idea that salvation, whether it be expressed in terms of a new birth or a new creation, deals with restoration to *order*. The believer is given a “sound mind” (*sophronismos*, related to *sozo*, to save and *sophron*, sober) and demonstrates it to be so by a walk in harmony with God’s *order*.

The Greek word *taxis* (referred to above in Col. ii. 5) is translated “order” in its every occurrence, and also bears upon this theme. But the word is derived from *tasso*, to arrange or put in order, especially in a military sense. Since it is obviously connected also with *hupotasso* (subject, subdue, submit) it will be considered as part of that word which also speaks of “order”.

Hupotasso

This word means literally, to set in order under; it speaks of submission (sometimes voluntary) and suggests, taken together with the thoughts already voiced on *kosmos*, that God in His wisdom ordained a certain *arrangement*, spoilt since by sin, but being restored by the work of Christ. A system of “rule and authority and power” was vested in created beings, but when “the end” arrives all will have been annulled and “*put in subjection* under His feet”. Finally, even the Son Himself will voluntarily submit Himself that “God may be all in all” (I Cor. xv. 24-28).

In the Prison Ministry of Paul another aspect is introduced in connection with *submission* to Christ, in that He is seen as “Head over all things” and as such given to the Church which is His Body (Eph. i. 22, 23). The Church anticipates the “dispensation of

the fullness of the seasons” being already under His Headship (Eph. i. 10 where “gather together in one” is literally “head up”).

Hupotasso is also used of submission to earthly authorities (Rom. xiii. 1, 5-7) and of the submission of believers to one another (Eph. v. 21); which submission is then interpreted by the Apostle into specific terms (Eph. v. 22 - vi. 9).

This last passage brings the idea of *order* and *arrangement* back into the field of the subject, insofar that it speaks of the relationship between husband and wife. The long introduction has been necessary to impress upon the mind that the most important aspect of this whole subject is the thought that God has ordained an *order*, an *arrangement*, and that any understanding of the God-ordained positions of man and woman, and their relationship to each other, must be conditioned by the terms of that *order*. It behoves both man and woman to know the respective positions that have been given to them in the good pleasure and economy of God, and to walk accordingly.

Tragedy when “order” is defied.

Before entering more specifically into the enquiry of the relationship between man and woman, it is as well to notice that when God’s *order* or *arrangement* have in time past been defied or rebelled against, tragedy has inevitably followed. Satan is the first case in point.

Identified as Lucifer in Isa. xiv. he is seen as seeking a position other than that given him in God’s *order*.

“I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High” (verses 13, 14).

His judgment is quickly pronounced (15-20), but the effects of Satan’s fall have been far reaching indeed, as any who know a little of Scripture will be aware.

Satan is seen at work in the garden of Eden under the guise of the “serpent”. That it is Satan here can be known from Rev. xii. 9, but just *how* is not made clear. The ‘serpent’ (Heb. *nachash*, a shining one) of Gen. iii., who “beguiled Eve through his subtilty”, need not have been the limbless reptile now generally associated with that word, for insofar that he is identified as Satan himself, he “transforms himself into an angel of light” (II Cor. xi. 3, 14). But on the other hand there is also the possibility that Satan *demon-possessed* the body of a real serpent (perhaps then in God’s *order* not the unwholesome creature we know today) and spoke through it to Eve.

In the latter case God’s *order* will have been transgressed, in that, part of the creation put under the dominion of Adam, was caused to step *out of its proper place*, being raised up by Satan out of its appointed *order*.

The next step in the tragedy is that Eve usurps the place of her husband, as guardian of the garden and the tree of knowledge, by reasoning with the serpent about the Word of God, and is consequently “thoroughly deceived” (Gen. iii. 1-7; I Tim. ii. 14).

Adam also fails to regard God’s *order*, listening to the voice of his wife rather than to the Word of God (Gen. iii. 17). The end result of all these steps out of God’s appointed *order*, is that sin and death enter the *kosmos*, and that creation begins to show everywhere the evidence of it.

So we read the steps which led to sin and death entering into God’s *order*, as different parts of His creation step out of their appointed places. First Satan, then the serpent, then Eve and finally Adam, and hence tragedy follows. This terrible story of rebellion and disobedience ought to be a lesson to all mankind of the results that must surely follow the ignoring of God’s *order*, and especially ought it to be given heed to by those who know and love the Word of Truth, and who seek to live out their lives in harmony with His good pleasure.

In the studies which are to follow concerning the God-ordained positions of man and woman, it is asked of the reader that he keep in mind this basic truth concerning *order*. Each part of God’s creation is fitted to take and hold a certain place in His overall scheme. It should be the desire of each one of us to *know* what that place is, and then to *live in obedience to it*, and to Him Who so ordained it. Failure to do this can only lead to disorder and tragedy.

In the world around us there is a general revolt against “law and order”; the old values are fast being undermined, and there is a growing dissatisfaction with one’s lot in life. It is easy to be part of this, carried along with the stream of popular opinion. One of the fields in which this revolt and dissatisfaction expresses itself is in the man-woman relationship. It behoves every God-fearing man and every God-fearing woman, to have nothing to do with popular trends, but to turn their thoughts to the Scripture of truth, and allow themselves only to be influenced by its teaching. God has a place for man, and He has a place for woman; they ignore this to their own peril and the dishonour of the Lord.

No.2. Man, Woman and Equality. **pp. 103 - 108**

It has so far been observed that in considering the God-ordained positions of man and woman, the most basic truth to be kept in mind is the thought of *order*. God, in His wisdom, has determined overall arrangement, and it behoves all to both know what that place is, and then to live in obedience to it. Such *order* is the basis for determining the right relationship between man and woman, as they both obviously have a part in it, according to God's present economy. To ignore or rebel against God's *order* is to court disaster and dishonour Him.

The "arrangement revealed in Scripture.

To pretend to know where every part of God's creation fits into His purposes would be to go beyond what Scripture has revealed, but enough has been written to "know in part".

Angels are seen to be messengers and ministers of God, in a passage which contrasts the superior position of the Son (Heb. i. 6-8 quoting Psa. civ. 4). They are particularly associated with Israel in Scripture, being present at the giving of the law (Acts vii. 53; Gal. iii. 19), figuring prominently in the Second Coming of Christ to that same people (Matt. xvi. 27) and mentioned frequently in those parts of Scripture where Israel's hope is dominant (e.g. Hebrews, Revelation, Acts. cp. also Dan. xii. 1).

Principalities and powers are seen in their relationship to Christ as Head over all things; He being "far above all principality and power" and "the Head of all principality and power" (Eph. i. 20-23; Col. ii. 10). These beings are associated with heavenly places (Eph. iii. 10).

Mankind, in relation to the earth, were given:

". . . . dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Gen. i. 28; Psa. viii. 4-8).

Something of the responsibility and authority of mankind can be felt from the command given them to "subdue" the earth; a word (Heb. *kabash*) translated in II Chron. xxviii. 10 "to keep under", and perhaps suggesting the possibility that were mankind not to exercise their responsibility, then disorder would ensue.

The Apostle Paul, in I Cor. xi. 3, brings together three aspects of God's *order*, in a passage in which the relationship between man and woman is touched upon:

"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

Whilst the word “head” used in this context must be given special consideration in a later study, enough can be seen for now to recognize an *order* in the mind and purpose of God.

Thus it is seen that each part of God’s creation, and indeed the Creator Himself (Christ) has a part to play in God’s *arrangement*. It is fitting that at the head of it all stands the Son of God, of Whom such words as “subject” and “obedience” are used (Luke ii. 51; I Cor. xv. 28; Phil. ii. 8; Heb. v. 8). Such words give an indication of the “mind in Christ Jesus”, and we are exhorted to let this mind be in us (Phil. ii. 5).

An important distinction.

A distinction is to be made between man and woman as *individuals*, and man and woman with respect to their *positions* in the economy of God. It is because this distinction has not been made in time past that so much confusion has arisen as to the “equality” or otherwise of woman with man. The position in Scripture is not that man is superior to woman, but that he has been given (in God’s good pleasure) *a different position*. If this *position* speaks of authority and seems to be superior to that allotted to woman, this is not to be misunderstood as though it means that man himself is superior to woman.

A proper understanding of what is involved in the different *positions* given by God to man and woman, will not only solve many of the problems that arise between them, but provide a principle for clarifying other truth revealed in Scripture. To appreciate the distinction of position mentioned above, it will be necessary to refer firstly to the original creation of man.

The two creation records.

There are two creation records in the book of Genesis. No true believer will need to be told that they are *not* contradictory, but it is as well to observe that they serve *different* purposes.

In all probability the book of Genesis came about (as we now have it) when Moses put together a number of ancient records or histories, which had been handed down from the very earliest times, adding his own contribution. Such a *Mosaic* does not detract from the “inspiration” of Scripture, but rather supports it, in that Moses actually records his sources of information at the *end* (not the beginning, see *New Discoveries In Babylonia About Genesis* by P. J. Wiseman) of each section of the book:

“This is the book of the generations of Adam . . . Noah the sons of Noah . . . Shem”, etc. (v. 1; vi. 9; x. 1; xi. 10).

So it is seen that the first account of the creation of man belongs to “the generations (histories) of the heavens and of the earth”, whilst the second is included in “the book of the generations of Adam” (ii. 4; v. 1). Hence the first record of man’s creation shows

the relationship of mankind to the rest of the work of God, but the second reveals more specifically the man-woman relationship.

In the first account it is only necessary to note that God created mankind “male and female”; but the second requires it stated that, “Adam was first formed, then Eve”, that the woman was created “for the man” and “of the man”, that the man was “commanded” concerning the garden of Eden before ever the woman appeared on the scene (I Tim. ii. 13; I Cor. xi. 8, 9; Gen. ii. 15-18). The second record will, therefore, have more bearing upon the relationship and positions of man and woman.

A help-meet for him.

“Adam was formed first, then Eve” (I Tim. ii. 13). The implications of the order will be more fully considered when the position of the man is studied. But the woman was made as “an help meet” for the man; she was created “on account of the man” (Gen. ii. 18; I Cor. xi. 9).

It is not strictly correct to speak of the woman as man’s “help-meet”. This has come about because the two words were “first improperly hyphenated, and then taken as one word” (*Oxford Dictionary*). The A.V. margin reads, “an help as before him”, and the meaning appears to be “a help *corresponding to him*”, one in whom he would see his reflected image and hence find his completion. In fact the Septuagint version of the O.T. at Gen. ii. 20 has:

“. . . . a help like to himself”,

and even in the Apocrypha (although it is no part of “inspired” Scripture), Ecclesiasticus 36:24 reads:

“He that getteth a wife beginneth a possession, a help *like unto himself*, and a pillar of rest.”

For Adam it was not good that he should be alone (Gen. ii. 18), but the only true companion for him could be one “like unto himself”, his equal in fact. This much is surely seen in the choice that the Lord gave to him in deciding for himself who this one should be.

“And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them” (Gen. ii. 19).

But Adam, although himself formed also out of the dust of the ground, could find no complete satisfaction in any other creature made in like manner. The birds and the beasts brought unto him, although coming equally from the hand of the Creator, were separate entities; Adam sought one with whom he could feel a closer unity, one whose heart beat in time with his own. Hence, after Adam had named every creature brought unto him, thereby indicating to the Lord that none were suitable, at last came the “building” of woman from a part of his own body (Gen. ii. 19-23).

What actually happened physically here is beyond the scope of these articles to consider, but the interested reader might like to give thought to the suggestion made by Dr. R. G. Sobey in a small booklet entitled *Tsela*, in which he says:

“It does not seem possible anatomically to refute the biblical possibility, that the Tsela removed for the upbuilding of Eve was no less than one of the side chambers of the left lung, as then constituted, and more specifically the uppermost and third lobe of that left side.”

Whatever we may think of the above possibility (and of course Scripture gives no details in this matter), it is certain that Adam found in this piece of Divine surgery, a help-meet for him.

“And the man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (ii. 23 R.V.).

Moses almost certainly added the explanation which followed (it is out of place in the mouth of Adam), in which it is seen that the man will find his completion in the woman, the two becoming “one flesh” again when the man “cleaved unto his wife” (Gen. ii. 24). This wonderful unity was to be used later by Paul as a picture of an even more wonderful relationship, which now exists between Christ and the Church which is His Body (Eph. v. 25-33).

Hence it is seen that the woman, *as an individual*, stands on a complete equality with the man; she is his counterpart, “like unto himself”. In God’s ideal and original arrangement, true completeness was to be found when the two came together again (even as they were one originally in the person of Adam); there was to be “one flesh”. Man and woman were not, however, made identical with each other, but possessed those differences necessary for the fulfillment of their respective places in God’s economy; and hence they were to be looked upon as complimenting one another.

The advent of sin into the world, bringing with it a certain amount of disorder, may have spoiled the balance that was originally intended, but it in no way invalidates the truth expressed in Gen. ii. 24. What the situation would have been had not sin entered to spoil, is not the subject of Scripture, but it does seem, on the basis of Gen. ii. 18-24, that every man would have found his complement and completion in a woman; it would have been, one man—one woman—one flesh. That this is not now universally so, nor in fact apparently ever has been, should not cause us to lose sight of God’s original ideal as far as the earth and its economy is concerned.

Man and woman different positionally.

Whilst it must ever be maintained that man and woman as individuals before God stand on equal footing, there can be no doubt at all that they have been entrusted with different *positions* in God’s present economy. Seen from the point of view of “faith in Christ Jesus”, Paul could write:

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, *there is neither male nor female*” (Gal. iii. 26-28).

Also the Lord taught:

“For in the resurrection they *neither marry, nor are given in marriage*, but are as the angels of God in heaven” (Matt. xxii. 30).

Such passages as these seem to do away with the distinction of sex, and hence the respective *positions* associated with that distinction. But there are other places where, for the present economy at least, that distinction is not only to be recognized, but to be lived by. It is in these latter passages that the *position* of the man is seen to be different from that of the woman.

Obviously when it comes to “faith in Christ Jesus” there can be no distinction made amongst men and women, and this must be true whether during the Acts dispensation (as in Gal. iii. 28), or the present one. But *position* is another matter.

Some of the passages which reveal the different *positions* allotted to man and woman, and which must have a bearing upon any conclusions that are drawn, are:

“Unto the woman He said thy desire shall be (subject) to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. iii. 16).

“. . . . the head of the woman is the man” (I Cor. xi. 3).

“Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law” (I Cor. xiv. 34).

“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence” (I Tim. ii. 11, 12).

If such passages seem to suggest that the *position* of the man is superior to that of the woman, this is not to be misunderstood as though it implied that the man *himself* is superior to the woman. There is an important distinction to be made between *individual standing* before God, and *position* in His present economy.

In the next article two examples will be given to show the difference between *individual standing* and *position* in God’s economy and order. An important principle comes to light which reflects not only upon the man-woman relationship, but also upon other aspects of truth, touching even the Deity of Christ.

No.3. Man, Woman and Equality (*continued*). pp. 126 - 130

Attention has so far been drawn to God's desire for *order* in His creation, that every part of that work of His should find its proper place in His *arrangement*. As belonging to God's order, man and woman each have an allotted place, according to His pleasure, in the present economy. But it is necessary to draw a distinction between the *positions* given to man and woman, and their own *individual standings* before God. Misunderstanding of this distinction has led to the non-scriptural idea that man is himself superior to woman, whereas, in actual fact at best, it is only that the *position* allotted to man, since it speaks of headship and authority, is superior. This distinction is now to be illustrated by two examples.

Jew and Gentile during the Acts period.

"The Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail", said Moses to Israel (Deut. xxviii. 13). It is quite evident that in choosing Israel, the Lord never suggested once that they were a superior nation above other nations of the earth. In fact:

"The Lord did not set His love upon (cleave to) you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you" (Deut. vii. 7, 8).

"Love" was the reason for such a choice, and hence Israel were not to exalt themselves, the Lord would exalt them in due course. They were chosen to fill a certain *position* in God's economy for the earth, and this *position* no more made them a superior nation, than God's vesting of the headship in the man placed him as a superior being over the woman.

During the Acts period, when both Jew and Gentile were being called by the preaching to Christ, a distinction is to be observed in this respect. With regard to "faith in Christ Jesus":

"There is neither Jew nor Greek And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. iii. 28, 29).

But Paul could also write:

"What then is the *superiority* of the Jew? or what the profit of the circumcision? *Much in every way*: for first that they were entrusted with the oracles of God" (English Greek N.T. translation of Rom. iii. 1, 2).

And yet:

"What then? are we (i.e. we Jews) *better* than they? *No, in no wise*: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin" (Rom. iii. 9).

Unless the above passages are taken as contradictory, which they cannot be as part of the “inspired” Word of God, then some distinction must be made, and that distinction has regard to the different *positions* held by Jew and Gentile in the earthly purpose of God.

With respect to “sin” (Rom. iii. 9) and “faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. iii. 28, 29), both Jew and Gentile, since they were *both* “under sin” and in need therefore of “faith in Christ Jesus”, stood on an equal footing.

With respect to *position* in God’s economy however, the situation was very different. The Jew here held a *superior position*, having been entrusted with “the oracles of God” (Rom. iii. 1, 2). To them pertained “the sonship, and the Glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises”; they were related to “the fathers” and it was “of” (Greek *ek*, out of) them that Christ came (Rom. ix. 4, 5). This was a *position* of privilege, authority and responsibility, and in this *position* consisted any superiority they had. For this reason even “the gospel” was:

“. . . . to the Jew *first*, and also to the Greek” (Rom. i. 16).
“It was necessary that the word of God should *first* have been spoken to you (Jews)”
(Acts xiii. 46).

Compare also Acts iii. 25, 26; Rom. ii. 9, 10; I Pet. i. 1; iv. 17.

Hence an important distinction is observed which throws light on the situation existing during the Acts period. This situation has since changed with the revelation, through Paul, of the “dispensation of the secret” (Eph. iii. 1-9 R.V.). Under the terms of this present economy the Jew and the Gentile are made into “one new man”, and the distinction between them (created by the privileged *position* of the Jew) has been done away (Eph. ii. 11-22); in fact the situation under the present economy can be expressed as, “There is neither Greek nor Jew” (Col. iii. 10, 11).

There is however, no reason to suppose that the introduction of this administration through the Prison Ministry of Paul, has done away with the distinctive *positions* allotted to man and woman, rather the reverse, for God expects the truth of this present calling to be lived out giving due place to male and female:

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands the husband is the head of the wife husbands love your wives” (Eph. v. 22-33; Col. iii. 18, 19).

To defy such a God-given *order* is to fail to “walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called” (Eph. iv. 1).

An application to the Deity of Christ.

The Deity of Christ is often challenged from such a passage as John xiv. 28:

“My Father is greater than I.”

Here it is the Son that speaks, and a *relationship* is introduced. The same relationship is seen in I Cor. xv. 24-28:

“Then cometh the end, when He (Christ, of verse 23) shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, *even the Father* And when all things shall be subdued unto Him (i.e. Christ, the Son), then shall *the Son* also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

It is quite wrong to read more into these verses than is there in the purpose of God. To argue that the Father is one Being, and that the Son is a lesser Being, is to fail to recognize that a distinction is necessary to understand the *relationship* between the Father and the Son. This same Son is recognized as such by Nathaniel, but He has already been identified by John as “the Word became flesh”, Who “was God” (John i. 1, 14, 49). To argue that a different *Being* is spoken of in these verses, is to make nonsense of language.

Whilst it would be quite wrong to pretend to fully understand the Being of God (and hence the Deity of Christ), enough can be seen to recognize that it is only in the Father-Son *relationship*, where the different *positions* of Father and Son are revealed, that the word “greater” can be used. A father holds a “greater” *position* than a son in everyday life, but it cannot be maintained therefore, that the father is a superior individual to his son. The reader will be conscious that although care is needed in comparing *the* Father-Son relationship, the earthly is in some respects a help in understanding the heavenly.

Hence, as has been already observed in a previous article, even the Son Himself can be seen to have a *position* in the out-working of the purpose of God, and when that position is fulfilled, when “the end” arrives, even He is “subject unto Him that put all things under Him” (I Cor. xv. 24-28).

In God’s *arrangement* and *order* every part of His creation has its place. But so has also the Father-Son relationship in which God has manifested Himself to us. It is not within the scope of these articles to develop the meaning of that relationship, simply to note that it does form part of an overall plan. It also reveals to us just how important the distinction is between *individual standing* and *allotted position*, and that distinction must be fully appreciated if the true conception of equality between the sexes is to be understood. “Male and female created He them” so that each would find their place in His purpose, complementing one another. For either to step out of their God-ordained positions can only lead to tragedy.

The world, having not understood the above distinction, firstly relegated the woman herself, and treated her as an inferior being to the man, and then, when the time of “enlightenment” had come, again misunderstood the true design of God by giving woman a position never intended for her. No true believer has any excuse for being taken in by this misunderstanding, since he has the Word of God for his guidance, and the Son of God for his example. The words “subject” and “obedience” were gladly taken by Him; they should characterize the believer (he or she) in his desire to honour the Lord and walk worthy of his calling.

Limitations of the subject.

Before examining the specific positions allotted to man and woman in the purpose of God, it is necessary to be aware of the limitations imposed on the subject by at least two factors.

(1) In God's original purpose for the earth, as far as it is possible to determine, it was intended that there should be a woman for every man, so that it could be truly said of *all* men:

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh” (Gen. ii. 24).

There seems every reason to suppose that there would have been a perfect balance in numbers of men and women, so that what the Lord observed of Adam would be a true observation of *all* men:

“It is not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. ii. 18),

and this would be remedied in the fulfillment of the “one flesh” of Gen. ii. 24. None of this can of course be proved, since it is obviously not possible to be dogmatic about what the situation *would have been*, had not sin entered, but any Scriptural indications that there are at all points to such a balance as has been suggested above.

With the entrance of sin has come a certain *disorder*, instead of *order*, and as far as God's earthly purpose is concerned at least, the one man, one woman, one flesh conception has been spoilt so that not all married and others practiced polygamy. Some aspects therefore, of the respective callings of man and woman could not be fulfilled in the lives of those, who found themselves outside of this relationship.

As far as Israel was concerned, the production of a “seed” was of prime importance, and a special calling of the woman therefore came to be motherhood, and this could not lawfully be fulfilled outside of the marriage bond. (The levirate law concerning the duties of a “husband's brother” was a special circumstance.) Just how far this has any relation to the present dispensation must later be considered, but it can perhaps be already appreciated that such considerations are likely to impose a limitation upon what can be said (and put into practice) with respect to the man-woman relationship.

When, for example, the headship of the man is spoken of in I Cor. xi. 3, it is at least possible (as suggested by C. K. Barrett and others) that Paul in referring to the “man” (*aner*), actually means the “husband” (*aner* is translated “husband” many times in the N.T.). Hence the “woman” in the same context, would be the “wife”.

“. . . . the head of a woman is her husband” (R.S.V.).

In Eph. v. 22-24 (the present dispensation) the headship of the man is spoken of within that same relationship, and it is not without significance that the wife is to submit herself unto her “own” husband (verse 22).

Such considerations suggest that a man can only *completely* fulfil his position as “head” in relation to a wife, although it cannot be entertained for one moment that any godly unmarried woman should misread this and usurp the position allotted to man:

“I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp (exercise) authority over the man”
(I Tim. ii. 12).

Whilst “man” is here again *aner*, it can hardly be maintained from the context that Paul is confining his word to husbands.

Hence it seems that in interpreting the *complete* meaning of man’s headship, it can only be properly understood (and therefore fulfilled) within the marriage bond. Such will impose limitations upon what can be said (and practiced) concerning the unmarried.

(2) A second limitation to this subject is one which has often to be taken account of in practical truth, that of interpreting a *general* principle into *specific* practice. Paul touched upon this in Rom. xiv. 22:

“. . . . happy is he who has no reason to judge himself for what he approves” (R.S.V.).

Not every aspect of *specific* practice is mentioned in Scripture; the conscience enlightened by the Holy Spirit’s application of the Word of God, is left to decide the rights or otherwise of the believer’s way of life, where there is no “thus saith the Lord” in *specific terms*.

So also with the subject under consideration. The positions allotted to man and woman can be defined in certain terms; the “headship” of the man, the “submission” of the woman; the “authority” of the man, the “quietness” of the woman and so on (Eph. v. 22-33; I Tim. ii. 8-15, etc.), but the *specific* interpretation of those terms in everyday life (except where Paul, for example, *specifically* mentions “praying” in public and “teaching” (I Tim. ii. 8, 12), is left for the individual to work out before the Lord.

Granted that such limitations must be accepted in examining this subject, there is much guidance that Scripture gives whereby all believers might know how (as man and woman) they may “walk worthy of the calling” wherewith they are called.

No.4. The Headship of Man. pp. 151 - 156

The Hebrew word 'head' (*rosh*) is not used of man in his relationship to woman in the O.T., but insofar that it is very frequently represented in the LXX by the Greek *kephale* ('head' in I Cor. xi. 3; Eph. v. 23, two relevant passages in this enquiry) it is important to note its usage. Apart from referring to the human head, the head of the serpent, etc., it is used as follows:

- "... a river ... became into four *heads*" (Gen. ii. 10).
- "... the *tops* of the mountains" (Gen. viii. 5).
- "... the *heads* of their fathers' houses" (Exod. vi. 14).
- "When thou takest the *sum* of ... Israel" (Exod. xxx. 12).
- "... he overlaid their *chapters*" (Exod. xxxvi. 38).
- "... restore it in the *principal*" (Lev. vi. 5).
- "... the *chief* fathers of ... Israel" (Numb. xxxvi. 1).
- "... make them *rulers* over you" (Deut. i. 13).
- "... your *captains* of your tribes" (Deut. xxix. 10).
- "... the three *companies* blew the trumpets" (Judges vii. 20).
- "Ezer the *first*, Obadiah the second" (I Chron. xii. 9).

It is also used significantly of the month Abib, which became for Israel, "the *beginning* of months" (Exod. xii. 2), and in the Psalms of the Lord's word, true "from the *beginning*" (cxix. 160). Hence it is also found represented in the LXX frequently by the Greek *arche* or *archon* ("beginning", "principality"; "ruler", "prince").

Rosh ('head') thus seems to denote primarily, "*priority* or *precedence* in respect of time, order, place or dignity" (Parkhurst). But its usage also suggests that it can include the idea of *origin* or *source* (Gen. ii. 10, beginnings of streams, 'heads'), an important consideration when thinking of the headship of man:

"... the head (*kephale*) of the woman is the man ... the man is not of (*ek*, out of) the woman; but the woman of (*ek*) the man" (I Cor. xi. 3, 8).

The original *source* of woman (in Eve) was man, insofar that:

"... the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He (into) a woman" (Gen. ii. 22).

C. K. Barrett (in his commentary on I Corinthians) refers to a passage in Herodotus (iv.91) where *kephale*, used in the plural form, is applied to the "*source* of a river". (Compare above, Gen. ii. 10.)

Another aspect of the usage of *rosh* (and also *kephale*) is of *the whole number, the sum or principal* as applied to persons (Exod. xxx. 12) or possessions (Lev. vi. 5). Certain papyri and Greek inscriptions, both before and after the period of the N.T., also suggest this meaning:

“In P Oxy 11.273/18 (A.D.95) *kephale* is used of the ‘whole amount’ of land that was being ceded; in *Michel* 588/16 (2nd half ii./B.C.) of ‘the total expenditure’” (*Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* by Moulton and Milligan).

In the N.T. Authorized Version *kephale* is regularly translated ‘head’, although a cognate word, *kephalaion* is twice rendered “sum” (Acts xxii. 28; Heb. viii. 1) and *kephalis*, another word in the same family, “volume” (Heb. x. 7).

Putting all these thoughts together the following three basic meanings emerge as to the Hebrew *rosh* and the Greek *kephale*:

- (1) Precedence with respect to time, order or position.
- (2) Origin or source (out of).
- (3) Sum or whole.

It is not without significance that all three of these meanings are applied to Christ in the N.T.:

- (1) “*He is before all*, and all things hold together in Him. And He is the Head (*kephale*) of the body, the church; Who is *the beginning (arche)*, *firstborn out from the dead*, in order that He might be *in all things, holding the first place*” (Col. i. 17, 18).
- (2) “The Amen, the faithful and true witness, *the origin (arche)* of God’s creation” (Moffatt—Rev. iii. 14).
- (3) “*In Him dwells all the fullness (pleroma)* of the Godhead bodily *the Head (kephale)* of all principality (*arche*) and authority” (Col. ii. 9, 10).

Christ has *precedence* with respect to time, order and place; He is the *origin* of the creation and the *fullness* (related to the idea of completeness) of the Godhead. All things (*ta panta*), in the dispensation of the fullness of the seasons, will be headed up (*anakephalaiomai*) in Him, whilst the church which is His body already enjoys His headship (Eph. i. 10, 22, 23).

The connection of the word ‘head’ with the idea of *sum* (probably associated with the fact that in ancient times the *sum* or *total* of a number of figures was placed at the *head*, not the foot as now, of an account) must not be lost sight of when thinking of completeness in Christ. Insofar that all things found in Him will eventually acknowledge His headship, He having filled these “all things”, they may be looked upon as *summed-up* in Him; Christ must be seen as “all in all” (Col. iii. 11) before I Cor. xv. 24-28 becomes a reality:

“Then cometh the end God may be all in all.”

The man-woman (expressed in the husband-wife) relationship, insofar that it includes the thought of headship, is a pale reflection of realities concerning the relationships between Christ and the church, and God and the whole creation.

The head of the woman is the man.

The title of this section is taken from I Cor. xi. 3 in a context where Paul is dealing with the relationship between man and woman in order to teach truth concerning the veiling or otherwise of the head in a public assembly. The passage is not easy to expound, there being a number of difficulties in it, but these will not detract from what Paul has to teach on the subject being considered.

“I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God” (I Cor. xi. 3).

It has already been observed (in article 3 of this series) that the word “man” here (Greek *aner*) could be “husband”, as in the R.S.V.;

“. . . . the head of a woman is her husband.”

It has also been pointed out, that since man and woman complement each other, then the proper relationship between the two may only be *completely* understood and fulfilled within the marriage bond. These things must be kept in mind in all that is said of their relationship to each other.

Applying now what has been learnt of the meaning of headship from both Old and New Testaments, note first that man has precedence in time and position in God’s economy:

“Adam was first formed, then Eve” (I Tim. ii. 13).

“Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man” (I Cor. xi. 9).

Paul, building upon the prior formation of Adam, deduces from it that the authority to teach (i.e. God’s word) has been vested in man not woman. (He also uses a second argument to enforce his point, but this will be dealt with when the teaching of women is examined in more detail.) More light is thrown on this when the implications of the prior creation of man are seen in Genesis:

“The Lord God took *the man*, and put him in the garden of Eden *to dress it and to keep (guard) it*. And the Lord God *commanded the man of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it* And the Lord God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone*” (ii. 15-18).

It is seen that the man is placed in the garden to “guard it” (Moffatt) and commanded concerning the tree *before* the building of the woman; *he* is the one in whom the authority and responsibility for the garden and its forbidden tree are vested. It is to *him* that the word of the Lord comes, and since there is no record of the Lord having repeated His command to the woman, it is reasonable to suppose that it was also Adam’s charge to make his wife aware of the prohibition concerning the tree. (That she did know of it is evident from iii. 2, 3 even though she minimized it by misquoting.) This charge may reflect on Paul’s word in I Cor. xiv. 34, 35:

“Let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. And *if they would learn*

anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in church” (R.V.).

The same subjection is resident in I Tim. ii. 11, 12. If any woman has any doubt as to what God thinks of this subjective quietness, let her consider I Pet. iii. 1-5:

“Wives, be subject unto your own husbands whose adorning let it not be that outward but the hidden man of the heart the ornament of *a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*”

The headship of man therefore involved him in a *position* of responsibility, a position for which he was fitted in the purpose of God. When he (in the person of Adam) allowed the woman to usurp that place in Eden, a position for which she was evidently *not* fitted (hence her deception), tragedy ensued. The aspect of this responsibility given to Adam which Paul (in a post-Acts epistle) sees fit to dwell upon, concerns the teaching of the word of God. This must therefore be given a large place in our understanding of man’s headship.

Whilst thinking of the tragedy in Eden, note that the responsibility of Adam is further brought out when the Lord takes the reckoning. Note in particular the *singular* forms “him”, “thou” and “thee” in the following quotation:

“And the Lord God *called unto Adam*, and said *unto him*, Where art *thou*? Who told *thee* that *thou* wast naked? Hast *thou* eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded *thee* that *thou* should not eat?” (Gen. iii. 9-11).

Adam is the one first sought by the Lord; *he* is to first give account, insofar that the Lord commanded *him*. The word of God was given to *him* and *he* was held responsible for the failure.

“. . . . by one *man* sin entered into the world by one *man’s* offence death reigned . . . by one *man’s* disobedience many were constituted sinners” (Rom. v. 12-19).

It is evident from the context of this last passage that although Paul uses the Greek *anthropos* (which can be “a human being whether male or female”) he has Adam in mind (verse 14) and not Eve, or man in general. Adam could be looked upon as being, in a sense, in covenant relationship with the Lord:

“They (Ephraim and Judah) *like Adam* have transgressed the covenant” (Hosea vi. 7 R.V.),

and this would explain how it was that “from Adam to Moses” there were those who did not sin “in the likeness of Adam’s transgression” (Rom. v. 14), i.e. against a direct commandment from God. Moses is no doubt meant to represent the Law which brought Israel into *covenant* relationship to the Lord and which involved a number of direct commandments from Him (Exod. xix. 5, 6; xx. 1-17, etc.). Adam, in that the Lord God gave a direct commandment to him, was, in a sense, in a similar position to Israel, and this is probably what is in mind in both Hosea vi. 7 and Rom. v. 14, referred to above.

Man, insofar that the headship is vested in him, stands in a *position* of precedence in the man-woman relationship for the present economy (this not being mistaken with the idea that *he himself* has any precedence, there being no respect of persons with God). This position involves him in certain responsibilities and authority which woman is expected to recognize under the term “subjection” (I Cor. xiv. 34; Eph. v. 22-24; Colossians iii. 18; Titus ii. 5; I Pet. iii. 1-6). (The word “obedience” in the Authorized Version of I Cor. xiv. 34 and Titus ii. 5 is the same Greek *hupotasso* as in the other passages.) For either man to fail to take this position allotted to him (Adam’s failure), or woman to usurp it (Eve’s failure), can only mean a dishonouring both of the Word and the Lord Himself. This is especially serious in the light of the fact that the relationship between husband and wife is used in Scripture as a picture (perhaps a pale one) of that between Christ and the church:

“Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, *even as* Christ is the head of the church Therefore *as* the church is subject unto Christ, *so* let the wives be to their own husbands in everything” (Eph. v. 22-24).

The meaning of man’s headship in specific terms will be interpreted in the lives of those who seek the Lord’s honour according to their understanding of their respective positions before Him. Husband and wife will conduct their lives “as unto the Lord”, “in the fear of Christ” (Eph. v. 21, 22 R.V.), and the knowledge that their relationship in ‘one flesh’ is a picture of Christ and the church, should add to the carefulness of their walk.

With regard to the unmarried, difficulties have already been expressed concerning the fulfillment of the positions of man and woman in their relationship to each other. Again specific walk will be determined as before the Lord, and no godly man or woman will have any desire to do anything which seems to detract from God’s original intention in creating “male and female” and allotting to them particular positions in His good pleasure.

“Be subject to one another from reverence for Christ” (Eph. v. 21 Moffatt).

No.5. The Headship of Man (*continued*). pp. 170 - 175

It has so far been seen that the headship of man, insofar that it involves him in a position of precedence, speaks of a certain authority and responsibility which he is to exercise in relation to the woman, in the purpose of God. The reader is reminded of the three basic ideas which lie behind the Hebrew *rosh* and the Greek *kephale* ("head").

- (1) Precedence with respect to time, order or position.
- (2) Origin or source (out of).
- (3) Sum or whole.

All three of these ideas are applied to Christ in Scripture, it being remembered that man's relationship to woman (expressed in the husband-wife unity) is but a pale reflection of Christ's relationship to the Church (Eph. v. 22-33), where the man pictures Christ.

The aspect of headship which involved man in precedence in time ("Adam was first formed", I Tim. ii. 13, cp. I Cor. xi. 9) has already been considered with some of its involvements. Now attention is drawn to a second aspect, represented under the idea of *origin* or *source*:

". . . . the head of the woman is the man the man is not (*out*) of the woman; but the woman (*out*) of the man" (I Cor. xi. 3, 8).

Closely connected in thought with this aspect of headship is a third, that of *summation* and *completion*, which also suggests *unity*. These last two aspects of headship are seen in Christ in that He is:

"The Amen, the faithful and true witness, *the origin (arche)* of God's creation" (Moffatt—Rev. iii. 14),

and with respect to the Body of Christ:

". . . . speaking the truth in love, we may *grow up into Him* in all things, Who is *the Head*, even Christ: *from (out of) Whom* the whole body" (Eph. iv. 15, 16).

Although this last passage is practical truth, it represents a present realization of the meaning of Christ's headship to the church, which headship will, in the dispensation of the fullness of the seasons, be effected as far as the whole creation "in Christ" is concerned (Eph. i. 10). Then, that whole creation will find its *unity* and *completeness* in Him; it will, in a sense, be *summed up* in Him.

". . . . His purpose which He set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, *to unite all things in Him*" (R.S.V.).

". . . . His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself for the administration of the fullness of times; *to head up all things in the Christ*" (The Englishman's Greek N.T.).

“ His good pleasure which He purposed in Him,—For an administration of the fullness of the seasons—to reunite for Himself (under one head) the all things in the Christ” (Rotherham).

“ the purpose of His design so to order it in the fullness of the ages that *all things in heaven and earth alike should be gathered up in Christ*” (Moffatt).

“ His hidden purpose to be put into effect when the time was ripe: namely, that *the universe, all in heaven and earth, might be brought into a unity in Christ*” (N.E.B.).

“ God’s merciful purpose when the times are ripe for it of *restoring the whole creation to find its one Head in Christ*” (Weymouth).

The above translations of Ephesians i. 10, taken respectively from the R.S.V., The Englishman’s Greek N.T., Rotherham, Moffatt, N.E.B. and Weymouth, give some idea of that aspect of headship which suggests that the creation will one day find its *unity* and *completeness* in Christ.

Hence the whole creation “in Christ” had its *origin*, and will find its *goal* in Him, insofar that He is given as Head. In the headship of man is seen a shadowy picture of this wonderful relationship, and the building of woman took place in such a way that the truth of God’s great purpose in Christ was foreshadowed:

“And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, builded He a woman And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, *because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh*” (Gen. ii. 22-24).

Here, woman had her *origin* in man (“the woman is *out of* the man”, I Cor. xi. 8) and he would find his *goal* and *completion* in her (“cleave unto his wife . . . one flesh”)—a *unity indeed*.

It should be observed that the man does the cleaving, and this is a reminder that it was Christ Who cleaved to the church, not the church to Him. Although it is true to say that the creation finds its completion and goal in Christ as Head, this only so insofar that He first cleaves to it. He is the active one; the church responds to His love. This is always so in the things of God:

“We love Him, *because He first loved us*” (I John iv. 19).
“*Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it*” (Eph. v. 25).

This thought will be seen to explain why it is that the husband is told to “love” his wife, whereas the wife is to “submit” to her husband (Eph. v. 25, 22). Love is initiated by the man (insofar that in this context he pictures Christ) and the woman’s role (like that of the church) is responsive.

There are obviously limitations to interpreting types and shadows used in Scripture, and this must particularly be borne in mind when they set forth Christ. The headship of man is a pale reflection of the Headship of Christ, it can never fully set forth the true position, or accurately represent it. For example, as has been seen already, man and woman stand on an equality with each other, and it is only with respect to *position* that man is found associated with any suggestion of superiority. There are obvious

difficulties in seeking to apply this aspect of the husband-wife relationship to Christ and the Church, for if care is not exercised it could be maintained that Christ (as a Being) is in no way superior to the church, but only positionally! Such a thought cannot be entertained.

However, granted such limitations, and since Scripture itself uses the husband-wife relationship as a picture of greater truths (Eph. v.), a good deal of help may be obtained by comparing these things together. Such comparison ought to have a very humbling effect upon us as we seek to live out in practice, even if only in a shadowy way, our relationship to each other as “male and female”. It is a wonderful thought indeed that this earthly relationship binds up in itself (in picture form, granted) the two mysteries (secrets) of Eph. iii.:

- (1) The secret of Christ, seen by the church as Head (iii. 4, 5).
- (2) *The* secret, concerning the Body of Christ, the Church (iii. 3, 6, 9).

In Ephesians v. the two are set forth in the husband-wife relationship expressed in “one flesh”, and they become, considered together, “a *great* secret” (verse 32). This “great secret” is lived out as a picture in the lives of all who take their God-ordained positions in the husband-wife relationship in obedience to His word.

The Apostle Paul has built practical truth upon two aspects of the headship of man already considered: (a) concerning the recognition by woman of that headship insofar that she has her head covered at worship (I Cor. xi. 3-16) and (b) with respect to teaching and authority (I Tim. ii. 8-15). These passages must be considered in later articles with respect to their relevance or otherwise for the present dispensation.

And he is the saviour of the body.

Do these words, found in Eph. v. 23, and linked to the thought of headship, apply to Christ only, or do they have some relevance to the husband? It hardly seems likely that Paul would have introduced them *in this context*, if they had no meaning at all apart from expressing the work of Christ, as Saviour of the body of Christ, the church. Surely it is logical to reckon that Paul introduced them here for a specific reason, and since his subject is the practical relationship between husband and wife, they must have some truth to convey in that light.

Commentators seem to have been frightened of allowing that this is so, no doubt because it most certainly cannot be maintained that a man is the “saviour” of his wife, if that word is to be given the full meaning that belongs to it when used of Christ.

Soter (saviour) however, may be used in a different sense than that normally conveyed by the English word which always translates it in the A.V. Consider, for example, the following observations from the Greek papyri on *soter*:

“The designation is further extended to leading officials, as when a complainant petitions a praefect in the words (I turn) to you, my *preserver*, to obtain my just

rights' (P Oxy 1.38/18 A.D.49-50), and similarly in the account of a public demonstration in honour of the prytanis at Oxyrhynchus, the multitude acclaim him 'Prosperous praefect, *protector* of honest men, our ruler!' (*ib.* 41/22 ii/iii A.D.)" (*The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* by Moulton and Milligan.)

The word was also used of the Ptolemies and the Roman Emperors, one example in this connection having the phrase (*pan*) *ton soter*, which should be compared with I Tim. iv. 10:

“. . . . the living God, Who is *the Saviour of all (soter panton)* men”

In this last passage the word *soter* is given the meaning “Preserver” in the *Englishman’s Greek Interlinear Literal Translation*, as it is also in F. F. Bruce’s *Expanded Paraphrase of the Epistles of Paul*:

“. . . . the living God, the Preserver of all mankind, especially of believers.”

Considering the context in which these words are found, the translation conveys the right sense in which the Apostle is using the word. Timothy is urged not to be taken up with the exercise of the body (for its preservation), but rather to exercise himself with a view to godliness (7). Not that bodily exercise is wrong, but that it is limited in its service, whereas godliness is profitable for everything, “since it holds the promise of life here and now and of life to come” (J. N. D. Kelley’s translation of I Tim. iv. 8). Timothy is reminded that he has his dealings with the God, Who is the *Preserver* of all mankind. (No doubt there is much more behind Paul’s concern for Timothy than has been suggested here, for the whole passage seems to be a warning against aestheticism, characteristic of later Gnosticism.)

Returning then to the clause of the original enquiry, “and he is the *saviour* of the body” (Eph. v. 23), it may be granted in the light of the usage of *soter*, that although when applied to *the Saviour* it must be given a very full sense, it could be true of the husband in a lesser way. He is to be the *preserver* and *protector* of his wife.

Before asking in what way he is to put this role into practice, it is interesting (and relevant to part of this subject) to note that the idea of *salvation* may be understood in this same way in I Tim. ii. 15:

“. . . . she shall be *preserved (sozo, related to soter)* through child-bearing”

Moffatt has, “Women will *get safely through* childbearing” and Weymouth is substantially the same. This promise will be considered in a later article.

The husband’s role as “protector”.

If it is true to say that Eph. v. 22-33 is a practical passage of Scripture dealing with the outworking of the husband-wife relationship, then it is also logical to believe that the Apostle who wrote it included those thoughts which would be helpful in understanding what was involved in that relationship. It has already been seen that although the clause in verse 23, “and he is the saviour of the body” must apply in its fullness to Christ

Himself, yet, in a lesser sense, it is also true of the husband, insofar that in the relationship being considered, he is a faint picture of *the* Saviour. Hence other truths expressed in their fullness of Christ in this context, may also be taken to have a relevance (even if only partial) to the role of the husband as “head”.

In seeking to answer the question, “In what way is the husband a protector and preserver?”, the following words from verses 25-28 seem relevant:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and *gave Himself for it*; that He might sanctify and cleanse it *that He might present it not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing So ought men to love their wives*”

The ‘love’ which the man is to exhibit to his wife is that which gives itself; a love, true in its fullness of Christ Himself (verse 25, cp. John iii. 16; x. 11, etc.), but pictured in the man. Its object is a presentation without “spot or wrinkle”, two words which it is worth while considering.

“Wrinkle” (*rhutis*) is associated with age, but such may be brought on prematurely through worry or anxiety. The husband’s role as “protector” must surely include the thought of shielding his wife from anything which might lead to “wrinkles” of this nature; He must bear the burdens of the marriage.

“Spot” (*spilos*), also used in II Pet. ii. 13, and found in the verbal form in James iii. 6 (‘defileth’) and Jude 23 (‘spotted’). Dr. Bullinger says of the word, “a spot, a stain; mark, stain, *in a moral sense*” (*Critical Lexicon to N.T.*). The word is associated in the context with “the washing of water by the word” (26), and to a Hebrew, such as Paul, this would bring to mind the O.T. washings which removed ceremonial defilement (cp. Lev. xv. e.g.). Such cleansing was a constant reminder of the need for holiness (the outward being a picture of the inward) before God.

These things being so, the idea of a “spot” in this context, a *moral* blot, suggests that the husband further exercises his place as protector, in that he defends his wife from any such defilement. Was it here that Adam failed, failing to shield his wife from the serpent’s cunning and possible defilement? Did he fail to assert his headship in this way, with the consequence that his wife was “thoroughly deceived” (ITim.ii.14, Weymouth)? It is possible that Adam was with Eve when she was tempted (Gen. iii. 6 note “with her” and “Ye” of verse 4), in which case he most certainly failed to defend her.

However this might be, when the life of Abraham is considered, the same fault is seen, for he opted out of his headship when he allowed Sarah to be thought of as his sister only thereby placing her in moral danger, and the seed with it (Gen. xii. 11-20). Isaac (like father, like son), did just the same (Gen. xxvi. 6-11). Did they inherit this basic weakness from their forefather Adam?

There are obviously practical considerations which make it impossible for a man (living in the present society) to be on hand at all times in the role of “protector”. When the Western World changed from an agricultural to an industrial society, and

thereby demanded that a man should work away from his own home, not only was the husband-wife relationship affected, but the family unit also. However, we note with thankfulness, that at least one aspect of ‘protection’ is afforded by “the word” (Eph.v.26). If husband and wife (“one flesh”) live in obedience to that word, recognizing the specific positions that each have been given in the purpose of God, then they fulfil all that is possible, and this is irrespective of the conditions imposed by any society.

In that relationship, the husband is preserver, protector, provider and deliverer. He must exercise this role as best he can in the circumstances he finds himself, and according as the will of the Lord is revealed unto him. His aim and object, with respect to his wife, should be to shield her from anxiety and moral defilement, presenting her without “spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing”.

No.6. The Failure in Eden. **pp. 187 - 191**

The failure in the garden of Eden has already been touched upon in this series, but since it has a number of lessons to teach which are relevant to the subject of “male and female”, it must be given some consideration. Before looking into this however, there is an important truth which ought to be noticed, and which affects an understanding of the God-ordained positions of man and woman.

Identification.

The human race has come into being in such a way that all mankind are *identified* with Adam; an important truth upon which the Apostle Paul has built great doctrines. This identification can be felt from such a passage as Acts xvii. 26:

“He made of (*ek*, out of) one every nation of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth” (R.V.),

and it is also resident in Rom. v. 12-21, where the “one man” Adam is contrasted with the “one Man”, Christ.

But ‘identification’ is also behind some of Paul’s arguments concerning “male and female”, so much so that Adam, in a sense, stands for man as a whole, whilst Eve represents woman. Consider, for example how Paul rests his case concerning *all* women upon the experience of Eve in Eden:

“I suffer not a woman to teach . . . *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*
And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression”
(I Tim. ii. 12-14).

Similarly, in I Cor. xi., he argues that a woman ought to worship with her head covered, from the facts of Eden:

“For the man is not (out) of the woman; but *the woman (out) of the man*” (8).

This fact was only literally true of the creation of Eve, for since then, as Paul later points out, it has been different:

“For as woman was made from man, so *man is now born of woman*” (12, R.S.V.).

The Apostle Paul wrote under the inspiration of God when he drew attention to this ‘identification’ of all men with Adam, and all women with Eve. He was surely conscious of the fact that there are differences among men, as there are also among women, but he has in mind in both of the above passages, the allotted *positions* of man and woman in the purpose of God. He does not consider whether *any individual* woman has the knowledge, ability, or even the desire to “teach”, he has in mind only that in the good pleasure of God, revealed to him by what happened in Eden, it is not the woman’s place. Was Eve deceived when she usurped the position of her husband?—so is *any* woman likely to be who places herself in the same position, usurping the authority of man. This is identification.

It is therefore important, in considering what happened in Eden, to keep this truth in mind, for it indicates that the tragedy which was enacted there reflects upon a proper understanding of the man-woman relationship, and the respective positions allotted to each of them. In the light of such “identification”, we wonder whether any man or woman would dare to assert that they would have acted differently than did Adam and Eve, when subjected to such a test of obedience?

The transgression of Adam.

The word “transgressions” (Greek *parabasis*) means literally a “stepping aside”. It is used of “*breaking the law*” (Rom. ii. 23), and, as Trench notes in his *Synonyms of the N.T.*, “there must be something to transgress, before there can be a transgression”. Hence it is written:

“Where there is no law, neither is there transgression” (Rom. iv. 15, R.V.).

Adam sinned against a direct command from God entrusted to him, and in doing so was not deceived (I Tim. ii. 14); he deliberately disobeyed God (Rom. v. 19). What induced him to do such a thing?

In seeking an answer to this question it must be remembered that Eve was made in such a way that Moses could write:

“Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall *cleave* unto his wife”
(Gen. ii. 24).

The unity between husband and wife must have been greatly intensified in the first pair, before sin entered to spoil. May it not be that Adam’s affection for Eve overcame his better judgment, and rather than be separated from “the woman whom Thou gavest *to be with me*” (Gen. iii.12), he chose to enter the darkness with her? (In stating this

possibility, there is no desire to whitewash the sin of Adam and make him into a hero, any more than the recognition that Eve was deceived takes from her any blame for what happened.)

The sin of Adam is seen in a clearer light by noting that the word “disobedience”, used of his fall in Rom. v. 19, is *parakoe*, meaning literally “to hear aside”. This again links Adam’s failure to his wife:

“And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast *hearkened* (*akouo* in the LXX) *unto the voice of thy wife*” (Gen. iii. 17).

Another great tragedy resulted from Abram giving way in the same manner; the birth of Ishmael, which brought into being a nation that have ever since been a thorn in the side of Israel:

“And *Sarai said unto Abram*, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And *Abram hearkened* (*hupakouo*) *to the voice of Sarai*” (Gen. xvi. 2).

Ishmael was born (verse 15), but this attempt in the flesh to fulfil the promise of God was rejected by Him, and Isaac was promised (xvii. 15, 16, 21). The interested reader might also like to compare Gen. iv. 23 and xxxix. 10, but just to show that it is not *always* wrong to “hearken unto thy wife”, note Gen. xxi. 12:

“And God said unto Abraham in all that Sarah hath said unto thee (concerning Hagar and Ishmael), *hearken unto her voice.*”

Returning then to Adam, we note how greatly he seems to have been influenced by his wife; firstly in allowing his affection for her to overcome his loyalty to God, and hence in giving way to her “voice”, in the matter of the forbidden fruit. Remembering the thought of “identification”, we wonder just how much this tendency in Adam is a commentary upon all men; it is certainly true of some!

The influence of the woman.

This seems a good point to consider a factor in the man-woman relationship which makes a great impact upon the success or otherwise of a marriage, the important and influential part played by the wife in that union. Unfortunately that influence can be exercised for good or evil, leading either to tragedy (as in Eden) or blessing abundant.

This is not the place to discuss what part the woman’s “influence” has in her calling of God, but it is important to note here what an effect it can have upon the husband, and his position as head.

“A good wife is an honour to her husband; a shameless wife rots all his strength away” (Prov. xii. 4, Moffatt).

“To gain a good wife is to gain a fortune—a boon bestowed by the Eternal” (Proverbs xviii. 12, Moffatt).

“A rare find is an able wife—she is worth far more than rubies Her husband is a man of note She talks shrewd sense” (Prov. xxxi. 10, 23, 26, Moffatt).

The writer of this section of Proverbs ends by calling for praise and due credit to be given to such a woman, who has played such an important part in the blessing and happiness of her husband and children (xxx. 30, 31).

In other passages in Proverbs quite the contrary is seen in other women, who hypnotize men with their charms, and lead them like oxen to the slaughter (ii. 16-19; v. 3-6; vii. 5-27; ix. 13-18). It is true that the women described in these latter passages are harlots and adulteresses, but they are quoted to show just how the feminine charms and persuasion may be exercised to influence for evil, and bring men to dishonour, poverty, ill-health and remorse (v. 8-14). For an example of how a man may throw away all sense of sound judgment before the charms of a woman, consider Herod in Mark vi.:

“. . . . the daughter of Herodias danced *pleased Herod* and the king said unto the damsel, *Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom*” (22, 23).

It may be argued that Herod was drunk and that it was a practice of the time for men in high positions to give rewards to dancers who pleased them (*Ellicott Commentary* on Matt. xiv. 7), but the “sorrow” of Herod is evidence that he was quite conscious of what was going on; his unthinking oath, drawn from him by the charms of a woman, had cost the head of John the Baptist (25-28).

The reader might like to compare as a contrast to this story, the influence for good displayed by Esther, who found herself with a similar promise, and yet turned it to the blessing of her own people (Esther v. 1 - vii. 10, see esp. v. 3, 6; vii. 2, 3).

Whilst the responsibility for failing to exercise his headship must be laid squarely at the feet of Adam (and indeed also of any man who follows his example), it must not be forgotten that marriage is the union of two people who *complement* each other, and that therefore *both* partners influence, for good or evil, the position of “head”. It is surely the experience of happily married believers that neither partner is *conscious* of having to *assert* their proper place in the calling of God, there is a unity brought about by that word which has no need for such pressures; both “influence” the relationship according to their God-ordained positions in the purpose of God.

Love and obedience.

In considering the failure of Adam in Eden, it has been suggested that he allowed his affection for the woman to outweigh his loyalty to God, and it may be thought that, however wrong this may have been, at least it did show the depth of his love for her. But is this so? We know that such things are commonly asserted by the world, but the believer does not take his standard from such a source. The question seems to be “Can *true love* exist apart from obedience to God?”; where “true love” is considered in a Scriptural sense.

There can be but one answer to this, exhibited in the actions of the Father and the Son:

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (I John iv. 10).

The love of God was shown in that *He did not withhold* His Son from the cross (Rom. viii. 32, cp. Gen. xxii. 12, 16); the other side being demonstrated in the “obedience” of the Son (Phil. ii. 8, cp. the same in Isaac Gen. xxii. 7, 8). The picture of Abraham and Isaac fulfilled in *the* Father and *the* Son, demonstrates for ever the meaning of true love, that it is closely related to obedience.

Adam did not exhibit “true love” for Eve in allowing himself to be persuaded to act contrary to the Lord’s will; affection maybe, but not that love which knows obedience. True love in Adam would have caused him to exercise his headship against all persuasion, for he would have recognized in this his wife’s greatest good. No relationship can be lived out contrary to the Lord’s will and expect to enjoy true harmony, or experience true love.

The lesson of Eden concerning the headship of man, is a lesson for all time. “Male and female” ignore it to their own loss and the dishonour of the Lord. No man shows his love for his wife by opting out of his responsibility as head, however well meaning his action may appear to be, and likewise no woman usurping this position given by the Lord to her husband can claim that this is any demonstration of the love she has for him. Love and obedience to the will of the Lord go hand in hand. Herein lies the failure in Eden, and herein also is the tragedy which the world and the professing church are courting.

No.7. The Failure in Eden (*continued*). **pp. 207 - 213**

It has so far been seen that the failure of Adam consisted in the fact that he did not assert his God-given position as “head”, so that he listened to the voice of his wife instead of to the word of God. He exhibited a weakness in allowing his wife to usurp his position, which divulged upon him the responsibility for the garden, “to dress it and to guard it” and the commandment concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. ii. 15-17). This responsibility was given him *before the building of Eve*, a significant fact upon which Paul bases N.T. truth (I Tim. ii. 11-14).

The transgression of Adam involved disobedience, and it is to be noted that in his fall he was not deceived, no doubt suggesting that as “head” he was properly equipped to withstand any temptation from the Evil One. (If he was to guard the garden and the commandment concerning the tree, it is logical to reckon that he had been already equipped by the Lord for such responsibility, for does the Lord give any a job to do without first equipping them?).

Eve however, was apparently *not* so prepared (her calling lay elsewhere) and hence deception ensued.

The deception of the woman.

From the lips of Eve herself came the confession:

“The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat” (Gen. iii. 13).

Paul wrote:

“. . . . the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (II Cor. xi. 3; I Tim. ii. 14).

It is necessary to go back to Genesis itself to find out how this “deception” came about, and since Paul builds important doctrine upon it, it will serve as a useful preparation to consider the steps which led up to this tragedy.

It was shown in a previous article that behind the tragedy in Eden lay the defying of God’s “order”

- (a) Satan, identified as Lucifer, desired a higher position in God’s order than that allotted to him (Isa. xiv. 13, 14).
- (b) The serpent is raised up out of its appointed order by Satan and beguiles the woman (Gen. iii. 1-6).
- (c) The woman steps out of her appointed place by reasoning with the serpent, instead of referring him to her husband as the guardian (Gen. iii. 1-6).
- (d) Adam listens to the voice of his wife instead of to the word of God. He thereby opts out of his headship (Gen. iii. 6, 12, 17).

Now note the steps in the deception of Eve:

SERPENT. “Can it be that God has said, ‘Ye shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?”

The crafty serpent expresses surprise at the stringency of God’s commandment, at the same time throwing doubt on whether God can have indeed said such a thing. The serpent has in fact used a clever trick (which has been employed in argument many times since) of quoting something *like* the word of God (not the word itself), concerning which he will now be able to show its unreasonableness. He has *added* to the original word from God, making the commandment more stringent; the *one* tree of Gen. ii. 17 has become “every tree” (the idiom requires “any tree”) in iii. 1. Upon *this* falsification he then throws doubt.

Eve is partially taken in by this trick, for in answering, she herself misquotes the original word of God:

Eve. “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat, but from the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘Ye shall not eat from it, and ye shall not touch it, lest ye die’.”

Following the serpent, Eve also *adds* to the word of God, “and ye shall not touch it”, at the same time *minimizing* the penalty of disobedience from “surely die” (ii. 17) to “lest ye die” (iii. 3). (The expression “thou shalt surely die” is literally, “dying thou shalt die”, an emphatic figure which shows the certainty of death, if disobedience occurs.) Note how the woman has been already influenced by the Devil’s opening words in which he has implied severity and unreasonableness on the part of God. She herself makes His commandments more severe (“and ye shall not touch it”), whilst suggesting that God cannot surely mean *certain* death (“lest ye die”), that being unreasonable. She also omitted the gracious emphasis “freely” (ii. 16 with iii. 2).

The mind of Eve is now already prepared for the serpent’s next words, “God does not really mean what He says”. She has herself failed to give His words their full weight, now the serpent takes her a further step:

SERPENT. “Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.”

Here is a direct contradiction of the word of God, but with the cunning twist that, although God may well have *spoken* of the certainty of death, this was only said to deter Adam and Eve from partaking of a fruit which offered so much; God was in fact withholding something from them which would make them like Himself in knowing good and evil. The serpent does not suggest for one moment that there might be a very good reason for the withholding of this knowledge at this time, but simply presents God as one who has made an idle threat to keep mankind from it.

In examining the words used by the serpent in iii. 4, 5, it will be noticed that, apart from the first statement, “Ye shall not surely die”, *the rest is truth* (see iii. 22). This cunning mixture of truth and error, which contains the root of the temptation put before Eve, is too much for her:

EVE. “And the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and the tree was desirable to make one wise, and she took from its fruit, and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. And the eyes of them both were opened” (iii. 6, 7).

Here in this final step lies the triumph of Satan. The word of God has been misquoted, doubted and openly contradicted, and now the woman turns from it altogether *to her own judgment* (“And the woman *saw*”). The tree appeared to have everything to offer; it looked appetizing, was aesthetically pleasing, and perhaps even more important, it offered knowledge. She judged that it was alright to partake of it; she was “thoroughly deceived” (I Tim. ii. 14, Weymouth).

Satan’s triumph through the serpent came about for at least two reasons, both of which are relevant to what Paul builds on this tragedy in I Tim. ii. 11-15:

- (1) The woman stepped out of the position allotted to her in the good pleasure of God, and usurped the authority of the man (given him in Gen. ii. 15-17), taking a place for which she was not fitted.

- (2) She mishandled the word of God, adding to it and minimizing its terms (iii. 2, 3), and then eventually turned from it to her own judgment (iii. 6). She preferred intuition to inspiration.

Upon these two aspects of the failure of Eve, Paul bases truth for all women. (It might be added at this point that the writer of these articles is not responsible for what the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to record on this or any other matter, but he is responsible to faithfully deliver it.)

It would be a logical sequence to what has been seen of the failure of Eve in Eden, to go on now and consider what has been said in I Tim. ii. concerning the teaching of women, but that subject is reserved of a separate article. Hence it seems a good point to notice how the punishments meted out to Adam and Eve, because of their respective failures in Eden, were to remind them constantly of their failures, and God's intended places for them in His economy.

The reckoning.

It is a wonderful commentary on the nature of God, that *He came seeking Adam* after the fall; and then, not in the heat of the moment, but "in the cool of the day" (iii. 8). He came also not to vent his spite upon his creatures, but in love, and with the promise that the Devil and his works would one day be destroyed (Gen. iii. 15; Heb. ii. 14, 15; I John iii. 8 cp. John iii. 17). But it was not possible that things could remain exactly as they had been before the entrance of sin (Gen. iii. 22-24); there must be a reckoning.

Yet even in this reckoning the mercy of God shines through, for the punishments meted out to Adam and his wife were not arbitrarily chosen, but gave promise of life and taught man and woman that in future they should consider God's order, and their respective places in it.

Unto the woman God said,

"I will greatly multiplied thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and *thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*" (Gen. iii. 16 margin).

The first words recorded in Scripture said to the man and woman together were:

"Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. i. 28).

We have no reason to suppose that the first three terms of this command could be fulfilled in any other way than is now the experience of man and woman; an experience in which the woman plays the major part, insofar that she conceives, carries, brings forth and nourishes a child. That the production of a seed was of prime importance as far as God's earthly economy was concerned will be shown later in more detail, but here in Gen. i. 28 is the first suggestion of it. Upon the woman divulged the main part of this responsibility, and it was in keeping with this that the woman (when the reckoning was

taken by God) should be kept constantly reminded of the presence of sin by now having “sorrow” attached to her experience.

But in this sorrow there shone through hope, for it was to be “the seed of the woman” that would bring salvation and restoration to mankind (Gen. iii. 15; Matt. iii. 20, 21). I Tim. ii. 15 has sometimes been connected with this promise of Christ by translating:

“She shall be saved through The Childbearing” (i.e. the birth *par excellence* of Christ Himself).

The whole context of the passage mitigates against this suggestion, however, and it may also be noted that *strictly speaking* salvation comes only through the *death and resurrection* of Christ, not His birth (I Cor. xv. 14, 17 etc.).

What the Apostle actually meant in I Tim. ii. 15 by the phrase “she shall be saved through the childbearing” (lit.) will be made the subject of a separate study, when it will be seen that the words have more in common with the thought of *working out one’s salvation* (cp. Phil. ii. 12) than with initial salvation in Christ. A woman will work out her own salvation, not by usurping the position allotted to man (in this context, “teaching”), but by abiding in her own calling in faithfulness and love. Eve was reminded of her peculiar calling in that now it was to be worked out in “sorrow” (Gen.iii.16). Such was the first part of the reckoning.

The second part of the judgment pronounced upon Eve, emphasized the first:

“Thy desire shall be subject to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee” (Gen. iii. 16 margin).

A number of translations suggest that the first part of this verse means, “Your desire shall be *for* your husband” (R.S.V.); Moffatt and N.E.B. are similar. But the A.V. margin and *The Companion Bible* are more in line with the whole context, “thy desire shall be *subject to* thy husband”. The LXX renders the Hebrew *teshuqah* (‘desire’) by the Greek *apostrophe*, “turning”.

As the ‘desire’ of the woman had led her astray in Eden (Gen. iii. 6), so that desire should now be under the control of her husband; her “turning” should be “subject” to him, and he would exercise authority over her in this respect.

But this “rule” (Gen. iii. 16) was not meant to become despotic, making the woman little different from a slave, a situation which became the rule in ancient and modern heathenism, and was even perpetuated under so-called Christendom. Rather was it an emphasis of the relative positions of male and female in God’s original design, positions which should have their roots in mutual respect and love, with obedience to God as the prime motive.

In the light of the revelation concerning the Body of Christ, it may be wondered how relevant this “rule” now is. But the Apostle Paul has no hesitation in using the word

“submit” of the wife in such a context no less a parallel than that of the Church to Christ (Eph. v. 22-24). Mr. C. H. Welch wrote:

“The idea of ‘submission’ in Ephesians v. is not one of a humiliating or servile description, but of recognizing the Lordship of Christ, and so to be willing for the lowest or the highest place, as He shall will” (*Christ and the Church in Home and Business*).

Whether it be the ‘rule’ of Gen. iii. or the ‘submission’ of Eph. v., one thing is quite evident; that God desires both male and female to remember their respective places in His wise economy.

Hence it is seen how that the judgment pronounced upon Eve was God-ordained place in the man-woman relationship, expressed in the idea of “submission”. The punishment of Adam was intended to do as much for him also.

Unto Adam God said,

“. . . . cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee In the sweat of thy nostrils shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground” (Gen. iii. 17-19).

Adam had failed to assert his headship over the woman, who in turn, together with Adam, had failed to keep the animal creation in subjection (Gen. i. 27, 28; iii. 1-7). He now was to get a lesson from nature which would constantly remind him of his failure to exercise his authority; the ground would everywhere exhibit signs of his fall, and he would henceforth have to exert his strength to keep it in control (“the sweat of thy nostrils”—iii. 19). He would be kept in mind that he was the strong partner in God’s economy; the woman was “the weaker vessel” (I Pet. iii. 7); he was to be employed in keeping ‘order’ in an earth which now had every evidence of disorder. As such he could surely not forget his proper calling of God at the “head” of God’s “order” in the earth.

So were “male and female” taught, even in failure, their proper places in God’s overall design. But it seems not to have been long, before (through the line of Cain) every effort began to be made to take the mind off the cursed ground and its lessons. Cities were built where man could forget the severity of life, and amusements and pastimes devised to concentrate his thought elsewhere (Gen. iv. 16-22). It is not without significance that the building of the first city is in the context of leaving the Presence of the Lord (Gen. iv. 16, 17).

It is beyond the scope of these articles to consider how such things have developed into the system which is so much a part of our everyday lives; civilization, with its comforts and attractions which give no sense of the heritage of Eden. But whilst it is *not* suggested for one moment that many of these things are intrinsically wrong, it would be tragic, if in the life of any believer, they played such a major role in his experience as to detract from the Lord and His intentions through “male and female”.

The world of industry and business has been responsible to a great extent for blurring the distinctions between the sexes. It is sad indeed to see this also happening even

amongst professing Christians. A proper understanding of the failure in Eden (alas just a myth to so many) will correct any such tendency in those who love the Lord and His Word.

No.8. The Calling of Woman. **pp. 228 - 233**

Insofar that the headship of man has already been considered in this series of articles, and this speaks of a relationship, the calling of woman has also been touched upon. Also in article No.2, when referring to the equality of man and woman, it was seen that, since woman was built originally as an “help meet” for man, she is thus his complement. It would be a good preparation for the present article, if the reader went back to these previous articles (Nos.2,4,5) and read again what has been written there.

Woman created on account of the man.

The Scriptural reason for the creation of woman is made clear in two passages:

“It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him . . . and the Lord God . . . made He a woman . . .” (Gen. ii. 18, 21-23).
“Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man” (I Cor. xi. 9).

It will be appreciated that on the basis of these words, the *peculiar* calling of woman cannot properly be understood apart from her relationship to man. (By her “peculiar calling” is meant her calling *as a woman*, not her calling, for example, as a member of the Body of Christ, although the latter calling must obviously include the former.) She was originally built as a complement for man, the two together forming a unity—“one flesh” (Gen. ii. 24). There seems to be no reason to assume that this original intention has changed since, even in such a spiritual calling as the Body of Christ (cp. Eph. v. 22-33). What does have to be taken into account however, is that with the entrance of sin, this unity and relationship (which can only be realized in what we call “marriage”) does not always come about. Some do not marry for one reason or another, and there are times when it is expedient not to do so (cp. I Cor. vii. 25-40). Such things as these impose limitations on this subject, as has been already indicated in article No.3.

Before proceeding any further it is important to make it quite clear that since both married and unmarried (men or women) are called as members of the Body of Christ, it is obviously possible for them to “walk worthily” of *that* calling, whether single or married. Otherwise, Paul’s exhortation in Eph. iv. 1 would be so much mockery from the Lord. But there are further responsibilities which divulge upon the married (Eph. v. 22 - vi. 4; Col. iii. 18-21), and which represent part of *their* worthy walk. These latter responsibilities are a reflection of the *peculiar* callings of man and woman, understood and realized fully only within marriage.

Woman and the Earthly Calling.

By “the Earthly Calling” is meant, that calling of God which deals with the peoples whose hope is earthly in sphere, Israel holding the first place. Such a calling is revealed in the greater part of Scripture (the whole of the O.T. plus all the New with the exception of Paul’s post-Acts xxviii. epistles, viz., Eph., Phil., Col., I & II Tim., Titus and Philemon). How relevant the calling of Womanhood in this Earthly Calling is to the present Heavenly purpose of God, must be given consideration.

Having noted the basic reason for the original creation of woman, “on account of the man”, “as a help meet for him”, consider now the first command given to man and woman *as a pair*.

“And God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth”
(Gen. i. 28).

The words “fruitful multiply replenish” refer to the production of *a seed*. Both male and female are involved in this of course, but the burden obviously falls upon the woman, insofar that she is the one who conceives, carries, bring forth, suckles and protects the child in its early years. A large part of her special calling therefore involves her in *motherhood*. This is also appreciated from Gen. iii. 20:

“And Adam called his wife’s name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”

“Eve” means life or life-spring, and she was named by Adam in connection with her special calling of being a spring of life—motherhood.

The name “Adam” similarly conveyed a truth (remembering that the Hebrew *adam* is many times used of a human being, whether male or female—cp. Gen. i. 26, 27 “man”). Deriving from the word *damah* (see *An Alphabetical Analysis*, Part 1, page 36 by Charles H. Welch). It was a reminder that man was made “in the *likeness* of God” (Gen. i. 26; v. 1).

Referring again to Eve, it is also noted that when she is judged by the Lord after the fall, her particular punishment (which was not arbitrary) referred yet again to this special calling:

“I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children” (Gen. iii. 16).

Even the wonderful promise given to woman in I Tim. ii. 15 (written, it may be noted, after Acts xxviii.) points in the same direction.

“She shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and holiness with sobriety.”

In the Earthly Calling, where Israel predominated, the production of a seed was of prime importance. Israel was to be a great nation, and that greatness included amongst other things, numerical strength (Gen. xii. 2; xiii. 16; xxii. 17; Exodus i. 7-9;

I Kings iv. 20, etc.). Under such circumstances it was looked upon as a “reproach” for a wife to be barren (Gen. xxix. 31; xxx. 22, 23), and part of the Lord’s blessing upon Israel was fruitfulness and safety in bringing forth young (Exod. xxiii. 26; Deut. vii. 14; xxviii. 4).

“Lo, sons are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward”
(Psalm cxxvii. 3, R.S.V.).

It seems also that outside of Israel, and probably stemming from the original command to Adam and Eve in Gen. i. 28, similar ideas were held about barrenness. Abimelech, king of Gerah (a city of the Negeb) who lived in the time of Abraham, had a taste of the judgment of God when “the Lord fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech” (Gen. xx. 17, 18).

A very big part of the calling of woman, as far as the Earthly purpose of God was concerned, was motherhood, and *the* great honour which was to be bestowed upon womanhood had been made known from the earliest times:

“the woman her seed it shall bruise thy (the serpent’s) head” (Gen. iii. 15),

and when the fullness of time came, “God sent forth His Son, *made of woman*” (Gal. iv. 4). Herein lay the great privilege and blessing of womanhood, to be the vehicle whereby the Word would become flesh, a promise which had its fulfillment in Mary, “blessed amongst women” (Luke i. 28, 42).

But this special calling of woman, the calling of motherhood, is very much tied to the Earthly Calling of God, where the production of a seed was of prime importance. How relevant is it to the present Heavenly Calling?

Motherhood and the Body of Christ.

It is quite evident from Scripture that the members of the Body of Christ have no command from God to produce a seed. Such a command, if it did exist, would be of such an important nature, that it would appear clearly in Paul’s epistles of the Mystery, written from his Roman prison. But no such word is found therein.

On the other hand it is necessary to guard against a too spiritual outlook on this subject, which views the bringing forth of children as something too fleshly to have anything to do with such an high and holy calling as that given to the Body of Christ. Such an attitude savours of Gnosticism, which has been a great detractor from truth in all ages.

Writing after Acts xxviii., Paul assumed the existence of children in more than one context:

“*Children*, obey your parents in the Lord ye fathers, provoke not your *children* to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. v. 1, 4).
“. . . . she shall be saved in *childbearing*” (I Tim. ii. 15).

“A bishop then must be one that ruleth well his own house, having his *children* in subjection with all gravity” (I Tim. iii. 2, 4, see also verse 5).

“I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, *bear children*” (I Tim. v. 14 R.V.).

Paul’s admonition in the last passage is even a corrective so that no occasion should be given to the adversary (Satan, verse 15?) to revile.

It is necessary to take balanced view of childbearing within the calling of the Body of Christ, not reading into it terms which belong only to the Earthly Calling of God, vested largely in Israel, but on the other hand not confusing the spiritual nature of the present calling as though it mitigated against children. Whether or not members of the Body of Christ ought to have children (assuming the possibility) and how many, is one of those personal matters between the individual and the Lord. It introduces aspects of this subject which the writer does not consider are part of public exposition, since the Scriptures do not directly refer to them (the rightness or otherwise of contraception, for example). Such aspects as these must be left to Christian couples, as before the Lord, to decide.

However, there are a number of points that such couples might well keep in mind before reaching any decision as to what part motherhood is to play in the present calling of woman. They refer to differences between the situation in Israel when the Earthly Calling of God was in progress, and the present situation.

Firstly, there are not wanting indications that since the bearing of children formed a large part of the calling of woman in Israel, then she was given special strength to perform this function.

“. . . . the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for *they are vigorous* and are delivered before the midwife comes to them” (Exod. i. 19, R.S.V.).

The word “vigorous” (A.V. “lively”) here is the Hebrew *chayah*, cognate with *chavah*, “Eve”, a name given to her in view of her special calling, “mother of all living” (Gen.iii.20). Whilst it cannot be ruled out that the midwives, who made the above statement, may have been lying to protect their own skins, it is probable that they did in fact speak the truth. The rapidity and ease of delivery of Arabian women in even modern times is remarked upon in the Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on Exodus 1:19 (referring to the writings of Burkhardt and Tischendorf).

This is not to say of course, that such strength and vigour were universal among Israel (or any other nomadic people not enfeebled by the luxuries of civilization). Nor is it right to assume that every birth was perfect; untimely births were not apparently unknown amongst the Israelites:

“Wicked men may they wither like *an abortive birth* which melts away or *a still-born child* which never sees the sun” (Psa. lviii. 3, 7, 8, N.E.B.).

There was however the promise of Psa. cxxviii. 1-3:

“Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; that walketh in His ways *The wife shall be as a fruitful vine thy children like olive plants*”,

and who can judge what measure of blessing (of this nature) might have been enjoyed by the whole nation of Israel, if only they had hearkened to the Lord’s judgments, to keep and do them (Deut. vii. 12-15)?

Turning now to the Body of Christ it is quite evident that no such fruitfulness, nor special “vigour”, is promised to married women in connection with their calling within this company (although I Tim. ii. 15 should be taken into account), and this must be a factor to influence any understanding of the role of motherhood in this present calling.

Closely connected with this in thought, is the fact that part of the blessing of the Lord upon Israel involved their becoming a nation of great multitude, as the “dust of the earth”, “the sand upon the sea shore” and as “the stars of the heaven” (Gen. xiii. 16; xxii. 17). No such promise is associated with the calling of the Body of Christ.

A further point of difference that may be noted is that whilst an Israelite woman might look upon herself as under the judgment of the Lord if she were found barren, wringing from her such a cry as that of Rachel to Jacob (“Give me sons, or I shall die”) or such a vow as Hannah vowed before the Lord (“If thou wilt grant me offspring, then I will give the child to the Lord for his whole life”)—Gen. xxx. 1; I Sam. i. 11, N.E.B., there is no suggestion that barrenness ought to be viewed in such a light in the present calling.

Over against these points however, are the following thoughts taken from the post-Acts xxviii. ministry of Paul, which, it is trusted, may help the reader to arrive at some sort of balanced view between the extremes that some have been led into.

Paul sees in the ability of a man to manage his own household well, keeping his children in submission and respectful in every way, the kind of quality required in an overseer of an assembly (I Tim. iii. 1-5). Such a statement suggests that Paul considers it perfectly natural in the present calling, to have children, in fact the family circle seems to provide a good training ground (in this context) for such a position of responsibility.

I Tim. v. 14 is part of a special context dealing with widows. Paul shows a realistic appreciation of the emotional problems of “younger widows” (R.V.), and as an expedient desires, that in order to afford the Adversary no grounds for slander, they should remarry and have children. It is beyond the scope of this article to consider the context in any detail, and it is only brought forward here to show that Paul saw nothing wrong or unspiritual in motherhood; in fact here it serves as a corrective against gossip and misconduct (verses 11-13, 15).

Finally, it ought not to be forgotten, that perhaps the most “spiritual” calling of all, that revealed especially in Ephesians and Colossians, includes within it terms the ideas of “household” and “family” (Eph. ii. 19; iii. 15) when seeking to make known something of the purposes of God in Christ. The same epistles, which minister such a high calling, and take the believer to “heavenly places” (Eph. i. 20; ii. 6, etc.), are also just as

concerned that a walk, “worthy” of that calling should include right relationships between *parents and children* (Eph. vi. 1-4; Col. iii. 20, 21).

All the above points, based upon Scripture, must be taken into consideration at least (to say nothing of many others which are purely common sense, e.g. health, environment and economies), in determining for the believer, as a member of the Body of Christ, just how far motherhood remains today a part of the peculiar calling of woman.

The Plan of God.

*(Being a series of studies in the Scriptures, made for broadcasting in America.
They have the beginner and even the unbeliever in mind,
and are an attempt to present the Truth of the Scriptures in the simplest possible way.)*

No.37. The Epistle to the Philippians (4). pp. 16 - 20

We concluded our last study with the magnificent reaction of the Apostle Paul to the activities of his enemies at Philippi, who were seeking to add affliction to his bonds, doubtless out of jealousy and animosity. "What of it?" he exclaims. Whatever is happening, Christ is being proclaimed! This was what really mattered to the Apostle, who could rise above the rigours of his imprisonment and the petty behaviour of these people. He was sustained by "the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" and their intercession for him (Phil. i. 19). Whether his "salvation" mentioned in verse 19 meant his deliverance from prison, or the final salvation with eternal glory (II Tim. ii. 10), the context does not make clear, but there is room for both conceptions. The latter one certainly fits in with the following verse, in which the Apostle mentions his "earnest expectation" and the hope of not being "ashamed", which looks forward to the Lord's future assessment of his service.

"According to my earnest expectation and hope, that in nothing shall I be put to shame, but 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 R.V.).

It would seem that Paul had Job xiii. 16 in mind, where the LXX is identical. "This is also shall be my salvation" (R.V.).

The one thing that is dominant in Paul's thought right through this section is the proclamation and exaltation of Christ; self is completely left out. "Christ shall be magnified" is the note that is stressed right through; whether he lives or whether he dies is not the first concern of the Apostle. Either can contribute to the glory of the ascended Lord Jesus as He wills.

At first glance, verse 21 seems to contradict this:

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Whose gain? Christ's or Paul's? Most expositors seem to think it is Paul's, *but this would contradict the very spirit of this context*. It would introduce a self-motive which was completely lacking in the Apostle's mind here. Even if chapter iii. is remembered with its stress on the "prize of the high calling" (iii. 14), we must not assume that this is the only theme that is brought forward in this epistle. Paul has certainly avoided the spirit of Peter when he said "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" (Matt. xix. 27). *The Companion Bible* note on Phil. i. 21 is,

“if his bonds had furthered the Gospel, what might not his death do?” and this is to the point. There is a structural *chiasm* here, which, when fully filled out, reads:

“For me to live is Christ (His gain), and to die is (Christ’s) gain.”

If we could only catch this spirit so that the whole of our life and service aims solely at Christ’s glory and magnification!

Apokaradokia, “earnest expectation”, is a picturesque word, used only by Paul in two contexts; Rom. viii. 19, “the *earnest expectation* of the creation”, and here. It was possibly coined by him and describes a keen anticipation of the future, literally a “craning of the neck” to see what lies ahead. This future certain hope bore a relationship to his imprisonment and testing, making them “a light affliction”, while he looked at this future glorious scene (II Cor. iv. 17, 18), and so enabling him more resolutely to magnify the Lord *in his body*, whether in its present sufferings or in final martyrdom!

At this point the Apostle’s language becomes broken and irregular, reflecting in a vivid way his thoughts as they pass from the possibility of further service for the Lord on his release from prison, or the giving of his life for His Saviour.

“But if to live in the flesh—if this is the fruit of my work, then what I shall choose I wot not” (i. 22 R.V.).

The R.V. margin gives the alternative reading “I do not make known”. *Gnorizo* occurs 24 times in the N.T., but never in the sense of “knowing”. It is generally rendered make known, or declare, and what Paul is saying here, is not that he did not know what to choose, but he did not *make it known*. Whatever his personal desires were, he put them on one side for the will of the Lord to be accomplished and His glory furthered.

Two alternatives presented themselves to him: (1) departing and being with Christ, (2) staying in this life with the object of serving Him and His people.

“But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better; yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake” (i. 23, 24 R.V.).

These are two opposites which put him under constraint. He was “hemmed in on both sides (J. B. Lightfoot). If he merely considered himself, then to be with Christ was infinitely better, with all the sufferings and imperfections of this life finished for ever. But the spirit of this intensely unselfish man so controlled him that he was willing to put self and its desires entirely on one side. It was more needful for the Philippians (24) that he should stay here, and so this became the overriding consideration.

What a lot of wishful thinking and even rubbish has been read into the statement “to depart and be with Christ”. Those who indulge in this seem to have forgotten that Paul had already dealt with the state after death and resurrection to follow in I Cor. xv., and II Cor. v., and that, being the man he was, he was not likely to contradict himself and cause confusion among the churches. The fundamental doctrine of the resurrection of the

believer has been so jettisoned by modern Christianity, that many are only too glad to seize on this verse to support their unscriptural views. It can be said with certainty that, for the believer in the N.T. there is no way out of the grave except by resurrection, whether it is as the consummation of his certain *hope*, or an out-resurrection, a special one in connection with his *prize*. Those who do not believe this conveniently stress Phil. i. 23 and forget Phil. iii. 11 “if by any means I may attain to the out-resurrection, out from among the dead” (literally). This was the Apostle’s great desire in chapter iii., and it does *not* express an opposite sentiment to i. 23. The two must and do blend together. To consider departing and being with Christ, apart from his longing for this unique resurrection, shows a biased mind.

This is not the place to give a detailed exposition of II Cor. v., but the reader should ponder it carefully and prayerfully and he will then see that the last thing Paul wanted was the *death state*—for that was like *being naked*. He rather longed for “*his house from heaven*”, the permanent dwelling of the resurrection body in contrast to the temporal tent of the present mortal one. Without such a resurrection, believers who had died were perished (I Cor. xv. 18) another verse which the wishful thinkers conveniently ignore.

As to the *timing* of either the believer’s resurrection or out-resurrection, we do not go into here, having already dealt with this point elsewhere. Far too much has been made of the *timing* rather than the *certainty* of these resurrections, and this timing is invariably by inference rather than from the clear teaching of Scripture. As far as the *experience* of the believer goes in these matters, it will be “death and sudden glory” for those who have “fallen asleep in Christ”. There is certainly no legitimate ground here for violent disagreement or faction, and in these intensely dark and difficult days we need to take heed and not allow the enemy to come in as the divider of the brethren, and so nullify the Divine unities of Eph. iv. and the practical unity in service brought forward in Philippians.

Coming back to the context of Phil. i. 24, we have noted that the Apostle Paul put any private desires of his own on one side, and considered the needs of his loyal supporters at Philippi:

“And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide, yea, and abide with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith” (i. 25 R.V.).

Not only this, but he felt confident that he would be released from his prison, and be in a position to visit them again (26). This would give them much joy. The A.V “rejoicing” is too mild. *Kauchema* is really “glorying” (as R.V.), or better, exultation. What a rich answer this would be to their prayers for the Apostle, and how it would thrill their hearts to see him again in the flesh and share with him the spiritual riches in Christ!

Verse 27 commences a section of exhortation and example, and no notice should be taken of the chapter break, for this section goes on to ii. 18.

“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ” (i. 27 R.V.).

The verb *politeuesthe* is correctly rendered in the R.V. margin as “behave as citizens worthy”. It could be rendered, “let your life as citizens be worthy of the gospel”. They had a heavenly citizenship (iii. 20) and their present life here should reflect this, whether Paul was able to visit them or not.

We need constantly to be reminded that there is a three-fold injunction to “walk worthy” in the prison Epistles:

“Walk worthy of the calling” (Eph. iv. 1).

“Walk worthy of the gospel” (Phil. i. 27).

“Walk worthy of the Lord” (Col. i. 10),

and this covers every circumstance in the home and outside. The Philippians, as Roman citizens, were intensely proud of their civic privileges with all the benefits that accrued by being a Roman colony. Though living far from Rome, they enjoyed privileges as though they were resident there. As Dibelius puts it, “it signifies a colony of foreigners whose organization reflects in miniature the *politeia* of the homeland”.

Similarly, from a spiritual standpoint, though far away from heavenly places, they were citizens by grace of an exalted sphere *there*, and thus could not avoid the responsibility that such an overwhelming blessing brought. We too, are in their position; from one sense very much on this earth, yet our home is not here. We are pilgrims, passing through to our eternal home in the heavenlies. May our practical response be like the Hebrew believers who by their faith and conduct declared plainly that they sought a better country, a heavenly one (Heb. xi. 14-16).

No.38. The Epistle to the Philippians (5). pp. 34 - 37

In our last study we were reminded of the three-fold injunction to “walk worthy” in the prison epistles of Paul. The new section of Philippians, upon which we now enter, commences in i. 27 with the word “only” which is emphatic, as it is in Gal. iii. 2. It has the force of “above all”, for the Christian practice which follows is essential if the truth is ever to make progress. If groups of believers cannot practically exhibit in their corporate life what they profess, who is going to listen to them seriously? The word that the Apostle uses is not the usual one, *peripateo*, but *politeuesthai*, which is cognate with the word “conversation” A.V., or “citizenship” R.V. of Phil. iii. 20. In the verse we are considering, the R.V. is to be preferred. “Let your *manner of life* be worthy of the gospel of Christ”, and in the margin we read, “behave as citizens”.

We have already pointed out the force of all this. If the Philippians as Roman citizens enjoyed great civic privileges, then they must also face up to the responsibilities which these brought. Likewise, as citizens of the heavenlies, they must act accordingly, and reflect this by standing together with dauntless courage in absolute *unity in service and*

witness. There is no doubt whatsoever that this thought completes the precious unities of the Spirit, faith and body in Eph. iv., which form such an important part of the believer's "worthy walk". To talk about guarding these, at the same time to do anything that spoils the group-unity in service, is to delude oneself.

To enforce this truth, Paul's vivid mind quickly turns from the figure of civic privileges to a team of athletes united in mind and spirit:

"Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one soul striving for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing affrighted by the adversaries" (i. 27, 28 R.V.),

and this thought is repeated in iv. 1, "stand fast in the Lord". Any possibility of the spoiling of internal harmony, such as had occurred in the Corinthian church, was dreaded by the Apostle. He knew only too well how such disruptive work played into the hands of Satan and ruined the witness for the Lord. The Philippians must stand not only individually, but *together as a company in one soul* (literally) and *one spirit*. They must *strive together*, "*sunathleo*", a term connected with the games, which Paul uses again in II Tim. ii. 5 R.V.:

"And if also a man *contend in the games*, he is not crowned, except he have contended lawfully."

They must do this *together*, and this is the recurring thought in this most practical letter, which we ignore to our peril. Such united steadfastness, in spite of all attempts to scare them, would be a "manifest token of perdition" to their opponents. Moffatt vividly translates "fighting side by side", and over all this the Lord was presiding, overruling all to the Philippians' ultimate salvation and their being "more than conquerors" (Rom. viii. 37), while allowing the enemies, with the powers of darkness behind them (Eph. vi. 12), to manifest their own perdition.

The "faith of the gospel" is surely all that "good deposit" of truth which they had received through Paul's ministry, and which the enemies were seeking to overthrow. It was a privilege, not only to receive this by faith, but to *suffer* for it. The word "given", *echaristhe*, is formed on the stem of the noun *charis*, grace. To suffer for God-given truth is not something to be regarded with dread, but a mark of His signal favour, granted for Christ's sake. Such a view would transform the situation and enable the Philippian church to come through with flying colours whatever persecution they were called upon to endure. One is reminded here of Peter and John, who, after being flogged, departed from the Sanhedrin "rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name" (Acts v. 41).

Such suffering then did not come by accident. The Lord was in control, and rather than being a mark of His displeasure, it was one of His approval. And moreover, the Lord identified Himself with the suffering of His children, as Paul doubtless remembered from the words of the Saviour when He arrested him so dramatically on the road to Damascus, and said "I am Jesus, Whom thou persecutest" (Acts ix. 4, 5). Paul reminds

the Philippians that, not only were they being tested, but he himself was sharing in their sufferings, in his Roman prison. This he emphasizes by the word “same”:

“Having the *same* conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me” (i. 30 R.V.).

They were engaged in a common struggle, in part of which they had seen him involved in the early days at Philippi.

The Apostle now adds to his plea for practical unity with a further four-fold stress. The “if” of ii. 1 is not one of doubt. There was nothing more certain than the realities to which he appeals. “If” could be rendered “since”, or supposing it to be retained, we must add the thought of “as indeed is the case”. There is no verb in the Greek and most translations supply the verb “to be”, but possibly “avails” might be better. Moffatt renders the passage:

“So by all the stimulus of Christ, by every incentive of love, by all your participation in the Spirit, by all your affectionate tenderness, I pray you to give me the utter joy of knowing you are living in harmony, with the same feelings of love, with one heart and soul, never acting for private ends or from vanity, but humbly considering each other the better man, and each with an eye to the interests of others as well as to his own” (ii. 1-4).

This rendering gives the sense of the passage well. *Paraklesis* in verse 1 can be rendered “exhortation” as well as “consolation”, and this would enforce the Lord’s authorization, “exhortation in Christ”, to what Paul was saying, showing it was more than a personal plea. “Comfort of love” is the next bond that they should have to keep them together. In Col. iii. 14 it is described as the “tie [bond] of love”. This unselfish love is God-given and should cement them together in their witness. The third is “participation in the Spirit”, practically sharing all the riches He has given through His truth. “Bowels and mercies” is best taken together as hendiadys “affectionate tenderness” (Moffatt), the bowels being looked upon as the seat of the emotional state, “the abode of tender feelings” (Lightfoot).

All this should have constituted a stirring appeal to the Philippian church. These lofty motives which have their origin in the Lord, if responded to, would complete the Apostle’s joy and would lead to a four-fold result, being “of the same mind” (ii. 2 R.V.), “having the same love” (the love of verse 1), “being of one accord” (together in soul, literally), “of one mind” (repeating the verb *phronein*). Paul piles up these expressions, deliberately stressing practical and outward unity. The Philippians could be left in no doubt that this manifest unity in service was an absolute essential *in the pathway to the heavenly prize*. To ignore this was to invite the risk of running the race in vain and being disqualified by the Lord. Such an attitude of mind would lead to *strife* and *vain ambition*, and the only antidote was the opposite qualities of *unselfishness* and *humility*. This humility is stressed at the outset in the “worthy walk” of Eph. iv. 2. The Apostle himself had exhibited it constantly in his witness and dealing with the churches. He could truthfully say that he had served the Lord “with all humility of mind” (Acts xx. 19). This saved him from the original sin of pride and self-exaltation. Later on in the chapter he is going to bring forward the example of the Lord Who humbled Himself (verse 8).

Real unselfishness, so often talked about but so little practiced, would deliver from the bondage to self and the claiming of one's rights, "not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (verse 4 R.V.). The spirit that wins the prize is not concern for ourselves, but first of all for the needs of others. Self-renunciation is a hard lesson to learn, for with all of us the "I" has great pull, and we must watch constantly that self-interest does not enter into our motives for Christian service.

In order to enforce this most necessary lesson, in fact it is the very essence of this letter to the Philippians, Paul brings forward examples in the lives of others, the first thing being the supreme example of the Lord Himself:

"Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (ii. 5 R.V.).

There is no verb in the second part of the sentence. The A.V. and R.V. supply the verb "to be", but most modern expositors take the phrase "in Christ Jesus" in the usual Pauline sense of being *positionally* in Christ. F. F. Bruce's paraphrase is, "Let your purpose and attitude of heart be that which is becoming in those who are one in Christ Jesus". This is acceptable if it does not remove the introduction of the Lord as the Example above all others. If we still keep to the A.V. and R.V. rendering, we must realize that it is not the mind of Christ *as a whole* which Paul is exhorting the Philippians to have. It would be impossible for any limited human being to contain *all* the mind of God. Here it is rather the particular aspect of complete unselfishness which the Lord so wonderfully exhibited when He left all the glory that was His before the creation, and was willing to stoop so low, ending in the death of the cross for our sakes.

The great passage that now follows, is one of the most profound in the Bible, and has been recognized as such by Biblical scholars from the first centuries onwards. It abounds with difficulties in interpretation. The Scriptures say very little about the pre-existence of Christ before creation and this very fact complicates the teaching even further. One thing we may be sure of—Paul was not writing this passage to overwhelm the believers at Philippi, nor Christians of succeeding generations. The primary purpose was not to give a complete revelation of the position Christ had in eternity past, but to stress the exceeding love which was willing to give Himself to the limit and which we must have, if we are going to "run well" in the heavenly race.

In examining this context, we shall find there are seven steps of the Lord downward from the glory to the cross, and seven steps upward to that same glory that was His, originally, and this is balanced in the structure of the epistle by the seven gains of Paul in the flesh and his seven gains in the Spirit in chapter iii. 7-11.

<i>Seven-fold Humiliation of Christ</i>	<i>His Seven-fold Exaltation</i>
(1) He emptied Himself (made Himself of no reputation)	(1) The Name above every name
(2) Became a bond slave	(2) Every knee shall bow
(3) Likeness of a man	(3) Things in heaven
(4) Fashioned as a man	(4) Things in earth
(5) He humbled Himself	(5) Things under the earth
(6) Obedient unto death	(6) Every tongue shall confess
(7) Even the death of the cross	(7) Jesus Christ is LORD

Many are the interpretations of this passage, and one might well be daunted in trying to ascertain the correct one, but we remember that the words used must have a definite meaning and have been within the comprehension of the Philippians, otherwise their important teaching would have been valueless.

No.39. The Epistle to the Philippians (6).
pp. 56 - 60

We are seeking to expound one of the most profound passages in the Bible namely Phil. ii. 5-11, dealing with the pre-incarnate Christ and His seven voluntary steps downward from the glory that was His before His Nativity, to the shame and degradation of the Cross, followed by seven steps upward to the glorious position He relinquished. Before we seek to deal with this section, we wish to point out that it was probably a hymn, and if so, it is one of the earliest examples of Christian hymnody we possess. Ernest Lohmeyer in his work *Kyrios Jesus* (Heidelberg 1928) pointed this out, noting the way the sentences are constructed and the rhythmical cadence of the lines. If this is so, one would expect it would be possible to arrange them into stanzas, and Lohmeyer has done so with six stanzas with three lines thus:

- (1) Being in the form of God
He considered it not a thing to be seized
To be equal with God.
- (2) But emptied Himself
By taking the form of a slave
Coming in human likeness
- (3) And appearing on earth as a man
He humbled Himself
Becoming obedient unto death (indeed death on a cross)
- (4) Wherefore God highly exalted Him
And bestowed on Him the Name
That is above every name
- (5) That at the Name of Jesus
Every knee should bow
Of things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.
- (6) And every tongue shall confess
Jesus Christ is LORD
To the glory of God the Father.

Other scholars have modified this, but it is possibly true and would fall in line with other hymns contained in the N.T. such as the Nativity Canticles in Luke, and the hymns of praise in the Revelation and elsewhere. In view of Eph. v. 19 and Col. iii. 16, what more natural than that the early church should sing the praises of One who was so rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that through His poverty we should become eternally rich and endow us with such a high and holy calling? As to whether Paul composed this section of the epistle as a hymn, or is using another's composition under the Spirit's guidance, we cannot know for certainty. That the Apostle was capable of poetry of the highest order, "the hymn to love", as it has been called, of I Cor. xiii. clearly testifies.

But what early hymn has been so difficult to interpret? One writer, Karl Bornhauser, has observed that when there has been gathered all that has been written and issued on these verses, one has a library! Yet, as we have before stated, the passage must have been such that the Philippian believers could understand it, at least in a measure, otherwise it would have been of little value to them. And so, we take heart, believing that, if we notice very carefully what has been written, and avoid either adding ideas of our own or subtracting from the Divine record, we can receive such an understanding ourselves under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

For those who are capable of deep study, and who have an up-to-date background of N.T. Greek, the writings of J. Lightfoot and E. H. Gifford may be consulted, together with other Biblical scholars of the Victorian period. The twentieth-century writers such as Barth, Lohmeyer, F. W. Beare, Dibelius, Jeremias, M. R. Vincent, among many others, give a different view point and should be weighed over in the light of Scripture. One recent monumental work is R. P. Martin's *Carmen Christi*, but this is a work chiefly for advanced students. Mr. C. H. Welch's *The Prize of the High Calling* is an obvious choice for those who value a rightly divided exposition, although Mr. Welch would never claim that what he has advanced is the last word on this Philippian passage. However, his deep insight into the truth made known through Paul's epistles, must always command respect and should never be ignored.

There are a number of points we must carefully consider in the exposition of Phil. ii. 5-11; (1) *Being* in the *form* of God. (2) The meaning of *morphe*, form. (3) Robbery *harpagmos*. (4) To be equal with God, *to einai isa Theo*. (5) He made Himself of no reputation, literally, He emptied Himself. (6) He took upon Him the form of a slave (servant). (7) He was made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in fashion as a man He humbled Himself even to the death of the cross. If we can get a Scriptural conception of these eight points, we are well on the way to understanding what lies behind this profound passage.

***Huparchon*, being in the form of God.**

The word "being" is not the verb "to be" but *huparchon* "existing", though we must remember that this word had a weakened sense, almost equivalent to *einai*, to be, in N.T. times, as the grammarians such as Liddell—Scott—Jones, Moulton—Milligan, Bauer—Arndt—Gingrich, and A. T. Robertson, testify. Cognate with *huparcho* is *huparxis* (Acts ii. 45 "goods") and *huparchonta*, the participle used as a substantive, also translated a number of times "goods", thus being practically identical with "I have". Note Peter's use of *huparcho* in Acts iii. 6, "silver and gold *have* I none".

Huparcho can denote an original or fundamental possession as I Cor. xi. 7 testifies. Man is the image and glory of God, not by acquirement, but in virtue of his original creation by God (Gen. i. 27). Whatever *morphe* consists of, it was Christ's original possession. Very little is revealed in the Scriptures of the Lord's pre-incarnate state, and we need to be very careful in dealing with or accepting all the statements of the creeds. One would have thought that all careful students of the Bible would have insisted that, if

ever there was a place where the actual wording of Scriptures must be carefully handled and adhered to without addition or subtraction, it is here. Yet what do we find? Too often mere influence or guess-work form the basis of theological ideas which cannot therefore be equated with the revealed truth. Some dogmatically push the sonship of Christ before Bethlehem, totally ignoring the fact that there is no direct statement of God's Word or revelation on this point. Where the Divine Book keeps quiet, we should be quiet too. We are certain that Divine sonship is true of the holy Babe yet to be born, for the angel definitely states this to be the case in Luke i. 35. Note he does not say that the holy thing that shall be born is called the Son of God but "*shall be called*" so.

The two important passages which deal with Christ's pre-incarnate existence are John i. 1 and Col. i. 15-19. What a magnificent opportunity the Apostle John had, when writing the prologue to his Gospel, of stating the eternal Sonship of Christ, if this was truth! He could have written:

In the beginning was *the Son*, and *the Son* was with God and *the Son* was God,

but he did not do so! Before Bethlehem the Lord Jesus was the *Logos, the Word*. Here we are on sure ground. Being originally the "Word" must therefore be parallel or identical with "being in the form of God", and had this been carefully considered, much profitless speculation that has been written on this passage would have been avoided. Of Christ's eternal existence we have no doubt, for if he was God, this must be true, but in *what capacity* had He always existed, is the point at issue.

Those who deny the Deity of Christ are unreliable expositors of the passage with which we are dealing. They rest on false premises. They perpetuate the fallacy of arguing from human experience, that a son implies a pre-existing father, not realizing that the word "son" is used in both Old and New Testaments divorced from the idea of generation or priority. In Hebrew, age is expressed by the phrase "the son of --- years", and the N.T. uses such expressions as the "sons of disobedience". It was one of the commonest ways of expressing identity.

Having misunderstood this, Arians often project the father-son relationship before Bethlehem and so, with a double error, they give us darkness rather than light. John i. 1 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was God", must be before our minds all the time when dealing with Phil. ii. 6-11 or we shall surely go astray. We have read a number of expositions from well-known scholars where John i. 1 is not even mentioned.

We come to the other great passage which deals with Christ in His pre-incarnate existence, namely Col. i. 15-19, where He is designated as the "Image of the invisible God". The Greek for 'image' is *eikon* which the LXX uses to translate the Hebrew *tselem*, image, in Gen. i. 26, "Let us make man in our *image*, after our likeness". In Dan. iii. 19 we have the phrase "the *form* of his (the King's) countenance", where the Aramaic equivalent *tselem* is rendered in the LXX by *morphe*. In fact *eikon* and *morphe* are used as interchangeable terms in the Greek Bible which helps us in our understanding of *morphe* in Phil. ii. The same can be said of *eikon* and *doxa*, glory, in the LXX, and

we remember that Gen. i. 27 is directly quoted in I Cor. xi. 7; man is the “image and glory” of God, and the Lord Jesus Himself is described as the “Image and glory of God” (II Cor. iv. 4). The magnitude of God’s glory is such that, unmediated and unveiled, no creature can see or endure it. It can only be seen partially by creation in Image—the Lord Jesus Christ.

To some extent the uncovered glory of God in its full blaze of light and majesty must be veiled. This Moses had to learn when He desired to see God’s glory (*see* Exodus xxxiii. 18-23). This tremendous glory then is bound up with Christ, the *eikon*, Image of God. God is spirit (John iv. 24) and as such He has no dimensions or shape from which a likeness could be fashioned, as in the creation of Adam. God cannot be seen in His essence; only in His Image, the Lord Jesus Christ, and He wills that all the redeemed will finally be conformed to this Image (Rom. viii. 29). Even in the heathen world, it has been shown that an image, *eikon*, was not held to be a mere *representation* of an object, but was believed in some way to participate in the *being of the object* it symbolized. In some way, it *was* the object it represented, and as it has been expressed, it was “the reality itself coming to expression”. How much more is this true with the Godhead! In Christ alone we see expression of the Divine glory, “the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Cor. iv. 6). James ii. 1 literally reads “our Lord Jesus Christ, the glory”.

Summing up then, *morphe* (form), *eikon* (image), and *doxa* (glory) are definitely connected in the Scriptures and throw light on each other. This should help us when we come to consider *morphe* by itself. It is not too much to say that a clear understanding here with respect to *morphe* gives us a good foundation for the correct appreciation of the rest of the hymn. We intend to proceed carefully and reverently, studiously avoiding ideas that are not backed up by the clear testimony of Scripture. We realize that this study is very difficult, but we have no means or ability to turn the “strong meat” of the Word, the deep things of God, into milk that all can receive without effort.

No.40. The Epistle to the Philippians (7).
pp. 71 - 74

In our consideration of the profound passage in Phil. ii. 5-11 we now address ourselves to the meaning of *morphe*, form—"Who, being in the *form* of God". What adds to the difficulty of interpretation is the fact that many of the key-words and terms do not occur elsewhere in the N.T., so that we have no usage to guide us. *Morphe* only occurs once more, namely Mark xvi. 12. *Harpagmos* ("robbery") does not occur in the LXX and is a rare word in secular Greek. *Huperupsoo*, "highly exalted", is a unique word in the N.T as is *Katachthonios*, "under the earth". Some words and expressions are used in an unusual way. The verb *Kenoo* ("made Himself of no reputation") only occurs in four other contexts in Paul's writings and then in a bad sense (Rom. iv. 4; I Cor. i. 17; ix. 15; II Cor. ix. 3). *Schema*, "appearance", is only used once elsewhere by the Apostle (I Cor. vii. 31).

***Morphe*, the form of God.**

The standard commentary of J. B. Lightfoot on Philippians published in 1868 makes a convenient starting place in modern interpretation together with the work of E. H. Gifford, *The Incarnation, a Study of Philippians 2:5-11*. Lightfoot compares in detail a similar word *schema* ("fashion" in Phil. ii. 8) and concludes that *morphe* stands in contrast to *schema* as that which is intrinsic and essential is in contrast with that which is accidental and outward. He cites some parallels with Plato and Aristotle and comes to the conclusion that this word is used in a sense substantially the same as it bears in Greek philosophy, not that Paul was deliberately deriving his sense from this, any more than the Apostle John did when he used the word *logos*, "word", a term already used by the Greek philosophers.

Lightfoot's conclusion is clearly stated: "Though *morphe* is not the same as *phusis*, 'nature' or *ousia*, 'being', yet the possession of *morphe* involves participation in the *ousia* also." The same understanding is found in E. H. Gifford who states that *morphe theon* "is the Divine nature actually and inseparably subsisting in the Person of Christ" (*The Incarnation*, p.16). "The term includes the whole nature and essence of Deity" (p.19). The same viewpoint is taken by H. R. Mackintosh, and H. C. G. Moule.

One thing we must keep in mind is that the later archaeological discoveries giving much additional light on the Greek of N.T. days were largely denied these scholars. It is now clear that *morphe* does convey something relating to outward appearance, but at the same time we must not confuse it with *schema*, or treat the words as though they were synonymous. *Schema* refers to an outward appearance which does not express inner reality. Abbott-Smith describes the difference "as the outward and accidental" as contrasted with "the inward and essential". It may mean a "false appearance". In the corresponding verbs, the Lord Jesus is "transformed" or "transfigured" on the mount in glorious splendour (verb from the root *morph*). Believers are being *metamorphosed* into

the image of Christ (II Cor. iii. 18), both these instances being something more than just outward appearance. But when Satan is transformed into “an angel of light”, and his ministers into “ministers of righteousness”, the verb used is a compound of *schema*, for this transformation is something outward only—merely a disguise.

As we have *morphe* again in verse 7, “He took upon Himself the *morphe* of a slave”, it would be helpful if we inquired as to what *morphe* can mean in this connection and here, as we are *within the realm of human experience*, we can come to a true understanding which should certainly assist us in our consideration of the “form of God”. We are amazed that so many expositors have not done this. Did a slave in N.T. times merely *look different* from his master, or did this go much deeper? Obviously it did, for a slave had no rights or possessions of his own; he belonged body and soul to his master and was virtually his property, to be bought or sold or even killed as his owner wished. The *morphe* of slave then is clear. It denoted the *status* of a slave which doubtless reflected itself in his outward appearance, for we cannot imagine that a slave’s outward appearance was the same as his master’s. There was therefore both an *inward* and *outward* aspect of the *morphe* form, of a slave. It can hardly be possible that the word *morphe* can be used in a completely different sense *in the previous verse*. There is no need therefore to make the word mean *essence* only (as Lightfoot and others), nor just outward appearance as the glory of God (as many modern commentators). It is not an either/or position, but a *combination of both*.

Moulton and Milligan say that *morphe* “always signifies a form which truly and fully expresses *the being which underlies it*” (*Vocabulary of N.T. Greek*). As Greville Ewing (*a Greek and English Lexicon*) expresses it, “this word is sometimes used to denote the *nature itself or substance* of anything” (our italics). Marvin R. Vincent in *Word Studies in the New Testament* states “*Morphe*, form, is identified with the *essence* of a person or thing”. “To say that Christ was in the form of God, is to say that He existed as essentially one with God.” The expression of deity through human nature, thus has its background in the expression of Deity as Deity in the eternal ages of God’s being. Whatever the mode of expression, it marked the Being of Christ in the eternity before creation. “As the *form* of God was identified with the *Being* of God, so Christ, being in the form of God, was identified with the being, nature, and personality of God.”

J. J. Muller in a footnote (*The Epistles of Paul to the Philippians and Philemon*) says, “*morphe* denotes the *inner being*, as it *actually* and *concretely* realizes itself in the individual”. We therefore come to the conclusion that this difficult word refers to an *outward* visible manifestation of an *inner* essence or reality, not just one or the other. The Lord Jesus, in His pre-incarnate state, as the Image of the invisible God, appeared to the heavenly beings as God *because in reality He is God* (John i. 1). His outward visible appearance expressed His essential nature and character and this nature and character is that of God. As one scholar puts it (T. A. Thomas) “If he were not truly and fully God, He could not have been in the *morphe* of God”.

It has been noted too, that *morphe* and *eikon* image, are closely linked, and it has been shown by commentators that even in ancient thought an image was not held to be a *mere*

representation of an object but in some way to participate *in the being* of the object it symbolized. In some sense it *was* the object it represented, “the reality itself coming to expression”. This is all in line with the meaning of *morphe* in Phil. ii.

He thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

Our next problem is the meaning of *harpagmos* “robbery”. We have no help from its usage, for, as stated before, it occurs nowhere else in the N.T. and not once in the LXX. Furthermore, it is very rarely used in Greek literature generally. The word may be taken actively as the A.V., or passively as in the R.V. “Counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God.” One view means that equality with God was Christ’s normal possession and inherent right. It was not a thing to be seized, for in the “form of God” He had no need to grasp after that which He already had. The other view is that the Lord did not consider equality with God a thing to be maintained at all costs, “a prize which must not slip from His grasp” (Lightfoot), but emptied Himself and became incarnate. The question is not only which view fits the present context, but also *the remoter context of John i. 1 and Col. i. 15-18*. We feel that this has been forgotten by many expositors. Furthermore, are the expressions the “form of God” and “on an equality with God” parallel expressions? Those who say “yes” hold the view that the pre-incarnate Word already possessed equality with God and therefore there was no need for Him to attempt to seize it, but on the contrary, He voluntarily humbled Himself. The other view postulates that before Bethlehem Christ had not this equality. He could have seized it, but rather than doing so, chose the lowly path of obedience and humbling, waiting for the Father to exalt Him as Lord and give Him this equality which He did not have previously. This latter view has been largely followed by expositors since Lightfoot’s day. We ask therefore which view fits the context of the *whole* of Scripture dealing with the Word Who was God and then in due time, God manifest in the flesh? In appealing to the *example* of Christ, do we expect to read of a right which He did not possess and might have seized, or a glory which He had and renounced for us and for our salvation, and one day will receive back again manifestly to all creation?

For ourselves, though not the fashion at the moment, we believe the latter view is the true one. However, there are modern scholars who accept it, such as S. H. Hooke (*Alpha and Omega*) and W. Barclay (*Great Themes of the New Testament*). Dr. Barclay writes, “Jesus Christ did not consider His own equality with God an act of seizure and of plundering. There was no necessity that He should do so, for that equality was His by right”.

We are told by some expositors that this view does not fit the context, but we are absolutely at a loss to understand why this is so. In our estimation it fits not only the context we are dealing with, but, as before stated, the remoter context of John i. 1 and Col. i., which is apparently forgotten by these critics and *must be taken into consideration* if a Scriptural and correct understanding of Phil. ii. 5-11 is desired. This may seem to raise a problem in the exaltation mentioned in the verses that follow but we must not try to trim the first statements of this hymn in order to fit (as we may think) its final lines.

The pre-incarnate Word was God and therefore equality with God was not something which the Word had any need to seize or usurp. But this very expression to “seize or usurp” seems to imply a contrast, and this has been seen by many expositors, some of whom contrast the Lord with Adam who grasped at the knowledge of good and evil, and others with Satan, who as Lucifer, attempted to seize divine honours.

With the former view, I Cor. xv. 47 is brought in with its teaching of Christ as the second Man and last Adam. Even here we must take care not to exceed what has been written, for some have done this, picturing the pre-incarnate Christ as little more than a heavenly man who descended to the earth. This view is apparently quite widely held among evangelical scholars. We will examine both these views in our next study, and we shall find that, if any contrast is intended by the Apostle, it is more likely to be with Satan and his ambitious pride rather than with Adam.

No.41. The Epistle to the Philippians (8). pp. 96 - 100

In our last study of the profound passage in Philippians ii. 5-11, we saw that, in His pre-incarnate state, the Lord Jesus had no need to seize “equality with God”, and suggested there may be a contrast here with either Adam or Satan. Quite a number of expositors have taken the former view, which is that Adam fell for Satan’s temptation recorded in Gen. iii. 5 “Ye shall be as God”, thus grasping at Deity which he certainly did not possess.

However, this is surely a misunderstanding of Gen. iii. To begin with these interpreters only *partially quote* verse 5, and thereby miss the full meaning. The whole verse reads:

“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods (or God), *knowing good and evil.*”

What Adam was grasping at was the knowledge of good and evil, not the position of God Himself. To believe the latter is to read into the verse what is not there. Adam’s sin was bad enough without adding to it. There is always a right time for knowledge and in Adam’s case God saw that this had not yet come. Doubtless as he developed, at some future time this knowledge would have been imparted, but knowledge without adequate moral and spiritual development is fatal, and looking on the world scene today, this should be obvious. When will some of our modern educationalists learn this? Man is acquiring knowledge which he is not fit to have, and in almost every case this is being twisted to wrong ends.

That the “knowledge of good and evil” can be a good thing Heb. v. 14 testifies, “but strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age (i.e. mature), even those who by reason

of use have their senses exercised *to discern both good and evil*'. Such knowledge is for the mature mentally and spiritually; it is not for undeveloped babes, and this is what Adam was at the beginning.

No one surely is going to argue that the 'mature' who attain to the knowledge of good and evil, thereby attain to Deity and become God!

Furthermore, there is no hint anywhere else in Scripture that Adam was deliberately grasping after the position as God. Rom. v. deals clearly with Adam and his fall, but there is not a hint here of any such ambition. The whole of this extraordinary idea comes from partially quoting Scripture and thereby misquoting it, and should be a warning to us all.

If any contrast is intended with Christ in the Philippian passage, then it is much more likely to be with Satan, who certainly did grasp after God's position, and still seeks it. Isa. xiv. and Ezek. xxviii. show us that Satan in his unfallen state was probably the first and the most glorious of the angelic host, the chiefest of God's creation, but he was not satisfied with this. He said, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God I will be like the most High" (Isa. xiv. 13-14). In other words he tried to seize God's position and to be God Himself. This was in utter contrast to the Lord Jesus, the pre-incarnate Word, Who was willing to humble Himself and stoop so low.

We must also take account of the Heavenly man theory which links Dan. vii. 13, 14 and I Cor. xv. 45-47. Some, like Lohmeyer, assert that Paul used the Gnostic myth of a Primal man, who, as a heavenly Redeemer, descends from heaven to accomplish a saving mission, and re-ascends back to heaven, taking back with him the trophies of victory. This we reject absolutely. God's revelation in His Word is not dependent on the darkness of pagan philosophies; rather it is the other way round. Gnosticism is often a corruption of Divine truth.

But there are some who hold to a similar theory and maintain that it can be substantiated from Dan. vii. and I Cor. xv. However, a careful scrutiny of these passages will show the falsity of such a view. If we take what is probably the grandest description of O.T. theophany, namely Ezek. i. 4-28, we find the prophet trying to describe what is really indescribable. All he can do is to use human terms to set forth in some measure what he saw, hence the frequent use of "like" and "likeness". Above the firmament he saw "*the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire, and upon the likeness of the throne, was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it*" (i. 26). He speaks of the *appearance* of fire of His loins, and the bow that is in the cloud.

All these were the nearest human terms to describe the vision, but the reality utterly transcended his words. His eyes took in something of the Lord of glory, just as Isaiah did, when he too saw "the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the Temple", and his ears heard the solemn worship of the seraphims crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory. And the posts

of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke” (Isa. vi. 1-4).

In neither case did these prophets see someone who was just an exalted man. What they saw in a measure was the pre-incarnate Christ and His overwhelming glory. With this accords Dan. vii. 11-14. Daniel likewise saw One *like* a son of man (R.V.), but the prophet is careful not to say that he saw a man, but One Who had a human appearance which is quite a different thing.

When we come to I Cor. xv. 45-47 we must take care not to read into it what is not there. Scripture is very clear that Christ took upon Himself manhood at Bethlehem and not before. He Who, as the Word, was God (John i. 1) in due times became flesh (i. 14) and so became the Second Man and Last Adam (I Cor. xv. 45, 47). He was not “flesh” before His Nativity and those who describe Him as the Primal Man in glory before His incarnation are exceeding the revelation of Scripture, and to bring any of these utterly inadequate ideas into the context of Philippians we are studying is disastrous to its understanding.

Proceeding with our consideration of this passage, we read in the R.V.:

“. . . . Christ Jesus, Who, being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, *taking* the form of a servant, *being made* in the likeness of men” (Phil. ii. 5-7).

It is to be noted that the A.V. “made Himself of no reputation” is literally rendered “emptied Himself”. The Greek is *kenoo*, hence the term *kenosis* and the utterly unscriptural “kenotic” doctrine that Christ here gave up His Godhead and became just a human being. If this were true then Divine redemption collapses, for a man cannot redeemed men (Psa. xlix. 7, 8). God alone can be Man’s Saviour. “I, even I, am the Lord: and beside Me there is no Saviour” (Isa. xliii. 11) and never do we read in Scripture that God has delegated this supreme work to anyone else.

What does *kenoo* mean? Volumes have been written on this. The verb is generally used in a bad sense. The adjective means, “empty-handed”, “vain”, “useless”. Charles H. Welch points out that the LXX uses *kenoo* twice as the equivalent of the Hebrew *amal* “to become weak”. This helps us considerably, for the testimony of Scripture is that the Lord Jesus became “poor” and “weak” on our behalf as part of His great stooping down to our desperate need (II Cor. viii. 9). F. W. Beare says that the English equivalent is He “beggared Himself”, “became poor as a beggar”, and this was really true for He had no home (Matt. viii. 20), or enough money even to pay His tax (Matt. xvii. 27); He Who, before His birth, had all the wealth which accompanied His Godhead!

Another important point which helps us understand the real meaning of “emptying Himself” is to note that, instead of the conjunctive “ands” between the two clauses as A.V. (“*and* took upon Him *and* was made”) which are not in the Greek, the R.V. rightly renders the Greek aorist participles as, “*taking* the form of a servant, *being*

made in the likeness of men". The aorist here is of "coincident action" (J. H. Moulton) and the clauses are therefore *explanatory*. In other words these phrases are explaining what "emptying" means. This again guides us and prevents us from importing ideas into the context which are not really there. Christ emptied Himself *by taking the form (morphe) of a slave, and by being made in the likeness of men*.

We have seen that *morphe* means more than "essence" on the one hand or "external appearance" on the other but is a combination of both. So if the question is asked—did Christ empty Himself of the *morphe* He had originally? the answer must be that *He divested Himself of the external glory of that morphe*, for this could not be a part of the status of a slave. One thing is certain. This was *voluntary*. It was not that the Father stripped Him of His dignities, *He stripped Himself* of all external attributes of that glory which then became concealed or veiled. Calvin says, "He laid aside His glory in the view of man, not by lessening it, but by concealing it". Lightfoot puts it, "He divested Himself of the glories, the prerogatives of deity".

This concealed glory on one occasion only shone through His human body, at the Transfiguration (Matt. xvii. 1-8), and its effect was to almost stupefy the three disciples who were with Him. It is obvious then that He could not walk among men like this, for they would have been overwhelmed and his ministry would have been impossible.

That we are on the right lines here is amply confirmed by the Saviour's prayer recorded in John xvii., "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self *with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was*" (xvii. 5).

It was of this tremendous outward glory that He divested or emptied Himself, and thus His Deity was untouched.

But what love, what condescension is here! Can we even begin to fathom it?

No.42. The Epistle to the Philippians (9). pp. 108 - 111

Having attempted to get an understanding of the profound statement in Phil. ii. 7, "He emptied Himself" (R.V), we noted that the next two phrases were *explanatory*, "*taking the form of a slave, being made in the likeness of men*".

We have already seen that if we keep the meaning of *morphe* to external appearance only, we make it practically synonymous with *schema*, and the words are *not* identical. To say, as some expositors do, that Christ as the Image and Glory of God fulfils all that *morphe* means, is thus not going far enough, and, as we have already pointed out, if we place such a limitation on the meaning of this word in verse 6, we must consistently do so in verse 7, which will then mean that the Lord in taking the *morphe* of a slave, merely

looked like one externally. This is surely too trivial to even consider. In “emptying Himself”, He so stripped Himself that He not only became man (even if he became the greatest of men it would be a tremendous condescension for One Who was God) but He became a Man Who had the *lowest status*, that of a slave. Can we ever fully appreciate this? Surely this is part of the “love that passes knowledge”! (Eph. iii. 19). *How* He became man the Bible nowhere *fully* states. Luke i. 34, 35 and Heb. x. 5 go as far as we shall get an explanation.

Paul, in writing his first letter to Timothy, declares that Christ’s taking upon Himself a human body is a *great secret* (I Tim. iii. 16), and how do we finite creatures ever expect to *fully* comprehend a great secret of God?

The language of Scripture is very careful and guarded when it touches the Lord’s humanity. “Being made in the *likeness* of men.” This is parallel to Rom. viii. 3, “God sending His own Son in the *likeness* of sinful flesh”. God most certainly did not send His Son in *sinful flesh*, for if Christ partook of Adam’s sin, He would have needed a Saviour Himself; He could never have been a Saviour for others. The sinlessness of the Son of God is of the utmost importance in the Divine plan of Salvation. The whole scheme of God collapses if this is not true. We are amazed at the light way some evangelicals treat the Virgin Birth as though it is of little consequence.

The angel, speaking of His birth to His mother, Mary, declared: “therefore also *that holy thing* which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God”. There has been no other *holy* baby since Adam’s fall. The germ of sin is in everyone born into this world, and in due time surely manifests itself. The Lord Jesus could say with truth, “the prince of this world (Satan) cometh, and hath *nothing* in Me” (John xiv. 30), a statement which would be a lie if made by any other human being.

That His body was a *real* one, there can be no doubt. “A body Thou hast prepared Me” (Heb. x. 5), and nowhere in the Scriptures is there any hint that this was not so in actual fact. It was a body that could eat and sleep and manifest weariness, a body that could be seen, touched and heard. But it was a body that owed nothing to a human father, and everything to the action and overshadowing of the Holy Spirit (Luke i. 35).

The early Docetic doctrine was an error of the first magnitude, for if Christ did not possess a *real* body, He could not have really died on the cross, and again the whole of God’s redemptive plan would have been brought to nothing. “And being found in fashion (*schema*) as a man. He humbled Himself” (8). In this verse we now have *schema*, meaning *an outward appearance* only, and not the deeper meaning of *morphe*.

The Bauer-Arndt-Gingrich Lexicon gives a good illustration from Josephus of a King who exchanged His royal robes for sackcloth and took on a *schema tapernoin*, “a lowly appearance”. He obviously did not relinquish his position as king in so doing. It was his *outward appearance* that changed. So it was with the Lord Jesus.

If any should regard the phrase “in the likeness of men” as meaning no more than He became *like* a man but was not actually, this next phrase corrects such an idea. Scripture talks about the “days of His flesh” (Heb. v. 7), and in the eyes of all who saw Him He was a real man; His humanity was no pretence.

The Apostle continues, “He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (8). Here we come to the lowliest depth of His humiliation. Both the main verb and the participle here are aorists, and participle explanatory. He humbled Himself in becoming obedient unto death, and not a noble death at that, but the degraded one that was reserved for slaves and criminals.

In recording that He deliberately yielded Himself in obedience to such a death, the Scripture clearly teaches, as it does elsewhere, that the Lord Jesus Christ is more than man, for death is the ultimate end of all men, whether they will it or not. They have no choice in the matter, but our Saviour asserted “no man taketh it (life) from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again” (John x. 17, 18).

This atoning death is the very centre of God’s redemptive purpose and the whole Divine plan of the ages rests upon it. This is the main object of the Lord’s seven steps downward from the glory that was His before Bethlehem. “The wages of sin is death”, and those wages must be paid if ever these two monstrous things, sin and death, which directly oppose all God’s purposes, are ever to be eradicated. There was no other way for this to be achieved, and we may be sure that, had there been one, God would have taken it and avoided the great cost to Himself.

We now trace the seven steps upward of the Son of God from the lowest depth to the highest heights which places Him as Lord of the universe.

“Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (ii. 9-11 R.V.).

“Wherefore also” (*dio kai*) could be translated “that is why”, the rest that follows being the consequence of such sublime renunciation. This is a vindication of all the obedience involved and is the completion of the glorious story. “Highly exalted” (*hyperupsoun*) is kept uniquely for this exaltation of the Savior, literally “hyper-exalted”. Quite a number of commentators think there is a contrast here with His pre-incarnate state. In which case they assert that He is finally raised to a higher position than He had before Bethlehem. This is the logical end of interpreting, as so many do today, “thought it not robbery to be equal with God”, as a *prize* which Christ might have seized for Himself, but did not do so.

This view brings many difficulties which conflict with other passages of Scripture; the chief being that the pre-incarnate Christ could not have been God in the fullest sense. In some respect He must have been inferior. This goes right against the general tenor of

revealed Truth, for monotheism is one of the Biblical fundamentals. There never has been two Gods, one inferior to the other. This borders on the darkness of pagan polytheism and is really a species of the early Arian heresy. Bringing in the doctrine of the Trinity at this point does not solve the problem. It is true that these expositors do not state things so boldly, but it is what such a view logically means. Furthermore such teachings goes right against the clear statements of John i. 1 and Col. i. 15-18 regarding the Lord's pre-incarnate Deity. We are perturbed to see some conservative evangelicals taking this position and we are bound to reject such a view absolutely, and also their exposition of the passage we are now dealing with, treating it as a prize for Christ, giving Him finally a position which He never had before. The error here is contrasting the Lord's exaltation *with His pre-incarnate state*, whereas the contrast is with *His earthly humbling*. Professor F. W. Beare's comments here are so much to the point that we quote them in full:

“The thought is not that God exalts Him to a higher rank than He held before, as being in the form of God. *No such comparison between the pre-existent state of Christ and His exalted state is envisaged.* We must altogether reject the notion, widespread as it is among the commentators, that Christ received as the reward of His humility the high station of equality with God which He refused to seize for Himself as plunder, by storming the heights like a Titan. The contrast is not between the pre-existent condition and the present exaltation, *but between the earthly condition of slavery (self-humbling, obedience) and the consequent exaltation.* Here is given, as it were, the archetypal pattern of the divinely established law: ‘whoever shall humble himself will be exalted’ (Matt. 23:11). It is *in His manhood* that Christ is now exalted and endued with all authority. Even the verb ‘conferred’, (granted as an act of grace), suggest that God is here dealing with Christ as man. God ‘giveth grace to the humble’ (I Pet. 5:5,6)” (*The Epistle to the Philippians*, pp.85,86. First two sets of italics ours).

We believe this puts the case clearly and is according to Truth. The other view would surely have been treated as heresy in the early centuries, for, however much they failed to grip the distinctive teaching of the Apostle Paul, they were at least clear on the Deity of Christ and held on to it tenaciously. We must surely “prove all things” and “hold fast that which is good” (I Thess. v. 21).

No.43. The Epistle to the Philippians (10).
pp. 130 - 133

We are now considering the seven upward steps to the highest glory for the Lord, who humbled Himself to the degradation of the Cross for our redemption. We noted that the contrast was not with His pre-incarnate position, but that of His humiliation as Man.

“Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (ii. 9-11 R.V.).

The Name which is above every name can only be one, that of LORD which designates Jehovah, the one great God. Jesus was His *earthly* name, the name of His humbling, and this is not mentioned by the Apostle as the signal for genuflection, as so many think. The supereminent Name is that which now *belongs to* Jesus in His superexaltation, that of LORD, and the O.T. makes it abundantly clear that there is “none else” beside Him. It is not that He is a step higher than other exalted beings, but rather that He is *unique*, in a class apart because He is the *incomparable One*.

“To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?” (Isa. xl. 18).

“To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One” (xl. 25).

“To whom will ye liken Me, and make Me equal, and compare Me, that we may be like?” (xlvi. 5).

Rom. xiv. 9 asserts that “. . . . Christ died and lived again, that *He might be Lord* both of the dead and of the living” (R.S.V.). Phil. ii. 9-11 looks forward to the day when this shall be *manifestly so*, when He shall have the universal homage and worship of all creation. It is the will of the Father that “all (men) should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father” (John v. 23). The Apostle John in a heavenly vision foresees such a glorious goal:

“And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things that are in them, heard I saying, Unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen.” (Rev. v. 13, 14 R.V.).

What the Apostle Paul writes in our present context reinforces all this, for he does not hesitate, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to apply one of the most magnificent contexts of the O.T., emphasizing the greatness of the one God, to the Lord Jesus Christ:

“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: *for I am God, and there is none else*. By myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that *unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear*” (Isa. xlv. 22, 23 R.V.).

It is inconceivable that Paul in so doing had any doubts concerning the full Deity of Christ. He proclaims Him not just as Lord of the Church, but finally as Lord of the whole universe *manifestly*, and it is this that forms the magnificent climax of this section in Philippians. What He is *now* as Lord and Head of the Church, the Body of Christ, He will then be *openly to the whole creation*.

We cannot be absolutely sure what ‘things’ or beings ‘under the earth’ comprise. Most likely they refer to evil spirits under Satan’s control. We do know that the abyss (bottomless pit A.V.) is linked with the sea (Gen. i. 2 LXX), and that the book of Revelation reveals that the abyss is the abode of demons (Rev. ix. 1-3; xiii. 1; xvii. 8), and this may be also true of the earth. In which case this great scene of exaltation is one of complete victory, for even the demons have to acknowledge the Lordship of Christ with the rest of creation. *Exomologeisthai*, does not mean just to make a confession of faith, but, as recent scholarship has shown, to “admit”, “acknowledge”, “own” or “recognize”. All this is to “the glory of God the Father” (Phil. ii. 11).

Two things stand out here. First, that there is no rivalry between divinities. Such an idea was rife among the gods of surrounding paganism. Second, that the mediatorship of Christ still exists at this point of time. Not yet has the goal been reached when *all* rule, authority and power has been brought to nought, and Christ takes complete control (I Cor. xv. 24). But this scene of tremendous glory is the outward and visible vindication of His earthly humiliation and rejection by men. The One that was “despised and rejected of men” and opposed by the powers of darkness, is now universally recognized as King of kings and Lord of lords. All this is as much to the Father’s glory as it is to His. It is not only to Christ’s glory, but equally to the glory of the Father. Here is no glorification of the one as against the other. The Father and the Son are one in every sense; in the redemptive purpose before creation, in its performance, and finally in glorification.

We are conscious that the consideration of this most profound passage in Philippians has been “hard going”. But, as we have stated elsewhere, we have no means of simplifying “strong meat” so that it becomes “milk”. It has been difficult for the writer, as it must be for anyone who seeks to expound this passage honestly and carefully. It may be as well to sum up.

These verses were not introduced by Paul to give a profound account of the Godhead before Bethlehem or afterwards. They were written, possibly incorporating a primitive hymn, to enforce the injunction concerning *unselfishness*, each believer being exhorted not to look on his own things, but rather on the things of others, and *here was One Who did that very thing* and gave Himself to the limit for us men and for our salvation.

Christ Jesus was in the *form (morphē)* of God. This meant that He *was* God *manifestly* so, in a glorious form—the Image of the invisible God. (We have seen that *morphē* goes deeper than *schema*, an outward appearance.) As such, there was no need for Him to try and seize this position for His own ends, but seeing the tremendous need of all His people involved in sin and death and a ruined heaven as well, He emptied Himself

of the glory attached to this *morphe*, and took upon Himself a human body, in order that He might bear the penalty of sin, namely death, in the place of His children. That glory was veiled by His humanity, but on one occasion (the Transfiguration) it shone through and overwhelmed the three disciples who were with Him.

He not only condescended to make the great step downwards from the throne of glory to the frailty of human body, but deliberately chose the status of a slave and finally yielded Himself to crucifixion, the shameful death of a criminal and in that death He was “made sin (or a sin-offering) for us Who knew no sin” (II Cor. v. 21). The Lord laid upon Him “the iniquity of us all” (Isa. liii. 6). He was the One “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree” (I Pet. ii. 24).

This, praise God, was not the end of the story. He was raised from the dead and “highly-exalted” (a unique word). Before the crucifixion He had prayed to the Father “glorify Thou Me with Thine own self *with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was*” (John xvii. 5). This prayer was abundantly answered, for He is now in that glory which was His before Bethlehem, the One Who was the Logos and was God (John i. 1); He Who was and is the Image of the invisible God. The goal of Him is to be manifestly acknowledged as LORD, the Supreme One, by the whole universe, including His enemies and all who oppose His rule. This is not only to His glory but also that of the Father.

We conclude with some recent words of Professor T. A. Thomas on the “emptying” of the Lord Jesus Christ:

“Whatever effects His incarnation may have had upon our Lord, they can in no way be construed as diminishing from His absolute Deity. He was God incarnate, God manifest in the flesh, in full possession of all the attributes of Deity. Anything less than this is completely out of accord with the picture that we have of Him in the inspired inscripturated Word.”

It is indeed refreshing to read this at a time like the present when there is so much false teaching concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is truly “our great God and Saviour” (Titus ii. 13 R.V.) now supremely exalted.

No.44. The Epistle to the Philippians (11).
pp. 156 - 160

The central point in the great hymn to Christ that we have been considering was His *obedience* unto death (Phil. ii. 8; Heb. v. 8). The Apostle Paul now brings the thought of obedience to bear upon the situation at Philippi:

“So then, my beloved, even as ye have always *obeyed*, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure” (Phil. ii. 12, 13 R.V.).

He says, in effect, as the Lord obeyed, so should you also! Paul does not seek to force this obedience in a harsh way. He addresses them as “my beloved”, but at the same time his commands are definite and must be carried out. Just as they were obedient when he preached the gospel to them at the beginning (Acts xvi.), so they must continue to do so as believers, whether he is present or absent.

The next phrase has sometimes been taken out of its setting to teach that man can work out salvation for himself, if he tries hard enough. The constant negation of human works and merit in connection with the sinner’s salvation all through Paul’s writings, makes this impossible. “Working out” is not the same as “working for” salvation. Salvation is received as a free gift by faith in Christ (Eph. ii. 8, 9), but, once received, it must be “worked out” in daily life and practice by the believer.

It must not be inferred, however, that such an one is left to do this in his own strength, for “God works in” and gives the grace and strength so to do. Here we have the seeming paradox of Divine power and human responsibility illustrated. Whether the Apostle has in view the church at Philippi as a whole, and not individual Christians, as some expositors assert, is debatable. To say that the individual cannot be in view here because of the former injunction not to consider self but the interests of others, is misunderstanding the situation. The self-interest to be avoided is the concern for self-advantage in the things of *this* life, not the spiritual things concerning the life to come, and in any case, a church’s spiritual growth is geared to the growth of each individual member.

This “working out” must be done, not with swagger and a false assurance, but with “fear and trembling”. The same phrase is used in II Cor. vii. 15 for the attitude of the Corinthians to the visit of Titus, or the attitude of the servant to the master, with Christ in view (Eph. vi. 5). This “fear and trembling” recognizes the frailty of the flesh, realizing how easy it is to stumble and fail the Lord. Here indeed we can have “no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 3), but every confidence in the Lord’s empowering, God *working in us*, so that we can accomplish this to His glory. The verb *energeo*, “works in”, has the same root as our word “energy”; it is mostly used of Divine action in the sense of

causing action in someone else (compare the mighty resurrection power that “worked in Christ”, Eph. i. 19, 20).

This dynamic power is ours by the appropriation of faith, so that not one of us can say that our “working out” day by day is impossible. This practical response is well-pleasing to the Lord; it leads to His “good pleasure”, and seeking to please Him should be first priority in every believer’s life and aim. This is the key to continual fruitfulness and satisfaction.

Paul now adds a word of warning:

“Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world, holding forth the world of life” (ii. 14, 15 R.V.).

The Apostle goes back to the failings of the people of Israel when journeying in the wilderness. As the O.T. record shows, their walk was disfigured by constant grumbling against the Lord and His servant Moses. They could not stand up to the test of faith that such a journey imposed. The comment of the epistle to the Hebrews is clear: “. . . they could not enter in because of unbelief (for disobedience)” (Heb. iii. 19). This chapter and I Cor. x. should be carefully weighed over in this context. “Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer” (I Cor. x. 10).

In fact God’s longsuffering with this lasted out until the tenth time that they grumbled and rebelled (Numb. xiv. 22, 23), and then He solemnly pronounced that such a generation should not enter into the promised land and thus they all died in the wilderness, with the exception of Caleb and Joshua, who had fully responded in faith to the Lord.

The Philippian believers were warned to remember this and we should do the same. Too often grumbling is looked upon as something that we can indulge in without sinning too much, but we should bear in mind that such conduct has at its root, unbelief, which God can never tolerate, nor does it go with a life that is manifestly Christ-centred. The Philippians must not be content with just being believers; they must be *manifestly* so in their lives. The word “be” in verse 15 is not the verb “to be”, but *genesthe* “become”, or “show yourselves to be”. Inward saving grace must be manifested by outward conduct, specially to a world of darkness and ignorance of the Lord. This is enforced by the words *amemptoi* (blameless) and *akeraioi* (harmless).

Amemptos means “irreproachable”, a life at which no finger of criticism may be pointed. Such a life results from the “working out” of the “in-working” Divine power that the context stresses. *Akeraios* is the word the Lord uses in Matt. x. 16, “*harmless* as doves” or in Rom. xvi. 19 “*simple* concerning evil”. In contemporary Greek it is employed of *undiluted* wine, or metals which have no weakening *alloy*, hence unmixed or pure. These words set forth vividly the will of God for His children. Their lives must

be such that their “public behaviour is above criticism” (Rom. xii. 17, J. B. Philips) and no foreign element must intrude to undermine their witness.

We must not understand verse 15 to teach that such conduct is the means of salvation. “That ye may be the children of God”, means *manifestly so*, very much like the Sermon on the Mount, “. . . . love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you *that ye may be the children* of your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. v. 44, 45). Likewise the Philippians must “shine as lights in the world”.

The imperative seems required here rather than the indicative and the Greek can read either way. Paul calls upon the Philippian church not to obscure the light of testimony by wrong doing, but rather to shine brightly in the surrounding darkness of a world that knows not God and is at enmity with Him. It may be that the Apostle has the Song of Moses in mind in connection with apostate Israel (Deut. xxxii. 5), and is concerned lest his converts at Philippi should backslide in this way.

We do well to remember that we are surrounded by a world that is hostile and critical; one that is in gross spiritual darkness. The only real light that can pierce such darkness is that of One Who said “I am the light of the world”, and strictly speaking, the believer in Christ is a light reflector or light bearer. True light does not originate from us; it comes solely from Him Who is Life and Light. What we are required to be is the bearer of His light, giving an unobscured daily testimony, His light thus shining through us. We should beware of the things that can obscure this light. In His earthly ministry the Lord said:

“Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?” (Mark iv. 21).

The “bushel”, a measure of commerce, can stand for business and all its commitments, and the “bed”, the love of ease, two things that can easily quench the light of faithful witness. These two things and anything else that hinders, must be avoided at all costs. Paul then urges the Philippian believers to remember the duty and the privilege of light-bearing, just as he wrote to the Thessalonians and reminded them that they should all be “children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness” (I Thess. v. 5). *Epechein* can mean to “hold fast” or “hold out, offer” and both shades of meaning are true in Phil. ii. 16.

If his friends at Philippi faithfully adhere to the Word of life and hold it forth, the Apostle is assured in his mind, that at the great day of Divine testing of Christian witness and service, the Day of Christ, he will not have laboured in vain, for they will be concrete evidence of the fruit of his labours. The Apostle, while he delighted to call himself the “slave of Christ”, working tirelessly for Him, yet had a dread of labour in vain, the expenditure of strength to no purpose. To the Galatians he wrote:

“I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain” (Gal. iv. 11).

To be of any worth, Christian service must accomplish something for the Lord, and while we may not always *see* the fruit of our labours in this life, yet there are occasions

when it is obvious that energy expended in certain directions is wasted, and the Lord does not ask us to spend our strength needlessly and to no purpose. We need heavenly wisdom at times like these to take the right course of action.

The Apostle now comes to the most solemn personal reference in the epistle. In his witness for the Saviour, Paul had spent himself without stint. Here he stresses the fact that this might cost him his life. While he hopes to be released and visit Philippi again, he cannot be absolutely sure at this stage:

“Yea, and if I am offered upon the sacrifice and service of our faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all” (ii. 17 R.V.).

From this we can see that the possibility of execution is vividly in his mind, but rather than be afraid or depressed, he rejoices. What a spirit! *Spendomai*, “if I be offered” is a word of sacrifice, alluding to the drink-offering which accompanied some of the O.T. ritual. In no sense did Paul imagine that this had any redemptive value, either for himself or anyone else, but it did represent the fact that he was prepared to go to the very limit for Christ, in giving his life, if the Lord willed, as a libation poured forth unto Him, a tribute of his love and gratitude. However, he did not keep the thought of sacrifice to himself and his own witness and suffering. He spoke of the “sacrifice and service” of the Philippians’ faith. Later on in the epistle he is touched by the gift they sent to him and calls it “an odour of a sweet smell, a *sacrifice* acceptable, well-pleasing to God” (iv. 18). When he wrote to the church at Rome, Paul urged them to “present their bodies *a living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom. xii. 1).

In view of all this, surely sacrifice should mark all our service for the Lord. Can there be any value in work for Him that costs little or nothing? And it should be *joyous* sacrifice too. The Apostle, though contemplating the possibility of martyrdom, yet rejoices and bids the saints at Philippi to join with him in such rejoicing (Phil. ii. 17, 18). How easy it is to get depressed if the Christian way and witness results sometimes in personal loss!

Yet this touch of sacrifice should not occasion surprise. We should expect it and be ready to accept it as the normal experience of those whose home is not here, in a world of unbelief, but, rather, in heaven, as Phil. iii. 20 so clearly indicates. Let us remember that this epistle teaches us that it is not only a gracious privilege to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for His sake, if it is His will (i. 29).

No.45. The Epistle to the Philippians (12).
pp. 175 - 179

After likening his service for the Lord and the Philippian church to a “sacrifice”, a joyous one, for he bids these believers to rejoice with him, even though the cost may be his life, Paul now looks to the future. He expresses his hope concerning his imprisonment and his intention of sending Timothy on a mission of goodwill.

“But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ” (ii. 19-21 R.V.).

The Apostle intended to send Epaphroditus with the letter without waiting until his own case had been dealt with. He realizes that the believers at Philippi will be anxious to know the outcome of his trial, so he informs them that he will send Timothy with the news and possibly follow after with a visit himself. If there is no early release for him, then Timothy, as well as giving them valued advice and help, will be able to bring back news of them which Paul trusts will be encouraging for him. Whenever the Apostle plans for the future, he always acknowledges that God’s will must be paramount (see Rom. xv. 32; I Cor. xvi. 7; Philemon 22) and this is also true in the context with which we are dealing.

Note he does not say “I hope in *Christ*” or “*Christ* Jesus”, but uses the practical title of “Lord”, which always expresses the believer’s relationship to God when service is in view. A practical owning of the *Lordship* of Christ means that He is in control of all our planning and activity. We have no right to try and shape our future without consulting Him first, otherwise tragic results may follow.

Paul is saying that, if it is the Lord’s will, Timothy will visit them with a twofold object: to give them first hand knowledge of himself and encourage them, and also that he (Paul) will be cheered when Timothy brings back good news of them. The Apostle now gives a very high commendation of his son in the faith. Like-minded, *isopsuchos*, literally “of equal soul”, is a rare word, as is *eupsuchein* “be of good comfort” of the previous verse. *Isopsuchos* is used once in the LXX of Psa. lv. 13 (liv. 14 LXX), “a man mine equal” showing that it is used of close friendship, but with what a difference! The close friend of the Psalmist treacherously betrayed him, whereas here, Timothy stayed with the Apostle right to the end.

As Paul considers the brethren that are with him and the saints of Caesar’s household, there is no one who exhibits the deep concern of Timothy for the Philippians. Like the Apostle, Timothy was genuinely unselfish, with a real practical concern for the needs of others. He was willing to share in the “care of all the churches”, like Paul, so he was the ideal choice to be sent on the journey to Philippi.

When the Apostle says “all seek their own”, he cannot mean that every believer in the Philippian church was selfish, for he has already commended some for their practical fellowship in the gospel (i. 5). He must be making a general statement concerning those around him. The mission to Philippi called for wisdom, tact and patience and a genuine concern for the state of believers there, and there was no one at hand so fitted for the task as his beloved son Timothy. They knew his proven worth (22), for Timothy had been with Paul when he first brought the gospel to them (Acts xvi.). He had been tested and found worthy. “Proof”, *dokime* is related to the verb “approve” in i. 10.

The relationship of Paul and Timothy was not the cold one of master and servant, but the intimate one of parent and child. In I Cor. iv. 17 R.V., Paul describes him as a “beloved and faithful child in the Lord”, and in this close way they had worked together as the slaves of Jesus Christ. “Served” is *edouleusen* literally “to serve as a slave”, not that Timothy was Paul’s slave, but they had together served as the Lord’s slaves for the extension of the gospel and the truth committed to the Apostle, and this should remind us that the only position of honour in the church is one based on faithful service to the Almighty One, Who took the form of a slave (ii. 7) and was among His own as “He that serveth” (Luke xxii. 27).

Verse 23 shows how Paul’s mind balances the prospects, on the one hand of martyrdom or being released from prison. His hope is that there will be a favourable verdict at his trial and that he will be able to visit the Philippians himself. Through it all there is a confident trust in the Lord, for His peace was reigning in his heart freeing him from anxiety. He leaves all to the Lord’s will, for the phrase “in the Lord” is the equivalent of “if the Lord wills”. What is sure is that he will send Timothy as his representative, and if possible, he will follow shortly afterwards.

Paul now turns to the immediate present and commends Epaphroditus to the church at Philippi. The name has a pagan origin, being formed from the name of the Greek goddess, Aphrodite. A shortened form was Epaphras, which at once makes us think of the Epaphras of Col. i. 7; iv. 12, although we cannot identify the two as the same person for certain, for Epaphras was a common name. The Apostle speaks of him in glowing terms, as a *brother*, a *fellow-labourer* and *fellow-soldier*, one who had worked hard and closely with himself. He had come as a “messenger” (literally “apostle”) from the Philippian church bringing their gift to Paul in his prison. The Apostle now plans to send him back, presumably as the bearer of the letter he was now writing. While Epaphroditus waited for the completion of the letter, he ministered to Paul’s needs (25).

Unhappily he had fallen ill. The news of his sickness had reached Philippi and the friends there became concerned about him. A report of their anxiety had evidently reached Epaphroditus, which greatly distressed him. He longed after them all [*epipothon*, the word used for Paul’s keen desire to see them all (i. 8). Not only this, but he (Epaphroditus) was sore troubled (ii. 26 R.V.)]. This word *ademonon* is used of the Lord’s agony in Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 37), a strong word indeed, expressive of distress that follows a great shock. Note he was not upset because he was seriously ill, but rather because the *Philippians had come to know of it* and this had brought anxiety

upon them. Here again is the spirit of the Philippian epistle, namely concern for others, rather than concern for self.

We do not know what his illness was, except that it was connected with his Christian service (30). It must have been extremely serious, because Paul tells us Epaphroditus was “nigh unto death” (27). What an opportunity the Apostle had to exercise his miraculous gift of healing, so evident during the Acts! (xix. 11, 12; xxviii. 8, 9).

If Paul still possessed this evidential gift after Acts xxviii., it is utterly incomprehensible that he did not use it in connection with such a close friend and valued fellow-labourer who was in such desperate physical need. The same could be said of Timothy’s frequent physical weaknesses (I Tim. v. 23) and the illness of Trophimus (II Tim. iv. 20). Dispensational truth alone has the Scriptural answer. Instantaneous divine healing was one of the earthly kingdom miraculous signs of the Acts period and passed away when the earthly kingdom people, Israel, passed into their spiritual darkness, deafness, and hardness of heart, making them unusable by the Lord during this parenthetical age of grace.

The healing of Epaphroditus was the direct result of God’s mercy, not only on him, but on the Apostle also (27). Had the Lord not intervened, Paul would have had the sorrow of bereavement on top of his prison sufferings. Resuming the statement of his immediate plans, Paul writes that he is more eagerly, or very eagerly, sending him back to them. This is possibly in case anyone in the Philippian assembly should criticize Epaphroditus for leaving Paul in his imprisonment and need. He should be received with all joy and held in honour (29) or highly valued. Verse 30 shows the extent this faithful servant of the Lord was prepared to go for Him. Note the R.V. “*hazarding his life*” as against the A.V. “not regarding his life”. The omission of one letter in the Greek gives this deeper meaning and this is supported by modern editors generally. *Paraboleusamenos* is a gambling term and thus Epaphroditus almost gambled with his life for Christ’s sake. This means more than being ill; it suggests some special danger to which he exposed himself for His Lord, the Apostle Paul and the Philippian assembly, who were unable to help the Apostle owing to the distance that separated them (30). This is Christian service indeed, where self is forgotten and the claims of the Lord and His people are first and foremost.

Chapter iii. commences with the phrase *to loipon*, translated in the A.V. and R.V. “finally”, which gives the impression that Paul is concluding his letter. However, one peculiarity of the Apostle’s style is the habit of “digression”, the holding up of his main argument to explain or expand a point. (Note the parenthesis of Eph. iii. 2-13 and there are many other examples.) MacKnight states that *to loipon* is put for *kata to loipon*, “as for what remains”, for *loipos* means “something left over”.

Thus we need not deduce that Paul is now going to end immediately this epistle. He had still something remaining to say to the Philippians and this is seen in chaps. iii. & iv. where the real concluding remarks begin (iv. 8). His call to “rejoice in the Lord”, repeated in iv. 4 is characteristic of the epistle as we have seen. But realizing certain

dangers which lay ahead, he straight away turns to serious warning. For the protection of those under his charge, the Apostle frequently had to repeat himself. He assures the Philippians that this was not “irksome” (R.V.) for him and it was certainly safe for them that he did so. Evidently he had a hostile group of Judaizers in mind whom he describes in three ways: (1) dogs, (2) evil workers, (3) the concision, or self-mutilators. The scornful term “dogs” was given by the Jews to the Gentiles, who were Israel’s enemies and refers to the scavenger dogs that roamed the streets (Matt. xv. 26, 27; Rev. xxii. 15) and were regarded as unclean. Paul hurls back the epithet against those of his own nation, who so constantly opposed him and the gospel that he sought to make known. They followed him wherever he went, seeking to bring Gentile converts under the bondage of the Mosaic law, and in the epistle to the Galatians, he largely has them in mind. They were “malicious workers”; he calls them “deceitful workers” in II Cor. xi. 13, and like the Lord Jesus Himself said of the opposing Pharisees, they would “compass sea and land to make a proselyte, and when he is made make him twofold more a child of hell” than themselves.

The third term is a play on words. *Katatome* is a parody on the similar word for circumcision, *peritome*. The putting away of types and shadows in the gospel message of salvation, which found their realization in Christ and His finished work on the Cross, now made circumcision merely self-mutilation and on a par with the pagan practices forbidden in Lev. xxi. 5 (compare I Kings xviii. 28).

The physical rite that once upon a time put an Israelite into covenant relationship with God had passed, and its spiritual equivalent could not be applied to all God’s redeemed people, whether Jew or Gentile. They are the real circumcision who have the inward reality, not just the external rite (Phil. iii. 3; Rom. ii. 28, 29).

No.46. The Epistle to the Philippians (13). pp. 194 - 199

After warning the Philippian church of the activities of the “circumcision after the flesh”, the Judaizers, the Apostle Paul asserts “for we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. iii. 3 R.V.). The A.V. reads “in the spirit”. The earliest manuscript witness, the Chester Beatty papyrus, the word for “God” is omitted and the sense then is “who worship *in spirit*”, the new nature, as opposed to the flesh, the old nature of sin. This accords with the important statement of the Lord in John iv. 24 R.S.V. “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth”, that is to say, *truly in spirit*, apart from the natural mind or the flesh.

This sweeping statement searches deeply into all worship, and that this is of great importance from God’s standpoint is seen by the following words: “The Father seeketh such to worship Him” As the Father continually seeks for such *real* worship, how

much does He find in Christendom as a whole? This is a solemn thought which should exercise the minds of all believers. When will Christians realize that they cannot worship God with the senses all alone? There is so much sensual worship in the churches today that it is difficult to find any who are concerned with true worship in the spirit. That the senses can be employed in some degree in the *outward* expression can never produce acceptable worship by themselves. We do well to keep this constantly in mind.

We should note too, that *latreuo*, the word translated worship, is rendered “to serve”, 16 times, and “do service” once. So that we must not limit the context to worship only, but also include the thought of *acceptable service*. Such service can never come from “the flesh”. It can only proceed from the “spirit” or the new nature bestowed on the believer by God Himself (II Pet. i. 4). Christian service done in the strength of the flesh will be counted as “wood, hay and stubble”, to be consumed as worthless in the day of Christ’s testing the work of believers (I Cor. iii. 12-15).

Another mark of the true church is that each member rejoices or boasts in Christ Jesus and has no confidence in the flesh (iii. 3). *Kauchaomai* “to exult or boast” is almost exclusively a Pauline word, being used by him over thirty times. The statement in Philippians shows up the innate tendency of the human heart, to secure by its own effort and merit, approval and acceptance with God. To place one’s confidence or trust in anything outside of Christ is to have “confidence in the flesh”. This is a lesson that so few seem to learn, but it is basic to all growth in grace and knowledge of the Lord.

There was a time when Paul himself had not learned this lesson, as he is now going to tell us. If he is going to set aside personal advantages of birth and up-bringing, it is not because he did not possess them. He did, in full measure, but he was going to cut the ground from under the Judaizers, by showing how empty and futile this was in God’s sight or with spiritual growth in view. He now turns back to his pre-Christian life and declares to the Judaizer and all who boast in self or self-made religion that if there was a competition between them, he would emerge as head of the list. He was indeed a true, full-blooded Jew and he details seven points to illustrate this.

(1) “Circumcised the eighth day”, according to the provisions of the law (Lev. xii. 3). This proved that he was no ordinary proselyte, circumcised after his conversion to Judaism. He was so from birth, and thus put into covenant relationship with God from the beginning of his life.

(2) Of the race of Israel, the elect nation that God called out from all other nations and endowed them with such mighty privileges as Rom. ix. 3-5 clearly shows. When contrasting himself with some of his opponents in the Corinthian church, he could say “Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I” (II Cor. xi. 22).

(3) Of the tribe of Benjamin. In spite of its smallness (Psa. lxxviii. 27) the tribe of Benjamin was regarded with esteem. Situated in the south, it probably resisted pagan influences from the north and it had the privileges of containing the holy City and the

Temple within its borders. It remained loyal to David after the disruption of the monarchy and further, Israel's first king, namely Saul, was drawn from its ranks. Saul was the Apostle's original Hebrew name, in which he took pride.

(4) A Hebrew of the Hebrews. This either means an eminent Hebrew, one who took special pride in belonging to Israel's race, or it could mean as Moffatt's translation, "a Hebrew son of Hebrew parents", informing us that the language in which he was reared was the ancestral mother tongue. Ability to speak in Hebrew and Aramaic was a mark of faithfulness to the old culture, showing that his parents had not succumbed to their environment by forgetting the ancient language. The three privileges that follow were Paul's own acquirement.

(5) As touching the law, a Pharisee. This meant that he was a member of a sect which was most strict in its adherence to the law of Moss. As Josephus expressed it "a body of Jews who profess to be more religious than the rest, and to explain the laws more precisely". Their one aim was to provoke the same zeal in others and bring them to a similar conformity.

We cannot help but remember the stinging reproaches of the Lord Jesus concerning some of the Pharisees of His day. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites . . ." (Matt. xxiii. 13, 14, 27). At the same time we must point out that not *all* Pharisees merited this condemnation. Some were sincere men, even if misguided. Paul does not use the name Pharisee as a reproach, but as a title of honour, and the Pharisees were highly regarded by masses of the people. His one aim was to safeguard the sacred Torah and in doing this, he conceived it to be his duty to try and stamp out any movement that appeared to oppose it. Hence Paul's rigorous persecution of the early believers of the Acts period.

(6) "As touching zeal, persecuting the church." Whilst it seems ironical that the one to whom was committed the doctrine concerning the church of God should write, "concerning zeal, persecuting the church" (iii. 6), yet this was the mark of his faithful adherence to Judaism as a Pharisee of the Pharisees, imagining he was doing God service! He enlarges this in Gal. i. 13, 14, "You have heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond all measure, and ravaged it—and I was making progress in Judaism beyond many of my own age in my nation, being exceedingly zealous for my ancestral traditions". Years later when writing to Timothy he reflected on God's mercy to him, describing himself as a persecutor, a blasphemer and injurious (I Tim. i. 13). He never ceased to marvel at the grace of God that met him on the road to Damascus and changed him from Saul the Pharisee, to Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles with a dispensation of grace and glory beyond computation (Eph. iii.). It was inconceivable that the Apostle, looking back on the bondage of Judaism in which he had been so proficient, could allow this grievous yoke to be fastened upon the Gentile converts. True, he had been zealous, but what a danger zeal can be without knowledge! It is so easy to be zealous in the wrong thing, because of blindness or perverseness! Saul of Tarsus, like his nation, had a "zeal without knowledge" (Rom. x. 2), and there are thousands today like him, even among professing Christians.

Christian witness is so often judged merely by *activity* and *keenness*, but these of themselves cannot produce acceptable service in the sight of the Lord. His truth must be the foundation and substance of *all* service first and foremost, and to err here is to err everywhere else. On the other hand we should avoid a knowledge of the truth without zeal. Such knowledge is cold and lifeless and produces no fruit for the Lord. The truth, rightly held, should certainly lead to warm response. The Lord wants all the keenness possible from His children, but first of all directed by His truth for the present age and a knowledge of His will.

(7) “As touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless” (iii. 6). The Apostle does not say he was blameless in the sight of God, but, as far as the *observance of the law was concerned*, he was blameless. We can now therefore understand the Lord’s warning “I tell you except your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the Kingdom of heaven” (Matt. v. 20). It is not that men are called to produce a higher decree of the same righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, but rather they are brought into contact with a different kind of righteousness, as Paul now explains, *the righteousness which proceeds from God and is accorded to faith*.

This leads him now to the other side of the balance sheet, for what we have here is a statement of liabilities and assets and the advantages of birth and attachment to God’s earthly people which he formerly set down in the column of assets, he now transfers to the column of liabilities, for in Christ he has something that is so infinitely better, that he must now seek to set it forth in seven further statements. Before he does this, he gives the reason for this dramatic revaluation:

“But what things were gain (lit. gains) to me, these I have counted loss for Christ, Yea, verily, and I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord” (iii. 7, 8 R.V.).

“Everything as loss”, that is anything that previously he would have counted as advantage to him. This goes wider than the religious privileges he enjoyed through being one of God’s chosen people Israel. It included everything which might be reckoned as good by the natural man. It was as though the Apostle put them all in a parcel and consigned them to the refuse heap, so worthless were they in comparison with the excellency of the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We must distinguish between *knowing about* a person and actually *knowing him*. Paul is not here thinking of facts pertaining to Christ, as getting to know Him personally by faith. A close bond was formed between the Saviour and the Apostle on the Damascus road, and this became more intimate and deeper and wholly absorbing as time went on. There is no doubt that Paul conceives of God in terms of Christ. For him, getting to know Christ, was getting to know God, and with this there was nothing earthly that could compare with it, not even his religious beliefs that once meant so much to him as a Pharisee. In fact he tells us that for Christ’s sake he had suffered the loss of all things, or forfeited everything. This would possibly include personal property which could have

been confiscated on his renunciation of Judaism and certainly it included the high status which he once held therein. Everything had gone which would generally have been esteemed to be desirable in this life. But with his new valuation, seen through the enlightened eyes given by the Spirit of God, this meant little or nothing. And he is now going to tell us why in a sevenfold statement:

“ (1) that I may gain Christ, (2) and he found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (3) that I may know Him, (4) and the power of His resurrection, (5) and the fellowship of His sufferings, (6) becoming conformed unto His death. (7) If by any means I may attain unto the resurrection from the dead” (iii. 8-11 R.V.).

The word ‘gain’ is cognate with the “gain” of verse 7. What does Paul mean when he says that I may *gain* Christ? We must surely not forget the aim of the epistle as a whole, that is, not just to present Christ as Saviour or to give a setting forth of the gospel of salvation. It assumes the readers already experience this and now are prepared to *work out* that salvation in witness and practice with a prize or reward in view. Hence the figure of a race given later in chapter iii. which the Apostle always uses in a context of service with reward or loss in view (cp. I Cor. ix. 24-27). “Gaining Christ” was getting to know Him *as Rewarder*, even as Moses of old who esteemed reproach for Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he had respect unto the *recompense of reward* . . . he endured, as seeing Him Who is invisible (Heb. xi. 24-27).

No.47. The Epistle to the Philippians (14). pp. 216 - 219

We continue to study the section in chapter iii., where the Apostle Paul enumerates his “gains” and “losses” for Christ, a faint echo of the great losses and gains of the Lord Jesus of chapter ii., Who had given up so much for him and all His people in His matchless condescension and stooping down, and is now so highly exalted in the glory at the Father’s right hand:

“ I count all things to be loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of mine own, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil. iii. 8, 9 R.V.).

We considered the meaning of “that I may gain Christ” in our last study. To know Christ as Rewarder presumes that first of all one is “found in Him” and the Apostle explains this by equating it with the gift of God’s righteousness through faith in Christ. The possession of this righteousness is the one essential for acquittal at the tribunal of God. It is entire contrast to any human righteousness on the basis of law-keeping. This standard is far too low for that utter perfection which is the final condition of the whole of creation when the Divine redemptive purpose has been reached. There will then be not

one blot or blemish in God's universe. Isaiah had already written of God's covering righteousness symbolically ". . . He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness . . ." (Isa. lxi. 10). God is the sole Author of this complete and saving righteousness which He is ready to impart to sinful men on the ground of complete trust in Christ. This is a perfect standing indeed. Millions labour to get it by their own efforts and must fail. The tragedy is that the very thing they are working so hard to get God gives as a free gift to those who accept His Son! To the Apostle, who had realized this astounding fact years earlier, this meant that he gladly gave up all his previous attempts to work out his own righteousness. This justification by faith is the main theme of his Roman epistle.

"That I may know Him" has been interpreted in several ways by expositors but this surely represents Paul's aim now he has realized in experience what this glorious standing is. The next step and one that never ends during this life, is to get to know Christ more deeply and intimately day by day. The phrases which follow are the filling out of this personal knowledge.

We can say with certainty that a real knowledge and acknowledgment of God is the highest goal that saved human mind can attain in this life—though even then it is but "partial" (I Cor. xiii. 9-12) this side of glory. Israel's tragedy of old, with all their constant failure, was due to the fact that, as God lamented concerning them:

"The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: *but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider*" (Isa. i. 3),

and so, in this respect, Israel had fallen lower than animals, in spite of all God's loving dealings with them.

The unsaved person does not "know God". If the world as a whole did, we could not be in the terrible condition that we see all around us. One of the great aims of redemption is to bring the redeemed to a true knowledge of the Redeemer and this should colour the whole life of the believer in Christ. Paul had used the close, warm phrase, "Christ Jesus my Lord" expressing his gratitude and devotion. His greatest aim was to get to know Him better and to "win Him", though this was not done without some loss on his part, "for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things" he states, but without any sense of self-pity, for his present great gain made all these things seem of no more value than "refuse" (8).

Verses 10-12 are an expansion then of what getting to know Christ means and this is developed in terms of *power* and *fellowship*.

". . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death" (iii. 10 R.V).

The Apostle was not content to know the Lord in His earthly life. Thousands of believers today are, and do not go on to know the *risen* and *ascended Christ*—the One Who said after His resurrection "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. xxvii. 18). Paul discounted a knowledge of Christ after the flesh (II Cor. v. 16). It was the *risen* Christ he had personal dealings with and to know Him meant getting to

realize something of the greatest of all powers, namely that which conquers death, the power of His resurrection.

We live in an age of power and through scientific discovery have come to know the power that the Creator has locked up in matter. But we may be sure of one thing, atomic power will never bring someone from the grave and give him eternal life! Later on Paul prays for the Ephesian believers that they might know “the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set him at His own right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph. i. 19-23). From this one can see that such a mighty power is at the disposal of the believer *for service*. How much better than one’s own puny strength! No wonder Paul stated that he could do all things through Christ Who *empowered* him (Phil. iv. 13). Realizing this, one can appreciate better how he longed to know the “power of His resurrection”.

We may all join in such longing, but what about the item that follows—the fellowship of His sufferings? *Koinonia* fellowship or sharing, describes the close association between the Lord’s sufferings and those of the Apostle (II Cor. xi. 23-28). He could truthfully say that daily he bore in the body “the dying of the Lord Jesus” (II Cor. iv. 10). These sufferings “for Christ’s sake”, he bore gladly, for at the very beginning the Lord had said “For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my Name’s sake” (Acts ix. 16). It was this measure of sufferings he was anxious to “fill up” (Col. i. 24) in faithfulness.

Let us be quite sure of this, that the Christian pathway designated by the Lord will include suffering. We can sometimes avoid it, by departing from the Lord’s will, but “no cross, no crown”, is true for every believer. We need not shrink from it, for the wonderful promise of I Cor. x. 13 is for ever true.

Fellowship in the Lord’s sufferings leads to “conformity to His death” (Phil. iii. 10) and this is best explained by the teaching and experience of Rom. vi. with its stress on identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. In Him we die to the dominion of the sinful old nature and in Him rise to newness of life, but the *experience* of this demands obedience to Rom. vi. 11 to *reckon* this to be true, otherwise this remains doctrine and nothing more. It is important to note that Paul puts resurrection power *before* fellowship in the Lord’s sufferings. To experience the latter without the former would be to commit spiritual suicide, for we could not endure such an experience in our own strength.

“Being conformed” or “conforming myself”, is the present participle and suggests a daily and continual experience of this conformity. Each day brings its tests and temptations which can only be met successfully by the power that conquers death and a daily dying to everything that is out of the Lord’s will.

The goal of all this is expressed in verse 11 “if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection from the dead”. On the surface this seems an anticlimax. Did Paul who was

undoubtedly saved, doubt whether he might be raised from the dead after death? The answer is “no” and the problem comes because of the translation not being adequate. Literally he wrote “the *out-resurrection*, *out* from the dead”, the preposition *ek* being used twice, thus being emphatic. The doctrine of resurrection was a part of orthodox Judaism. When the Lord said to Martha concerning Lazarus, “thy brother shall rise again” (John xi. 23), Martha replied, “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day” (24) for this was the hope of every Jew. We can better understand the force of *ek* in Phil. iii. 11, if we turn to Mark ix. 9, 10. The Lord charged the disciples to tell no one of the things they had seen until He was risen from (*ek*) the dead. This puzzled them, for they questioned what the rising *from* or *out of* the dead could mean (10). A general resurrection was understandable, but a *selective one*, leaving others behind was something new to them.

We know that this is new also to many believers today for the creeds as a whole, teach one general resurrection at the end of time, whereas the Scriptures teach that it will be “every man in *his own order*” or *rank* (I Cor. xv. 23), as God wills. Not all will be raised at once, but according to the working out of the Lord’s purpose for the various groups of His children. His timing is correct and no one can alter this. There is a resurrection which is the realization of *hope* and the consummation of salvation for the people of God. Rom. viii. 23 definitely teaches that this is the final out-working of redemption, and “the redemption of the body” and redemption is not complete without it. Redemption from sin is the *beginning* of salvation, and redemption from death which embodies resurrection is the *climax* or *goal*.

However, in addition to this there is a resurrection which leads to a prize or reward and this must not be passed by or confused with “hope”. In Luke xx. 34, 35, the Lord, in answer to the Sadducees, declares that marriage belongs to the present age, but those *who are accounted worthy to obtain that age and the resurrection out (ek) from the dead*, do not marry. Here is a selective resurrection depending on personal worthiness or faithfulness and when we get the double *ek* in Phil. iii., we have similar teaching. The Apostle had not the slightest doubt that, if he died, he would be brought back to life. This was an essential part of his hope. But in Philipians he was pressing on in his eagerness to obtain not the hope but *the prize* in connection with the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, and this would be pre-fixed by this special *out-resurrection* which “if by any means” he endeavoured to obtain. Let us not confuse these two distinct aspects of teaching.

No.48. The Epistle to the Philippians (15).
pp. 236 - 239

We have given a consideration to the very important “out-resurrection” of Phil. iii. 11 and its purpose as a prelude to the PRIZE in connection with the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Some find the doctrine concerning resurrection in its various aspects difficult to grasp. One feels this is largely because the average Christian mind is dominated by the Platonic idea of the immortality of the soul which is unknown to the Scriptures of truth. Modern Christendom is leavened with ideas which have their basis in paganism if traced back far enough and this is one of them.

Professor F. W. Beare is undoubtedly right when he says:

“Paul, unlike us, was affected by Greek notions only in a secondary way. His inheritance was Hebraic, and the Hebrew thought instinctively of the person *as a whole*; for him the body was a valid expression of the *whole* person, not a more or less indifferent frame for the soul. Paul was constitutionally incapable of thinking of life eternal in terms of a ‘soul’ existing in some disembodied state a ‘spiritual’ resurrection would to him be no resurrection at all; a disembodied existence would be no better than the shadowy and unsubstantial existence of a shade” (*Epistle to the Philippians*, pp. 125, 126, italics ours).

It is significant that the Scriptures never use the phrase “the resurrection of the *body*” which we find in the creeds, but always the resurrection of the *dead*, for it is always *the whole person* that is in view.

The Apostle now uses a favourite metaphor of a race, drawn from the Olympic games. We have references to this in I Corinthians & Galatians and it is significant that the epistle to the Hebrews likewise uses it (xii. 1, 2). When this figure is employed, we are not dealing with God’s free gift by grace apart from merit or works, that is salvation and its kindred aspects, but *service* and the possibility of reward or loss. This is clear in I Cor. ix. 24, 25 and it is just as true in the Philippian context we are now considering. Paul was longing to reach the full end for which Christ had saved him. As J. B. Philips puts it: “grasping ever more firmly that purpose for which Christ grasped me”. This means he is not content with being just saved, as so many are, but eagerly pressed forward to reach maturity, or full-growth (perfection), for attached to this is a Divine *prize or reward*. God has no crowns for immature Christians!

“Brethren I count not myself to have yet apprehended: but one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (iii. 13, 14 R.V.).

Here is the concentration of the disciplined athlete and runner. He is not going to be distracted, “*one thing* I do”, nor is he going to turn his head backwards and glance at the “things that are behind”, but with his eye on the goal, the Lord in heaven’s glory, he is pressing forward with the greatest speed possible.

Sometime God's Word exhorts us to remember. Sometimes it is equally important to forget. It was indeed a sad day for Israel when they said "we *remember* the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt" (Numb. xi. 5; xiv. 4). The insidious 'remembering' and looking behind at that from which they had been freed and redeemed, soon led to the wish to go back to the place of bondage, although their fickle memories forgot the suffering and misery connected with it.

We need to take a lesson from this and ask the Lord to deliver us from such deceiving memories. "Looking back" has no place for the urgent runner who is eager to obtain the prize. Paul's one aim was that he might "finish his course with joy" (Acts xx. 24) and so he must "run without swerving" (I Cor. ix. 26 Moffatt) for the prize of the high calling of God *in Christ Jesus*.

It is remarkable how often this phrase is misquoted and the last three words omitted. Some translate it "the upward call or summons" and while this sounds attractive it hardly fits in with the "calling which is *IN* Christ Jesus", not a summons *TO* Christ Jesus. "In Christ" is always *positional* as used by Paul, and this wondrous calling or vocation is *IN* Christ and cannot have any reality apart from this glorious position.

We should not translate the genitive, prize *of* the high calling, as one of apposition, meaning the prize, that is to say, the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. This would make the wondrous calling of Ephesians and Colossians one of personal attainment, instead of one of sheer grace as these epistles so clearly teach. It is rather the genitive of relation, meaning the prize *in relation to* this high calling. We must therefore distinguish between the "one hope" of this calling with its riches of grace, and the prize, which is something to be striven after even as the Apostle Paul was doing in the context we are studying. Those who are perfect (mature) must be "thus minded" said the Apostle. Whether he was referring to some in the Philippian church who claimed to have reached this position, it is difficult to say. It is hard to believe that any at Philippi had progressed further than Paul himself.

However in verse 15 we have the gracious promise that God would illuminate the minds of any who had real difficulty in understanding and in any case, each must walk and put into practice the light they had already received (16).

The Apostle now commences a section of warning. He was indeed the Apostle of freedom, but freedom did not mean licence or self-indulgence. "For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh," (Gal. v. 13). Evidently there were some at Philippi or elsewhere who were doing this very thing. Some have tried to maintain that unbelievers are referred to here but a careful consideration of the statements made, make this impossible.

"Brethren, be ye imitators together of me and mark them which so walk even as ye have us for an example. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is perdition,

whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things”
(iii. 17-19 R.V.).

Let us take the last phrase first, “who mind earthly things”. It would be idle to accuse an unbeliever of doing this, as he of himself could do no other. How can an unbeliever mind heavenly things?

Again these people against whom the Apostle is warning the church are said to “walk”—a term used consistently of believers. One can then understand his profound sorrow, even to tears, that such could so degenerate in their daily life. Further than this they are said, not to be enemies of Christ, but of *His cross*. Now the cross stands for specific doctrine in Paul’s epistles, standing between the believer and the flesh (Gal.v.24) and the world (Gal. vi. 14). It would have no meaning in the lives of those “dead in trespasses and sins”.

The mind is all-important here, specially in relation to the runner in the race for the prize, which is an heavenly one. To attempt this with a mind whose bent is on earthly things is to court disaster. Writing to the Colossian church Paul insisted:

“Set your mind on the things that are above, where Christ is seated on the right hand of God” (Col. iii. 2 R.V.).

This the runner must continually do. If his gaze is distracted he is likely to swerve from the track and drop out of the race. It is possible that some had succumbed to antinomianism at Philippi that is, the throwing off of all restraints under a wrong conception of grace and freedom. Some expositors think the Apostle is not necessarily meaning that all this was necessarily happening at Philippi, but that Paul had knowledge that such things were taking place elsewhere and so he warns the Philippians in advance. It does not really much matter, as long as the warning was given and heeded by those to whom he was writing, and by us today.

In direct contrast to all this Paul continues:

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself” (iii. 20, 21 R.V.).

Politeuma, can be translated as “citizenship”, “commonwealth”, or “colony of haven” (Moffatt). Just as Philippi was a Roman military colony directly related to the capital city of Rome although far removed geographically, so we are citizens of a heavenly commonwealth far removed from this earth, and are pilgrims passing through this earthly territory to our real home in the heavenlies “far above all”.

“From whence”, *ex hou*, can refer only to *politeuma* and not to *ouranois*, heaven. “We eagerly await a Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.” Paul seldom uses the word Saviour in connection with Christ. It may be because the term was frequently used in the heathen world for their gods and the Roman emperors were designated as “saviours”, so the term might be misconstrued as applied to Christ. Certainly salvation is not fully complete

until we see Him face to face and are made like him. Now we have this body of our *humbling* (the word is cognate with “he *humbled* Himself” of chapter ii. 8). “Vile” is too strong as translation today though the English word in 1611 had a less intense meaning (cp. “vile raiment” James ii. 2). The body is not “vile” in this sense. It is indeed frail and mortal and cannot stand up to the conditions of the heavenly sphere of our calling. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.

“We shall bear the image of the heavenly (One)”, Christ in glory (I Cor. xv. 49). The body of the Lord’s glory is the prototype of the believer’s spiritual body, fashioned by the Lord’s mighty transforming power. This power is so great that it will at long last align all things (subject) under the headship of the Lord Jesus. His omnipotence brings all things under His control, and nothing less than this is the glorious goal in which members of the Body of Christ and the redeemed of all callings will finally participate.

Purpose, Promise and Performance.

No.2. pp. 1 - 6

In Eph. iii. 11 we read:

“According to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord”,

and to this passage we shall return for close scrutiny presently. The climax of God’s gracious purpose in Ephesians is found in Eph. v. 27:

“That He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

Turning to Philippians, we find the stress is laid on the ‘performance’ of the promises made:

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. i. 6).

Even though the Apostle expresses “confidence”, some doubt has been injected into this verse, suggesting that what had been begun would be discontinued, but the rule of I Cor. ii. 13 when applied, shows what the Apostle meant by “begin” and “perform”, for he uses the same two words in II Cor. viii. 10-11, where he reminds the Corinthians of what they had ‘begun’ a year ago, that there should be a “performance”. It would make nonsense of his exhortation to teach that Paul told the Corinthians that their willingness a year ago to make a contribution to the poor saints should not now be fulfilled. Later in Philippians, Paul expresses the earnest wish that he may “apprehend that for which he had been apprehended of Christ Jesus”. The change of this ‘vile body’ that it may be fashioned like unto the Saviour’s “glorious body”, is “according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself” (Phil. iii. 12, 21). Colossians traverses much the same ground as Ephesians, but with different emphasis and different sequence. We read that Paul was made a special minister,

“according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (or complete) the word of God; even the mystery” (Col. i. 25, 26).

In II Timothy, the Apostle stresses the purpose of grace that is implied in his ministry, saying 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, Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles” (II Tim. i. 9-11).

Having given this rough survey, we propose a more detailed and careful study of the words and context of “the eternal purpose” of Eph. iii. 11. Before considering the

bearing of the context upon this passage, we must draw the reader's attention to the fact that while "the eternal purpose" has a majestic sound about it, its literal rendering should be "the purpose of the ages", and this demands some expansion and explanation. In the O.T. the word translated 'eternal' or 'for ever' is the Hebrew word *olam*, and if we consider its occurrences in Ecclesiastes, as translated in the A.V. we shall find it translated "for ever", "old time", "world" and "long" in Eccles. i. 4, 10; ii. 16; iii. 11, 14; ix. 6 and xii. 5. Such variety may be charming but can be misleading. Supposing we translated *olam* in Ecclesiastes consistently, we then have the following most suggestive index to this problematic book.

***Olam* in Ecclesiastes.**

- A | i. 4. The earth abideth to the *age*.—The passing generation.
- B | i. 10. Already in or to the *ages*.—Nothing new under the sun.
- C | ii. 16. No remembrance to the *age*.—Forgotten.
- D | iii. 11. The *age* set in the heart of men.
- C | iii. 14. What God does is to the *age*. It remains.
- B | ix. 6. No portion to the *age*.—under the sun.
- A | xii. 5. Man and the *age* home.—The passing generation.

While this analysis of itself may not appear very illuminating, the comparison of passage with passage will bring out into prominence some of the truth sought and taught in Ecclesiastes.

The epistle to the Ephesians is most intimately associated with all we believe and hope for, and so we turn without further comment to the way *aion* is found and is translated in that most wonderful epistle. First let us note the way the A.V. has rendered this one word, namely *world, course, ages, world, eternal, world without end, world* (Eph. i. 21; ii. 2, 7; iii. 9, 11, 21; vi. 12). Here we have this world which had a beginning, but which has no end, the course of this world, and the eternal purpose. If we translate consistently, light and instruction will immediately appear.

***Aiōn* in Ephesians.**

- A | i. 21. Rulers of this and *age* to come.—Subject to Christ in resurrection.
- B | ii. 2. The *age* of the world.—Satanic energy (*energeō*).
- C | ii. 7. *Ages* to come.—Divine grace (future).
- D | iii. 9. Hid since the *ages*.—The mystery (Central feature).
- C | iii. 11. *Ages*, their purpose.—Divine wisdom (now).
- B | iii. 21. The generation of the *age* of the *ages*.—Divine energy (*energeō*).
- A | vi. 12. Rulers of the darkness of this *age*.—Withstood in resurrection power.

This purpose or plan of the ages is vitally linked with the following features, most of which are unique 'and are not to be found in the ministry of any Biblical writer except Paul' as the prisoner of Christ Jesus for us Gentiles. We tabulate without attempting to comment or enlarge these unique items:

- (1) Paul speaks of himself as the prisoner of Christ Jesus for us Gentiles.
- (2) He speaks of a special dispensation of grace that was given him to us-ward.
- (3) This involved the making known to him by revelation the Mystery (secret).

Having given some attention to the need to speak of the ages rather than that which lies beyond our grasp, namely eternity, which unlike the ages, can have no beginning or no end, a state that the human mind cannot grasp and with which the Scriptures are not concerned, we turn to the actual references in the great Prison Epistles that speak of Purpose, Promise and Performance. It is obvious that God had a wondrous purpose when He chose the members of the Church which is the Body of Christ, before the foundation (or overthrow) of the world, but the actual word 'purpose' first occurs in a verbal form in Eph. i. 9, and in the substantive in verse 11:

“In all wisdom and prudence having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself, That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him: In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.”

What words are here! Before we dare to submit these verses to our poor inspection, should we not, in figure, “take off our shoes from off our feet”? The place whereon we stand is indeed “holy ground”.

Let us consider the wording of Eph. i. 8. As the verse stands in the A.V., it seems to contain a contradiction. How can anyone “abound” or “over-flow” with “prudence”? How can anyone “abound”, when the original means to overflow as well as be discreet, frugal, economical and provident at the same time? The contradiction exists only in the punctuation of the English translation,

- (1) Redemption. This is made to abound with prodigal riches.
- (2) Instruction. This is given little by little as we are able to bear it.

Let us read the passage once again, but put a full stop in the middle of verse 8, thus:

“In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace wherein He hath ABOUNDED toward us.

In all WISDOM and PRUDENCE having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself.

This mystery, good pleasure and purpose, had a special dispensation in view:

“With a view to (*eis* R.V. ‘unto’) a dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him.”

The word “dispensation”, following the Revised Text, is used by the Apostle Paul four times:

Oikonomia

- A | Eph. i. 10. A dispensation of the fullness of times (the mystery of his will)
 purposed in Himself.
- B | Eph. iii. 2. The dispensation of the grace of God given me to you.
- A | Eph. iii. 9. The dispensation of the mystery according to the purpose
 of the ages which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- B | Col. i. 25. The dispensation of God given me for you.

In the fullness of “time” (Gal. iv. 4) when God sent forth His Son, the Greek word for ‘time’ is *chronos*, but in Eph. i. 10 the word is *kairos* a “season”, the time of harvest (Matt. xiii. 30), referring not to the clock, but to the season of the year. The usual Greek words translated “gather together” are not found in Eph. i. 10 but a compound of *kephale* “head”, *anakephalaioomai* “to head up” is used. The R.V. reads “to sum up”, but the presence of three expressions “the Head” and “the Fullness” and “all things” in Eph. i. 22, 23, and the added fact that in Colossians we learn that Christ is also “Head of all principality and power” (Col. ii. 10), and that in Him dwells “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily”, make it imperative that we retain the word ‘head’ in the phrase which the A.V. translates “gather together”, and read “to head up”, and so suggest that what Christ is to the Church of the One body now (Eph. i. 22, 23), He will be when the goal, as indicated in I Cor. xv. 28, shall be attained. Now, in this anticipatory dispensation, Christ is All and in all (Col. iii. 11), but when “the end” comes, God will then be all in all. Both Eph. i. 22, 23 and I Cor. xv. 27, 28 flow out of the special interpretation given by Paul of Psa. viii.

The Inheritance.

The A.V. renders Eph. i. 11 “In Whom also we have obtained an inheritance”, where the R.V. reads: “In Whom also we were made an heritage”.

Cunnington translates “We were made God’s portion”.
Rotherham reads “We were taken as an inheritance”.
Moffatt reads “We have had our heritage allotted us”.

The word *kleroomai* translated “obtain an inheritance” occurs nowhere else in the N.T. Dr. Bullinger, in his Lexicon, tells us the word is in the middle voice and means “to acquire by lot, to obtain, to possess”, but leaves the question unsolved as to who it is that obtains.

We have on other occasions expressed our conviction, that many a doubtful passage in the N.T. can be rendered with certainty by referring to the parallel use in the LXX. One such passage is I Sam. xiv. 42, where in answer to the casting of lots between Saul and Jonathan, “Jonathan was taken”. The Greek *Katakleroumai* here is the translation of the Hebrew *lakad* “to take”, in what is called the *niphal* or passive voice, “be taken”, not actively “to take”. There are six occasions apart from I Sam. xiv. 41-42 where this word is used for being taken by lot.

“The tribe of Judah *was taken* and Zabdi *was taken* and Achan *was taken*” (Josh. vii. 16-18).

“The tribe of Benjamin *was taken* the family of Matri *was taken*, and Saul the son of Kish *was taken*” (I Sam. x. 20, 21).

It seems impossible to resist this evidence. Eph. i. 11 teaches us NOT that we have obtained an inheritance, but that we have been taken by God as His inheritance! Of this rendering Alford says: “This seems to me the only rendering by which philology and the context are alike satisfied”.

We have already gained information by referring to the history of Israel. Let us turn again and see what that typical people tell us concerning this conception.

“And the Lord spake unto Aaron, thou shalt have *no inheritance* in the land, neither shall thou have *any part among them*: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel” (Numb. xviii. 20).

This is blessing contrary to nature indeed! The man that God would honour *the most*, is to have, apparently, *least*, but only apparently. The tribes of Israel may possess a portion of the land, but Aaron finds his part and inheritance in the Lord Himself. This is not on all fours with Eph. i. 11, but it is an approach. The Ephesian believer is taken one stage further; the Lord finds His portion in the members of the Church of the One Body. This too finds its counterpart in Israel:

“The Lord’s portion is His people: Jacob is the lot of His inheritance” (Deut. xxxii. 9).

We must not, however, make the mistake of insisting so much upon this aspect as to deny that Israel did have an inheritance. Truth out of proportion oft becomes a lie. In Deut. iv. 20, Moses reminds Israel that they were taken to be a people of inheritance unto the Lord, but in verse 21 he refers to the good land which the Lord had given them for an inheritance. Both statements are necessary for a full presentation of the truth. Both Israel and the Church are reminded that unless they are the Lord’s portion, all other portions will be a mockery. Unless they find their inheritance in the Lord, mere possessions will become vanity.

“All things are yours”, said the Apostle, “whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours: and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (I Cor. iii. 22, 23).

The Apostle uses the word *prothesis* “purpose” once more in the Prison Epistles, namely in II Tim. i. 9, when speaking of the purpose of God, and once in II Tim. iii. 10 of his own purpose and manner of life.

So far we have been concerned mainly with the question of *purpose*. We now turn to *promise* and will discover that the promises of God march with His purposes, and first of all, find their beginning and ending in Christ.

No.3. The Promises. **pp. 21 - 26**

“For all the promises of God in Him are the Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (II Cor. i. 20).

These sentiments form the general tenor of all Scripture. However many times we have been assailed by doubtings and disappointments, we shall all say, out of full hearts, the words of I Kings viii. 56:

“These hath not failed one word of all His good promise, which He promised”

Both Sarah and Abraham are mentioned in the N.T. concerning their conviction that God keeps His promises. Abraham “staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully persuaded that, what He had promised, He was able also to perform” (Rom. iv. 20, 21). Sarah “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). God too, “willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath” (Heb. vi. 17). Here in these three quotations, we have the assurance that God is (1) Able, (2) Faithful, and (3) Unchangeable, with regard to His promises. So important and valued were these promises, that the Apostle when he lists the superior advantages of Israel says:

“To whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, *and the promises*” (Rom. ix. 4).

In contrast, the Gentiles at that time were “Aliens and strangers from the covenants of promise” (Eph. ii. 12) and so were without hope, without Christ, and without God.

Coming to the positive references to ‘promise’ in the Prison Epistles, and including the two epistles to Titus and I Timothy we read:

“In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began” (Titus i. 2).

I Tim. iv. 8 speaks of the “promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come”. II Tim. i. 1 opens with the words:

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus.”

Coming to Ephesians we read:

“Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory” (Eph. i. 13, 14),

and among the special privileges that go with the membership of the Church which is His Body, we read:

“That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel, whereof I was made a minister” (Eph. iii. 6, 7).

We have purposely refrained from digging too deeply into some of these passages, Eph. ii. 6 being one, but have simply emphasized the fact that God keeps His promises, that He is both able, and faithful and is worthy of our complete trust. These facts practically include our third item “Performance”, but we will give this a hearing also that our joy may be complete.

Performance.

Jeremiah was staggered at the prospect of being a prophet unto the nations, and made as an excuse the confession:

“I cannot speak, for I am a child” (Jer. i. 6).

To encourage him, the Most High condescended to give Jeremiah a sign, and said to him:

“What seest thou? And I [Jeremiah] said, I see a rod of an almond tree.”

The answer of the Lord is not very evident on the surface, for He said:

“Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten My word to perform it” (Jer. i. 11, 12).

In Jer. xxxi. 28, the word translated ‘hasten’ in i. 12 is translated “watched”. The almond is one of the first trees to blossom in Palestine, and was so called “the watcher”, and this would need no explanation to Jeremiah or any Hebrew living in his day. To Abraham promises had been made which included a seed, and a land, and when Isaac was distressed by famine, the Lord told him not to go down into Egypt but,

“Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father” (Gen. xxvi. 3).

As we have earlier quoted, Solomon speaks of the performance of God’s promises of I Kings viii. 20, 24:

“The Lord hath performed His word that He spake.”

“Who hast kept with thy servant David my father that Thou promisedst him.”

Without further quotations, which the reader can supplement to his lasting benefit, we once again cite the Apostle’s words from Phil. i. 6:

“Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Purpose Promise Performance

What a trinity of blessing these three words contain, and they belong equally to Israel and the Church, without the possibility of failure through lack of power, through changeableness, or for any possible reason. May this blessed 'confidence' be the portion of all who have put their trust in Him "Who is faithful that promised".

The Question Why?

There can be few, if any, who have walked along life's pilgrim pathway, without at times finding the word "Why?" forced from heart and lips, and we go straight to perhaps the most wonderful example of this human feature, the record of the crucifixion, and read the poignant words:

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Matthew tells us that the language actually used by the Saviour was,

"Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" (Matt. xxvii. 46).

These words are a quotation from Psa. xxii., and there is every evidence that the Saviour recited the whole Psalm and identified Himself with David and all perplexed believers, for later the Psalmist said: "They pierced My hands and My feet". "They part My garments among them, and cast lots upon My vesture", and the closing words of the Psalm "He hath done (*this*)" could easily be the equivalent of the closing words of the crucified Saviour, "It is finished". The cry "Why hast Thou forsaken Me?" cannot mean that Christ was taken unawares by His betrayal and actual crucifixion, such passages as Heb. x. 5-10, Matt. xvi. 21; xxvi. 2 and Luke xviii. 31 make such an excuse impossible. Let us for a moment turn to an earlier trial, and see how the Saviour met it. In Matt. iv. 1-10 we have a record of the temptation of the Son of God in the wilderness. How did He resist the temptation, rebuke and triumph over the tempter? He Who Himself was The Word met the tempter exactly in the same way that you and I must meet him, He said "It is written" three times, and quoted three passages from O.T. Scriptures. The reviling crowd spoke truth when they said "He saved others, Himself He cannot save".

Look at the record of Mark iv. 35, 36. At the close of a strenuous day of healing and teaching not only the multitudes, but when alone with His disciples, He at length said to them, "Let us pass over unto the other side". Now note the words that follow:

"And when THEY [not He] had sent away the multitude, THEY took Him EVEN AS HE WAS in the ship",

and even though a storm arose that threatened the safety of the ship, "He was asleep on a pillow" (38). Here was "The Man Christ Jesus" dead beat, physically exhausted, working miracles for others, but never for Himself. At the disciples' cry however, He Who had been carried "even as He was", arose, rebuked the wind, and at His word "the wind ceased and there was a great calm" (Mark iv. 39-41). Now these

passages (Matt. xxvii. 46; Matt. iv. 1-10 and Mark iv. 34-41) have been brought forward to show that the Saviour entered into all the physical and mental trials that are known to man, and so the question “Why?” came from His lips, not because He did not know the answer, or was ignorant of the purposes of God, but that He might assure us that the eternal question “Why?” that haunts man from cradle to grave is understood by Him, and shared by Him.

So far as we have any means of knowing, man is the only creature on earth that asks the question “Why?”, and so with these introductory words, inadequate as they may appear to be, we turn to the Scriptures for examples and for the answers given to this ever-repeated question “Why?”

Psalm lxxiii.

This Psalm of Asaph shows us a man of like infirmities as ourselves, whose faith was sorely tried, but who was graciously led to the only place where his questioning heart could be satisfied. The Psalm is divided into three parts by the recurrence of the words “Truly” (1), “Verily” (13), and “Surely” (18), which are all translations of the same Hebrew word, and could be translated in each place “After all”. First the Psalmist gives the conclusion that he had been led to after a period of doubt, and says “After all, God is good to Israel”, and if we demur and say, did Asaph doubt this blessed fact? he himself says:

“As for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped” (2),

and this because he had become envious at the prosperity of the wicked who seemed to have no trouble as other men, whose eyes stood out in fatness and who had more than heart could wish. So in verse 13 he came to the sad conclusion:

“After all I have cleansed my heart in vain.”

But then came the wonderful change:

“Until I went into the sanctuary of God, then understood I their end” (17).

“After all, Thou didst set them in slippery places” (18).

Asaph’s question “Why?” was solved as our questionings must be solved “in the Sanctuary”. He had actually put his finger on the answer by his use of the word “chastened”, for this is the Lord’s dealings with His own. Asaph’s feet “were almost gone”, his steps had “well nigh slipped”, but now he realized that those who had been the object of his envy would be cast down to destruction, while he emerged from the Sanctuary saying:

“Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel”

“And afterward received me to glory”

“Whom have I in heaven but Thee?” (24, 25).

Most of us at different times have felt like Asaph, but however slippery the path, and the assault of the enemy, we can say with him “Thou hast holden me by my right hand” (verse 23).

Abraham, the man of faith.

Abraham is lifted out by the Apostle Paul, both in Romans and in Hebrews as a wonderful example of a faith “that staggered not” at an almost unbelievable promise, yet, there is an illuminating passage which shows that he was much like ourselves, and became haunted with the question “Why?”. This we find recorded in Gen. xv. Although Abraham believed in the Lord that Sarah should have a son and heir, Abraham nevertheless asked:

“Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it [the land]?” (Gen. xv. 18),

and at first reading, the answer of the Lord sounds the very opposite of reassurance:

“Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years” (13).

The assurance comes in the sequel:

“But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again” (16),

as we find they did (Exod. xii. 40-42).

There were several factors that led to delay. Terah’s halt at Haran, and Lot’s accompanying afterwards gave the evil one his opportunity. Now, instead of blotting out the Canaanite by one miraculous blow, the Lord seems to suggest that even the Amorite had some length of time allowed, “the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full” (Gen. xv. 16). Daniel also tells us that “when the transgressors are come to the full” (Dan. viii. 23) the closing phases of Prophecy will be at hand. This seems to be a principle that is observed even when dealing with iniquity. In the dreadful denunciation of hypocritical Pharisees and those that agreed with them, the Saviour said:

“Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” (Matt. xxiii. 32, 33).

The Apostle Paul, referring to the antagonism of the Jews to the gospel, speaks of killing, persecuting, being contrary, forbidding to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, concluding with the words:

“To fill up their sins always” (I Thess. ii. 15, 16).

Here again some recognized ‘measure’ seems to be in view, and therefore may be an answer to another “Why?” that has often expressed the worry and anxiety of man under the centuries of Satanic power. Why should Satan be allowed 6000 years of rebellion? Perhaps so mighty an antagonist needs to have a greater extent of liberty before the final

judgment falls. We cannot say for certainty that this is so, but, taking all these and parallel passages into account, the agonized cry “Why?” may have to be answered:

“The iniquity of the Wicked ONE is not yet full”,

and like Asaph we shall have to go into the sanctuary of God to gain peace and assurance and understand the “End”.

There is much that is left unsaid. If we can be assured that the Saviour Himself identifies Himself as the Son of Man by actually quoting as of Himself the agonized opening of Psa. xxii., and if we can sympathize with Asaph in his distress and learn with him the lesson that he learned, and if like Abraham we catch a glimpse of the measure of iniquity that must be filled before judgment falls, then, while we may still at times be moved to ask “Why?” of some of life’s enigmas, we shall have the comfort of these Scriptures to enable us to trust where sometimes we cannot trace.

A Survey of the Books of the New Testament

No.1. Israel, in the Gospels and the Acts. pp. 41 - 45

During the period covered by the Gospels, the Acts, Paul's early epistles and the book of the Revelation, Israel is present and is dominant, Israel is the channel of blessing Divinely appointed, and through which blessing to the Gentile must flow. It will not be necessary to deal with this feature exhaustively but the following passages will suffice for all who bow to the teaching of the Scriptures. The ministry of the Saviour, was, at the first, exclusively to Israel. Commissioning the twelve on their first mission, the Lord said:

“Go not but go rather.”

“Go *not* into the way of the *Gentiles*, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of *the house of Israel*” (Matt. x. 5, 6).

This restriction is observed later in the Lord's dealing with the Syrophenecian woman:

“But He answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of *the house of Israel*” (Matt. xv. 24).

Only when the woman accepted the position of “little dogs” that eat the ‘crumbs’ that fall from their “masters” (Gk. *kurion* lord's) table could she receive a blessing. The Apostle acknowledges this pre-eminence of Israel in the epistle to the Romans. Not only does he say “to the Jew first” (Rom. i. 16); not only does he remind the Gentile believer that he was like “a wild olive grafted contrary to nature” into the olive tree of Israel (Rom. xi. 17-25), but lays it down categorically,

“That Jesus Christ was a minister of the CIRCUMCISION for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the FATHERS”,

and subsequently, and only as an outcome of this, that “The Gentiles might glory God for His mercy” (Rom. xv. 8-12). It is acknowledged by all scholars, that the epistle to the Romans was the last epistle written by Paul before his Roman imprisonment. It therefore gives the last word on the place of Israel up to about Acts xx., and this is what the Apostle said of Israel in the ninth chapter of this epistle:

“My brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came. Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen” (Rom. ix. 3-5).

In pointed and intended contrast with this unique position is the description given of the Gentiles “at that time”, and written in one of the Epistles covering the period of Israel's absence:

“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and with God in the world” (Eph. ii. 11, 12).

The Saviour Himself reminded the woman of Samaria that:

“Salvation is of the Jews” (John iv. 22).

The people of Israel occupy their pre-eminent place from Act i., until set aside in Acts xxviii., a period that covers and includes the seven epistles of Paul’s early ministry. Let us tabulate the references for the sake of brevity.

- (1) Arising out of the forty days opening up of the Scriptures of the O.T. and prompted, not by blinded Jewish prejudice, but after being assured that He Who had thus expounded to them, or “opened” the Scriptures, saw to it that their understandings were also “opened”, the disciples put to the Lord the one question to which such an opening of the Scriptures must lead:

“Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts i. 6; *see* Acts i. 3; Luke xxiv. 27, 32, 44-48).

It is a sad comment, that those who believe that “the Body of Christ began at Pentecost” have to stoop so low in support of their traditions, as to label Acts i. 6 as “An Apostolic mistake”!

- (2) When we examine Acts ii., we discover the following features. Those who had gathered from “every nation under heaven” to observe this feast, are denominated “JEWS”. They are addressed by Peter as “Men of Judaea”, “Men of Israel”, “Men and brethren”, “All the house of Israel” (Acts ii. 5, 14, 22, 36).

The Scriptures quoted in proving certain features, are the prophet Joel and the Psalms. These O.T. Scriptures have nothing to say about a church, but associate Pentecost with “the raising of the Lord to sit upon David’s throne” (Acts ii. 16-21, 30, 33). The Revised Text omits the word “church” from Acts ii. 47; but even though it should be retained, Stephen’s use of the word in Acts vii. 38 shows that the nation of Israel was at that time spoken of as the “Church in the wilderness”.

- (3) In Acts iii. 19-26, Peter provides the moral of the healing of the lame man. It was a foreshadowing of the “restoration of all things”, and in relation with this great theme of prophecy, Peter said to Israel:

“Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. UNTO YOU FIRST God, having raised up His Son Jesus, SENT Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts iii. 25, 26).

- (4) Even after the stoning of Stephen, and the subsequent preaching in places as far off as Cyprus and Antioch, such nevertheless preached the word “To NONE but unto the JEWS ONLY” (Acts xi. 19).

Leaving the testimony of Peter let us turn to the teaching of Paul.

- (5) In Acts xiii. Paul is separated by the Holy Spirit, and evangelized some of the cities of Galatia. He addressed the congregation in the synagogues as “Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham”, (but added what Peter could not have added until the revelation given him in Acts x.), “and whosoever among you feareth God. To YOU is the word of this salvation SENT” (Acts xiii. 26).

Explaining his attitude subsequently, Paul said to the Jews:

“It was necessary that the word of God should FIRST have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles” (Acts xiii. 46),

and the closing words of Acts xiv. show that here, not in the Gospels, nor in Acts i.-xii., but here God “opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles”.

- (6) Paul’s defence recorded in Acts xxii. was given in Hebrew, and when he spoke before king Agrippa, he acknowledged that Agrippa was “expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews” and later said:

“And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise *our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come*” (Acts xxvi. 6, 7).

It is evident that Paul had not heard of the “lost” ten tribes! And when at length Paul reached Rome, instead of fulfilling his long cherished desire (Rom. i. 9-13), he called the chiefs of the Jews together, and told them:

“For the *hope of Israel* I am bound with this chain” (Acts xxviii. 17-20).

It is evident from these Scriptures, that throughout the gospels, and right through to the close of the Acts, Israel was a factor to be reckoned with, but what Gentile today could, if he would, become like the graft of wild olive?

The New Covenant and the Mystery. Two distinct callings and spheres of blessing.

The word “testament” is too closely interwoven into our speech that it cannot now be dispensed with, nevertheless it is unfortunate that it is used as a synonym for “covenant”, for these two words have different associations. The chief use of the words “testament” or “testamentary” is to do with a person’s will, as drawn up by a solicitor, which opens with the words:

“This is the last will and testament of”

The Greek word *diatheke* is translated both “covenant” and “testament” in parallel passages, as:

“A Surety of a better testament” (Heb. vii. 22), and
“The Mediator of a better covenant” (Heb. viii. 6).

There can be no doubt but that the word “covenant” should be used in practically every occurrence of the word *diatheke*. We are not however, governed either by the

etymology of the Greek word or by its use by pagan Greeks. The word is employed in the LXX version to translate the Hebrew *berith*, which is translated in the A.V. O.T. “covenant” 260 times, beside “confederacy”, and “league”, all, or any of which translations imply an agreement made by two parties or more. It is amazing to ponder the different way in which many believers act when engaged in the business of this world, as over against their strange dealings with Scripture. No man in his senses would go to a Bank, an Insurance office, or a Building Society and act as though he had every right to that which was in some specific covenant, *simply because he lived next door!* Yet Christian men of understanding and integrity can read, both in the O.T. and in the N.T. that the New Covenant was made by the Lord “with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah”, whose identity is further made clear by the added words:

“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” (Jer. xxxi. 32).

God never led the “fathers” of any Gentile reader of these words out of Egypt to the foot of Mount Sinai, and all pretensions to rights and claims of blessing under the New Covenant are invalid and foolish. This new covenant falls into two parts:

- (1) The forgiveness of sins (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34).
- (2) The restoration of Israel to their land (Jer. xxxi. 36),

and with this restoration, their entry into the position of a kingdom of Priests, which formed part of the broken covenant of Sinai (Exod. xix. 5, 6) which was forfeited, but which will be their blessed position by virtue of the blood of the New Covenant shed by Christ (Rev. i. 5, 6).

At the close of the Passover feast, which the Saviour commemorated with His disciples before He was offered as the true “Lamb of God”, 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 remissions of sins” (Matt. xxvi. 28).

This is repeated in the epistle to the Corinthians (I Cor. xi. 25), for it was the Divine purpose that through Israel, all families of the earth should be blessed, and the forgiveness of sins was a *sine qua non*, before Israel could reach to their ultimate position as a Kingdom of Priests, or be restored as a nation. The first phase of the New Covenant was in operation *all the while* that Israel remained as a people before God, i.e. up to the end of the Acts. When, however, Israel were dismissed, and became *lo-ammi* “Not My people” (Hosea i. and iii.) the New Covenant was suspended, for how can it operate when one of the parties is out of commission?

We can see that the New Covenant is in force as long as Israel is in covenant relationship with God as His people. It is confirmed in the Gospels, by the offering of Christ, it is in course of fulfillment under the ministry of Peter, Paul, James, John and Jude (*see* I Pet. ii. 5); it lapsed at the close of the Acts, which date line was followed in a few years by the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple under Titus, and it will be

resumed when the day of the Lord sets in as we learn from the Prophets of old and the Book of the Revelation. In the interval, and filling the gap caused by Israel's failure and dispersion, the Lord introduced "The dispensation of the Mystery" (Eph. iii. 9 R.V.) entrusting it to Paul as the Prisoner of Jesus Christ for us Gentiles (Eph. iii. 1; Col. i. 25). In this calling the New Covenant is not mentioned. In Ephesians and Colossians Israel's hopes and the promises made unto the fathers have no bearing. The recipients of the blessings that belong to this calling were "strangers from the covenants of promise" (Eph. ii. 12). Their blessings go back to a period called in Eph. i. 4 "Before the foundation of the world" (or as we have learned to translate it, "before the overthrow of the world").

No.2. The Olive Tree, and the Joint Body
(Rom. xi. 17 - 24; Eph. iii. 6).
pp. 61 - 66

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment As the dew of Hermon" (Psa. cxxxiii.).

This Psalm of David appealed to Hezekiah when he arranged his fifteen Songs of the degrees, or steps (II Kings viii. 8-11, Isa. xxxviii. 8), for similar words are used of the united nation under David "as the heart of one man" (II Sam. xix. 14), as are used of the unity under Hezekiah "one heart" (II Chron. xxx. 5-18). (See *The Companion Bible*, appendix 67.) Later, Ezekiel was instructed to set forth the future unity of the nation of Israel, by writing the names "For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions" on one stick, and "For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions" on another stick.

"And join them one to another into one stick: and they shall become one in thine hand" (Ezek. xxxvii. 15-19).

The first reference to any form of oneness in the early ministry of the apostle Paul, is in his first epistle, that to the Galatians.

"For ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28).

Lifted out of their context these words could be and are used of richest and fullest unity found in the N.T., but they form part of an argument, as the opening word "For" indicates, and not only so, they become luminous when read in the light of a threefold prayer, found in the Jewish Prayer Book, which reads like this:

"O Lord our God, King of the Universe, I thank Thee I was not born a GENTILE.
"O Lord our God, King of the Universe, I thank Thee I was not born a SLAVE.
"O Lord our God, King of the Universe, I thank Thee I was not born a WOMAN."

When we remember that Paul had been a ‘zealot’ for the traditions of the fathers, and an advanced advocate for the Jew’s religion (Gal. i. 14), his words in Gal. iii. 28, which are an expansion of the words already quoted, become full of meaning.

“There is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile).
There is neither bond nor free (Slave).
There is neither male nor female (Woman).
For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

The sequel does not go on to speak of the Church of the One Body but links this unity with Abraham:

“And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise” (Gal. iii. 29).

No exposition of these words can be acceptable that ignore chapter iii. 16:

“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”

Whether this is a reference to Gen. xiii. 15, xvii. 8, or xxiv. 7, the promise of “the land” to this seed is so far removed from any possible reference to the dispensation of the Mystery with its sphere “heavenly places far above all”, as to make comparison difficult. Two figures are employed in the epistles to set forth the nature of the unity of believers, during the Apostle Paul’s Acts ministry, which contrast in one or two essential particulars with the unity of the church of the Mystery, the subject of Paul’s second, or Prison ministry. I Cor. xii., sets forth the symbol of the human body in connection with the diversity of spiritual gifts enjoyed by the Church of that day. The insistence that though these were “diversities” of gifts, yet they were all from “the same” Spirit, is well illustrated by the fact that a body is not one member but many; the foot differs from the hand, the ear differs from the eye, yet all have been set in their place by God. In structural correspondence, the words:

“But now hath God set the members” (I Cor. xii. 18),

are placed over against the words:

“And God hath set some in the church” (I Cor. xii. 28);

the several members of the body, being equated with:

“First apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues” (I Cor. xii. 28).

It is illogical as well as undispensational to take the illustration of unity “the human body” and omit all references to supernatural gifts. It is illogical, for the Apostle explicitly states at the beginning of the chapter, that he is writing “concerning spiritual gifts”, and it is undispensational, for the present dispensation of the Mystery is totally devoid of supernatural or miraculous gifts. The parallel to this reference to the gift of

apostles, etc., is in Eph. iv. 8-11. In I Cor. xii. 28 Paul goes out of his way to indicate a numerical order in the gifts saying,

“FIRST apostles, SECONDARILY prophets, THIRDLY teachers”,

whereas in Eph. iv. 11 we read:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers”,

and in Eph. ii. 20 we discover that the Apostles and Prophets were a “foundation” ministry, and never to be repeated in this dispensation, whilst the Evangelist and the Teacher are the legitimate successors of the Apostles and the Prophets, as we learn from II Timothy:

“Do the work of an EVANGELIST for (i.e. the reason) I (Paul, the apostle) am now ready to be offered” (II Tim. iv. 5, 6).

“The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to TEACH others also” (II Tim. ii. 2).

“The apostles” of Eph. iv., cannot refer to Peter, James, John and the rest of the twelve, for they were called and appointed by Christ on earth (Matt. x. 2-5), in a context of miracles (verses 1, 8) and under a prohibition “Go not into the way of the Gentiles” (verse 5). The apostles of Eph. iv. were given to the church by the ASCENDED Christ, and so constitute a new order, especially given:

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph. iv. 12).

Returning for a while to Paul’s earlier ministry, we turn to Rom. xi. By referring to Rom. x. 21 “To Israel He saith”, to Rom. xi. 25, 26, 28 “Blindness in part is happened to Israel and so all Israel shall be saved the Deliverer shall come out of Sion and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob”, we can be assured that the Church is not in view, but Israel as a nation. The figure employed here by the Apostle to illustrate the union of the Gentile believer with Israel, is that of an olive tree. The Gentile nations as such are not in view, but “believers” from among the nations, for the Apostle says:

“Because of unbelief they (i.e. the natural branches, Israel) were broken off, and *thou standest by faith*” (Rom. xi. 20).

Here, then, under the figure of the olive tree, the unity of the Jew and Gentile that believed during the Acts is set forth. This, however, is by no means all. There are peculiar features that are of supreme importance, and must now be noted.

*The branches that were broken off were the unbelieving among Israel, the remaining branches constituting a remnant. Into the place from which the unbelieving of Israel had been broken off, the Gentile believer had been grafted, “contrary to nature”.

[* - For a fuller examination of Rom. ix.-xi., with complete structural analysis, the reader is referred to the book *Just and the Justifier.*]

Why does the Apostle use the expression “contrary to nature”? The root and fatness of the olive tree belonged to Israel, and if Israel had repented, and had been restored at that time, no Gentile would ever have shared it with them, even temporarily. It was something exceptional that was in view. It is clear that Paul cannot be referring to the great promise of justification by faith, for two reasons. In the first place, he warns the believing Gentile that he might be “cut off”, a warning that cannot refer to justification by faith, for Rom. viii. makes a separation for ever impossible; and secondly, Abraham himself was an uncircumcised Gentile when he was justified by faith, and so can be the father of all who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles, without any necessity for a grafting in “contrary to nature”. So far as justification was concerned, the oneness of all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, was so close, that many have taken the words of Gal. iii. 27-29 as though they were written in Ephesians. “Contrary to nature” cannot, therefore be used of the great *doctrine* of Rom. i.-viii.; it can only apply to the *dispensational* teaching of Rom. ix.-xi. The *doctrinal* truth remains, the dispensational aspects change, and pass away.

We have now seen enough, we trust, to convince us that truth is not in view in Rom. xi. Before passing on to the great conclusion, however, we must examine more carefully the Apostle’s figure of the olive tree, and discover why he speaks of the process as engrafting into the true olive tree, branches of the wild olive, contrary to nature.

To provoke unto jealousy.

If the reader will glance at the structure of Rom. xi. 11-32, he will see that the word ‘provoke’ is given three times. Two of these references actually occur in verses 11 & 14, while in verses 17-24, instead of stating the fact for the third time, we find that the Apostle uses the figure of the olive tree. It is the usual custom in grafting to take a slip of the choice variety, whether it be apple or pear, or rose, and graft it into the stock of some stronger, though not so choice, variety. For example, in the case of the standard rose, the tall stem is the briar, and upon this is budded the more fragile flower. Paul appears to reverse all this, and there are many who bluntly say that he did not know anything about the culture of trees, and must not be taken literally. This, however, cannot be. He hangs the whole argument of Rom. xi. upon this figure, and if he is wrong in this, he may be wrong altogether. Paul himself recognizes that the process is “contrary to nature”, but those who criticize, and suggest that he is using a far-fetched illustration, are themselves in error. While the engrafting of a wild olive into the true was “contrary to nature”, it was by no means contrary to practice. *Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella*, a Latin writer on agriculture, gardening and trees, deals with the cultivation of the olive tree, and speaks of the very practice under consideration. It was found that when an olive tree began to cease fruit-bearing, the insertion of a wild graft had the same effect upon the tree that it was hoped the insertion of the Gentile would have had on Israel; it “provoked” the flagging olive tree to “emulation”. The practice has been revived in our own day to provoke certain shy-bearing pear trees to fruitfulness. *Columella* flourished about 40A.D., so that Paul was not speaking “without the book”.

The fact that the Gentiles who believed had received “the blessing of Abraham” in the form of the promised “spirit” (Gal. iii. 14), and that they possessed the gifts associated with Pentecost (I Cor. xiv. 21), was intended to provoke Israel to wake up to the fact that their unique position was going. The whole point of the olive tree in Rom. xi. lies in the purpose with which the wild olive was graft in, namely to provoke the flagging tree (Israel) to jealousy. Gentile nations are not in view in Rom. xi., for such cannot be addressed as “brethren”, neither do they stand “by faith”.

When we return to the epistle to the Ephesians we shall see that in the unity there revealed, the Jew as a Jew, and the Gentile as a Gentile, disappear, the one Body being a newly created new man. In that company, there can be no member graft “contrary to nature”, no member is “natural”, no member is “wild”, it is a unity so unique that a term seems to have been coined to express it, which we will see presently. During the Acts of the Apostles, a “middle wall” divided the Jewish believer from the Gentile, but this was broken down, its enmity “slain” and a “new man” created. This theme occupies Eph. ii. 11-19, and is of sufficient importance to demand careful study.

We will give the structure of the passage, which is as follows:

Eph. ii. 11 - 19-. The new man.

D | O1 | 11, 12. IN TIME PAST.
 P1 | n | 11. Gentiles IN THE FLESH.
 o | 12. Without Christ.
Distance p | 12. Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.
 p | 12. Strangers from the covenants of the promise.
 o | 12. Without hope.
 n | 12. Godless IN THE WORLD.
 O2 | 13, 14. BUT NOW.
 P2 | q1 | 14. He is our PEACE.
 r1 | “The BOTH” made one.
 s1 | 14. Middle wall broken.
Peace t | 15. Enmity in flesh.
 s1 | 15. Decrees abolished.
 r1 | 15. “The TWAIN” created one new man.
 q1 | 16. So making PEACE.
 q2 | 16. Reconciled to GOD.
 r2 | 16. “The BOTH” in one body.
 s2 | 16. Through the cross.
Reconciliation t | 16, 17. Enmity slain. Peace.
 s2 | 18. Through Him.
 r2 | 18. “The BOTH” in one spirit.
 q2 | 18. Access to the FATHER.
 O3 | 19. NO LONGER.
 P3 | 19. Strangers and foreigners.

The structure reveals a threefold subdivision of the subject matter, which is related to three time periods.

- (1) In time past What we once were.
- (2) But now What grace has done.
- (3) No longer The complete reversal of the past.

Each part of Eph. ii. deals with a time past in contrast with a time present, with its accompanying change. It is important to observe the distinctive features of these two parts, the former dealing with death and life, the latter with distance and nearness.

No.3. pp. 81 - 85

We should note the differences between the two contrasting sections of Eph. ii. dealing with the past and present. Instead of sin and trespasses we have dispensational distance; instead of the flesh with its lusts, we have the flesh in its uncircumcision and enmity. In the first section we have a new creation, and in the second the creation of a new man; in the first, believers are seated together in the heavenlies, in the second builded together as an habitation of God. These differences are important, for if the section before us deals with dispensational distance rather than with sin and death, this will materially colour the meaning of the reconciliation referred to here by the Apostle. The trend of the two parts of this chapter may be seen if set out as follows:

Ephesians ii.

- A | DOCTRINE |
 - a | 1-3. Once. Walk. World and flesh.
 - b | 4. But God. Mercy. Love.
 - c | 5-10. Made Alive together.
 Raised together.
 Made to sit together.
- A | DISPENSATION |
 - a | 11, 12. Once. Gentiles. In flesh. In world.
 - b | 13-18. But now. Nigh. One.
 - c | 19-22. Citizens together.
 Fitly framed together.
 Builded together.

The Gentiles who composed the majority of the members of the one Body had no Scriptures full of promises made unto their fathers; they were not only alienated from the life of God, but were also aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. The structure of the epistle as a whole throws into prominence two features—the new man, and this twofold alienation. For the moment our attention is to be directed to the dispensational alienation, the dispensational disability of being a Gentile as contrasted with the dispensational privilege of being a Jew.

What was the position, dispensationally, of those who are now members of the Body?
This passage bids us remember that we were once:

- a | Gentiles *in the flesh*.
- b | Without Christ.
- c | Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel.
- c | Strangers from the covenants of the promise.
- b | Having no hope.
- a | Godless *in the world*.

There was nothing personally wrong in being a Gentile, but being born a Gentile carried with it great dispensational disabilities.

“He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for His judgments, they have not known them”
(Psa. cxlvii. 19, 20; *see also* Amos iii. 2; Rom. iii. 2).

We observe in Eph. ii. 11, 12 that the sphere of Gentile disability is “in the flesh”; *so also is the sphere of Israel’s privileges*. Some of these privileges are set out by the apostle in Rom. ix. 3-5:

- A | According to the flesh Brethren.
- B | Israelites.
- C | Adoption (placing as sons).
- D | Glory.
- E | Covenants.
- E | Law.
- D | Service.
- C | Promises.
- B | Fathers.
- A | According to the flesh Christ.

In the flesh, the Gentile is without Christ. He can only reach Christ “in Spirit”; in the flesh he is without hope, for it was *of Israel* according to the flesh that Christ came. Thus the words *en pneumat*i (Eph. iii. 5) really preface the threefold fellowship of the Mystery detailed in verse 6, of which more when we reach that passage.

At the close of the dark list of Gentile hopelessness are the words “in the world”. The world is at the present time an abandoned evil, the enemy of God and of truth. Its prince is the devil, for the Saviour’s kingdom is not of this world. The whole world lieth in wickedness, and its rudiments are antagonistic to Christ. It is totally oblivious of the work and witness of the Spirit. Its elements hold the Gentiles in bondage. Nothing but utter hopelessness, therefore, can be the condition of those who are “in the flesh” and “in the world”.

From this pit of corruption and from this Godless, Christless, hopeless wilderness, God, in His rich mercy, stooped and saved those whose destiny is to be blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly place in Christ.

The Syrophenician woman (Matt. xv. 22-28), shows us something of the meaning of the words:

“Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise” (Eph. ii. 12).

The Gentile was by nature “far off”. How could he be made nigh? The answer is that, while the dispensation that included the nation of Israel lasted, *Gentile believers could be grafted into the olive tree of Israel*. Rom. xi. does not refer to a merely national position—those addressed were “brethren” and were reminded that they stood “by faith” (Rom. xi. 20, 25). The justified Gentile during the Acts period did not become a member of the Body of Christ; *he became a graft in the olive tree of Israel of which Abraham was the root*.

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

When we realize something of the slavery of Satan and the dominion of sin (ii. 1-3), with what relief do we read the words of Eph. ii. 4, “but God”. Again, when the helplessness and the hopelessness of the Gentiles’ case dispensationally, as set forth in Eph. ii. 11, 12 is realized, how blessed the “but now” of verse 13! The blood of Christ which accomplished deliverance from the bondage of sin (Eph. i. 7), now breaks down all barriers and gives perfect access. The former condition of alienation is closely linked with a special enmity. The new status brings in peace, evidently the result of the cessation of that enmity.

It will be necessary to turn once more to the structure already given on this passage (see article No.2). Member P2, shows us a twofold division of theme. In the centre t and t we have the enmity, and at the four extremes ($q1$, $q1$, $q2$, $q2$) we have:

“He is our PEACE” “So making PEACE”
“Reconciled to GOD” “Access to the FATHER”

To understand these terms will enable us to understand both the dispensational condition of things during the Acts and earlier, and the mighty change brought in at the opening of the dispensation of the Mystery. Christ is evidently our peace, because He has:

- (1) Made the both one, and
- (2) Broken down a middle wall of partition.

What is this middle wall? As the salvation of the sinner is not in view, but the dispensational distance of the Gentile who needed to be “made nigh”, we shall not accomplish much by interpreting this middle wall as sin. A further consultation of the structure ($s1$ and $s1$) will show that the middle wall stands in correspondence with ordinances or decrees that have been abolished.

What did God intend by these ordinances, and what did He mean by this middle wall of partition? The reference to the latter is an allusion to the temple that was standing at Jerusalem in the days of Christ and His apostles. This temple consisted of an outer square some six hundred feet wide, and a second, inner, area. Josephus describes it as follows:

“On advancing to the second temple a stone balustrade was thrown around it four feet and a half high, and withal beautifully wrought, and in it stood pillars at equal distances proclaiming the law of purity, some in Greek and some in Roman letters, that no alien might pass within the sanctuary.

Such was the first enclosure, and not far from it, in the middle, was the second ascended by a few steps and encompassed by a stone balustrade for a partition, which prohibited by inscription any alien from entering, under penalty of death.”

(Antiquities xv: xi:5).

In our own time one of the very stones spoken of by Josephus has been discovered by the side of the *Via Dolorosa* in Jerusalem. A cast of the stone is now in the British Museum. The translation of the inscription is as follows:

“No one, being a foreigner, may enter into the enclosure around the holy place. Whosoever is apprehended will himself be to blame for his death which will certainly follow.”

This was an outward and visible sign of an inward and real enmity. While this obtained, absolute unity and equality among believers was impossible. While both Peter and Cornelius were sinners saved by the same precious blood, the one had an access which the other was denied. Now, had this difference merely related to the Jerusalem temple it might not have mattered very much, but the middle wall of the temple represented a very real middle wall in fact. This difference, dispensationally, that existed between Jew and Gentile is seen quite clearly in the Saviour’s words to the Syrophenician woman. (We say dispensationally, advisedly, for in the realm of doctrine and salvation Rom. iii. and x. declare that there is “no difference” whereas Rom. iii. and ix. are just as emphatic upon the privilege that pertains to the Jew only.) To this woman of Canaan the Lord said:

“I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. xv. 24).

Peter’s attitude when he visited Cornelius shows the existence of the middle wall very clearly:

“Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean I ask therefore for what intent you have sent for me?” (Acts x. 28, 29).

Peter, by his own admission, is still a Jew, still keeping the law that regulated ceremonials, still calling Gentiles, however devout and God-fearing, “common” and “unclean”, and so far removed from the missionary ideal as actually to ask for what intent Cornelius had sent for him!

This middle wall was not, however, exclusively related to Peter. The assembled apostles and elders at Jerusalem, in solemn council, and uniting with their decision the Holy Ghost, perpetuated this middle wall between Jewish and Gentile believers:

“Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God; but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in synagogues every sabbath day” (Acts xv. 19-21).

It is evident that while the Gentiles were asked to observe these four “necessary things” (verse 28), the Jewish church was still intent upon the whole ceremonial law. This could have but one effect—division. The Jewish believer would, no doubt, consider himself upon a higher plane of sanctity than the Gentile who was expected only to observe the four basic things. This decision at Jerusalem is called “the decrees”, exactly the same word as is translated “ordinances” in Eph. ii. 15:

“They delivered them *the decrees* for to keep, that were *ordained* of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem” (Acts xvi. 4).

There is one further reference to this middle wall and the decrees or ordinances, and that is found in Col. ii. Whether “the decrees” of Acts xv. and xvi. are in view in Ephesians ii. may be open to question; the passage in Col. ii., however, is beyond doubt. The passage uses the same words as are found in Eph. ii. 1 “and you being dead to trespasses”, and proceeds:

“and to the uncircumcision of your flesh, He hath made alive together with Him, having freely forgiven us all trespasses, having blotted out *the handwriting of ordinances* which was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross” (Col. ii. 13, 14).

What these contrary ordinances were is immediately made known:

“Let no man *therefore* judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast, or new moon, or sabbaths, which are a *shadow* of things to come, but the *body* is of Christ” (Col. ii. 16, 17).

For the Jewish believer the setting aside of these ordinances was symbolized in the rending of the veil, and is set out in the epistle to the Hebrews. For the Gentile believer the slaying of that enmity was symbolized by the destruction of the Temple itself some forty years after, when the middle wall was demolished. The removal of this enmity is a distinctive feature of the dispensation of the Mystery.

Let us give due heed to the very emphatic language used with reference to the setting aside of these ordinances:

“Broken down”; “abolished”; “slain” (in Ephesians).
“Blotting out”, “taking away”; “nailing to the cross” (in Colossians).

Here is no reform, but abolition followed by a new creation.

No.4. pp. 101 - 103

In the passage we have been dealing with, Eph. ii. 11-17, those who were at enmity, but have now been made one, have been stressed. They are three times referred to as “the both” and once as “the twain”.

The thought here is entirely opposed to the idea that the Gentile who was once an alien is now admitted into the fellowship of the covenants; it is entirely opposed to anything similar to the graft in the olive tree. The both are made one—“for to create in Himself of the twain one new man”. This blots out both the Jew and the Gentile, as such.

There are some who would repudiate evolution, and stand by the doctrine of creation as given in Genesis, yet they are found denying a new creation and admitting evolution into the second chapter of Ephesians. Wherever we read of a new creation in Scripture, we find, as essentially connected with it, the passing away of former things.

“If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold new things have come into being” (II Cor. v. 17).

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea the former things are passed away” (Rev. xxi. 1, 4).

“Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind” (Isa. lxv. 17).

Eph. ii. 11-19 is dispensational, and while the great foundation doctrines of Romans are as true as ever, the dispensational position of Romans and Corinthians is “passed away”. New things, dispensationally, have come into being. Nothing that belongs peculiarly to the earlier dispensation must be allowed to intrude into the new. This new man is reconciled to God through the cross; and the both have access to the Father. The reconciliation is “to God”, the access to “the Father”. The one views the whole company; the other views the individual and is experimental.

We now draw to the conclusion of this section with the third time period—“No longer”. Once we were strangers; we are strangers no longer. Once we were foreigners; we are foreigners no longer. Not that we have been merely placed on a level with Israel. We have been blessed in a realm of which Israel never dreamed.

Into this new creation we resolutely refuse to admit anything that has not the divine sanction. Here is a new creation and a new man. Here is the beginning of the one Body. Here is the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace.

When we were considering the opening verses of Ephesians, we found that the subject was threefold. We have the will of the Father, the work of the Son, and the witness of the Spirit. We drew attention to the way in which the three sections of the prayer that

follows seem to keep this threefold division in mind. We meet these features once more in Eph. ii. 18:

“*Through Him* (the Son) . . . we both have access by *one Spirit* . . . unto the Father.”

In chapter iii., the Apostle speaks particularly of the dispensation given to him, of the Mystery, and the peculiar character of the unity there created.

“In Spirit that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel whereof I was made a minister” (Eph. iii. 5-7).

The mystery or secret of the present dispensation is, of course, twofold; it deals with Christ and it deals with the church. Now Christ is the theme of all Scripture, the Hope of all callings, the Foundation of all structures. Consequently, while fuller and higher revelations were necessary to declare His exalted position at the right hand of God, such were in their nature an advance upon what had gone before. The revelation that pertains to the church, however, was entirely new. Nothing in any shape or form was known of it in Scripture. Its constitution, sphere of blessing and time of choice are all absolutely unique. Nowhere else throughout the whole range of revelation was it ever revealed that Gentiles should be “seated together” in the heavenly places; never elsewhere that of Jew and Gentile should a new man be created, associated with a fellowship of absolute equality.

This fellowship occupies a central position in the witness of Eph. iii. 1-13. It is shrined in the structure of the Mystery. It is bounded by the terms “in Spirit” and “in Christ”, and has a threefold equality, a fellowship without precedent, expressed, so far as the English will permit, by the words “joint-heirs”, a “joint body” and “joint partakers”. The words “in Spirit” of verse 5 do not refer to the revelation made to apostles and prophets, but, as at the end of Eph. ii., indicate the only sphere in which such an equality is possible. In the flesh, Israel can brook no peer; in Spirit only can such an equality be possible.

Three times does the Apostle use the word *sun*, “together with”. As translations we can use the terms “fellow heirs” and “fellow-partakers”, but hardly “fellow-body”. The best plan we can adopt is to translate the *sun* by the word “joint”, remembering that it indicates perfect equality. In I Cor. xii. 13 we have “one body, *whether* we be Jews or Gentiles”; this could not be written of the church of the Mystery, for here there is *neither* Jew nor Greek—both have been blotted out, and of the twain a new man has been created.

We must remember, when reading Eph. iii. 6, not to pause at the end of the verse, but to read straight on into verse 7. It is not the gospel simply, but “the gospel whereof I (Paul) was made a minister”. A reference to Gal. ii. 7 will show that the members of the “body” of Ephesians could not have been equal partakers of the promise in Christ according to the gospel there set forth. The gospel in which these members equally share is that gospel of the grace of God which is in view in Acts xx. 24, a gospel exactly fitting the dispensation of the grace of God, even as the gospel of the Mystery exactly fits the dispensation of the Mystery.

The peculiar items of Eph. ii. 13-18 and of iii. 6, are expressed in the sevenfold unity of the Spirit in Eph. iv. 3-6. We have seen that from Matthew to the Revelation the people of Israel with their covenants, promises, miracles and superior position are dominant, with the exception of the parenthetical dispensation of the Mystery, resting upon the earlier doctrine of Romans and the Acts epistles of Paul, but differing essentially in its dispensational place, character and sphere.