

Wholesome Words.

VOLUME III.

1911.

May be procured from—

MR. E. MATTHEW,

529 Battersea Park Road,

LONDON,

or

MR. A. FORD ANDERSON,

13 Rockdove Gardens,

Tollcross,

GLASGOW.

All correspondence for the Editors to be addressed to—

JOHN P. A. TAYLOR,

Beracah, Barrhead, near Glasgow.

INDEX TO VOLUME III.

| | PAGE |
|---|--|
| Abel, - - - - - | 4 9 |
| Abraham, - - - - - | 9 8 |
| Abraham's Offering, | 1 3 8 |
| Ag e s f r a m e d , T h e , - - - - - | 4 0 |
| A m a z i a h , - - - - - | 8 9 |
| | |
| Benue, On the Banks of the Niger and, - - - - - | 5 1 |
| | |
| C a i n , - - - - - | 4 9 |
| Canticles V., Notes from | 1 1 0 |
| Concentration, - - - - - | 4 |
| Conscience, A good, - - - - - | 3 4 |
| Corinthians i. 9 , First, - - - - - | 9] |
| | |
| E b e d - M e l e c h , - - - - - | |
| E n d o f t h e L o r d , T h e , - - - - - | 3 9 |
| Enoch, - - - - - | 6 4 |
| | |
| Example, T h e power of, - - - - - | 9 0 |
| | |
| Faith, - - - - - | 32, 33, 40, 49, 64, 85, 98, 109, 124 |
| | |
| God's Choice, - - - - - | 9 7 |
| Gone Home, - - - - - | 71, 84, 95 |
| Hebrews xi., - - - - - | 16, 32, 38, 40, 49, 64, 79, 85, 98, 109, 124 |
| Hezekiah, - - - - - | 1 2 6 |
| Holy Spirit, T h e , - - - - - | 25, 43, 83, 115, 133 |
| | |
| Incentive, An, - - - - - | 2 |
| I n o u r m i d s t , - - - - - | 3 |
| I s a i a h l v i i . 1 5 , - - - - - | i v |
| | |
| J a b e z t h e H o n o u r a b l e , - - - - - | 8 2 |
| Jehoahaz, | 5 4 |
| Jehoram, - - - - - | 5 3 |

INDEX TO VOLUME III.

iii
PAGE

| | |
|--|----------------------|
| Jehoshaphat, | 13 |
| Jehovah who hears, | 121 |
| J o a s h , _ _ _ _ _ | 54, 87 |
| Know y e n o t ? _ _ _ _ _ | 57 |
| Lessons from the lives of the Kings of Judah, | 13, 53, 87, 126 |
| Motto for 1911, | 1 |
| Niger and Bernie, O n t h e B a n k s o f t h e , - - - - - | 51 |
| Noah, _ _ _ _ _ | 85 |
| Obedience and Disobedience, | 102 |
| O n s e e k i n g G o d , - - - - - | 79 |
| O n t h e B a n k s o f t h e N i g e r a n d B e n u e , | 51 |
| Phoebe o u r s i s t e r , _ _ _ _ _ | 7 |
| Plant, A t e n d e r , | 8 |
| P r o m i s e , A p r e c i o u s , - - - - - | 67 |
| P s a l m c x x x v . , _ _ _ _ _ | 42 |
| Reading, _ _ _ _ _ | 23 |
| Retrospect, A , - - - - - | 113 |
| Sarah, - _ _ _ _ | 109 |
| Sit Thou on My right hand, | 19 |
| Song o f M y B e l o v e d , A , _ _ _ _ _ | 37 |
| Spirit, The Holy, | 25, 43, 83, 115, 133 |
| Strangers y e t a n g e l s , _ _ _ _ _ | 66 |
| Stronghold o f Z i o n , The, _ _ _ _ _ | 28 |
| Tentwork i n S c o t l a n d , _ _ _ _ _ | 60, 94, 131 |
| T o - d a y , _ _ _ _ _ | 16 |
| Understandest thou what thou readest ? _ _ _ _ _ | 105 |
| Women, A w o r d t o t h e , _ _ _ _ _ | 128 |
| W o r m s , _ _ _ _ _ | 10 |
| Y e c a n n o t s e r v e t w o m a s t e r s , | 30 |
| Zion, The Stronghold o f - - - - - | 28 |

ISAIAH LVII., 15.

" FOR thus saith the **high** and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: **I** dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of **a** contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. "

FATHER of our blest Lord, we own
Thy matchless majesty and might;
The homage due to its vast claim
We yield the Son's exalted Name;
Nor less our hearts confess the right
By which the Spirit shares the Throne.

Our God art Thou, our Life, our Light,
Our Harbour from the swelling storm,
The sweet, cool Shade from noonday heat,
Th' embattled stronghold's sure Retreat—,
All ills are outward that can form
'Gainst spirits humble and contrite.

Comfort is brought for lowly birth
To those who tremble at Thy word.
Discern we here **a** wise defence;
Let wayward Folly's vain pretence
Of pride pass, shameless but unheard,
To mingle with the dross of earth.

As homesteads where Thy Name's adored
O, be our hearts by Thee divined !—
Pavilioned not in depths of night
But glorious in robes of light,
In height and holiness enshrined—
Deep Trinity ! Thou Sovereign Lord !

G. N.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. III.

JANUARY, 1911.

No. 1.

MOTTO FOR 1911.

" *That in all things He might have the pre-eminence.* "—Col. I. 18.

As therefore ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in *Him*. (Col. ii. 6.)

Holding faith and a good conscience (1 Tim. i. 19) seek to Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things (Tit. ii. 10) and Pass the time of your sojourning in fear (1 Pet. i. 17)

Perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. vii. 1) as it is written Ye shall be *Holy* for I am *Holy*. (Lev. xi. 44.)

Neglect not the gift that is in thee (1 Tim. iv. 14) but be thou an Ensample in all things, to them that believe, in Word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity. (1 Tim. iv. 12.)

Ye are not your own for ye were bought with a price (1 Cor. vi. 19). Exercise thyself therefore unto Godliness (1 Tim. iv. 7) giving diligence to present thyself

Approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed Rightly dividing the Word of Truth. (2 Tim. ii. 15.)

Take heed lest anyone spoil you (Col. ii. 8), even ungodly men who deny

Our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. (Jude i. 4.)

Ye should contend earnestly for the faith. (Jude I. 3.)

Only let your manner of life be worthy (Phil. i. 27), denying Ungodliness and worldly l u s t s . . . live soberly, righteously and Godly,

Looking for that blessed hope, and the appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. (Titus ii. 12.)

" *In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.* " (Prov. iii. 6.)

A. D. A.

AN INCENTIVE.

" Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before. "—Philipp. iii. 13.

As the year's end draws nigh, how reflection exercises the mind of each one of us.

Gone indeed the old year, with its joy and sadness, its work and waste, its victory and defeat, its mistakes, its shame, and its glory.

How we think of locking the stable when the horse is gone, and miss indeed the water when the year's well has gone dry.

Gone ! be it large or small, full or scant, the year's record has been made up, and its work is done. Gone the opened furrow, and the sowing of the seed, but not the harvest.

The prudent man will forget indeed his needless fears and worries, his hatreds and sorrows, every base ingratitude, every poisoning enmity, letting all that is unworthy go, remembering only that which is good, and carrying it forward as seed for future sowing.

Henceforth its mistakes are with God and His mercy; the good with God and His blessing. The year's impress has been made, good or bad, for weal or woe, and it must forever remain indelibly set in the mosaic of our life's record—" A book of remembrance was kept. "

Mistakes made ? Yea, both sad and many.

Privileges despised ! Opportunities irretrievably lost !

Yet God in wondrous wisdom and kindness has even blessed us in spite of our great weakness and many falls, for how many needful lessons, severe though they have been in acquisition, have been learned by them that have been exercised thereby.

Difficulties once surmounted make easier, and give strength for those that are to follow.

Likewise weakness and temptation once given way to make us the weaker for the trials that are yet to come.

" God will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able. "

Remember how much easier to miss the second prayer-meeting, the second Bible-reading, the second Gospel-meeting, aye and the second Lord's Day morning meeting—each than the first.

Fellow-saints, let us seek at the Throne of Grace, the grace

that is given to help in time of need, whether of temptation, to enable us to stand firm, or of the FIRST OPPORTUNITY or privilege given to buy up and value aright.

HARK ! The tramp of feet! 'Tis the *march of opportunity* as she comes with time-measured step to the glorious air of privilege.

QUICK ! To ARMS ! In response to the bugle-call of God, let the armour of Eph. vi. be donned, and be " *ready, aye ready* " to step in Opportunity's ranks, and, having stepped in, to keep rank, like David's men of old.

Remember, God's time is Now, as also is ours—" To-day if ye will hear His voice "; " While it is called to-day "; " Come Thou "; " Come Now. "

" To-day is the crest of the wave that slopes backward, down into the furrow named yesterday and forward into the furrow named to-morrow. "

Let us then, as standing on the threshold of another year—a new year—stand, having our loins girded, wisely daring and doing for our God " Who is a Rewarder of them that seek after Him, " knowing that " if God be for us, who can be against us ? " and being fully assured that " greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world, " and ever remembering those soul-sustaining words " I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. "

Let us then be men and scale the heights of duty, pressing forward to the mark unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. " No man having put his hand to the plough and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of God. "

May it be ours to answer with joy to the Roll Call of service at the judgment seat of Christ.

" Stretching forward to the things which are before. " God grant that this word may be to us a great incentive to noble purpose in the will of our God and for the sake of His Son.

"IN OUR MIDST. "

NOTES OF AN ADDRESS.

WE read in Luke x. of the man who fell among thieves; he was left half dead, stripped, and robbed. " By chance " a priest came that way and passed by. " *By chance* " a Levite also, who again passed by on the other side; but at last a

Samaritan—no " by chance " do we read here; but lie came to where he was, pouring in oil and wine, and restoring him So Christ has come down to the very place, to where we were in a lost and ruined condition, helpless. When only a babe a manger was found for Him, no room in the inn. He was not found within Herod's palace. As we view Him there, a " Perfect Babe " in that manger lying, " Perfect Child, " He is growing up into that " Perfect Manhood "; but on the Cross they place Him, there suffering for us all—" Father forgive t h e m . . . " in His last moments there. We exclaim again—" What a coming down " to get at our individual life ! So we, if we wish to get at the lost and helpless ones, must get right into their very midst, by visiting their homes and getting at their individual lives, to feel with them. Some whom we visit have become almost inhuman, and have scarcely seen daylight down in those dungeons where they exist; but a welcome is to be found there. Why ? Because they see the love of God, and that His love is the same to each one of us. Invite them to a Gospel meeting, however near—they say: " How can we come in these rags ? " But visit them, and get right into their midst, and they will give an attentive ear to the Gospel, and will hear of the love that the Master has for each and all, for we are all on the one basis as " sinners "; but the coming down of Christ into our midst manifested His love towards us. Not even at the Cross did He flinch one iota, when they mocked and spat on Him, and said—" If Thou be the Christ the Son of God—come down, " not even then did He make use of that power which He had and come down. Where would we be if He had done so ?

Let us seek to reach the individual lives of these poor and needy ones around us that are dying, lost ones, for there is a work in this sphere, and are we doing it ?

Communicated by F. DODGE.

CONCENTRATION.

CONCENTRATION is nothing more or less than the setting of the mind upon some definite object and allowing nothing to prevent the attainment of the desired end.

It is *the* principle that underlies success. One may have ability, training, culture, and opportunity, but apart from the

cultivation of a spirit of dogged perseverance and concentration of effort there cannot be the progress that there should be. There is truth in the words—"The weakest creature living, by concentrating his powers on a single object, may accomplish something; the strongest, by dispersing his over many, may fail to accomplish anything."

The Psalmist remarks upon the blessedness of the man who meditates upon the law of the Lord, day and night.

Does not this speak of concentration of thought and time? Was it not to a great extent the secret of his great attainments in the knowledge of God? "One thing have I asked of Jehovah; that will I seek after."

"My soul thirsteth for God."

"My soul wait thou only upon God."

"Oh, God! Thou art my God, earnestly will I seek Thee."

"My soul followeth hard after Thee."

"My heart and my flesh cry out unto the living God."

"Seek Him with thy whole heart."

"Thou hast commanded us Thy precepts, that we should observe them diligently."

"With my whole heart have I sought Thee."

"With my whole heart will I keep Thy precepts."

Listen also to the words of Paul to Timothy—"Be diligent in these things, give thyself wholly to them," or his exhortation to the Colossians—"Set your mind on things that are above."

Let us lay it well to heart that in order to reach any attainment in the knowledge of the Scriptures, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, to become a man of God, and furnished completely unto every good work, there must be concentration of effort, in the spirit of him who said—"One thing have I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after."

There are a great many hindrances to a concentrated study of the Holy Scriptures, and one of the greatest is an uncontrollable mind. Naturally the mind is like the colt, wild and ungoverned, but to make progress we must learn to discipline ourselves in order to acquire the power of commanding our attention.

He who can concentrate his mind upon a given subject may master great difficulties, whilst he who cannot do so looks in vain for success. But something else is necessary in addition to this concentration of the mind, and that is the noble yet

scarce virtue, " patience, " without which the mind cannot be said to be truly disciplined. Patient labour is essential, and never fails to meet its reward. The will of God does not generally burst upon us in a vision. It is here a little, and there a little, line upon line, precept upon precept. It may need years of patient study, self-discipline, and hard labour.

We must know the mortified feeling of being repeatedly defeated and return again and again to the charge ere success can be achieved.

But perhaps we may excuse ourselves on the score that we cannot find the time, and yet, if we were only to think of the many moments that are wasted and frittered uselessly away, perhaps we should be more than surprised. How many there are who sigh over the remembrance of the past of lost time and lost opportunities ! Lost, and lost for ever ! If, however, we are wise we shall seize the floating advantages and gather up the precious fragments of time.

It has been well said—" There are a thousand little intervals in life which if put together would make up a large space of time, and advance us a great way if we were to make the best use of them. Their shortness may be an excuse for not using them seriously, but it is very dangerous to accustom ourselves to lose time without regret. "

The word to us from God is—" Redeem the time, because the days are evil. "

Beloved, let us lay it to heart; concentration of time and effort there must be if we are to become strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Those precious moments must be gathered up, as we shall find in the stress of life they are the only opportunities we have of gathering material and power for our work. If but a sentence be read during a spare moment, it may be so read as to be carried off into any other scene of action and turned over in the mind as a subject for meditation. If we were, each one, to seek after God and His Word, in this quiet, earnest, determined way, in the spirit of

" My soul followeth hard after Thee, "

there would not be the complaints of spiritual destitution and poverty of which we hear so much.

A poor woman gained a prize at a flower show for a plant she had grown in her window, in which there was little more than

one hour's sunshine every day. Her plan was the simple one of so changing the position of the plant that it was always in the sunshine when there was any in the room. Thus it grew strong and green and put forth beautiful flowers and blossoms.

Were we to devote one hour each day in the right spirit to the study of the Scriptures, what progress we would make ! How much of that which is now weak and sickly would thus become strong, vigorous, and beautiful !

We are not speaking here of the accomplishment of great matters, but of those little things that lie close to our hand, of that patient continuance in well-doing so hard to the flesh, so difficult to maintain, and yet so God-glorifying and weighted with such great blessing for the doer thereof.

With apology to the poet we would say—

" Be diligent, and let who will be clever,
Do noble things, not dream them all day long. "

Half-heartedness paralyses our endeavours. Let us **be** in earnest ! Let us be sincere ! Let the clarion note be sounded—

" Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do
Do it with all thy might. "

" Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord. "—1 Cor. xv. 58.

A. F. A.

PHOEBE, OUR SISTER.

" **I** COMMEND unto you Phoebe, our sister, who is a deaconess of the church that is at Cenchreae. " (Rom. xvi. 1.)

Phoebe would doubtless be missed after she left Cenchreae; how could it have been otherwise ? She must have endeared herself to those among whom she had lived and laboured.

It may have been—it sometimes happens—that they had not fully appreciated her worth till she had gone. (We never miss the water till the well runs dry.) Then, perhaps, many would recall the kindly services, the gentle ministrations of this excellent woman, and the thousand and one ways in which she had made her presence felt among them; how she had visited those who were sick and nursed them back to health, or hastened

to the relief of the needy; how she had washed the saints' feet.

Who can rightly estimate the value of such an influence as that which she exercised among the saints? She did not step out of her proper sphere, her ministry was exclusively feminine in its character.

She could not minister to the Lord in person as did the women who followed Him from Galilee, but she knew and understood that by serving His beloved saints she was serving Him, realising the value He puts on such service, and that her labour was not in vain in the Lord.

How deeply the Apostle Paul appreciated Phoebe's tender care is seen in his touching eulogy of her in Romans xvi. 2.

" For she herself also hath been a succourer of many, and of mine own self. "

A. H. C.

A TENDER PLANT.

THERE is by my bedside as I write a piece of a tender plant, together with a flower of exquisite beauty, which a kind hand brought to the sickroom. Only a few days ago I visited the very place where both were growing.

Being a cold dull day, the gardens looked quite dismal amid a downpour of rain and the November scarcity of vegetation; but on running into the hothouses for shelter the eye rested at once on a wealth and variety of colour. The flowers and plants were most beautiful, and growing luxuriously. Neither frost nor November blast had touched them. They were there growing in the most congenial of soil, and seemed quite to appreciate the genial warmth of the places provided for them. But the piece of the tender plant and the flower shall know those places no more, for they have now felt the keen edge of the knife, and the little water in the glass will require to suffice to sustain them for, it may be, a few hours longer. Yet the care bestowed upon them in bringing them to such perfection has not been lost. Among the many they were perhaps little thought of before, but now they have been selected for a purpose. Nothing in the room can compare with them (save for the Scripture Texts upon the walls, the Words of which came from the same Almighty Source). What a pleasure they have given

the writer ! It has been a positive joy just to lie and look at them. And they have caused me to think, not of myself, but of *the Master*.

They seemed to speak and to say, as did Martha once, " The Master is here and calleth thee. " Yes, both the plant and the flower pointed to the Lord Jesus. And there is no Name so precious and no Person so tender, nor yet so adapted for the sickroom as *Jesus*. " *Himself* took our infirmities, and bare our diseases, " and when at last *He* took *His* place in the midst of *His* suffering creatures, then, even as of old, " In all their affliction *He* was afflicted. " So " *He* knoweth our frame, " and our " often infirmities, " and is perfectly acquainted with every " messenger of Satan. " (2 Cor. xii. 7, Job ii. 4, 5, Luke xiii. 16.)

To you, weary sufferer, I would say, " Is there no balm ? Is there no physician ? " Ah, yes; for the Lord Jesus applied to *Himself* that very name, even " Physician. " As such *He* has infinite knowledge of every form of disease and sickness. But *He* works very differently from the usual medical practitioner. All that the Lord Jesus does and allows is " for the glory of God. " This is so even concerning *you*, and as you lie shut in day by day, with no seeming change in the poor worn-out body, remember " Thy Lord is near, and knows, " and just think of the tender plant and the flower—how that they, so tender and delicate, yet were the means of affording much joy as they simply lay in the little place provided for them, and manifested by their very appearance that they were " *His* workmanship. " What a joy to *His* heart to see *you* simply lying amid your suffering and helplessness, and yet seeking to shew to others that you too are " the work of *His* hands. "

The few hours, alas ! have gone, and on resuming my writing I find that both the tender plant and the flower are dead. Grown in the seclusion of the hothouse, they have died in the seclusion of the sickroom. Few, comparatively, have seen them, yet everyone who did admired their loveliness. The delicate green of the tender plant added beauty to the exquisite colour of the flower, which could not help giving to the entire room of its sweet fragrance. Now they are dead. But the Lord Jesus said, " I am the Resurrection and the Life: he that believeth

in Me, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die. Believest thou this ? " For the believing sufferer there is a future of eternal bliss. " He shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation. " You shall then no longer have the poor frail tabernacle in which you suffered so much. " And *He* shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying; *nor pain*, any more. " Glorious and happy prospect !

Then again I was reminded that the Lord Jesus *Himself* grew up before Jehovah *as a tender plant*. Not always such, it is true, but *He grew up* " as a tender plant, " afterwards manifesting that *He* was also the Stronger than the strong man. In the seclusion of Nazareth the Lord Jesus was seen by the delighted eye of Jehovah, growing up as a tender plant. *How His* tenderness, in the truest sense, must have but added to the harshness of all else. And when eventually *He* completed

" *His* sojourn in this vale of tears,
The tale of woe, unfolded in those years
Of sinless suffering and of patient grace, "

He then gave *His* back to the smiters, and *His* cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: *He* hid not *His* face from shame and spitting. *His* visage was so marred more than any man, and *His* form more than the sons of men. Blessed Master ! Wondrous example of patient suffering !

Perhaps this small tribute to the workmanship of an allwise Creator may prove a stimulant to some; but if it penetrate to the bedside of some stricken and sorely tried saint, and gives comfort, its object will have been accomplished.

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

WORMS.

THERE is not much difference in one respect from the thin wire worm to the fat lumbricoides; all are dirty slimy repulsive creatures that spend their little life-time in the mud. *Helpless* and defenceless in themselves they have the sense to know it

and to seek refuge in or under some substance more resistant to external influence than they are themselves.

How strong we are in comparison ! We can crush them out of all recognition with the slightest physical effort, but pitying their helplessness we step aside and suffer them to live. How strong Goliath was as he shouted his challenge, and yet he was felled with a small pebble, and no matter how strong we think ourselves, whether physically or mentally, we ought to have the sense to know that there are powers against us wielded by the Adversary against which we are as weak and helpless as the worm is against the careless foot.

There is a footpath here edged with boxwood, winding among some rocks, and here in the early morning, particularly after a shower, the worms leave their rocky fastnesses and boldly strike out into open ground, crawling across the pathway in countless numbers till the pedestrian has the choice of taking another path or of killing a few worms. Does he hesitate ? And shall Satan hesitate if we are in the way of his purposes ? Not at all ! The lesson is that we ought to keep in the place of safety, under shelter of the Rock. " 'Tis only there in safety, and peace we can abide. " Drops of blessing are falling and will come our way, but let us not worm-like, risk life for a feast.

Israel set out across the wilderness in a long and straggling line, winding their way to the promised land, and when they saw the giants there they were afraid but not humbled, for when they said " We be as grasshoppers, " they valued themselves far too highly. " We had better hop out of the way of these big inhabitants ! " Grasshoppers, indeed ! Why if God had removed *His* protection the enemy could have risen and crushed poor Jacob to pulp. But he lifts his cumbersome body and trails through the wilderness for years, a long, lean, hungry worm.

But Bildad asks a question that echoes within ourselves: —

" *How can a man be just before God ?
Or how can he be clean that is born of a woman ?
Behold, even the moon hath no brightness,
And the stars are not pure in His sight:
How much less man, that is a worm !
And the son of man, which is a worm ! "*

A question that was not answered till the Mighty One became weak and it seemed as if the curse pronounced on the Serpent was to be turned on the Son of God **as** He went lower and lower till He reached our place and became **a** Worm. Then the protection of His Shield was taken away and He was left alone.

Satan's seeming triumph was short-lived, for God raised Him and the Adversary will never be able to touch Him or those trusting in *Him* so long **as** they remember that they are weak creatures **of** the dust.

JAMES M'FARLANE.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

CLYDEBANK. —The special meeting for ministry, announced to be held here, will be held instead in the Masonic Hall, Dalmuir, on Thursday, 5th January, from 12 noon till 6 p. m., with interval. Saints and ministering brethren please note.

" WHOLESOME WORDS, " Volume II., will shortly be ready. A few extra to the quantity actually ordered are being bound, so that friends who did not order as desired by 30th November have still an opportunity to secure a copy. Orders will **be** executed according to date received. Price Is. Id. each. Send order to nearest agent or to Mr. Taylor, Beracah, Barrhead.

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A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. III.

FEBRUARY, 1911.

No. 2.

LESSONS FROM THE LIVES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

JEHOSHAPHAT succeeded Asa. He presented many characteristics of his father, whom he followed, and in some respects exceeded in his zeal " for the ways of the Lord, " and " the first ways of his father, David. " It is recorded that he " strengthened himself against Israel, " and again, he " sought to the God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel. " 2 Chron, xvii. 1, 4. These words are instructive as showing the attitude of Jehoshaphat toward the apostate people of Israel in the early years of his reign, which formed such a contrast to, and brings into prominence the sad ways of his later days, in " joining affinity with the King of Israel, " and thus failing in that which seemed his strongest point; but we are anticipating.

Consequent upon Jehoshaphat's seeking unto God, and walking in His commandments, we read—" Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hands, " and also that " he had riches and honour in abundance. " This is the secret of prosperity such as God wishes for *His* people in *all* ages. The divine principle is ever applicable—" Seek ye Me, and live "; and again, " Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and *His* righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you; " and to neglect this, or to reverse the order thereof, L to court failure and disaster, however deceptive appearances may be. *How* often the words have been verified, " *He* always wins who sides with God. To him no chance is lost. "

Concerning Jehoshaphat, we read further that " his *heart* was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, " and he knew the blessedness of the man " in whose *heart* are the highways to Zion. " " Keep thy *heart* above all keeping, for out of it are the issues of life, " is a most important matter, for here the real work of God ever begins. The heart right with God is the main spring for the proper ruling and regulating of all our actions

and ways. God spake concerning His people of old, " They do always err in their *heart*, and they have not known My ways; therefore I swear in My wrath, they shall not enter into My rest. " May we give ear to the same and take heed, lest there be in any of us " an evil *heart* of unbelief, in departing from the living God. "

Jehoshaphat began by getting right with God himself, and then he was able to help others; so we read that " he sent his princes, " " and with them the Levites, " and " with them the priests, " and " they taught in Judah, having the book of the law of the Lord with them; and they went about through all the cities of Judah, and taught among the people. " Verses 7-9. Princes, Levites, and priests, all in their divinely appointed place, and doing their divinely given work, as legislated for " in the book of the law of the Lord. " *That* regulates everyone and everything in the varied spheres of service with their privileges and responsibilities attached thereto. Similarly should it be so in the Kingdom of God, as expressed in the churches of God, where the gifts of the ascended Christ as set by God therein, work in blessed co-operation, and active operation, in their varied spheres and measures; unto the realisation of the hope of God's calling, " the perfecting of the saints unto the work of ministering unto the building up of the Body of Christ, till we all attain unto the unity of the Faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. " Eph. iv. 11-13. " So they taught the people, " and, in the increasing knowledge of God and of His ways, and walking therein, they experienced the fulfilment of *His* words—" My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest"; for "the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat, " and this rest they used as in Asa's case, " in building castles and cities of store, and making preparation for war, " for the great Adversary of God's people is ever on the alert, and is a very subtle foe, for he comes not only in times unexpected, but in ways unexpected, and very often the point we think invulnerable is the point of his attack, and often of his triumph. So it was with Jehoshaphat, of whom we read—" *He* joined affinity with Ahab. " " And after certain years he went down to Ahab to Samaria. " Ch. xviii. 1, 2. *He* is gladly received and liberally

treated by the King of Israel, who then asks and persuades him to go up with him to Ramoth Gilead, to which Jehoshaphat replies, " I am **as** thou art, and my people as thy people; and we will be with thee in the war. " In the book of the law of the Lord it might have been read—" For wherein now shall it be known that I have found grace in Thy sight, I and Thy people ? Is it not that Thou goest with us, so that we be separated, **I** and Thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. " Exod. xxxiii. 16. But here separation to God is given up and the path of separation left, and he who " strengthened himself against Israel, " and " walked not after the doings of Israel " in past time, is now found joining affinity with Israel's idolatrous king, in common cause, and going up in company with him to do battle against the enemy. It is true Jehoshaphat has some qualms of conscience about the matter, and seeks to quieten the same by his suggestion to make enquiry at a prophet of the Lord concerning the project, but a lying spirit from the Lord, in the mouth of the prophets of Baal, decides the matter; so the King of Israel and Jehoshaphat the King of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. Thus Jehoshaphat leaves the ways of the Lord and disobeys the word of the Lord, and puts himself into circumstances in which he has no claim upon, nor warrant to expect, the protection of God, and thus " tempts the Lord his God. " So far removed from God's perfect Servant, who, when tempted to leave the path of obedience to His God His Father, firstly by the suggestion of the tempter to take *Himself* out of circumstances of divine appointment, by making the stone bread; and secondly, to put *Himself* into circumstances for which *He* had no word of the Lord, nor claim upon God's protection, refused to cast *Himself* down from the pinnacle of the temple, saying, " It is written ⁴ Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. ' " Matt. iv. 5, 6.

Still, God did not forsake *His* erring servant, and in the hour of his extreme danger, when he cried to *Him*, " the Lord helped him, and God moved them to depart from him " who sought his life. *How* many have erred thus and tempted the Lord their God by putting themselves into circumstances, through disobedience, in which they cannot count upon *His* presence and help and blessing, which has so often led to disaster, and " concerning the faith making shipwreck. " Although Jehoshaphat returned to his house in safety and in peace, yet God

rebukes his servant, through His messenger, speaking in His message, saying " Shouldest thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord ? for this thing wrath is upon thee from the Lord. " Ch. xix. 2.

Still the lesson is not learned, and further disaster follows in consequence of him " joining himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel, " who did very wickedly " to make ships to go to Tarshish. And they made ships, " but alas for the ships that they made, they never reached Tarshish, for the ships were broken, by the Lord. These principles still abide for the separated people of God, and these are written for our learning and our admonition, amid the characteristics which are prevailing and increasing in these times, of toleration and co-operation of children of God with the ungodly, and ungodly associations and ways of men. The will of the Lord for *His* own is imperative in the matter—" Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers "; and *His* call is clear and definite—

" Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,

And touch no unclean thing;

And I will receive you

And will be to you a Father,

And ye shall be to Me sons and daughters,

saith the Lord Almighty. " " Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. " 2 Cor. vi. 17—vii. 1. _____

DAVID SMITH.

HEBREWS XI.

" TO-DAY " has an importance in our esteem beyond any other time. Not that in the abstract it is more important but simply that it is all that we can call our own. For its right use we are responsible; if we fail the loss can never be repaired.

The features of " to-day " may be good or bad: circumstances in our reckoning may be favourable or otherwise, but such as " to-day " is, we must accept it, endeavour to understand it and make the most of it. Some people are never contented with the circumstances of their lives; they unwittingly (it may be) adopt the language which is censured in the Word as to the former days being better than the present*. They seem to think that had they lived at another time and in dif-

* Ecc. vii. 10.

ferent circumstances they would have achieved better results. All such thoughts are idle and unfruitful. The faithful man, on the contrary, recognises the fact that now is his opportunity and sets himself to utilize it. After a careful examination he comes to the conclusion that the provision God has made for him exactly meets his requirements and he congratulates himself and thanks God that the lines have fallen unto him in pleasant places. Also in addition to provision for the present he finds he can start with a rich store of experience—that which has been obtained by others at much cost to them but which is placed at his service. Not that others have made the way so clear and smooth for him that he can run thereon easily, without care, for faith will be needed by him in his day as by them in theirs, but he will find that they under a variety of circumstances proved God's faithfulness and sufficiency and also learned the wisdom and blessedness of obedience.

Such thoughts as these come to one in contemplating the record of God's mighty men and women as given in Heb. xi., marshalled under their Princely Leader the Captain of their salvation.

Men often count themselves happy if they can point to a noble ancestry—that of this world. Even Christian men are more proud of a descent from Puritan forefathers than from princes of earth, but what shall we say of such an ancestry as that presented in Heb. xi. ! Such descent runs not in the blood, and we may be their true descendants—the imitators of those who by faith and endurance inherit the promises.

Shall we look at the goodly company and as we do so have our hearts drawn out to these noble men and women ! What was the mighty power that actuated them all in such diverse circumstances ? It was faith. A persuasion was granted to the mind that God was faithful and His word sure, and that mighty principle not only launched the believer on his course but also sustained him in it to the end. It was this unseen force which dominated these men, leading them to sacrifice what was most dear and on the other hand to sustain trials the most severe. The outer man recoiled from the suffering and loss but was mastered by this great faith which forced it along the path and would allow of no retreat.

The strength of faith should be measured by the stability of the object upon which it rests, and seeing that God and His

sure word is the foundation faith ought not to fail, but **as** we know to our cost, while God is ever reliable we often fail to believe Him.

Faith is no imitation of another. Certainly we should imitate these worthies of Heb. xi. in exercising faith, but the particular expression of it must be in connexion with **a** matter or matters peculiar to our time. So the subject matter of Enoch's faith was not that of Abel's, nor Noah's merely that of Enoch's; each was peculiar to the person and the circumstances of his time. So is it still.

We cannot doubt that the great truth of the 17th century for which the Reformers witnessed was; " free grace. " In *that* their faith was manifested. That truth now is largely established and **a** further line of truth, neglected by the crowd, calls for regard on the part of the faithful. Faith is swift to hear in the midst of deafness, alert in drowsiness, courageous amidst faintheartedness; it never drifts with the stream, but breasts the current of unbelief which is taking men away from God.

How important to faith is the "ear"! Faith indeed *cometh* by hearing and *continueth* by hearing, so the word in Heb. iii., " To-day, if ye will hear *His* voice. " Heb. xi. shows **a** noble company of believers, but Heb. iii. on the contrary presents **a** vast multitude of unbelievers who did not enter into God's rest. They failed in their " to-day, " but in the goodness of God we have an opportunity and so the word proceeds " To-day, if **YE** will hear *His* voice, harden not **YOUR** hearts. "

The importance of faith will be more appreciated if we observe that there are two destinies before man, two poles **as** it were towards one or other of which men are ever travelling. They are Salvation and Perdition. Faith leads to the former, unbelief to the latter. As faith is in exercise we are going on to salvation and are being saved on the way, but it is possible to shrink back (like Lot) though the mercy of God will save us from the end, and that will mean loss and ruin in our present life and loss at the reward seat. Well if it can be said " We are not of them that shrink back to perdition, but of them that have faith to the saving of the soul. "

If the Lord will, we propose to briefly consider Heb. xi., pointing out some of the special features marking the faith of these men and women of God.

S. J. HILL.

(*To be continued.*)

" SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND. "

AMONG His many utterances, I feel sure none gave God more pleasure than that quoted above. If we might legitimately speak of events in *Heaven* then surely there never had been an event of such supreme magnitude as that of the moment when the Lord Jesus Christ, on the invitation and welcome of *His* Father, took *His* seat upon *His* Father's throne. The days of earthly toil were over. Hours of praying and weeping, hungering and thirsting, weariness and sorrow, shame and rejection, suffering and crucifixion, bruising and Death, were all past. " From the womb of the morning, " we see *Him* in the beautiful " dew of *His* youth, " with neither sign of decrepitude nor of corruption, only those wondrous marks telling eternally of the Lamb slain, even those with which *He* was wounded in the house of *His* friends. Now *He* takes *His* seat. God's " No pleasure, " connected with past ages, has been supplemented by *His* " well pleased " in connexion with those thirty odd years of *His* Son's life upon earth.

Lofty and inspiring sight to see Jesus, *Heaven's* altogether Lovely One, take that seat there in all *His* benign and unassuming dignity. " Sit Thou on My Right Hand. " The joy of that moment was ever before *Him*, energising " Faith's princely Leader " to endure the Cross, and despise the shame. Born " King of the Jews, " yet laid in a manger, no crown of gold had adorned that kingly brow; only, nearing the end, a crown of thorns. *He* was despised, and rejected of men. Dying, " yea, the death of the Cross, " *His* accusation was written over, " THE KING OF THE JEWS. " But now *He* has taken *His* seat. From that throne *He* watches. From that throne *He* whispers: "*He* that overcometh, I will give to him to sit down with Me in My throne, as I also overcame, and sat down with My Father in *His* throne. *He* that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. " (Rev. iii., 21, 22.) "*He* that overcometh. " " To him that overcometh. " In John vi. 66, we read, " Many of *His* disciples went back, and walked no more with *Him*. " In Luke xxii. 28, we read, " Ye are they which have continued with *Me* in My temptations; and I appoint unto you a Kingdom, even as My Father appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom; and ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. "

Handsome and kingly reward for service accounted faithful by Him.

Again, in II. Timothy we have the words, "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David. Faithful is the saying . . . if we endure, we shall also reign with Him." And then Paul, when the time of his departure had come, said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the Faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day; and not only to me, but also to all them that have loved His appearing." And mark, to have loved His appearing is, in the judgment of the Righteous Judge, to have fought the good fight, to have finished the course, and to have kept the Faith. "Look to yourselves, that ye lose not the things which ye have wrought, but that ye receive a full reward." (II. John 8.)

It is quite the opposite to vanity to be ambitious of receiving a full reward. Moses in his day made his choice, "accounting the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." "Why?" For he looked unto the recompense of reward. (Hebs. xi. 26.) The many who live in the belief that membership of the "one Body" entitles each individually to a like place and reward in glory are surely deceiving themselves.

Most instructive and sobering is the God-given history of the man whose love for David was so wonderful, "passing the love of women." "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for *our* learning, that through patience and through comfort of the Scriptures we might have hope." There is very much in David's life analogous to these present evil days. For is not David, in some degree, a type of our Lord Jesus Christ? The solemn moment in Saul's life had been reached, and because he rejected the Word of the Lord, the Lord had rejected him from being king. And the man after God's own heart, the king of *His* providing, had been duly anointed in the midst of his brethren. Not one who was head and shoulders above the people but one who, in Saul's eyes, was a mere stripling, and the only one whose presence, even in Jesse's judgment, was thought to be quite unnecessary at the sacrifice. Yet David is God's chosen, and in and around him God's purposes in that day centred. It does not always follow

that what God has rejected ceases to be popular, and so for many a day Saul continued at the head of Israel's thousands, while David was an outcast, hunted and persecuted, with neither crown nor manifested kingdom. Nevertheless " This is he ! " (I. Sam. xvi. 12, and compare John i. 30). Of a beautiful countenance, and godly to look upon, he had learned among the sheepfolds and in following the ewes that give suck, to confide in Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom he afterwards describes so beautifully as being " a God of deliverances. " It was after his mighty triumph over Goliath, when he stood before Saul with the head of the giant in his hand, " that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. " There and then, he entered into covenant relationship with David, and stripped himself of his robe and apparel and sword and bow and girdle, and gave them all to the man who had won his love. Following upon that scene a few passages are most interesting.

I. Sam. xix. 2—" Jonathan, Saul's son, delighted much in David. " I. Sam. xix. 4—" And Jonathan spake good of David. " I. Sam. xx. 4—" Said Jonathan . . . whatsoever thy soul desireth, I will even do it for thee. " I. Sam. xx. 17—" Jonathan caused David to swear again, for the love that he had to him; for he loved him as he loved his own soul. "

And David was fully conscious of Jonathan's love. " Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. " " Very pleasant hast thou been unto me. " So David always found him.

How sad that Jonathan never severed his connexion with Saul, although he knew perfectly well that God had rejected him ! This sacrifice he never made. *He* never went forth unto David to take his place once and for all with him in his temptations and sufferings. Others did, who were not perhaps so lovely and pleasant in their lives " as Jonathan. It may be he thought he could exert his influence and do more for David by remaining where he was.

I. Sam. xxii. gives us the beginning of David's " school. " There we find a peculiar company of about 400 gathering themselves unto David, " and he became Captain over them. " That step marked the beginning of wondrous possibilities, for this is the very time when Psalm xxxiv. filled his heart, part of which is " Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of Jehovah. " (Compare Prov. i. 7.) Some of these

became " chief of the mighty men whom David had, " whose one desire was to give him his rightful place, and " to make him king, according to the word of Jehovah concerning Israel. " (I. Chron, xi. 10.) Jonathan, however much his love, was not one of these. For to remain with Saul, and at the same time to seek to be true to David, was impossible. To remain by Saul's side was not the way to promote David's interests.

In I. Sam. xxiii. 16, 18, we read that " Jonathan, Saul's son, arose, and went to David into the wood, and strengthened his hand in God. And he said unto him, ' Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee: and thou shalt be king over Israel, *and I shall be next unto thee* ' ; . . . and David abode in the wood, and Jonathan went to his house. " Much divine knowledge he had concerning David's future, and in the light of that future his words are intensely sad and solemn. " **I shall be next unto thee.** "

The time of David's humiliation and suffering passed away and he was at length established upon his throne. Amid the surrounding pomp and grandeur and dignity of that throne we see many called to share the king's favour. Names are mentioned, and deeds long forgotten are brought to light and remembered by David. II. Sam. xxiii. furnishes a most instructive list. " These be the names. " Not one empty seat, yet the man who should have sat next unto " the anointed of the God of Israel " is not there; not even mentioned among " the mighty men whom David had. " Alas ! where is Jonathan ? Let the " song of the bow " answer. *He clung to Saul.* Upon the mountains of Gilboa they were slain. " And in their death they were not divided. " So that his prediction " **I shall be next unto thee** " had no fulfilment, although he " delighted much in David, " and " spake good of David, " and " loved him as he loved his own soul. " The road to the throne lay by way of Adullam's Cave.

Now what about these days in which our own lot is cast ? There are many Christians not unlike Jonathan, who are " lovely and pleasant in their lives, " and who seem to delight much in " Christ, " and who speak well of " the Lord, " but who have never seemed to realise the place where the Lord Jesus suffered, even " without the gate, " (*Hebs. xiii. 12*), and the Divine exhortation following upon these words—" Let *us* therefore go forth *unto Him* without the camp, *bearing His*

reproach. " Will such kindly ponder what we have written, for their own sakes. " *His reproach* " is still a reality, and personal obedience to the personal authority of the Lord Jesus Christ demands self-sacrifice, and means a narrowing of the pathway for all who obey. It is much too narrow, alas, for many. They dread to step " outside the camp, " and some would excuse themselves by asserting that to " come out " would mean the loss of all influence; or, in other words, that they can do far more to promote the cause of Christ by remaining where they are, no matter how unscriptural their associations may be. " *Howbeit* the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal—^c The Lord knoweth them that are *His* ' and ' Let everyone that nameth the Name of *the Lord* depart from unrighteousness. ' " (II. Tim. ii. 19.) This does not mean to stand and to walk alone. If such obey the Divine command they will find others who have also been obedient to the same call, with whom they can " follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, " even with " them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. " (II. Tim. ii. 22.)

The pathway may be deemed very narrow; but it is only by treading the *narrow* pathway, the one Divine pathway which leads to the Throne, that we shall find that " the Commandment is exceeding *broad.* " (Psalm cxix. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 96. R. V.)

NORMAN D. W. MILLER.

READING.

" TILL I come give heed to reading. " (1 Tim. iv. 13.) These were the words of the Apostle to Timothy, whom he calls his son in the faith. Reading is a beacon on the *High Way* to Zion, or better, in our own day, a finger-post to show us the way. Reading is an important part in the training of a child of God, for by reading he comes to know, through the guidance of the *Holy Spirit*, the mind and will of God concerning things past, present, and future. It is through not reading aright that so many mistakes are made. In Deut. xvii. 19 we read concerning the King—" And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this Law and these statutes to do them. " What was written aforetime was written for our learning. (Rom. xv. 4.) It is by reading a

child of God knows whether the things that he has been taught are the right things. The Bereans of old searched the Scriptures daily to see whether things were as taught by Paul, and for that they were called noble. The Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees, "Have ye not read?" (Matt. xii. 3) and to the lawyer, "How readest thou?" (Luke x. 26). There is great need for us who are gathered to the Name to take heed to reading, for if at the time of the Apostle some had missed the mark and turned aside unto fables, much more, then, to-day, when men on every hand are saying, "Hath God said?" yea, having itching ears they heap unto themselves teachers after their own lusts, and turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. (Tim. iv. 3-4.) Let us read to learn, that we may fear and keep His commandments, that we may prolong our days. _____ D. D.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

DERBY. —If the Lord will, the annual conference of those interested and engaged in the work of the Lord amongst the young will be held in the Iron Tent, Normanton Road, on Saturday, February 25th—3. 20 to 3. 30, prayers and confession; 3. 30 to 4. 30, concise reports; 4. 45, tea; 6 to 8. 30, addresses. Assemblies at a distance are asked to send representatives, and where this is impracticable to send reports of items of interest and matters for prayer and thanksgiving. Special prayer is asked for Divine guidance and blessing. Kindly send word to Mr. A. Foster, 69 Belgrave Street, Derby, how many we may expect, not later than February 20th. —W. J. MUNDAY; A. FOSTER.

RATON, NEW MEXICO, U. S. A. —Correspondence should be addressed to Mr. Peter Longmuir, 408 South 5th Street, Raton.

LANCASHIRE [LIVERPOOL). —It may not be generally known that our esteemed brother Mr. Geddes is seriously ill. At the time of writing (Jan. 20) he has been confined to his bed five weeks, but we are thankful to say, through the goodness of God, he is free from pain. Remembering how we have been helped of God through his ministry in past days, we are sure all will remember him before the throne of grace, that our God may be "a very present help" (Psalm xlvi. 1) to him now. —W. GAINFORD, H. GITTINS, W. J. TRAINER.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE GUIDE.

THE words that our Lord spake next concerning the Spirit reveal Him as " Guide into all the truth. " " *Howbeit* when He the Spirit of truth is come, He shall guide you into all the truth; for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak. " (John xvi. 13.)

As it was needful to us for the understanding of the Sacred Scriptures to have a Divine Teacher, Who was co-equal with the Father and the Son, so is *He* also given to us to be our Guide into all truth. We would here draw attention to that little word " all. " In natural and spiritual things we are apt to be taken up with one thing, or one side of things, and thus become biased, forgetting that some other things are of equal importance. *Have* we not heard the expression concerning those who minister continually on one thing, that that is their line of things. We can well understand an evangelist, a proclaimer of the glad tidings, speaking constantly and only upon " the gospel of the glory of the blessed God, " but we cannot understand any who profess to be guided by the Spirit dwelling only upon prophetic truths to the neglect of doctrinal and practical truths bearing upon the conduct and daily walk of the believer, or *vice-versa*. If our understanding is right, a Spirit-taught believer will be guided into all truth, and will give it out according as he is led by the Spirit to meet the need and to the edification of the Body of Christ. Thus if the Spirit is our Guide there will be no undue prominence given to any one part of God's truth to the exclusion of another. The Old Testament with its history, its types and shadows, its prophecies, the record of the failures of God's people, and the faithfulness of

some, will all have their deep and important lessons to us, especially as we go on and let the New Testament throw its ray of light upon and reveal the Old. The glorious truths concerning the Person and work of Christ, the unfolding of "the Mystery" of the Body of Christ, the truth of the Church and Churches of God, the practical truths and exhortations touching our daily walk as children of God, the Coming Again of our Lord Jesus, with all the events which follow, and other truths, each and all will have their proper place and be given out in due time if we are led by the One who guides into all the truth.

DECLARER OF THINGS TO COME.

Our Lord continues His theme of the coming of the Spirit by saying, "He shall declare unto you the things that are to come." It has been said by some believers in the sects that no profit can come to those who search into things to come, "but rather that believers should be occupied with things that affect them in the present. This sounds very plausible, but it is not Scriptural nor spiritual. If no blessing or profit could come to children of God by knowing of "things to come" the Spirit would not have been given for this purpose. It is part of Satan's plan to keep believers from reading of "things to come," because he would rob them of the joy there is in that blessed hope of the Lord's coming for *His* own. *He* would rob them of that which thrills our very being, to know that our despised and rejected Lord shall reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords in the very place where *He* was put to shame and crucified. *He* would hide from them the truth of the development of the spiritual Babylon around us (the world-churches and chapels) and its awful history and doom, and himself being cast out of heaven to this earth, and from this earth to the Abyss, and from the Abyss into the Lake of Fire. No wonder that it is part of his business to keep believers from reading "things to come" under the Spirit's guidance. Let us seek grace from God, confessing our neglect in the past, to read and speak more of "things to come." Do not let us put them from us under the plea that we cannot understand them. Truly the greatest intellect will fail here unaided by the Spirit, but the believer who relies upon the Declarer of "things to come" as he reads the prophetic page will get light and understanding. We cannot understand what we do not read, as witness that

sadly neglected book of the Revelation. Yet at the very threshold we read—"the Revelation, " the unveiling. And the blessing is promised not so much on the ground of understanding, as on the ground of reading and hearing the words of this prophecy. (Rev. 1. 3.) And if the present writer may venture a word of advice to young believers it is, avoid commentaries on future events which may or may not be polluted, and drink for yourselves from the unpolluted stream—the Word of God, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and get your light from the Spirit's lamp. It is a wise thing also to compare spiritual things with spiritual ones.

GLORIFIER OF THE LORD JESUS.

" *He* shall glorify *Me*: for *He* shall take of *Mine* and declare unto you. "

We see this word " glorify " means " to render glorious, " " to magnify, " and if such a thing were possible in our Lord's case, " to add dignity thereto. " *He* is so full of the God-head glory that it is impossible to add to *His* glory in this respect. But as the Son reflected the glory of the Father, even so does the Spirit render glorious the Son. *His* mission is to show us what *He* is, and what *He* has done, and the earned glories that are *His* through *Him* becoming the Man, Christ Jesus. Unaided we could not enter into the heights from which *He* came, nor the depths to which *He* descended when *He* died " the death of the Cross, " but the Spirit reveals the God-Man there, atoning for sin, and we begin to fathom the deep things of God. We see *Him* raised by the power of God, and as the Sin-Purger *He* is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high. By inheritance *He* had a more excellent name than angels, but now through the earned glories and triumphs of the Cross, *He* has gained a greater Name, and higher place than they, as was *His* by inheritance. *He* has the Name above every } Name, the place above every principality and power, and is saluted by God as a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. For every believer *He* is now Advocate with the Father, and their High Priest. And to those collectively who are gathered to *His* Name *He* is Great Priest over the House of God. *His* present and future glories it is the Spirit's delight to dwell upon and render glorious. Hence all Holy Spirit ministry glorifies the Lord Jesus. This is the touchstone of all. For if ministry has not Christ for its

centre and circumference, its all and in all, it will be barren and unfruitful and will have no power over the heart's affections. Just as the Sun is said to be the centre of the Solar system, so is Christ the centre of the Sacred writings. And as a compass always points to the North, so the Spirit always points to Christ. Whatever truth is touched Christ is its ultimate end. It is healthy exercise for those who minister God's Word, whether young or old, to ask, have I rendered Him glorious in my ministry? When He is rendered glorious it is a Spirit-given ministry; where it is not so, it is of the flesh, and carried on with brain-power and fleshly energy, however intellectual and truthful it may be. May we have grace to serve with reverence and godly fear, and with humility of mind. If we are kept in this spirit and under the Spirit's control we shall render Him glorious.

J. DORRICOTT.

{To be continued, if the Lord will. }

THE STRONGHOLD OF ZION.

(2 Samuel v. 7.)

WELL nigh impregnable, indeed, is this position held by a stubborn and determined foe, whose occupation of this stronghold has remained positive until the time now before us! Little wonder, then, they were so self-reliant, boasting of the position in such a confident manner that they taunt David in those words "Except thou take away the blind and lame thou cannot come in hither"; but they reckoned apart from the God of Israel.

Such then is the task David has set himself. No failure looms up before him. Has he not already had great cause for rejoicing in God's manifold deliverances, and can that God fail him now? Never. He is the same yesterday and to-day and for ever. Let His own words attest this—"Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion."

The moral results of such a victory bring no vaunting on David's part. David is a worker and warrior, not a boaster, and so, calmly but deliberately, he sets about another task namely, that of building. Thus we read, "David built round

about from Millo and inward. " (2 Sam. v. 9.) Nothing of indolence or ease characterised the " man after God's heart, " **as** witness his stupendous preparations for the House of God. (1 Chron, xxix. 1-5.)

" From Millo and inward"—how suggestive ! Defence and prosperity, no doubt, for "David waxed greater and greater, for Jehovah, the God of *Hosts*, was with him. " (2 Sam. v. 10.)

Commencing nearest the enemy and building away from and inwards " towards God. "

Has not the Lord Jesus, single-handed (by His victory over Satan) eclipsed that of David ? He snatched from Satan his own weapon and turned it to such a purpose, with such a glorious termination that Satan has been rendered powerless— " that through death *He* might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the Devil. " (*Heb. ii. 14.*)

What **a** victory! Blessing has flowed to fallen man, and through the efficacy of the shed blood all who are sheltered under it are eternally pardoned. Born from above, no judgment hovering over us, we are as secure **as** God can make us, " accepted in the Beloved. "

As sharers in the spoil, ought we to sit down and enjoy the fruit of *His* labour and allow things to take their course ? Surely not. Let us be up and doing, " building round about and inward, " for we too are under an able and energetic Instructor and Supervisor, namely, the *Holy Spirit*.

" The spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience " has been ousted from his coveted abode, and our body is now become " **a** temple of the *Holy Spirit*, which is in you, which ye have from God. " (1 Cor. vi. 19.) " Sealed with the *Holy Spirit* of Promise " when we believed, *His* work is to " teach us all things " and " to guide us into all the truth. "

Having then the Guide, God's desire is for us to come to **a** knowledge of the truth, (1 Tim. ii. 4,) and that we may adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, in all things. (Titus ii., 10-14.)

Thus the building commences and is carried on (as God's desire is that it should be) unremittingly, fortifying ourselves against **a** possible attack by the adversary (for assuredly he will return) while correspondingly the building extends inward (Godward); thus defence and prosperity should mark the pathway of the one with whom is Jehovah, the God of *Hosts*.

" Wherefore taking up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. " (Defensive).

Let us be equally balanced and fully equipped, having Breastplate on and Loins girded.

Helmet on and Feet Shod.

Shield on arm and Sword in hand, and meet the wily tempter prepared.

" Putting away therefore all wickedness and all guile . . . as new-born babes long for the spiritual milk which is without guile that ye may grow thereby unto salvation. " (Prosperity).

Let us press on toward the goal, unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, desiring to hear from *His* own lips, « Well done. "

The strife is o'er, the battle done,
The triumph of Jehovah won,
Oh ! let the song of praise be sung,
Hallelujah !

J. WEIR.

YE CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS.

IN Moses' life there came a time when he reached cross-roads. Two paths opened out before him. One was an easy path of wealth, position and comfort; the other a difficult way of affliction and reproach. *He* had to make up his mind which he would take. Should he continue to be treated as a member of the Royal Family, or should he throw in his lot with the down-trodden and despised people of God ? There was no middle pathway for Kim. It was of no use for him to remain in Pharaoh's household and let his sympathies go out to his brethren. *He* must either remain where he was, or definitely sever his connection with his past life, with Egypt and all its treasures, and identify himself with his afflicted brethren. We cannot imagine that his choice was made all in a moment. No doubt he often counted the cost, for he had a lot to give up, but at last he came to a decision. *He* refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to be evil entreated with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. " (Heb. xi. 24, 25.)

We will be of no use to God while we halt between two opinions, and we cannot serve two masters. Before you and me are two pathways—one the way trodden by *Him* who was despised and rejected of men; the other the pathway of the world's approbation and self-indulgence. In James iv. 4, this is very marked. It is impossible to be a follower of Christ and a friend of the world, but it is sadly possible that even a child of God may become an enemy of God by being a friend of the world. In II. Timothy iv. 10, Paul writes:—"Demas forsook me, having loved this present world," and so Demas, by becoming a friend of the world, made himself an enemy of God.

Those who, like Moses, definitely choose the Lord's side, refusing the world with its pleasures and allurements, will like him know something of the reproach of Christ. In the world's estimation the cross was a fit place for the Lord Jesus Christ, and the world has not improved. *He* is still rejected and despised, and those who faithfully follow *Him* will also know what it is to be rejected and despised. **Do** we sometimes wonder why we bear so little for *Him*? **Is** it not because we try to serve two masters? Because we are not wholehearted? Do we not sometimes forget that by the cross of Christ we should be crucified unto the world, and the world unto us? (Gal. vi. 14.) **Do** we realise that the cross stands between us and the world?

Moses accounted "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." The apostles rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Name." (Acts v. 41.) **Do** we know anything of this joy? Or when called upon to suffer reproach do we blush and feel ashamed?

When the Lord Jesus is manifested, how glad and proud we shall be to be identified with *Him*, but how much it will add to our joy if we can call to remembrance a time when we went forth unto *Him* outside the camp, and other times when the reproaches of them that reproached Christ fell on us. We do not realise what an honour it is to be called by *His* Name, to be gathered into that Name which is above every name, to be identified with the One to whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that *He* is Lord.

One of the objects of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was "that *He* might deliver us out of this present evil world."

(Gal. i. 4.) We are in the world, but not of it. Our position is that of strangers and pilgrims, whose citizenship is in *Heaven*, and our attitude should be that of waiting for a Saviour. The Lord is, now waiting until God has made *His* enemies the footstool of His feet; until the time arrives for Him to take His power and reign; when the Kingdom of this world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord, and of *His* Christ.

Meantime it is not for *His* followers to meddle in politics, nor to seek position and influence in a world where He, the rightful King, has been rejected, but to be where loyalty to *Him* will place them, " outside the camp, bearing *His* reproach, " as loyalty to David took his faithful followers to him in the cave of Adullam, until the time came, for him to sit on the throne. When the time comes for the Lord Jesus to reign then we shall be manifested with *Him*.

We must not, however, forget that God bids us to " be subject to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake (I. Peter ii. 13), and to " render to all their dues " (Romans xiii. 7.) It is also our duty to pray " for kings and all that are in high place. " (I. Tim. ii. 2.)

May we who profess to be followers of Christ take the place here which *He* has assigned us, and know more of " denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, " and of living " soberly and righteously and godly in this present world; looking for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. " (Titus ii. 12-13.)

GEO. E. HORNE.

FAITH.

(Continued from page 18).

" Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving (or conviction) of things not seen. " Thus faith is described. Evidently knowledge of " things hoped for " and of " things unseen " is not received on the evidence of the senses, but on the testimony of God. Faith receives the witness of God; for it is important to observe that when God speaks to a man (whatever may be the medium of the communication) He is able to give conviction that it is He who speaks. This is a very important and interesting fact which needs to be recog-

nised. Until a man hears the Word of God and knows it is the Word of God, he is not responsible to obey; indeed to accept a communication without knowing it to be God's would be presumption and not faith. But God, because He is the *living* God, and because His word is "living and energetic," can and does give the knowledge that *He* is speaking. Then comes the opportunity of faith and the responsibility of obedience.

Faith concerns itself with matters which are not evident to the senses or to ordinary reason. It is not faith to accept that which is manifest, or necessary, or even probable, but faith apprehends things not only naturally improbable, but impossible, and counts upon those things simply and only because God has said. The word "assurance" means having the firm confidence which counts on the fulfilment of the promise as truly as though it were fulfilled, and because thereof is willing to *wait*. Some may say that faith is shown by demanding immediate fulfilment, but this is not so; unbelief is impatient because there is the lurking fear that the thing may fail, but faith can afford to wait, and whether the time be short or long its confidence is the same. Some demand signs and wonders, but does that speak of faith? The Lord Jesus by way of rebuke once said, "Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe." If a man is persuaded that the bank note he holds is good and the bank sound, he will be in no hurry to cash it, but if he doubts, then he will be in a fever of impatience until it is changed into geld. The Lord's notes are as good as gold and will all be cashed ere long.

Not only is this true of things hoped for, but the same applies to things not seen. Faith is the conviction of things not seen. A conviction of the mind concerning unseen things will inevitably lead to an anticipatory picture of those things being formed, so that long ere they themselves are possessed the anticipation will afford much delight and blessing. This faculty of seeing by faith is referred to in verses 13, 26 and 27 of this chapter, *Heb.* xi.

This ought to help us, for with us as with them, faith is required concerning things hoped for and not seen. We also need this "assurance," this "conviction" which will lead us to wait with endurance, being cheered with a lively anticipation of those "things which eye hath not seen, nor hath

ear heard, nor hath entered into the heart of man, " but which " God hath revealed to us by *His Spirit*. " And have we not the word of *Him* who prefaced His promise of coming again by saying " As ye believe in God so believe in Me " to the end that we should wait the fulfilment in unshaken confidence ? And does He not add at the end of the Book " Yea ! I come quickly ? " What then shall we say % Shall it not be, " Amen: Come, Lord Jesus ?"

(To be continued.)

S. J. HILL.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE.

IT is absolutely essential in the service of God to have a good conscience, a conscience which does not condemn us in seeking the glory of God, in endeavouring to carry into effect the word of God as He has been pleased to reveal it unto us; albeit our efforts are characterized with much weakness.

In reading the first letter to Timothy we find that Paul had exhorted him to tarry in Ephesus and to charge certain men not to teach a different doctrine. The end of this charge to them was " Love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned. " From these things some had swerved unto vain talking, leaving out the essentials of the Christian life in all their talking, which would leave those who heard as empty as the words spoken. Against such an unhappy lot Timothy is warned in order that he might, by taking heed to himself and to his teaching, become the saviour of himself and of them that heard him.

In the end of the Apostle's charge we are given the vital parts of Christian life and service, and no matter how great or how small our knowledge of the Scriptures may be these things are required of us, and without them we are sure to make ship* wreck concerning the Faith.

Conscience seems to be that standard of rectitude in man which tells him what is right and what is wrong. It wrought in Adam the moment he partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; he was condemned in his heart and fled from the presence of God. All down the ages it has been witnessing in man, whether in the Jew with the greater revelation of

God in the oracles given to him, or in the Gentile who had no law, but by nature did the things of the law and became a law unto themselves, in that they shewed the work of the law written on their hearts and their conscience bearing witness therewith. In that solemn day the Judge of all the earth shall do right, for *He* shall judge the secrets of the hearts of men*. The great work of the conscience shall then be made manifest and man will be held responsible for the light God caused to shine into his heart.

If this be true of those whose light for the most part was dim, how much more alive should our conscience be to the right and wrong of things in this present day when God has been pleased to illuminate us by *His Holy Spirit* from the pages of *His sacred Word* ? Not only so, but our conscience should be to-day as it was not when we were newly saved. Things which then did not appear wrong to us, we have found to be wrong as increased light from God has come to us, bit by bit, line upon line, and we have had to cease to do evil and learn to do well that we might go on with God. Do we now enjoy as at the first a good conscience, or are we on the other hand either searing it with a hot iron, or thrusting it from us, and thus, alas ! running on to the rocks ?

The Apostle tells us that he served God from his forefathers in a pure conscience. *He* had nothing of defilement on his conscience in the days of his zealous observance of the law and after he was saved he exercised himself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man. *He* sought to do the will of God from the heart fervently; he sought after a heart that was free from an evil conscience so that he might have boldness before God. (1 John iii. 21-22., Heb. iv. 16, Heb. x. 19-23, 1 John iv. 17.)

He endeavoured to carry out the spirit of the truth of Matt, v. 23-24. " If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer the gift. " We are apt to think that if we come to the remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ we can draw nigh to God and offer to *Him* the sacrifice of praise even although there is that on our

* Romans ii. 16.

conscience in regard to our brother to whom we have done some injury, or something that is not quite brotherly. The way we can draw near is given explicitly in Heb. x., and one of the conditions is, with our hearts sprinkled from **an** evil conscience. How often it may be that we draw near to God with our lips while our hearts are far from Him; how often is the meeting for the remembrance of our Lord Jesus changed from **a** time of godly joy, when the praise of His people should flow out of full hearts, to **a** time of heaviness of heart through defiled consciences? Dull silence reigns, the silence of death, and saints, glad when the meeting is over, **go** away to their homes **as** miserable **as** they came, or perhaps more so. Brethren, these things ought not **so** to be. May we be reconciled to God, and reconciled to one another, **so** that with hearts uncondemned we may know that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Thus shall we have boldness to draw near with true hearts **as** we exercise ourselves to have **a** conscience void of offence toward God and man. Surely it is wise to do so, in view of the day that is coming, when the Lord shall bring the hidden things to light and make manifest the counsels of the hearts and each man shall have his praise from God. It will then be seen whether we have, with **a** good conscience, sought to serve God in our day and generation.

JOHN MILLER.

ARTICLES FOR "WHOLESOME WORDS" should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, "Beracah," Paisley Road, Barrhead. Intelligence items should bear the signatures of two overseeing brethren, and should reach Mr. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding the issue in which insertion is desired.

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A SONG OF MY BELOVED.

THERE are many songs in the Scriptures. For example, we have the song of Moses, Ex. xv., the song of Deborah and Barak, Judges v., the song of David, the sweet singer of Israel, which he sang when Jehovah delivered him out of the hand of Saul and out of the hand of all his enemies, 2 Samuel xxii., and many others beside. To Solomon, however, was given the honour to compose the Song of songs. No doubt all his one thousand and five songs were good, but this one is the best.

This rich love song is an allegory, in which the love of Christ and the Church (His Body) is likened to that of a bridegroom and a bride. "He that hath the bride is the Bridegroom," John iii. 29. "I am my Beloved's, and His desire is towards me," S. of S. vii. 10. "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me," Gal. ii. 20.

" Let *Him* kiss me with the kisses of His mouth:
For Thy love is better than wine.
Thine ointments have a goodly fragrance;
Thy name is as ointment poured forth;
Therefore do the virgins love Thee. "*"

Surely this a fitting beginning to this remarkable song. It is the expression of love from a heart overflowing with gratitude. "Christ... loved the Church and gave Himself up for her," Eph. v. 25. "His mouth is most sweet," S. of S. v. 16.

" Thou art fairer than the children of men;
Grace is poured into Thy lips. " f

" Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, " John i. 17.

" His lips are as lilies, dropping liquid myrrh. " ‡

" Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated wickedness:
Therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee
With the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. §

* S. of S. i. 2, 3. f Ps. xlv. 2. J S. of S. v. 13. § Ps. xlv. 7, 8.

All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes,
and cassia. "

" *He* is altogether lovely. "*

" Unto you therefore who believe, *He* is precious, " 1 Peter 11. 7. " *He* is the Chief among ten thousand. " " This is my beloved, and this is my Friend. " " Oh ! Thou whom my soul loveth. " " Thy love is better than wine. " " We will remember Thy love more than wine, " than wine that maketh glad the heart of man. "The love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. " Eph. iii. 18. " **I** have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee, " Jer. xxxi. 3. " Love is strong as death. "

" Thy name is **as** ointment poured forth, "**f**

" To Him bear all the prophets witness, that through His name, every one that believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins, " Acts x. 43. "**I** write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake, " 1 John ii. 12. " And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved, " Acts iv. 12. " Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will **I** do, " John xiv. 13.

" Sweet is the savour of *His* name

Who suffered in *His* people's stead.

His portion here, reproach and shame,

He liveth now, *He* once was dead. "

" This name shall shed its fragrance still

Along life's thorny road,

Shall sweetly smooth the rugged hill

That leads me up to God. "

E. B.

FAITH.

" FAITH is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen. " (Heb. xi. 1.)

The Scriptures contain many instances where individuals who came in contact with the Son of God upon the earth exercised faith in His words. We remember in particular the woman who touched the hem of His garment. What joy was hers **as**

* S. of S. v. 16. † S. of S i. 3.

she received the long-wished-for cure and heard those comforting words, " Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; **go** in peace. " (Luke viii. 48.)

Then there was the man who obeyed the word of the Lord Jesus and found his withered hand at once become active.

But without going into details of either case, we may at once remind ourselves that in each faith in the words of the Lord was exercised, and brought blessing **as a** reward.

Since then centuries have rolled on, and our day has come; and to some perhaps these are very dark days with trials and difficulties. Possibly we fail and sin, not in any outwardly pronounced sense, but in thought only, forgetful it may be that the thought of foolishness is sin. (Prov. xxiv. 9.) Where such exists let us not droop, but arise beyond the things of to-day, and bring our troubles to God, and **so** alter the course of our thoughts that they will be onward, upward, and homeward. If our faith comes to be **as small as a** grain of mustard seed, despise it not, for God can strengthen and enlarge this. The heart of faith makes no choice of particular circumstances, but dwells with God in all details of life; and this is what God desires—individuals whose faith rests in *Himself*, and who live with *Him* continually.

A person whose faith is in God in all circumstances may become **a** mighty servant of *His*, be he or she who they may. Sad to think of waning faith bringing changeableness—one day up and the next down, joyful at one time and sorrowful another, sincere then inconsistent. On the other hand, God is pleased if amid changing scenes we truly advance to stronger faith, although it be little by little and day by day. *Here* is the divine pathway where spiritual declension is unknown; where the pale face or withered hand and helplessness in things of God give place to enjoyable spiritual health, ready to labour for *Him*, and if needs be ready to wait to labour. May we seek this way !

GEO. M'INTYRE.

THE **END** OF THE LORD.

" LET US **go** over unto the other side of the lake; and they launched forth. " (Luke viii. 22.)

From the events recorded during that crossing our God would have us draw both comfort and instruction in this our day, for His ways are just the same now **as** ever.

True it is that the Lord Jesus allowed, nay commanded, that storm to overtake His beloved disciples, allowed them to be in fear and distress even to the point of despair. Possibly, if they had had their choice the conditions of the journey would have been pleasant, the sky clear, the sea smooth.

And if we had our way we would have smooth sailing, but *His* way is different. *He* knows best, for the storms which sweep our sky are only meant to bring us nearer to *Himself*.

As they sailed *He* fell asleep and seemed unconcerned as to their danger. What doubts and fears must have filled their minds as the waves beat upon their frail craft, threatening to sink it. Was this to be the end? Would that storm overwhelm them?

Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, " Master, Master, we perish ! " and *He* brought them out of their distress. Blessed moment !

A word from *Him* and all was calm; the silver lining appeared in the cloud, so to speak. Their trouble was over.

How this should encourage us when divinely ordered trials come, as they do, in order that " the proof of our faith, much more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, might be found unto praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. " (1 Peter i. 7.)

Certain it is that the disciples knew more of the Lord Jesus after the storm than ever before, for their need had brought them into His presence, and they had heard His voice full of majesty, and had seen His sovereign power displayed on their behalf.

Oh, to know God thus in the troubles peculiar to each of us, as the One eminently able to succour through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who sits enthroned in the glory.

Do we not rather give *Him* occasion to say to us, " Where is your faith ? " Surely yes. May we then profit by the reconsideration of these simple, well-known heart truths, knowing that if we honour *Him* in our difficulties all will be well.

A. H. c

HEBREWS XL

(Continued from page 34).

" BY faith we understand that the ages have been framed (or set in order) by the Word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do appear, "

We observe that the record of the worthies in Heb. xi. is arranged in the order of time, but before entering upon the list of names we are called to consider an exercise of faith not peculiar to any age or people but to all, and to all time. " By faith *we* understand. " And this is surely as it should be, for the subject matter of faith here is elementary in its character; without it no advance can be expected to any higher subject. As men in this world we are confronted by things which speak of wisdom and power; by an orderly arrangement which proves design; by a succession of events which marks a purpose. But while such evidences are abundant yet faith is that principle which reads those evidences aright. True, the evidences are plainly seen, but the invisible things of God can only be apprehended by faith. Man naturally is occupied with the creature, the thing made, ignoring the fact that the thing made is but a pointer to the Maker, but an evidence of *Him*. Faith accepts the evidence as evidence and acknowledges that behind all seen things, or even unseen things, God is. Not only is matter not eternal but neither can matter sustain itself; God not only set it going but *He* orders its constant changes. *His* word continues to be uttered through the Lord Jesus Christ, for not only is *He* before all things but by *Him* all things consist.

This Scripture shows that faith recognises God as creating and regulating all things. Though *He* may act generally on established lines, yet nature cannot go on without *Him*; not like a clock which, being wound up, will go on even though its maker is laid low in death.

The ages (embracing the material structure, but going beyond) are set in order by God. Things seen have not their origin in things seen, but in God. *He* only is eternal who is and was and is to come—the Almighty. Man, apart from faith, shuts God out and becomes occupied with " secondary causes. " *He* speaks of nature and nature's laws and affirms that we live in " the age of law. " If we interpose with the name of God and suggest that these laws are dependent on God, that they are *His* servants and not *His* masters, then how soon is it apparent that such men do not believe in God in any real sense.

It is evident that the recognition of God in this way is the first letter in the alphabet of faith, and until men are prepared to give such recognition it is of no use to seek to lead them on to higher spiritual truths. But if there be such recognition

it will pave the way to those manifestations of faith which follow. Then, in the hearty acknowledgment that God is the great Disposer of all things we shall be prepared to trace His way in all ages and in connection with all circumstances.

(*To be continued.*)

S. J. HILL.

PSALM 135.

Praise ye Jehovah !
 Praise ye the name of Jehovah;
 Praise Him, O ye servants of Jehovah:
 Ye that stand in the house of Jehovah,
 In the courts of the house of our God.
 Praise ye Jehovah; for Jehovah is good:
 Sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant.

God is good and doeth good, and there is a sense in which we can be conscious of God's goodness toward us every hour we live, realizing His nearness and the unfailing care He has over us, guiding our every footstep. At times we may fail to understand His purpose in allowing this thing or that thing to happen, but there is then the opportunity to put in Him that implicit trust which delights His heart. Perhaps a day will come when we shall see all clearly; circumstances that we cannot understand now will be made plain that they have all been ordered for a wise purpose.

Great is Jehovah, and highly to be praised, *
 For I know that Jehovah is great,
 And that our Lord is above all gods. f

He is the Living God.

Whatsoever Jehovah pleased, that hath He done.

" It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief. " *I* It also pleased the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell. * When we consider the magnitude of what our God has done for us, how much we owe to Him, it should indeed prostrate us before Him.

The great and mighty wonders wrought for Israel in the past could never equal that which God did for us when He gave His Son. We have far greater cause for remembering Him and praising Him than Israel ever had.

* Ps. xlviii. 1 † Ps. cxxxv. 5. + Isa. liii. 10. § Col. i. 19.

Thy name, O Jehovah, endureth for ever;

Thy memorial, O Jehovah, throughout all generations.

" To Thy name and to Thy memorial is the desire of our soul. "

The Psalmist speaks of the nations that knew not Jehovah, the Living God.

The idols of the nations are silver and gold,

The work of men's hands.

They have mouths, but they speak not;

Eyes have they, but they see not;

They have ears, but they hear not;

Neither is there any breath in their mouths.

They that make them shall be like unto them;

Yea, every one that trusteth in them.

There are still people in the world to-day who make their own gods. They have never heard of the Living God as the nations of the Psalm had. Will these people ever hear of the God who made the worlds ? of the glad tidings of God's love to the world ? Will they ever worship and praise the Living God ? The civilized world to-day are forgetting God and eternity—are the Pagans seeking after *Him* ? *He* hath made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after *Him* and find *Him*, though *He* is not far from each one of us.

All authority has been given unto the Lord Jesus Christ in heaven and on earth, and *He* has bidden us to go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that *He* has commanded, and *He* has promised " Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. " S. M'F.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(Continued from page 28.)

THE SENDING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WE must ask our readers' patience to follow us as we look back into the Old Testament Scripture where this event is fore-shadowed. (Read Leviticus xxiii.) It may be necessary to

make a few remarks concerning the offering of the sheaf of first-fruits to get the connection. " When ye be come into the land which I give unto you and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest unto the priest; and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you; on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. " This was to be accompanied with its burnt-offering, meat-offering, and drink-offering. This wave-sheaf shadowed forth the resurrection of Christ, who as the corn of wheat has fallen into the ground and died, but sprang up in resurrection " *on the morrow after the Sabbath,* " bearing much fruit. (Mark xvi. 1.)

It seems that Paul made reference to this when he wrote " But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the First-fruits of them that are asleep. " . . . " But each in his own order; Christ the Firstfruits, then they that are Christ's at *His* coming. " (1 Cor. xv.)

If the wave-sheaf was accepted, the whole of their harvest was accepted; and the offering of the two wave-loaves which followed was dependent upon the acceptance of this wave-sheaf. So Christ in resurrection presented *Himself* to God, on the ground and in the full value of *His* sacrificial work, not so much on the ground of sin-offering and trespass-offering, but on the basis of *Him* having become burnt-offering, meat-offering, and drink-offering, as the wave-sheaf portrays. *He* is before God for our acceptance, and we are accepted in the Beloved One, linked with *Himself*, eternally one, even as He said on the morrow after the Sabbath, " Go, tell My brethren, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God. " (John xx.) From the offering of the wave-sheaf they were to count seven Sabbaths, and the day after the seventh Sabbath (what is now the Lord's Day) a new meat-offering of two wave-loaves of fine flour, baked with leaven, was to be offered. This was to be accompanied with offerings mentioned by Jehovah. In this wave-offering offered fifty days from the offering of the wave-sheaf we see foreshadowed the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (fiftieth), when both Jew and Gentile were to be brought together, and made one through the blood of the cross. Turning to Acts ii. we read, " And when the day of Pentecost was now come they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the

house where they were sitting... And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. " . . . Peter standing up with the eleven says " . . . This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. " (Joel ii. 28-32.) Here, on the seventh Lord's Day after His resurrection, fifty days after the Antitype of the wave-sheaf, is this out-pouring of the *Holy Spirit*. This was first upon believers who were of the seed of Abraham and probably proselytes who had " taken refuge under the wings of the God of Israel. " But Peter's message was directly to the *House of Israel*, and the offer of mercy was to the Jew first.

THE SAMARITANS RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Philip the evangelist went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ. " And there was great joy in that city. . . . When they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God they were baptized, both men and women. "

Now, these Samaritans, on believing the Gospel message, had been baptized, but they had not received the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Samaritans were a mixed race of Jews that had been left in Palestine as tillers of the land at the carrying away into the captivity, and Babylonians who had been imported thither. They inter-married, and the religion that was set up was a blend of Babylonish idolatry and Judaism. (See 2 Kings xvii.) They formed themselves into a separate people, and named themselves after their chief city, Samaria. They removed to Samaria what rightly belonged to Jerusalem, and made Samaria the place of their worship. There was a bitter feud between the Jews that returned from the captivity and their descendants, and " the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. " The woman of Samaria in her discourse with the Lord said " Our fathers worshipped at this mountain, but ye say Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. " The Lord replies and tells of the time when neither at this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem shall men worship the Father. " Ye worship ye know not what, we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. " And so it came to pass that salvation was sent to the Samaritans by the hand of Jews, and they received the Gospel through Philip, and the gift of the Holy Spirit by the prayers and laying on of the hands of Peter and John, For when the Apostles heard that Samaria had received

the Word of God they sent unto them Peter and John. (Acts viii.) So that it became literally true that salvation was by means of the Jews.

GENTILES RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The command of the Lord to be witnesses of Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth, is gradually being fulfilled, and the sphere of " the Way " is being enlarged. The message of the Gospel through Peter reaches unto the Gentiles in the person of Cornelius and those with him, for whilst Peter is preaching, " the *Holy Spirit* fell on all them that heard the Word. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. " (Acts x.) Now notice the difference and the order in which the *Holy Spirit* was received.

The Jews in Acts ii. were brought to repentance, then were baptized in water unto the remission of sins, and then they received the gift of the *Holy Spirit*.

The Samaritans believed, and were baptized in water, and then, after the laying on of the Apostles' hands, they received the gift of the *Holy Spirit*.

The Gentiles believed, and received remission of sins, and forthwith received the gift of the *Holy Spirit*, and afterwards were baptized in water.

This difference and order is very important for us to notice, for it is by confusing things and times which differ that those err who baptize unto the remission of sins and make baptism essential unto salvation from judgment. It will be plainly seen that the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins was at that time for Israel and not for the Gentiles. As Israel had rejected their Messiah in *His Own Person*, and in the offer of mercy to them as a nation through Peter and Stephen, the offer of grace was extended to the Gentiles, and God now deals with Jew and Gentile alike, as Romans i. to iii. proves, on the broad basis of all being sinners, and the same message of repentance, mercy, and grace is to both. At the same time we must remember that the mercy of God lingereth long, and Paul, as was his wont throughout the Acts of the Apostles, seeks to reach the Jew first and then the Greek, until we come to Acts xxviii., and then we find the full turning to the Gentiles. (Read verses 23 to 28.)

We conclude this part by saying that now, whether Jew or Gentile hears the message of repentance and believes in the Lord Jesus, they forthwith are indwelt by the *Holy Spirit*

and their bodies become *His temple*—(Eph. i. 13, 14. 1 *COT*) vi. 19, 20)—and baptism in water is that which should follow, in obedience to the Word of God, showing they are disciples of the Lord Christ. (Acts x. 47, 48.) J. DORRICOTT.

(To be continued, if the Lord will.)

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

JARVIS BROOK, SUSSEX. —The usual meetings will, God willing, be held on Good Friday (so-called), April 14th. 11. 15, prayer; 2. 30, ministry; 5. 30, ministry. Luncheon and tea will be provided We desire prayer for these meetings, and hope again to see some saints from neighbouring assemblies, also some brethren given to the ministry of the Word. —J. T.

BRIDGER; O. BEST; B. W. THORNHILL.

LIVERPOOL (Lancashire). —We purpose, if the Lord will, to have our annual district conference on April 14th (Friday),⁵ in the Y. M. C. A., Mount Pleasant, from 1. 30 till 8. 30 p. m. Interval for tea, 4. 30 till 6 o'clock. Prayer, praise, and addresses. Also, in the Atherton Hall, Birkenhead, on Saturday, April 15th, meeting for overseers from 2 p. m. till 5 p. m.; tea from 5 to '6. Subject for consideration—"What is the correct interpretation of 1 Cor. v. 11, last clause, 'With such a one no, not to eat' ? " Also (in subjection to time at our disposal), "The character and arrangement of conference meetings." Meeting for the answering of questions from 6 till 9. Believers are requested to bring their own hymn books. Prayer is requested; ministering brethren welcomed. —THOS. B. HORNE'; W. J. TRAINER.

BARRY (near Cardiff). —The annual meetings for the ministry of the Word will be held, God willing, on Monday, April 17th (Easter Monday Bank Holiday), from 2. 45 to 8 p. m., with interval for tea, 5 to 6. We shall value the fellowship of fellow saints in prayer that the proposed meetings may be a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. —T. EVELEIGH; ED. FOSTER.

MATLOCK. —If the Lord will, the second Annual Conference will be held here, in the Farley Hill Assembly Hall, on "Good Friday" so-called, April 14th, to which we give you a hearty invitation. Order of Meetings—Afternoon, 3. 0 to 4. 0, Prayer, Praise and Exhortation. Tea at 4. 30. Outdoor Meeting

(weather permitting) during interval. Evening, 6. 0 to 8. 0. Addresses to Saints. Will those who intend being present kindly advise, not later than April 10th, Mr. Gorroick, Sycamore Road, Matlock ?

DERBY. —If the Lord will, the Annual Conference will be held here on Monday, April 17th, in the Victoria Hall, St. Peter's Church Yard. Meetings as follows—Prayer and Thanksgiving, 11. 0 to 12. 30. Ministry of the Word, 2. 0 to 4. 0. Subject: " The Church's privileges and responsibilities. " Evening meeting, 6. 0 to 8. 30. Subject open. Luncheon at LO. Tea at 4. 30. We desire the prayers of all, and the presence of as many as possible. —On behalf of Overseers of the District, HENRY ELSON, ARTHUR TURNER. Communications to Mr. A. Foster, 69 Belgrave Street.

SCOTLAND.

LANARKSHIRE AND DUMBARTONSHIRE. —The annual spring-meeting for ministry of the Word will be held, if God permit, In the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on Saturday, 22nd April, from 2. 30 p. m. till 8 p. m., with interval for tea from 5 till 6. A hearty invitation is given to ministers of the Word and also to fellow saints. The prayers of the assemblies are besought. --J. HINSHELWOOD; C. M'KAY; D. WHITTET.

WEST OP SCOTLAND. —If God permit, our sixth annual conference of those interested in the work amongst the young will be held on Saturday, 13th May, in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, as follows: —3 till 3. 30, praise and prayer; 3. 30 till 4. 30, reports (written and oral); 4. 30 till 5. 30, interval for tea; 5. 30 till 7. 30, ministry. It is hoped that as many as possible will be present from neighbouring assemblies. Written reports should be sent to Mr. J. Hinshelwood, 12 Kerr Street, N. W., Glasgow, not later than May 9th. —J. HINSHELWOOD; D. WHITTET; J. P. A. TAYLOR.

EDINBURGH. —The usual spring conference will be held in Buccleuch Parish Halls (*D. V.*) on April 15th, from 1. 30 p. m. to 7. 30 p. m. The presence and prayers of fellow saints are earnestly desired.

SAINTS who have been praying to God on behalf of our brother Mr. G. R. Geddes will be thankful to hear that he has partially recovered, though still very weak.

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HEBREWS XL

(Continued from page 42.)

" BY faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had witness borne to him that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts, and through it he being dead yet speaketh. "

Three things are mentioned in the Scriptures as distinguishing between Abel and Cain: (1) Faith in the former and not in the latter; (2) Abel was righteous and his works were righteous, Cain was of the wicked one and his works were evil; (3) Abel brought a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Faith must have a revelation from God; it cannot exist apart from a reliable communication. This is not always recognised and consequently we have presumption posing as faith, but presumption is a false faith. It is not begotten of God's word, but has proceeded from man's lawless desires. We must be clear in our minds that " Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. " What is recorded in Genesis iii. concerning the Sin of Adam and Eve; their alienation from God and expulsion from Eden; of the word concerning the woman's Seed which should crush the Serpent's head though in so doing He should suffer the crushing of His own heel; of the coats of skin by which the guilty pair were covered, obtained only by the death of the animal to which it belonged; all these things being so recorded in chapter iii. it is proper to conclude were known both to Cain and Abel, who are brought to our notice in chapter iv. In chapter iii. we have the double witness to the

Deliverer—first, in the word of promise; and second, in the type.

Now while we assert most strongly that faith must have a revelation to go upon, yet we remark that faith is highly intelligent and a revelation which is limited in its terms may be capable of a wide interpretation. See then the workings of faith in this young man. He had been a thoughtful child, pondering on the sad story of the fall and observing its disastrous effects; he apprehended the dread distance standing between the Holy God and His lawless creatures; his mind fastened with pleasure upon the blessed intimation of the Deliverer, while noticing that the deliverance would be effected by suffering. Further, he doubtless considered the provision made by God in clothing his parents. Are we not justified in believing that such thoughts filled his mind and as a result unfeigned faith was found in him? That faith in God and God's word led to righteousness of life, for he is spoken of as "righteous Abel" and his works were righteous.

In process of time, having, as we may suppose, approached the age of manhood, both he and Cain brought offerings unto God. Faith in Abel led him to express in his offering that which he had learnt previously would meet the requirements of God. The tender, spotless, unresisting lamb was slain, and it, together with the fat (the best), was offered. What a delightfully intelligent offering! And see what is the result. God accepts, has respect unto Abel and his offering. Faith had long been dwelling in Abel's heart and his patient continuance in well-doing had evidenced the genuineness of his faith, but not until NOW did God witness to him of his acceptance. While truly born again, righteous in his ways, his acceptance could only be *declared* in connection with his offering, in which he expressed not only his faith but the subject of it. But let us distinguish between faith and the token of faith. Thus a person believes on the Lord Jesus in the heart, but then follows the expression of that faith in baptism. Now Abel was righteous, and had he not been righteous his gift would not have been accepted. The order is expressly stated, "God had respect unto *Abel* and to his *offering*" but that offering expressed what had long been the subject of his faith, even the One who had been promised and whose sufferings had been typified. Thus he brought, as taught by faith, a more

excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he had witness borne *to him* that he was righteous, God bearing witness in respect of his gifts.

We also, if taught of God, have been led to recognise the ruin of sin in which we were involved; we have accepted the truth of the promise and the fact of its fulfilment in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, His life, death, and resurrection. We have accepted Him **as** the Sent One of God and (can it be said of all who read this ?) have expressed our faith in the way appointed by the Lord (in baptism) and are still expressing our faith in Him, week by week, in the breaking of the bread. In these things we have had, and still do have, the assurance borne to our hearts of our acceptance before God.

S. J. HILL.

{To be continued.}

ON THE **BANKS** OF THE NIGER AND **BENUE**.

NOTES FROM AN ADDRESS.

FOURTEEN years ago this autumn **I** received **a** circular, with **a** picture on the front, entitled " The Channels of Commerce Change. " Three men with rod and line were sitting on the top of three high posts, around which **a** tidal river had once flowed; but the water had long since gone into another channel, leaving the posts high and dry. Yet there they sat tight upon their posts, waiting—waiting with what patience they could muster—for the tide and the fish which *never came*. In the background was **a** steamer just ready to start, flying **a flag** with these words on it, " To the Commercial Fishing Banks. " These men failed to take advantage of the changing circumstances.

Yes ! Channels change in Commerce, in Nature, and in *Grace*, and it is well for us to consider our methods and to watch for fresh fishing grounds and be quick to seize opportunities. Let us also remember the words of the Great Fisher of Men, " Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find. " Does He mean among the heathen tribes and nations ? Is **He** pointing there to-day ?

What do the Pagans say ? Some years ago Egerton Young

was labouring among the Red Indians and visited those at Nelson River in Canada. After he had preached with much power, several expressed their thankfulness for what they had heard. At last an old Indian came from the rear and said, among other things, " I am so glad I did not die before I heard this wonderful story. " Then he paused and asked, " May I say more ? " " Yes ! say all that is in your heart, " was the reply. " Well, " he said, " I don't want to be rude, but it does seem to me, my white brother, that you have been a very long time in coming with that great Book and its wonderful story to tell it to your red brothers in the woods ! "

It is quite true—we have been a long time in coming. So long that we are almost *too late*; but, thank God ! we are not yet too late for the fishing on the banks of the mighty River Niger (2, 300 miles long), and its great tributary the Benue (850 miles long). I allude to Northern Nigeria and Adamawa. We may soon be too late, for Mohammedanism is making rapid strides among the Pagan nations and tribes there.

" Northern Nigeria is about one-third the size of India, and since 1900 has been a British Protectorate. It is a similar country to India in many respects. The valley of the Niger and Benue might well be compared with those of the Ganges and Bramaputra, while the northern parts are not unlike the Deccan in India, and the lower ranges of the *Himalayas* might find their counterpart in the mountain ranges of Adamawa. The peoples of both India and Northern Nigeria possess a high indigenous civilisation when compared with the tribes and nations which surround them. "

It is said " There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood leads on to fortune. " I believe the flowing tide of God's grace is going up the great Niger River, and that these countries present us with the finest opportunity to evangelise the heathen that we have ever had. At present these people have a great admiration for the white man, and are anxious to hear about his God. Shall we go up on God's tide, or shall we be left high and dry ? Shall the Community fail to follow His leading ? God forbid !

One great fact among many others points to Northern Nigeria as our objective. This is the existence of the wide-spread Hausa language. " It is current from Lake Chad to

Guinea as the general medium of intercourse, and in all surrounding markets north of Mauritania and Tripoli. It is spoken as their mother tongue by many millions. For harmony, wealth of vocabulary, simplicity, and elegance it certainly deserves to take a foremost place among the languages of Africa. " " With a knowledge of the Hausa language a man could preach and work in almost any town or village of the heathen tribes, for it is understood by a few people of almost every village in the country. " It is taught in England. It will be well to prove your ability to acquire languages by learning *Hausa* at home.

There is one thing more I desire to say—namely, that Scripture teaches that parents ought to lay up for their children. There is a generation of earnest and intelligent young men and women growing up among us. *Have we not a responsibility resting upon us to provide them with adequate opportunities to develop their latent gifts—to supply an outlet for their youthful energies ? Have we not an obligation to prepare and leave them a heritage to labour in when we are gone ?* I believe that the flower of our young men and women are suffering from a lack of suitable work for God, in which they may exercise the latent graces of self-denial and self-sacrifice. Why not give them a place to labour in beyond the sea ?

Let us concentrate our efforts on Northern Nigeria or Adamawa ! Let us make a determined and sustained effort—an effort worthy of that Great Name. Let us seek to plant a strong station among the Pagan tribes in a good position where no missionaries are, and branch out from that as a centre. In the Name of our God let us set up our banners.

EDWIN MATTHEW.

LESSONS FROM THE LIVES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

(Continued from page 16.)

THE next reign of the Kings of Judah presents a very dark night in the history of the testimony of the people of God. Jehoshaphat, although he left his sons great gifts and gold and silver and fenced cities, did not leave the example and influence of the godly life he should have lived, and in Jehoram,

his first-born, was a sad exhibition of characteristics that instead of upholding the honour and dignity of his father rather reflected on the same to his discredit and dishonour. His selfish and shameful attempts to secure his throne and kingdom in the slaughter of all his brethren, as well as divers of the princes of Israel, and his marrying the daughter of Ahab, the King of Israel, surely evidenced fruit of the seed that was sown, in the affinity of his father with Ahab, King of Israel. Not only in our lifetime do we influence others, for "none of us liveth unto himself," but afterwards the effects of our ways and works and words remain, bearing fruit after their kind, for good or evil. Well will it be if "remembering" us, and "considering" the issue of our life, others can "imitate our faith." (Heb. xiii. 7.) We pass over the short and dark reign of Jehoram, characterised by his doing evil in the sight of the Lord, to that extent that not only did Jehovah send to him a warning message by the hand of Elijah, the prophet of the Lord, but carried out the same in "an incurable disease in his bowels, from the Lord," as well as great plagues upon his people and his house. One disaster follows upon another, and the Lord raises up enemies round about, by whom his wives and sons are carried away (with the exception of the youngest), and he died after a reign of eight years, and "departed without being desired." The next reign, that of Ahaziah or Jehoahaz, the youngest son of Jehoram, was in many respects a continuation of that of his father. Under his mother's (the wicked Athaliah's) influence and tuition, "who was his counsellor to do wickedly," we cannot wonder that his life and ways were fruit after its kind, which was "to his destruction," for "he walked after their counsel." A mother's counsel! what a power and influence it exerts for good or evil upon the rearing and training of sons and daughters. May mothers in Israel see to it that theirs shall not be of the character and example of that before us, but of that so highly commended in the words of 2 Tim. i. 5. If such be so, there shall be more of the experience of Psalm i. 1, known by our sons and daughters. "The wicked are not so," as exemplified in the case of Ahaziah, "whose destruction was of God," as spoken of in the prophetic words of Elijah, the prophet of the Lord, and which was carried out by the hand of Jehu.

About this time the kingly line in Judah was almost extinct,

Ahaziah having been slain, and Athaliah his mother having destroyed " all the seed royal of the house of Judah, " except Joash, son of Ahaziah, whom God preserved through the instrumentality of Jehoshabeath, wife of Jehoiada the priest, the sister of Ahaziah, whom she hid with his nurse in the House of God, for the period of six years, while the wicked Athaliah reigned over the land. In the seventh year Jehoiada, with others, entered into a covenant themselves, and with the Levites, ' and the heads of the fathers' houses, to restore the king and bring him to Jerusalem, and to the throne, and " all the congregation made a covenant with the king in the House of God. And he (Jehoiada) said unto them, ' Behold, the king's son shall reign, as the Lord hath spoken concerning the sons of David. ' " And so it came to pass. " Then they brought out the king's son and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony, and made him king; and Jehoiada and his sons anointed him. And they said, ' God save the king. ' " (2 Chron, xxiii. 11.) All this surely reminds us that God's purposes and ways and words abide, even during and throughout the darkest history and apostasy of His people. Circumstances and appearances may be ever so dark and threatening, and difficulties and enemies ever so great and opposing, yet " the word of the Lord abideth for ever, " and " the will of God abideth for ever, " and such as " willeth to do His will " shall find that God's commands are God's enablings. So the kingdom was established under the rule and reign of the rightful king, and a restoration was effected of the House of God; for " he was minded to restore the House of God, " during the days of Jehoiada the priest, and under his influence and guidance, who required of the priests and Levites that they gather out of Judah and Jerusalem the tax of Moses, the servant of God, and that the matter **be** hastened. Then a chest was made, and set without at the gate of the House of Jehovah, and " the princes and the people rejoiced and brought in and cast into the chest until they had made an end. " " Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance, and gave it to such as did the work of the service of the House of Jehovah. " " So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set up the House of God in its state, and strengthened it. " Here it seems clear that in " the things written afore-time for our learning " are helpful lessons for the characteristics

and circumstances of the dark closing days of this age, as well as principles and ways of God that abide for and are applicable to the same, worthy of the consideration and imitation of those who are " minded to restore the House of God. " Such are relative to and in association with the despised and rejected and hidden One, yet " the precious Corner Stone, " at God's right hand, as " Son over God's House. " "If so be, " *tasting* that He is gracious, and *coming* to Him in the acknowledgment of Him, and setting Him apart in the heart as Lord and submitting to His authority and will, some may yet be found; these, " as living stones, " being built " a spiritual house, " may know fulfilled in their experience, " whose House are we if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end. " Further, " as Great Priest over the House of God, " it shall be theirs to know and own Him, for He is " the Branch, " laid up in the presence of God, that buds and bears blossoms and fruit. He shall also bear the glory—a dual glory, and wear the mitre as well as the crown—for He is King and Priest, " after the order of Melchizedek, " " and shall sit upon His throne, and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a Priest upon His throne. " As " an holy priesthood, " through Him they may draw nigh to God as worshippers, and " as a royal priesthood " shew forth His excellencies to men; but such collective character of approach to or worship of God, or such collective testimony toward and as before men, is inseparably associated with the House of God.

They who believe and say that the House of God is in ruins, and that such cannot now be, lay themselves open to the charge of grave inconsistency if they still claim and maintain collective testimony, and the breaking of the bread, and the prayers; all of which are privileges and responsibilities in and of the House of God, as were the lampstand, the table of Shewbread, and the altar of incense, in the holy place of God's sanctuary of old. The things that have been written that one may know how he ought to behave himself in the House of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth (see 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15), abide as present truth for present times, to be fulfilled by all whose spirits God has stirred, and is stirring, to go up and build His House.

DAVID SMITH.

"KNOW YE NOT. "

"KNOW ye not that ye are temple (inner temple) of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man doth mar the temple of God, Him shall God mar; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1 Corinthians iii. 16, 17.)

There are revealed in God's precious Word solemn truths for both saint and sinner, the acceptance or rejection of which will be either to their eternal gain or eternal loss. It behoves us therefore to consider this solemn yet precious exhortation, reminding us of a truth which, alas ! in these latter days (when the thoughts and hearts of many of God's children are occupied with the many various religious elements and institutions of the present day) is often neglected and forgotten.

As we look at the preceding chapters we get an insight into the purpose of the Apostle in this solemn exhortation. In the earlier part of this epistle we see, alas ! division and strife, a letting go, a falling away. (1 Cor. 1-11, 1 Cor. iii. 1-4.) Lovingly he emphasises the preciousness and power of their calling as Church of God, Temple of God, and now having graciously reproved them for their unfaithfulness he exhorts them to hold fast the truth as revealed to them in the beginning. It might be helpful to consider God's dealings of old with *His* chosen people, Israel, remembering the words of the Apostle Paul (Rom. xv. 4), "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning that through patience, and through comfort of the Scriptures, we might have hope. "

Time and scenes may change, but like unto God's unfathomable love so is *His* law, "It changeth not. " Therefore we assert that the principles set forth in God's dealings with *His* chosen people, Israel, reveal a solemn and practical lesson for God's chosen people now, relative to *His* divine will toward them as worshippers.

Turning to Exodus xl. 17-38, a scene presents itself before our gaze. Pitched in a circle round about are the tents of God's people, Israel (Numbers ii.), but that which stands in their midst specially arrests our attention. It is God's Tabernacle, God's *House*, built in accordance with God's pattern, God's divine will; built, too, by men inspired with divine wisdom. (Exodus xxxv. 30-31, Exodus xxxvi. 1-2.) Behold the outcome of His people's obedience to His will ! The

glory of Jehovah filled the Tabernacle. (Exodus xl. 34-35.) Here in this Tabernacle divine ordinances are to be performed. Rule is to be maintained, each one fulfilling his own duty and service as ordained by God. (Numbers iii.) Alas ! sad to say, this blessed condition did not continue long. The time came when there was a gradual decline and man's rule displaced God's rule, man's pomp and ritual took the place of God's glory, until at last the House built by Solomon in place of the Tabernacle, which God also owned by the presence of His glory (1 Kings viii. 11) was laid waste and burnt because of His people's departure from *Himself* (Jeremiah lii. 13). Later in the history of God's chosen people a form of worship continued. They observed in part that which God had ordained should be observed wholly. To them the solemn words of Isaiah xxix. 13 were applied by the Lord Jesus Christ—" This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouths and honoureth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain do they worship Me, teaching **as** their doctrines the precepts of men. " (Matthew xv. 8, 9.)

But going back to this scene in its first stage, we ask why all this additional toil and labour ? Were there not already altars and places of worship in the land they were going to possess ? Yes, there were altars, revealing man's ingenuity, man's wisdom, man's craft. Could they not then avail themselves of one of these ? No, indeed. Listen to God's solemn command to them ere they entered the promised land, " Ye shall destroy their altars and break down their images and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire. " (Deut. vii. 5.) " Thou shalt also utterly destroy them (the former inhabitants), thou shalt make **no** covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them. " (Deut. vii. 2.) Thus were God's chosen people Israel to deal with those nations whose land they were going to possess. " Thou shalt utterly destroy. " Oh ! solemn command; no rebuilding, no patching up, no picking out the good from the bad; all the component parts of those altars made by man's ingenuity and craft were to God's dishonour, and necessitated utter destruction and burning. Surely such principles are applicable to these days, wherein many of God's children are striving to reform that which God abominates. Oh ! that they would give heed to *His* call,

" Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate. " (2 Cor. vi. 17.) There is to be no mingling with the idolatrous thing. " Be ye holy, even as I am holy. " (1 Peter i. 16.)

God's call to the sinner is " Come unto Me. " (Matt. xi. 28.) The very act of coming necessitates a severing asunder, a separating from, and the solemn call to God's redeemed ones to-day is " Come out and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and I will be a Father unto you; ye shall be My sons and daughters. " (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.)

In the light of these precious and solemn truths it becomes each one to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard. " *He that hath ears to hear let him hear.* " God is speaking lovingly, yet solemnly. Turn not a deaf ear; give heed, and may that listening to *His* command lead you to obey the truth, thus bringing joy to your own soul; but more than this, bringing joy to the heart of God. For surely *He* it is who speaks through John and says, " Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of My children walking in the truth. " (3 John iv.)

A. E. B.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

WEST OP SCOTLAND. —If God permit, our sixth annual conference of those interested in the work amongst the young will be held on Saturday, 13th May, in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, as follows: —3 till 3. 30, praise and prayer; 3. 30 till 4. 30, reports (written and oral); 4. 30 till 5. 30, interval for tea; 5. 30 till 7. 30, ministry. It is hoped that as many as possible will be present from neighbouring assemblies. Written reports should be sent to Mr. J. *Hinshelwood*, 12 Kerr Street, N. W., Glasgow, not later than May 9th. Mr. *Joshua Hawkins*, *Halifax*, will (*D. V.*) deliver an address on "Work in the Sunday School and After. "—J. HINSHELWOOD; D. WHITTET; J. P. A. TAYLOR.

HALIFAX. —The usual conference meetings will be held, if the Lord will, on Monday, June 6th, from 10. 30 a. m. till 8. 30 p. m., with intervals for refreshments. Subjects will be made known later.

ABBAY TOWN. —Through the goodness of God we have been favoured by the presence of our esteemed brother John

Miller of Blackridge for several weeks preaching the word in our Brother Lee's kitchen at Whitelea, situated over two miles away, thereafter continued in Abbey Town in a Mission Room rented for the occasion. Our Brother John Miller having to leave, the meetings were continued by our esteemed Brother Norman **D. W.** Miller of Greenock for over four weeks. The attendance and interest has been excellent throughout. Four professed to be saved; one of these desires to be baptised and received; many have been helped and several convicted. We have been refreshed and there has been much blessing. We desire the prayers of all that we may fulfil 1 Corinthians xv. 58. —EDWIN BOOTH; WM. RUTHERFORD.

TENT WORK IN SCOTLAND. —"Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, " it is proposed to resume the same for another season in the beginning of June, if the Lord will. The past season was at the first; and on till nearly the close, found to be very uphill and trying, but as it was in Job's experience, the Lord blessed the latter end, and there are to-day, as the fruit thereof, five in the Fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, so we " thank God, and take courage. " It is purposed to take the tent to the north of Scotland, and to commence in *Huntly*, where there are several saints in the Fellowship, but no Assembly, as yet. It is also hoped to reach other parts. The work will **be** carried on under the joint responsibility and labours of our brethren Mr. David Smith and Mr. John Miller, as last year. Any " deacons **of** Christ Jesus, " who may wish to spend part or all of their holidays as helpers in the work, will be gladly welcomed; as well as gospel literature for free and general distribution. Trusting for the continued remembrance of the work and workers in the prayers of saints and Assemblies, whom we would likewise remind of privileges and responsibilities in the light of 2 Cor. viii. 7. Contributions should be sent to Mr. Taylor, Beracah, Barrhead, as soon **as** possible. —JAMES CHRISTIE; ALLAN MILLER; J. P. A. TAYLOR.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. III.

JUNE, 1911.

No. 6.

EBED-MELECH.

A BLACK DIAMOND.

IT is interesting to observe that whilst we have in the book of Jeremiah a striking witness to the unchangeable nature of the Ethiopian's *shin* (see chapter xiii. 23) we have evidence in the same book that the Ethiopian's *heart* may be changed. God delights in the prayer, whether it comes from a white man or a black man—

" Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. "*

The result is the same in both cases. " In *every nation* he that feareth *Him* and worketh righteousness is acceptable to *Him*. " f

" A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity. " It is not an easy matter to know one's friends in the days of prosperity. Experience teaches how loud professions of friendship in such circumstances are silenced into apathetic indifference and cold neglect in the time of adversity and need. On the other hand how delightfully refreshing it is when in the day of adversity there comes truly brotherly help from such as have made no great boast of their attachment !

Jeremiah is in adversity (see chapter xxxviii.). *His* faithfulness in declaring the truth of God has aroused the antipathy of the princes, and they urge the vacillating Zedekiah to put him to death. Like Pilate of a later day, who yielded to the bloodthirsty cry of the wicked chief priests, rulers, and people, and delivered up to their will a greater than Jeremiah, of whom Pilate had to testify " Behold I, having examined *Him* before you, found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse Him, " J so Zedekiah goes back on what he has done in delivering Jeremiah from the dungeon and now delivers him to the will of the princes.

* Ps. li. 7- † Acts x. 35. ‡ Luke xxiii. 18-25.

Inspired by the measure of consideration shewn him, as recorded in chapter xxxvii. 21, Jeremiah may have inclined to trust the king. The measure of that trust would be the measure of his disappointment when now he finds himself cast into the dungeon of Malchijah, the king's son. * Truly

It is better to trust in Jehovah
 Than to put confidence in man.
 It is better to trust in Jehovah
 Than to put confidence **in** princes, **j**

Jeremiah knew this, and now has fresh opportunity of proving the truth of his own confession " Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from Jehovah.... Blessed is the man that trusteth in Jehovah, and whose trust Jehovah is. " **J**

In the dungeon there is no water, but mire, and Jeremiah sinks in the mire and is like to die.

Bo much for the outward circumstances. What about the inward condition ? Not all in the Lamentations is a lamentation, and in this, **as** we might judge, unlikely portion of *His* word, God hap been pleased to preserve a witness to the unwavering confidence *His* oppressed servant reposed in *Him* (see Lam. iii. 55-57): —

"I called upon Thy name, O Jehovah, out of the lowest dungeon.

Thou heardest my voice; hide not Thine ear at my breathing, at my cry.

Thou drewest near in the day that **I** called upon Thee: Thou saidst, " Fear not. " "

" Call upon **Me** in the day of trouble. **I** will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify **Me**" was beautifully exemplified in Jeremiah's experience at this time. God honoured the faith of *His* servant who trusted in *Him*.

" The salvation of the righteous is of Jehovah:
He is their stronghold in the time of trouble.
 And Jehovah helpeth them and rescueth them:
He rescueth them from the wicked and saveth them,
 Because they have taken refuge in Him. "§

* Jer. xxxviii. 6. †Ps. cxviii. 8, 9. J Jer. xvii. 5, 7.
 § Ps. xxxvii. 39, 40.

But this deliverance often comes through human instrumentality, through the brother who is born for adversity, and so it was in this case. The human instrument chosen by God for the deliverance of *His* servant was Ebed-Melech, an Ethiopian eunuch, whose day of opportunity came in the day of Jeremiah's need. It was no light matter for one in his position to shew himself counter to the princes who exercised such power over the king. The fear of man bringeth a snare, and it serves to increase our appreciation of this black man, to justify indeed our description of him as a black diamond, when we consider that whilst naturally afraid of these great men, yet Ebed-Melech rose above this fear and boldly interceded for the oppressed, imprisoned prophet.

"Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" was the word spoken through the man of God to Eli. These principles we see in interesting operation in Zedekiah's days. The king's ways and experience illustrate the latter principle; those of the Ethiopian eunuch the former.

Doubtless Ebed-Melech considered himself well rewarded in the success that attended his intercession, when he was permitted to rescue Jeremiah from the dungeon. But God giveth good measure, pressed down, running over, and *He* has seen fit to record not only, as in chapter xxxviii. the circumstances of Ebed-Melech's trial and triumph, his seizing of the opportunity that came his way to shew his love to God by helping God's servant, * but also, as in chapter xxxix., *His* appreciation of Ebed-Melech's trust, and an assurance to him of deliverance from his foes.

What a joy it would be to Jeremiah to tell his deliverer that whilst the judgment of God would inevitably come upon Jerusalem, and his eyes would behold it, yet he, Ebed-Melech, would be delivered in that day, he would not be given into the hand of the men of whom he was afraid, but would surely be saved! The closing part of Jeremiah's message is specially interesting. Surely in the light thereof we rightly conclude that Ebed-Melech's care for Jeremiah was not simply human compassion for one in trouble, but was fruit of his trust in God which is now so fully acknowledged and rewarded. "I

* See Hebrews vi. 10 and 1 John v. 1, 2.

will surely save thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee: because thou hast put thy trust in Me, ' saith Jehovah. " (Jer. xxxix. 18.)

What a black man has done, through faith in God, black men may still do. But how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent! (Romans x. 14.)

"God, our Saviour, who willeth that *all men* should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. " (1 Tim. ii. 4.)

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all men* unto Myself. " (John xii. 32.)

" And the *Spirit* bade me go, *making no distinction.* "' (Acts xi. 12.)

" And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ' Whom shall I send, and who will go for *Us* ? ' Then I said, ' Here am I; send me. ' " (Isaiah vi. 8.)

" *How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things !* " (Romans x. 15.)

ZENAS.

HEBREWS XI.

(Continued from page 51.)

BY faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and he was not found because God translated him.

Enoch comes before us as succeeding Abel in the way of faith, and the subject of his faith was a step beyond that of Abel's, proceeding from it and its own proper conclusion. Abel was concerned with the ground of justification, with the way of escape from the ruin brought about by the one man's disobedience, and consequently his faith found expression in the firstlings of the flock and the fat thereof placed on the altar. The death of that spotless victim pointed on to the sacrifice of Christ, to *Him* who should abolish death and bring life and incorruption to light.

Enoch by faith so powerfully apprehended the efficacy of God's provision to deliver from the dread consequences of sin that he viewed death itself as being annulled by the work of the coming Seed, and in the sublime boldness of his faith he

cherished the conviction that there was no need for him to die. For long his mind dwelt upon the blessed hope, and as he pondered his senses died as to this world and were quickened in reference to heaven itself, the dwelling place of God. Insensibly his life manifested a higher character, his converse with God was more sustained, his walk with Him became more habitual. His walk with God was such as we may have, for it was by faith. It consisted in a most perfect subjection of mind to God, an absolute acquiescence in His way, so that there was perfect oneness of mind, not two minds, but only one, and that, God's. It was impossible for such fellowship to be continued without God expressing His pleasure, and so we read that during Enoch's life and walk here witness was borne to him that he pleased God well. So well, indeed, did he please God, and so well pleased was he to be in God's company, that one day when lost to earth in holy communion he found that God had taken him to be with Himself, never more to return to earth. What a change ! we say. Doubtless it was, but more in the *surroundings* than in the *company*. Of him indeed it was true as sometimes we sing "There, no stranger, God shall greet thee"; he found himself at home and in a society which he had loved for long; delivered from earth and its scenes of ungodliness over which judgment brooded. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death," and thus does he fittingly set forth what should be the attitude of believers in this time.

How then do we view death in the light of the resurrection of Christ ? Do we say that all must die; that we must be looking for it ? It is a significant fact that the creeds of Christendom ignore the hope of the Lord's coming for His own, and teach believers to look for death as inevitable. This is truly sad, and such an attitude is surely condemned by the example of Enoch. The Scripture asserts "we shall not all sleep." It says "We that are alive, that are left to the coming of the Lord." It is evident that death is in no sense necessary, for our Saviour, Christ Jesus, has abolished death and brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel. We therefore should say "Amen" to Scripture, and assert also that death (which indeed in the case of the believer is spoken of as "sleep") is not necessary; that it is only an incident in the believer's course; that it is not the end, but only a turning in

the way, and that this shall be abundantly demonstrated in God's good time, when death will be swallowed up in victory. The Lord asserts of *Himself*—"I am the First and the Last and the Living One, and I became dead, and behold I am alive for ever more, and I have the keys of Death and of *Hades*. " The resurrection of Christ ensures one of two things for every believer—either (1) resurrection for the sleeping saint; or (2) freedom from death for the saint living when the Lord comes. This is according to the word in John xi., "He that believeth in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. " If a believer die (like Lazarus) it is for the glory of God, that the Son of God should be glorified thereby.

If this indeed be the believer's proper hope, if indeed the death of Christ has separated him from a world under judgment, will he not seek by faith to walk with God, looking for that blessed hope? And again, if he thus look for Christ's coming, will not that again have a sanctifying effect upon him in his life? Not only will he be righteous, but there will be an unworldliness, a heavenly character in his walk which will lift him far above the present, and he will begin the life that is life indeed down here, and some day, like Enoch, he will find himself at home.

S. J. HILL.

(To be continued).

STRANGERS YET ANGELS.

"Forget not to shew love unto strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ⁰ (*Heb. xiii. 2.*)

WE read in 2 Kings iv. 8 that the prophet came to Shunem, where lived a great woman. Whatever social eminence she may have had, it is clear that she loved the name of Jehovah and sought opportunity to give tangible proof of the same

Moreover, it is certain that she pleased God in so doing. Hence the honoured place given her in the Scriptures, written for our learning, reminding us that *He* is not unrighteous to forget, and that whatever we may do for *Him* in the name of the Lord Jesus is not in vain.

When Elisha passed that way her opportunity came, and she embraced it by constraining him to eat bread; thus it came about that he availed himself of her hospitality again and again. Would that we were as ready to seize God-given opportunities of serving the Lord Jesus.

Desiring further to show kindness, she approached her husband (the head of the house) and induced him to co-operate with her in the good work. " Let us, " she said, *^c make a little chamber in the wall, and put therein a bed, a table, a stool, and a light. " Frugal certainly, yet sufficient. " And it shall be (how confident she seemed !) when he cometh to us that he shall turn in thither. "

Together they set about the work of preparing for his reception. Pleasurable indeed must that dual service have been to them. *How much more so to God, who, from His lofty throne deigns to notice the little things.*

Elisha accepted their offer and became their guest.

Now God manifests *His* approval, *His* appreciation of that labour of love. Elisha said " Call this Shunammite, " and he said to her, " Thou hast been careful for us with all this care. *What is to be done for thee ?* " She answered " I dwell among my own people. "

But Gehazi said, " Verily, she hath no child, and her husband is old. " Then it was that God, who knew the intense longings of her heart, gave her the promise by the mouth of the prophet, " Thou shalt embrace a son. "

And so it came to pass.

A. H. C.

A PRECIOUS PROMISE.

" And Jehovah shall guide thee continually,
 And satisfy thy soul in dry places,
 And make strong thy bones,
 And thou shalt be like a watered garden,
 And like a spring of water whose waters fail not. "

(Isaiah lviii. 11.)

THIS is one of the Lord's faithful promises of old, applicable to us as it was to Israel, and how it should stir us up to a desire for closer communion with Him ! *Here we see five steps,*

each growing out of the last, and at the same time each presenting a distinct and beautiful picture.

" Jehovah shall guide thee continually. " Often we feel our need for that strong hand to guide and that infinite wisdom to show us our path, and then indeed we cry to the Lord and He answers us. However, *He* guides not only now and then, when *we* feel we need it, but continually. Oftentimes when the waters are smooth, and consequently we forget to cry for that help, *He* in *His* infinite mercy and grace is guiding our barque and turning it aside from many perils unseen to us. *His* guidance is continual; let us rejoice in it and see the result:—

" Jehovah shall.... satisfy thy soul in dry places. " Perhaps those in isolation would realise this more fully than others. As we gaze around a desolate picture we see indeed dryness, barrenness, no desire for spiritual things, mocks and taunts. And how is the soul to thrive in the midst of such dryness? For food and drink it must have, and these it cannot obtain from such a soil. There is a danger of the soul being parched and panting for want of moisture, but the Lord has been guiding us continually, and now amid such barren surroundings *He* completely satisfies our souls. What a precious promise when we are away from fellow-saints and feel the surrounding dryness so keenly! Yes, our souls are satisfied, and the result is growth, for

" Jehovah shall.... make strong thy bones." See the little babe lying so helplessly where it is placed. It has not strength enough to raise itself to a sitting posture; its bones are soft and weak. Then as the babe is nourished its bones become harder and stronger, and soon it can sit, stand, walk, run, and even keep its position when another child withstands it. Thus the young soul in the dry place will be nourished by the Lord; its bones will be made strong, and soon it will be able to stand boldly and unflinchingly against those who seek to oppose it. Then that soul will experience the fourth step, for

" Thou shalt be like a watered garden." How often, alas! we see believers like an unwatered garden, the ground parched and dry, no blade, no sign of growth, nothing to relieve the sense of barrenness and desolation! They were unwilling that the Lord should guide them, unwilling that their souls

should **be** satisfied, unwilling that their bones should be made strong. *Had* they listened to the Lord's voice what **a** different scene would have been presented ! They would have been like **a** watered garden, with its signs of abundance, profusion of flowers, rich colours, sweet-smelling odours, fruits large and juicy and tempting, everything speaking of delight, abundance, peace, rest, enjoyment. May we earnestly desire to be like the watered garden, and then we shall reach the culminating point, and ourselves having been watered from that well of living waters we shall **be**

" Like **a** spring of water whose waters fail not. " Imagine a garden parched and dry, with its blossoms drooping, leaves fading, fruit undeveloped, and then see, **as** the waters of the little spring come slowly but surely trickling among the roots, how the flowers lift their drooping heads, the colours brighten, the leaves unfold. The work of the little spring was not centred in itself; it was to minister to others, to bring food, strength, and comfort. And what **a** wonderful result !

Would we be like **a** spring of water, ministering to others ? If so, the Lord must **be** our Guide; our souls must be satisfied; our bones must be made strong, and we ourselves must be watered. Then indeed we shall **be as a** well of water, not intermittent, failing perhaps when most needed, but " whose waters fail not. "

M. D.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

CANADA. —Some time ago our brother Mr. **I. W.** Waters and two of our younger brethren in Toronto made known to overseeing men in these parts their desire to devote themselves more to the work of the Lord. It has been in their hearts to visit the assemblies in Engle and Raton, in the United States, which are nearly 1, 800 miles distant from Toronto, with the object of strengthening the bond of fellowship. It is their purpose to cover the distance in stages, staying and working for their own maintenance in such cities **as** Chicago, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Denver. While in these cities they intend preaching the Word of God and otherwise serving the Lord **as** they have opportunity. They purpose leaving Toronto about

the end of May. Overseeing men having fully considered the matter and gone into it thoroughly with the three brethren, have much pleasure in giving them the right hand of fellowship, and wishing them God-speed in their undertaking. Recognising their connection with, and responsibility in, "The Fellowship," they purpose sending their gifts (see 1st Cor., xvi, 1-2) to the assembly in Toronto, and it has been decided that the assemblies in Canada will provide literature for distribution and pay hall rents, &c. This mode of procedure we commend to the careful consideration of all who live at a distance from an assembly of God, and are thereby hindered enjoying the privileges and sharing the responsibilities in the ordinary way. We would now seek a very special remembrance of our brethren in the assembly prayers of the entire community. Also, we have much pleasure in intimating that special meetings for Christians will, God permitting, be held in Brantford on the 24th of May. This meeting will also be of the nature of a farewell meeting with our brethren before they leave for the United States. And, further, it has been arranged that the tent work this summer will (D. V.) begin on the first Lord's Day in June, in Brantford, continuing till the end of July; then in Toronto during August and September. For these special efforts we also seek the prayers of beloved fellow saints that in and through all God may be glorified.

—1). J. COOK; J. WOOD.

[We are sorry we did not succeed in inserting this notice in the May issue, as our friends desired. It will be most useful to our brethren if any who have information concerning saints in the Fellowship in the cities to be visited will kindly send particulars to Mr. D. J. Cook, 252 West Mill Street, Brantford, Ont., Canada.]

NEWHALL. —We purpose holding our annual conference (D. V.) on Whit-Monday, to which we give you a hearty invitation, and ask your prayers that God may be glorified and we, His people, helped. Order of meetings is as follows: —11 a. m., thanksgiving and prayer; 2 p. m., ministry—subject, "The Claims of God as set forth in Romans xii. 1, 2, &c. ; 6 p. m., ministry. Luncheon and tea in the intervals. Please let us know how many we may expect by June 1st, and communicate to Mr. Nehemiah Banks, 31 Midway, Burton-on-Trent.

IRELAND. —It is our joy again to intimate our purposed annual conferences at Belfast and Armagh. We trust that a greater interest than ever will be taken in these, and that we shall one and all experience afresh the grace and goodness of our God, and be made to rejoice before *Him*. Those accustomed to the ministry of the Word are hereby given a hearty invitation. Please note that the conference on July 12th (Wednesday) will be held this year in Belfast, at *Shiloh Hall*, 79 Victoria Street, from 10 a. m. till 7 p. m., with intervals for refreshments; and on the 13th (Thursday) in Armagh, *Newry Road Hall*, commencing at 11. 30, with suitable intervals for refreshments. — W. J. LENNOX; SAML. MILLER.

WEST OF SCOTLAND. —The annual conference of workers amongst the young was duly held on Saturday, 13th May, when there was a good attendance of fellow-saints, and an interesting and helpful time was experienced. Reports were read from Carluke, Blackburn, and St. *Helens*, whilst brethren present gave brief accounts of the work in Atherton, Birkenhead, Bradford, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, *Halifax*, Innerleithen, Leeds, Liverpool, Paisley, Motherwell, Musselburgh, and Wigan. Mr. Joshua *Hawkins'* address on "Work in the Sunday School and After" was listened to with rapt attention. The word spoken was felt to be most solemnizing, yet encouraging withal. Scotch workers appreciated the presence of two co-workers from the south along with Mr. *Hawkins*—namely, Mr. *Harry Taylor* and Mr. *George M'Intyre*.

British Isles Conference, 1911—Suggestions of subjects for consideration at above should be forwarded so as to reach Mr. *Taylor*, Beracah, Barrhead, by the end of June.

PAISLEY. —On March 30th our dear brother Robt. Gilliland fell asleep. He retired to rest as usual, and was found dead in bed in the morning. He was associated with us in the assembly in Paisley for about 15 years, and was one of those steadfast brethren who hold to the truth with tenacity. His greatest grief in recent years was caused by the infirmities of the flesh, which interfered with his continued attendance at the meetings. We feel much the loss of our brother, but we rejoice in the prospect of that coming glorious resurrection, which preserves us from sorrowing as those who have no hope. —J. BUCHANAN, sen.; J. BUCHANAN, jun.

BARRHEAD. —*Having reached her three-score years and ten,, our beloved sister Mrs. William Davidson, after a long and painful illness borne with great patience, departed this life on Lord's Day, 21st May, to be with Christ, which is very far better. She had been in the assembly here for very many years. Her presence will be much missed, not only by our brother, her husband and the relatives, of whom a number are in the Fellowship, but also by many others who proved Mrs. Davidson to be a real friend. A brother saw her some time before she went home, when she told him she was ready to go. " The radiance of the better land, " as one put it, was seen in her countenance, despite the intense suffering she was enduring. Her body was interred in Neilston Cemetery on Wednesday, 24th May. Of her it could be said that she loved the habitation of God's House—the place where His glory dwelleth—and, like the virtuous woman of Proverbs xxxi., " her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her. " We commend the bereaved relatives to the prayers of the assemblies.*

WHOLESOME WORDS may be procured from Mr. E. Matthew, 529 Battersea Park Road, London, S. W.; or Mr. A. F. Anderson, whose address is now 13 Rockdove Gardens, Tollcross, Glasgow.

GONE HOME.

TORONTO, CANADA. —On April 20th our beloved brother Mr. John Brady, of this assembly, departed this life to be with Christ. Our brother's illness, which developed into pneumonia, was only of a week's duration, and his departure therefore was somewhat sudden. His funeral was attended by saints from Toronto and Brantford assemblies. Our brother came to this city from Belfast, Ireland, a number of years ago, and was one of the pioneers of this assembly. He was a warm-hearted man, zealous for the truth, and will be missed very much in these parts. We ask the prayers of saints for the widow and children that they may be sustained in their bereavement. —
H. W. WATERS; D. J. 'COOK.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. III.

JULY, 1911.

No. 7.

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(Continued from page 47.)

WE will continue this subject by showing the prominent place the Holy Spirit should have in our private and assembly life.

At the outset we see that everyone in whom the Spirit dwells is

BORN OF THE SPIRIT,

even as our Lord said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John iii. 5.) The incorruptible seed—the Word of God—is the means used by the Spirit in the work of conviction and conversion. "Belief cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. x.) "Of His own will brought He us forth by the Word of truth." (James i.) We may use as an illustration the time when this earth was in a state of chaos, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. The Spirit of God moved (was brooding over) upon the face of the waters, "and God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light." And was it not so with ourselves, when in a state of death and darkness, the Spirit of God moved upon us? "Seeing it is God that said 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' who shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." Has our reader known anything of this? Has the word of Christ reached your heart? Are you born of the Spirit which brings life, light and liberty?

Upon the new birth taking place believing ones are

SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of God's own possession unto the praise of His glory." (Eph. i.) How precious is the thought that God gives the Holy Spirit as *His* seal upon us—the Divine mark

upon His sheep, a pledge having two sides—1st, that we are His, and that at His coming He will claim His own redeemed possession; and 2nd, that as we are His and have received this sacred pledge, we know that we shall assuredly enter into the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. We are kept for the inheritance even as the inheritance is kept for us. Like the betrothal ring, which is a pledge to the receiver that she will be the bride of the bridegroom, " I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine, " the Spirit is the earnest that we shall enter upon and share the Bridegroom's possessions.

" And on each He setteth His own secret sign;
They that have My Spirit, these, saith He, are Mine. "

INDWELT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

As we have before alluded to this, we will not dwell much upon it now. It is a very heart-searching truth, to keep in remembrance that our bodies which once were the possession of Satan have now become God's own possession, and are now the temple of God's Holy Spirit, indwelt by Him. This should teach us to render our members as servants unto righteousness, knowing that it is in our bodies we have the privilege of glorifying God. " For it is God that worketh in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure. " (Phil, iii.) " Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. " Tongues that once used deceit, now speaking with grace, seasoned with salt. Hands that wrought only for sin and pleasure, now not only providing for things honourable in the sight of all, but labouring to give to him that needeth. Like Simon Peter's mother who had a fever, and after the Lord healed her she was found ministering unto Him, this we may do in the person of His members and others upon earth. Let us be careful to act upon the movings of the Holy Spirit within, lest He be stifled and grieved and not act through us.

CHURCHES OF GOD, GOD'S HABITATION, AND INDWELT BY THE SPIRIT.

Not only are individuals indwelt by God's Holy Spirit, but those who are collectively gathered by the Spirit unto the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ and to whom God gives the title "Church of God" (1 Cor. i. 1), which also is called His

Temple, are also said to be indwelt by the Spirit of God as really and as positively as an individual is indwelt (1 Cor. hi. 16-17, 2 Cor. vi. 16), and further, the House of God which is Church of the Living God, made up of each several assembly forming one individual whole, is also said to be His Habitation in the Spirit. (Eph. ii. 19-22, 1 Tim. iii. 15.)

What is God's design that His Churches should thus be indwelt ? Surely it is not that we should merely see the truth that such companies of early saints were called of God by this name. What thoughts open out to us when we begin to learn the power with which God has endowed *His House*. There should be no room here for carnal reasonings or carnal ordinances, no room for the flesh to assert itself, whether it be proud flesh of human intellect, or degraded flesh which shows itself in bickerings and strife. Everything and everyone in God's House should be subservient to the Spirit of God. If this is not so we are not answering God's design in calling us together. Every action should be under the control and carried out in the Spirit's way and power. Worship, praise, prayer and ministry to the saints, Godward; testimony' to the truth and the Gospel, manward. The furniture and the furnishing of the *House* are as essential as the *House* itself; yea, these should be one. Divine worship and Divine ministry, and an order that is entirely of God, should characterise it. We will leave this theme for a little and return to it again.

We further see that

IN ONE SPIRIT WERE WE ALL BAPTISED INTO ONE BODY.

This truth is put forward by the *Holy Spirit* to show how closely believers are linked together with their Risen *Head*, and how all the members of that One Body should do the will of the *Head*, and the mutual love, care, and responsibility each member should have to one another. Our prayers should be for all saints, and our care should be for all saints. Thus was the heart of Paul. *He* set the example, he gave by the Spirit the exhortation. Many, no doubt, were the prayers that ascended to the throne for Mark when the dissension came (and perhaps this was why he was afterward " profitable ") for Peter whom once he had to blame, and for poor Demas who forsook him. As far as in us lies, consistent with the *Holy Scriptures*, sympathy and help should extend to every member of the

Body of Christ. (Of course if one is put away from an assembly of God, we must have no fellowship with such, no not so much as to eat with him, for he is in the place of "without" for God to deal with, and we should hinder his repentance and restoration by so doing. But even such an one our prayers should still follow.)

Discipline has nothing to do with the truth of the Body of Christ. We received not into it, from it we cannot expel. It embraces all believers in our Lord Jesus Christ from Pentecost until the second coming of our Lord. It is our eternal union with Him and our union with one another, bound up in the bundle of life together. We are members of His Body. "He is the Preserver of the Body." Therefore we learn to "weep with those who weep, and rejoice with those who do rejoice." "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." Were this truth to lay hold of us, how diligent would we be in our care for those believers who are in the Babylonish churches and chapels around us, seeking their deliverance and help, not by going in with them, for we can never help others out of the mire by going in ourselves, but **as** occasion offers "speaking the truth in love," if "God peradventure give them repentance unto the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Tim. ii.)

ACCESS IN ONE SPIRIT.

Paul, writing to the Gentile believers at Ephesus, says "Through *Him* we both (Jew and Gentile) have our access in One Spirit, unto the Father." What an important part the Spirit of God acts in all that pertains to the believer. So here in the question of access unto the Father, it is in One Spirit. We know that it is through Christ and on the ground of the precious blood we draw nigh, yet God is careful to tell us, that it is also in One Spirit we have access unto *Him*. The Spirit of God acts upon our spirits and fits us in a moral sense to draw near and by *His* power we present our worship, praise, prayer and confessions through Christ unto the Father. (Eph. ii. 18, v. 20; Col. iii. 17.)

This brings us to the words expressed in Phil. iii. 3. "We are the circumcision, who

WORSHIP BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD,

and glory in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. "Worship by the Spirit of God—what a theme to fill our souls !

How little understood by us, and probably much less known experimentally ! Knowing the truth of what worship is, can never of itself produce it. It may be that souls, who love the Lord Jesus Christ and have known the love of God to them, who know but little of this truth and could not intelligently define it, yet render by the Spirit worship to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ such as pleaseth Him well. Far be it from us to hinder the knowledge of this glorious truth, we would rather help to the better understanding of it, in our feeble way, so that believers may intelligently worship God, but we also desire to show that it is more a question of the heart's condition and appreciation of what Christ is and has done, and the love of God to us, than the intelligence of the mind.

We should have thought that our Lord would have conversed with the Elders or the Scribes and Pharisees upon the hallowed subject of worship, men who knew God's law; but no, He turns aside to a despised Samaritan woman and bestows His grace and love upon this black sinner, and in her He found one who would render the homage of her heart for grace bestowed. And the Lord tells her of a new dispensation, of an hour when neither at Samaria's mount nor yet at Jerusalem should men worship the Father. He removes the place and temple which were once chosen by Jehovah, and centres her thoughts upon " the Father, " and the worship was to be that of a spiritual kind—no longer carnal ordinances, but worship in spirit and in truth was what the Father sought. As we have said, the earthly temple was to be removed and the veil was to be rent from top to bottom, and through that rent veil, which denoted His flesh, believers were to have the continual privilege of access unto the Father and of entering into the *Holies*, that is, where Christ is before the face of God.

No longer to hear the words " Come not at all times, " " only once a year and then not without blood, " but to hear, " Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is the fruit of lips that make confession to His Name. " Thus through the death of Christ the way has been opened by which believers may have access unto the Father to offer through Christ and by the Spirit their prayers, praise and worship, without any person coming in between—no rail, no veil, no pope, bishop or priest—save the Mediator between God and

men, Himself a Man, Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy ii.) It is clear from the Holy Scriptures that there is something marked out therein of a collective character, where worshippers of the Father should be found. We know " God dwelleth not in temples made with hands. " No material earthly building can call itself the house of God. From the Church of Rome down to the smallest mission God dwelleth not there. But it is clearly seen that the saints, after the descent of the Holy Spirit, who were gathered unto the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the aggregate were called " the House of God, " and locally were addressed as the Church of God, or when spoken of in the Provinces were called " Churches of God, " and these, as we have remarked, altogether formed one Church of the Living God—one Spiritual House, not the buildings they met in but the gathered together saints. (See 1 Cor. i. ii.; 2 Cor. i. 1; 1 Cor. xi. 16; 2 Cor. viii.; Gal. i. 2; Rev. i. 4, 20; 1 Pet. ii. 5; 1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 6.) (See margin—" that is God's. ")

Now why does He call it " a Spiritual House " ? Was it not that through these saints collectively there might flow up to God the Father, by the Spirit, worship, praise and prayer, even as Peter describes " Ye also, as living stones, are built up a Spiritual House, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. " (1 Pet. ii.) And again, " " The temple of God is holy, which ye are. " (1 Cor. iii.)

And yet again, " Ye are fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God, being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the Chief Corner-Stone, in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple (or sanctuary) in the Lord; in whom ye also (the Assembly in Ephesus) are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit. " (Eph. ii.) This is what the early churches were called, and called into being to be, " a spiritual house, " " a holy temple, " " a habitation of God in the Spirit, " where they could hear the voice of God saying through the Scriptures, " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way through the veil, that is to say His flesh, and having a Great Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an

evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. " (Heb. x.)

Have we in our day laid hold of God's purpose for His gathered people—to be found together as worshippers of the Father in spirit and in truth ? Here lies one of the chief purposes, " To offer up spiritual sacrifices " Godward, also to be " pillar and ground of the truth " manward. Each saint in the community must be in a truly spiritual condition before we can answer to God's design in being thus together.

For the sake of the lambs we would point out that prayer is not worship, for in prayer we draw near to God to receive, but in worship we draw near to give. The place where we meet is not the place of worship, but in spirit we should enter into the holy place—the presence of God, this is the place of worship.

Worship seems to be a higher thing even than praise. For in worship the heart is bowed by the Spirit of God, rendering its deep homage unto the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the foundation of all is what Christ is and what He has done as the Burnt-Offering.

We come then on the Lordly Day with our hearts full of what Christ is to God, and offer the sweet-smelling savour sacrifice of His Name, His worth, His work. What He has done for us will lead to praise, what He has done for God and what He is to *Him* will lead to worship. May the expression of our hearts be—

Holy, holy, holy, humbly we adore Thee.

Honour, blessing, pow'r and might we would ascribe to Thee.

Courts of heaven ringing, with the praise we're bringing,

For the One who lives our living Lord to be.

J. DORRICOTT.

(To be continued if the Lord will.)

ON SEEKING GOD.

{Continued from page 66.}

HAVING briefly dwelt upon the faith of Enoch, we desire to tarry awhile on the important words that follow. It is stated that Enoch had witness borne to him ere he was translated that he was well pleasing to God, and then follows the general principle of faith of which Enoch was an illustration. The

principle is this, " He that cometh to God must believe (1) that He is, and (2) that He is the Rewarder of them that seek Him. "

Let us consider this principle as it affects two classes—(1) the people of God, and (2) others.

(1) As to the people of God. Of course such are necessarily believers in God, but it is the holding of this fact as a living conviction that makes all the difference between some believers and others. We believe that God was and is to come, but to what extent do we enter into the fact? Man, in this materialistic age, ignores the fact of the " Living God, " and recognizes only the forces of nature which operate with such regularity, not knowing that " In HIM we live and move and have our being. " If indeed he feels bound to own a great First Cause, and even a superintending government, yet he rejects the truth that such an One is reachable by man or takes any knowledge of him.

If it said " God is, " and no more, there would be no encouragement, but the second statement is like the Gospel to us, " He is the Rewarder of them that seek Him. " *How* encouraging to faith! *How* consolatory to those who realize their sinfulness, foolishness, emptiness, and weakness, to know that God is not indifferent to the condition of *His* people, but holds *Himself* ready to reward the seeker. This touches closely the matter of prayer, and should encourage to perseverance in its exercise. The prayer of faith does reach God's ear, if of faith it will be persisted in; it will begin with " asking, " and in due time shall receive; it will *go* on to " seeking " and will find; and will not cease to " knock " and the door shall be opened. The answer may not come according to expectation, but it *will* come. The Apostle prayed *thrice* that the "thorn" might be removed, and though it was not removed the answer came, and it was better than he expected. And the Lord prayed three times, and did *He* pray in vain? Seemingly so, as an outsider might view it, but not so according to *Heb. v. 7* and *Psalm xxi. 2-4*. Therefore when we come to God let us have this double persuasion, that God is and that *He* is the Rewarder of them that seek *Him*.

Now let us extend the application of this principle to others who have not had the revelation of God in *His* word. Consider *Acts xvii. 27*, " That they should seek God, if haply they might feel after *Him* and find *Him*, " and *Romans ii, 7*, "To

them who by patience in well-doing seek for glory.
eternal life. "

Psalm xix. will tell us that by other means than that of an oral or written revelation God as God is made known to men, and that men are not therefore left in ignorance altogether of *Him*. It is God's intent that men should seek after *Him*, and it is their responsibility to do so. If they do, they will find reward. One striking and beautiful illustration we select from among others—that of Cornelius as given in Acts x. There we see a Gentile, an alien " from the Commonwealth of Israel, a stranger to the Covenants of promise "; but we proceed no further with our quotation from Ephesians ii. 12, because in this case he *had hope* and he *had God*. He can plead no promise, nevertheless he seeks God. The expression of such seeking is that he feared God, honoured *Him* in his household, gave alms to the people, and continued unceasingly in prayer. *How long* he may have sought before the answer came we know not; but God was not unmindful, and while the man patiently continued in well-doing *He* was making preparation for his blessing. Observe the elaborate preparations made in *Heaven* to reward this seeking soul. An angel is sent to him with assurances of God's favour and with directions as to what he should do. Then while his messengers are drawing near to the place where the Apostle Peter is sojourning, a remarkable lesson is being given to the Apostle, preparing him to become the messenger of good tidings to the seeking Gentile. We need not perhaps recount the story, for doubtless it is familiar to all, but we suggest it should be studied as presenting an illustration of this great truth. The result of that man's seeking God was not limited to his own blessing but embraced his kindred and near friends, and also the instruction of Peter in a lesson he was slow to learn, that God is no Respector of persons, but in every nation he that feareth *Him* and worketh righteousness is accepted by *Him*.

Perhaps we need not say that Cornelius had not sought God except God had first sought him, according to Gal. iv. 9.

May we not conclude from this, and from many other instances, that among the multitudes of souls who have not been favoured with such knowledge of God as we possess in the Word, there will be found many, in that day, who have come to *Him* in the conviction that *He* is the Rewarder of them that seek *Him*. May we all seek *Him* more and more ! S. J. HILL.

JABEZ THE HONOURABLE.

WHEN Benjamin was born, his mother called him Ben-oni, meaning " the son of my sorrow. " Jacob, however, called him Benjamin, meaning " the son of the right hand. " Then Rachel died. Whether the mother of Jabez thought she too, like Rachel, was dying when he was born, and wished her death to be remembered by the name her child bore, we cannot positively assert, but certainly she bore him with sorrow, and certainly it was this fact that accounted for him being called Jabez.

Unpromising beginnings, in the goodness and mercy of God, have often surprisingly wonderful endings. How often He brings to a close with a glorious sunset the day which has begun with dark clouds overhead ! Or again, how often *He* raises those of lowly birth to high positions ! The last He maketh first !

" Glorious in holiness,
Fearful in praises, doing wonders, "

sang Moses and the children of Israel concerning Him when the dark morning of the people's dread of the Egyptians issued in the day of their mighty deliverance and joy. (Exodus xv.)

And it was He upon whom Jabez called, the God of Israel, who heard his call and responded to his call, and thus, as Benjamin became the son of the right hand to his father, Jabez became more honourable than his brethren, the one who bore the name that reminded of early sorrow became in the goodness of God an occasion of abiding joy, the lowly one was exalted.

God is **skill** the wonder-working One. **He** still delights to hear the call of such as fear that evil might prevail and bring them into sorrow. To such **He** responds. **He** grants their request and keeps them from the evil. They honour Him who thus call upon Him, and **He** honours them, and makes them honourable.

Look at Jabez and his brethren ! He was more honourable than they. Consider him and his mother. " His mother called his name Jabez, saying, ' Because **I** bare him with sorrow. ' "

• Look at Jabez and his God ! " And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, ' Oh that **THOU** wouldest bless *me* indeed, and enlarge *my* border, and that **THINE** hand might be with *me*, and that **THOU** wouldest keep *me* from evil, that it be not to *my* sorrow ! ' And God granted him that which he requested. "

(1 Chron, iv. 9-10). What a mercy if we can truly say, " This God is our God for ever and ever " ! (Ps. xlvi. 14.)

The experience of Jabez may afresh assure our hearts of the truth of Azariah's message to Asa, "If ye seek Him He will be found of you. " (2 Chron, xv. 2.) And a greater than Azariah has testified, " Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you. " (John xv. 16.)

How clearly He sets forth the conditions of prevailing prayer, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you " ! (John xv. 7.)

—————ZENAS.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICT. —We purpose, if the Lord will, having a conference on August Bank Holiday. Ministering brethren are kindly invited to pay us a visit. We will value the prayers of the saints on behalf of this district. The place of meeting and other particulars will be stated later on. We had a visit from our beloved brother, Mr. A. C. Leamy, from London, and saints generally have been blest and refreshed through his ministry. His visit has been highly appreciated. —WILLIAM FISK; A. M'KINNON.

ABBAY TOWN. —The assembly now meets in the Hall, Swinsty, Abbey Town. The meeting for prayer is now held on Friday at 8 p. m. instead of on Thursday.

CARDIFF. —If the Lord will, the usual conference will be held on the August Bank Holiday. Subject chosen for conference at the morning meeting, " Our privilege and responsibility of ministering to the Lord and to fellow-saints " (see Rom. xii. 11, Gal. v. 13, etc.). The afternoon and evening meetings being open for the ministry of the Word generally. We seek and shall value the prayers of the community that these meetings may be blessed of God to the deepening of the spirituality of His people. Visitors from a distance and ministering brethren who hope, in the will of the Lord, to be present will kindly communicate with Mr. Ed. Foster, 41 Plasturton Avenue.

On behalf of the overseeing men of the district, —

J. P. HARDING; T. DOBLE.

SCOTLAND.

WALKERBURN. —Our annual conference will (*D. V.*) be held on August 12th in the Meeting Room, 80A High Street, Innerleithen, beginning at 3 p. m. and continuing till 8. 30 p. m. Interval from 5 p. m. till 6 p. m. Saints and ministering brethren will receive a hearty welcome. Prayer is desired that God's blessing may be realized. —J. BRODIE; J. CHRISTISON.

IRELAND.

It is our joy again to intimate our purposed annual conferences at Belfast and Armagh. We trust that a greater interest than ever will be taken in these, and that we shall one and all experience afresh the grace and goodness of our God, and be made to rejoice before Him. Those accustomed to the ministry of the Word are hereby given a hearty invitation. Please note that the conference on July 12th (Wednesday) will be held this year in Belfast, at Shiloh Hall, 79 Victoria Street, from 10 a. m. till 7 p. m., with intervals for refreshments; and on the 13th (Thursday) in Armagh, Newry Road Hall, commencing at 11. 30, with suitable intervals for refreshments. —W. J. LENNOX; SAML. MILLER.

GONE HOME.

ABERDEEN. —On May 18th our dear brother James Dey departed this life to be with Christ, which is very far better. He was associated with us in the assembly at Aberdeen for many years. He was well known by many of the Lord's people on the Tyneside, and was very steadfast in the faith. *He* had been in failing health for about two years, but, thanks be unto our God, was well cared for by some of the saints to the very last. *He* passed away at Ordie, Dinnet, where he had been staying with our brother and sister Mr. and Mrs. Thomson. His body was interred in Logie Cemetery on 20th May, when an opportunity was given to sound out the Word of the Lord. —J. CHRISTIE; W. THOMSON.

Our brother Dr. C. M. Luxmore, who is sailing, God willing, on July 1st for a short visit to the assemblies in Toronto and Brantford, desires the prayers of the saints for God's blessing to go with him.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. III.

AUGUST, 1911.

No. 8.

HEBREWS XI.

(Continued from page 81.)

" By faith, Noah, being warned of God, concerning things not seen as yet, moved with. Godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. "—*Hebrews xi. 7.*

WE now return to the consideration of examples of faith, and verse 7 presents the case of Noah. Before considering his case particularly we remind ourselves that different periods present different subjects for the exercise of faith, so that faith is not a mere imitation of what another has done.

It has been suggested, we believe, that Abel in the subject matter of his faith illustrated the attitude of believers before the cross who approached God on the ground of sacrifice, in hope of the better thing to come. Enoch went beyond Abel, for he apprehended the results of the finished work of Christ, which God had accepted, as witnessed in the respecting of Abel's offering, and he {Enoch} grasped the great truth of the abolishing of death and the bringing to light of life and incorruption. (2 Tim. i. 10.) He is therefore a fitting illustration of believers in this present time. Noah, we suggest, represents an earthly people yet to be, who when the judgment of God is poured out on the earth will be shielded and delivered.

The condition of faith is indicated in the words " not seen as yet. " There was no demonstration before him of judgment coming, all around was fair, and people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and so forth. The days immediately preceding the Coming of the Son of Man will be similar in character, as the Lord Himself testified. *How thor-*

oughly in our own time has the thought of " the wrath to come " been dismissed from men's minds ! Men are going ahead by leaps and bounds in the path of material progress, and God is less and less in their thoughts. This will increase, and though the taking away of the saints (like the translation of Enoch) may cause some uneasiness, yet it will probably be but a nine days' wonder. Then will appear the *sign* of the Son of Man in heaven, and a general mourning will take place, but while He tarries men will recover themselves, and after their fright will say "Peace and safety. "

As to the faithful in that day, we find that while the love of the many shall wax cold because of prevailing iniquity, yet on the other hand there shall be found many faithful ones who will suffer at the hands of men in the Great Tribulation, but who, in the fierce judgment to which the opening of the seals will be an introduction and which will actually begin with the trumpets and be completed in the vials, will be protected and delivered. A perusal of the book of Revelation will show that there will be such a company who will be protected by God, and with this agrees the word quoted by the Apostle Peter from Joel's prophecy to the effect that when that great and notable day of the Lord comes, whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered.

We may further illustrate this matter by alluding to the condition of Israel in Egypt at the time of the outpouring of the judgments, as in Exodus. There we note that from the fourth plague and onwards God made a distinction between His people and the Egyptians, and the former were spared. This, as we know, is particularly in evidence in the last stroke—namely, that of the slaying of the firstborn. In that case the blood was placed by the head of the household on the lintel and side posts of the door, and the household was protected. This may somewhat illustrate the principle of the deliverance in connexion with the families of Israel at a future time.

As to the *present* application of the word in Hebrew xi. 7, we should clearly discern how important it is for Christian parents to apprehend the dread fact that the world is under judgment, and that separation, both on their part and that of their households, is imperative. Faith will then " prepare an ark " by training the children in God's ways and keeping them from the world's ways. Then faith, having done its work,

God will not fail to bless, and it may be expected with confidence that such shall endorse their parents' action by themselves accepting the salvation of God and witnessing thereto by their baptism in water.

S. J. HILL.

LESSONS FROM THE LIVES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

(Continued from page 56.)

" And Joash did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah all the days of Jehoiada the priest. " " But Jehoiada waxed old and was full of days, and he died. " " Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened to them, and they forsook the house of Jehovah, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their guiltiness. " (2 Chron, xxiv. 2, 15, 17, 18.) These words are so full of sad yet wholesome warning that we quote them fully. Many a Jehoiada's influence has been as sadly missed. Godly counsel and restraint may be little thought of, and little appreciated at the time, yet what a loss and miss, when they are no longer to be had. Other counsellors and counsels prevail, of a sadly different type, and to such the king turns his ear, and his mind, to the ruin of himself and others. The kings of Judah had a responsibility toward the word of Jehovah, and the counsel of Jehovah therein, as set forth in the words of Deut. xvii. 18, 19; and also to the priest of God, " for the priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of Jehovah of Hosts. " In such, and also in the prophets of Jehovah, " whom He sent to bring them again to Jehovah, " were provision and preservation for the ruler of His people in the great and grave responsibilities of the throne, as well as for His people themselves, but they would not give ear. To all this is added the testimony of Zechariah the son of Jehoiada, the priest, in his faithful rebuke " Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of Jehovah that ye cannot prosper ? Because ye have forsaken Jehovah, He hath also forsaken you, " which, alas, he sealed with his life's blood. For the king and the people to turn away from and refuse such, and give ear and

heed to those whose counsels led them away from God, and into idolatry, was to court disaster and destruction, and so it turned out. These things have their lessons and warnings for the scenes and circumstances of these times, characterised by " turning away their ears from the truth, and turning aside unto fables. " In the midst of such dark days of apostasy there is provision from God for His own unto their salvation and preservation, as spoken of in the words of Paul to Timothy, iv. 16, first epistle—" Take heed to thyself, and to the teaching. Continue in these things, for in doing this thou shalt save both thyself, and them that hear thee. " Also, " And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. ", (2 Tim. ii. 2.) And again, " But abide in the things which thou hast learned and been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them. " (iii. 14.) On the other hand, the prevailing characteristics of the last days are in abundant evidence, in the false teachers who are in reality ministers of Satan, " fashioning themselves as ministers of righteousness, " men who have given up all faith in the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God; and consequently reject their authority, their counsel and their guidance; and accept the reasonings and sophistries and opinions of men, gifted and learned, no doubt and thus increasingly dangerous; " from which turn away, " is the Scriptural injunction and course.

Alas, indeed

. . . the godly man ceaseth;

The faithful fail from among the children of men.

They speak vanity every one with his neighbour:

With flattering lip, and with a double heart, do they speak.

When faithful men do arise, we owe them a debt of gratitude for the truth they have taught us, and for the godly influence of their lives over us, concerning whom the words and exhortation of *Heb. xiii. 7* have a fitting application. Joash, in this respect, very grievously failed and sinned in the base ingratitude to his friend and counsellor, Jehoiada, that found expression in his treatment of his son, who for his faithfulness in declaring God's message was hated, and " at the commandment of the king " was stoned to death; the divine comment thereon being that " thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness

which Jehoiada had done to him, but slew his son. " The sequel shows how sadly Joash reaped what he sowed in his awful crime, in the defeat of his army; a great host in comparison with the army of the Syrians, that came against him who came with a small company of men; yet, is he defeated, for Jehovah was against him, because they had forsaken Jehovah, the God of their fathers. Greater distress yet overtakes him, in great diseases that afflict him, and by his own servants " he was slain in his bed, and died. " Righteous retribution, surely, from the hand of a righteous God; which marks an epoch in the history of the people of God; if it is, as it seems to be, the same Zechariah that is referred to in the words of the Son of God in Matt, xxiii. 35, charging home the guilt of the nation in their rejection of the message and murder of the messengers of God, " Whose blood, " *He* said, " cried for vengeance, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zechariah, son of Barachiah, whom ye slew between the sanctuary and the altar. " There is a difficulty in that in Matthew he is said to be the son of Barachiah; who seems to be the prophet, the inspired penman of the prophecy of remnant times, of whose murder we have no account. Perhaps some young or old disciple can suggest some solution of the difficulty.

Joash's son was Amaziah, who began to reign when 25 years old. " *He* did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, but not with a perfect heart. " *He* seems to have some regard for the law of Moses, and is open to receive counsel from the man of God, although not very willing to lose the 100 talents he had given for the help of the army of Israel. He believes and proves that Jehovah is able to give much more than this, and that God hath power to help, and to cast down; and so his enemies are delivered into his hand. His victory, however, becomes his downfall, for he sets up the gods of his enemies to be his gods. **He** turns away from Jehovah, and refuses to hear His message through His prophet. " Now from the time that Amaziah did turn away from following Jehovah they made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; but they sent after him and slew him there. " Solemn beacons of warning these are, to cause us to " cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart, " and to " take heed . . . lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God. "

DAVID SMITH.

THE POWER OF EXAMPLE.

THE power of example, either for good **or** evil, cannot be over-estimated. We will make **a** great and grievous mistake if we suppose that what we say has greater weight than what we do. The old proverb is too true—" Example is better than precept. "

When we turn to the *Holy Scriptures* we find many touching examples held **up** for our instruction, notably in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, *Himself* the great Exemplar.

What more touching picture of humility and grace could we have than, when in yon upper room, **He** took **a** towel and girding Himself He washed His disciples' feet ?

With what weight the words come to us—" **I** have given you an example that ye should also do as **I** have done unto you. "

If we hear Him say, " Love your enemies and do them good and lend never despairing, your reward shall be great and ye shall be Sons of the Most High, for **He** is kind toward the unthankful and evil, " is not He *Himself* the great example of love for one's enemies, *He* who when reviled, reviled not again, yea, even in the hour of *His* deepest sorrow, suffering taunts and jeers at the hands of *His* enemies, the prayer of His heart was " Father forgive them, for they know not what they do. "

If we be followers of Christ, then we will pay strict heed to the injunction, " If thine enemy hunger feed him, if he thirst give him drink, for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. **Be** not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good. "

If it be **a** question of service, then **He** stands out, one in ten thousand, as Jehovah's perfect Servant. Did not He say " The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give His life **a** ransom for many " ?

How wise and gracious are His words to Peter regarding the question of the tribute money, " Lest we cause them to stumble " ! What **a** beautiful example of consideration for the conscience of others.

" He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps. "

If He says, " Follow Me, " **He** sets the example in work as in word, not like the hypocritical Pharisees, of whom He said, " All things therefore whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe, but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not. "

But if we would be like our blessed Master, how needful it is for us to take heed to the exhortation " Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. "

And here lies the crux of the whole matter, for just so far as we endeavour to be imitators of Christ, just so far as the life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal bodies, just so far will our lives be a power for good and a blessing to all around us. "In everything commending ourselves as ministers of God, " or as the exhortation of Paul to Timothy, " Be thou an ensample to them that believe in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity. "

And Paul does not thus charge him without himself having set the example. Think of his words to the overseers of Ephesus, " In all things I gave you an example, how that, so labouring, ye ought to help the weak and to "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He *Himself* said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive. ' "

And again, his words to the Philippians, " The things which ye both learned and received and heard and saw in me, these things do, and the God of peace shall be with you. "

Let us lay this lesson to heart, for example is more forcible than reason, yea it is the school of mankind and they will learn at no other, for though, alas ! it is too true that " one sinner destroyeth much good " yet it is also true that " Examples of rare intelligence, yet more rarely cultivated, are not lights kindled for a moment; they live on in their good deeds and venerated memories. "

A. F. A.

1 CORINTHIANS, I. 9.

" GOD is faithful, through whom ye were called into the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. "

What a beautiful picture is this in the introductory note of the Apostle's letter to the Church of God at Corinth !

We all naturally admire beautiful paintings, works of art.

How numerous the pictures we have seen that have only impressed us while our gaze was upon them ! How few were so impressed upon the mind that they could be reflected again ! They have been like clouds without rain. Pictures should

speak, and speak effectively. Thus, by Divine inspiration, this outstanding word-picture by God speaks, and speaks to us effectively to-day as it first did to the Corinthians. It has not lost its beauty, nor any of its virtue. It is the beautiful picture of the Fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Does it speak to you? Does it impress you? Alas! if it does not.

God is faithful. This is the most important part of the picture. We have been called into this Fellowship by God, who is faithful.

How Divine intelligence has vitalized this picture! *How* vacant and void without it! Beautiful and delightful without it, but without virtue, and like a vapour would soon vanish from our minds; or, again, like the fig tree with beautiful foliage but no fruit. Thus this picture, in its divine setting, is indeed "a word fitly spoken," which is as "apples of gold in baskets of silver." May we thus, as the called together of God, reflect a faithful translation of this, God's word-picture of the Fellowship of *His* Son.

G. F.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

BRADFORD. —It has pleased God to lay on our hearts some measure of concern for the hundreds that flock from all parts of the country to the sea-side places at this season of the year. Conjoined with this there is the fact that the authorities still allow open-air speaking on the sands to a large extent in most places. We have therefore set our hearts to make some efforts to bring the glad message of Divine grace before those to whom it may be our privilege, under God, to reach under such circumstances, and herein we heartily invite your co-operation and of fellow-saints with you in prayer, and in every other way as it may be agreeable to your wish and ability. At a meeting of overseers of assemblies in the West Riding, together with Deacon-like ones, it was decided (if the Lord will) to make a start in Morecambe on July 16th and each Lord's Day till September 16th, concerning which suggestions and intimations may be sent to Mr. Harry Taylor, 21 Bentley Grove, Meanwood, Leeds, from whom also particulars of time and place of meetings may

be obtained. The following brethren have been approved for the work on the dates here named:—

July 16th—Joshua Hawkins and Harry Taylor.

July 23rd—Joshua Hawkins and Harry Taylor.

July 30th—Joshua Hawkins and Elijah Taylor.

August 6th—Elijah Taylor and Plume Hawkins.

August 13th—George Fox and others who may be spending their holidays at Morecambe at this time.

August 20th—Do.

The work, it is suggested, will consist of—

- (1) Distribution of Scriptural literature, for example, O. L., E. W., N. T., and other kinds suitable for believers.
- (2) Preaching the Word on the sands, afternoon and evening.
- (3) Individual conversation with interested ones, and supplying information as to local meeting places, etc.
- (4) Enlisting the fellowship and help of any from assemblies who may be visiting Morecambe during the season.

We are hoping that there may be some amongst you whose hearts may be stirred up to help at intervals, and whom you may approve for the work; the names of such and others who may be spending week-ends at Morecambe we shall heartily welcome, to be sent to the above address. Trusting this feeble testimony, made in conscious weakness in the presence of abounding need, may secure your hearty co-operation and continuous prayers. —JOHN T. BEADSWORTH; ROBERT NELSON; J. W. GALLOWAY.

(On going to press we learn that a very successful start has been made, but after the first hour of meeting the authorities stopped the preaching, as the speakers had not obtained a licence. We hope that the application for same will be favourably considered.)

NORTH-EASTERN DISTRICT. —The August Bank Holiday Conference will be held in the Gospel Hall, South Frederick Street, South Shields (Tyne Dock Station). Meeting for overseeing men from 10. 30 a. m. till 12. 30 p. m. Ministry meetings from 2 till 4. 30 and from 6 till 8 p. m. Intervals for lunch and tea. —WM. FISK; A. M'KINNON.

LEICESTER. —We purpose (if the Lord will) holding our usual Annual Meetings on Bank Holiday, August 7th, in the Oak Street Rooms (off Humberstone Road). Morning, commencing at 11, for Prayer, Praise, and Thanksgiving; Afternoon and

evening—Ministry of the Word, at 2. 30 and 5. 45 respectively. — C. BELTON; H. G. BUTLIN.

LAKES DISTRICT. —Correspondence for the Lakes District should now be sent to Mr. E. Booth. Oakwood House, Abbey Town, Cumberland.

THE SCOTCH TENT. —Work began in the tent at Huntly on Lord's Day, 4th June. There were a number of strangers present in the afternoon, and in the evening the tent was filled. A measure of interest has been shown by local believers. Latest reports intimate attendance good on Lord's Days. Brethren Smith and Miller still go on sowing the good seed, assured that their labour is not in vain. Remembrance in the prayers will be much appreciated. Kindly note that contributions to the tent fund should be forwarded to Mr. Taylor, Beracah, Barrhead. Literature for distribution in connection with the tent work should if forwarded immediately be addressed to Mr. David Smith, care of Mrs. Davidson, Dunabban Villa, Lochalsh Road, Inverness, whither the tent has now been removed.

Mr. John Miller's home address is now Fernville, Queen's Drive, Windermere.

CANADA. —For some considerable time the question of the extension of the Fellowship in the Dominion of Canada has been exercising the minds of overseeing men in these parts, who recognise that with the opening up of this great country there are invaluable opportunities for preaching the Gospel and ministering the word of God to those who are saved. We have found that little is likely to be accomplished in the matter of planting new assemblies in a satisfactory way by correspondence. This being so, our brother and fellow labourer David J. Cook has made a proposition to brethren as follows: —

That he and Mrs. Cook give up their permanent home and move, as need may require, to any part of the Dominion, in the hope and for the purpose of simplifying the important work of extension.

As our brother has taken a leading and active part in the work of the Lord in these parts during the past five years, and for many years before that in Scotland, his wide and varied experience goes far in fitting him for the work he undertakes with the fullest confidence and fellowship of overseers and saints

in the assemblies here. We earnestly request the prayers of saints on behalf of our brother and sister. They purpose making their first move immediately after the visit of our -esteemed brother Dr. Luxmoore to these parts in July. Their present intention is to go to Merritt, **B. C.** Our brother intends to labour with his hands for their living. His postal address in the meantime will be—

c/o Mr. Robert Murray,

15 Jubilee Avenue,

Brantford, Ontario, Canada,

For overseeing men in these parts. —ROBT. MURRAY; H. W. WATERS.

CONFERENCE OF OVERSEERS IN THE ASSEMBLIES IN THE BRITISH ISLES. —As arranged when representative overseers were together in Leeds in September last, another similar conference will be held, if God permit, in Clayton Hall, 26 High Street, Peckham, London, S. E., on Friday and Saturday, 8th and 9th September, 1911. Communications for consideration should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, Beracah, Barrhead, near Glasgow. Our friends in London are making needful arrangements, and it is desired that word be sent at the earliest moment to Mr. S. J. Hill, 6 Rye Hill Park, Peckham Rye, London, S. E., how many from each district may be expected. We again urge on our fellow-workers the need for exercise before God in order that His richest blessing may be realized on these meetings. Adequate representation from each district is very desirable. The prayers of the assemblies is lovingly besought and will be highly valued.

On behalf of those convening the meetings,

We are, yours in the Lord's service,

C. M. LUXMOORE; H. ELSON.

GONE HOME.

MOTHERWELL (LANARKSHIRE). —We regret to state that on June 29th William Watson, aged 22 years, beloved son of our brother Mr. William Watson, departed this life to be with Christ, which is far better. He had been the subject of much prayer, and was saved only five days before his death. He gave a bright

and happy testimony to all who came in contact with him. His first hymn was

" **Oh** Christ He is the Fountain,
The deep, sweet Well of love. "

His great regret was that he had not been saved and baptised ten years before. He pleaded earnestly with his sister not to put **off** the question of her salvation, and desired his mother to let his brothers in Canada know that he was saved. **One hour** before he passed away he sang the verses of some hymns, one of which was

"**I** will sing of my Redeemer
And His wondrous love to me,
On the cruel cross He suffered,
Paid the debt, and made me free. "

His body was laid to rest in Dalziel Cemetery on Saturday, 1st July, many of the saints from neighbouring assemblies being present. We ask the prayers of the saints for our dear brother and sister in their sad bereavement. —ROBERT LINDSAY; SAMUEL HORN; JAMES HINSHELWOOD.

WIGAN. —We beg to inform fellow-saints of the home-going of our beloved sister Mrs. Chantler Stanway, of Preston, which took place on 5th July, at her home, in the 68th year of her age. Her remains were interred at Preston on Saturday, 8th July, there being present brethren and sisters from the assemblies in Wigan and Blackburn. The Word of God was ministered to the relatives and friends present. Our sister was well known to the saints in these parts, having been associated with the assemblies for about 28 years. Latterly she was identified with the assembly at Wigan, and for some time previous to that with the assembly at Blackburn. Our sister commanded the esteem of all who knew her, she being a faithful handmaid of the Lord. Her departure was hastened by an accident. About the middle of May she fell and broke her thigh, and from that time till the Lord took her home she suffered * intensely; so that to be let go from her earthly house was indeed a happy release, for which we felt thankful to God. " How very far better " (Phil, i.) in her case seems to have an especial emphasis. A husband and grown-up family mourn her loss. —WILLIAM SAVIGAR, (Wigan); THOMAS HARKNESS (Blackburn); J. M'INTYRE.

Wholesome Words.

A Monthly Periodical for the Nurture of God's Children.

VOL. III.

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No. 9.

GOD'S CHOICE.

" Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, ' Why hast Thou made me thus ? ' or hath not the Potter a right over the clay ? "—*Romans ix. 20.*

" NOT many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called. But God chose the foolish things of the world, and the weak things, and the base things, and the things that are despised, that no flesh should glory before God. " (1 Cor. i. 26.)

Our gracious God knew exactly what He was getting when He chose us, knew our limitations, our natural defects, our uncomeliness (it may be), yet withal He chose. Sometimes one thinks, " If I had been differently constituted I might have been able to do this or that, " when all the while there is a work ready to our hands in which the very imperfections we deplore may be pressed into His service. May it not be that the more unlikely the material the more glory to Him ?

All that is needed is that we be passive in His hands, as is the clay in the hands of the potter; that He may fashion us according to His Holy will, and thus be instrumental for His eternal praise. What an honour to be thus chosen when the wise, the mighty, the noble, have been passed by !

There's a work for me, and a work for you,
Something for each of us now to do.

The men of Issachar who came to David in Hebron had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do, and in their day of opportunity they came to play the part, to fill the niche, for which they were intended. They understood why they were where they were, and we may imitate them in this respect.

A great poet wrote, " All the world's a stage; the men and women merely players, " and "they fret and strut their little hour upon the stage, and then are seen no more, " May we apply this to spiritual things, and act well our part, knowing that We *shall* be seen again, and according to our behaviour here we will be rewarded in a day to come. For each man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire, and the fire itself shall prove each man's work, of what sort it is (quality, not quantity). Ours may be a minor part, with a maximum reward.

Beloved young Christian, just beginning life's service for God, what a glorious field of opportunity lies before you ! What abundant scope there is for energy and initiative in God's service ! It may mean being misunderstood by some. No matter. So was our Lord and Master. He will understand.

In conclusion, the writer was at the distribution of school prizes some time ago, and was struck by the disappointment plainly written on the faces of some of the unsuccessful ones when they saw the awards which might have been theirs pass into other hands. May no such regrets be yours in regard to the eternal rewards God is holding out for faithful service.

Oh, to have something, something,
Something to lay at His feet !

A. H. C.

ABRAHAM.

(Continued from page 87.)

" By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed. "—*Hebrews* xi. 8.

THERE are two dangers (amongst others) to which, the servant of God is exposed—namely, (1) to act without instructions, (2) not to act with instructions. Faith is necessary in order to stand still and Wait for God as well as to go forward when the word comes. The sanguine temperament wants to be doing, and is prepared even to face danger and death; history will tell of some who have gone to death when the will of God Was that they should have fled, and, on the other hand, when faithfulness to God required the sacrifice, then sometimes instead of standing there has been the fleeing.

" When he was called. " At one time he had no call, though evidently ready to do God's will. The call of God must be waited for. It was said to someone who desired to preach the Word, " Don't do it unless you must, " and we know how God complained of some, " I sent not these prophets, yet they ran. " Abraham was called, and he knew it. Unbelief says " We cannot know God's call as Abraham knew it. " Is God dumb ? Shall we think of Him as is said of dumb idols, " They have mouths but they speak not " ? The question is not " Does God speak ? " but " Do we hear ? "

The call was individual, as we read, " I called him alone. " It may be said God's word is for all. In a general way that is true, but the sayings of God are applied particularly and individually, and so He speaks to one and not to another; to one *now* and to another *then*; to one concerning *this* thing and to another of *that* thing. How important, then, to be ready with open ear and willing heart to heed *His* word !

It is evident that although " Lot went with him " yet he (Lot) had not heard the call, and his going forth was not an act of obedience, but some lower motive, whether of affection or of self-interest, or of both, impelled him. Are we then surprised that his venture ended in disaster and that it had been better never to have started forth out of Ur of the Chaldees, for the end was worse than the beginning ?

The application of this to present circumstances must be apparent to any with a measure of experience. *How* many have started forth leaving friends and else behind, in order to do the will of God, and where are they now ? So we say, let us see to it that all we do is in *faith*, because we have heard His voice, and because, so hearing, our hearts have been gained and led to obey.

" *He* obeyed. " No self-choosing or self-pleasing, for the path was a painful one, involving him in heavy sacrifice. *How* great the cost, in country, kindred, father's house, and so forth, who can estimate ! Obedience consists not merely in doing what we are commanded. A child may so do from fear of punishment, but is such act unwillingly performed with clouded brow, rebellious look, and sluggish step—is that obedience ? Obedience is one of the choicest words we have, but, alas ! it has become degraded because applied to the doings of slaves rather than of children who delight to do their Father's will.

Can we not raise this word "Obedience" from its degraded associations and view it in the light of His devotion whose meat it was to do the will of Him who sent Him and to accomplish His work? Only so shall we appreciate its meaning as we should.

"Not knowing whither he went." Unbelief is ever asking for the path to be spread out before it and ample provision held in readiness for all contingencies, but faith starts with *God*, and says "I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day," and again, with the Apostle, "I believe God that it shall be even as it hath been told me."

And this leads us to the appreciation of the word in Acts vii. 2, "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia." He was a man who had seen a vision of the glory of the Lord, and in the light of it what attraction could the land of his nativity exert upon him? Was an effort needed to give it all up, even though to the natural man he gained nothing thereby? Did he not feel like another who said, "What things were gain to me these have I counted loss for Christ," and was he not sustained by that "first love" which characterized Israel of which God spake in Jer. ii. 2., "I remember for thee the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, how thou wentest after Me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown"? Herein lay the secret of his faithful course; he had had "visions of God," and his heart was weaned away from what others valued, and he could go out, "not knowing whither he went."

"By faith he became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents." (Verse 9.) If faith is necessary to go forth it is equally needed to maintain the character of a sojourner. The going forth may soon be accomplished; the exaltation of spirit which is oftentimes experienced in times of effort will readily carry a person through, only to leave him limp and powerless to maintain the place he has taken. To win a position calls for courage and daring, to hold it calls for the rarer qualities of steadfastness and endurance which are too often lacking. So it is said in Eph. vi. 13, "That ye may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand"

Abraham's was a faith of a very high order indeed. Doubtless there was a faintness of heart at times, a slackening in the course; sometimes a question arose in his heart, as year after year passed

and no sign came of the accomplishment of the promise. But although he had opportunity to return, no thought of doing so was entertained.

View that noble man at the early stage of his sojourn when the strife between his and Lot's herdsmen revealed the unequal association. He defers to his nephew, "Is not the whole land before thee? if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right." No grasping unbelief here; faith can afford to lose now in the assurance of ultimate gain. Whatever he apparently forfeited was more than made up immediately by the reassuring words from God, "Lift up now thine eyes . . ." (Gen. xiii. 14.)

Again, later in his course, after he delivered Lot and in so doing delivered Sodom's king, how did he treat the king's tempting offer "Take the goods to thyself"? "I have lifted up my hand (he said) unto the Lord God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take a thread nor a shoe latchet, nor aught that is thine, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abraham rich." We know something of the secret of this, in that he had just received the blessing of Melchizedek, and so could readily refuse the otherwise tempting offer.

The evidence of his sojourner character was seen in his tent life. The land was his by promise, but as to actual possession the time was not yet. "The Canaanite was then in the land." *He* might have argued that the land being his was to be immediately possessed, and so he might have built a city and gathered an armed following with which to contend for his rights, but while such a line of action might be specious and might look like faith, yet in fact it would have been a forestalling of God, a going forward in presumption and not in faith. On the contrary, faith taught him to live in a tent and as a stranger and sojourner to wait God's time, looking for the city having foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.

Abraham's faith went far beyond the city (Jerusalem) which his earthly seed in due time possessed; his mind was set on the heavenly Jerusalem which is yet to come. And in this faith he was succeeded by Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

How graphically does his sojourning by faith illustrate the true Christian position! The Apostle says "All things are yours." We also are "fellow heirs" and Abraham's seed

according to promise. How then are we to behave in this world ? Shall we seek a present place and portion ? Shall we establish ourselves here and make us a name ? Or, rather, is not our course indicated by Abraham with his tent, to which was allied also the altar in recognition of God's claims ? Are we not called as " strangers and pilgrims " to behave ourselves honestly among the Gentiles, to be subject to authority, and in all things to follow the example of Him who said, " My kingdom is not of this world " ?

S. J. HILL.

(To be continued.)

OBEDIENCE AND DISOBEDIENCE.

" ALL that Jehovah hath spoken will we do, and be obedient. " (Ex. xxiv. 7.) Thus spake the children of Israel when Moses had read to them the book of the covenant. How pleasing to God who had borne them as on eagle's wings to Himself ! How becoming on their part in view of the great deliverance they had known ! Theirs it had been to feel the cruel bondage of Pharaoh. Jehovah in grace and power had rescued them and broken Pharaoh's power. He had led them out of Egypt, the symbol of His presence going before them, a pillar of cloud by day to lead them the way and a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might go by day and by night. Their great Deliverer was also their Guide, and He was able to provide for all their needs, to sustain them and protect them from all their foes. His limitless resources, for example, were revealed at Migdol, when they found themselves hemmed in. But Jehovah did not allow them to fall into the hands of their pursuing foes. He opened up a way for them through the sea. The Egyptians went in after them into the midst of the sea, and Jehovah looked forth upon them and discomfited them; He overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. Israel saw the great work which Jehovah did upon the Egyptians, and the people feared Jehovah; and they believed in Jehovah and in His servant Moses. Then they sang unto Jehovah—

" He hath triumphed gloriously:

The horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.

Jehovah is my Strength and Song,

And He is become my Salvation, "—Ex. xv. 1, 2.

In these and the words that follow they express their appreciation of what Jehovah had done; their understanding, too, of *His* purpose in their deliverance.

" Thou in Thy mercy hast led the people which Thou hast redeemed:
Thou hast guided them in Thy strength to Thy holy habitation.
Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of
Thine inheritance. "

The delivering grace here displayed was continued to them in many different ways according to the needs of their desert journey, until at last the land was reached. " And it came to pass, after many days, when Jehovah had given rest unto Israel from all their enemies round about, and Joshua was old and well stricken in years, " that he called for all Israel and said to them, " Ye have seen all that Jehovah your God hath done unto all these nations because of you; for Jehovah your God, lie it is that hath fought for you. . . . Ye know in all your-hearts and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which Jehovah your God spake concerning you; all are come to pass unto you, not one thing hath failed thereof. " (Joshua xxiii. 1, 3, 14.).

Look at them, rejoicing on the desert side of the Red Sea, listen to their song of triumph as it rolls across the desert and back again over the waters of the sea. Who would think that this delivered rejoicing people would fail to trust Jehovah in whatever trial the desert might produce? Who would think that they would look back with longings to Egypt, and preferring its pleasures to Jehovah's purposes? Yet this is just what they did, and that before very long. *How* deceptive appearances sometimes are!

Now at Sinai they avow their purpose to do *His* will. But, alas! they failed to lay hold of the grace and power which alone could enable them " both to will and to do *His* good pleasure, " hence their failure. When the trials came, their hearts wavered and their lips murmured against Jehovah.

Like unto the fathers were the children. But to all how faithful God had been and how faithless they and their children. His charge at Bochim fully attests this. " **I** made you to **go** up out of Egypt and have brought you unto the land which **I**

sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break My covenant with you; and ye shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall break down their altars: but ye have not hearkened unto My voice: Why have ye done this? " (Judges ii. 1, 2.) Their conscience is aroused under the solemn words and they weep over their failure, when they learn the sad result.

Again and again *He* was merciful to them and delivered them from the hands of the oppressors who came against them in judgment. *He* rebuked them for their sin, but still they rebelled against *Him*. They hardened their hearts and stiffened their necks, and went on in their self will till there was no remedy. They refused all the counsel of Jehovah. They rejected *His* Messengers, the prophets, and when the Son *Himself* came *He* too was rejected. Listen to *His* heart-moving words which tell how far-removed from God *His* people were—" O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her ! *How* often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! " (Matt, xxiii. 37.) Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, and how grateful to God we should be for preserving the record of Israel's history. We should be warned thereby lest we fall after the same example of unbelief. This is quite possible, though we have been delivered from bondage worse than theirs by far, and have received blessings far surpassing theirs, and anticipate the due fulfilment of greater promises than any given through Moses. Ours it is to look for the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ; Who gave *Himself* for us, that *He* might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto *Himself* a people for *His* own possession, zealous of good works. (Titus ii. 13, 14.) Alas, that this purpose should be frustrated in so many ! *How* sad to see children of God like Esau, who sold his own birth-right for one mess of meat, or like Lot, who gave up his pilgrim tent and testimony and tried to settle down in the place of honour in wicked Sodom ! And such behaviour is worse in us than in them because of the greater light and greater blessings we now have.

The beginning of departure from God may often be in a very little thing. Israel lusted after meat and tempted God in their

heart. (Ps. lxxviii. 18, Numbers xi. 1-5). The end was rejection of all the counsel of God. Oh, the power of little things ! Little foxes spoil the vines, little flies the ointment, and little sins the life. We need to have our hearts exercised about little matters, for if neglected they may lead to great and serious matters.

Let us get out of fellowship with God and we become blind and helpless and foolish. Wisdom and safety lie in the example of the Psalmist: —

" Search me, O God, and know my heart;
 Try me, and know my thoughts;
 And see if there be any way of grief in me,
 And lead me in the way everlasting. "

Our surroundings and temptations may differ somewhat from those of Israel, but worldly gain and carnal indulgence may prove fatal to us **as** to them. It means spiritual death; it means eternal loss.

Let us seek to know God's deliverance and preservation from carnality; let **us** lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith. Moses like, let us choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for **a** season. But **a** better, **a** greater, example is found in *Him* 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; and being found in fashion as **a** Man *He* humbled *Himself*, becoming obedient even unto death. Yes, unto death. How significant! And His obedience unto death is the source of all our joy and blessing. It becomes us then that we should be faithful and obedient too. In our obedience God finds joy. In our disobedience *His* name is dishonoured and *His* heart is grieved. Let us not be weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.

H. M.

UNDERSTANDEST THOU WHAT THOU READEST?

THE portion from which those words are taken (Acts viii.) is in fullest agreement with the Divine principle set down by the Lord Himself in Acts i. 8, " Ye shall be My witnesses both in

Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth, " a principle rigidly adhered to by that devoted band. Little wonder such fruit was the outcome ! The net truly was cast on the right side.

It is no mere natural curiosity that has prompted Philip to undertake this journey—a desert is not an inviting place to the flesh at any time—it is a call from God, and Philip loyally responds thereto, and his obedience is rewarded by seeing another become *a* trophy of the grace of God—only one—yet it is as essential that the one be reached as the 3000 on the day of Pentecost.

The moment Philip is caused by the Spirit to understand that this is the object of his mission in those words " Go near and join thyself to this chariot, " Philip ran, so great is his desire to carry out his mission, and as he approaches he hears the eunuch reading about Isaiah the Prophet, and this is the manner of Philip's introduction, " Understandest thou what thou readest ? "

Philip displays no desire to know how often he has read this same portion; perhaps he has gone over it many a time, but always with the same lack of understanding, and now when the definite and pointed interrogation is put to him his answer is "How can I, except someone shall guide me? " An opportunity presented, an opportunity grasped, and the eunuch realises that there is in this Scripture what he never understood before. Philip preached from it " Jesus, " and had the joy of seeing the eunuch saved.

This same Scripture might profitably be applied to ourselves in our day, for, like the eunuch, much of the reading is misunderstood.

Head knowledge apart from heart knowledge can never equip us for the fight of the Faith. The " helmet of salvation " is not " the whole armour of God, " yet it is an essential part and can only be as serviceable as God would have it when in, combination with the other parts. The enemy soon finds out the vulnerable part and directs his attack accordingly.

" *How* readest thou ? " (Luke x. 26) was the question put by Him who " spake as never man spake. " It is to be feared that some depend too much on others enlightening them at times, rather than endeavouring to know the mind of the Spirit for themselves.

Too much attention cannot be paid to this. Paul exhorted Timothy, "Give heed to reading. " "Be diligent in these things. Give thyself wholly to them. " (1 Tim. iv. 13, 15.)

Certain of the sect of the Sadducees approached the Lord Jesus one day presumably with the object of questioning His teaching (Matt. xxii. 23-33), quoting from the Law—"Master, Moses said. " What saith the answer of Christ? " Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures... " It could not be laid to their charge that they had no knowledge of Moses' writings, for their own words attest otherwise, " Moses said, " but it was only a superficial knowledge—not that knowledge necessary to a right understanding through the studying of the Word under the guidance of the Spirit.

It is perfectly clear that all have not the same aptitude for learning, all have not the same capacity for holding, yet, alas ! this very thing may dishearten saints. Be comforted, brethren, for like the balm of Gilead have come down to weary travellers on the desert pathway those words of the Apostle—" If the readiness is there it is acceptable according as a man hath, not according as he hath not, " which surely contains a principle applicable to the matter of ability to know and to do the Lord's will as to the matter of giving of one's means. It is as when a man, going into another country, called his own servants and gave unto one five talents, to another two talents, to another one., to *each according to his several ability*. Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them and made other five talents. In like manner he that received the two gained other two. But he that received the one went away and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money. (See Matt. xxv. 14-30.) God expects us to use the ability He has given us, whether much or little. The proper exercise of the little will lead to the possession of more. To him that hath shall be given. Let us not be discouraged because we have such feeble understanding, nor satisfied because we know and understand so much, but rather, in the spirit of the apostle, while thankful for what God has enabled us to apprehend, press on still, if so be we may apprehend that for which also we were apprehended by Christ Jesus.

May it be ours to more assiduously and prayerfully study the Word of God, giving diligence to present ourselves approved unto God . . . handling aright the word of truth. (2 Tim.

ii. 15.) Thus shall we be found walking in the footsteps of Him who when but twelve years of age astounded the doctors with His understanding and His answers, and in our measure be well pleasing to God. J. W.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

LANARKSHIRE AND DUMBARTONSHIRE. —The annual autumn meetings for ministry of the Word will be held, if God permit, in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on Saturday, 16th September, from 2. 30 p. m. till 8 p. m., with interval for tea from 5 till 6. Subject for ministry at both, meetings—" Responsibility as to Testimony. " Ministering brethren, please note. The prayers of all the saints and the presence of as many as find it convenient to be present earnestly desired.

J. HINSHELWOOD; D. WHITTET.

EDINBURGH. —The annual September special meetings for ministry will be held, if God permit, in Buccleuch Parish Halls, Buccleuch Street, Edinburgh, on Saturday, 23rd September, beginning at 2 p. m. and continuing till 7. 30 p. m., with interval for tea.

AYR. —The assembly now meets in the New Welcome Hall, Wallace Street, Ayr.

KIRKCALDY. —Mr. John Pye's address is now 21 Institution Street, Sinclairtown, Kirkcaldy.

TRINIDAD, COLORADO. —The place of meeting of the saints formerly assembling in Engle has been changed to 311 Fairview Street, Trinidad. Brother John Gilliland has gone to join brother William Allingham at Strawn, Texas, and brethren Sperry and Hays, formerly of the assembly in Raton, are now living in Trinidad, and associated with the assembly there.

JOHN WILTON; M. D. HAYS.

Just as we go to press we learn that our beloved brother Mr. Norman D. W. Miller had to give up working with Mr. Coyne in connection with the tent at Ballymena, and return home very ill. Prayer is desired that God may be graciously pleased to grant him restoration.

Wholesome Words,

A Monthly **Periodical** for the Nurture of God's Children.

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No. 10.

SARAH.

(Continued from page 102.)

WE are not a little surprised to find the name of Sarah having a place among the noble company of the faithful in Heb. xi. From a perusal of Genesis alone we should hardly have concluded that she was entitled to such a place, but with the guidance afforded in Hebrews xi. we have little difficulty in tracing the operation of her faith. There are some examples of unbelief found among the people of God which quickly recur to the mind. Does not "Doubting Thomas" pass for a proverb, and in like manner do we not say "Unbelieving Sarah"?

Let us trace the history of the case. She, a true helpmate of Abraham, and an heir with him of the grace of life, received the promise of the seed, but delay—the period of probation which besets all—led her to look about with that fertility of resource which is perhaps more marked in women than in men, for a means of speeding up the matter, though in the process the result would be less than her faith originally anticipated. She required Abraham to take her maid servant and he hearkened to her voice, thereby occasioning himself, as well as Sarah, not a little vexation and trouble.

Sarah found out that her well-laid scheme turned out not so well as she had thought, and Abraham found out that, having hearkened to his wife once, he was required to do so a second time, in casting out the bondwoman and her son, though it caused him grief.

But "God is faithful," and in Genesis xviii. the Lord, when with the two angels at Abraham's tent, not only repeated

the promise of the birth of Isaac, but announced its near fulfilment, and Sarah, who had not been spoken to, but who was standing by, "laughed within herself" in incredulity. Now what shall happen? Will God reward unbelief? Is it possible that Sarah shall be the mother of Isaac under such circumstances? Impossible! God works with faith in His people, and not apart from such faith can His promises be fulfilled. This requires that Sarah's unbelief be checked and judged. How then did this come about? Note what follows in Genesis xviii. 13—"And the Lord said unto Abraham, 'Wherefore did Sarah laugh saying Shall I of a surety bear a child which am old?' Is anything too hard for the Lord?" Then Sarah denied, saying, "I laughed not" (for she was afraid). And He said, "Nay! but thou didst laugh."

We note the change in the style of address; it had been to Abraham concerning Sarah, but when Sarah denies and interposes "I laughed not," then the Lord turns to her and addresses those simple yet convicting and even crushing words "Nay, but thou didst laugh." We are not permitted to follow the effect of this direct rebuke, but it must have been keenly felt; the unbelief in her heart was stricken even to death, and she herself humbled before God. This we know because it is written "By faith *even* Sarah herself received power to conceive seed when she was past age, since *she* judged Him faithful who had promised." How consolatory is such a testimony, for how like in many respects are we to Sarah!

Some characters we hold in awe, but Sarah seems familiar as one whom we have known and whose ways are not unfamiliar to us.

We may learn that whereas unbelief may hinder, may postpone the fulfilment of God's promise, and may and will cause us much trouble, yet restoration may be granted as we allow God's word to judge the unbelief and humble us before Him. Then we, *even* we, shall receive the needed power for the accomplishment of God's will in us.

S. J. HILL.

NOTES FROM CANTICLES V.

THOUGH sleep is absolutely necessary to the body, yet its stealthily encroaching powers must be ever guarded against. To

slumber instead of rising, to sleep instead of working, must surely be followed by that want and poverty described by the man of wisdom: —

" Yet **a** little sleep, **a** little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to sleep;
 So shall thy poverty come as **a** robber,
 And thy want as an armed man. "

Alas ! that thus we should find the Bride in the portion now before us. Listen to her confession: —" **I** was asleep but my heart waked. " (Ver. 2.) **A** hand had knocked, a voice had called. Did she know the voice ? Yes. Did she rise ? Alas ! no. To her it could not be said " There's a Stranger at the door, " for the voice was familiar—it was the voice of her Beloved, a request clothed with endearing words, in sweetest accents, that fell upon her ears like the dew on the opening flowers: " Open to Me, My sister, **My** love, My dove, My undefiled. "

But though her heart awoke she still reclined, and between her and her Beloved there was a door, strong, heavy, and tightly barred. Inside was the comfort of the couch, without the inclemency of the midnight weather.

" For My head is filled with dew,
 My locks with the drops of the night. " (Ver. 2.)

And as she reclines she remembers that she had lain down for the night, that she has put off her coat, that she has washed her feet.

" **I** have put off my coat; how shall **I** put it on ?
I have washed my feet; how shall **I** defile them ? " (Ver. 3.)

Thus she counts the trivial cost. The trouble of rising and putting on her garment, the danger of defiling those feet which had been washed for the night, are the mighty factors which she multiplies, and with astonishing audacity asks, " *How shall I ? How shall I ?* " O ! let us contrast her trouble with His. Let us think of His condescension, of His path on earth— " **A** Mourner all His life was He "—of the shame of the cross and its awful death, when His holy hands and feet were pierced, and His visage marred more than any man's.

Reader, let us ponder, In the Bride's reluctance to rise

can't we see ourselves ? How oft when called to the " Remembrance Feast " **do we** take the very last minute in bed which so often results in our absence when the hour has come ! How oft when called to the open street as heralds of the gospel do we consider the weather's inclemency, " Lest we defile our feet " !

" My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door,
And my heart was moved for Him.

I arose to open to my B e l o v e d . . . " (Ver. 4-5.)

The entreaties of Him who stood without in the cold were unavailing. She had been comfortably perched. But oh ! what is this that at length meets her gaze ? It is a hand. The hand of her Beloved put through the hole of the door. Now, see how she arises. The heart, which the knockings and the entreaties had only awakened, is now moved. As the blessed Lord Jesus had to endure His passion before He could receive His bride, as Adam the deep sleep, we wonder if in that hand she saw the wound ? Surely it was this that was so potent in its effects, moved that heart to its core, that caused her to leap from her couch to unbar the door and welcome the One whose hand spoke volumes to her soul; even Him who " was wounded for our transgressions, who was bruised for our iniquities. "

" Thus might I hide my blushing face,
While *His* dear cross appears,
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt mine eyes to tears. "

" I opened to my Beloved;
But my Beloved had withdrawn *Himself* and was g o n e . . . " (Ver. 6.)

Yes, she had lain just too long. *His* Spirit will not always strive. Out into the dark night she goes in search of *Him* who so very recently had been the Seeker. No thought now of herself, as she calls for *Him* who has turned away. *His* voice had shortly before echoed unanswered from within, now the unanswered echo of her voice rebounds from the mountains which surround Jerusalem.

The city watchmen find her and perform the part of thieves and robbers, for there she wanders with her bleeding wounds,

and without the mantle which formerly she had grudged to put on. Oh, the dread results of not answering at once to *Him* who says—"Behold I stand at the door and knock. " If we, through our negligence, cause Him to turn away, it may entail a great amount of suffering and sorrow to find Him and enjoy renewed fellowship. To lose is generally more easy than to find. Well might we pray—

" Oh, give me Samuel's ear—
 The open ear, O Lord !
 Alive and quick to hear
 Each whisper of Thy word;
 Like him to answer at Thy call,
 And to obey Thee first of all. "—Amen.

GEORGE PRASHER.

A RETROSPECT.

AUGUST 20th, 1911. —This is my 40th birthday as a child of God, having been born from above on August 20th, 1871, in a carpenter's shop at Kennethmont, Aberdeenshire, on a Lord's Day evening (this 40th anniversary being also a Lord's Day), The word of God which gave me light, life, and liberty was Isaiah xliii. 25—" I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. " Mr. Andrew Allan, Footdee, Aberdeen, an honoured servant of the Lord and much used in the salvation of souls, was the instrument in God's hands to point me to the Saviour. This day brings up many memories of the past. I was baptised and received into the fellowship of gathered-out ones in November of the same year.

Many of those saved about the same time have gone home. Some, alas ! have been turned aside and lost to view, but the Lord knows His own, and none who really trusted Him will be lost. " 'Tis grace has kept me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home. "

Oh ! the many happy seasons of heavenly joy, the many answers to prayer, the many great deliverances from difficulties and dangers seen and unseen I have to thank my Father for, and His many mercies and tender care from day to day. Truly I can say goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of

my life, and I trust I shall dwell in the House of the Lord till the end of days.

In the course of those years gone by I am conscious of many failures and shortcomings. Many opportunities of doing work for the Master have been missed, and much time misspent, but He knows my regrets and confessions, and He knows all that may have been done acceptably to Him, constrained by love to Christ. He is the unchangeable and faithful God. He will not forget any work of faith or labour of love " *in that day*" however imperfectly done.

I desire to place on record here my thankfulness to God for being spared, and for the grace given me to come out with those whom He by His grace " called into the Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, " to contend earnestly for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Our individual and collective efforts in this way, like everything human, have doubtless been mingled with many imperfections, but God knows the desires of honest hearts to do His will. Many of those who came out first have been like the mixed multitude who came out of Egypt with Israel—have proved veritable thorns in our sides. Those of strong self-wills have found it no place for them, and others have been discouraged because of the way, and, like " Timorous " and " Mistrust " whom Bunyan depicts, have seen " lions in the way " and have turned back. But thank God there is still a goodly community who, like " Christian, " have pushed forward with the help of God to find the dangerous lions " chained " and impotent. Let Timothy-like young men take courage and go forward. May they be strong in the grace given them. May they be indeed examples of the believers in word and in faith. Let no one despise their youth. May they " keep (as a garrison) that good thing, " and fill up worthily the places of the fallen ones and the places of those whose work is nearing a close: and " when the Chief Shepherd shall appear they shall receive a victor's crown. "

It is with pleasure I recall to memory the many years of happy fellowship with the beloved of the Lord in His service when enjoying comparative health. And now in my time of sickness, when the loving hand of a gracious Father has been dealing with me as a son, I here express my deep debt of gratitude to fellow saints for their sympathy, their prayers, and their many acts of brotherly kindness to me in my time of need.

This has called forth tears of joy and thanksgiving to God for His manifold ways of dealing with me. May the latter days of my life be better than the former, and may He grant that this period of affliction shall give to Him His desire that His image may be reflected in me as gold tried in the fire. —Amen.

WILLIAM THOMSON.

[The writer of the foregoing retrospect has been almost constantly confined to bed for six years from the effects of a complete nervous breakdown. He has been wonderfully sustained by the Lord, and often has comforted others visiting him. Prayer is requested on his behalf that God may be pleased to use him still more to His own glory.]

THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(Continued from page 79.)

THE SPIRIT THE POWER TO RAISE UP AND FIT FOR THE MINISTRY. IN our last paper we sought to show that the Holy Spirit was the power for acceptable worship; in this we desire to show that the Holy Spirit is the sole power to raise up ministers and fit them for ministering. They are the gifts which have been given by our ascended Head to the Church which is His Body, also those whose labour is toward the world, such as evangelists. It is the Spirit that sends forth: as for example, "The Spirit said, Separate Me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." Then the prophets and teachers at Antioch fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them (identified themselves with them in fellowship in this service) and sent them away. "So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia." (Acts xiii.) It was again as in the days of Isaiah, "Whom shall I send and who will go for Us?" See Acts xxviii. 25, 26. Those whom the Spirit sends forth will be especially endowed with power from on high. They are only men, but men filled with the Spirit. The disciples whom the Lord after His resurrection sent forth needed this. He said to them "As the Father hath sent Me even so send I you," and He breathed on them and said "Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (in anticipation of the coming of the Spirit). He also said "Tarry ye in the city until ye be clothed with power from on high." (Luke xxiv. 49.)

So in the Acts of the Apostles we see men going here and there at the dictation of the Holy Spirit; hindered in going to some places, helped in going to others. And Paul could say that his ministry and his journeys were accomplished by the power of the Spirit of God. (Romans xv. 19.)

The Spirit of God is sovereign in the choice of His instruments, often choosing and using the weakest and those who are nought, so that no flesh should glory in God's presence. **It** was so with Peter, who was a fisherman, and Matthew, who was a despised tax-gatherer. But when it was necessary to choose a man to stand before kings, to be a witness to Christ and one to whom **He** could unfold " The Mystery, " **He** chose Saul of Tarsus who had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. In turning to 1 Cor. xii. we see the same thing, the Spirit sovereign in His choosing, and sovereign in His using. In passing we would say that as in the old creation the Triune God is seen in operation adorning the heavens and the earth with the various creatures from His hand, each having its own place and sphere and all fulfilling the Divine will, so here in the new creation the Triune God is seen in operation through the agency of the Spirit of God. Note " The same Spirit, " " The same Lord, " " The same God. " Diversity characterises all the gifts, yet it is the same Spirit. And the evidence of the Spirit's manifestations will be "to profit withal. " This is the true test of one speaking by the Spirit of God. The gifts are various, to meet the different needs, but one of the chief things to remember is that " the Spirit divideth to each man severally as **He** will. " Therefore in meetings for the saints, room should **be** left for the operations and manifestations of the Spirit. In our right desire for order and arrangement let us be careful not to shut out the Spirit. The flesh shuns dependence and waiting upon God.

Paul when at Miletus sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the Church and said to t h e m " Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock in the which

THE HOLY SPIRIT HATH MADE YOU OVERSEERS

to feed the Church of God which **He** hath purchased with *His* own blood. " (Acts xx.) *How* necessary it is to continually remind ourselves that if there are to be true overseers, true shepherds, they must **be** of the *Holy Spirit*? producing. *He*

must implant the desire to care for the souls of saints. He alone can give the needed grace and humility to serve the Lord in this respect with all lowliness of mind, in order to be saved from the snare of assuming any clerical position or of becoming lords over God's heritage. He must give the needful grace and wisdom to those who would feed and rule as shepherds. The leading and guiding of the flock is to be according to the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Shepherd of the sheep. It is not because a brother is the most intelligent, the most gifted, the most learned, that he should be recognised as an overseer. The chief point is, Has he a shepherd's heart to care for saints? Does he possess the qualifications of which God speaks? Luther once said, concerning a certain Pastor in Germany, "He has knowledge but not humility, he has gift but not lowliness."

Those whom God raises up to watch in behalf of our souls will have the grace and ability to rule well as also to feed well. This brings us to 1 Timothy iii. and Titus i., where God gives the character and qualifications of Holy Spirit-made overseers.

First, "If a man seeketh overseership, he desireth a good (or beautiful) work." Note well the word ^{ci} Work. "It is a real spiritual care. The true overseer will not merely attend oversight meetings, but he will know and care for all the flock amongst which he works. One is becoming worldly and needs rebuking and warning, another is becoming lukewarm and needs a stirring word, another is depressed and faint by the way and comfort is needed. How much he will be cast upon the Great Shepherd to minister to the needs of all. The absent ones need visiting, the sick, the poor and needy, the widows and orphans all requiring attention; he will find it is "work," real work, beautiful work—the care of souls. He will not act in the spirit of a policeman—looking out for the erring to bring them to punishment, but as a Shepherd who seeks to restore and heal.

Then as to his character and qualifications. "He must be without reproach." Note that word "Must," both in verses 2 and 7. Must means must here, as much here as in other places, such as "Ye MUST be born again," "The Son of Man MUST be lifted up." We must never belittle any of God's "musts."

He must be a man of such character that no saint nor world-

ling can truthfully say **a** reproachful word about him. **A** man having **a** character, with no stigma on it. The standard is high, but God knows how needful purity of life, and ways of righteousness, are to the one who is to guide His saints. If he is **a** married man he must not have more than one wife. He must be temperate, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality.

He must also be no brawler. Not **a** quarrelsome person as one who has had too much wine. **He** will be eminently **a** man of peace. No "striker." This appears to come from **a** word which means "to cause blood to flow" from **a** striker with the hands. But here it is a "striker" with the tongue, causing trouble, strife, and dissension.

As the opposite to this he must be "gentle" even as it is again written, "The Lord's servant must not strive but be gentle towards all; apt to teach; forbearing, not contentious." Not one fond of disputations or controversy. For "It is only by pride cometh contentions." "If any man seemeth to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God."

"**No** lover of money." God does not condemn having riches, but He lays obligations on those who have them to use them according to His will. The love of money is **a** root of all kinds of evil, and leads the heart astray.

"One that ruleth well his own house." This scripture seems to contemplate an overseer having **a** household, where, under God, he will be trained to rule and care. He will have firmness with kindness, **a** heart of pity and love, knowing how to exercise discipline for the good of the object, so that if he has children they will be in subjection with all gravity. *Having trained his children in the fear of God, God in mercy visits him, and he has "children who believe."* Titus **I**. Therefore, knowing how to rule his own house, **a** smaller circle, he is helped of God to take care in that which is larger—**a** church of God. If one fails in his own house, it may be by being too severe or too indulgent, or by being both, it may be by allowing his wife and children to rule, then the same failure and weakness manifested in the home will be seen in his work in the assembly, and this would be productive of all kinds of evil. Therefore such an one is unfitted to take care of **a** church of God. The Spirit of God uses more words over this qualification than any other. The overseer must not **be** one

newly come to the faith. Such lack grace, experience and stability to care for saints, being but lambs in the flock. The greatness and gravity of the work would not appeal to such an one, and seeking after position and place, not work, Satan would cause his downfall through pride, and he would be caught in the Devil's snare.

There is a care which all should have, one for another, but there is a special and deeper care implanted in the hearts of Holy Spirit-made overseers, which is not common to all. Not only must an overseer live a negative life of being " without reproach, " but he must lead a very positive life in righteousness and good works. " Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the Devil. "

The sheep will be more or less what the shepherds are. What a work ! What a calling ! Who is sufficient for these things ?

Let us pray for those who do this work. Their discouragements are many, their encouragements are few. They often have a weary aching heart, sleepless nights are sometimes theirs as they contemplate the state of the flock committed to their trust. They have sorrows of which the assembly in general knows but little.

(To be concluded.)

J. DORRICOTT.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

BLACKBURN. —In the good will of God we purpose holding our Annual Conference of Workers among the Young on Saturday, October 21st (*D. V.*) Further particulars will appear in circular. —T. B. HORNE; W. J. TRAINER; J. M'INTYRE.

TORONTO AND BRANTFORD, ONTARIO, CANADA. —During the month of July we were visited by our esteemed brother Dr. C. M. Luxmoore, who conducted a Young Men's Camp at Brantford for about seven days, which was well attended and much appreciated by the young men of these assemblies, who, we believe, received lasting help and encouragement. He also conducted a series of special public meetings in Brantford and Toronto, and special meetings for sisters. We ask the

prayers of the saints that God will bless the special effort made to further His work in these parts. —H. W. WATERS; D. J. COOK.

LANARKSHIRE. —We had our Annual Autumn Conference in the Institute, 70 Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on Saturday, 16th September, 1911. The attendance was above the average, the lesser hall being completely filled. We were glad to have with us our brother Edwin Matthew of London, who introduced the subject, "Responsibility as to Testimony, " and spoke with special reference to our responsibility toward the pagan tribes of Africa. Our brethren D. Smith and J. Miller also ministered the word of the Lord, which was of a solemn and searching character. We desire to put on record our grateful thanks to God for His goodness and for this manifestation that He hath not forsaken the earth though many, alas ! have forsaken Him. —JAMES HINSHELWOOD; DAVID WHITTET.

ARTICLES FOR " WHOLESOME WORDS " should be sent to Mr. J. P. A. Taylor, "Beracah, " Paisley Road, Barrhead. Intelligence items should bear the signatures of two overseeing brethren, and should reach Mr. Taylor not later than the 15th day of the month preceding the issue in which insertion is desired.

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11..

JEHOVAH WHO HEARS.

THE book of Malachi abounds with evidence of Jehovah's interest in His people. Alas ! it shews unmistakably too, how it is possible for His own to be *where* He would have them be, and at the same time not to be *as* He would have them. Both things must be right in order that His pleasure and glory, and His people's highest blessing, may be secured. There were exceptions, however, in Malachi's days. Not all were alike bad. It was then, as later the Lord Jesus Christ found it in Sardis. " Thou hast a few names in Sardis which did not defile their garments. " This was the exception. The general condition was denoted by the words, " Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead. " (Rev. iii. 1, 4.) Let us look briefly at the evidence given, in the words of Malachi to the people, that Jehovah had heard their words, and let us seek to profit thereby as we remember that He who heard them hears us too. Do our sayings secure His approval or His condemnation ? Are they such as we shall wish we had left unsaid when the great day of review arrives, when the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels of the hearts ? Are the secret motives that prompt our sayings and our doings such as shall secure for us His commendation in that day ?

How sad that the first recorded word of Israel in this book is to question Jehovah's love. He said " I have loved you, " and they had but to cast back their minds to His past doings to be assured that His testimony was true. But when the heart is out of touch with God the memories of God's people seem especially faulty. In present trials it often happens that past mercies are forgotten, and Satan too readily succeeds in causing doubts of God's love to find a lodging place in the heart of His tried people. Such trial of faith is meant; to cast us more upon God. Oftentimes He takes away the blessing that His own goodness and resources as the Blessor may be more fully known. Howsoever great our trials may be, however difficult it may be to understand why God allows us to be

afflicted as we sometimes are, let us not forget that our Father's hand will never cause His children needless tears; let us remember the great outstanding manifestation of His love to us, the gift of His Son, which should ever fully assure our hearts, and evoke the praise which faith can give, even in the night.

" He spared not *His* Son.

"Tis this that bids the hard thought disappear. "

How true it is that

" Faith can sing through days of sorrow,
All will be well. "

And

" How sweet, how blessed is the thought
That Thou dost hear Thy people's cries,
And whether Thou dost give or not,
"Tis love that grants, and love denies. "

" Wherein hast Thou loved us, " bespeaks the sad condition into which God's people had fallen when Malachi. *His* messenger, was caused to testify to them. It is not the voluntary exercise of the devout soul seeking to consider all the manifestations of *His* love that it has experienced. That, indeed, is right and proper and healthy. Would that it were more common than it is among God's people.

" Whoso is wise shall give heed to these things, and they shall consider the mercies of Jehovah. " (Ps. cvii. 43.)

" I have loved you, " saith Jehovah. But they say " Wherein ? " It is the expression of a doubting, not a worshipping, heart. And throughout the book of Malachi the proneness to challenge instead of to gratefully accept *His* word is very apparent.

" A son honoureth his father and a servant his master; if then I be a Father where is Mine honour ? And if I be a Master where is My fear, saith Jehovah of Hosts unto you, O priests, that despise My name. " And the priests say " Wherein. " *He* tells them, and still they say " Wherein ? " (Chapter i. 6, 7.)

From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same Jehovah's name was great among the Gentiles, but alas ! those who should have revered and loved it most, now stand charged by *His* messenger as having profaned that great and terrible Name. In vain are the doors of *His* house opened. In vain is the fire kindled on *His* altar. The heart was not right with God, and outward conformity, which is not the result

of inward subjection, to His will can never please Him. Isaiah was very bold on this point, and his boldness has been endorsed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

" This people honoureth Me with their lips,
But their heart is far from Me. "

(Isaiah xxix. 13.; Mark vii. 6.)

They were worse in Malachi's days. " Bring no more vain oblations " was the expression of Jehovah's disapproval in Isaiah. In Malachi He longs for one to shut the doors. They came and covered the altar of Jehovah with tears, with weeping, and with sighing. Their offerings were not of the best of the flock or herd. They brought the blemished, the lame, the sick. Why did they weep ? Did they begrudge Him even these ? or were their tears further evidence of their hypocrisy ? Was this weeping like the kiss of Judas ? Only a sham !

He received not the offering with good will at their hand. Again they raise the protesting voice " Wherefore ? " They had wearied Jehovah with their words. Yet they said " Wherein ? "

How perverted their judgment had become. " Every one, " said they, " that doeth evil is good in the sight of Jehovah. " The light that was in them has turned to darkness, and though God is speaking to them through His messenger they fail to recognise His voice, they fail to see from his faithful testimony how closely the God of judgment is regarding their doings, and they say " Where is the God of judgment ? "

From the days of their fathers they had turned aside from His ordinances, and had not kept them, and now He calls upon them to return unto Him. If they do so, He promises to return unto them. But they say " Wherein shall we return ? " " Ye rob Me " is a further explicit charge against them, and still they say " Wherein ? "

How hardened their hearts had become ! How dull their conscience ! Can they be reached ? Jehovah's word is as a hammer which breaketh the rock, but it would seem that here we have a people with hearts that are harder than rock, for when He sums up the matter, and says " Your words have been stout against Me, " they still retort " Wherein ? "

Thus we see how Jehovah showed, by His speakings through Malachi, that He heard what His people said, that their words were far otherwise than they should have been, and instead

of looking upon them with delight and listening to them with pleasure He had to say " I have no pleasure in you. " (Chapter i. 10.)

They had received the grace of God in vain. But though dark indeed were the clouds that overhung His people then, these certainly did not lack their silver lining. And even for Malachi there was something to cheer, above and beyond that which gladdens every faithful witness, the sweet consciousness of doing the will of the One who sent him, for whilst amongst those to whom he so faithfully testified there were sorcerers, adulterers, false swearers, those that oppressed the hireling, that oppressed the widow and the fatherless, those that turned aside the stranger from his right and *feared not* Jehovah, yet there were also those who *feared* Jehovah. Malachi's words found an abiding place in their hearts. " *Then* they spake one with another. " And Jehovah hearkened. He heard with delight.

How encouraging, yet how solemnizing, are the words of the Psalmist—

" The eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous,
And *His* ears are open unto their cry.
The face of Jehovah is against them that do evil,
To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. "

Psalms xxxiv. 15, 16.

—————ZENAS.

HEBREWS XL

(Continued from page 110.)

" THESE all died in faith " (verse 13). Death is the end of all things under the sun; it extinguishes all hopes which are dependent on things below; it upsets all human schemes and calculations; it reduces the mightiest to impotence; it is the great inevitable to which all classes succumb. But one thing it cannot overcome, and that is " faith. " " The great conqueror, " death, is itself overcome by faith in God, for God — He who promises—can never die, and the promises of Him who is and who was and who is to come, must all be fulfilled* Therefore faith needs one thing only and that is to know that God has spoken; it is not concerned about the fulfilment; the ways and means whereby the object shall be attained belong not to its care, for " He who has promised is *able* also to perform. "

They who believe have His word; His promises they have hugged to their hearts; their fulfilment has been descried by them in the distance, and they have, in the joy of their hearts, greeted them. Further, it has been most natural on their part to act in harmony with such belief; being occupied with their hope in the promises has tended to disengage their grasp from the present scene, and in their whole demeanour they have shown themselves to be strangers and pilgrims. This world has become foreign to them; they have lost touch with it; its objects and pursuits are not theirs, and it is evident that they will never find satisfaction in this scene. Faith in God and His Word has spoiled the world for them, for their eyes have beheld a brighter and better scene, a country wherein Sin is not, and a city where God *Himself* reigns.

And is God indifferent to such people; are the advances wholly on their side and not on *His*? Nay! *He* is looking upon them and regarding the yearning of their hearts for a scene ordered by *Himself*, and although the world may misunderstand, despise, ignore them, count them a peculiar people or even fools and fanatics, yet "God is not ashamed of them to be called their God." Men seek the patronage of the great, and human societies count themselves honoured indeed if a Royal personage becomes their head, even though he be a "figure head" lending but the influence of a title. But these of whom we have been speaking have God for their Patron. The Most *High* looks down upon these poor folk, these tent-dwellers, these visionary people, who are never content unless dwelling upon promises, and *He* says that *He* is not ashamed to own them and *He* consents to be called "their God," and while now they live in tents there is a City which *He Himself* has prepared for them.

Of those who *then* "died in faith" all this is true, and the same applies to the present day as well, for in these things their and our portion will be one. Oh! then, for faith in God, in *His Word*, in *His promises*, and a correspondence in all our ways witnessing to the reality of our faith.

One thought more. Let us note that these *died* in faith. Their confidence declined not as they grew older; their faith increased with their age, and their path was that of the just which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Alas! it is not always so! Many have run well for years and getting near the end it seemed as though they might venture to say with

Paul that the crown was "laid up" for them; yet even at so late a stage of their history they have turned aside from the course and have forfeited the prize. Then let us walk humbly and carefully and in increasing dependence on God and His provision for faith, so that it may be said by Him who knows (should the Lord not come before) "these died in faith."

S. J. HILL.

LESSONS FROM THE LIVES OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

(Continued from page 89.)

In the life and reign of Hezekiah, may be discovered many of the principles and ways in practical expression and illustration which have been written for our learning, and are worthy of our consideration and imitation. Coming to the throne of Judah, at the age of 25 years, the early part of his reign is characterised by an earnest endeavour to follow in the steps of his father, David, and so he did. "He did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, according to all that David his father had done" (2 Chron, xxix. 2). He began at once, and in the first month of the first year of his reign, the doors of the House of Jehovah were opened, and repaired; the priests and Levites brought and sanctified; and confession made of failure and wrong-doing in forsaking God and His house. This was a good beginning, which was next followed by the uncleanness of the house being purged and the service thereof restored, as the result of Hezekiah's powerful appeal to the Levites and others, in the words "My sons, be not now negligent, for Jehovah hath chosen you to stand before Him, to minister to Him, and that ye should be His ministers, and burn incense." Then the offerings of Jehovah are brought and sacrificed, "the burnt offering and the sin offering for all Israel." And "when the burnt offering began, the song of Jehovah began also." How close the association, and how significant the relation between the burnt offering of Jehovah and the song of Jehovah! "And they sang praises with gladness, and bowed themselves and worshipped." Then came "the thank offerings," which were brought into the house of Jehovah. "So the service of the house of Jehovah was set in order. And Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, because of that which God had prepared for the people, for the thing was done suddenly." Thus, things being set in order *within*, they then reach out to others of their brethren, and by letters written and sent to them,

make a strong appeal on behalf of Jehovah, for them to " *turn again to Jehovah*, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel," and to yield themselves unto Jehovah, and enter into His sanctuary and serve Jehovah their God, with the result that many " laughed them to scorn and mocked them. " So that in any endeavour to imitate such a worthy example, in seeking to clear ourselves of our responsibilities toward fellow saints, we need not be surprised nor discouraged although to-day such meets with a like result. However, some " humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem "; and some may yet have repentance given them from God to acknowledge the truth, and thus recover themselves out of the snare of the devil (2 Tim. ii. 25, 26). They also kept the Passover, in the fourteenth day of the *second* month; thus taking their place before Jehovah as denied, but accepting His gracious provision for their cleansing, like the man defiled by contact with the dead body, they keep it the *second* month, instead of the first. The result was " great joy in Jerusalem. Then the priests and Levites arose, and blessed the people; and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to His holy habitation, even unto heaven. " " Now when all this was finished, " they didn't settle down into ease and indifference. No; there was much yet to be done, and a work of destruction against the idolatry and false worship, so the pillars were broken in pieces, and the Asherim hewed down, and the altars destroyed. Then priests and Levites were appointed in their courses, every man according to his service, to minister and to give thanks, and to offer the offerings of the Lord, all as it is written in the law of Moses. Moreover, *Hezekiah* commanded the people that dwelt in Jerusalem to give the portion of the priests and Levites, that they might give themselves to the law of the Lord, with the worthy result that " the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly, " and " laid them up by heaps. " And " when *Hezekiah* and the princes came and saw the heaps, they blessed Jehovah and *His* people "; all of which reminds us of the words of the Spirit, through the apostle, " *Howbeit ye did well that ye had fellowship with my affliction. And ye yourselves also know, ye Philippians, that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church had fellowship with me in the matter of giving but ye only; for even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again to my need. Not that I seek for the gift, but I seek for the-fruit that in-*

creaseth to your account. But **I** have all things and abound. **I am** filled, having received from Epaphroditus the things that came from you; an odour of **a** sweet smell, **a** sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. And my God shall fulfil every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. And unto our God and Father be the glory for ever and ever. Amen. " (Phil. iv. 14-20.). DAVID SMITH.

A WORD TO THE WOMEN.

IN the first letter to Timothy, which teaches right behaviour in the House of God, the women have not been overlooked; and need it be said that in God's word through the apostle in this epistle there is **a** striking testimony to the place that the wearing of apparel usually has in **a** woman's heart and ways. This is found in the first word of the apostle concerning the women, " In like manner, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefastness and sobriety; not with braided hair, and gold or pearls or costly raiment; but (which becometh women professing godliness) through good works. " (1 Tim. ii. 9, 10.) And in Peter's letter prominence is given to this same matter, " Whose adorning let it not **be** the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible apparel of **a** meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner aforetime the holy women also, who hoped in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: **as** Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. " (1 Peter iii. 3-6.) Since God has seen fit to speak at such length and in such explicit terms, shall any dare say that these are unimportant matters ?

The need still abides for emphasizing the apostolic doctrine " **Lei** the women learn in quietness, with all subjection. " It is the foolish woman who is clamorous and wilful. (Pro. ix. 13.) Even in the things of God old wives' fables would obtrude themselves, but these must be refused. (1 Tim. iv. 7.) Instead of retailing fables God would have the aged women to be reverent in demeanour, not slanderers, nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good. (Titus ii. 3.) Clearly they have to learn in order that they may teach. In 1 Cor. xii. **28** we read " God **hath** set some in the church, first apostles,

secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues. " Women may be " helps. " The aged women, if they go on as God would have them, will first of all themselves learn in quietness, with all subjection, and then they will seek to train the young women; and surely this necessitates not only the saying of the right thing but the doing of the right thing, teaching by example as well as by precept. Thus we find in Titus ii. 4-5 what the aged woman should be as well as what the young woman should be. It is true that God has deemed it needful to enjoin husbands to love their wives; let it not be overlooked that women also have to be trained to love their husbands, their children also; they are to be soberminded* chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, and the weighty consideration is added, " that the word of God be not blasphemed. " Continuance in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety has connected with it a promise which should gladden and encourage every Christian husband and wife. Great indeed must be that joy of which the Lord Jesus Himself spake, as recorded in John xvi. 21, " She remembereth no more the anguish, for the joy that a man is born into the world. ' But 1 Tim. ii. 15 suggests possibilities of greater joy than this, and it may be helpful to point out that whilst it was given to *Hannah* to receive from Jehovah the man child for which she supplicated Him, it was when she had fulfilled her promise and given him back to Jehovah that she knew the experience expressed in the words of the Lord Jesus—" It is more blessed to give than to receive "—her joy now was so full, God would not be her debtor, and she speaks out of the abundance of her heart,

" My heart exulteth in Jehovah,
 Mine horn is exalted in Jehovah,
 My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies;
 Because I rejoice in Thy salvation. "

—1 Sam. i. 28; ii. 1.

And there is another sense in which God may make Himself known as the One who setteth the solitary in families. Let the pure minds of beloved sisters be stirred up again in the remembrance of 1 Peter iii. 1. "In like manner, ye wives* be in subjection to your own husbands, " and wherefore ? It is not here that she may know salvation in the sense of

1 Tim. ii. 15, nor yet that the word of God be not blasphemed as in Titus ii. 5; it is that " if any obey not the word they may without the Word be won by the behaviour of their wives "— to become channels of salvation, to save a soul from death by converting the sinner from the error of his ways. What a joy indeed ! What a privilege ! Oh, that Christian women might live up to their rights ! Even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, to take the low place and wait on others; and the place of subjection, the place of lowly ministering to others, is clearly marked out in the Word as the woman's truly blessed sphere. How refreshingly sweet to *Him* and how blessed for Mary, Joanna and Susanna to be imitators of *Him*. They ministered of their substance. What an honour to have their names inscribed thus in the eternal Word of God ! Is it not right to think that these had specially distinguished themselves in the willingness or wholeheartedness of their service ? Many others did as they did, and their work brought its own reward, but there is surely reason for these being expressed by name. (Luke viii. 2, 3.) " Whosoever would become great among you, shall be your servant [minister]: and whosoever would be first among you, shall be bondservant of all. " (Mark x. 43.)

It was not given to Phoebe to minister to the personal need of the Lord Jesus as those others did, but she too embraced the opportunity that was hers. " A deaconess [that is a servant] of the church, " " a succourer of many, and of mine own self. " No doubt she recognised the principle so beautifully set forth by the Lord *Himself*—" Inasmuch as ye have done it unto these ye have done it unto Me, " and her labour was sweetened with the thought of doing it as unto *Him*. And sisters now may know the same sweetness, they may minister unto *Him* in ministering unto *His*.

Priscilla, too, stands out as an example worthy of imitation. How deep rooted, how sincere, how earnest her love to the Lord as shewn in her devotedness to His much-tried servant Paul ! What honourable mention is made of her, and her husband's, love and service !

" My fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. " Is there not need to-day that sisters be stirred up to become imitators of Lazarus' sister, Mary who sat at the Lord's feet and heard His word ?

This is a necessity on the part of those who would do as Priscilla did, in conjunction with her husband. When they heard the eloquent Apollos speaking boldly in the synagogue "the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John," they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more carefully. The one who helped the brethren "much, he of whom Paul could say "I planted, Apollos watered," was himself helped by these humble tentmakers.

What an honour, too, was conferred upon Martha, in being allowed to minister to the earthly need of the Lord of Life and Glory! When He was hungry she provided for His need and for His comfort. And there is room for imitators of Martha, who will serve the Lord's servants in regard to their temporal needs, often, alas! so sadly neglected.

S. T. L.

SPECIAL NOTICES.

TENT WORK IN THE NORTH OF SCOTLAND. —The tent was first erected this season at Huntly, Aberdeenshire, and a series of meetings commenced first Lord's Day in June, when a goodly number turned out to an address by Mr. Smith, on "The Grace of God." Mr. Miller addressed the evening meeting in the gospel as shadowed in Genesis i. There was a goodly number again present, and this continued more or less the whole time (six weeks) the tent was there. The greater number of those attending the meetings professed to have already passed from death to life, and a number expressed themselves as having been much helped by the word spoken. As a result of the meetings, and intercourse with the brethren, the two sons of our Bro. Archibald there have been led to obey the Lord in Baptism, and are now enrolled in the assembly at Aberdeen. The tent was next pitched in Inverness and continued about seven weeks—the first fortnight by Mr. Smith and Mr. Miller together; the remainder by Mr. Miller alone. The meetings were rather sparsely attended at the first, but the people began to turn out very well after the first fortnight; on the Lord's-Day evenings there was always a full tent. Many attended almost nightly and appeared to enjoy the word, and seemed helped. One woman professed faith in Christ and appeared to be a real case. During the time the tent was pitched in Inverness Mr. Smith visited the assemblies in Aberdeen and

Aboyne. In the former place the meetings were very well attended, and a number of strangers came under the sound of the word, but the meetings in the latter were not so encouraging. Nevertheless, the saints seemed cheered with the visit of our brother. Mr. Miller proposes going to Lerwick for a short time, and prayer is requested that his visit may be a real help to the saints there. —J. MATHESON; J. CHRISTIE.

MOUNTAIN ASH. —With the close of the summer season we have, for the year, drawn our Bible-carriage campaign to a close. Commencing early in May, our brother Mr. John Williams, with a little band of workers from Mountain Ash and Aberfan assemblies, visited the neighbouring villages, where the gospel was preached, many books sold, and altogether some 10, 000 leaflets distributed, many of which were in the Welsh language. The ministry was public and from house to house, and while some mocked we look back with pleasure on the interest of others. One dear old man said " We never saw it on this wise before. " That our gracious God may abundantly bless with His increase is our prayer, in which we request the fellowship of fellow-saints. —J. FURLONG; THOMAS EVANS.

TORONTO, CANADA. —We desire the fellowship of the Community in rejoicing with us in our joy. During the past few months God has been pleased to save five young people in our midst, who have also satisfied us that they are disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. They have been baptized and received into the Fellowship of God's Son. These have been coming along to the meetings for a long time, and belong to the Bible Class. Three are the children of those in the Fellowship. The well-known closing words of 1 Cor. xv, " Wherefore my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord, " should encourage and stimulate us to the work of the Lord. —F. W. WOOLLEY; J. WOOD.

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THE HOLY SPIRIT.

{Continued from page 119.}

LIVING BY THE SPIRIT.

WE will now conclude our subject with a few practical exhortations to individual believers. It has been said that "the Holy Spirit is always in us but we are not always in the Spirit." This no doubt is true. But the expectations of God concerning us are that we should be continually living in or by the Spirit, finding our fulness and supply from Him. This is the spiritual atmosphere of the new creation—the new man—the inner life, and thus the Apostle exhorts, "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us walk." (Gal. v.) The latter will be the outward manifestation of our living in the Spirit and this will show itself forth in bearing

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance (self-control). Against such there is no law. Here is a precious cluster of fruit so refreshing to God but so sadly missing in our lives.

One may ask, who is desirous of living to please God, "How or by what means can I live in the Spirit?" Thank God, there is nothing hard or mysterious here. It is within the reach of the youngest child of God. The new man—the inward life—needs to be continually nourished and fed by prayer and meditation on the Holy Scriptures, thus living in communion with God and knowing the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. This will lead us to dwell upon things unseen, even eternal things (that are not bounded by time or sense). We shall lay hold on eternal life and live the life which is life indeed, having fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Living in the sunshine of His presence, the Spirit of God can

so work within us that out from us will bud forth this precious fruit.

The writer remembers hearing a story which may help to illustrate this to the young. A gentleman once offered a prize to cottagers, living in a very poor part of a town, for the best plant that could be grown by themselves. This was done to encourage them to beautify their homes. The day arrived for showing, when to the surprise of all the prize was carried off by a little girl, a slum-dweller, who had shown the best plant. *However could she produce such a plant? No garden, no plot, no favourable circumstances, living in a single room with only one window in it. The story was very simple. "Every day she nourished her plant with water, and kept turning it round towards the sun."*

May it be so with us in a spiritual sense. Circumstances may appear unfavourable to us, and one may be tempted to say "If I were only away from here I could show this precious cluster of fruit." You may be in an ungodly home, you may be surrounded by ungodly men in business or workshop, and this leads you to have these thoughts. These are the very places where this fruit should be seen, where you may glorify God. "If we live in the Spirit by the Spirit let us also walk," and walking by the Spirit we shall be kept from fulfilling the desires of the flesh.

THE SPIRIT'S WARFARE.

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other that ye may not do the things that ye would." Within us is this continual warfare, the flesh against the Spirit, the Spirit against the flesh, to preserve us from doing the things that we otherwise would, things after the flesh, things that bring spiritual death in their train.

It is only by the Spirit that we can make to die (margin) the deeds of the body. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God these are the sons of God. (Romans viii.) Things that the flesh desires we must make to die by the Spirit, and thus by so doing we show that we are sons of God, bearing likeness to our Heavenly Father. As we have said, the warfare is continual, and varied, and if we refuse or neglect the power that God has given us for this warfare the flesh will assert itself and be manifested in many ways as seen in Gal. v. 19-21, and "they

that practise these things shall not inherit the kingdom of **God.** "

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT.

Now let us listen to the following exhortation, " Be not drunken with wine wherein is riot; but be rilled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to God even the Father. " (Eph. v.) God can only fill empty vessels, and it is only as we are self-emptied of fleshly ways that we can be filled with the Spirit. From the Scripture before us it appears that being filled with the Spirit will show itself in outward manifestations; being carried away from ourselves we shall give utterance to matter that the Spirit has taught us from the Scriptures, and singing one to another, and **a** thankful grateful spirit will possess us.

In Acts ii., when filled with the Spirit, " They began to speak with other tongues " (**a** gift which appears to have ceased from the Church).

Again in Acts iv., after prayer, the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and they spake the Word of God with boldness.

And when the question of serving tables and ministering to the widows arose in Acts vi. the disciples were told to choose men full of the Holy Spirit.

Was it not because Barnabas was **a** good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith that much people were added unto the Lord in Acts xi. ?

The disciples at Iconium were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

Instances could be multiplied, but these will suffice to show that those whom God used in the early churches were those who were filled with the Spirit. And that which was true then is equally true now. •

" Quench not the Spirit. " (1 Thess, v.) We may quench the Holy Spirit in ourselves and in others. In ourselves by not doing and saying what the Spirit would have us. Have we not sometimes been exercised to give out **a** hymn or to read some portion of God's Word, or do some act, and we have hesitated to do so though we were assured it would be most fitting at that time. God the Holy Spirit passed us by as unwilling vessels, and He touched another heart who responded

to that touch, and he had the joy of being moved and led by the Holy Spirit and gave God joy in so doing.

Quenching the Holy Spirit in others may be easily done by discouraging any of the Spirit's operations through them. Feeble and failing efforts in younger brethren should be encouraged, if they have grace and humility, lest they be hindered through any lack of sympathy on our part.

SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT.

Peter, writing his letter to the sojourners of the Dispersion, says " E l e c t according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. " (1 Peter i. 2.) The sanctification (or setting apart) mentioned here appears to be a progressive one, as it is " unto obedience. " These to whom Peter wrote were born-again ones out of Israel, and **as** such they would understand to what Peter made reference—the setting apart unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood. This reference was not to the Passover but to the time when Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments, and all the people answered with one voice, and said " All the words which the Lord hath spoken will we do. " And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the mount, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel which offered burnt-offerings and sacrificed peace-offerings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people; and they said " All that the Lord hath spoken will we do and be obedient. " And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said " Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words. " Ex. xxiv. 3-8.

The blood of sprinkling enjoined upon the people obedience to all the words of the Book of the Covenant. The Altar, the Book and the People were bound together by the sprinkled blood of the Burnt-Offerings and Peace-Offerings which the young men of Israel offered. (Heb. ix. 18-20.)

How solemn is the truth that for the people to break away

from the words of the Book was also to break away from the blood-sprinkled Altar which bound them to the Book. Now let us ask ourselves, what is the sanctification of the Spirit? what is the blood of sprinkling which enjoins our unquestioning obedience to the written Word of God? Moses applied the blood to the altar, to the book, and the people, thus setting them apart unto obedience. And is it not on the basis of the sprinkled blood of Him who was God's Burnt-Offering and Peace-Offering, who was wholly for God in life and death, whose obedience to God can only be measured by " the death of the cross, " that obedient ones are set apart? It is on the basis of this Burnt-Offering that the Spirit sanctifies us unto obedience by means of the Truth. " Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy Word is truth. " (John xvii.) This is what we have come to, " The blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. " We are saved not to be self-pleasers, not to go where we like, not to do **as** we like, not to do things under the plea, " My conscience does not condemn me, " but to be obedient children, to learn to please God in all things according to His Word. " As obedient children " we are not to fashion ourselves according to this world, but as He which has called us is holy so are we to be in all manner of living.

THE SPIRIT'S YEARNING CRY.

The book of God opens with the Spirit brooding over the face of the waters, and closes with the Spirit's yearning cry to the Lord Jesus to " Come. " " I come quickly " had been twice repeated by our Lord, and He announces *Himself* as " The Bright and Morning Star. " Immediately, the Spirit in association with the Bride says " Come " to the Bridegroom, and they in turn seek to waken up every sleeping saint, " *He* that heareth, " and exhort the individual believer to say " Come. " Then, knowing the judgments that are to fall upon this doomed world, and the eternal punishment of the lost, they eagerly turn round and invite " Him that is athirst " to " Come, " and the invitation is widened and pressed home, " He that will, let him take of the water of life freely. " (Rev. xxii.) Thus may it be our blest portion to know the communion of the Holy Spirit that we may send a responsive cry to Him that sits on the Father's right hand, and say " Yea, come, Lord Jesus. " Amen. J. DORRICOTT.

ABRAHAM'S OFFERING.

(Continued from page 126.)

IT was not until late in Abraham's life and after he had been well trained in God's school that he was chosen for the high honour of exemplifying typically the sacrifice of the Son of God by the offering up of his son Isaac. It could not be expected that a raw recruit could endure such a test; a veteran who had proved his steadfastness in earlier engagements must be chosen for such a great yet blessed trial of faith. How important to be ready, and consequently how necessary to progress step by step in the earlier stages, so that a condition of preparedness is reached when the supreme trial comes.

It was a trial of his affection for his son as well as a test of his faith in God. Observe the words in Genesis xxii., "Take now thy son, thine only son, whom thou lovest, even Isaac." Could language be chosen more calculated to touch his heart and render the trial more severe? How gladly he had received the promises which depended on Isaac for their fulfilment! Had it not been said "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," and yet the word of God was plain and unmistakeable, "Offer him up." 'Tis not for faith necessarily to reconcile apparently conflicting statements; it but requires to know assuredly that God has spoken. As to how God will fulfil His promises, what means He will employ, is His concern alone. To question God's ability is to touch His Godhead—that which is essential to Him as God—and therefore must be condemned. To stand in doubt of His willingness is permissible except where we have His promise, and *then* we know that He is not only able but willing and the result is sure.

It is not opposed to the above to say that Abraham, viewing firstly the promise concerning Isaac, and secondly the requirement of his sacrifice, counted on God to do what was absolutely unknown before, even to raise him up from the dead. If no other means existed God could and would do even that, the simple conclusion being that "He who had promised was able also to perform."

The language of Hebrews xi. 17 suggests how completely in spirit Abraham consummated the sacrifice; he "offered up

Isaac. " Soon his faith was rewarded as he beheld the ram on the altar and Isaac standing beside it as one risen from the dead.

The particular value of this act of faith, and the purpose of it, are seen in the death of Christ. He, even more than Isaac, was the subject of promise. Of Him " Moses in the law and the prophets did write, " and when He at length came, though His coming, like that of Isaac, was seemingly delayed, there was a goodly number of faithful ones waiting for Him. To Him were gathered a company of disciples to whom (as to Peter) the Father revealed Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God. These looked to Him to redeem Israel, to bring in the Kingdom, and to effect the fulfilment of the promises, whether relating to Him as the Son of Abraham, Son of David, or Son of Man. What consternation then seized upon them as they saw Him yielding to His foes and led off to death, and when at last He yielded up His Spirit we see them utterly crushed and hopeless. Did all despair in that dark hour, when they were weeping and lamenting and the world was rejoicing ? It certainly appears as though the faith of the eleven had failed, and also that of the women—though their love remained, and perchance also something of hope. But were there none who, like Abraham, accounted that God was able to raise Him from the dead ? And yet resurrection in their time was not quite an unheard of thing, and moreover had not the Lord told them that the third day He would rise again ? If then *they* failed to believe, what shall we say of Abraham who trusted in God in that early day ? Is he not well called " the father of the faithful " ?

It is a joy to note that the sacrifice of Isaac, which threatened (as it appeared) to frustrate the promises of God, became the occasion for their confirmation, for it was not until that sacrifice was consummated that God interposed with an oath (Gen. xxii. 15), and in like manner it was only after Christ had died and had been raised that God swore with an oath " Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, " so guaranteeing the fulfilment of the promises, and affording strong encouragement (by reason of His word and His oath) to all who believe.

May we be ready when it may please God to test us !

SPECIAL NOTICES.

THE usual New Year special meetings for the ministry of the Word will be held (if God permit) as undernoted. Prayer is requested that God's blessing may be realized. Saints and ministering brethren are heartily invited.

ABERDEEN. —In Thistle Hall, 11 Belmont Street, on December 31st, 1911; 1st and 2nd January, 1912.

BATHGATE. —In the Masonic Hall, Jarvey Street, on Tuesday, 2nd January, from 11 a. m. till 7. 30 p. m., with intervals at 12. 30 p. m. and 4. 30 p. m. (The Masonic Hall is much more suitable than the last hall used).

CLYDEBANK. —In the Borough Library Hall, Hall Street, on Thursday, 4th January, from 2 p. m. till 7 p. m., with interval from 4 p. m. till 5 p. m.

COWDENBEATH. —In Corona Hall, Stenhouse Street, on Wednesday, 3rd January, from 11 a. m. till 7. 30 p. m., with intervals.

EDINBURGH. —In Buccleuch Parish Halls, Buccleuch Street, on Monday, 1st January, from 2 p. m. till 8 p. m., with interval from 4 p. m. till 5 p. m.

GLASGOW. —In the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, on Monday, 1st January, 1912. From 10 a. m. till 11 a. m., praise and prayer. From 11 a. m. till 1 p. m., ministry. From 1 p. m. till 2 p. m., interval. From 2 p. m. till 3 p. m., answering of written questions. From 3 p. m. till 4 p. m., ministry. From 4 p. m. till 5 p. m., interval. From 5 p. m. till 7. 30 p. m., ministry.

GREENOCK. —In Bank Street Meeting Room, on Saturday, 6th January, 1912, from 2. 30 p. m. till 7. 30 p. m., with interval from 5 p. m. till 5. 45 p. m.

MOTHERWELL. —In the Masonic Hall, Hope Street, on Wednesday, 3rd January, from 2. 30 p. m. till 8 p. m., with interval from 4. 45 p. m. till 5. 30 p. m.