

# YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

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### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

##### SECTION I.—HEBREWS 1.

From GLASGOW.—A master-writer, in addressing Hebrews—those who had been carefully trained in the observation of the law and were well acquainted with the words of the prophets, having " the hope of the promise given unto the fathers " in their hearts—fittingly commences his treatise with the great subject of God and His spoken word to man.

We are reminded in the first two verses of the scene on the mount of transfiguration, when God, by a voice from heaven, directed the attention and bore witness to, the One who magnified the law and made it honourable, who also justified the prophets, being the fulfilment of their words. A greater than Moses and a greater than Elijah, " This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him." Surely no more faithful expression, no higher authority, no worthier witness, no mightier display of power could be found, than in the Son. The One appointed heir of all things, the maker of the ages, the effulgence of His glory, the image of His substance, the upholder of all things. The writer seems to emphasise these things that the exceeding greatness of the Son, might be realized and compared with that of the prophets.

When God spoke to " the fathers " it was to a people who had been brought for Himself from Egypt, and the " us " to whom the word came through the Son was the continuation of that race, to which God had been constantly speaking through the prophets. In what high esteem, then, was He to be held, who had " made

purification of sins," thus removing for ever that which they knew had remained a barrier between them and the One who is "glorious in holiness," for no prophet, although rightly honoured, had come within measurable distance of making purification by himself.

It is on the basis of such a One having spoken with effect, that the writer proceeds to outline the place of power which is now His, seated "on the right hand of the Majesty on High." Bearing the name of "the Son" He could claim the place of honour, far higher than that of the mightiest of angels and to prove this the writer refers to those passages already spoken by God through the prophets concerning Him and His divinity.

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From LONDON, S.E.—Though the subject of the chapter seemed to us easily recognisable, we found the details really difficult, and this paper will probably be made up of questions we could not solve satisfactorily.

The word "SON" is, surely, the keynote. The whole epistle sets forth His glory in comparison with that of others. Greater than angels, Moses, Joshua, Aaron, Melchisedek and the faithful ones of chapter 11. is our Lord Jesus Christ, yet He gladly associates us with Himself in His majesty, in consequence of which we are exhorted repeatedly throughout the letter to walk worthily of our calling. In this first chapter we are told that God in the old days revealed His will bit by bit by prophets, but now His full glory, yea, His very Self, is declared plainly through One who was no mere prophet, but His own Son. Highly exalted is the Son now, far above the angels—"angels worship at His feet."

Now for our questions—

Verse 2. "At the end of these days." Does this mean "at the conclusion of that dispensation?" "The law was given through Moses : grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

"Spoken unto us in a Son." It was impossible for any or all of the prophets to declare God fully for they did not know Him fully : only a Son could know the heart of the Father, and now "the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared Him."

"Appointed heir of all things." When? One brother thought this might have been on the day Satan rebelled, and that it was the cause of his rebellion.

Verse 3. Some wonderful phrases are contained here, which could not apply to any mortal, and therefore emphasise the deity of the Lord Jesus,

" Upholding all things by the word of His power "; this reminds us of Paul's words at Athens. Did the word of Genesis 1. have an upholding, as well as a creative, power?

" When He had made purification of sins, sat down." Acts 7. 56 shows the Lord standing, and some thought the Lord did not sit down till He had completed the purification of the heavenly things (see Hebrews 9. 23). Others thought He completed the work of purification on the Cross, after which He could say " It is finished." Anyway, the word " sat down " seems to express the entering upon well-earned rest (see Hebrews 4. 10).

This verse and others, such as John 1.18 and 2 Corinthians 4. 6, teach us that we shall never see God apart from Him, but that He is the visible expression of the Almighty One.

Verse 4. " Having become by so much better than the angels "; we could not understand this as it seems to suggest the Lord was not always so much better. The " excellent name " is, of course, " Son."

Verse 5. " This day." When? Would this be when the Lord was appointed heir of all things? " I will . . . He shall"—these words also seem to suggest He and God the Father did not at one time manifest such relationship—we feel we are treading near " holy ground " in saying this.

Verse 6. " When He again bringeth in the first-born ": surely the Authorised Version and the R.V. Margin have the correct rendering " Again, when He bringeth "?

" And let all the angels of God worship Him "; the reference in the margin to this is " Deuteronomy 32. 43, Greek." The R.V. of the Deuteronomy scripture is nothing like this. What is the explanation?

Verse 8. " Of the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is . . ." We suppose the modernists " forget " this verse when they deny the deity of the Lord.

[We have seen a translation which says " God is Thy throne for ever and ever." This, of course, would be useful to a " modernist."]

Verse 9. " Thy fellows." Would these have been the angels?

A lovely chapter, this !

DAVID A. HILL.

[We defer attempting to answer these questions for the present in the hope that answers will be sent in by Corners, or by any who would like to help.]

From BARROW.—The epistle to the Hebrews differs much from the other epistles. There is no formal beginning, and no formal ending [?], as in the case of the epistles to the Corinthians and others where it states " Paul, the Apostle, unto the church of God which is at Corinth, etc., etc." In a letter one naturally looks for : (1) To whom it was written, and (2) from whom it comes. These two points however, are entirely omitted from this book, hence the difficulty in ascertaining definitely who was the author. It has been suggested that Paul was the writer, and from internal evidence there seems to be excellent ground for this assumption. [This is a difficult and highly disputed matter.] Some have thought that this was not an epistle but a treatise and here again internal evidence goes to show that it was indisputably a letter. For instance—

1. They were a church who had suffered persecutions, and had also had sympathy with others who were imprisoned. (Chapter 10. 32-35 ; 6. 10.)

[It does not necessarily mean from the portions cited that the receivers of this letter were together in one church of God—if this is what our friends mean. Many evidences shew that they were in church position, i.e., the house of God, nevertheless.—J.M.]

2. They were in danger of apostacy. (Chapter 5. 11 ; 6. 9.) They had resisted but not unto blood. (Chapter 12. 3-6.)

3. They were not novices, but had been in existence—as a church one would think—for a considerable time. (Chapter 5. 12.) In that time they had teachers, who had gone to be with Christ and they are reminded of such. (Chapter 13. 7.)

4. Certain personal touches are brought in. There is a request to pray for the writer, that he may be restored to them—this indicates that writer and recipients had met before. (Chapter 13. 19.) Also they knew Timothy—a common friend to the writer and to them. (Chapter 13. 23.) This allusion to " Timothy our brother " would suggest that the Apostle Paul was the writer. [But why exactly?] From the above it would seem certain that a certain church was addressed, and not Hebrews in general, and that they knew the writer personally, and also knew his friendship for Timothy.

As we have already stated, the epistle opens in a different manner to the other epistles. The language is sublime, and introduces us at once to the Godhead. Chapter 1. teems with beauty of thought. In little compass it takes us from the eternity of the past,



## THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

(SUGGESTIONS FOR THE HELP OF YOUNGER ONES.)

Seeing that the Old Testament story is very largely drawn upon in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it would be well for all, especially younger ones, as a preliminary to the study of each section, to make a point of refreshing their memories of each PARTICULAR Old Testament incident, character or ordinance, met with in the section. This includes, of course, direct quotations from the Old Testament writings, which should be turned up and compared.

In many cases, too, New Testament similarities should be noted.

The passage in hand will generally give an idea of the scope of the references to the Old Testament, and the particular lesson for which these references are brought up by way of illustration, should always be kept in mind in reviewing- the Old Testament story.

SECTION I. (Chapter 1.) There is, we think, little in chapter 1. over which a very young disciple can spend much time except in the way of memorising.

SECTION II. (Chapter 2. 1 to 3. 6)

1. Verse 2 will bear a good deal of elucidation, from Moses especially.
2. Verses 3 and 4 on the other hand refer to New Testament history.
3. A few striking verses from the rest of the chapter (such as verse 9) might be selected and memorised.
4. The contrasts of the first six verses of chapter 3. could be talked over.

SECTION III. (Chapter 3. 7 to 4. 13.) " My rest." The example of disobedience.

1. Find as much as possible of what is said in the Old Testament about the " Rest " here spoken of.
2. Find whether there were any exceptions to those mentioned in verses 16 and 17 of chapter 3. who came out of Egypt and whose carcasses fell in the wilderness.
3. Memorize verses 11 to 13 of chapter 4.

SECTION IV. (Chapter 4. 14 to 6. 12.) " Named of God a High Priest after the order of Melchizedek."

1. Give the scriptures in the New Testament which speak of the Lord Jesus as Priest.
2. Write an essay on " The Throne of Grace " and " The things that accompany salvation. "
3. In what ways was Melchizedek a type of the Lord Jesus ?
4. Refer to other New Testament scriptures which speak of milk, as in verse 13 of chapter 5.

iii.

5. The parable of fruit-bearing in connection **with** falling away could be studied and compared with similar parables.
6. Verses 14 to 16 of chapter 4. and verse 1 of chapter 5. could be memorized.

SECTION V. (Chapter 6. 13 to 7. 17.) Abraham, Melchizedek, Levi.

1. Write an essay on the meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek, keeping- in mind the points mentioned in the section.
2. Give scripture to show which Tribe the Priests came from, as according to verse 14 of chapter 7. it was not from Judah. Show from scripture what class of people came from Judah.

SECTION VI. (Chapter 7. 18 to 8. 13.) " The Chief Point."

1. Give reasons as shown by New Testament Scriptures for the giving of the Law.
2. Give other New Testament Scriptures where the Lord is spoken of as an Intercessor.
3. Write out the verses in this Epistle where the Lord Jesus is spoken of as Son.
4. Chapter 8. 3. Write a short essay on the offerings which our High Priest requires to offer.

SECTION VII. (Chapter 9. 1 to 28.) The Ordinances of the Old Covenant.

1. Verse 4. Say what you can about the " Tables of the Covenant. "
2. Verse 20. Give Old Testament and New Testament Scriptures which refer to the blood of the covenant.
3. Refer to other New Testament Scriptures which speak of Christ bearing sins.

SECTION VIII. (Chapter 10. 1 to 25.) Great Priest over the House of God.

1. " Lo, I am come to do Thy will." Show as briefly as possible by referring to Scriptures that the Lord Jesus accomplished this at all times.
2. Write a short essay contrasting verses 3 and 17.

SECTION IX. (Chapter 10. 26 to 11. 16.) Living by Faith.

1. Verse 28. Give instances of this with Scripture references.
2. Verse 37. Write a short essay on the coming of the Lord.
3. Write a short account of Abel's offering, especially keeping in mind what is said about it in the section.

SECTION X. (Chapter 11. 17 to 12. 2.) The Great Cloud of Witnesses.

1. Write an account of the offering up of Isaac.
2. Write a paper on verses 25, 26 of chapter 11.
3. Contrast the doings of the Israelites with those of the Egyptians as recorded in verse 29 of chapter 11.

SECTION XI. (Chapter 12. 3 to 29.) " Consider Him." Service well pleasing to God.

1. Give Scriptures which speak of chastening and say what is its object.
2. Give scriptural instances showing how the conduct of one person affects the whole company (as is shown to be possible in verse 15).
3. Write a short essay on the Mediator (verse 24).

SECTION XII. (Chapter 13. 1 to 25.) " Unto Him without the camp."

1. Refer to other New Testament Scriptures speaking- of those who rule.
2. Write a short essay on verse 13.
3. Give other Scriptures which speak of the Lord Jesus as Shepherd. (Verse 20.)

R.T.H.H, and N.A.

[If any Corner produces a noteworthy essay on any of these subjects will the correspondent please favour G.N. with a copy with a view to publication in a suitable place?]

to the eternity of the future. Its grand theme is the Christ, slain, raised, exalted, glorified, His coming to earth again, His unchanging character, and His eternal existence. It places Him equal with God, yet tells us He is God's Son. [This is not a contradiction in terms, be it noted.] It seats Him on His Father's throne, and then tells us concerning His Own throne which is for ever and ever. It proves without a shadow of doubt, the deity and eternity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 1 seems to suggest that those to whom the epistle was addressed, had accepted the message from God to the fathers in the prophets, though very few in Israel accepted the Son from the self-same God. Israel had not denied that "the law was given by Moses," but they certainly refused (as a nation) the "grace and truth" that "came by Jesus Christ" (John 1. 17). The Son is brought prominently before us in Hebrews ; in fact it is the initial note. (Chapter 1. 2, 5, 8. Compare chapter 3. 6 ; 4. 14 ; 5. 5, 8.) With the mention of the Son, the writer associates His portion, His deity, His omnipotence ; then in a startling contrast, His making purification of sins, (all the wonderful gracious acts entailed being left unspoken), then the reader is told of His ascension to the right hand of the Majesty on High. (Compare Philippians 2. 5-11.)

Verse 3, "effulgence." This is much more than the A.V. "brightness." It means diffusing a flood of light, as if from the sun ; yea, a flood of light originating in glory. This takes our minds back again to John 1. 4, 5, and such was the light "that the darkness overcame (R.M.) it not," despite the fact that at the close of His life on earth He said, "This is your hour and the power of darkness." Thank God, it was only transitory.

"The very image of His substance" verse 3. These words elude our finite minds in explanation. He was and is the exact impress (as of a seal in wax) not of His (the Father's) appearance, but of His substance. He is God, or in Scriptural language, "The Word was God." How wonderfully again these two attributes of verse 3 are brought near to us in the Gospel is seen in 2 Corinthians 4. 4, 6. (Compare Colossians 1. 15, 20.) How the great apostle's heart must have glowed with wondering love, as time and time again, when speaking of the deity and majesty of the Lord Jesus, he seems unable to refrain from introducing the Gospel.

Verse 4 gives us a contrast with the angels. He who had been a little lower than the angels (chapter 2.

9) is now become so much better than they, moreover, He hath inherited a more excellent name than they. [This slight paraphrase is misleading.] Theirs may have been excellent, but His more so. This would appear to be more than the name given at His birth (Matthew 1. 21) "Thou shalt call His name Jesus." It was faith in the name that healed the lame man of Acts 3. (also see Acts 4. 10, 12). This too would appear to be the potent name of Acts 10. 43, Luke 24, 47, and John 20. 31. However, Hebrews 1. 4 introduces a further thought—an inherited name—a name He has earned would seem to be suggested in it. [Certainly not earned, for then it would be no inheritance.—J.M.] Is not this also suggested in Ephesians 1. 20, 21, and Philippians 2. 9? And wonder of wonders, He will share the honour with the Overcomer. Revelation 3. 12. ". . . Mine own NEW Name."

Verse 5. "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." Quoted from Psalm 2. 7 and twice repeated in the New Testament in association with the resurrection (see Hebrews 5. 5). [Hebrews 5. 5 deals with priesthood, not resurrection specifically.] This latter scripture, although not giving a specific time, yet joining the words in close relationship with His priestly work (after resurrection undoubtedly.) We would suggest that the "day of begetting" in these instances was the day of receiving back into heaven after resurrection. "The firstborn from the dead" Colossians 1. 18.

[Oh no ! This would make Him Son by resurrection a serious and fatal error. Great, indeed, is the difference between Only-Begotten and Firstborn, and ONLY and FIRST are words of great signification.—J.M.]

This quotation is also used in Acts 13. 33, but the application appears different. The raising up here is to be taken in conjunction with verse 32 and would suggest the incarnation. The words "raised up" are used in the same sense as they are in Acts 3. 22, 26, not a raising from the dead, but, in fulfilment of the prophets, "raised up" as the Messiah to Israel.

Verse 6. The time of "bringing back the firstborn into the inhabited world" (R.M.) we would suggest is at the return of the Lord Jesus to the earth. Arguments to this end are (a) resurrection has already taken place in verse 5 ; (b) "firstborn" is the name given to the Lord Jesus after resurrection ; (c) His coming to the inhabited earth will be as Sovereign Lord taking vengeance on them who obey not the Gospel. (2 Thessalonians 1. 8.)

[Was He not Firstborn of all creation long before incarnation—Colossians 1. 15? I think so.—J.M.]

The quotations in the first of Hebrews can be divided into three heads thus :—1. Verse 5, Resurrection glory, a better name than angels. 2. Verses 6-9, Millennial glory, the object of angels' worship. 3. Verses 10-14, His Eternity. Angels His servants.

J. MCCORMICK.

[1. Is this resurrection glory in verse 5? 2. Is Christ better than angels because He is a resurrected man? There is something far beyond resurrection here, namely, deity. " My Son," says God, " I have begotten Thee." A Son by generation, not by resurrection, and as Son is infinitely higher than angels.—J.M.]

[We are in deep things, especially in verses 4 and 5. Exception can be taken to what is here said on these verses. Surely the more excellent name is " Son," as an eminent scholar says, " in the peculiar and individual sense of the citation " (verse 5). This name belongs to Him " not by ascription nor adoption, but by His very Being itself—and has been ever, and now is, His." At birth, resurrection and in His priesthood we get manifestations of an eternal fact, not some new begetting, unless it be a derived and figurative reference.—G.N.]

From CROMER.—Paul's object in his epistle to the Hebrews appears to be a complete proof of Christ's deity, or His complete association and communion with God. To this purpose, Paul therefore commences with a reference to the One who had spoken to them " of old time, in the prophets." This places the Hebrews in connexion with facts with which they are fully familiar, and subsequently shows how God has employed One greater than the prophets, even his Son, in these last days.

In verse 2 we are reminded of the parable of the vineyard (Mark 12. 1), for God had already sent the prophets, signifying the servants, and had even sent His well-beloved Son. If we continue the parable we see what fate would have overtaken us, if it had not been for God's great and abounding mercy. In connection with the same verse we can profitably refer to John 1. in which we read that " without him was not anything made that hath been made."

What a contrast we get in verse 3. First, we see the Lord Jesus as One who reflects God perfectly, like Him in every respect, and through whom He made the worlds. Then we read that He made purification of sins. What a depth of meaning is contained in these words !

How they imply the grief and agony of the One forsaken by God upon the cross ! Then we read of His return to the glory, and of His just reward, being placed far superior to the angels, by reason of His sacrifice. Proofs of Christ's superiority are then shown, mainly by quotations from the Old Testament, again a book with which the Hebrews were well acquainted and so making these proofs specially applicable to them. This chapter shows far more than any other the deity of the Lord Jesus. We see from verse 7 what wonderful beings the angels must be, but how much more wonderful must the Lord Jesus be. Verse 10 onwards especially emphasises this, and we read in chapter 13. 8 of " Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever."

L. S. LUFF.

### PROVISIONAL STATEMENT, 1925.

DR.	EXPENDITURE.	£.	s.	d.	CR.	INCOME.	£	a.	d.
Printing (including £3 5s. 4d. for 1924).....		50	0	0	Jan., 1925, Cash on hand		2	0	2½
Printing <i>Dec.</i> , 1925, about.....		7	0	0	Cash Collected for Papers and Volumes (includ- ing donations).....	52	2	11	
Postage Expenses, about		4	0	0	Arrears to Collect, about	6	0	0	
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J. ROBERTSON.

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# YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

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### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS 2. 1 TO 3. 8.

From LEICESTER.—The admonition and warning of verse 1 takes us back to chapter 1. with reference to the word spoken. The Word of God spoken unto us, coupled with the One through whom He has spoken, is we judge the great lesson that this epistle sets before us. In the past dispensation the prophets spake the Word of the Lord, but now it is in a Son, and because of the high rank and glory of this Person we are admonished to give the more earnest heed or attention to the things that were heard. "The things that were heard" appear to be the wonderful truths unfolded to the apostles of the Lord by the Lord Himself. These were passed on by the apostles and become in the mind of the writer the authority for the saints in the day he wrote. The writer also proves this authority when he says God also bears witness with them by signs.

There was a big responsibility resting upon all who heard, the Word in the prophets, but far greater is the responsibility of attention to the Word in His Son. The writer states how transgression and disobedience under the law met with a just punishment, and asks how can we escape, if we neglect so great salvation.

It is helpful here to notice who the saints were that received and read this epistle. We judge they were converts of Israel and the Jews, and very possibly covered that nationality in a wide area. We think there is little evidence [None!] that these were outside the fellowship

that existed in their day (as some we believe have suggested). Epistles were (without exception) sent to those in the fellowship. The tendency of these converts to Christianity was to drift back into Judaism, and we think they were likely to fail in their faith and loyalty to Christ as Lord. Hence the object of this epistle is to bring before them the Person and work of the Lord in respect to His divinity, His exaltation, His humanity, His suffering **and** death, His High Priesthood, and so forth, and to show how worthy He is of their hope, faith, love and devotion. Judaism set aside the Christ and the writer tells how it is possible for a child of God to trample under foot the Son of God.

The main object of Satan has always been to keep man away from Christ. How we see this exemplified in the religion of to-day. Not that they leave Him out altogether, because the Sacred Name is necessary, but they fail to honour the Son in one way or another, cutting away beneath their feet the ground upon which security for eternity lies.

How shall we escape? Judgment must first begin at the House of God. If the righteous is scarcely saved (1 Peter 4. 17, 18.) The word neglect in verse 3 is worthy of attention. It is not nearly so strong a word as that used in chapter 10. verse 26. "If we sin **WILFULLY**"—the consequences resulting from such sin are very terrible, nevertheless to neglect so great salvation must bring serious judgment upon a child of God. Neglect may be to esteem lightly or treat with indifference, or to put off, and give other things a preference. As one writes one realises how prone we all are to failure and to drift indeed away from the things we have heard and learned. How often we put others first, yes, and other things—business, prospects, pleasure, self. The judgment seat of Christ, we should understand, will reveal how far we have gone astray or how far we have kept faithful to the Lord Jesus. •

F. JEWELL.

From CLYDEBANK.—We had some discussion in regard to verse 2 and it was stated that we have a contrast throughout this epistle between what was spoken through angels in the past, namely, to the people of God at Sinai, and what God has spoken in His Son.

Acts 7. 53, Galatians 3. 19 were referred to, and the fact that disobedience and transgression are mentioned seems to bear out the thought that the law is here referred

to. On the other hand the law is always spoken of as the law of Moses, who was the mediator of the Old Covenant, and the Voice that shook the earth was the voice of Jehovah, not the voice of angels, although these mighty beings accompany the presence of their Sovereign Master. Lot's wife stands out as an example of disobedience to the word spoken through angels.

However, if we neglect the great salvation which has first been spoken through the Lord and confirmed unto us by them that heard, we shall certainly drift, and fall away from the living God, and become shipwrecked concerning the Faith. The things that were heard, and what the Apostle sent from God has spoken, will never drift or shift. [This includes what the apostles themselves said.]

Verses 5 to 8 bring before us the contrast of an inhabited earth of the past in subjection to angels [Is it not the present scene which is subjected to angels?] and that over which Adam the first man was placed in dominion by the Creator Himself. The three great classes of flesh (see 1 Corinthians 15. 39), were in subjection to the man whom Jehovah God made upright. But it speaks of another day when the inhabited earth shall be in subjection to the Son of Man. But now we see not yet all things subjected to Him.

In that day He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth. (See Isaiah 11.). The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. So that it is not unto angels, but to the One who was despised and rejected of men the inhabited earth to come will be in subjection. He shall wield the sceptre of a righteous government. How precious the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ is brought before us. He was made, He took hold of along with others, of flesh and blood ; He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham, that He might become a kinsman-redeemer and avenger to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil. To buy the field and to buy the pearl of great price, it was necessary for our blessed Lord to leave the throne, to use the market place, and redeem the slaves of sin and Satan. It also behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. The second part of Psalm 22. was referred to, and we believe it brings before us the exaltation of the Christ. " I will declare Thy name unto My brethren ; In the midst of the congregation will I sing Thy praise " (verse 22). " Of Thee cometh My praise

in the great congregation " (verse 25). In verse 30 we have a seed shall serve Him and verse 31 a people born. Could we say that the great Fulfiller of these is seen in Hebrews 2., both in sacrifice, and as a merciful and faithful High Priest for a people sanctified, and partakers of a heavenly calling, owning the authority of Him who is Son over God's House? This first portion of chapter 3. would cast our mind and heart on the excellencies of our Apostle sent from God in chapter 1. and the High Priest who has gone back into the presence of God in chapter 2. Wherefore consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus, who was faithful to Him that appointed Him. We were reminded of the trust (in verse 13) reposed by the Lord in His Father for the children whom He gave, and John 17. 9, 10 was read in this connexion.

CLYDEBANK CAMPER.

[Psalm 22. 22 is true of the Lord's work now among His own. I. My brethren, a term which denominates all the born-again. II. The congregation (i.e., the Church) a term which describes those called out and separated according to God's will (not the Church, the Body) and alas, all those who are His brethren are not in the Church, the Church of living God. But Psalm 22, carries us beyond the present dispensation to Millennial times when " all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord " and so forth. In those days " a Seed shall serve Him," and to following generations the tidings of the Lord's work shall be told.—J.M.]

From GLASGOW.—Chapters 1, and 2. seem to lead up to and *give* reason for the expression contained in the first verse of the 3rd chapter " Holy brethren—consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession—Jesus. As Apostle—the one coming from God with His message and authority, the Hebrews were warned to give heed to what He had said. He had spoken of a salvation complete in every detail and meeting every extremity of circumstance in which man could find himself. Knowing the prominence into which sin had been brought by the law, with its continual demand for offering and its remembrance of sin, they were in a position as none else among men, to appreciate the greatness of that which had been spoken by the Lord and confirmed with such manifestation of power. Their knowledge of the experience of " a just recompense of reward " gave added weight to the warning.

The Old Testament writings were again called in to show God's purpose for man and the position in which

he had been placed, although lower than the angels. The very fact that subjection was not in evidence shewed the man-made distance between God's purpose and man's present position.

The only way in which this state of perfection (entailed in complete salvation) could be possible was in the One, who, having been made man, and being now crowned with glory and honour, had tasted death for every man.

In connexion with chapter 2. 10-18, there seems to be much in common with the words of the Lord contained in John 17.

These verses in Hebrews 2. seem to give a detailed reasoning from different points regarding His position as the merciful and faithful High Priest. To be the perfect leader, in the sense of verse 18, of many sons unto glory, He suffered. The word " sons " seems to convey the idea of inheritance as in Romans 8. 14-17.

Verses 11 and 12 seem to speak of their relationship, having descended from Abraham as in verses 16 and 17, while verses 13 to 15, brought them back to what is contained in verse 9. In the last part of verse 17 is shewn His operation toward God as High Priest on behalf of the people whilst verse 18 speaks of his activities in things pertaining to men.

[Should the distinction between the latter portion of verse 17 and verse 18 not be : I. " Things pertaining to God " (to make propitiation), and II. " Things pertaining to men " (to succour the tempted)? That is, to meet God's claims and to meet our need.—J.M.]

Having brought their minds back to that which they knew concerning the place and office of high priest, the writer calls for consideration of Him who had shewn faithfulness in both capacities and is counted worthy of more glory than Moses, being Son over God's house ; the One whom they had confessed. It is remarkable that their relationship as brethren should again be emphasised this time as " holy " and " partakers of a heavenly calling."

From BARROW.—The things which we have heard in chapter 1. put us into a state of mind to receive that which is written in chapter 2. First the deity of our Lord, now His humanity. His superiority to angels, but here made lower than the angels. Wonderful thought, yet happily true ! He passed by angels, and laid bold of the seed of Abraham (verse 16).

We find some difficulty in the words of verse 2. " The word spoken through angels." It is evident from such

Scriptures as Galatians 3. 19 ; Acts 7. 53 and Hebrews 2. 2 that angels or messengers (which we would suggest in this case were heavenly messengers) played a very prominent part in the giving of the law. What this part was we do not know. ["Written with the finger of God" seems to convey angelic operation.—G.N. Is not the Finger of God the Spirit of God? Comparing Matthew 12. 28 with Luke 11. 20, I think they are interchangeable terms. Other scriptures too help to this conclusion.—J.M. I have thought that, to an extent we do not realise, God does things by His agents. There are those mighty in strength who fulfil His word, harkening unto the voice of His word. Hence (as a suggestion) the engraving of a stone is something God could delegate to an angel, who is then called, on the lines of finite minds, the finger of God. But J.M.'s comment is apposite.—G.N.] In distinction to this we are told that Jehovah spake to Moses mouth to mouth (Numbers 12. 8). Galatians 3. 19 says that the law was given through angels at the hand of a mediator (Moses).

The application given in this chapter to the 8th Psalm differs from the primary application of that particular Psalm, a perusal of which will shew that the comparison is between the heavens, the moon and the stars which God has created, and man, the worm of the dust,—to whom God in a PAST DAY gave dominion over all living creatures (see Genesis 1. 28). [Can we doubt that the primary application of Psalm 8. is to the Lord Jesus and not to Adam? I trow not, in the light of what is said about "the babes" in verse 2, and Matthew 21. 16. "The Son of Man," which Adam never was, verse 4. Hebrews 2. gives the true interpretation and application and shows the Lord to be the One prophesied of therein. Of the beauties of this Psalm we have neither time nor space to speak now.—J.M.] But now these same words are taken and applied to the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, in a COMING DAY, God will subject all things. (Hebrews 2. 8 ; 1 Corinthians 15. 25 ; Psalm 110. 1 ; Hebrews 10. 13 ; Ephesians 1. 21 and 22.) But though for the time being we do not see all things subject to Him, yet "we behold Him . . . crowned with glory and honour" (verse 9)—God's answer to the crown of thorns (Philippians 2. 9-11.) Then the writer goes on to show the humanity of the Lord Jesus in a very clear and marked way. Speaking of the Sanctifier and the sanctified, he says they are all of one (verse 11) ; "for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren (see verses 12 and

13). " Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also in like manner partook of the same " (verse 14 ; Hebrews 10. 5.) And all this was, that He might die, and thus through death bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. So it is, that the words of Psalm 8. are literally true in His case. It will be a man to whom the " inhabited earth " (R.M.) will be in subjection ; as it is also a Man who is now in the presence of God to be a faithful High Priest. He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham (the faithful one), that He might be a faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God. His work as such is a glorious work. He is the meeting place for the sins of His people. For having been tempted Himself, He can succour those that are tempted. Let us then, not refuse to come by Him in this character for how oft are we tempted, and how oft we need succour. We might well with such thoughts upon our hearts be called upon to consider Him in connexion with coming to God.

Chapter 3. 1. Jesus is the Apostle of our confession, that is, the sent One. He is also the High Priest of our confession, that is the One Who has returned to the glory. And now His relationship to God's House is brought to our notice. In this connexion He is contrasted with Moses, who was faithful in God's house. But this One hath been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, for Moses was but a servant ; but Christ as a Son is over God's House. " Whose house are we if we hold fast the glorying of our hope firm unto the end " (Hebrews 3. 6).

Thus let us take heed, lest haply we drift, and we should also bear in mind the warning of chapter 2. 1 " Wherefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things that were heard."

J. MCCORMICK.

From LONDON, S.E.—The " therefore " with which the chapter commences was thought to have been written in view of what the writer had said in chapter 1. The Lord Jesus Christ was so very much greater than angels that we should give so much greater attention to what He has to say. Neglect of the word spoken through angels " brought judgment," (see Numbers 15. 31 for example), how much more so neglect of the word spoken by Christ, the Son of the Living God—Jehovah of Hosts (see Hebrews 10. 28). We take it that the word spoken through angels was the law. (See Acts 7. 38, 53, and Galatians 3. 19.)

Verse 3. " We." This epistle was written to born-again ones as is clearly shown by a review of the letter as a whole (chapter 3- 1 ; 10. 19, for example.) This being so it seems certain that the " great salvation " spoken of in this verse means something more than salvation from the power of sin—but rather, having been redeemed from sin's power let us, in view of our future salvation from its presence, seek by God's grace to be redeemed from its practice now, or judgment will follow—not that of Egypt, but of the wilderness.

Verse 4. " Gifts of the Holy Spirit." We suggest that these gifts vary—as the talents in the parable Matthew 25. 14-30. (See Ephesians 4. 7-11.)

Verse 5. " The world to come." In view of verses 6-8 does this mean the " inhabited earth " (see R.V. margin)? Verses 6-8, we take it, refer to man as he left God's hand—perfect, but in the latter part of verse 8 we see the story of the result of man's disobedience, the created things not now being in subjection to man.

[Yes, " the world " is " the unhabited earth " into which God will bring His First-born (Hebrews 1. 6) and over which the Lord shall reign ; and in which the angels, shall then have no part in government and administration. Verses 6-8 refer to " The Son of Man," the Lord Jesus.—J.M.]

Verse 9 contrasts this state of things with the exalted position of Christ. The revised rendering of verse 9 caused some thought and we agreed that the sense of this verse appeared to be " But we behold Him, Jesus (who hath been made a little lower than the angels that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man) because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour " (see Philippians 2. 8-9).

[This paraphrase is wrong, the crowning with glory and honour was before His death, " that by the grace of God He should taste death for every man." Read this in the light of Matthew 11. 27 and notice the treatment of Him, who had all things, by men in the cities of Galilee. Again see what He did, to whom the Father gave all things, with water in a basin He began to wash the feet of His disciples. (John 13.) And yet again " The Son of Man," the One with the right to reign, suffering and dying and tasting death for every man, not to gain glory and honour thereby, but having it already. Then we shall bow our hearts before such amazing grace of God.—J.M. If verses 6-8 are considered it will be seen that

the writer says about them : " Verse 8 is not yet manifestly accomplished, but the first two items in verse 7 have been—we behold Jesus. . . . " As the second Adam, the Head of the race, Jesus was made lower than angels and crowned with glory and honour. These are the first steps in the reinstatement of Man. 2 Peter 1. 17 refers to a manifestation of what had been true all along.—G.N.]

Verse 13 also caused some exercise. It is the Lord Jesus speaking here and we thought that the divine Son puts His trust in God, and we put our trust in God and thus are brethren of the Lord Jesus Christ. Are we correct on this point or is the verse capable of another interpretation?

[We are not His brethren as "the divine Son." He has no brethren in that relationship, He is " Only Begotten." Chapter 2. of Hebrews deals in the main with Him who is " the Son of Man " and as such He says " My brethren " and we on our part do well, to think of Him, nevertheless, as " our Lord."— J.M.]

Questions.—When was the devil given the power of death? We thought that it was when man fell, for we read in Romans 5. 12, " as though one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin "; death being unknown before the entrance of sin.

[I do not know that it is right to speak of the devil as being given the power of death as though this was given him by God. The Lord's words in John 8. 44 are helpful " He was a murderer from the beginning " and to deal with a murderer the Lord came. Even the murder of the Lord Himself was a deeply laid plan by the devil, but such a death on Calvary was the devil's undoing.—J.M.]

verse 17. " The people " we take it are the, same as " the brethren " spoken of in the early part of the verse? The Israelite of old had to present himself at the door of the tent of meeting before offering sacrifice, that is, he had to show the desire and in the same way we think we have to show our desire to take advantage of Christ's propitiatory work. (1 John 2. 1, 2.)

[" The brethren " and " the people " are riot equivalent terms. Brethren is a term describing origin and relationship and is, I judge, true of all born of God : but the people shows God's children together under divine authority with collective responsibilities and enjoying collective privileges.—J.M.]

Chapter 3- opens with a glorious " trumpet call " to

" consider Him." After having reviewed the past glory with the Father and the humble position to which He descended, let us " consider the Apostle (sent One—sent by God) and High Priest (in God's presence for us) of our confession, even Jesus." We thing " confession " here is better than " profession "—for there is plenty of the latter abroad to-day but not much of the former. [Profession has of course acquired a bad sense.]

The thought with which we concluded was in verses 3-6. Moses did what was right in God's House as a servant (Numbers 12. 7) but Christ is a Son over the House, " whose house are we." Wonderful thought, bound together with Christ. [" Bound together under Christ " rather than with Him. He is over us in God's house.—J.M.] The " if " in verse 6, suggests that it is possible to lose a great deal of " present " blessing as well as the future " Well done," if we fail to grasp our present opportunities. " Hold fast that which thou hast, that no one take thy crown" (Revelation 3. 11").

GEO. E. SOULSBY.

From PORTSMOUTH.—In chapter 2. the contrast between the Lord Jesus Christ and the -angels, commenced in chapter 1., still forms the central argument. The law was spoken through angels ; the present salvation was first spoken by the Lord, who has already been demonstrated to be far above any angel. The world to come will not be subject to the angels but to the Son, who has received especial honour because He was for a little while lower than the angels. The Son became man in order that He might bring many brethren in, to share His glory, and also that He might be to them a merciful and faithful High Priest.

Chapter 3. commences with another contrast and comparison, this time with Moses. Moses was faithful as a servant in God's House ; the Lord Jesus is faithful but as a Son over God's House, of which the author's readers form a part.

One or two verses have also been considered in greater detail. In Hebrews 2. 2 we are told that the word was given through angels. Stephen states (Acts 7. 38) that an angel spoke with Moses and the elders in Mount Sinai and gave them the living oracles. From Galatians 3. 19 we learn that the law was " ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator." The New Testament, therefore, makes plain, what is not revealed in the Old, that a mighty angelic Messenger came between God and Moses when the law was given on Mount Sinai.

[Care must be exercised to **distinguish between** " The Angel of the Covenant," (also called " The Angel of His presence "), " the Angel which spake to Him on the Mount Sinai," (which is the Lord Jesus) and angels concerning whom Hebrews 2. 2 speaks.—J.M.]

We are not clear whether chapter 2. 5 implies that angels once had dominion over this world. That this was the case seems to be often inferred from this Scripture taken in conjunction with some of the statements of Ezekiel 28., 31. and 32. but it does not seem necessarily involved in these scriptures.

Chapter 2. 10—" the Captain of their Salvation," has brought to our minds the incident of Joshua 5. 14 where the Captain of the Lord's Host appears to Joshua.

E. J. EVERY.

From BRANTFORD.—The opening of this chapter brings before us another contrast. Showing forth the excellencies of His work as compared with that of angels. We suggest that this " salvation " spoken of in this chapter is a daily salvation from all sin and defilement (see 2 Timothy 3. 14-17). We believe that verse 4 in general refers to Acts 2. Would verse 5 lead us to conclude that the past world was subject to angels.

[Verse 5 has to do with the government of the inhabited earth not with a pre-Adamic date.—J.M.]

There seems to be a contrast between the first Adam and the last Adam in the citation from the 8th Psalm. The first Adam failed, whereas the last Adam succeeded, in accomplishing the will of God.

Would we be right in saying that the Lord was made a little lower, or for a little while lower, than the angels because He subjected Himself to death? (Chapter 2. 9.) [I am not certain that the idea of time should be introduced here. The Lord became a Man, and in His being man in that sense He is lower than the angels. His being greater and better than angels is not because of exalted manhood, but because He is Son (see Hebrews 1. 4, 5.—J.M.) The perfection of the Servant was shown forth through the suffering and trials He triumphantly passed through. Although He was the perfect One before this, these trials only showed forth His perfection in a greater degree. Thus, He will inherit an added glory.

The following verses bring before us the great condescension of the Lord Jesus Christ. Well might the hymn writer say :—

Through weakness and defeat  
 He won the meed and crown,  
 Trod all our foes beneath His feet  
 By being trodden down.

We also see in verse 17 the priestly character of the One who has passed through temptations and trials. Who then is more able to sympathise with man during his small trials than He who passed through greater trials, apart from sin?

Attaining manhood's ripeness  
 Midst sinners sinless He ;  
 And though in human likeness  
 From human errors free.

R. MCKAY.

From CROMER.—The first verse reminded us of the preface to Luke's gospel, especially the words " those things which are most surely believed among us." The first few words in verse 2 bear a special significance when viewed from the Jewish standpoint. **The** word spoken by angels was the law as given through Moses, ample confirmation of which is given in other scriptures such as Acts 7- and Galatians 3. 19.

Verse 3 is evidently a continuation of verse 1. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," and " lest haply we drift away from them."

The word spoken unto us came through the Lord Jesus and later by those that heard Him. We have been saved from the penalty of sin but it is possible for us to come under the power of sin ; to gain the victory we must continually heed the word of the Lord and the words of the apostles to whom He chose to reveal His will.

Verse 8. The inheritance of the Son was that " He left nothing that is not subject to them." " But now (that is, to-day) we see not all things subjected to Him," for the devil is the prince of this world ; " the whole world lieth in the Evil One " (1 John 5. 19).

The marginal reading seems more applicable in verse 9 " for a little while lower than the angels because of the suffering of death." It necessitated the taking of the body prepared by God for Him before He could give His body for us. We see Him now crowned with glory and honour by God [Did not this crowning take place before the Cross with a view to the suffering of death?] but in a coming day Philippians 2. will be fulfilled and " every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Verse 11. He (the Lord Jesus) that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of One (God, the Father). [Hebrews 2. is not dealing with the truth of the Lord's relationship to the Father as " the Only Begotten." He is here as " the Son of Man." When He says " My brethren " it is not as one who is the Only Begotten but as one who became a man and by being a partaker of blood and flesh can truly claim that relationship with sanctified ones.—J.M.] A wonderful truth—He was " the Only Begotten of the Father " but we also have been begotten again and made sons of God " through the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever." Contemplate His wondrous love !—He is not ashamed to call us brethren—and, what is more, He associates Himself with us in worship to God, and He revealed the wondrous character of God to our puny minds.

Verse 7. " It behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren," reminds us of Joseph (compare Genesis 37.). " A merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God." What should we do without the Lord Jesus, for He is the only man upon the throne of God. He is the Mediator—the Daysman. [A Mediator is much more than a Daysman, that is, one who gives a decision in a dispute or difficulty and the office of Mediator and High Priest are distinct, though both are held to-day by our blessed Lord.—J.M.] The High Priest's duty is not alone to offer sacrifices but to intercede for His brethren. He is like a faithful and mighty Intercessor and His prayers are continuously going up to God for us—happy moment when His and ours coincide. To Peter : " I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." One cannot help but think of the Lord's prayer in John 17. In verse 18 we get that beautiful assurance, " He is able to succour them that are tempted."

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—From verse 3 we gather that the writer of this epistle was one who was not with the Lord during His life here on earth, as he writes of that which was spoken through the Lord being " confirmed unto us by them that heard." This seems to strengthen the probability that the epistle was written by the Apostle Paul. [But it might be said exactly opposite. For Paul's gospel was received direct and in one sense required no confirmation.]

The point of first importance put before us in this epistle is the necessity of giving heed to God's speakings through His Son, first because of who He is (as we read

principally in the first chapter) and because of **what He now is, which** is the point reached at the end of the second chapter.

We are referred back to the word spoken through angels, which we understand was the law of Moses. It is mainly from the New Testament that we learn the law was ordained by angels by the hand of a mediator (Acts 7. 53 and Galatians 3. 19). At the giving of the law in Exodus 19. the angels are not mentioned.

This law was for a time given effect to, its statutes and its judgments were rigidly executed, every transgression receiving a just recompense of reward. As at the giving of the law in Sinai the people beheld, in great fear and trembling, the signs that God was speaking, as in this chapter we have the threefold witness that God has spoken.

- (1) Spoken through the Lord.
- (2) Confirmed unto us by them that heard.
- (3) God also bearing witness with them by signs and wonders.

Verse 5 would seem to suggest that the world, before the creation of man, was subject to angels (see Ezekiel 28.) and this had ended in a failure. [This does not refer to a pre-Adamic state.] But when God created man, he no longer allowed the angels to have dominion over all the earth but entrusted it to man—Adam (Genesis 1. 26), and in spite of man's failure, God shall yet subject the world to come to the Man in whom God found no failure, the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven. Thus we have here one reason why the Son should become man.

In verse 14 we further find that He partook of blood and flesh, that He might shed His blood, and through death, bring to nought him that had the power of death, and deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. The eternal truth that apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission (Hebrews 9. 22) could therefore be fully answered only by the Lord Jesus becoming like one of us, sin apart.

The third purpose of His lowly stoop which we have in this chapter is the one with which we shall mainly be occupied in the study of this epistle, viz., that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. None but a man could be High Priest, whether after the law, or after the power of an endless life. (Hebrew 7. 16.)

Thus it behoved Him, whose delight was **with** the

sons of men, to be made like unto His brethren, ere He could have the joy of saying—

" I will declare Thy name unto My brethren

In the midst of the congregation will I sing Thy praise."

" I will put my trust in Him."

" Behold, I and the children which God hath given me."

N. G. ADKINS.

### SECTION I.—HEBREWS 1. (Concluded).

(Note.—We have not printed quite all that arrived for Section I. —quite unavoidably late in most cases—because some regard must be paid to considerations of space.)

From BRANTFORD, ONTARIO.—This epistle has been called the Leviticus of the New Testament. It is very interesting to note the many references to the Levitical order of things. It is a treatise of the new order of things, the old things having" past away.

The writer of this epistle directs our finite minds to the speakings of the Infinite. This book is full of comparisons and contrasts. The first contrast we see is in verses one and two, where God's ways of speaking- to man in the past and in the present are shown forth.

As we read the books of the Old Testament, we are bound to see how many times God did speak to man. The law, the prophets, and the psalms, are full of speakings. Instructions, warnings, entreaties and commandments are met with all the way through.

God tried many times and in various ways to impress upon His creature man what was required of him. After all the different ways and means had been tried without the desired effect being produced, God has resorted to another means of speaking and that is, through His Son.

He that keeps the stars, planets and the whole great universe in order, suffered Himself on man's behalf to come to this sin-stained earth. The man He created, He even came down to die for. What more could He do? Seeing such a wonderful One is speaking, should we not then give an attentive ear to His words of love? Surely this last word of God to us is His best word.

In chapter 1. 3, 4, we see the glorification of the One who glorified God through an accomplished work (see John 17. 1-5). This glory far exceeds the glory of angels.

We suggest the later clause of verse 8 refers to the Millennial reign of the Son of God. It will be an impartial reign, where rich and poor will receive justice, at the hand of the Lord of all the earth. This is in striking contrast to the rule of man heretofore.

In verse 9 we have the Father's testimony to the Son. He, as the perfect Servant, showed forth perfect love and perfect hatred. The works of creation are shown forth in verses 10 to 12 and are contrasted with the unchangeable nature of God. Hence the words: " They shall perish; but Thou continuest." Verse 14 causes us to think of Psalm 34. 7.

R. MCKAY.

From LEICESTER.—Putting on one side for the moment all consideration of the possible authorship of this epistle we realise the strong motive that urged the writer to such a wonderful unfolding of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was evidently necessary that the first-love of these Hebrew believers should be rekindled and that the tendency to fall back on Jewish practice and doctrine should be checked. Whilst no salutation is given, we suggest that "the epistle was written to those who had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ from amongst the Jews.

The opening of the epistle is unique both in character and appeal. We note the absence of any address or salutation, the omission of any narrative or commendation respecting those to whom it is written. With what dignity and force do the opening words strike the ear and heart. No reasoning, no argument, no trifling with preconceived ideas, are here; instead, bold majestic statements. How becoming are such words to the theme of setting before the Hebrews a true conception of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their hearts are stirred by recalling- their privilege of holding the oracles of God, and to the cherished fact of the inspiration of the prophets is linked the stupendous truth that God has later spoken in (His) Son. To this is added a description of His greatness and authority, the appointed heir of all things, maker of the worlds, effulgence of God's glory, image of God's substance, upholder of all things, who made purification of sins and is now seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high, inheriting a more excellent name than angels.

Angels and men are brought in to contrast their claims and rank with the dignity of the Son of whom it is said " Let all the angels of God worship Him " and " anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows." Yet what amazing- truths lie beyond. This one made lower than angels, tasting death for every man. Though crowned with glory and honour He is Apostle and High Priest of our confession. As Son over God's house He transcends Moses the faithful servant; eclipses Abraham as a forerunner entering within the veil; crowns the priestly order of Melchizedek by the power of an endless life; is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. [But do our friends mean to introduce death into the priesthood of Melchizedek when it is said " But there one, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth " ? Care must be taken even in eulogy.—J.M.] Surely the hearts of the Hebrews must have enlarged towards Him as they heard of such a High Priest on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, in the tabernacle not made with hands. What an encouragement to their endurance of suffering as they look off unto Him the princely leader of the faithful worthies from Abel to their own times. What enlightenment for mind and heart to learn that Sinai, Zion and Jerusalem fade away before the heavenly Jerusalem and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant and a kingdom whereby we may offer service well pleasing to God. Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise to God continually, to whom be the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Would not their hearts respond—" But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition ; but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul? And shall not we also praise God for such an enthralling revelation of the Son to us, occasioned by their

condition, as we seek patiently and prayerfully to observe every wonder and virtue as the succeeding chapters of the epistle unfold our blessed Lord Jesus Christ?  
F. JEWELL.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—In the closing verses of the Gospel by Mark our eyes are directed to the heavens where we see the Lord Jesus, Who, having emptied Himself and taken the form of a servant and known the deep humiliation of the cross, has now been highly exalted and has sat down at the right hand of God. In the epistle to the Hebrews we shall now consider Him in this place of exaltation and seek to know more of His present work in the presence of God for us.

The first chapter deals almost exclusively with the incomparable greatness of the One through whom God has now spoken, for it is only as we realize WHO the blessed Person of the Lord Jesus Christ really was that we shall give the most reverent attention to what God has said through Him, and appreciate more fully the truth of the Divine message given to us in the ensuing chapters of this epistle.

These last days are days of inestimable privilege as compared with the days of old because we have the more perfect revealing of God's character through all that was done and spoken by His Son. When considering the life of the Lord Jesus we saw something of the outshining of God's glory. "We beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." But verses 2 and 3 tell us He was all this originally "who being the effulgence of His glory," or as we have it in Philippians 2. 6. "Who, being in the form of God," and in the simple language of John "The Word was God."

These introductory verses also tell us of His WORK, first in creation and then in purification of sins, for He is now being contrasted with the angels, whose inferiority is so evident. Being created beings they cannot create life, nor has God ever spoken of any of them as He did of the Lord Jesus Christ "Thou art My Son."

In the epistle to the Colossians, chapter 1., we have confirmation of what we get here in Hebrew, the Lord Jesus being spoken of as "The image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation . . . all things have been created through Him and unto Him . . . and in Him all things consist."

Such testimony leaves us in no doubt as to the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

While we cannot interpret divine relationship by the human, it is suggested that He is spoken of as "My Son" because, in relation to God the Father, He possesses all the attributes of an only son, such as likeness in form and nature and heir of all His Father's things.

[He is Son because God says "I have begotten Thee" He is a Son and never was a child (I speak of His Godhead) and always had the full attributes of deity in nature, form, glory and all else that surpasses our ken.—J.M.]

The function of the angels is here made clear, although perhaps not always realized. The angels of God WORSHIP the Son, and they are ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation, or as in Psalm 34. 7, "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them."

## QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From CROMER.—In Hebrews 1. 6 there is an apparent reference to a statement " And let all the angels of God worship Him." We cannot find out where this comes from, as there seems to be some error in the marginal note. Could you please enlighten us?

## ANSWER.

From BARROW.—R.V.M. [Reference, not " Margin "] gives reference " Cited from Deuteronomy 32. 43 (Gk.)." " Gk." means the Septuagint or LXX. translation of the Hebrew manuscripts into the Greek language. [3rd Century B.C. and onwards]. Deuteronomy 32. 43, in the LXX. translation, contains the quotation given in Hebrew 1. 6. The Hebrew version [not version, which means translation, but text] of this scripture, from which our English version is made, entirely omits the words here quoted.

[Alford says : " The translators (LXX.) probably found them in their Hebrew text (of Deuteronomy 32.) which, especially in the Pentateuch, appears to have been an older and purer recension than that which we now possess.]

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Chapter 1. verse 5. " This day have I begotten Thee." What is the day here referred to, and what is the meaning of " begotten " ?

## ANSWER.

[The reference here is to facts that lie outside the ambit of time, concerning the nature of which God has made no revelation, and finite beings have no knowledge. It is most holy ground and man should tremble to tread thereon ; or attempt to enquire thereinto. All we know is that the relation between the Infinite and Eternal Father and His Son is not creation but generation in virtue of which the latter sustains the unique title " Only Begotten."—J. M.]

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Chapter 2. verse 9. " Crowned with glory and honour." Does this refer to the exaltation of Philippians 2. ? If not, to what does it refer?

## ANSWER.

[This query is anticipated by the notes on page 16 (which see).]

# YOUNG MEWS CORNER.

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### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION : THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

#### SECTION III.—HEBREWS 3. 1 TO 4. 13.

From KILMARNOCK AND GALSTON.—Section III.  
" Wherefore as the Holy Spirit saith." These words remind us of the scripture in 2 Peter in regard to the prophetic writings " that men spake from God being moved by the Holy Spirit, " and of David's own words in 2 Samuel 23. 2 : " The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was upon my tongue."

The words spoken are words of entreaty " To-day, Oh that ye would hear His voice ! " They are words not for the sinner but for the people of God. They are for those who already have heard God's Voice in the message of the gospel. It was not God's intention in the past to deliver from Egypt to allow to wander in the wilderness, or for them to go their own way. No ; He brought them out that He might bring them in. It is the same to-day. He has redeemed us for a purpose and in order that this might be realized He still continues to speak. May we indeed seek to hear and obey His Voice.

Numbers 14- presents a sad picture to us in the case of the nation of Israel. Before them lies the land of God's promise, into which He desired to bring them, but, alas ! He could not do so because of their unbelief. They had tempted Him at Massah with their words, " Is the Lord among us or not?" and here also is seen a repetition of the same : " Would God we had died in Egypt " ; " Would God we had died in the Wilderness."

They failed to enter in because of their unbelief, and this opportunity which was here held out to them, never came their way again ; their carcasses fell in the wilderness,

With such a picture before us we are called upon to take heed to ourselves lest perhaps there shall be in any of us an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God, and to encourage each other on so long as it is called To-day.

With reference to the 14th verse we were also reminded of Israel in the past when delivered from Egypt, going forth in dependence upon God " By faith they passed through the Red Sea as on dry land." Of such a time God speaks in Jeremiah 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." If they had just continued as they had begun, it would have been well with them. But, alas ! they did not hold the beginning of the assurance firm unto the end, they left their first love, they failed to trust in God and so they failed to enter in. It is only as we seek to hold this firm unto the end that we are become partners of the Christ. This characterized Him. He opened His ear morning by morning to hear. " He was not rebellious nor turned away backward." " From the track He turned not back, He went on to the end."

Unmoved by Satan's subtle wiles  
By suffering, shame and loss ;  
His path uncheered by earthly smiles  
Led only to the Cross.

We should therefore fear, lest we come short, for we also have had good tidings preached to us. The good tidings we understand to refer to God's rest for us in this present day, which we understand to be " The House of God." The good tidings spoken to them did not profit them because they were not mixed with faith in those who heard. So also, to-day, it is on the principle of faith that we form the House of God and will be maintained in this divine position.

We noticed that the word here used for rest was not the same as in Matthew 11. The thought expressed in the word seems to be rest in association with a place. The House of God then is the place of rest for us to-day. We could not find a better place in which to dwell or where our days could be better spent. We quote the words of Genesis 49. 15 in this respect. " He saw a resting-place that it was good, and the land that it was pleasant, and he bowed his shoulder to bear and became a servant under taskwork." We should indeed therefore be diligent to enter into that rest like the Psalmist of

old who said " One thing have I desired of **the Lord, that** will I seek after, that I may dwell in the House of the Lord to length of days." H. PIPER.

From GLASGOW.—The core of this section seems to be contained in chapter 3. 12-14. These are linked up through the " wherefore " of verse 7. with the " Apostle " of verse 1. The writer takes up the words through David, " To-day, if ye shall hear His voice," and demonstrates that the warning then issued, m anticipation of the " Apostle's " appearance, was still effective, in that " To-day," was not closed. The hardened, erring heart of the fathers could be as easily manifested in them, their children, and developed into that falling away from the living God through unbelief.

Against this is set the position of " partakers of (or with) Christ " (which seems to be set forth in John 14. [15.?] 1-4). To those Hebrews it must have meant sharing in His rejection and also as fully in the glory and honour of which he was counted worthy and which was yet to be manifested. The holding fast of their confidence was necessary to that continuous partaking.

The writer then goes on to show that those who fell in the wilderness, through unbelief and resultant disobedience, had been debarred from entering into the rest which God had provided for them. But more than this, God had sworn that they should not enter His rest. Concerning this the writer shews some important points. The rest was that which God had after the completion of works at the foundation of the world. There was the possibility of man entering (verse 6), but it was not given to Joshua to bring them in (verse 8). Therefore God again spoke through David of the danger of hardened hearts, showing the rest as still remaining (verses 7-9). The promise of entering (verse 1) was evidently contained in the " good tidings " (verse 2) and, that the entrance was being experienced in their case, is shown in verse 3. That it was not completely and finally theirs is apparent from the words of verse 1 : " Let us fear lest . . . any one of you should seem to have come short " and " Let us give diligence to enter " (verse 11).

As full entrance was to be obtained by belief and consequent obedience, they were called to " diligence " in "taking heed " in view of *the* living- and active word spoken by the Apostle and of His ability as both Apostle and High Priest to see into the depths of that which re-

mains hidden to all other eyes (chapter 4. 13).

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From CROMER.—Thus far in our study of Hebrews we found it helpful to remind ourselves often of the fact, that it was written to Saints who were once Hebrews. Such would be well acquainted with the Old Testament writings. At the commencement of this section we meet a quotation from the Old Testament (Psalm 95. 7-11). In the light of the quotation the writer of the epistle exhorts the "holy brethren" 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."

Israel was indeed the chosen people of God but the lives of most of the men that came out from Egypt were spoiled for God. Through unbelief in the wilderness they perished on the way to the promised land. We are God's remnant people to-day and the writer of the epistle foresees the possibility of unbelief (loss of faith) creeping in and causing us to fall away from the living God.

Verse 13. These solemn words remind us of the Parable of the Sower, and especially of the seed which fell among the thorns, which, said the Lord, "is he that heareth the word, and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and he becometh unfruitful." (Matthew 13. 22). This, we think, has a connexion with the words of this verse, "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin."

Verse 14. We are partakers of Christ here in this scene. Surely only so long as we "hold fast" and continually feed upon Him. It is possible for us to lose our appetite for Him, and to taste of the world's goods again, as did those children of Israel in the wilderness, because of which God swore that they should not enter into His rest.

Chapter 4. We have connected with the words of the Lord Jesus "I will give you rest," together with the further words "Ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11) There are two "rests" spoken of here; that which can be obtained by the sinner, and another which can be obtained only by a believer, and then only if he takes the yoke of His Master upon him.

We noticed the word "seem" in this first verse of chapter 4. A person may be saved yet by his outside behaviour may "seem" to have fallen short of the "rest" of Matthew 11. 28. This seems to be borne out in verse 3, for the writer of the epistle definitely states

that " We which have believed do enter into that rest" although it does not necessarily follow that we " find rest unto our souls, unless we take on us His yoke."

[The " rest " of Hebrews 3. and 4. must not be confused with the " rests " of Matthew 11. In Hebrews it is God's rest which is for His people, which may be refused or from which we may fall through unbelief.—J.M.]

Verse 4. We are reminded here that God rested after He had made the worlds, and it would seem that His rest has never since been broken. [Is not the very opposite true? Did not the " fall." necessitate God working again? " My Father worketh even until now, and I work," John 5. 17.—J.M.] Man, the creature whom God made in His own likeness enjoyed a rest and communion with God, but that was broken when man sinned and immediately after that sad event happened, God promised that the woman's Seed should bruise the serpent's head. Thus it would seem that from that time forward it is manifested that the Lord Jesus's labours lay before Him, while the Holy Spirit from thence onward testified by types and shadows of the coming of the Son of God, the object of which was to bring man back to God. The Lord Jesus did come " at the end of these days " and He died, rose again and " sat down "; His work being completed, He entered into His rest.

Verses 5-7. Although God spake the words " They shall not enter into My rest," yet after the death of the Lord Jesus, these new words were taken up, obeying which the sinner can find rest—

" To-day, if ye shall hear His voice,  
Harden not your hearts."

In verses 8 and 9 we return to words concerning the children of Israel. We are told definitely that they did not obtain the " rest " when they entered the Promised Land, since God afterwards spake of another day (Psalm 95.). We suppose verse 9 refers to Israel as a nation and that it is a future event.

[The day God defined in David is, "Today if ye shall hear His voice." It was God's message to Israel concerning a day of opportunity to enter into God's rest in His house. They rose to the occasion and brought the Ark of God to Zion which was called " Thy resting place." (Psalm 132. 8).—J.M.]

Verse 10. From this verse we gather, as before-mentioned, that the Lord Jesus having finished the work that God had given Him to do, has Himself rested.

Whilst in verse 11 we are exhorted to enter into that rest ; to do so we must enter on His TOIL and then His **word** may be "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." At that time we shall do so to the full. We feel this is a very solemn chapter when we remember that it is written to saints, and as though the writer would remind them that God is just as jealous a God as He was in Israel's day—he says " The word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword " (verse 12). God has bought us with a great price and He claims our " all " as He did from Israel ; He wants us to enter into His rest, which brings joy to our souls.

G. H. MUTIMER.

From TORONTO.—In our consideration of this section we were impressed with its solemnity, and Jacob-like, we said " How dreadful is this place." Under the old covenant those that sinned died without mercy, and " If we sin wilfully under the new covenant stern judgment awaits us." " Hebrews 2. 1-3 also Hebrews 10. 26-31. But we are glad that there is the glad and happy side to those who give hear to the voice of the Son of God. So much depends upon our hearing. " Ye shall find rest to your souls " (Matthew 11. 29). This we suggest is the thought of Hebrews 3. and 4. If we be thus "yoked" and continue to hear " His Voice " we shall find rest (please consider verses 6, 14). [No, rest in Hebrews 3. and 4. is not the rest of those who are yoked in service. Note, what is said in Hebrews 4. 10-11. Our service never can constitute God's rest. God chooses His own place of rest : I. The last day of seven days. II. The land of Canaan. III. The hill of Zion. And whether a day, a land, or a hill, it was faith in God's word alone which enabled them to appreciate the choice of God. Faith alone will keep us in the house of God to-day and if there be in us an evil heart of unbelief, service could never take its place. We serve, yoked by the Lord together, because we have seen and are (we trust) in God's place.—J.M.I If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end, if we hold fast the beginning of our confidence, we shall find and experience the rest of God and become partakers with Christ.

O God what perfect rest is Thine,  
 Thy rest is in Thy Son,  
 'Tis all unspeakable divine  
 Thy rest and ours are one.

Therefore let us labour [give diligence] to enter into that rest lest any fall through departing from the living God. If we fail to hold fast, if we sin wilfully, we will realise the words of Jacob true. Judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4. 17.)

It was with glad hearts and with song that Israel left behind the bondage of Egypt, and in the beginning of their confidence in Jehovah they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do and be obedient (Exodus 15. 1-19 ; 24. 3, 7), but they hardened their hearts and departed from the living God, they forgot the Rock of their Salvation and their carcasses fell in the wilderness. A splendid beginning, but what a sad end. They failed to enter into the rest of God through unbelief.

The Lord was not a hard taskmaster but with patience and with tender care bore with them forty years. They in return provoked the Lord and tempted Him. Not only under Joshua was this true, but in a later day.

These two chapters call for our earnest and faithful consideration in view of possibilities for good or for evil. Pretence is no use because the word of God is living and active (or energetic) discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. We may deceive one another, but with God—impossible. All things are naked and bare before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

God is a living God,  
The Son of God is living,  
The Word of God is living.

And if we hear and by faith give heed to His words we shall be "living stones," a house for God where He can dwell, showing forth the excellencies of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

SAMUEL NICHOLL.

From LEICESTER.—The portion under consideration would appear to be a parenthesis, intercepting the theme of the priesthood of the Son of God, which is resumed chapter 4. 14, but it is a very important one. The writer deems it very needful to emphasise again and again the necessity of listening to the voice of God and the present possibility of these Hebrew saints entering into God's rest, otherwise all is lost.

God spoke loudly and persistently to Israel in the past, but they were not joined by faith with them that heard, and once more God calls "To-day." He is speaking more plainly in a living and active word, and more

blessed, abiding and spiritual truths and privileges are associated with the call of to-day than the past. The writer unfolds to these saints the infinite resources of God, to be obtained because of, and through, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Possibly these Hebrew believers might fall back upon the law and prophets and think therein was the mind of God to be known, but since God has spoken in a Son it is necessary for them to stretch out to the privileges of a new Covenant and a new Priesthood, hence the exhortation " Looking unto Jesus " and the warning, " Take heed brethren, lest there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God." How many of God's children fail to realise God has a rest for the people of God. In speaking of this rest the Spirit of God recalls the failure of those who provoked the Lord forty years in the wilderness, under a faithful Moses, and a valiant Joshua. Even in David's day the rest was still future, for in David after so long a time, " To-day if ye shall hear His voice." [Not future—present. " To-DAY if ye shall hear His voice"—J.M.] We think the inference is very strong that in Solomon's time Israel had their rest (1 Kings 4. 21 ; 1 Chronicles 22. 18 ; 23. 25). Israel were dwelling in the land, gathering its increase, their enemies subdued, warfare ended, God's House dedicated, and worship perfected.

But beyond this climax of Israel's hopes, transient at its best, God has still a Sabbath rest for His people, into which all true believers in Christ should seek to enter, not a rest from the conscience of sin or from the weariness of a heavy heart, but a rest in doing the will of God—a rest which is mutual, for such rest in God, and God rests in them. [A Sabbath rest is not a rest in doing, nor is the Hebrews 3. and 4. rest a rest in God.—J.M.] We understand this rest to mean, entering into spiritual privileges of worship and service in God's House and that it cannot possibly be realised by those believers outside of God's House. It has no reference to the heavenly rest when believers are absent from the body and present with the Lord. Yet, whether we enter in or not God has rested from His work, and the living Way has been opened into the true sanctuary—the Great Priest fulfils His office. Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest and hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end.

F. JEWELL.

From LONDON, S.E.—The " wherefore " gives emphasis to what follows in the word of the Holy Spirit spoken by David the Psalmist. " To-day if ye will hear His Voice harden not your hearts." We think of those warning words uttered by the Lord in His early dealings

My spirit shall not always strive with man " Genesis 6. 3. David calls to mind the days of the temptation in the wilderness, Psalm 95. 8-11, and this takes us back to the time of the murmuring of the children of Israel at Meribah, when they tempted the Lord, saying " Is the Lord among us or not " (Exodus 17. 7). It was not until they had tempted the Lord God ten times that He declared in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest ; that is enter the Land of Promise. He had sworn unto their fathers (Numbers 14. 22-23). They failed to receive the full blessing He had provided for them because of unbelief.

What are we to understand by the rest of God? and was it broken by the entrance of sin into the world? [God's rest to-day is in His house. His rest of the Sabbath was undoubtedly broken by the entrance of sin.—J.M.] Psalm 132. V3-14 gives us light as to this point. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion ; He hath desired it for His habitation. This is My rest for ever : here will I dwell; for I have desired it." God having provided the remedy for sin in the gift of His Son now rests in the finished work of redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ. Hymn 72.

Then come the words " let us therefore fear, lest haply a promise being left of entering into His rest, any one of you should seem to have come short of it ; this speaks of falling short of the full glory which is to be revealed. We are here admonished that we may not lose through " falling away from the faith." Hebrews 6. 4-6 warns us of this in an exceedingly solemn way. Paul in his writing to the Corinthian saints speaks of receiving the grace of God in vain, and in his letter to the Galatians exhorts them also to hold fast their liberty in the Lord Jesus Christ, and speaks of some as having fallen away from grace, who preferred the law.

The closing verses tell of the power of God's Word and His all-seeing eye ; one could call to mind the result of Zedekiah's refusal to obey His word spoken through Jeremiah, how he was overtaken by the Chaldean in the plains of Jericho, captured and made blind. Hearing the word of the Lord, quick and powerful, and sharper

than any two-edged sword, brings responsibility, and rejection, judgment. It is the sword of the spirit **and** of great searching power. • " He knoweth our downsitting and uprising, He understandeth our thoughts afar off.\*" (Psalm 139. 2, 3). He is acquainted with all our ways ; there is nothing that is not manifest unto Him ; and we are exhorted to take heed and obey, and contend earnestly for the Faith which was once delivered unto the saints. (Jude 3.).

GEO. PAIN.

From PAISLEY.—In chapter 3. 7 we are left in no doubt regarding the truth of the inspiration of the verses cited from Psalm 95, which we concluded was written by David (chapter 4. 7), as we are distinctly told they were spoken by the Holy Spirit. [The Holy Spirit spoke by others as well as David, but we know Psalm 95. was written by David (Hebrews 4. 7).—J.M.] (See also 2 Peter 1.21 and 2 Timothy 3. 16). Surely the people of that day had the voice of God to guide and instruct them. We have still the same in our day (chapter 1. 2) who are also warned to " Take heed and exhort one another day by day."

God's great and gracious purpose towards Israel, in choosing and ultimately delivering them from the house of bondage, with a mighty hand and stretched out arm, was in fulfilment of His own promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to bring their children into that land flowing with milk and honey, and God abides by His word (Deuteronomy 7. 8) but, for those who would enjoy to the full such kindness and condescension on His part, faith in Himself must be exercised. We were reminded that God's promises were almost all conditional. Here we have the sad record of how Israel failed to enter into the rest which God had in store for them, and their lack of faith is clearly displayed in their disobedience, in spite of what they had said, to the voice of God, to go in and possess the land of Canaan, and in their open rebellion against the commands of the Lord, which were designed for their own blessing (Deuteronomy 6. 24, 25 ; 10. 12, 13). They murmured against Moses, the servant of the Lord, and provoked God to anger, the special provocation referred to being the time when they refused to leave Kadesh-barnea and go up. (Deuteronomy 1.). The words that we read in Deuteronomy 9. 7, 8. 22-24, would surely have caused this generation to know how God had been grieved through their fathers, to whom he swore in His wrath that they would not enter into His rest, and so He has

spoken of another rest in David which remaineth for the people of God (chapter 4. 9). [This Sabbath rest is not exclusively millennial. It is for the people of God, for the " To-day " in David's time, for the " To-day " in our day, and, no doubt, will have an application in a "To-day" yet to be.—J.M.] We suggest this to be a future time, that is the millennium (see Isaiah 11. 10) when the Lord Jesus Christ shall reign in association with Israel in Jerusalem, God's resting place, as it was His purpose to dwell with them in the past and find His rest among them (Psalm 132. 8, 13, 14 and 1 Kings 9. 3). Although we read Joshua did not give them rest, that is in the full sense, surely manifestations of the presence of God are seen amongst His people in the land, as for instance in the reigns of David and Solomon, and others who did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, shewing what God can and will do for a God-fearing people who have respect unto His commandments.

This rest in old covenant times, in association with the Place of God's dwelling on earth (2 Chronicles 6. 2 ; Acts 7. 44-49), we compared with the House of God in the present dispensation. This is truth that every child of God does not know, being the apprehension of God's desire for His children, something to be known by faith or confidence in Him whom we love, and implies practical faith which is possible on the part of the believer of the present time, who thus enjoys rest as the result. We may also have the thought of a future rest or continuity. " Our rest is in heaven, our rest is not here." Canaan was to Israel a type of what heaven is to us. An earnest of this is experienced in " obedience to the truth." The answer of the Lord Jesus to the scribe who had answered discreetly to what was told him may be helpful. (Mark 12. 28-34 ; see also John 14. 1).

So let us for whom these things have been written, take fast hold of instruction and give heed to the exhortations of verses 1 and 11 of chapter 4.

S. THOMSON.

From BARROW.—The subject now before us is one of extreme importance to every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Important because, if a wrong interpretation is placed upon the words " My rest " the whole fabric of Scripture in connexion with the believer's security is set at nought, and the pernicious doctrine of "falling away" is brought to the front. Hence careful perusal of the

passage in question must be made before embarking on any explanation of its contents. The word rest does not necessarily imply relief from weariness or fatigue, but rather a cessation of labour, as will be found in Genesis 2. 2. " And He (God) rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made."

The rest spoken of in the Hebrews has, we believe, found expression in varying ways, which have been made known to us in the Scriptures. From early times it had been God's desire to dwell amongst His redeemed people. Thus, in the book of Exodus God said, " Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell amongst them/" (Exodus 25. 8). This seems to be the earliest expression of God's rest in the midst of His people, with whom, and in whom He could delight, and find pleasure. He held out to them a rest for the future, which in their case seemed to be the entering into the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey ; for which, however, they were to fight every inch of the ground, wresting it from the enemy with many a trial, and fierce battle, holding it as their own, God-given possession (Deuteronomy 12. 5-14). But how many entered into that rest? As far as we can gather, there were but two (from twenty years old and upward)—Caleb and Joshua—faithful men who, against overwhelming difficulties, stood fast on the Lord's side, and encouraged the people to go in and possess the land. (See Numbers 14 ; 29, 30 ; and 26. 63-65). What havoc and distress had been wrought in the ranks of that congregation through the terrible sin of unbelief. Times without number they turned from the word of the living God (Psalm 106. 24) until God swore in His wrath—" They shall not enter into My rest " (Psalm 95- 10, 11).

The next expression of God's rest in the Old Testament was distinctly associated with the place of the Name and the House which was built there. David said (1 Chronicles 28. 2) " It was in mine heart to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and for the footstool of our God." This we know he was not privileged to do, but Solomon built the house, and at the dedication he ended His prayer with these remarkable words—" Now, therefore, arise, O Jehovah God, into Thy resting place, Thou and the ark of Thy strength " (2 Chronicles 6. 41) these same words are quoted in Psalm 132. 8 in association with which we find God's answer, to which we do well to take earnest heed (Psalm 132. 13.and 14)—

" For Jehovah hath chosen Zion ;  
 He hath desired it for His habitation.  
 This is My resting place for ever ;  
 Here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, and what we have seen in the foregoing has its parallel in this day of grace. As we see, God's rest in the past was closely linked with the house, so- in the present. If we note the connecting word in Hebrews 3. 7, and read the previous verse, we have this truth brought to the front—" But Christ, as a Son over His (God's) House, whose House are we, if we hold fast our boldness and the glorying of our hope firm unto the end, wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith, ' To-day if ye shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts.' " Those of old time could not enter into the rest because of unbelief (Hebrews 3. 16-19). Hence they are a warning to us to take heed.

The rest, as brought forward in our subject is not that which is spoken of in Matthew 11. 28 " Come unto Me ; I will give you rest,"<sup>5</sup> which is unconditional upon faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and refers to what may be termed the heavenly rest. But for the believer it is a conditional rest as will be found in Matthew 11. 29, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." [Note the contrast of Hebrews 4. 3 " We which have believed do enter," and " Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me," and our friends will appreciate the difference of the rest of Hebrews and that of Matthew 11. 29.—J.M.] The one is a gift, the other is (as it were) a reward. If we pursue the thought of the Children of Israel entering the land, we, in like manner must contend for the truth, for in that alone will we find rest. (See Jude 3.) Again, in the land they sought unto the place of the Name where God dwelt. We in our day are privileged to seek unto His dwelling place, His resting place, that spiritual house (1 Peter 2. 5).

The exhortations contained in the passages under consideration are very searching, showing the importance of immediate action in seeking to attain to that rest, for the word is " Today." It was " To-day " in Joshua's time. It was " To-day " through David, and it is still " To-day." Then there is the great weight of such words as " Take heed, brethren," " Exhort one another day by day, while it is called, To-day " (chapter 3. 13). " Let us fear, therefore " (chapter 4. 1), and, finally,

" Let us therefore give diligence to enter into **that** rest, that no man fall after the same example of disobedience" (chapter 4. 11).

The two remaining verses (12 and 13) **should** be noted particularly, for it is through the word we ascertain our condition, and through that same word we determine our position.

J. MCCORMICK.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—In chapter 1. of Hebrews, One is brought before us who came forth from God with a message to His people. In chapter 2. this same One is brought before us as the One who has returned to God to represent His people.

Chapter 3. opens with an exhortation to consider this One (Rotherham "attentively consider") who has become the Apostle of chapter 1, and High Priest of chapter 2.

They are called holy brethren because they are associated with Him that sanctifieth (chapter 2. 11) partakers or partners of a heavenly calling. This shows us to whom the epistle was written, a people who had recognised that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Their hearts were not towards Jerusalem but towards Heaven, into which He had entered whom they acknowledged as their High Priest.

Attentively consider the Apostle. As the Apostle, he is the only one who could bring to God's people a perfect revelation of God's will, Himself being the outshining of His glory and the very image of His substance.

Attentively consider the High Priest. He is above all<sup>1</sup> others and competent to be the High Priest of God's people. Because of who He is, He perfectly knows God's requirements, and because of what He became (partner in flesh and blood) He can perfectly represent men. To both these appointments He was or is (" being " Young and Rotherham) faithful.

In a past day when God dwelt among men, Moses was a servant in His House. His office was that of Servant (Young " attendant " Rotherham " guardian ") but this One whom we are considering, has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses. His relationship to God's House is that of Son over His House. In connection with His coming- forth as the Apostle, He is exalted because He is a Son (no other apostle ever held this relationship to God) and in His relationship to God's House He is exalted as Son. As the Apostle He has greater

glory than the angels (they are called His servants). As Son over God's House He has greater glory than Moses who was a servant.

Whose House are we. God has a dwelling place to-day which is comprised of those of His people who are holding fast their boldness. This boldness is spoken of in chapter 4. 16 in connection with drawing near to the Throne of Grace, and also in chapter 10. verses 19 and 35 in which it is boldness to enter the Holy Place. It is evident, therefore, that it is boldness of approach to God which is the first condition contained in this verse. The glorying of our hope firm unto the end (see chapter 6. 18 and 7. 19). This would seem to teach us that the most important function of God's House is Godward. What God wishes above all is that His people may be able to draw near to Him acceptably.

According to this chapter, there are very solemn possibilities that we may not hold fast. This is demonstrated by a reference to God's people in the past. They were a people who had heard His voice and seen His wonderful workings for them, and yet they hardened their heart and were disobedient so that God swore in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest. They came short of God's purposes through unbelief. What solemn possibilities for us. "Take heed, brethren," and "let us fear, therefore," are truly fitting warnings.

My rest. See Deuteronomy 12. 1-10 ; Psalm 95. 11 and Psalm 132. 8 and 14. These are a few scriptures which show clearly that the place of God's rest is the House of God, where His people can "come before His presence with thanksgiving," "make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms," "worship and bow down."

In considering chapter 4., a suggestion was made that certain verses applied to and were intended for Hebrews who were not born again.

1. The promise of verse 1 was left to Hebrews in general, which is implied in Psalm 95.
2. The good tidings of verse 2 were preached to the Hebrews in general, both in the past (Number 13. 27 and 30), and in the present (Hebrews 1. 2) and the rest which was then lost through absence of faith can now be secured by faith, for "we which have believed do enter into that rest."
3. The promised land is a type of the Heavenly rest, and therefore a future state for the people of God.

4. Verse 11 is a warning to Hebrew unbelievers of the possibility of falling in the same way as their forefathers did.

The above points were contested, and briefly the replies were as follows—

1. The promise of rest was to a redeemed people (Exodus 15. 13). The "us," "we," and the "you" of this Epistle are a people who can evidently worship, serve and supplicate collectively in God's newly-appointed way (see 10. 19, 9. 14 and 4. 16) and have rule and government (see chapter 13. 7 and 17).
2. The distinction between the rest which believers find on putting trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the rest which disciples may find in service, is clear from the Lord's words in Matthew 11. (i) "I will give you rest." (ii) "Ye shall find rest." The latter most nearly corresponds to the rest which the Hebrews are exhorted to give diligence to enter into (Hebrews 4. 11) "belief" and "faith" being as essential for this rest as for the former rest.
3. Sojourning in Egypt, passing through the wilderness and enjoying the rest in the promised land, is, in the purposes of God, the present portion of the redeemed. The Epistle to the Hebrews treats mainly of the rest (a) which remains to the people of God; (b) which demands diligence to enter therein; (c) which can be entered into if the conditions summarised in chapter 3. 6 are complied with, and (d) which can be lost through non-compliance. The rest of Heaven is assured to all believers in Christ, and is a gift which is never withdrawn and can never be lost or forfeited like the "Rest" of the Epistle to the Hebrews. (John 5. 24, and 10. 28; Hebrews 4. 1).
4. Verse 11. This rests on the question as to who are the people referred to as "us," which is dealt with in the first reply.

N. G. ADKINS.

Note from R. McK., BRANTFORD.—"The subject for the Conference at Toronto, April 2nd, (D.V.) is: 'The golden opportunities and possibilities of youth/' "

## SECTION III. (CONCLUDED).

From BRANTFORD.—The commencement of this portion, being a citation from Psalm 95, is surely an apt illustration of the fact, as mentioned in the first Epistle by Peter, 1. 23. That the Word of God liveth and abideth. Because, though it concerned God's people in a past day, God can speak through the same words, if the condition of heart is the same. The writer of this epistle asks us all to take heed to ourselves, to see if there be in any one of us, an evil heart of unbelief, for this is a solemn possibility to all who are in the Fellowship of God's Son, and thus Satan would gain the advantage. Verse 13 shows that there is a continual need of exhortation. We are not to put this off till to-morrow, for to-morrow never comes, and if we fail to exhort one another daily, Satan is ever ready to find some mischief for idle minds to be engaged with. We should be stronger in grace at the end of the journey, than at the beginning, having escaped from the corruption of this world, through the knowledge of Him. We have an example of this in the triumphant words of the Apostle Paul. "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the Faith."

What a striking contrast is shown out between the Apostle Paul's confession and the many thousands of Israelites who fell in the wilderness, owing to their hardness of heart.

We suggest that verse one of chapter 4, speaks of a daily rest to the obedient one. Matthew 11, and verse 19 seems to bear out this thought. Only tender hearts can let these words have an influence over them. In verse 2, we see that the children of Israel (except Moses) were not united in faith with Joshua and Caleb in their reports of the promised land.

Alas, we see that those who entered into the promised land did not wholly please Jehovah after Joshua's death and the elders of his day. The people lapsed again from serving the living God and turned to idols.

Verse 7 surely speaks of the longsuffering of God with His people. For as David says in the 95th Psalm, "We are His people and the sheep of His pasture." Even to this present day we can readily understand that the desire of the Great Shepherd is that His sheep shall dwell beside the waters of rest. The word "To-day" in this same verse conveys the thought, that the word spoken through Moses, Joshua and David and even now through Christ is still inviting ones to His rest. The Sabbath Rest of verse 9 we suggest is the eternal rest which will be earned according to our works.

We see from verse 11 that diligence is needful to enter into that rest. It will require a sustained effort. Truly Joshua and Caleb manifested this. How like the perfect Servant whose meat and drink it was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to accomplish His work. Yes. God is still speaking through His Son.

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice,  
For toil comes rest, for exile home;  
Soon shalt thou hear the Master's voice,  
The Midnight cry "Behold I come"!

J.T., J.B. and R. MCKAY.



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### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION : THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

#### SECTION IV.—HEBREWS 4. 14 TO 6. 12.

From LONDON, S.E.—A Great High Priest. Those first words of the portion for this month form the keynote of the section down to chapter 5. verse 10. Understanding and sympathising with our trials so well, He is fully able to present our needs to God. His life and death on earth gave Him complete experience, made Him perfect in experience, and now, within the veil, He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God through Him. Then let us take encouragement and draw near with boldness.

The words " Let us hold fast our confession " we could not understand. They are repeated in chapter 10. with " of our hope " added. In the present day the word " confession " always relates to sin whilst " profession " is used for public testimony ; in chapter 10. the " confession of our hope " cannot refer to sin, and yet, as it deals with the Sanctuary, it cannot mean outward witness : and, clearly, " confession " in chapter 4. has nothing to do with anything outside the Sanctuary. At first we were inclined to think, in view of the mention of infirmities and sin in the next two verses, that the word " confession " here in chapter 4. did refer to sin. Now we feel in a mystery, and would like help.

[The " confession " is the will of God for the people of God to-day. It may be compared to the words of the Covenant read by Moses in the audience of the people of Israel at Sinai, which they professed to accept, and to

which they expressed their willingness to be obedient. These things they stood for and held in common. So in our day there is a confession for which we stand collectively and when we were received into the assembly of God we confessed our willingness to obey the Lord. Our understanding of the Lord's will to which we were subject then should increase with years and with increased light there should be increased determination to hold fast our confession to the end.—J.M.]

Although the Lord was touched with the feeling of our infirmities (chapter 4, 15), He surely was not compassed with infirmity (chapter 5. 2) else He would, like the High Priests of old, have required to offer for His own sins. The reasoning of verses 2 and 3 of chapter 5- is strange to us. Because the High Priests were compassed with infirmity, they (a) could bear gently with the ignorant and erring, and (b) had to offer for their own sins. The Lord Jesus can undoubtedly bear gently with the ignorant and erring, but, as stated above, this cannot be through the same cause.

There is contained in verses 7 and 8 a wonderful picture. We see the Lord's prayers and tears, and notice, too, that God hears. Are we right in concluding that God, hearing, did not deliver Him from the death mentioned in verse 7? [The margin of the R.V. gives the meaning here " out of " death.] Is this, in fact, a reference to Gethsemane? In that " midnight hour " we see the lesson of obedience fully learnt, and He went forth towards that rabble to perform God's will—the death of the cross !

Verse 10 reminds us of Melchizedek, but chapter 7. contains more references and we will leave him for the moment, except to enquire whether the " of whom " in verse 11 refers to Melchizedek or to the Lord Jesus. [" Of whom " evidently refers to the Lord in His Melchizedek priesthood.]

The remark about " milk " in the next verse makes us think of 1 Peter 2. where those young in the faith are told to desire it : and of 1 Corinthians 2, where Paul reproves those older in the faith for not weaning themselves from it and desiring meat. We used to think that it was an excellent thing for Paul to confine his preaching to- " Christ and Him crucified," but we have recently learned that it was only through the failings of the Corinthians that the Apostle had to confine himself to that message—he desired to build on that foundation, just as the writer does here in Hebrews 6. The alphabet is but

the threshold of the language, and surely they should have known their A.B.C. by this time. The primary facts of Christian life are given in their order in verses 1 and 2 (so we think), (a) repentance, (b) belief, (c) baptisms—of the Holy Spirit and of water (see Acts 2. 38 and 10- 47) ; (d) laying on of hands (Acts 6. 6 ; 8. 17 ; 19. 6. 1 Timothy 4. 14. 2 Timothy 1. 6)—we hear little teaching about the " laying on of hands " to-day—• (e) resurrection, (f) judgment. These are all fundamental truths, but are only fundamental, and there is a building to be placed upon them.

The writer of the letter to Hebrews seems to view the people redeemed from Egypt, past the Red Sea, having formed the Tabernacle, and now, as priests, entering the courts, passing the brazen altar and the laver—and then stopping [ ! ? ] stopping just when about to fulfil God's desire which was for them to worship Him in the wilderness. God had a purpose for His people then—and has one for us to-day—but there must be the passing through orderly preliminaries first. These had been passed by the Hebrews, but, alas, they had stopped. Indeed, some had not only stopped but had commenced to drift back, past the laver and even past the brazen altar, crucifying Christ afresh. However, let us not be like them, but with boldness may we enter into the Sanctuary and through the veil.

With regard to those who had gone back being precluded from repentance, we recall the " sin unto death " in 1 John 5. 16, and the " sin against the Holy Spirit " which could not be forgiven, (Matthew 12. 31, 32) whilst Hebrews 10. 29 and 2 Peter 2. 20, 22 seem to refer to the same kind of men. The man of whose sin we read in 1 Corinthians 5. seems to have repented when 2 Corinthians 2. was written. [ " Sin unto death " should not, I think, be confused with sin against the Holy Spirit—but 1 John 5. 16 seems in agreement with Hebrews 6. and 10.—J.M.]

" Whose end is to be burned "—these words do not, we suppose, refer to the rejected ground (a picture of the men) but to the thorns. In John 15. we read of dead branches being burned, and in 1 Corinthians 3. 15 there is a reference to the hay, wood and stubble being burned, whilst the man himself escapes.

Maybe we are prone to stop at the threshold like the Hebrews, and at times to feel we never shall be able to enter the Sanctuary through our own follies, but we must stir ourselves from sluggishness, adding on our part all diligence, encouraging ourselves with the example of

those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Our forerunner, our Great High Priest, is within the veil on our behalf.

DAVID A. HILL.

From TORONTO.—This section tells us how high the Lord is as Priest over those who officiated in that capacity in the past, "having passed through the Heavens." How high a place the Son of God now fills, can be seen in that He hath sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, a Priest for ever.

As regards the priests of the past, "their range was earth, nor higher soared." They ministered in a worldly sanctuary or a sanctuary made with hands (Hebrews 9. 1) which was a shadow of the heavenly into which the Lord Jesus has entered, having obtained Eternal Redemption—a minister of the Sanctuary, and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man. In the very immediate presence of God for us (Hebrews 8. 1-2 ; 9, 24).

The heaven of heavens is His  
There in His Majesty the Lord,  
A Priest for ever is.

And when we consider and understand that we have such a High Priest, a song of praise rises spontaneously, and we bless God for His merciful provision. For when we are tempted and tried we can draw near unto the Throne of Grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us. How inspiring to remember that He is not an unfeeling High Priest, but can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

Such was His own portion down here. He was tempted and tried yet without sin. He was made perfect. How could the priests that ministered in the sanctuary be expected to enter into such "a Holy Place" as they themselves were like those whom they represented and on whose behalf they offered. They had to offer for "their own sins" as well as for the sins of the people. They were encompassed with infirmities.

Without sin, because He was the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1.) He was the image of His substance. He was God manifest in flesh and, as such, there was no blemish in Him. So when He offered Himself He "sat down" on the right hand of the Majesty on High on equality and on terms that delight the Father and the Son. He is able to save to the uttermost all that draw nigh.

Let us hold fast our confession, for chapter 6. tells us of the portion of those who fall away, it would seem as if some of those to whom the Apostle addresses these words had let slip those things which they had heard. They had become "dull of hearing" and were in such a condition that instead of being teachers they occupied the seat of learners for they had never progressed beyond these first principles.

How precious those first principles of Christ are : Repentance, Faith, Baptism. These are absolutely necessary, but God expects His children not to be always "babes" but to press on, "to be men" whose portion is solid food.

And if we son-like be obedient and exercise ourselves in those things that accompany salvation, we shall grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, let us hold fast our confession ; therefore, let us press on. There is no standing still. God is not unmindful of our little endeavours and if we have faith and patience we shall inherit the promises.

S. NICHOLL.

From KILMARNOCK AND GALSTON.—To the priests of the Aaronic line the appellation "great" was never applied. This name, however, can be truly applied to Him who is Jesus the Son of God.

"Our confession" we understand refers us to our baptism. It was then that we made a public confession to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, owning ourselves thereby under His authority. ["Our confession" refers to more than baptism, though publicly in baptism we confessed our obedience to the will of the Lord. Baptism has the thought of resignation to the Lord's will. See remarks on London's contribution.]

This indeed, therefore, is something that is to be held fast by us, and to this end the Lord Jesus Christ as our High Priest is before God's face for us. He can sympathise with us in our infirmities. He has been tempted in all points like as we are (except by sin). It is such a one, therefore, that can dispense mercy and grace to those who in time of need come to the throne of grace.

From the opening words of chapter 5. we see that it was necessary for the Lord to become a man in order that He might be a Priest. The words therefore are true of Him "He has been taken from among men." The work of a High Priest is here also brought before us

as one who acts for men in things relating to God and no fitter person could be found to fill this eternal office than the Lord Jesus Christ, who is possessed of the full deity and yet in the fullest sense is a man. It is through Him therefore, that our spiritual sacrifices ascend to God, and by virtue of His priestly work before God, in association with His sacrifice upon the cross, that we as the people of God know a present cleansing from our sins.

To this office of High Priest He has been called of God. He who said : "Thou art my Son," said also "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedek." It was noted here that the verb "to be" is not present in the Greek in reference to His priesthood although it is present in reference to His Sonship. The words therefore read "Thou a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." The absence of the verb it was suggested showed that it was the eternal, abiding character of His priesthood that was thus emphasized. [This is at least dubious. Strictly we have, "My Son art Thou." Nothing can be built on the omission of the copulative verb "art" in the other case. The order in the first case is emphatic. What is emphasised?—G.N.] It was at this time also we understand that the Lord was constituted a priest which would be after His resurrection from the dead.

His supplications and entreaties with strong crying and tears were not that He might be saved from death [dying] but that He might be saved "out of" death. It was for this purpose as we saw in a previous chapter that He partook of flesh and blood "that through death He might destroy Him that had the power of death."

"He learned obedience." He never was disobedient. In the home at Nazareth He was subject to Joseph and Mary. In all His life below He was the one of whom God could say "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Yet He experienced what it was to suffer, and that unjustly, when reviled, He reviled not again, when He suffered He threatened not. "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." "He became obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross."

"Obedience to the Father's will  
And love to Him did all fulfil."

"He was made perfect." He ever was perfect, there never was any imperfection in Him, and the trials and sufferings which He underwent only served to show, and to bring out, the real perfection that was in Him. To all that obey Him who learned obedience, therefore, He

is the author of eternal salvation and in this connexion He has been called by God a High Priest after the order of Melchisedek. The remaining few verses of this chapter contain words of reproof to those Hebrew believers in that they are not further advanced in the things of God. His discourse concerning this one, he says, is much, but rendered difficult through them having become dull of hearing.

The opening words of chapter 6. therefore, have in them a call for progress. We seem to hear the words " Let us go forward." His desire was that they might grow.

The things which the writer enumerates are necessary and vital truths—repentance from dead works, faith in God, the doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment, but these are not the alpha and omega of all that God has for us, and so He is seeking to bring before them the truth of the House of God and our Lord Jesus Christ as High Priest in association with the same.

May we hear His warning voice concerning those of whom He now speaks. " Those who were once enlightened, who tasted of the heavenly gift, and became partakers of the Holy Spirit, tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away." Of such He says, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. The power of granting repentance lies with God alone. We are reminded of the words of the Psalmist, "Turn us, O God, and we shall be turned." The Apostle Paul in writing to Timothy said of some " peradventure God may grant repentance." But those before us here—how solemn indeed—are beyond this as the words " it is impossible " shew. He therefore calls for diligence to be given by them to the full assurance of the hope unto the end. that they be not sluggish but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

HUGH PIPER.

From GLASGOW.—In connexion with the Word and the serious consequences entailed by neglecting it, coming as it had through such an Apostle and from One with such power, the writer turns attention to the Great High Priest and, in view of His position, encourages them to hold fast to their confession. This meant the responsibility of obedience, but it also brought the privilege of access to a throne of grace.

The writer then proceeds to enlarge on the qualifications and call of this High Priest and goes back to that which was evidently most familiar to them, namely, the Aaronic priesthood. Chapter 5. 3, seems to indicate that besides the high priests' Godward work in offering for men, in their hands also lay judgment. That God Himself should call a man to this honoured place was essential ; therefore, how fittingly could the position of Great High Priest be filled by the Christ, who had been called " a Priest after the order of Melchizedek " by the One who had called Him " Son." How truly, He, who had learned what obedience was by sufferings in His flesh, and who, in godly fear had " offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears " and had known the hearing and answering of His cry, could now be the merciful judge, succourer, and author of complete and eternal salvation from sin and death to those who were obedient.

It would seem that much of what follows concerning the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek was new to his readers, for the rebuke of the writer shews that their dulness made what he would say hard to interpret. By the " oracles of God " he seems to mean those things which were written aforetime coupled with that which had been spoken and confirmed to them. Before them he set the necessity of growth in experience by exercise " in the word of righteousness."

The first principles of Christ (not the first principles spoken of in chapter 5. 12) are indicated in chapter 6. 1, 2 : but they were not told to cease holding those things. They were necessary first steps, but they had been taken ; and could not be retaken. This is emphasised by the case of those who had tasted and had then fallen away and is illustrated by the land which, drinking the rain and bringing forth things fitting, receives blessing, or, bearing thorns and thistles is rejected.

We find this principle carried forward to the next verses. The first steps were but beginnings of advancement in fruitbearing and as they had displayed their love for the Name in ministering to the saints, their blessing was sure in God's righteousness. He desired their diligence in those things that by the blessing, the inheritance of that which was promised might be theirs.

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—This is the only occasion where the title Great High Priest is used, and it

would probably suggest the greater than Aaron. Aaron in his day went into God's presence through the veil of the tabernacle, but He who is so much greater, has passed through the heavens into God's immediate presence, "Whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us." (Hebrews 6. 20). It is with thankful hearts that we consider His work before the face of God on behalf of His weak and erring people, for He can sympathetic succour lend to those who sin. The phrase "yet without sin" caused some discussion, as to whether (reverently speaking) it signified failure was impossible to the Lord Jesus. We would solicit some help on the exact meaning of the phrase.

[This passage has been interpreted in two ways— I. The Lord was tempted but never sinned. II. The Lord was tempted but not by sin, for in His nature sin did not exist. The former we regard to be the true interpretation. We are tempted in two ways—I. By sin from within, James 1. 12-15. II. By the devil through many and varied circumstances. In the last phase of temptation the Lord was tempted, but sinned not, but the former temptation which is described to be our infirmity or weakness, the Lord never knew. The Lord's temptations were true, real and terrible, but He stood firm by what was written. There His safety lay and there lies our safety too. We must neither say that failure was impossible, then His temptations were unreal, nor must we ask what would have happened had He failed, which is a wicked suggestion and the answer to it would be utterly beyond the mind of man to conceive. Sufficient it is that He triumphed. Hallelujah !—J.M.]

In Hebrews 6. verses 4 to 8 we have experienced some difficulty and would invite criticism and help on the thoughts that some expressed. In the first place (though it has been suggested otherwise) we believe that the persons here referred to are born again. The wording of verses 3, 4 and 5 seems to us, to make this point clear. Also that they were known both to the writer and those addressed. (The word "once" in verse 3 has been elsewhere translated "Once for all.") This being so, from other scriptures we know that it is impossible for them to be eternally lost. (John 3. 16 ; John 10. 28 ; Romans 6. 23). Since they had received the blessings enumerated in these verses, and "then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance," verse 6. From what did they fall away? We suggest, they fell away from the truth of God, and went out of the

Fellowship of God's Son. It seems that, having fallen away (wilfully) it is impossible that such ones can be restored. The parable that follows illustrates this (verse 7). The land receiving the blessing compares with verses 4 and 5. Verse 8, " But if it beareth thorns and thistles, it is rejected and nigh unto a curse, whose end is to be burned' compares with verse 6. (1 Corinthians 3. 13). There is a similar thought to this contained in Hebrews 10. 26-31. Here we have wilful sin, after receiving the knowledge of the truth, and for this there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins. This is not the case of one who is overtaken in a fault, but the wilful act of one who knowingly spurns God's word, and turns from the truth. Then we have set before us the man who despised Moses law : he was stoned without mercy. But here is the greater sin, therefore, deserving the greater judgment because of what the act entailed (see Hebrews 10. 29). Thus, if the person has turned aside from the truth, and gone outside the Fellowship of God's Son wittingly and highhandedly, we suggest he is outside of man's jurisdiction both as regards discipline, and reception into that which we believe to be of God. He is in God's hands, for He hath said " Vengeance belongeth unto- Me, I will recompense," and truly " it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." At this point may we ask the following ? Are these words " it is impossible " and " there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins " absolute statements? do they suggest that there is a wilful sin which puts the wilful sinner outside God's house for all time, without any possibility of hope of return thereto? We seem to think the scriptures suggest so.

[We take those who fell away in Hebrews 6- to be born-again persons. They fell away from the living God (Hebrews 3. 13) which falling away is illustrated by the falling away in the Wilderness when those who refused to enter the land turned back and perished. Falling away from the living God involves falling away from His truth (or the faith) which results in such being outside the house of God. The possibility of restoration is contemplated in the case of certain elsewhere, but not in this case. The illustration of the land and its produce shows all has been done that is possible and it has yielded but thorns and further toil will be but wasted time. We must, however, be careful lest we think that every case, where we may have seen evidences of wilfulness in those who go or are put outside, comes under such scriptures. It

seems to me to involve the complete rejection of the will of God for His people to-day. Note how completely Israel rejected the will of God at Kadesh-Barnea, "Let us make a captain and let us return into Egypt." Numbers 14. 4.—J.M.]

Then we have brought to our notice 2 Peter 2. 19-22, where again we are told of those who had escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and who are again entangled therein, and overcome, the last state being worse with them than the first. What an awful condition—and again—it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment, delivered unto them. These words, like those of Hebrews chapters 6. and 10. do not suggest any restoration to that of which they once formed a part. That there is a sin which is altogether outside of man's jurisdiction is shown by 1 John 5. 16 ; where we have two classes of sin : firstly, concerning the sin not unto death, for which there is restoration ; secondly, concerning the sin unto death, for which there is no restoration, no, not even to pray for it. Do these words of John suggest one particular sin, moral or doctrinal? Can we have any guidance as to what such " sin unto death " may be? Is there any connexion between this " sin unto death " and the " wilful sin " of Hebrews 10-, or is the gravity of the position brought about by the wilfulness and not the particular nature of the sin?

In closing this subject the words of the Lord Jesus Christ are to us very significant, " No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God " (Luke 9. 62).

The failure of others should make us look carefully how we walk, that we should show diligence in seeking the mind of God, and seeking, too, to walk according to the light we have received, and so we should be " imitators of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises " (Hebrews 6. 12 and read Hebrews 11.).

JOHN MCCORMICK.

From PAISLEY.—Referring back to chapter 3. 1-6 where we have the contrast of the Lord Jesus Christ as Son over God's house, compared with Moses as servant, we are here directed to the contrast with Aaron relative to His priestly work. In the old covenant we find high priest designates the one who appeared once a year for

himself arid for the people, here we have the Great High Priest, and His greatness may be feebly understood by us if we grasp the place which He occupies (verse 14). At the same time we see how closely He can enter in all its spheres into the daily life of those who are in God's house. Under the law the high priest entered the most holy place with blood not his own, on the day of atonement (Leviticus 16.) one who was called of God and taken from amongst the people. This we find was true of Aaron who passed through suffering and trials with the children of Israel in Egypt, before he was priest, (this could not be said of Moses). It was vested solely in the family of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi, and was not continuous in consequence of death. The Lord Jesus Christ was after the order of Melchizedek, who, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto' the Son of God, abideth a priest continually, and was king as well as priest. In verse 7 His humanity and humility in His life upon the earth, amidst all the trials and temptations, gives us to realize how He was faithful and through His obedience to God He suffered, yet He was made or proved perfect, and as the God-man He is alone able to accomplish salvation.

Verse 8 being commented on, we ask : Did the Lord Jesus Christ suffer at the hand of God prior to the cross?

[I think we must distinguish between suffering " at the hand of God " and suffering " according to the will of God." Christ is our pattern of suffering according to God's will (1 Peter 2. 21). In the mill of the circumstances through which He passed, He was ground fine—as fine flour for the meal offering, but suffering at the hand of God seem to us to be words which we would associate with His vicarious sufferings on the cross.—J.M.]

Those to whom the apostle writes had been showing laxity in the things of God. Continuous exercise in spiritual things is essential, in order that children of God may not become sluggish. On the other hand those who are once enlightened and taste of the heavenly gift are exhorted to manifest in life the reality of the change that has been theirs by the grace of God with the assurance of God's faithfulness (verses 9-12). We learn in the school of God, and are chastised for our good, and through chastening we may become partakers of His holiness (chapter 12. 8-10). We may suffer also at the hand of others as the Lord Himself did : " If they persecuted Me they will also persecute you." (John 15. 20).

The Hebrews had become dull of hearing and there-

fore the writer could not impart many things to them concerning the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ, as if they had been in a right spiritual condition. By the time they should have been able to teach and in need of teaching, and are classed as babes in need of milk. The writer exhorts them to press on to perfection, not laying again what has already been laid. Touching those who once enjoyed fellowship and communion with the saints who also had partaken of the heavenly gift of the Word and Spirit of God, and had fallen away, so much so as to put the Son of God to open shame, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. The deceitful heart of man even of those born again is fully exposed in the fact that some could even deny the Master that bought them. They may also lead others astray and bring upon themselves judgment from God and suffer loss in eternity. (Compare 1 Corinthians 3. 13-15 ; 2 Peter 2. 1 ; Jude 4 ; Hebrews 10. 29-31 ; Matthew 10- 33 ; examples of which are not lacking in scripture).

S. THOMSON.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The writer, in chapter 4. after reminding the Hebrews of the rest which they should give diligence to enter into, returns to the main subject of the Epistle and speaks of the priestly character of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The One whom we have shown forth in chapter 1. as the Eternal Son, in chapter 2. as the Perfect Man, and in chapter 3. as Son over God's House, is now, at the end of chapter 4. and in chapter 5. further and more fully revealed as Great High Priest. In His office He is likened to two Old Testament priesthoods, one after the law, the other after the power of an endless life. The comparisons and contrasts continue.

We note the character of His priesthood and the Authority by which He is called a priest. Aaron was called of God and appointed for men in service Godwards. So was our High Priest. But much as was Aaron's usefulness in bearing gently with erring men because of his own experience, it falls far short of the fitness of the One who not only had a life experience of men and knew every temptation, but also passed through it all sinless and undefiled and has Himself become the author of eternal salvation because of His own atoning sacrifice.

Being made perfect, we understand, has reference to the sufferings of death as in chapter 2. 10 and spoken of by the Lord Himself in Luke 13. 32.

"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110. 4). The epistle to the Hebrews assures us of the present priesthood of Christ, just as other New Testament Scriptures speak of a present Kingdom of God and House of God. But the setting of this Psalm points us onward to a time when the Lord shall rule as King on the earth, when He shall be both King and Priest upon His throne. It was when the war with the four kings was over that Melchizedek came out to succour Abraham. Then it was revealed in a special way that He was Priest of God most High.

It is noticed that in Psalm 110- this quotation, "Thou art a priest for ever," comes after Jehovah has said "Sit Thou at My right hand," which suggests that He became priest after the resurrection. This seems to agree with the tenor of Hebrews 5. which first of all shows it is needful for a priest to be a man "For every high priest being taken from among men," and One, who, through His own sufferings has come in close contact with the needs of men. Then later we are told that if He were on earth He would not be a priest at all (Hebrews 8. 4). But we have a difficulty in reconciling this with what is said of Melchizedek, who, as Priest of God most High, had neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually (Hebrews 1\* 3). We should be glad of help on this point.

### SECTION III. (CONCLUDED).

(Replacing- the page 43 pasted on March issue.)

From BRANTFORD.—The commencement of this portion, being- a citation from Psalm 95. is surely an apt illustration of the fact, as mentioned in the first Epistle by Peter, 1. 23. That the Word of God liveth and abideth. Because, though it concerned God's people in a past day, God can speak through the same words, if the condition of heart is the same. The writer of this epistle asks us all to take heed to ourselves, to see if there be in any one of us, an evil heart of unbelief, for this is a solemn possibility to all who are in the Fellowship of God's Son, and thus Satan would gain the advantage. Verse 13 shows that there is a continual need of exhortation. We are not to put this off till to-morrow, for to-morrow never comes, and if we fail to exhort one another daily, Satan is ever ready to find some mischief for idle minds to be engaged with. We should be stronger in grace at the end of the journey, than at the beginning, having escaped from the corruption of this world, through the knowledge of Him. We have an example of this in the triumphant words of the Apostle Paul. "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the course. I have kept the Faith."

What a striking-contrast is shown out **between** the Apostle Paul's confession and the many thousands of Israelites who fell **in** the wilderness, owing to their hardness of heart.

We suggest that verse one of chapter 4. speaks of a daily rest to the obedient one. Matthew 11. and verse 19 seems to bear out this thought. Only tender hearts can let these words have an influence over them. In verse 2 we see that the children of Israel (except Moses) were not united in faith with Joshua and Caleb in their reports of the promised land.

Alas, we see that those who entered into the promised land did not wholly please Jehovah after Joshua's death and the elders of his day. The people lapsed again from serving **the living** God and turned to idols.

Verse 7 surely speaks of the longsuffering of God with His people. For as David says in the 95th Psalm. "We are His people and the sheep of His pasture." Even to this present day we can readily understand that the desire of the Great Shepherd is that His sheep shall dwell beside the waters of rest. The word "To-day" in this same verse conveys the thought, that the word spoken through Moses, Joshua and David and even now through Christ is still inviting ones to His rest. The Sabbath Rest of verse 9 we suggest is the eternal rest which will be earned according to our works.

We see from verse 11 that diligence is needful to enter into the rest. It will require a sustained effort. Truly Joshua and Caleb manifested this. How like the perfect Servant whose meat and drink it was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to accomplish His work. Yes. God is still speaking through His Son.

Toil on, and in thy toil rejoice,  
For toil comes rest, for exile home;  
Soon shalt thou hear the Master's voice,  
The Midnight cry "Behold I come" !

J.T., J.B. and R. MCKAY.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### HEBREWS 2. 9.

From LONDON, S.E.—We note the very **definite** No to our suggestion regarding the paraphrase of **this** verse, and that the crowning with glory and honour was before the death of the Lord Jesus. "This accords with Newberry's margin which shows the word "because" as "with a view to," thus making the phrase read "with a view to the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour": we had been taking the word "because" to mean "consequent upon." The scriptures quoted within the brackets (page 16) confirm the thought that glorification was before death. We are very astonished, however, that such should have been so. We had always thought the Lord laid aside His glory to endure the suffering of the Cross (see John 13- 4 and Philippians 2. 5-8—we have not forgotten John 1. 14). Moreover,

such a word as John 17. though spoken before the Cross, indicates that the Lord was thinking as if the Cross had passed (for example " I am no more in the world," " while I was with them," " now I come to Thee ") and the glory spoken of there seems to be given after the Cross is past. In Matthew 28. we see the Victorious Lord rising and announcing " All authority hath been given to Me "—as if it were given upon completion of His cross work and at the time of His resurrection. See also Acts 2. 32-6.

Is it thought (the reference to 2 Peter 1.17 suggests it) that the Lord was " crowned with glory and honour " at the Transfiguration ?

We shall be glad to hear further on these points.

[The Lord in His deity seeks the restoration of what is His by right, " The glory which I had with Thee before the world was " (John 17.). This is evidently associated with the fact that He " emptied Himself." Mysterious thought ! The crowning with glory and honour is connected with His character as " The Son of Man," whom God set over the works of His hands, but men denied Him and rejected His claim. Some, however, saw Him thus and willingly bowed their hearts to Him. Creation's Lord was in the wilderness with the wild beasts ; the unbroken ass yielded its will willingly to Him ; the fish in the sea comes at His bidding to Peter with money in its mouth ; and what shall we say yet more? " What manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey Him?" 2 Peter 1. 17 is a helpful commentary as to the effect of God's words concerning the Son in regard to the making the word of prophecy more sure, but the transfiguration is not the answer to Hebrews 2.—J.M.]

When we saw so many brackets in our February piece, we were quite sad, but we found contemplation on them very helpful.

[Sorry for LONDON feeling sad, we would rather see our friends meeting with difficulties than write as if all was clear as daylight.]

DAVID A. HILL.

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### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

##### SECTION V.—HEBREWS 6. 13 TO 7. 17.

From GLASGOW.—The writer's admonition that they should imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises, is strengthened by the example of Abraham, who having endured trial, received the promise with an oath. He had already in Isaac received assurance of the truth of God's word, but the oath was final to him for confirmation. So these Hebrews, having, through faith in God's word realised that Jesus had entered for them as a forerunner into the divine presence, a hope set before," received also " strong encouragement " from the oath which declared Him " Priest after the order of Melchizedek."

From this point the position of Melchizedek as Priest of God Most High, and the order of Melchizedek as the divine standard of priesthood are denned, while the peculiarities of both are contrasted with those of the Levitical priests of the order of Aaron. The priesthood of Melchizedek was continual, as, " having received it from neither father nor mother," and " it being witnessed that he liveth" death could not interrupt his sacred duty. On the other hand the tracing of genealogy was essential for priesthood to the son of Levi, the office passing from father to son, as each generation, having served God, was removed. Again, although Levi by virtue of office received tithes and pronounced blessing on his brethren, he had already, through Abraham, paid tithes and himself been blessed by a greater. The writer then points to the eminence of this King and Priest but

it is remarkable to note that although Melchizedek is used as the type, the standard which is **used when** speaking of continuity is " the Son of God."

Having proved the superiority of the standing of this new Priest, the reasoning proceeds to disclose the inability of the 'aw to bring perfection. The Levitical order functioned in it with its earthly, material things, but all this was superseded by the rising of a Priest of the tribe of Judah, having to do with non-carnal and therefore spiritual things, and holding office in the power of an endless life.

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From PAISLEY.—At the commencement of this portion the writer now draws special attention to Abraham, concerning whom the Hebrews had intimate knowledge in the recorded dealings he had with God. He is a worthy and outstanding example of the faithful of the past. Much encouragement and strength is surely obtained through reflecting sometimes on others who have gone before, and as we consider the many trials and difficulties that Abraham was called upon to undergo, little wonder that such a bright testimony should be written of him. His faith was not only occasionally exercised, but, as the scripture says, " He waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God " (Romans 4. 20—the whole of which chapter is worthy of consideration at this point.)

He received the promise because of his faith, and that while he was in uncircumcision. The promise of God is confirmed by an oath. We take these to be the two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, the promise and the oath (some differ). That which Abraham obtained was in connexion with his seed, that is, firstly, Isaac (Galatians 4. 28).

The hope mentioned in verse 18 and 19 called for discussion. We found it could not be the same as the hope of eternal salvation, nor the " blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ," nor the purifying hope of 1 John 3. 3. The scripture most akin seemed to be Hebrews 3- 6, having to do with the people of God entering in to His presence through our great High Priest.

Melchizedek being introduced as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the great contrast to the Levitical priesthood, in many points. In the latter no king could be priest, but every one must be of the tribe of Levi. They were hindered from continuing by reason of death ; they

were subject to rejection ; and there was the tabernacle and later the house of God, the continual offerings and all other ceremonies associated with the **requirements** of the law (Malachi 3. 7 ; Leviticus 10. 8-11) which made nothing perfect. In the new order we have Melchizedek as named of God, and having no beginning of days or end of life, abideth a priest continually, setting forth the Son of God. [Have our friends considered how the Lord became a Priest? When and how? Their remarks seem to say that the Lord's priesthood is from eternity, as is His Deity and Sonship, which is quite clearly not the case.—J.M.] In the beginning the Word of God, the Ancient of Days, the Father of Eternity, His priesthood was not inherited by birth nor was it handed to another. His person, order and endurance, typifying the Lord Jesus Christ in each special way. The bread and wine he brought may speak of resurrection. He is the first priest mentioned. Nothing is said of anything he offered to God ; on the contrary he received from Abraham a tenth out of the chief spoils, " and so to say, through Abraham even Levi who receiveth tithes, hath paid tithes." [Does not the fact that when men give to one who is a priest they have before them the thought of giving to the God of the priest? Melchizedek was priest of God Most High and Abram said later " I have lift up mine hand unto Jehovah, God most High."—J.M.] No doubt this shows to us the supremacy of the Melchizedek order, and the inestimable worth of our High Priest, who hath been made not after the law of a carnal commandment but after the power of an endless life.

Scripture for the choice of the priests is Numbers 1. 47-54 ; 2. 32 to 4. 49. That for the people of Judah. Genesis 49. 8-12.

S. THOMSON.

From PORTSMOUTH.—The theme of this passage is the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has entered within the veil for us and become an Eternal High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. The character of the Priesthood of Melchizedek is then spoken of His priesthood was not due to birth and he did not pass it on to another. The greatness of Melchizedek is shown by the tithes taken from Abraham and that he blessed Abraham. Since Abraham paid tithes to this priest, the Aaronic priesthood may be said to have paid tithes to the superior priesthood. The change in the order of priesthood is seen to be dependent upon a change of law, since

the Lord Jesus could receive no priesthood under the Mosaic law. Both law and priesthood have been supplanted because of their imperfections.

Melchizedek is only briefly referred to twice in the Old Testament :—Genesis 14. 18-20 and Psalm 110. 4. He is only spoken of in the New Testament in the Hebrews' epistle. In his priestly office he appears as such a perfect type of the Lord Jesus Christ in His priestly office that no comparisons are made in Hebrews between them. In fact some of the words used in Hebrews (for example, chapter 7. 3) associate him so closely with the Lord Jesus that some have considered Melchizedek not to have been an ordinary man. We consider that the statements made refer only to his priestly office and not to the man himself. [But it is ludicrous to speak of an office having no father or mother.] We can understand the difficulty that the Hebrew believers would have in understanding the Priesthood of Christ as being of the order of Melchizedek. The Aaronic order had filled such a large place in their lives and all they knew (or we know) of Melchizedek was contained in one brief reference in Genesis. Without doubt we have sufficient knowledge of him to make the type complete. The priest is connected with God's people, of whom Abraham was (so far as we know) the only one at that time. It has been suggested therefore that perhaps the only priestly act Melchizedek performed was when Abraham met with him. He then received an offering from Abraham, blessed him and gave to him just that further knowledge of God which he required to counter the temptation of the King of Sodom. Thus he showed the various aspects of the priestly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. Melchizedek reveals God to Abraham especially as the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, which will be a more evident fact in Millennial days. The Lord Jesus Christ is a Priest for ever and will therefore be a Priest during the Millennial reign. We have thought that there is a connexion between these two facts.

E. J. EVERY.

From BARROW.—Abraham, Melchizedek and Levi. These are the three persons who are now prominently brought to our notice by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews. These men are contrasted in a wonderful way, so as to bring forward once again the greatness of the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ. Abraham was a great man, being the father of the nation of Israel ; Levi

was great because from him sprang those who were anointed priests, and those who did the service of God's house ; but Melchizedek was the greatest of the three, in that Abraham gave him a tenth of the chief spoils (Hebrews 7. 4) as also did Levi, through Abraham. (Hebrews 7- 9, 10). The Lord Jesus, however, far excels these, for He has been exalted to be a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

We marvel that God, who cannot lie, and whose promises are Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 1. 20) should, in His promise to Abraham, interpose with an oath, saying " By Myself have I sworn . . . that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven." (Genesis 22. 16). And Abraham, holding tenaciously to that promise, " wavered not through unbelief, but waxed strong through faith, giving glory to God." (Romans 4. 20). This man Abraham was indeed a great person, to whom God could swear with an oath. But not for Abraham's sake only was the oath taken, but also " to shew to the heirs of the promise, the ' unchangeableness ' of His counsel . . . that we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us."

Though Abraham was the friend of God, and is highly placed among the heroes of faith (Hebrews 11 •) yet he was not a priest. Melchizedek, though a king, was also a priest. A certain amount of mystery shrouds this king's appearance, as recorded in Genesis 14. He appears to come out of oblivion, and returned thither again. We do not read of him before this time, and we do not read of him again after this time, save in connexion with the Lord Jesus, of whom he is a type in his king-priest character. We are told nothing of his birth, nor of his death. His genealogy is a closed book, neither his father nor mother are named, and so he is in this respect, like unto the Son of God, for as such there is no genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some have thought that this was one of the theophanies such as is recorded in Genesis 18. 13-33. [Melchizedek is not a theophany, if so, then the Lord's coming was a theophany and what a fearful heresy this would be !—J.M.] But the language of Hebrews 7. seems so definite, **THIS MAN** (verse 4). [" Man " is not in verse 4 it is only the demonstrative pronoun "this."] And again, we do not know of any of these instances (where the Lord Jesus appeared in Old Testament times) where He is given a

name except Jehovah, the Angel of Jehovah, Wonderful, and so forth. Here, however, is one who bears the distinct names of king and priest. How he obtained his priesthood we are not told, but it was undoubtedly of divine origin.

This name, being interpreted, is king of righteousness, and he is also king of peace, leading us to suggest that, as applied to the Lord Jesus, the thought is dispensational, and points forward to the Millennial reign, when He will in the fullest sense, bear out these characters. [Yea, truly, the Lord will be in the Millennium a King-Priest; but join verses 1-4 and see how the Priesthood fits the present while He sits on the Father's right hand.—J.M.] This thought is strengthened by a glance at Psalm 110. which quotes "Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek" (Psalm 110. 4). Note the following points—

Verse 1—"Sit Thou on My right hand, till I make thine enemies Thy footstool."

Verse 2—"Rule Thou in the midst of Thine enemies."

Verse 3—"Thy people offer themselves willingly in the day of Thy power."

Verse 4—"Thou art a priest for ever."

Verse 5—"The Lord . . . shall strike through kings in the day of His wrath."

Verse 6—"He shall judge among the nations."

The arguments used by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews in shewing the inferiority both of Abraham and Levi, are wonderful. The sons of Levi, under the Mosaic law were entitled to receive tithes from their brethren, but Melchizedek, whose genealogy was not reckoned from them, has taken tithes from the man who had received the promises. Again it is within the understanding of all who read, that the less (or the inferior) is blessed of the better (or superior). (Hebrews 7. 7). Therefore, Levi, as yet unborn, paid tithes to Melchizedek. This argument exalts the king-priest far above both Levi and his father. But now we are brought face to face with another, of even greater worth than Melchizedek, God's Own Son. The Levitical priesthood had proved a failure, and the time was now ripe when another priest should arise, not reckoned, however, after the order of Aaron. So it became needful that the law should be changed. How forcibly this brings before us the fact that the carnal commandment was at an end, and a new order of things was in existence. Passing

over the house of Aaron, and passing over the Law as given on Mount Sinai, the One who swore to Abraham saying, " By Myself have I sworn," is the same One who swore to His Son saying " Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." Thus we have the person of the Lord Jesus exalted far above the sons of Abraham, having an unchanging priesthood " not made a priest after a carnal commandment but after the power of an endless life (Hebrews 7. 16). How true the words of the hymn writer :

" Their priesthood passed through several hands,  
For mortal was their race ;  
His never changing office stands  
Eternal as His days."

JOHN MCCORMICK.

From KILMARNOCK AND GALSTON.—The writer after his words to them concerning faith and patience, brings Abraham before them as one in whom those things were manifested, and that in association with the promise of God to him, and as a result whereof he obtained it. We noticed, however, in Hebrews 11 • that Abraham is brought before us, linked on with those who died in faith not having received the promises. The word here, however, is in the plural, and with reference to all that God promised him, he did not obtain. The promise of God however, with regard to blessing and multiplying him had a fulfilment ; Genesis 24, 1 and 35, says " And Abraham was old and well stricken in age and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things." This promise, however, was not realized to the full in the life of Abraham, as we understand it will yet be more fully realized by him.

The writer refers us here to the occasion on which God swore to him by Himself, this being after the obedience of Abraham was manifested in the offering up of his son. He swore by Himself and that because He had none greater. He is God and beside Him there is none else.

Thou triune God there's none beside,  
With Thee the honour none shall share ;  
Far, far above earth's pomp and pride  
With Thee none ever can compare.

The oath in disputes amongst men was final for confirmation and was an end to all gainsaying, so also it was for this reason that God also in pronouncing" blessing upon Abraham, interposed with an oath, by this mani-

festing to the heirs of the promise the immutability of His counsel. The promise was to Abraham and to his seed, and it is such we understand that are here referred to in "The heirs of the promise," in verse 17, and in the "we," of verse 18. The promise therefore is to all who are of the faith of Abraham. "Know therefore that they which be of faith the same are sons of Abraham." (Galatians 3. 7).

God's word and God's oath we understand then are the two immutable things which we have as an encouragement for us to lay hold on the hope set before us.

In the word of promise to Abraham, about "blessing," God had [included?] therein the blessing which is contained in the Gospel, which presents to us Christ as Saviour, whereby we know the blessedness of which David wrote. "Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sin is covered." But this is not all the depth of meaning. This hope of which the writer speaks arises out of the same promise and in association therewith, the Lord is presented to us as our High Priest and that after the order of Melchizedek. He has gone in within the veil and that for us. So now it is possible for us also to approach. Faith and patience are, however, necessary if this is to be realised on our part. This great blessing is lost to us if we cease to hold fast—it is a hope in association with the existence of the House of God.

Melchizedek. It is after this higher order that the Lord has been made a priest. He has not taken Melchizedek's office, but He has taken Melchizedek's order in contrast to the Aaronic. The things made mention of concerning Melchizedek are all true of Him and that not because He is made similar to Melchizedek but because Melchizedek is made similar to Him.

He is truly without father, without mother, without genealogy. He has neither beginning of days nor end of life. He is a Priest and that in the power of an indissoluble life.

We noted that in reference to his order Melchizedek is only mentioned as priest. The Lord, however, is spoken of as High Priest. Also—that in the 4th verse of this chapter the revisers refer to him as a "man" and speak of him in the past tense. This however, is not so in the original as "man was" is omitted. They should indeed by their omission cause us to consider how great this Melchizedek is, for we understand that he is

not here spoken of in the past tense as though he lived and died, but in the present. May we therefore indeed seek to learn what God would seek to teach us from this one concerning our Great High Priest our Lord Jesus Christ.

HUGH PIPER.

From LONDON, S.E.—The promise of God is irrevocable, having been sealed with an oath. We thus have the double assurance of two unchangeable things, i.e., the promise and the oath of God. It is noteworthy that, there being none greater than He, God swore the oath by Himself (chapter 6. verse 13).

The promise thus made to Abraham imbued his spirit with hope. And what was Abraham's hope? Surely, the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God (Hebrews 11. 10). It is therefore evident that we have the same hope as Abraham, and our assurance is thus as great as his. [See Romans 4. 18. The promise. Genesis 12. 2, 3 ; 15. 5. 'The Oath. Genesis 22. 16-18. The Hope is not the City but his Seed.]

Melchizedek typified the Lord to a considerable degree, the chief points being that

He was both priest and king ;  
 He had neither beginning of days nor end of life ;  
 He abideth a priest continually ;  
 He was greater than Levi.

The tithes given to Melchizedek remind us that we should not be found lacking in this respect. We should present our bodies a living sacrifice (Romans 12. 1). That the Lord has also a claim upon our money cannot be doubted (see 1' Corinthians 16. 1). In connection with this, it is significant that the Lord loveth a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9. 7).

The bread and wine brought to Abraham are very significant, insomuch as they remind us of the body and the blood of the Lord. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life (John 6. 54).

The entrance of the Lord within the veil, as a high priest after the order of Melchizedek, has brought to an end both the Levitical priesthood and the law under which they held office. The law is now superseded by the new commandment given us by the Lord Jesus, that we should love one another. (John 15. 12).

[" Brought to an end " and " superseded " are just a little too strong surely?]

Two matters were found to present difficulty and assistance thereon would be appreciated. (See under Question and Answer.)

R. C. WESTON.

From LEICESTER.—" Those who inherit the promises." This can only be accomplished by being diligent and faithful in the hope to the end. Some thought the two immutable things to be God and His Word, or God's promise and oath, or God's counsel and oath.

The main teaching in these verses 13-20 appears to be the unchanging Word of God which the believer can rely on. God is faithful and will perform all He has said and promised, but the Hebrews are reminded the promises are in and through Christ Jesus. The hope set before them is the Lord who has passed through the heavens and is in the presence of God for them—a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The order or manner of Christ's Priesthood forms a leading theme for the writer, which he emphasises very carefully, and the opening verses of chapter 7. throw light on the very remarkable person and office of Melchizedek.

Concerning this portion different views were expressed. Some thought these verses to be a divine revelation of details concerning Melchizedek many of which were not previously known by man, and further that the words, " without father, without mother, without genealogy " indicated a person of miraculous incarnation [this word ought not to be used equivocally], who assumed a body for a brief period, in order to act as " Priest of God Most High " in the circumstances of Genesis 14. 18.

Another thought was that Melchizedek was an ordinary man appointed by God to act as priest on this occasion, but that whilst he had natural parents, he had no ancestors as a priest.

A third view was that Hebrews 7. 1-3 was a statement of historical fact as far as Jewish history recorded them, and that the writer used the absence of information as to the birth, death or parentage of Melchizedek as a proof that God could raise up a priest, without reverting to parentage. Such held that Melchizedek entered Jewish history as a king and priest and no more was known about him. [If God has made Melchizedek in Genesis 14. like unto the Son of God, whose generation as Son is utterly beyond the power of human reason, we

may expect to find things about Melchizedek incomprehensible. In a book of Genesis, which tells us whence and how things became, we have this mysterious man about whose genesis God tells us nothing, who has neither beginning nor end, and it is vain to seek either his cradle or his tomb. Conjecture about him may be rife and allowed at times to turn riot, but we are safe always not to go beyond the things that are written. These are for us and for our children.—J.M.] Note was made of the title in Genesis 14. 18, 19, 20, 22, "El Elyon" and it was suggested that at the time when Abram fought the battle, the people of Salem were worshippers of "El Elyon" and Melchizedek was their priest.

The remaining portion of chapter 7. under consideration shows the greatness of the priesthood of the Lord. The Aaronic order, which filled the minds of the Jew because of the past dispensation, was shown to be defective, hence the necessity of a priest after another order. The scriptures before us show clearly Christ is that priest but after the manner of Melchizedek. He has no infirmity, no sin, and lives for ever as priest. Having such a high priest Jesus the Son of God, our hope is higher, grander and clearer, and in this hope we draw near to God.

F. JEWELL.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Our last portion dosed in the showing of God's expectations that our spiritual life will not be neglected but that we would bring forth fruits worthy of God and His blessing upon us, and not spend an unfruitful life consisting only of thorns and briars. God yearns that we should give ourselves to better things, even the things which accompany salvation, and assures us that, if we press on, diligently living in the divine things to the end we shall in no wise lose our reward.

And God's promises are yea and amen. He made promise to Abraham (Genesis 12. 2, 3, etc.), a stupendous promise, a promise that only faith could grasp, and being anxious that Abraham should know and lay hold upon His unchangeableness, that any doubts or fears he might have should be swept away, He confirmed His promise to Abraham with an oath (Genesis 23. 16). Now we know that men take oaths (we as children of God being counselled to swear not neither by the heaven nor by the earth—James 5. 12) and that such oaths are to

affirm the truth, and are taken as strong and decisive evidence of the truth of what they promise to do or say. And God, willing to give Abraham and his seed this affirmation of His promise, there being none greater, He swore by Himself " By Myself have I sworn, saith the Lord."

In the promise and the oath (the two immutable things) we have this outstanding example of the unchangeableness of God. Thus we have strong encouragement to lay hold upon the hope set before us.

This hope is evidently not the hope of His coming, for the coming is not mentioned, but as to what this hope specially refers to we are not all agreed. Some think it is a hope centred in our Lord Jesus Christ as the High Priest in the presence of God, a hope that looks over and above the things around, looks through the heavens, right within the veil, and sees there Jesus Himself the FORERUNNER, knowing assuredly, according to the immutable promise of God, we shall surely follow. Others think that, seeing this hope enters into that which is within the veil (verse 19) it is definitely connected with the better hope through which we DRAW NIGH unto God which we get in the next chapter (Hebrews 7. 19), that is, the drawing-near with boldness to the Throne of Grace (Hebrews 4. 16) and the drawing near with boldness into the Holy Place (Hebrews 10. 19-23), both of which are present possibilities.

This hope is intended by God to keep us from drifting, keep us anchored, sure and steadfast, looking off unto Jesus our High Priest in the presence of God, a Priest for ever after Melchizedek's order.

In the seventh chapter we are exhorted to consider this Melchizedek and his greatness, not that we should be taken up with Melchizedek, but to see how beautifully our Lord's eternal and unchanging priesthood is uniquely typified, and to learn His divine appointment by God to that position.

Under the old dispensation (the law), priests of necessity must be taken from the tribe of Levi, but no such carnal appointment can ever be countenanced of our High Priest. He was not of the tribe of Levi, nor yet taken from a priestly family, but God, disannulling the commandment (and law made nothing perfect) chose Himself from among men, a faithful High Priest, one from the tribe of Judah, of which tribe Moses said nothing concerning priests.

All this is set forth typically in Melchizedek. He

was not of Levi, but so much greater, for to him, gave Levi tithes, in figure, being as yet in the loins of his father when Abraham met this Priest of God Most High. In the Levitical priesthood there was always succession of office, death made its changes, but concerning Melchizedek in his character as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, a veil is cast over him. Genealogy, ancestors, successors, birth and death are all alike hidden. He is never represented to us as one dead, but always living, and thus we see so beautifully set forth in type the unchangeable and eternal priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, so truthfully set out in the lines of the hymn—

Their priesthood passed through several hands,  
 For mortal was their race.  
 His never changing office stands  
 Eternal as His days.

N. G. ADKINS.

### QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From LONDON, S.E. -

1. Was Melchizedek of earthly or angelic origin?

1. From J.M.- Melchizedek was not an angel. If he had been then the Lord could not have been after his order, for the Lord is not One who is divine and angelic, nor yet angelic and human in His nature, but One who is both God and Man in one indissoluble union—one Priest being Jesus, the Son of God. Melchizedek was not the Son of God, but "made like unto the Son of God." He was not an angel, and we leave our friends to deduce their own conclusion.

2. Chapter 7. verse 8—"But there one, of whom it is witnessed that he liveth." Does this refer to Melchizedek, or to the Lord Jesus?

2. From J.M.—Chapter 7. 8. This verse refers to Melchizedek. If it could not be said that Melchizedek liveth, then he must be dead, and if dead what does this involve regarding "the order of Melchizedek?" Melchizedek is without "end of life."

LONDON'S queries, pages 2 and 3 (January).—It may be helpful to make a few observations hereon even if we do not solve the difficulties or answer the questions.

I. "At the end of these days." This evidently refers to the days which bring what is called "Old time" to a close. Of old God spoke in the prophets, but in the closing days of that dispensation God spoke in Son.

II. "Appointed Heir of all things." This statement precedes "Through whom also He made the ages." The Lord is called "The Father of Eternity," Isaiah 9. 6 Mg. God purposed certain things in Christ Jesus before times eternal and also made promise of eternal life before those times. The mystery belonging to this dispensation He did not disclose in past ages. "The mystery which from all ages hath been hid in God who created all things." It seems to me, in association with the creation of God in ages past the Son of His love (the firstborn of all creation, in whom, through whom, and unto-whom all things were created), was appointed even before things were created, the heir to all. I give this, without being dogmatic, as my thought on this statement.

III. "Upholding all things by the word of his power." Yes, the utterance of God has an upholding as well as a creative power. What God did in Genesis 1. remains with us still—the sun, moon and stars—the earth, men and beasts, grass and herb and fruit tree, the sea and its bound. The impetus of the saying of His power given at the first still remains effective. The same power upholds created things which are invisible to us.

IV. "Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." This evidently is the Lord's attitude now with reference to the question of sins; but in regard to other matters we have Him spoken of as standing (Acts 7. 56) and walking (Revelation 2. 1).

V. Having become by "so much better than the angels." The statement with reference to the purification of sins involves the incarnation and the cross. In incarnation He was made lower than the angels—angels strengthened Him in His times of weakness and what weakness is seen in the cross!

"The Lamb of God to slaughter led." Now He has become so much better, stronger or more powerful. His days of weakness and humiliation are past and He ascends excellent in majesty and glorious in holiness to sit on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens: better, infinitely better, than angels, for why? He has inherited a name more excellent. How has He inherited

the Name ? by His cross-work, or by the excellence of His earthly life, or by His resurrection ? No ! Never ! Great and wondrous facts as these are there is that which is more important than any of these and that is the fact that He is God's Only Begotten. Son is His Name by reason of His generation. Inheritance flows from relationship and relationship is by His being the Only Begotten.

VI. " This day have I begotten Thee." This I take to mean the day in which God dwells, which knows no night and knows neither yesterday nor to-morrow. It does not describe a period in the ages of eternity or in the years of time. God who says of His being " I Am," such an One says "This day have I begotten Thee." This is a fact in the Godhead, a fact before all ages, for all ages were made through the Son, a fact utterly beyond all the reasoning power of men, but yet a fact which we believe and by which in believing salvation is ours.

VII. I am just doubtful of what the margin says as to this quotation being made from the LXX. of Deuteronomy 32- 43. Psalm 97. 7, I think gives the portion from which the apostle quoted " Worship Him all ye gods ": gods or elohim, here the Spirit in Hebrews 1. shews must be understood not as the Triune God, but angels.

VIII. " Thy fellows." This has to do with men, not angels. God was the Fellow of God in eternity. " The Man that is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts " (Zechariah 13. 7). Christ, who is God, has a Fellow in Jehovah, and Christ who is also man has fellows in men, and above these latter He is anointed with the oil of gladness.—J.M.



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### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION : **THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.**

#### SECTION VI.—HEBREWS 7. 18 TO 8. 13.

From GLASGOW.—The priesthood being changed other things besides the law were altered in position. [The law is changed, not altered.] The object of the law was to mould man that he might be found well-pleasing and acceptable before God. As it had not the power to bring man to perfection the lack of which was evident, it was superseded by " a better hope " (chapter 7. verse 19). This appears to refer to the same thing as chapter 6. verse 18, and " strong encouragement " is given by the oath which confirms His appointment. [The commandment of verse 18 is the carnal commandment of verse 16, by which the priests of the Aaronic order were made. Our friends seem to be dealing with the law in a general way. " The better hope " is Christ as a Priest in the presence of God, by which we draw nigh to God. The oath does not confirm the Lord's appointment as Priest, but He is Priest by the word of the oath.—J.M.]

In chapter 7. 23-28, the writer seems to point to the eminent suitability of this One, " a Son, perfected for ever/' for the place of High Priest, furnished completely by appointment, character and work to save them that draw near. [Do our friends distinguish between the law and the covenant? Note how the service is connected with the covenant in Hebrews 9. 1.—J.M.]

From the details of the picture the writer turns, in the beginning of chapter 8., to emphasise the point that " such a High Priest " had actually sat down " at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty on High " on

their behalf. As the Aaronic priesthood had been in association with a law which in its turn was closely connected with the old covenant, so also, this priesthood involving a "far more excellent ministry" and bringing "a better hope" was accompanied by a "better covenant" of which He is both the Surety and Mediator.

There are several outstanding points in connexion with this covenant. Both the old and new were and are between God on one hand and Israel and Judah as a people on the other. The first entered into at Sinai was unfruitful because that people had departed from it. [We cannot limit the application of the covenant to Israel and Judah. The Israel of God has an application other than to the sons of Jacob and also' they which be of faith, the same are sons of Abraham. Two covenants are specifically mentioned in Hebrews, an old and a new; to which do we belong? In the new covenant obedience is not abrogated but it is rendered increasingly possible by having the law in the heart, with each person provided with a private Teacher the Blessed Paraclete.—J.M.] The second, because of the impression on heart and mind brought in its train could not possibly be ineffectual. The old was evidently dependent upon their obedience, while the new takes no account of obedience because of the intimate knowledge of God in each individual. [But of course obedience is rendered?] Besides this they were to be in the blessed position of perfection, having mercy shown to iniquity and sins completely forgotten.

"j. A. ARCHIBALD.

From PAISLEY.—Keeping still before us the priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ after the order of Melchizedek, verse 12 says, "the priesthood being changed there is made of necessity a change of the law." That which the people of God had to do with in the past has now been done away (the law made nothing perfect). [Have our friends considered Romans 8. 4? The moral code is inculcated in the Faith in the New Covenant Scriptures. But the law affecting the priesthood and all that appertains thereto has been changed.—J.M.] That no man is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident (Galatians 3-11) hence there must be the strict adherence to the requirements of which we read in Exodus 28. that the high priest die not. ["That he die not" has to do with possible judgment, not with death from natural causes. The priests of Aaron's line were dying men, but our Priest liveth ever. — T.M.] Herein the superi-

ority of the order of Melchizedek shines out when compared with the Aaronic order. The one is eternal, the other temporal and carnal in character, and the former has to do with a people who are "justified from all things" by faith (Acts 13. 39). " He taketh away the first that he may establish the second " (chapter 10. 9-14), enhances the present aspect of priestly worship in conjunction with the day of grace. The priests under the law were not appointed by an oath, but because of genealogy, and that whether their life and character complied with the position or not. How different in connexion with the Son of God. He was holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners. Well might we echo "Consider Him/" as we ponder and gaze upon His peerless and adorable person.

We noted the leading up of chapter 7. by such words, for ever, unchangeable, ever liveth, perfected for evermore, to introduce us to Him in office as the One who avails for our entrance into God's presence (chapter 8. 1) when as gathered together in holy priesthood capacity we in spirit ascend into heaven, with the object of giving to God through Him, thereby giving glory to God (chapter 8<sub>a</sub> 3). Verse 6 continues to present to us the greater blessings which are the portion of those who have been redeemed and brought unto Himself.

The word to Pharaoh was, " Let My people go that they may serve Me/" but we find Exodus 24. teaches us concerning a further step, the people entering into a covenant of obedience to Jehovah (through Moses). Chapter 19. also states what is enjoined upon them, setting forth obedience and sanctification, being identified with a people sprinkled by the blood of the covenant. Then follows chapter 25. and onwards, with all the blessed associations of such a people in service to God.

What lessons are here for us to-day, who are on our pilgrim pathway. We suggest for consideration 1 Peter 1. 2, " In sanctification (setting apart) of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ/' also to an already redeemed people as verses 18 to 23 make clear; see "also chapter 9. 19-21 ; 10. 22 ; 12. 24 and Psalm 50, 5.

The better promises have been enacted (established by law) because of the great and perfect Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (chapter 7. 27, 28 ; 9. 11-15. Compare also\* Galatians 3.). Verses 8-12 have reference to Israel and Judah in a day to come.

From LONDON, S.E.—In considering this section the favoured position of God's people in this our day, as compared with those living in the dispensation of the law, was forcibly brought to our minds.

Verses 18, 19. The law is now cancelled because of its weakness and unprofitableness. It could make nothing perfect—" what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh " (Romans 8. 3, 4). [Note the requirement of the law here.]

The bringing in of the better hope, we concluded, refers to the perfect work of redemption accomplished on cross, whereby we as redeemed ones, can enter into God's holy presence being " assured that, " by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things," and this the law of Moses could not do. (Acts 13. 39.) [" The better hope <sup>J</sup> is Christ in the presence of God for us, the One who is our saving Priest because of His priestly intercession, which is of course, based upon His work of atonement as was priestly service in the past.—J.M.]

The Levitical priests, being subject to death, could not continue, but Christ our Great High Priest will continue for ever, because the Lord swore with an oath and will not repent (verse 21).

It was suggested that the phrase " For such an high priest became us " (verse 26) meant, " such a One suits our case." The context gives His various attributes—holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. He was therefore eminently fitted to become the lamb of God, a sacrifice once for all. [Our friends are confusing the Lord as the Lamb of God and His being Priest of God. He was the Lamb of God, the Sin-bearer of Calvary (and, of course, still is the Lamb) but He was appointed a Priest in resurrection by the word of the oath. The sacrifice suited our sinner-need but the priest suits our need as saints.—J.M.]

The word " perfected " (verse 28) suggested to our minds a process, and in this connexion we referred to chapters 2. 9, 10 ; 5. 8, 9. Christ was made perfect through suffering.

Chapter 8. shows clearly that the Levitical priesthood has been entirely abolished by the eternal priesthood of Christ, and that the new covenant has taken the place of the old. [Our friends do not discuss the revival of priestly service during the Millenium.]

With verse 2 we connected chapter 9. 24, showing that the true tabernacle of which Christ is a Minister is in heaven itself.

The tabernacle in the wilderness was merely a shadow of the heavenly tabernacle, which now is, and the sacrifices now offered are the praises of the saints, Christ adding His sweet perfume.

Under the law the high priest could only enter into the holy of holies once a year and then not without blood, which he offered for his own sins and for the sins of the people. But Christ having died once, appears before the throne of God continually for us.

The latter part of the chapter has a future application. Romans 11. 22-27 proved helpful in this connexion. [And a present fulfilment (see Hebrews 10. 15-18). Note " And the Holy Spirit also beareth witness to us."—J.M.]

E. C. LEAMY.

From PORTSMOUTH.—This portion is concerned with contrasts and similarities between the High Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ and the priesthood of the Old Covenant. The high priests under the Old Covenant were failing and needed to sacrifice daily for themselves as well as for others. They served in the shadow of the true tabernacle. The Lord Jesus is perfect, has offered one perfect sacrifice and serves in the heavenly sanctuary. Like them He offers both gifts and sacrifices.

It is evident that the Lord Jesus was not a priest on earth and therefore the statement that " He offered up Himself " cannot mean that He was at once the victim and the Priest when on Golgotha's Cross. [This requires a fuller examination than is here given to it, but the statement whether correct or not, raises interesting questions. Who was it slew the burnt offerings of Leviticus 1. ?]

The Priesthood of the Lord Jesus must have begun at His ascension. It has been suggested that this is typified by the fact that Aaron on the Day of Atonement offered the sin offering clad in the holy linen garments and only put on the High Priestly garments of glory and beauty when the atonement was complete and the burnt offerings were to be offered.

We have wondered whether the Tabernacle was a copy of heavenly things in the sense that everything in its construction spoke of spiritual and the Person of Christ or whether there is in heaven a sanctuary. (See also Revelation 11. 19 ; 15. 5).

The superior character of the New Covenant is greatly stressed in this portion. The principle of the Old Covenant was that man could be taught to obey and

serve and please God. We learn from the Galatian letter that God knew this would never be but gave the Law for the very purpose of showing man's inability to do God's will. The New Covenant is indeed much better in that. Man's incapacity is recognised and there is rebirth by the Spirit of God before the man is called into covenant relationship to God.

E. J. EVERY.

From BARROW.—In Section V. we have been concerned with the arguments, used by the writer, to prove that the Lord Jesus is greater by far than Abraham and the sons of Aaron, for He is a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. Now in chapter 7. from verse 18 onwards, we read of a "better hope" and a "better covenant."<sup>M</sup> Our High Priest has passed through the heavens, hence our "better hope"; for we draw nigh through Him (see Hebrews 10. 19-22).

The high priest of the Aaronic line had to enter into the holy place, yearly, on the great day of atonement, with blood, and scarcely had God been propitiated for the sins of the people, when the debt began again to accrue. How much better now, for, once for all, a sacrifice of intrinsic value fully satisfying to God, has been offered and accepted, in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ; and on its merit continual intercession for us is possible.

Some discussion then transpired on what difference, if any, there might be in the work of the Lord Jesus as (1) Mediator, (2) Intercessor, and (3) Advocate. The following thoughts are but suggestive.

Mediator. Galatians 3. 20, states that "a mediator is NOT OF ONE." 1 Timothy 2. 5 gives us the two, between which, as middle-man, the Lord Jesus acts, that is, God and Man, thus suggesting that He has satisfied the righteous demands of God, and also fully meets the need of the creature. In Hebrews 8. 6 we have Mediator of a better covenant; 9. 15 Mediator of a new covenant; 12. 24, Mediator of a new covenant. It would seem it has more the sense as used in Galatians 3. 19—of one who dispenses what God has ordained with no suggestion of man dictating terms.

An Intercessor is one who comes between two parties—one of which has been aggrieved. There is a suggestion of pleading on the ground of mercy—and that by One who\* has endured temptation.

In 1 John 2. 1 we find that our Advocate (Paraclete) is Jesus Christ the righteous. Here the suggestion

would appear to be that of arguing on **our behalf**, or standing alongside of us in a helping sense, upon a legal and just basis. Pleading- again is contained in the thought but on an unimpeachable basis of satisfied justice.

Chapter 8. Now the writer reaches the climax of his arguments, and, having presented to his Hebrew readers (and to us) such a High Priest, in such an exalted and holy place, serving in the true tabernacle, of which the wilderness pattern was but a shadow (Hebrews 8. 5 ; 10. 1)—less than a replica or model we suggest—he now brings home the point to them that it is needful for our High Priest to have somewhat to offer. Whence will He find this " somewhat " ?

In the Aaronic priesthood, the high priest offered " gifts and sacrifices " (Hebrews 8. 3 ; 5. 1) of which the latter seem to have preponderated. In the Melchizedek priesthood " gifts " seem to preponderate. We do not lose sight of the fact that " once at the end of the age hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself " (Hebrews 9. 26 and 7. 27). Yet now, as far as verse 3 is concerned, it would appear that the writer concentrates our minds on the offering up of " gifts. " [We cannot overlook the " spiritual sacrifices " of which Peter writes (1 Peter 2. 5) which very definitely touch the point at issue.] The words of the psalmist come to our minds—" I will praise the name of God, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving, and it shall please the Lord better than an ox, or a bullock, that hath horns and hoofs " (Psalm 69. 30, 31 ; see also Ephesians 5. 19 and Colossians 3. 16).

The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is perpetually available for the sinner in his need of a Saviour, and ever avails for the saint in his transgressions. But from a kingdom of priests, gifts are necessary to fill His hands, while He is in the Holy place.

Some discussion took place on whether believers became priests on being born again, or if some other qualification was necessary. It was pointed out that the word priest is never used [of believers?] in the singular in the New Testament (Hebrews 13. 12-16. 1 Peter 2. 1-5. Revelation 1. 6 ; 5. 10 ; 20. 6). [The question of how and when persons in this dispensation become priests is one of more than technical interest. If birth (the new birth) supplies all that is necessary, then believers are and ever will remain priests whatever happens, or what-

ever spiritual deformity or plague may be theirs. But careful thought and patient study should be given to the subject and we should not hastily jump to conclusions.— J.M.]

In giving the Law, God desired that Israel should be a " Kingdom of priests " (Exodus 19/ 6) but through failure, the firstborn were passed over and the family of Levi chosen for their faithfulness (Exodus 32. 26-29. Numbers 3. 12, 41, 45). The [Levitical] priesthood also was set up after the Law was given. Now, in our day, there are many children of God, who have failed to respond to the laws of the kingdom, in varying degrees ; such we suggest forfeit their birthright. They fail to realise that priesthood is in association with God's house, and being strangers to the latter they cannot function as priests. It is contrary to all scriptural analogy for priests to worship, individually, each in his own self-chosen place. It is not in keeping with the pattern of things old or new.

Hebrews 8. 7-13 would seem to speak of future blessings which shall be Israel\*s, on the merit of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. [But see Hebrews 10. 15-18.]

JAMES MARTIN, JUN.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Our portion continues with the priestly character of our Lord Jesus Christ, showing on the one hand why there was no perfection in the Levitical priesthood, and giving further evidence of the perfection of our Lord's priesthood.

The Law and the Levitical Priesthood. In the consideration of suggestion No. 1 of this section (the reasons for the giving of the Law) it was shown that man was unable to attain unto justification by the works of the Law, because by the Law came the knowledge of sin (Romans 3. 20) ; the Law came in that the trespass might abound (Romans 5. 20) ; the Law was our tutor, says the Apostle, to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith (Galatians 3. 24). The Law appointed, without the taking of an oath, priests who had imperfections. They were subject to death, so the priesthood passed through several hands. They needed to sacrifice first for their own sins before sacrificing for the sins of the people. Though the commandment was holy, righteous and good. (Romans 7- 12), it was weak and unprofitable because it dealt with priests having infirmities. Hence the need for disannulling, to\* bring in a better hope. They were appointed to offer daily both gifts and sacrifices and to

serve in that which was only a copy and shadow of the heavenly things.

The Lord Jesus Christ. His Priesthood.—This, we have learned, is the theme of the Epistle. Well might the writer say that the chief point is, that we have such a High Priest, and in the portion now before us, we have still more of His transcendent greatness. He wa<sup>^</sup> a Son, appointed High Priest by Jehovah by the word of the oath. His priesthood is unchangeable because He abides for ever. He was sinless, therefore He had no need to\* offer first for His own sins. He offered up Himself not man}/times but once for "all. His ministry as High Priest is in the true sanctuary, in heaven itself, not standing, having sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

Chapter 7. verse 22. "The surety."—In order that the new covenant between God and His people might be effective, and that the promises of eternal inheritance might be secured to us (Hebrews 9. 15) the Lord Jesus, as surety, has offered Himself, and the covenant has been sealed with His blood.

Chapter 7. verse 2\$. "He is able to save to the uttermost."—We first learned the truth of this when we came to Him as needy sinners, but this can also be true of us when we draw near to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4. 16). There is also, we think, a sense in which He is able to save when we draw near in praise and worship, in that our High Priest bears the iniquity of the holy things (Exodus 28, 38) and even ere we draw near we need His intercession in order that we may know our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience. [But that sprinkling is done once for all, is it not?]

Chapter 8. verse 3. In considering the offerings which our High Priest requires to offer, we were reminded first of the offering of Himself unto God, when He said is Psalm 40. "Lo I am come . . . to do Thy will O my God." The offerings which He now desires to offers from His people are the sacrifice of praise to God, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name (Hebrews 13.-15) or as given in 1 Peter 2« 5, spiritual sacrifices offered by a holy priesthood, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, and, as a royal priesthood we may also offer service well pleas <sup>nr</sup> to God (1 Peter 2. 9 ; Hebrews 13. 28).

Chapter 8. verse 8.—We note that this new covenant is with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. It is, however, a covenant which applies to us who are children of the promise (Galatians 4. 28) as well as to Israel

and Judah. This is further evidenced by the fact that the Holy Spirit beareth witness to US concerning this new covenant (Hebrews 10. 15) and in establishing " the second " WE have been sanctified (Hebrews 10. 9, 10).

Chapter 8. verse 13.—" That which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away." Does this mean that the ordinances under the old covenant were just about to cease, seeing that the Epistle to the Hebrews is reputed to have been written in A.D. 64, before the Temple was destroyed?

[We may take this as applying a principle that " old and worn out things are discarded." It is a dispensational statement. The destruction of the temple turned the T<sup>h</sup>ws religion into- a religion without blood, for henceforth they had nowhere to shed it.]

N. G. ADKINS.

From LEICESTER.—The opening verses of this section are significant in reference to the Old Covenant. We emphasize the words : weakness, unprofitableness, nothing perfect. In contrast, under the New Covenant, we have brought before us a better covenant 7. 22 ; a better hope 7. 19, and better promises 8. 6.

The blessings of the new, centre around the Person and work of the Lord Jesus. Rightly understood and appreciated, no Christian would look back and wish to be associated with the requirements of the law, for the law was but " a tutor to bring us to Christ." It could not make anything perfect ; being weak and unprofitable it must pass away and give place to grace and truth.

[The Law, as to its moral side, is holy and righteous and good, it is also spiritual. Love is the fulfilment of law. But as to its ceremonial side with which the service of Aaron and his sons was connected, it was weak and unprofitable, there was no perfection there, neither in the sacrifices or the priests. It is with this view that the Lord's sacrifice and priesthood is contrasted, not with the law, which found its essential meaning summed up in "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God/' . . . " And thy neighbour as thyself.—J.M.]

In chapter 8. 1 the chief point the writer would emphasize is—the Lord Jesus as High Priest " who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister of the sanctuary." It may help us, to enumerate here, what has been said of Him concerning His Priesthood: "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek " (chapter 7. 17).

" It behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted " (chapter 2. 17, 18). " Faithful to Him that appointed Him " (chapter 3. 2). " Christ as a Son over His (God's) house " (chapter 3. 6). " Having then a great High Priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God " . . . " For we have not a High Priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin " (chapter 4. 14, 15). " So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest " (chapter 5. 5). " Though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, became . . . the author of eternal salvation " (chapter 5. 8, 9). " For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah, as to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests " (chapter 7. 14). " But He, because He abideth for ever, hath His priesthood unchangeable. Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." " For such a high priest became us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and made higher than the heavens " (chapter 7. 24-26).

Hebrews who had been associated with earthly high priests would find difficulty in turning from that which is visible, to lay hold on priestly service in the heavenly tabernacle, yet a service that could only be spiritually realised.

We are interested in the thought, underlying chapter 7. 25, that the Lord is able to save to the uttermost those that draw near, because of His endless life. Does not the Levitical order suggest that the virtue was in the sacrifice, the victim, rather than the priest? [Our High Priest can save to the uttermost because He liveth to make intercession. Both sacrifice and priest were necessary in a past dispensation though perfection was associated with neither.] Again the work of intercession is introduced, and we wonder what this implies, as we remember scriptures setting forth truth on parallel lines, such as Mediator for all men (1 Timothy 2. 5) ; Advocate for children before the Father (1 John 2. 1) ; Intercessor for worshippers (Hebrews 7. 25 ; 9. 24). We noticed three covenants : The old covenant of the law ; The new covenant

of grace ; A covenant to Israel (chapter 8. 9) which appears to be still future. [No, there are not three covenants, there is an old and a new ; note the force of " us " in Hebrews 10> 15 to which we have referred elsewhere.—J.M.]

In closing, we would mention the repeated exhortation enjoined upon the Hebrews to draw near. There is something very sweet and blessed about this. Joseph when he was making himself known to his brethren said " Draw near unto\* me," after their great sin. This was an extremely gracious act, and we should remember what we were : enemies, vile, afar off, yet we are invited to draw near. To whom? To God through Christ. Nothing bars the way for He has cleared the ground before us. Reconciliation, redemption, justification, sanctification—are all ours as saved by grace.

We now, as the Lord's people, can draw near, for prayer, confession and praise, also to worship in the holies. We go right into the presence of a holy God, because we have such a High Priest. May we realise the nearness as we approach, and the sanctity and the privilege.

F. JEWELL.

From BRANTFORD.—As we enter into this section we come upon a statement that seems to infer that the law was of no use. [Well, " ineffective " would not be quite so sweeping.] This verse 18 regarding the weakness and unprofitableness of the law seemed to bear out another thought or thoughts : we seemed more or less to come to the conclusion that it was concerning the " Flesh " and not the " Law." [" What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh."]

People nowadays seem to have an idea that the Law is not for our guidance. Now what would be more applicable to us as saved ones than the commandment : " Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve "?

We believe that there is a difference between the law of the past and to-day. That is—the " Shalt do " has passed away and it is now " I will " or " Here am I, send me." It was then compulsory but it is now voluntary. [Our friends have been too brief "to do the subject justice.]

In chapter 8. the climax, or chief point, is reached ; that is, our High Priest is seated on the right hand of God. We read of Him offering- gifts, but what gifts can He offer?

# YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

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## THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### SECTION VII.—HEBREWS 9.

From LONDON S.E.—Verse 9 of our chapter speaks of a " parable for the time now present."\* It will be noticed that in the R.V. the word " now " is in italics and in the A.V. is translated " then." [On closer examination of the passage I think our friends will accept the Revised reading. We follow the teaching of the Tabernacle because of its wealth of instruction as to the better tilings of this dispensation. Israel had the shadows and we the substance. There is no need to distinguish between the Tabernacle and the Temple, for the Mosaic order applied to both, and the priesthood of Aaron was the priesthood of the Temple as well as of the Tabernacle.—J.M.] It seems to us that the correct rendering requires the past tense. For whilst some thought that perhaps the Apostle was thinking now of the Temple rather than the Tabernacle, and that the former was still standing when the Epistle was written, yet the majority thought that the reference was still to\* the Tabernacle. The " house was left desolate " at this time and we also remember that the Tabernacle was given for the wilderness journey, 'answering to the position of God's people in the present dispensation.

The marginal reading of " the good things to come " in verse 11, is " the good things that are come," and it seems that this was future to the Tabernacle and its ser-

vices, but present to us now,—<sup>li</sup> having come " in the same verse referring to the time when the Lord was made a Priest after the order of Melchizedek (chapter 7.).

The high priest of old entered into the most holy place once every year and here we get the perfect work of Christ reviewed against this background of imperfections. See, for instance, verse 12 in contrast with verse 7.

The word translated " covenant " in the R.V. (verse 15 and onwards) is " Testament " in the A.V., and Mr. Newberry says, " The Hebrew word " berith " is covenant, whilst the Greek word " diatheke " is testament. Hence in these verses the words may have a double sense."

A covenant signifies an agreement, whilst a testament is a will, which, as the Apostle says (verse 17) is of force where there has been a death.

We take it that the " testament " applies to the Old Testament saints, who " through faith received the promises," and when Christ died then God's pledge towards them was fulfilled ; the covenant aspect applies to those living after the death has taken place—an " agreement " (may we say) because of the death which the Lord has already suffered.

[This extract from Mr. Newberry does not make plain what is meant by the Hebrew and Greek words having a double sense. It is quite clear that the Greek word " diatheke " is the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew word for covenant. The apostle draws an illustration of the binding character of a testament (which is the same word as Covenant in verse 15) when the testator is dead, in verses 16 and 17, and this in order to force home the Lord's death which makes good to those whom God has called and with whom He has covenanted all the benefits of this agreement. There is no need for our friends to build a construction on the English words " Testament " and " Covenant," there being for these but one word in the Greek.—J.M.]

Verse 23 again occasioned some difficulty. What are the heavenly things mentioned in verse 23? God told Moses to make the vessels " after their pattern, which hath been showed thee in the mount " (Exodus 25. 40). Was Moses shown actual vessels to copy or a divine pattern? [It is hardly safe to conclude that though the tabernacle, etc., was a copy of heavenly things that Moses saw the heavenly things themselves. He was shewn a pattern to work to. For instance, of the Brazen altar it is said " Hollow with planks shall thou make it :

as it hath been shewed thee in the mount." To say that the heavenly things are exactly like these hand-made things would do violence to such things—so I judge.—J.M.]

The " end of the ages " (verse 26) was thought to mean " on the completion of the ages " as translated by Newberry. If this is correct, it seems that the present dispensation or the " Church period " is not reckoned in the term " ages " as far as the Jews were concerned.

[If the Cross is the end of the ages past, did not other ages begin where these ended? Does not Matthew 28. 20 shew that we live in a particular age?—J.M.]

The chapter closes with yet another word of hope from the Apostle—glorious hope—" Christ shall appear a second time, apart from sin."

We have heard this last clause rendered " apart from the Sin question " which seems to be a better translation, [This is interpretation, not translation, and is somewhat rhetorical. The force of the word apart needs to be grasped.] remembering that even when here as the bearer of sin yet He was always free from sin.

GEO. E. SOULSBY.

From PAISLEY.—The first paragraph of this chapter mainly describes the furniture in connexion, with the tabernacle as constructed by Moses in the wilderness, the then recognised dwelling-place of God, as the one and only place of collective worship. Those things, though important and having to be carefully attended to, in their dispensation, being carnal ordinances, were imposed until a time of reformation. The first covenant, under which the people offered sacrifices, it was impossible that the worshippers could be made perfect. - We noted the constant service in the holy place, but only once in the year had the high priest access into the most holy place, and that not without blood. Here is a striking contrast between that day and this, since we are privileged to be amongst those who are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (chapter 10. 10). Now because of Christ's perfection, He being High Priest of the good things that are come, the worshippers are made perfect (chapter 10. 14) and can thereby offer acceptably, thanksgiving and praise, the fruit of lips, which shall please the Lord better than bullock or ox that hath horns and hoofs (Psalm 69. 13). We can learn from those past things and apply to our worship in our day.

The tables of the law were the basis of the **old** covenant, and the people received further instructions **through** Moses (Acts 7. 38). The new covenant has as its basis the cross work of the Lord Jesus Christ, typified or foreshadowed in the blood of sacrifices. We had some difficulty in reconciling some passages in regard to the tables of the covenant such as Exodus 34. 1 with verse 28, but from Newberry we find that " he " in the second sentence of verse 28 is the Lord, which makes the matter clear. Therefore we find that God wrote the tables of the covenant, and that Moses on various occasions wrote the commandments and statutes in the book of the law (Exodus 24. 4 ; 34. 27. Deuteronomy 31. 9, 24-26).

We had also suggestions how Moses received instructions concerning the erection of the tabernacle, whether he was shown the objects, of which he was to make the copies, or whether his instructions were purely verbal (Acts 7. 44 was referred to, but we did not all agree on this point).

These are some of the things that we encountered and we feel that we do not know as we ought, but would endeavour to learn more, having our confidence in God. Now we see as through a glass darkly but then face to face. He is faithful that promised. " Things which eye saw not, and ear heard not, and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him "—this remains yet to be realized in its fullest sense.

Note.—Regarding the question on page 61 concerning the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus, we were quite clear that His Priesthood was not from eternity.

S. THOMSON.

From BRANTFORD.—We believe the greater and more perfect tabernacle spoken of from verse 11 on to verse 28 is the heavenly temple ; through which the Lord Jesus as a forerunner, has passed and entered into the Holy Place. The latter part of Psalm 24. is very suggestive. Would this be the gates of the Heavenly Temple?

[The gates of Psalm 24. I take to refer to the gates of Zion in David's time, which typically speak of the Lord's entrance into heaven itself, where is Mount Zion and the City of the Living God—much more of which we shall know better by and by.—J.M.]

How striking is the comparison between the blood of goats and bulls and the blood of Christ. In verse 14 it shows us that purpose of God in cleansing, then under

the law as now under grace, the service of God. We have a perfect High Priest, a perfect temple also, and all who draw nigh are made perfect, through His blood.

It seems that even the things of creation are going to be affected by the redemption wrought at Calvary, showing how widespread is the effect of the death of Christ.

The time referred to, the revealing of the sons of God, is, probably just prior to the Millenium.

We have a word of encouragement in verse 24. As we think how the work of atonement has been accomplished to God's infinite satisfaction, and then that it is such a One that appears for us, we may have boldness in drawing near to God. As under the first covenant there had to be redemption, and a mediator between God and the transgressor, so Christ paid the price for our redemption with His blood and became the Mediator between God and us. It is God's will that as we wait for the Son, we should serve. For we look for His appearing, apart from the sin question.

Compiled by J.T., J.B., and R.M.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.— The subject of this chapter seems to be a comparison between the old and new covenants, and a contrast between the efficacy of the blood of Christ and that of bulls and goats. The first covenant had ordinances of divine service and its sanctuary, a sanctuary of this world. In connexion with the new covenant, the sanctuary is not of this world, but is in the heavens, a tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man (see Hebrews 8- 2).

The first paragraph of Hebrews 9. deals with the tabernacle, its divisions and its furniture, also the mode of entry into the Holy of Holies. There is a difficulty with regard to the position of the golden censer, or as we take it, the golden altar, which, according to Exodus 40. 26, was put into the tent of meeting before the veil, that is, in the holy place. In Hebrews, however, it is described as being within the Holy of Holies. Why this difference we cannot tell. [Note the difference between the words " wherein " of verse 2 and " having " of verse 4. The golden censer which normally rested with its live coals from the Altar of Burnt offering upon the Golden Altar was carried by the High Priest on the day of atonement within the Holy of Holies, and the Holy Spirit shews that it belonged to the Holy of Holies though placed in the

Holy Place with the altar of incense to which it belonged.]

The priests went into the first tabernacle continually accomplishing the services, and this included burning incense upon the altar of incense ; but into the second tabernacle the High Priest only was permitted to enter, and then not without blood. It will be clearly seen from this that it would be impossible to do service at the golden altar, except once in a year, if it was in the position ascribed to it in Hebrews 9. 4. But whatever the reason of this statement, one thing we rejoice to know, and are assured of, that He of Whom the golden altar speaks is now in the immediate presence of God.

Verse 13 has reference to those who had been denied by reason of contact with a dead body (see Numbers 19. 17, 18). The blood of Christ cleanses our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (Hebrews 9. 13, 14). Under such circumstances we can go forward in the work of the Lord, cleansed from dead works, and all that defiles.

In the chapter before us we have the work of Christ on behalf of the sinner (verse 12) and also on behalf of the saint (verse 14).

Verse 15 shows another wonderful fact, that the blood of Christ availed for those who, in the past dispensation died in faith. Since the offering under the law could not make perfect, it was necessary that He of whom those offerings spake should come, and a death take place "for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant." Thus God shews His righteousness in the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God (Romans 3\* 25).

Two<sup>1</sup> words in our study seem to present a little difficulty. These are "testament" and "covenant." As far as we can gather, a covenant is an agreement between two parties, for example, the giving of the law. Here God laid down the conditions and the people said, "All that Jehovah hath spoken we will do" (Exodus 19. 8). A testament however, is the expressed will of one who has died. We notice that the Greek word signifies both covenant and testament (margin of R.V.) and that the word covenant is used in the Revised Version in connexion with the old dispensation and the new (verse 1\*5). Could we have help on this point, please?

[See brief remarks on London's paper.]

Those things which were the works of men's hands had to be cleansed before they could be used in the service of God. Whether it be the people, the book, the

tabernacle, or its furniture, all had to be cleansed by blood. This is a beautiful picture of the service of God to-day. The sinner comes to the cross, and because of the shedding of blood, can receive remission of sins. The saint, defiled, ignorant, and erring, can come to the Father, through Jesus Christ the righteous, and confessing, have his sins forgiven, for the blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin. (1 John 1 > 7).

In connexion with the tabernacle, we are reminded that God spoke to Moses saying "See that thou make after the pattern shewed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25. 40). Stephen speaks of this pattern as a "figure" (Acts 7. 44). It is suggested that when Moses was in the mount, he saw but a "figure" of that which he had to construct. On the other hand such scriptures as—

Hebrews 8. 2—The true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, not man.

Hebrews 9. 11—The greater and more perfect tabernacle not of this creation.

Hebrews 9, 24—Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands like in pattern to the true, would lead us to think that there is, in heaven, a true tabernacle, of which the earthly one was an exact model. Perhaps we could have help on this point too.

[See brief remarks on London's paper.]

Verse 23. Could the "heavenly things" be paraphrased to mean "spiritual things" and therefore refer to worship in our day?

[Spiritual things are in contrast to natural or material things. 1 Peter 2. 5. Heavenly things are in contrast to earthly. Israel's sanctuary was a sanctuary of this world, but the Lord entered into a tabernacle which the Lord pitched, not man. Both heavenly things and spiritual things have a bearing on worship to-day, but we must not confuse the terms or we shall lose the sense.—J.M.]

Is there any relation between these heavenly things and "the heavnlies" quoted in Ephesians 1. 3 ; 2. 6?

[No, the "heavnlies" are not the "holies." The heavnlies would answer in some respects to the land of Canaan. It is the place of our blessings and of our warfare too. The Holies would answer to the sanctuary to which the tribes went up to worship God. Of course we must not overlook the fact that while the Tabernacle was a copy of heavenly things it also spoke of the House of God to-day (see Hebrews 3. 5, 6). Between the House

and the Holies there is a way called " The way which He dedicated for us."—J.M.]

J. MCCORMICK.

From KILMARNOCK AND GALSTON.—As it was in the old, so also is it in the new, we are saved to serve, " Ye turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God.<sup>M</sup> The first division of the tabernacle was called " the holy place," and the second " the holy of holies," and the greater holiness of the inner division was due to the fact that it was here that the divine presence dwelt.

Regarding the altar of incense we noticed that it is spoken of in association with the holy of holies although\* in the Old Testament Scriptures it is mentioned as being in the holy place before the veil and on it incense was burned morning and evening.

Its proper place however, seems to be the holy of holies, but owing to the inability of the High Priest to enter there (except once in the year) and the need for incense to be burned thereon twice a day, it would seem for this reason to have been placed in the holy place. The writer therefore is careful in the choice of his words. When speaking of the holy of holies he uses the word " having " to describe the furniture, while in reference to the holy place the words " in which " are used.

" The way of the holies." Into the first division the priests could enter at all times accomplishing the services, but into the second they could not go : there was no way made manifest. Only for a very brief space of time, once in the year, was the High Priest to enter. There was no way, however, opened up to God's presence at this time. On the contrary, the cloud of incense had to arise from off the censer which he held in his hand and cover the testimony that he die not. It seemed to us, that this cloud of incense was as a veil that was between the High Priest and God until he had sprinkled the blood upon the mercy-seat. They could not therefore in the past enter within the veil and serve God. They could only worship at a distance. (See Exodus 24. 1, " Worship ye afar off.") Before there could be a way for us to approach within the veil, a sacrifice and a priest of greater value than those of the first covenant were required, a sacrifice that could deal with sin as it affected the conscience, and a priest that was both divine and human.

The way of the holies was not made manifest as long as the first tabernacle had a standing, the blood of bulls

and goats and the priests of Aaron's order **were not** of sufficient worth that this could be effected.

HUGH PIPER.

From CLYDEBANK.—'The second covenant is new and eternal and has been dedicated with the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better than that of Abel. See also "-Sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ<sup>M</sup> (1 Peter 1. 2) ; "The blood of the covenant " (Hebrews 10. 29) ; "The mediator of the new covenant and the blood of sprinkling " (Hebrews 12. 24) ; "This cup is the new covenant in My blood " (1 Corinthians 11. 25).

The tabernacle, the sanctuary, the priesthood, the service of God, yea, the ordinances of divine service were Israel's as a result of their covenant relationship. At Mount Sinai they were sprinkled with the blood, the book of the covenant was sprinkled, and the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry in like manner. The mediator says "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath commanded to youward."

Dr. Robert Young gives divine service, as public or reverential service (Greek *latreia*). This word is also found in John 16. 2 ; Romans 9. 4 ; 12. 1 ; Hebrews 9. 6. "Ordinances " is also very interesting. The passover for instance was to be kept according to the "ordinance" in its season, in the appointed manner, at the appointed place, by an appointed people. The feasts of the Lord were divinely ordered. We note that the especial service of this first tabernacle was given to Aaron and his sons. The prophet (Malachi 2. 5) says, My covenant was with him of life and peace. Does this suggest that Levi kept the covenant of Sinai, while the people as a whole continued not in it? [The people were not in the covenant of the priesthood.]

We have a definite signification by the Holy Spirit of God, showing that the way into the holy place was not yet made manifest. Three things are ascribed to the Person of the Holy Spirit : The Holy Spirit saith (3. 7) ; The Holy Spirit this signifying (9. 8) ; The Holy Spirit also beareth witness to us (19. 15).

The words "a parable for the time now present " seem difficult of explanation in the light of chapter 8. 13. The gifts and sacrifices and meats and drinks and divers washings being carnal ordinances, never reached the conscience of the worshipper.

The red heifer of Numbers 19. was a sin offering. A man that was clean gathered up the ashes of the heifer,

and laid them in a clean place for a water of separation. With the typical teaching before us, we suggest that it is thus that the blood of Christ is for us as the people of God, to be applied to our consciences as worshippers by the living water of the word of God in the living and sanctifying power of the Spirit of God, to serve the living God. We understand this word serve is *latreuo*, bringing before us the high and holy character of priestly service.

:\* Unto Him that loveth us, and loosed us from our sins in His blood ; and He made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto His God and Father ; to Him be the glory and the dominion for ever and ever. Amen." (Revelation 1. 5, 6.)

JAS. MCKAY.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTES IN SECTION TITLE VI.

Though the offering of gifts and sacrifices according to the law no longer has a place in God's arrangement for His people, the parable of these things remains ; the substance, of these shadows is with us. It is quite evident that the position in which the Lord is viewed in the early verses of Hebrews 8. is not on earth but in heaven, and it is said " If He were on earth He would not be a priest at all."

A very eminent Greek authority says that a retrospective view of the aorist tense here so applying this offering to His offering of His body, cannot be admitted. So that, if it is not the offering of His body on the cross, it must refer to the Lord, the antitype of the High Priest of old, as offering to God the gifts and sacrifices of a willing-hearted, worshipping people.

#### THE CENSER OR THE ALTAR OF INCENSE (HEBREWS 9. ) ?

The correct reading of Hebrews 9. 4 and the sense in which the word " having " is to be understood were both considered briefly in 1921 (see page 53 of Y.M.C. papers). From this place we cull the reference 1 Kings ft. 22. (So this Corner is like Abel, being dead it yet speaketh.)

1 Kings 6- 22, then, says the whole altar belonged to the oracle (that is the most holy place, verse 16). Surely this settles the question and allows us without hesitation to read " altar of incense " in Hebrews 9. 4.

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G.N.

## FINANCE.

Our esteemed treasurer reports that at July 21st, an adverse balance of £4 2s. 10½. standing over from 1925 had not been met by the collection of corresponding arrears for 1925 of about £5.

So far we have not been unduly heavy on space (about 96 pages to end of July issue) as we have issued 150, 126, and 154 pages, the last three years, but the lookout reports "breakers ahead," and we shall have to take special measures to avoid a 1926 deficit.

First of all may we beg that outstanding accounts be paid up at once to the utmost possibility? (This actually means about £24.)

Secondly, we have the alternative of limiting the issues much more drastically or of seeking further help from such readers or corners as may be in a position to pay a little more money. Perhaps both methods can be adopted but £20 will be required if papers are not to be curtailed or omitted. Donations should be sent promptly please, to Mr. J. Robertson, 9, Gibson Street, Edinburgh.

Will any whose remarks have not appeared kindly bear with the omission in view of prevailing circumstances?

NOTE.—G.N. has delayed the July issue to see if the situation would clear up. He hopes to get the August issue out almost immediately after this, but would like to<sup>1</sup> feel more certain before proceeding with September.

## SECTION V. (concluded).

From BRANTFORD.—We are taken back in thought to Genesis 22. 16 by this portion. It was when God had had the joy of witnessing- the unfaltering- faith of Abraham on the occasion of offering- up Isaac that He could say " Surely blessing- I will bless thee, and multiplying- I will multiply thee."<sup>7</sup>

In verses 15-18 we have the assurance that God's promises are sure and steadfast, for God cannot lie. Yet He swore by an oath by two immutable things which we suggest are the sand and stars. [But " Heaven and earth shall pass away." The immutability of God's counsel is expressed in two immutable things—the promise and the oath.]

As regards to the " hope " mentioned in verse 18 and 19 we could not come to a definite conclusion. Some thought it referred to the promises, others to the Lord Himself.

As we come to chapter 7. we can easily see the main theme is the Melchizedek Priesthood. It seems to be very plainly

given to us by the aid of the Holy Spirit concerning- the outstanding- and exalted characteristics of this priesthood, which are :—1. His priestly office in which it is stated that He had neither father or mother, nor beginning- of days nor end of life; 2 King- of Righteousness; 3. King of Peace; 4. Made like unto the Son of God.

We notice that Abraham bears witness that Melchizedek was greater than the Levitical priesthood, in that he receives blessing and also gives tithes.

When God saw how the Levitical priesthood had failed He sent a perfect Priest of whom it is said, " Thou art a Priest **for** ever after the order of Melchizedek." This priest is our Priest, even the Lord Jesus Christ. [The priesthood of Christ is not an afterthought.]

Now we look forward to the day when His priestly activities will be centred upon earth during the Millennium period (see Revelation 20. 6).

As Moses was forty days receiving instructions from Jehovah concerning the Levitical priesthood, **so** also **were** the apostles forty days receiving instruction concerning the kingdom of God from the Lord Jesus. In this way perfection has been made. See Hebrews 10. 1, 14.

With the adopted band,  
We soon shall see Him there,  
With Him and them before Thee stand,  
And in His **glory** share.

[How do our friends conclude that perfection follows from the 40 days during which the Lord appeared to the apostles?—J.M.]

Compiled by J. T., J.B., and R.M.

#### NOTE FOR THE HOLIDAY PERIOD.

Be not weary in well doing. Satan never takes a holiday.

#### QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From BRANTFORD.—Have we any portion in the covenant spoken of in chapter 8. ?

# YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

No. 8.

Seventh Series.

August, 1926.

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## THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### SECTION VIII.—HEBREWS 10. 1 TO 25.

From PORTSMOUTH.—The only real value of the sacrifices of the law was that they pointed on to the great sacrifice and were meant to indicate a spirit of obedience in the offerer. [Such sacrifices are said to "sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh" in days when God was dealing with Israel after the flesh.—J.M.] The atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ, on the other hand, is completely and permanently satisfactory and will therefore never be repeated. Sin has been finally dealt with and we can have boldness to enter into the Holy Place, subject to the fulfilment of certain conditions.

The statement that "It is impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin" seems self-evident, but the unsatisfactory nature of the sacrifices under the law seems not to have greatly disturbed the Jews. Very few could have looked forward to the One of whom the sacrifices spoke since the thought of a suffering Messiah seemed almost unknown, in spite of prophecy. Probably there was little realisation in that day (as in this, also !) of the real character of sin and what an outrage it is against God.

The concluding verses of this portion show us that certain real and practical conditions must be fulfilled if we are to draw near acceptably. There evidently must be sincerity and faith if there is to be worship in spirit and in truth. There must further be an application of God's Word to the life of the disciple which we judge is indicated by "our bodies washed with pure water." [The sprinkling and washing here require discrimination. Firstly, it is not in this passage a question of discipleship but of priestly service, and it is to the latter that the

terms sprinkling and washing relate. That is to say they refer to the sprinkling and bathing which once for all fitted us for priestly service (compare Exodus 29. 4, 21 ; Leviticus 8.) and which were done for us by Another. Secondly, the words used are perfect participles which show that " a state is spoken of introduced by one act, the effect of which is abiding."—G.N.] Some have thought that " our hope " in verse 23 is the fact that the Lord Jesus is within the veil for us, others that it is the hope of our Lord's return, as is spoken of in verse 25.

E. J. EVERY.

From PAISLEY.—A shadow is but a meagre indication of a substance itself. Thus we have a comparison drawn which shows the excellence of the sacrifice of Christ. "Can never," and "impossible/" are words which leave us in no doubt whatever. We were also reminded of the words of Psalm 51. 16. " For thou delightest not in sacrifice ; else would I give it ; Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering,\* also Micah 6. 6-8 was referred to. There is firstly the failure to deal with sin adequately and secondly the uncertainty of approach to God in His holy habitation. Consequently we are directed to the One who " offered one sacrifice for sins for ever." The Son of God condescended and dwelt among men, in humility beyond our comprehension. His love the waters could not quench, nor floods drown.

The sanctification spoken of in verse 14 came up for consideration and linked along with verse 10, the thought seems to be primarily on the question of sin, that is an accomplished work on behalf of every believer who exercises faith in Christ, and does not require to be added to or repeated. Other scriptures referred to in this connexion were 1 Corinthians 1. 30 ; 6. 11 ; and Acts 26. 18. Then, based upon this conclusion we have what we termed a further aspect of sanctification involving human responsibility, those in the House of God, who " sanctify in their hearts Christ as Lord " : 1 Peter 3. 15. This can only be experienced by the application of the Word of God. 1 Peter 1. 15, 16 ; 1 Thessalonians 4. 3, 7 ; 5. 23 ; Hebrews 12. 14, and John 17. 17 were viewed in this connexion in a more general sense.

S. THOMSON.

From LEICESTER.—The conscience of the offerer was never at rest, because it was impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins. Yet the law was

a shadow of the good things to come ; it pointed in its offerings to the great and all sufficient sacrifice of Christ. It was intended to reveal to man his guilt, how very far short he fell of God's glory, and how necessary it was that salvation should come to man and put him right with God. So the worshippers under the law were never made perfect, but under grace through Christ how very blessed to know that by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified and, says the apostle, " we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

In verses 5-8 we have words spoken by the Lord from Psalm 40. The words given here are a little different from those used in the Psalm. The words " But a body didst thou prepare for me " replace some found in Psalm 40. How was it that sacrifice and offering were not required of the Lord Jesus? [Does the Psalm say that?] Was it because the Lord Jesus did the will of God completely and there was no necessity, or was it because since He came into the world God could find no pleasure therein, knowing His Son came to honour and obey the law [What parts of the ceremonial law were not kept by the Lord Jesus Christ?] and then to put it [not the law as a whole] away, for verse 9 of our chapter clearly says " He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second."

The new Covenant provides two very important promises. Firstly " Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more," and secondly " I will put my laws on their heart, and upon their mind also will I write them." The first promise is in contrast with the old covenant under which remembrance of sins is made year by year. Because of remission of sins under the new, there is no more offering for sin as chapter 9. 28 tells us " Christ having been once offered to bear the sins of many."

The second promise is important because God counts on those who are sanctified, rendering obedience to His commands and wishes, as the outcome of affections drawn to the Lord Jesus. The sanctified believer in Christ will respond not because it is a duty and obligation to observe the commandments, but because the love of Christ constrains him.

To sum up our thoughts on verses 1-18 : The efficacy and finality of Christ's redemption work impresses us, especially as it avails us, the people of God in this dispensation, in drawing near to God,

" Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holy Place by the blood of Jesus." We judge this is the highest privilege of God's gathered people, and our entrance into the Holies peculiar to our priesthood function on the Lordly morning. The Lord Jesus Christ is officiating as great Priest over the house of God and in this priestly office presents to God the spiritual sacrifices of the holy priesthood. Our right to enter the Holies is by the blood of Jesus. [Right? " By," (or strictly " in ") introduces the ground on which our confidence or boldness exists. It is the blood which has been taken in by the High Priest.] His redemptive [cleansing is perhaps a more prominent thought] work on our behalf is so complete and efficacious that with boldness we may draw near. Yet a fitness for so high a service is specially enjoined upon us, a. true heart which is loyal to the Lord, a faith which lays hold upon God and His Word unswervingly, heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, because sin is put away for ever in the once offered sacrifice, and our body cleansed from defilement by the spirit and word of God.

F. JEWELL.

From BARROW.—The perfection of the worshipper is the point aimed at in this section. It appears to us that we now reach a climax to which the writer has been leading us—our entrance into " the holy place through the blood of Jesus " (verse 19) as " a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices " (1 Peter 2. 5). The arguments in previous chapters have exalted the Lord Jesus far above the Aaronic priesthood, and now, as Great Priest, He is shown forth as the One, through whom we can draw nigh to worship. The good things which are ours through the Lord Jesus Christ, were shown to God's ancient people in a shadow. The offerings, which were offered under the law year by year, could never make perfect them that were drawing nigh. Rather, in these sacrifices there was a remembrance of sins. The conscience therefore was not free from a sense of guilt. In worship, God desires that those who draw nigh to Him, should have hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and as holy ones, cleansed and sanctified, offer up their sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving.

In order that this better state of things might be brought into operation, it was necessary that a better sacrifice should be offered, than those which were being offered continually. And not only so, but it must be a

sacrifice which, when once offered, would avail eternally. It was essential too, that all the types and shadows of the law should be fulfilled, ere the law could pass away, even as our Lord said " Not one jot, or tittle of the law shall pass away, till all things be accomplished." The people of God in a past day, had so departed from the law that Jehovah said : " I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand to trample My courts? Bring no more vain oblations." (Isaiah 1. 11 to 13.) They had truly departed from the living God, and in later years, even after God had dealt with them, in carrying them captive into a strange land, and after their restoration, having tasted that the Lord was gracious, they erred and offered to God, that which they would not offer as a present to their governor (Malachi 1. 8). It almost seems that, immediately upon this, God ceased His dealings with Israel for a time and the book is closed. [Though there was no oracle nor vision from the Lord between Malachi and the Baptist, God had not ceased His dealings with Israel. The House in Jerusalem was as the Lord described it "My Father's house"—J.M.]

But now, a fulfilment of God's desires concerning man is about to be accomplished, for He Who was in the form of God, yea God's equal (Philippians 2. 6), said Lo, I come, to do Thy will O God (Hebrews 10. 5-7), Holy, guileless, undefiled and separated from sinners (Hebrews 7. 26), He did always what pleased His Father (John 8. 29).

It is interesting that the quotation from Psalm 40. 6 is not from the Hebrew as we have it in th<sup>^</sup>R.V. but from the Septuagint (or Greek) translation of the O.T, [Note how different the Septuagint is from the Hebrew.] The psalm says <sup>7</sup> Mine ears hast thou opened " with " Ears hast thou digged (or pierced) for me " in the margin. This surely causes us to think of Exodus 21 • 2-6 and Deuteronomy 15. 17, 18 in connexion with the servant, whose time of service has expired, and who can now go free ; but instead says " I love my master, my wife, and my children. I will not go free. Then His master shall bring him to the door, or unto the door post : and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him for ever." How fully this was carried out by the pattern servant, who so loved His master (God) and His " wife " (His church) Ephesians

5. 25, and His children (His blood bought ones) Hebrews 2. 13. Therefore He gave Himself that He might please His Master and redeem [have for His own] those upon whom He had set His affection. [All this is very nice but the foundation is slight. Alford says that neither the verb nor the plural noun will bear it without forcing. In Exodus the noun is singular and the verb is different.]

[Though some have sought for an explanation of Psalm 40. in the boring of the Hebrews servant's ear with the awl, yet it was " his ear/' one ear only that was bored ; whereas in the Psalm it is " two ears <sup>></sup> that are digged or prepared. I take the meaning the Holy Spirit wished to convey was that the One who was coming into the world, to do God's will in a manner and measure in which it never had been done, would require prepared ears to hear God, and seeing that God prepared His ears, this has involved in it the fact that there was of necessity a body in which those ears were set so that the Septuagint and Hebrews 10. show the fuller content of the inspired words of this Psalm. Further we are not " His children '• in the sense of the Hebrew servant having children. This would make the Lord Jesus our Father. We are children of the Father who have been given to the Son which is a different thing.—J.M.]

So then, in coming to do God's will He took away the first (the law of offerings and sacrifices which could never make perfect), and established the second (God's will in connexion with Himself, and the redemption of a people for His praise). " According to which will we have been sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." This thought of sanctification is interesting, and we offer a few thoughts in connexion therewith.

Sanctification as revealed in the New Testament, seems to be presented in two\* different aspects :—

First, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Sanctification in this respect is God's work, and is not in any Way enhanced by man's efforts. As God views the saved one, in His purposes, that one is set apart. " They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world " (John 17. 16). Set apart with a definite object in view, that, as they have been redeemed they also should sanctify themselves, bringing themselves under the Lordship of Christ. The first aspect of sanctification is clearly shewn in such scriptures as Acts 20. 32 [?], 26. 18, 1 Corinthians 1. 2, and 6. 11, Hebrews 10. 10 ; 12. 14 ; which seem to show a definitely completed state of sanctification. On the other

hand, every child of God has His responsibility to carry out God's will as far as it is revealed to him, not only in the moral code which is laid down in the New Testament (and which is so very near to what is known as the ten commandments) but also in connexion with the truth. [This is an interesting and important matter, but while the "moral code" of the N.T. covers the same ground as in the old, it is wider and on a different plane altogether, dealing specifically with the thoughts and intents of the heart. Even the hated Samaritan knew his neighbour better than did the Jew.] Two scriptures in particular make this clear. 1 Thessalonians 4. 1-8 gives us the moral side of this question, and shews how the believer should walk; while 2 Timothy 2. 21 shows sanctification in the truth a separation or setting apart. [Is it right to put the truth and the "moral code" into compartments?] First we must "sanctify Christ in our hearts as Lord" (1 Peter 3. 1f), then we shall be sure of good success in spiritual things. Scriptures dealing with this second aspect are John 17, 17, 19; 1 Thessalonians 4. 3; Romans 6. 19, 22; Romans 12. 1; 2 Timothy 2. 15. Space forbids us entering into the Old Testament parallel, but, for those interested, a study of God's dealings with His people Israel - from Egypt to Canaan affords some striking illustrations.

Now that the offering of the body of Jesus has taken place once for all, and He has sat down on the right hand of God (Hebrews 10<sub>B</sub>, 12) mercy can be dispensed on the ground of that finished work. Wherefore the Holy Spirit testifies "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (verse 17). Sins having been done away with, and there being no more offering for sin, the worshipper can now draw near, and enter into the holy place through the blood of Jesus. What a privilege to enter into the holy place to worship and make mention of His peerless Name to God His Father, bringing our baskets of first ripe fruits, with which to fill His hands, and He presenting them to God with all the fragrance and sweetness of His own name. What delight must fill the heart of God as He hears His beloved Son well spoken of, and hears the appreciation of redeemed ones for what He has done.

In the light of all the blessings that have accrued through the work on Golgotha, the exhortations of the last three verses of the section are worthy of consideration "Let us hold fast," "Let us consider one another/" "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as

the custom of some is." This last should be specially noted, for, as in the days of the Apostles, so now. The assembling together of the saints is oft-times treated as a mere matter of course, which need not be responded to unless one is inclined to put forth a little energy. How can this lead to blessing?

JOHN MCCORMICK.

From LONDON, S.E.—The law, though perfect in precept, could never take away sin, and could only condemn the sinner by bringing home guilt to his conscience. By making sin apparent it wrought conviction in the heart of the sinner (Galatians 3. 24). Neither could the offerings given to God under the law make lasting atonement. The scriptures in Paul's Epistle to the Romans (3, 20) are very conclusive on this point. "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for through the law cometh the knowledge of sin." Hence the necessity of the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8\* 3).

On the day of atonement (Leviticus 23. 27) there was a remembrance made of sin; and the children of Israel gave pleasure unto God inasmuch as the offering pointed forward to the sacrifice of God's own providing who, in the fulness of time, came forth to make atonement for sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He, through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish unto God.

Verses 5-7 are cited from the prophetic psalms concerning Him who would satisfy God perfectly by His life of obedience and subjection to His Father's will. The Eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Wondrous miracle of divine love! He took the body God had prepared for Him, and in it fully expressed God's heart of love.

Verses 19, 20. An invitation or exhortation to enter into the holiest, by a new and living way through the veil, that is to say His flesh. The veil was a symbol of a closed way. Reference is made here to that body prepared for Him. His flesh probably corresponds with His blood in verse 19. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood." (Leviticus 17. 14). [No, blood and flesh here are not interchangeable terms.—J.M.] The way having been thus opened up, His redeemed clothed in righteousness are exhorted as to condition of heart when offering up

spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. We would call to mind His Own words that they that worship the Father must worship in spirit and in truth.

Verse 22 instructs as to the manner of our coming together, our hearts and consciences sanctified by the application of God's Word to our lives. "Be ye clean ye that bear the vessels of the Lord." (Isaiah 52. 11.) [See note on PORTSMOUTH'S paper.] "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart." (Psalm 24. 3-4.) "Holiness becometh Thine House." (Psalm 93. 5.)

Verse 23 exhorts us as to steadfastness in the faith (Acts 2. 42) ; of the privileges and responsibilities of our holy calling, and the place of the Name.

Verse 25. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"; this also speaks of collective testimony. \*'Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another." (Malachi 3. 16.)

Verses 26-31 warn us as to sin, and departure from God and His Word, and having received the truth, setting at nought the precious blood. "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Samuel 2. 30). When the day of the Lord [Not the day of the Lord. The day of Christ appears more accurate. 1 Corinthians 1. 8. Philippians 1. 6, 10 ; 2. 16.] shall come and each one of us shall give account of himself to\* God, such as have done despite unto the spirit of His grace will lose in that their works and their deeds will not be honoured. "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 " (1 Corinthians 3. 13).

The word closes with admonitions concerning maintaining our boldness, endurance and patience seeing that we have in view the speedy return of our Lord Jesus Christ. Until that time when we shall see Him even as He is, the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ. (2 Thessalonians 3. 5).

GEORGE PAIN.

From BRANTFORD.—As we again resume this "book of contrasts" we seem to be entering into another large and far-reaching subject, the contrast between the shadow and the substance (chapter Id 1). Now when we come to analyse a shadow what does it

consist of? Unless there is a substance there can be no shadow. Remove the substance and the shadow has vanished. The law is as a shadow compared with Him the substance.

The law could by no means make perfect them that draw nigh, but He perfected for ever them that are sanctified. His one great sacrifice in the giving up of Himself superseded all other sacrifices. Seeing that the old covenant has been put away, He has provided a new covenant ; for He said, " This is the new covenant in My blood." We have a striking illustration in the first two kings of Israel, Saul and David. As God rejects a disobedient Saul for an obedient David, He chooses a man who is after His own heart, one who is willing to do all His will. If the law is somewhat like a Saul, David would speak of the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus ; for He fulfilled all God's will.

We thought it rather significant that the words " I delight " and " The law is within my heart " (as given in Psalm 40.) are missing here. Would this be that the Lord is not seeking self glory?

J.B., J.T. and R.McK.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—In chapter 9. is revealed the first result of His sacrificial work, the cleansing of the heavenly things. In the latter part of chapter 9. and up to verse 18 of chapter 10. we see what His sacrifice has done for us.

This completes the argument the writer has been unfolding to his Hebrew brethren, showing how the new covenant has taken the place of the old covenant, and he concludes his argument by the main exhortation of the epistle, an exhortation to that which is the highest exercise of a redeemed and sanctified body of men and women—the worship of God in the Sanctuary.

The first few verses of the chapter tell us what the sacrifices could not do for the worshippers. It is not surprising therefore, that God could have no real pleasure in sacrifices and offerings, but to give God pleasure in the doing of His will, the Lord Jesus took a body in fulfilment of Psalm 40.

With regard to suggestion No. 1, a number of scriptures were supplied showing that the Lord Jesus at all times accomplished the will of God.

Luke 2. 49. He was about His Father's business.

Luke 2. 51. He was subject to His parents (Exodus 20. 12)

Matthew 3. 15. At His baptism. " Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

John 2. 17. At the cleansing of the temple. " The zeal of thine house shall eat Me up."

John 4. 34. At the well. " My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and accomplish His work."

John 6. 38. " I am come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him that sent Me."

John 17. 4. " I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given me to do."

Matthews 26. 39. " Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

John 19. 30. " It is finished."

In considering the statement that God had no pleasure in sacrifices and offerings, it was suggested that they had a value in so far as they pointed to Christ, that the bringing of sacrifices and offerings meant self-denial on the part of the worshipper (as for instance Abel's sacrifices and the freewill offerings under the law), and that they were brought in obedience to the commandment of God. (Leviticus 1. 3 ; Deuteronomy 12. 6.) In these ways, it was suggested, God had pleasure.

" In the roll of the book it is written of Me." These words were the language of the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ when He came into the world, and it is generally understood that the book referred to is the Old Testament Scriptures. But when these words were penned by David, this book did not exist as a complete book (although it is granted that the words were prophetic). It is suggested that the book may refer to something written in heaven, which answers to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

[Israel and the Messiah are so intertwined prophetically that it may be thus we are to look at Israel's words in the roll of the book of the law : " All that the Lord hath spoken will we do and be obedient." The unbroken law was put into the Ark. Verses 9 and 10 of Psalm 40. remind us of Moses' work as a mediator.—G.N.] [Note the setting of this quotation from Psalm 40. : " Wherefore when He cometh into the world He said." Thus this Messianic prophecy views a complete volume at the time of the Lord's birth, in which it was written that He would come to do God's will.—J.M.]

Verse 10. " By which will we have been sanctified." The new covenant of chapter 8. with the House of Israel and the House of Judah is now seen to have its application extended to the Hebrew saints of this dis-

pensation, and of course, to their brethren the Gentile saints. (See also verses 15 to 17.)

Verse 22. "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our body washed with pure water." In our June paper, page 83, it was suggested that the sprinkling was after the manner of 1 Corinthians 11 • 28. "Let a man prove himself and so let him eat," and a note was appended by G.N. "But that sprinkling is done once for all, is it not?" This matter was further considered, and it was shown that verses 19 to 23 which commence "having therefore brethren," arise out of all that which has gone before, things which are accomplished realities, namely, the perfect High Priest, the perfect Sacrifice, and those whom He has perfected for ever, and accordingly the exhortation to draw near is based thereon. God has now all things in readiness for the service of the true sanctuary. In verse 2, had the worshippers of old been once cleansed, they would have had no more conscience of sins. This is the happy portion of worshippers under the new covenant which is described in the words of verse 22 "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." As to the latter part of verse 22, "our body washed with pure water," we are reminded of the spiritual significance of the Lord's words to Peter "He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet." [This seems to agree with G.N. except that it is not merely worshippers but priests that are in question in Hebrews 10. The basis of approach for this dispensation is here described or laid down. See notes earlier.]

The provoking (spurring on) to love and good works is best accomplished by considering one another (as well as by exhorting one another) as one has expressed in the following lines :—

"If your thoughts of your neighbour be of love, and your constant wish and prayer is for their weal, they shall never guess the secret that causes their soul to love you."

N. G. ADKINS.

From CLYDEBANK.—In chapter 7. we read that the law made nothing perfect, and in our opening verses that it had the shadow of good things to come. The same sacrifices year by year which were continually being offered could not cleanse the worshippers or make them perfect. Four impossibles. It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins." "It

is impossible to renew them again unto repentance" (chapter 6. 6). " It is impossible for God to lie " (6. 18). " Without faith it is impossible to please God " (chapter 11.). The law is not of faith and the carnal ordinances and shadows thereof were imposed until a time of reformation, a time of making things thoroughly right. This has been done by the Lord Jesus Christ. " Once for all " tells of the abiding eternal efficacy, and the absolute completeness of the atoning work of Christ, brought before us as in chapter 7. 27 ; 9. 12, 26. Also\* in the roll of the book we read that His delight was in the law of Jehovah and in His law doth he meditate day and night (Psalm 1.2). And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord (Isaiah 11. 3) and we contrast that precious word of Proverbs 8. telling us of a day in the past, " I was daily His delight."

Sneaking of Himself the Lord Jesus says " My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me and to accomplish His work " (John 4. 34). " I do always the things that are pleasing to Him " (John 8. 29). Time and again the Lord speaks in this sense : " This is the will of Him that sent Me," " This is the will of My Father," " I am come down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me." Then we have the precious words of John 17. 4 "I glorified Thee upon the earth having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do."

We find in the shadow of good things to come how Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priesthood. (Leviticus 8.) After being washed with water and clothed, they are identified with a sin-offering ; a burnt-offering and a ram of consecration. Three times they lay their hands on the head of an offering. The blood of the ram is put on their right ear, thumb and great toe ; and the anointing oil. Is not the precious antitype to this seen in Hebrews 10.? " Sanctified once for all through the offering." By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified (verses 10, 14). [But is there not a difference between sanctification and consecration?—J.M.]

There are other scriptures bearing on the truth of sanctification in a three or fourfold manner. John 17. 17. " Sanctify them in Thy truth." The truth of God separates and leads to a sanctified place. " Send out Thy light and Thy truth." Compare 1 Peter 1. 22 : " Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth." We have also the sanctification of 1 Thessalonians 4. 3. Also " God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the spirit and belief of

the truth" (2 Thessalonians 2. 13) with which we couple 1 Peter 1. " Elect . . . in sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." The sanctification of the Spirit is both unto belief of the truth, and unto obedience to the will of God, and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. (" Unto whom coming " 1 Peter 2.).

JAS. MCKAY.

### QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From CLYDEBANK.—What is the difference between the words " prospero " and " anaphero " in relation to offering?

ANSWER.—As applied to sacrifices there is little difference between these words. But as " pros " implies motion towards and " ana " <sup>J</sup> motion upwards, perhaps " anaphero " views the action of offering a little later than " prospero." Phero is used to express the idea of carrying a burden or a charge.

NOTE.—Our beloved editor, Mr. George Nelson, has been called home and we sorrow his loss and feel the lack of his valued services.

Will correspondents in future send their papers to Mr. Tames Martin, 39, Priors Path, Barrow-in-Furness?

Corners will please consider and send their suggestions as to a new subject for the coming year.





# YOUNG MEN'S CORNER.

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## THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### SECTION IX.—HEBREWS 10. 26 TO 11. 16.

From GLASGOW.—" Sinning wilfully " and " after having received the knowledge of the truth " seem to depict a deliberate, premeditated setting aside the commandments of the Lord, and seem to agree with the " falling away " of chapter 6. verse 6. To the one who has dispassionately turned his back on everything that is pleasing to God and which bears the stamp of divine satisfaction and approval, there only remains the dread of that time in which " each man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire " (1 Corinthians 3. 13). " God shall judge His people " in the day when the hidden things of darkness shall be brought to light and the counsels of the heart made manifest. (1 Corinthians 4. 5). Then solemnly warning his Hebrew readers that " it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," the writer adds, " but we are net of them that shrink back unto perdition." Surely, he says, after all that you have sacrificed to the Lord and His work, how that your very earthly possessions you have not withheld, but willingly and liberally have disposed of them according as any man had need, surely you won't cast away your boldness now. [The case is much more than giving to the need of the poor. They had been through times of persecution, in which their goods had been spoiled or plundered. This they had taken joyfully (remarkable fact !) because of their better and abiding possession.—J.M.] The boldness entailed reward ; there was a promise held out to them ; but " ye have need of patience." With heart set on " a better possession and an abiding one," they had

endured many things for their Master ; but that was not enough ; there must be no\* shrinking back. To do the will of God required faith and patience ; then having done all, they could enter into and enjoy the " great recompense of reward. " In a very short time, they are reminded, He that was to come, would come, and though they might think this little while a long interval, the attitude of the righteous would be one of absolute faith and assurance. In such, God could find pleasure.

" We are of them that have faith, " and the Hebrews were left in no doubt as to what faith was. " Faith, " as one version puts it, means " we are confident of what we hope for, we are convinced of what we do not see. " How simple chapter 11 • verse 3 is, " By faith we understand. " No lengthy, exhaustive reasoning is required, simply faith in the Divine Record. None of us could prepare an explanatory treatise on how God framed the earth and hung the stars in space ; we simply read, " for Thou didst create all things and because of Thy will they were, and were created. " (Revelation 4-11). And it suffices us ; by faith we understand.

" These all died in faith. " Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, with many others, known and unknown ; men of like passions with ourselves ; doubtless many times they would fail, but the sum of their life is " died in faith. " How we are reminded of the Lord Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of Faith ; the One whose whole life from commencement to finish was one of faith. Those witnesses of early days had the prospect of " an inheritance, incorruptible and undefiled, " and in full faith they desired and longed for that better country, the heavenly. The case of Abraham was characteristic of all ; who, " When he was called, obeyed to go out unto a place, which he was to receive for an inheritance ; and he went out not knowing whither he went. " The promise was always before ; they could see it ; they greeted it ; but did not receive it. Yet we know that the One who " is not ashamed of them " has prepared for them a city ; one which hath the foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.

JACK L. FERGUSON.

From PAISLEY.—We are firmly assured that verses 26 to 31 are words of solemn warning to the people of God, and have nothing to do with the unregenerate. Many suggestions relating to time, place and nature of the punishment were made. The solemn possibility

exists of one who has received the truth, falling into a state of spiritual death, without place for repentance. (Compare 6. 4 to 6, 12. 16, 17 ;and 1 John 5. 16.) [Hebrews 10<sub>B</sub> 26 to 31 do not refer to gradual degenerating from the truth, but to wilful sin against the knowledge of the truth.—J.M.] We did not consider " the sin unto death " equivalent to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12. 31). They have allowed themselves to be completely overcome, and the work of Jesus Christ the Advocate with the Father avails nothing for them. The punishment that awaits them is "a. certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." Only God, and the individual, who has enjoyed the privileges of the House of God, enter into the remorse following upon disobedience to the truth. We suggest such is not a condition of sleeping, nor of having a seared conscience. Under the law the penalty of certain sins was death, which is analogous to spiritual death in the present dispensation. Ezekiel 22. 17-31, was introduced where the condition of Israel is pictured, and the judgment of God upon them. The peculiar character of this " wilful sinning " may be better understood from a contrast. When Israel sinned against God in the wilderness, fiery serpents were sent in amongst them, but a remedy was also provided. Similarly, in the church of God in Corinth, the apostle exhorts that sins, the result of moral weakness be judged, and thus restore the sinning one (Proverbs 28, 13.) On the other hand the thought of licence must never be entertained because of being associated with the better things that are to come.

Evidence is clear that faith has been waning, so the writer brings to his readers' remembrance what faith is, and what a potent factor, in the apprehension of spiritual realities it is (chapter 11. verse 1). Then also the grasp of the creative power of God is attributable to faith. Verse 3, we concluded, refers to the material worlds and not to the ages or dispensations. [What is to be understood by the material worlds? This verse undoubtedly provides much food for thought. We understand, of course, that the vital factor in it all is " the word of God."—J.M.] (Psalm 33. 6 ; 2 Peter 3- 5.) God spake and it was done : we believe, and manifest our faith.

Outstanding examples of faithful ones are enumerated, concerning some of whom we read little in the Old Testament—such as in the case of Enoch. Others by their

works shew their faith, as Noah. We considered faith and works in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 21. 25). We have encouragement to exercise faith in God (1 Peter 1. 7) "That the proof of your faith being 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."

S. THOMSON.

From BARROW.—In a past paper (Section IV.) we have dealt with Hebrews 10, 26 to 31, and now we await with interest the thoughts of other corners.

It is evident that the Hebrews addressed in this epistle, have been closely associated in sufferings for the sake of the Name. We would suggest that they dwelt in the same locality or district; [Their dwelling in one locality is not an absolute necessity, for, remembering Peter's words (1 Peter 5. 9) to God's elect in the five provinces of Asia Minor, we see believers suffering over a wide area, and not only so, but, "the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world." —J.M.] since not only did they endure a great conflict of sufferings through being made a gazing stock, but also through identifying themselves with those that were so used. It is evident that a wave of persecution had burst upon them. Yet what patience and faith they displayed. We might well imitate their faith. With eyes fixed on a better and an abiding possession, they took joyfully the spoiling of their temporal goods. Their boldness is spoken of as being worthy of reward. And encouragingly, the author directs their eyes of faith to Him, the soon coming One. The word for the present however, is "My righteous one shall live by faith," verse 38. Here "faith" is the emphasised word. In "Romans 1. 17" "righteous" is emphasised, whereas in Galatians 3. 11 "live" receives the emphasis. The life which we now live should be a life of faith, for "without faith, it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him," Hebrews 11. 6. This truth the Hebrew believers had realised, 'as we have seen, and now they are encouraged to go on in the path of suffering for the Master. If there is any shrinking back (note, this is not turning back, though it may, of course, be implied) the Lord has said "My soul hath no pleasure in him" verse 38. The thought here seems to be (in the light of what has gone before) in connexion with their testimony. If dangers or difficulties are in the way, they are to be met with a

firm front. Having exhorted these Hebrews on such lines, the writer turns their attention to the great >acts of faith of God-honouring men of old, whose trials were far greater than those of the Hebrew believers, in that\*they looked forward to things but dimly seen by them, yet with unwavering faith, they laid hold on God's promise. The instances named in the 11th of Hebrews seem to cover the whole life of faith. It is fitting that this chapter should open with a definition of faith. It is necessary to have a good and solid foundation (derivative meaning of the word substance—substantia) so that faith is the cementing foundation (and so strong is the association of ideas that the translators give "assurance") of all our hopes. [The root idea in this word is "something placed under," from "hupo"—under, and "isteme"—to place or set. It is usually translated "confidence" in other places.—J.M.] So strongly was the faith exercised by the heroes of chapter 11. that it is recorded of them in verses 13 and 14 that they saw the (fulfilment of the) promises and greeted them from afar. The elders of verse 2 we take to be those who\* are mentioned throughout the chapter—Abel, Enoch, Noah, etc. [May they not be the elders of Hebrews 13, 7 whose faith was to be imitated?—J.M.] We are taken to the beginning in verse 3. It is worthy of note that the word for "worlds" in the original Greek is "ages." This presents a difficulty to us, as the following sentence in the verse suggests something<sub>li</sub> of a material character. Does the Greek word for "ages" (aeons) contain the meaning "material worlds"?

It was through faith that Abel offered his sacrifice. He looked forward to the greater sacrifice, concerning Whom it had been said "The woman's seed shall bruise Thy head—and-Thou shalt bruise his-heel" (Genesis 3. 15). God showed His approval in respect of his gifts, and Abel, through his sacrifice, though dead, yet speaketh.

Enoch's faith, being centred upon God, affected his walk and decided his Companion. We read very little concerning this man, but what we do read is of a very commendable character, and <sup>f</sup> before his translation he had witness borne to him that he was righteous."

When <sup>f</sup> warned of God, concerning things not seen as yet," Noah "prepared an ark to the saving of his house," verse 7, and Abraham at the call of God left home and kindred to go into the land of promise. (verse 8).

These examples of faith are very suggestive—Abel's act suggests the sacrificial work of Christ, and therefore the sinners' salvation; Enoch's—the believers' walk with God, and ultimate reception into glory; Noah's—the believers' safety in the day of judgment; and Abraham's—the consummation of all things—the new heaven and new earth. These, of course, are merely suggestive, as other teaching may be applied as in the case of Noah who is a beautiful type of the faithful Jew in the great tribulation.

" These all died in faith, not having received the promises " and because of their faith, " God is not-ashamed of them to be called their God, for He hath prepared for them a city " Hebrews 11. 16.

JOHN MCCORMICK.

From BRANTFORD.—It is with solemn words that this portion opens : " If we sin wilfully." This is not an impossibility. We have an example of wilful sin in the case of Hymenaeus and Alexander, who wilfully thrust from them " faith and a good conscience." Wilful sin brings sure and certain judgment from which there is no escape. (Then if there is no escape from the consequences of wilful sin how do we find Hymenaeus back in the Church in Ephesus? Compare 1 Timothy 1. 20 with 2 Timothy 2. 17.—J.M.) There is a great distinction between wilful sins 'and sins of ignorance or sins of weakness. Compare Hebrews chapter 5. 2. We have another example of wilful sin in the case of Korah, Dathan and Abiram, who offered strange fire unto Jehovah. They reaped the terrible consequence of their act, the earth opening up and swallowing them alive into Sheol (Numbers 16. 30 to 32. [Not Korah, compare Numbers 16., 6, 7, 35, 40.] We are more privileged than the children of Israel, in that we have the indwelling Holy Spirit, and also the intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ. This, with the things written aforetime, cause our responsibility to be correspondingly greater than theirs. We have also brought before us, in the latter part of this chapter, the sad possibility of the words being true of us, " My soul hath no pleasure in him." We notice that each chapter in this letter is linked with the preceding, by a " joining " word—wherefore, therefore, etc.—thus showing the continuity of reasoning. [Chapters are a human device not part of inspiration.—J.M.] There is a helpful thought in the marginal reading of chapter 11. 1,

namely :—" Now faith is the giving substance to things hoped for " : just as though the things hoped for were actually realised. Faith leaps over time. The keynote of this chapter is " By Faith." Faith is the starting point of that heavenly race and a sustaining factor to the end. As we consider the lives of these who were so well-pleasing to God, we are reminded of the fact that actions speak louder than words. They truly showed their faith to their fellowmen by their lives. They had a correct perspective of the things of earth and the things of heaven, therefore the " opportunity to return" to the beggarly things did not entice them. We see many similarities to our own position in the present day. It is our privilege too, to confess that we are pilgrims and strangers here. If we set our minds on things above, God will not be ashamed of us.

The city referred to in verses 10 and 16 is, we suggest, the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21., whose Builder and Maker is God.

J.B., J.T., R.McK.

From LONDON, S.E.—This delightful chapter has been variously described as God's Roll of Honour or Picture Gallery, and since the primary intention which this chapter has in view is to shew what mighty things can be done by faith, it is clear that only the most noteworthy could be named therein.

In the opening verse, faith is shewn to be a firm belief that we shall receive that which is

(a) hoped for

(b) and yet not to be seen at the time the belief is exercised.

The Lord's own words confirm this—" All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye have received them and ye shall have them " (Mark 11. 24).

Certain acts of faith by notable Old Testament saints are then mentioned. Abel believed that he would be righteous by the shedding of blood. Enoch believed the testimony borne to him that he should not see death. Noah believed that the threatened flood would come. Abraham believed that God would lead him to the land of promise.

In due course the faith of these men was rewarded and yet we read the words—" These all died in faith, not having received the promises.<sup>11</sup> It would appear that they went from faith to faith and that from the belief in God's word concerning physical matters grew up a

belief that God would provide for them something better in the life hereafter. A heavenly home became the object of their faith—a home which was to be prepared for them by God.

Certain facts are brought before us in the ensuing verses (verses 17-31) which are distinctly in the nature of revelations and prove to be the keys to some matters in the Old Testament which might otherwise be difficult to understand.

Verse 19. Abraham believed that God is able to raise up even from the dead (up to that time none had been raised from the dead).

Verse 20. Faith caused Isaac to refrain from revoking the blessing which Jacob obtained from him.

Verse 24-26. By faith, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter—he counted **Christ's** reproach greater riches than Egypt's treasures.

Verse 27. Faith caused Moses to leave Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King.

Verse 31. Rahab the harlot received the spies by faith.

In most of the cases quoted above even a careful reading of the Old Testament scriptures would fail to bring out the above truths and they are therefore the more precious.

To all those named in this chapter witness was borne, through their faith, of the promise, the coming of the One who should bruise the Serpent's head. Yet they received not the promise, God reserving that blessing for us in order that we also might be partakers in the heavenly things.

[Our friends seem to have transgressed into Section

R. C. WESTON.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—This portion contains perhaps the most solemn of the several warnings we have already noticed in this Epistle. It has to do with "wilful sin," something infinitely more serious than failure in general.

In the second chapter it is "neglect<sup>M</sup> of the great salvation which brings the just recompense of reward.

In the fourth chapter we have the example of Israel's unbelief and disobedience which prevented them from entering into God's rest.

In the sixth chapter, those who "fell away" are likened unto the useless land which bears only that which is fit for the fire.

Now in the tenth chapter we read of "a certain fearful expectation of judgment and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries," and punishment sorer than the death penalty under the law, and also the vengeance of God. [The sin of\* Hebrews 10> is that of rebellion against the knowledge of the truth. By this rebellion the individual ranges himself with the Lord's adversaries; the word adversary here is used only once in its substantive form in the N.T. and literally means one who is "over against." There being no sacrifice for their sins following upon rebellion against God, and sacrifice alone affords shelter from divine fire, there is nothing to shield them from this ardent, zealous fire. Connect Hebrews 6:1-8 where the land as to what it has produced is burned. Again, John 15:6 where the question is one of fruit-bearing, not of eternal security, and we see the branches burned, they have become useless for fruit-bearing. Then 1 Corinthians 3:15 shews builders saved "Yet so as through fire"—all their work having been consumed in the burning. Let us not take our place with those who are against God. The issue here is not one of the eternal security of the believer, but of obedience to or rebellion against the truth.—J.M.]

These judgments, severe as they are, refer to those who are born again, and who have eternal life and shall never perish (John 10, 28); for they are described as having been once enlightened, made partakers of the Holy Spirit.

It was suggested by some that the "wilful sin" was the return to ordinances of the law. Others considered the warning and the judgments applicable also to us, on the ground that it is equally possible for those who receive the knowledge of the truth to turn their backs on what they know to be the will of the Lord. In either case we may take it that each of the four warnings is for us.

Such sin would render one's life useless for God, in fact, as far as the remainder of the life was concerned, the erring one would be "dead while he liveth," and his works "dead works" (Hebrews 9:14) ["Dead works" are works connected with the ritual of the law. They once were alive though they were always weak and unprofitable.] and as such, would not stand the fire of God's judgment (1 Corinthians 3:13 and see 2

Thessalonians 1. 8). [Doesn't the Thessalonian scripture refer to unsaved ones?] This is the shrinking back unto perdition of verse 39, which carries the thought of a life wasted.

<sup>l<</sup> The blood of the covenant " of verse 29 takes us back to the dedication of the old covenant, when Israel as a redeemed people, covenanted with God to do all that He had commanded, Moses sprinkling the blood of the covenant in witness thereof. It was a covenant of obedience to the Law of God and similarly its antitype has to do with the obedience of the children of God to His revealed Will, that is, after having received the knowledge of the truth. This seems to be what we get in 1 Peter 1. 2 where obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ are connected.

This warning is graciously followed by a commendation of their good works and sufferings. Further they are encouraged to continue in their boldness by the promise of the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Seeing then, that it is the daily life of the believer that is in question, the writer further encourages his readers by recalling, in detail, the lives and deeds of many Old Testament saints, those who had gained by faith " the victory that overcometh the world." For, " my righteous one shall live by faith."

At the outset, faith is defined, then we read of actions done and lives lived by faith,—by Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Sarah. *In* the case of Abel and Noah their faith was in connection with righteousness ; with Enoch, in being well pleasing to God ; with Abraham and Sarah in believing promises.

What those Old Testament saints had done by faith could not those who were in danger of " shrinking back " do? " Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing unto Him," are words which one feels would come to their hearts with great power. Faith has a great deal to do with reward. These old time saints not only lived by faith, but also died in faith, " Having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own." What a practical encouragement to Hebrew readers who had lost their all. (10. 34). Faith is the great and powerful link in both dispensations. It was, and now is, the essential for all who would be well pleasing to God.

## QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From GLASGOW.—There have been two distinct lines of thought expressed in the Corner here, in answer to the question :—" Why have we the Epistle to the Hebrews?" Some have thought that the writer was bringing before the Hebrews' minds, Christ in all His greatness and beauty, that they might be wooed from the things of the Law which were nigh unto vanishing away ; always producing something better, something superior.

On the other hand it was suggested that Paul wrote the Epistle because the Hebrews were gradually falling back into the things that were past. He could remember his own failure (see Acts 21.), when, beguiled by James and the rest of the disciples [?] he had gone up with the four young men to keep his vow ; when, although we know he was taken away before the offering after the seven days of purification, he had undoubtedly gone against the knowledge he had of the Faith in this connection.

We should be pleased to see what others think on this question.

Brief answer to Glasgow question will be welcomed.



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## THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### SECTION X.—HEBREWS 11. 17 TO 12. 2.

From PORTSMOUTH.—This portion may rightly be termed God's Roll of Honour. Each faithful one is given very brief reference, yet how clearly the life of each one stands out as God saw it ! In Hebrews 11. God reveals that faith was the mainspring of their lives. Abraham's faith in God's power to raise his son seems implied by his statement to the young men—" And we will worship and return to you " (Genesis 22. 5).

We think that Jacob is the only man of whom we are told that, when dying, he worshipped. His somewhat crooked and strange life ended well.

[We must not make Jacob too crooked. His life shews us a man born with disability and faced with obstacles afterwards which would have made men of less ability and faith turn aside from the will of God. Few men, if any, who are given early in life to subterfuge and unrighteous scheming end well—practice of deceit forms a deceitful character—Jacob's end sheds light on the true and inward character of the man who struggled after God ; a man who is said, when his name was called Israel, to have " striven with God and with men and hast prevailed."—J.M.]

Joseph, in spite of his wonderful life, showed his faith best in his dying request concerning his bones.

We consider that verse 24 of Hebrews 11. corresponds with Exodus 2. 11, and verse 27 with Exodus 10. 28-29. It is evident that verse 27 cannot refer to Exodus

2. 15. [Moses "forsaking of Egypt" was not his "leaving of Egypt" at the head of redeemed Israel. His forsaking of Egypt is seen in Exodus 2. 15, but Hebrews 11. 27 shews the real cause of his leaving Egypt then, he was told to do so by God ; he forsook Egypt by faith. Had God told him to remain there, remain he would I feel sure.—J.M.] Verse 28 as it stands in the text would infer that Moses kept the Passover in faith and that Israel merely obeyed him, but perhaps the R.V.M. " he instituted the Passover " may be the better rendering. [This passage emphasizes Moses faith in keeping or making the passover, and does not contain any reflection on Israel as to their lack of faith.—J.M.]

Verse 29 suggests that a path which is a means of deliverance to those with faith, may become destructive to those who attempt it without faith. May not such a principle operate in Christian life to-day? [The destruction of Egypt's army in the Red Sea is much worse than a mere lack of faith, they were out to fight against the God of Israel and to bring Israel into bondage again.—J.M.]

We are not clear as to how the inhabitants of Jericho were disobedient. The people of Israel were commanded (see Deuteronomy 20. 10-18) to offer the cities, against which they fought, a chance to surrender into servitude rather than be destroyed. Perhaps this offer was made to Jericho and should have been accepted since the inhabitants had heard of God's wonderful ways with His people. No doubt the people of Jericho\* shared in the general disobedience to God's revelation of Himself in creation spoken of in Romans 1. and shared in the sins which made it a just act for God to destroy the Canaanites before Israel.

[Have our friends read this passage in Deuteronomy 30 to which they refer? Note verse 15 : " Cities which are very far off from thee," then the contrast verses 16-18, the cities in the land, the inhabitants of such were to be destroyed. Our friends should read a little more about the cities in the land of Canaan and they will have no difficulty in seeing that their inhabitants were disobedient and wicked exceedingly.—J.M.]

The faith of Gideon shines out brightly as we read his life in Judges. Probably his faith and courage were never so tried as when he was asked first of all to overthrow his father's altar.

We consider that Samson showed faith on the last day of his life [And in his early days too] when he prayed

that his strength might come once more upon him. Probably he is before the writer's mind in verse 34—"from weakness was made strong."

Jephthah's faith seems well shown in his speech to the King of the Amorites. No doubt our opinion of Jephthah is rather clouded by his vow and the tragic result of it.

David's faith shows clearly when he allowed God to deal in his own time with Saul. His faith only suffered momentary eclipse when he said. "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul" (1 Samuel 27. 1),

None of these faithful ones were so favoured as we are. Among many other advantages we have the crowning example to encourage us of the **Author and Perfecter of Faith**.

E. J. EVERY.

From BRANTFORD.—Romans 4. gives a little more detail concerning Abraham's faith, and verse 20, in particular, reveals the secret of his well-pleasing life. Evidently he continued looking unto the promise. (Compare James 2. 22). Abraham is set forth as an example, and thus he is called "The father of the faithful." [By whom is he so called?]

As we review the many persons and their **works** brought before us in this chapter, we do well to ask ourselves the question, "Is there anything that faith cannot *do*?" We remember the words of the Lord Jesus when he said, "All things are possible to him that believeth." As we scanned the names of those whom God has counted worthy to be placed in His honour roll, for the greatness of their faith, we were struck with the omission of Joshua's name. Perhaps the reason for this is that it was a collective faith, Joshua being included. But we believe the outcome of his faith is spoken of in verses 33-34.

We noticed the faithfulness of Abraham and the three generations which followed him. This should encourage us who have faithful fathers not to break the link by\* being unfaithful. God watches over those that are faithful to Him and their faith is not placed in vain.

Examples of this are seen in the four generations mentioned.

Abraham had much promised him and was also called the "friend of God." Isaac became very wealthy because of his faithfulness. Jacob also became very

wealthy and received the promise that through his seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed. Joseph became the second ruler of Egypt because of his faithfulness.

The faith of Moses' parents shines out brightly at this period of Israel's history and is worthy of mention in Hebrews 11. The secret of Moses' endurance is, that, by faith he saw Him who was invisible. This reminds us of Psalm 16. 8-11, which undoubtedly refers to\* the Man Christ Jesus, who surely is the greatest example of faith. Yea, He was the Author and Perfecter of faith.

Compiled by R.M., J.S. and J.B.

From LONDON, S.E.—The word defines faith as "The assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen," and God graciously illustrates this truth in the lives of His faithful ones. Faith is shown to us as a living power that overcometh.

How wonderful is Abraham's faith ! He first of all received the promises that through Isaac his seed should multiply as the stars of heaven, and his faith that the promises would indeed be fulfilled was unshaken even when God asked him to offer up that Isaac. He believed that God would raise him from the dead.

By personifying Esau Jacob obtained the blessing, but when Isaac understood what had happened he realised that God's hand had overruled and that God would guide in the affairs of Jacob and Esau for the greater blessing of the former.

Jacob noticed how Isaac preceded Ishmael in God's favour, and how similarly he himself had superseded Esau ; and entering into God's plans he blessed the sons of Joseph as recorded in Genesis 48. 12 to 20. [It was not by past precedent he blessed Joseph's sons, but by faith.—J.M.] See him too, worshipping in Egypt upon his staff, witness to his pilgrim calling. Joseph also looked away from Egypt to the land of promise.

Passing on, we find Gideon. Regarding him we read in Judges 8. "and it came to pass as soon as Gideon was dead that the children of Israel turned again and went a whoring after Baalim and made Baal-berith their God." By this we learn that a man of faith has a wonderful preserving power to uphold not only himself but others with whom he is associated.

In this chapter we note that though some had definite promises given to them others received no direct nor personal promise, yet they had unbounded faith in

God's planning of the future. For instance, Moses' parents saw he was a goodly child and believed he would be preserved notwithstanding the King's commandment. [Does the scripture lead to this conclusion that they believed their child would be preserved? Their action to preserve Moses was in perfect keeping with the Lord's will then and now and as people of faith they could have no hand in systematic and legalised murder ; so in faith in God they hid their son.—J.M.] May we ask wherein Moses differed from the other Hebrew children that his parents rightly discerned God's purposes were to be fulfilled in him? [The word translated " exceeding fair " in Acts 7. 20 is the same as that rendered \*' goodly " in Hebrews 11. " Fair unto God " in the margin of R.V. is thought by some to be conjecture. How far Moses' parents saw of their boy's future is hard to say, but, to say the least of it, he had all the attraction of a beautiful, well-formed and nourished infant at birth, on whose behalf the godly parents were prepared if need be, to suffer the extreme displeasure of Pharaoh for whose ire their courageous faith had no fear.—J.M.] Then we read of " the reproach of Christ." What knowledge did Moses have of the coming Messiah and did he associate himself with Israel because he knew that out of their midst Messiah would come? [It was held in common by all believing Israelites then^ (and even Job knew of it) that Messiah was coming of Abraham's seed. To turn his back on Egypt, its treasure and pleasure, and to associate himself with a po::r despised and suffering people was to associate himself with that peoples' Messiah, who\* would be a suffering Messiah. This portion was to him a better one than all the treasure of Egypt.—J.M.]

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—What was the secret of the mighty deeds of the Old Testament worthies which are here recalled? They were as men who run a race, with their eyes fixed on the goal. They looked for the heavenly country, putting their trust in the God of Heaven. Some, who walked close with God, had a remarkable vision of the grace of God which was to appear. " Abraham rejoiced to see my day," said the Lord, and Moses accounted " the reproach " of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

We, too, have started in the race, and if we are to win the prize, we must be, as Cowper said, " obedient to the customs of the course." Our eyes must be -fixed

on our High Priest, Jesus the Son of God, and our desire must be towards that better country.

Much of our discussion of this section centred on the meaning of the first part of verse 2 of chapter 12, and we have submitted a question thereon, viz. :—<sup>li</sup> "In what way is Jesus the Author and Perfecter of our faith."

Many thought that the Lord Jesus Christ in His life on earth was the greatest example for all time, of One who lived by faith, or, as R.V.M, has it, of one who was the " Captain of faith."<sup>j</sup>

It was objected, however, that One who came from the presence of God, and knew all things, the end from the beginning, would have no need to exercise faith, seeing that faith has to do with things not seen.

Some said that in the Lord's life on earth, although His manhood and His Godhead were revealed in His actions, they were nevertheless distinct, that is, as a man He had the same and even greater temptations, sorrows, hunger, fatigue and other trials to contend with, as we have (except of course, sorrows induced by sin). And He met them with the resources which are available to us all, namely, the word of God, the Spirit of God, Faith in God, and Service for God and man. He never used His divine power to meet His own needs as a man, but only to meet the needs of others and to bear witness to the deity of His person. How this distinction was maintained is as much a mystery to us as His incarnation. [The Lord was essentially a man of prayer, consequently He must have been a man of faith, and remembering what is said early in Hebrews 11• :— " He that cometh to God must believe," we see the interrelationship of the two things. Our contributor rightly draws attention to the Lord's manhood and its concomitants.—J.M.]

The Messianic Psalms also\* depict the Christ as One whose trust was in God " Thou didst make me trust when I was upon my mother's breast, I was cast upon Thee from the womb." Psalm 22. 9-10.

We should like to have the thoughts of others on this important matter.

N. G. ADKINS.

From GLASGOW.—Having shewn that, while awaiting the fulfilment of the promise, faith was so necessary to life (10, verses 36-39), the writer proceeds to define faith and analyse its workings and results. To this end he reviews the lives of the elders and prophets and traces

in each the effects of settled conviction, that, with the seeking of God came reward, and that His promises were secured by unlimited power, exercised on behalf of those to whom they were given.

In this he shews to them the secret which, in many cases in the Old Testament, is veiled in the bare narration of facts. All, with an ambition to attain to that which God had shewn was before them, served and suffered in their day and generation. Each obeyed the injunctions given to him, according to his circumstance. Their faith is recorded and commended by God. The world was unworthy of those who had suffered its contempt, while He was not ashamed of them to be called their God.

As the writer reveals to them, however, this army of witnesses still awaits the fulfilment of the promise. As the counsels of God's will develop, something more glorious is unfolded and in this is the place of his readers. What greater encouragement could be set before them than the emulation of their forebears in the great race, in which faith was the measure of endurance and the sharing of reward with them was the goal. Therefore he enjoins them to set aside every encumbrance and the sin which clings closely to us and run with patience, always having before their eyes, Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of Faith. Chapter 12, verse 2.

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From PAISLEY.—For encouragement in a time when faith amongst the people of God is on the wane, the writer brings to their remembrance events in the history of faithful ones in the past. We have noticed previously the "continuing in faith"; this section deals with the "trial of faith." Here we get the operation of faith in a practical manner. Faith is a living and active grace, which ought to be demonstrated in every child of God (see James 2. 17, 18). It is interesting to note that Abraham is the first-mentioned in trial (see Psalm 11 • 5). We have the unconditional promise of God to bless and multiply his seed in Genesis 12. 2, etc., but in chapter 22. 16 to 18 the reading would suggest that the promise was confirmed upon his obedience. In faith he offered up his only begotten son (verse 17) in the spirit of Colossians 4. 12 "perfect and fully assured in all the will of God." The word of God must be known, so that actions may be decisive and not conjectural. This is characteristic of the various persons enumerated.

We considered some of the incidents concerning Moses to be helpful. Though he was brought up in Pharaoh's household, the time came when he made his choice, refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Doubtless the instruction received from a faithful mother in early days, was the source of his knowledge of God's purpose in the children of Israel. Despite the consequences that might be entailed, his heart's desire to visit his brethren and share in their afflictions, weighed more with him than the pleasures of sin for a season. The general idea is that Moses acted without faith when he slew the Egyptian and, fearing the wrath of the king, fled into the wilderness. But God "worketh all things after the counsel of his will," (Ephesians 1. 11), and there the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. There God makes known to him his purpose to deliver Israel by his hand. He was unwilling to undertake such a mighty task, but he is assured by two signs from the Lord, (we were reminded of the similar experience in the case of Jeremiah 1. 6-19), and having obeyed the commands of God, appears before Pharaoh time and again with Aaron, demanding the release of Israel. He appears the last time (Exodus 10-28-29), and this, we suggest, is what the Apostle refers to when he "feared not the wrath of the king." [See note Portsmouth.]

The circumstances associated with the others named, their treatment by the world and how they endured is a proof of the reality of faith in the living God. They lived in hope, and looked forward to the future blessing in Christ. We are brought in to enjoy the blessing which they received not. They stood for God in dark days, which meant a path of separation, though it cost many of them much suffering.

We were reminded of the faith of some in the earthly days of the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 7> 9, 50 ; Mark 10. 52) ; also instances when the Lord Jesus rebuked His disciples for lack of faith (Matthew 6. 30 ; 8. 26 ; 14. 31). He said to Thomas " Be not faithless, but believing." The two disciples on the road to Emmaus had hoped that it was He who should have redeemed Israel. " This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith " 1 John 5. 4. " Have faith in God " Mark 11. 22.

S. THOMSON.

From BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—The greatness of Abraham's faith was shewn in the offering up, as a burnt-

offering to God of his only begotten Son. He wavered not in unbelief. And in a parable he received his son back from the dead. We remember his own words to the servants :—" Abide ye here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder, and we will worship and come again to you " (Genesis 22. 5). Thus he accounted that God was able to raise up, even from the dead (Hebrews 11. 19). There was no precedent, no such thing as the raising of a dead body having taken place before. But Abraham had taken God at His word—" In Isaac shall thy seed be called,"—and this promise must be fulfilled. As we consider the faith of these men of old, we blush to think how small our faith is, in a day of greater light.

Verses 20, 21 and 22 deal with the dying words of three of the patriarchs. It is remarkable that at these times, the words of these men should be of such a prophetic character. Jacob's words to Joseph concerning his two sons are fraught with deep meaning : " I know it, my son, I know it " Genesis 48. 19, and " guiding his hands wittingly " (Genesis 48. 14), which seem to indicate that he had perfect knowledge concerning what was to happen to the sons of Joseph.

When Joseph spoke of the departure of the children of Israel, he undoubtedly had in his mind the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (see Genesis 50. 24). At the end of four hundred years the words of Joseph were remembered (Exodus 13. 19 ; Joshua 24. 32).

The parents of Moses displayed a great amount of faith when their son was born, and, rather than destroy him, they feared God rather than the king's commandment. They received their reward. It has been said that these examples of faith cover the whole of the Christian's experience, and it is interesting to note such words as " When he was born " (verse 23), " When he was grown up " (verse 24), " When his end was nigh " (verse 22), " When he was a-dying " (verse 21).

Verse 24. We wonder how much Moses knew of purposes concerning himself, when in the land of Egypt. He never forgot that he was a Hebrew, this was undoubtedly due to the training of a godly mother who' acted as his nurse in the house of Pharaoh. We are told by Stephen, " and he supposed that his brethren understood how that by his hands God was giving them deliverance." (Acts 7. 25).

How applicable to the present day are the words of Hebrews 11. 25 and 26, when the pleasure of sin and the treasurer of Egypt are so much sought after. Moses

was instructed in all the wisdom of Egypt, and was mighty in words and works, but this did not bring him one whit nearer to God. Though the pleasures of the palace royal were at his command, and the treasures of the land were his at a word, yet he willingly left them for "he looked unto the recompense of the reward" (Hebrews 11 > 26). May it be ours to look beyond the things of earth, and Moses-like, leave all behind, and count them as loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. (Read Philippians 3, 7 to 16). Let us also not be reckoned with the "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God" 2 Timothy 3. 1 to 4, but rather let us seek the "things which are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Colossians 3. 1-4).

• The discussion on the passing through the Red Sea brought forward an interesting thought, namely :—That the waters were not divided beforehand, but as the children of Israel stepped forward, the waters receded. Thus it could be said "By Faith." Every step forward the sea went backward till the people had crossed. Is this thought in keeping with the scripture? On the other hand, some thought that according to the reading of Exodus 14. the sea was divided before the Israelites set foot on its bed, and was already standing as two walls on either side of the advancing multitude.

[Reading Exodus 14 > verses 15 and 16 together, it seems evident that Israel struck tent and were on the move before Moses lifted his rod over the sea, so that the mighty deep barred the way and only faith in the word of Jehovah enabled them to "Go\* forward." Furthermore in their march they faced the east wind, the wind of adversity, by which the Lord divided the waters, so that what was against them was for them. From the words "All the night" verse 21, and "In the morning watch" verse 24, one would be led to conclude that it was the same night that the waters were parted that Israel went through and the Egyptians followed them. The waters were walls on either side and the bed of the sea was dry by the power of God in the east wind.— J.M.]

A fitting conclusion to\* the array of faithful ones is— "Jesus the Author and Perfector of Faith" Hebrews 12. 2. Faith endures the sufferings, and apprehends the joys. The "weight" of verse 1 is our individual failing, the "sin which doth so easily beset us" we suggest is unbelief.

JOHN MCCORMICK.

## QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—" In what way is Jesus the Author (or Captain) and Perfecter of our Faith?

ANSWER.—The Lord is called in Hebrews 2. 10 " The Author (Captain) of their salvation " in association with His leading many sons unto glory. But in Hebrews 11. and 12. the question is not one of salvation, but of faith, and the band of such as have lived, walked, wrought, fought and died in faith find their Prince in the Lord Jesus. Faith's Prince is not in chapter 11. however worthy these noble men and women were. He is also\* the Perfecter of faith : He is the one who has completed faith, that is, He finished all that God's word required without default. In the best of men there were blemishes, in Abraham and David, in Gideon and Samson, in Moses and all the rest, but in the blessed Master there was none—no fault or failing ; He is the Perfecter of faith.—J.M.

From BRANTFORD.—" Would we be right in linking Revelation 11. 18 with Hebrews 11. 40? "

ANSWER.—The promise of verse 39 is that referred to in chapter 10. 36-37—the promise of the Lord's coming. We, the saints of this dispensation, look for the Lord's coming and to our meeting Him in the air. The saints of a past dispensation had the promise of the Lord's coming to the earth, for One, the Redeemer, who would stand up at the last upon the earth (Job 19. 25) ; who should return and stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14. 4). I think our friends, as to time, are correct in associating these two scriptures. The perfection of the saints of old is like our own, bound up inseparably with the coming of the Lord.—J.M.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—Answer to GLASGOW'S question, page 123.—The primary reason why the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, was that the Hebrews in the Churches of God might see clearly what **had** now taken the place of the worship and service that obtained under the law, i.e.—

(1) That they might learn, on the authority of the Testament Scriptures, that the Lord Jesus Christ, although of the tribe of Judah, was now their High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek.

(2) That they themselves were in the then present House of God (howbeit conditionally).

(3) That the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ **was** the basis of their redemption and approach unto God.

(4) That they might not fail in the great purpose for which God had redeemed them and brought them together, but be established and encouraged to continue in the things put before them.

The second reason why the Epistle was written **was** that the Gentile believers of this dispensation might **be** similarly instructed.

The third reason was that the children of God in future dispensations (particularly Hebrews) might **have** strong encouragement and enlightenment in the **above** truths.

N.G.A.

On page 116 BARROW refers to the quotation in Hebrews 10. 38 " But my righteous one shall live by faith."

We suggest the question at issue in Galatians 3. is " Received ye the Spirit by the works of the Law or by the hearing of faith?" The answer is, that no man is justified by the Law but by faith. It is " faith " therefore that here receives the emphasis.

Although the word " faith " is very prominent in Hebrews 11-, the writer is reminding the Hebrews **how** the Old Testament saints lived, in order that their lives too, may not be wasted. " But we are not of them **that** shrink back unto perdition (loss or a wasted life) but of them that have faith unto the saving of the soul (or **the** life). So then it is the spiritual life of the believer on earth that is here at stake, therefore the emphasis in **the** quotation of Hebrews 10. 38 is on the word LIVE. It is important that this should be borne in mind in the study of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

N.G.A.

[We agree with the remarks of N.G.A. as to the **use** made of Habakkuk 2. 4. in these quotations. In Hebrews it is the life of faith, and only such as live by faith **are** accounted living ; th\$ lives or such as are otherwise **have** gone to perdition.—J.M.]

## PROPOSED SUBJECTS.

From PAISLEY.—The Epistle to the Romans.

From GALSTON.—(a) The Epistle to the Romans,  
(b) The Book of Genesis.

From LONDON, S.E.—(a) The Epistle to the Romans.  
(b) The First Epistle to the  
Corinthians.

From BARROW.—The Epistle to the Romans.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—

- (a) The Book of Job.
- (b) The Books of the Kings.
- (c) The Book of the Revelation.

From BRANTFORD.—The Epistles to the Corinthians.

Corners sending suggestions would do well to imitate London, S.E., and give a synopsis.

We thank all who have sent helpful suggestions. For coming year (D.V.) however, we propose to keep on old lines. A syllabus of the chosen subject for 1927 will soon be in hands of Corners.

Correspondents are requested to write on one side of paper only.

Friends are also requested to make an endeavour to increase the number of those receiving the publication.



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## THE EPISTLE TO HEBREWS.

### SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION :

#### SECTION XL—HEBREWS 12. 3 TO 29.

From LONDON, S.E.—In this section we are taught the wonderful truth that " we may be partakers of His Holiness." Here we are urged to "pursue Holiness " (follow after sanctification). It will not come to us when we refrain from striving against sin ; when we so prefer present ease [?] that we are willing with Esau to have the pottage and despise the blessing. [See note in Brantford's paper re lesson to be learned.] Our Holy Father's will is that we His children should be holy too, and for this purpose He watches over us, lovingly chastening when we err that we may return to His paths ; and when we do respond to His correction, He grants to us the joy of tasting the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Holiness becomes God's House to which we are come, an awe-inspiring place indeed as revealed in verses 22/24. Let us rouse ourselves to a sense of our responsibility, and let us be holy in all manner of living, passing the time of our sojourning in fear. That word " fear "

should convey to us the thought of " reverence and awe " (verse 28) rather than that of " terror." We have been brought into the sanctuary, the dwelling place of God, the Judge of all. Let us not displease Him by despising His calling.

We wondered in the course of our study why the Revisers use the word " themselves " in verse 3, which, in the A.V., reads " Himself." The latter rendering seems more in keeping with the surrounding verses. [This question of whether " Himself " or " themselves " is the correct word may remain a matter of doubt. Some ancient authorities give eauton=Himself, some eautous=themselves. The English Revisers evidently thought the weight of evidence was for the latter ; while the American committee followed the A.V. rendering.—J.M.]

Verse 15, taken in conjunction with Deuteronomy 29. 18, would imply that the life of an unholy one is not merely hurtful to that one himself (as well as displeasing to God) but is apt to have a harmful effect on one's neighbours. On the other hand, the holy one yields fruit which may be beneficial to those around. Thus Holiness pleases God, assists our fellows and results in rich blessing to ourselves. And in our striving to be holy we are assured of God working with us, correcting, teaching, 'encouraging.

DAVID A. HILL.

From GLASGOW.—Having pointed his readers to the great example of endurance, under the injustice of sinners, the writer now brings their minds to view affliction from another angle. He reminds them of the things written concerning the chastening of the Lord and how indispensable this chastening is to sonship. From this he proceeds to the benefits that come through the discipline of the Father of spirits (verses 10, IT). [Is the chastening of sons not the discipline by the Father of spirits?—J.M.] They are thus urged and encouraged to self attention firstly and to care for others secondly. The standard set for their grace in this, is that which God had shewn toward them. In the display of such, no root of bitterness could flourish, the terrible effects of which were so' far reaching.

With the words of warning come the name of Esau and the sin of which he was guilty. He undervalued his birthright, a legacy from God, and bartered it for a momentary satisfaction. How solemn the warning was in view of that which follows, for the apostle after point-

ing them to the power displayed at the giving of the old covenant, sets before them that which they had come unto—things unseen by mortal eyes as yet, which though spiritual, were none the less real in substance and position. Before their minds are set the location, the company, the Judge, the witnesses, and most precious of all, to them, me Mediator by whose blood their right of access existed. Thus, in view of the One before whose face earth and heaven shall flee away, they are called to " Grace " whereby service acceptable can be offered to " Our God who is a consuming fire."

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From BRANTFORD, ONTARIO.—In verse 2 the exhortation is given, to look unto Jesus. [The exhortation is to run with patience the race " Looking unto Jesus." Looking here means that the runner must forget all else, and fix his eyes intently on one object alone, on Jesus the Author and Perfector of faith.—J.M.] In verse 3 it is to " consider Him." Thus we would understand that the look is to be followed by meditation, and this is the remedy for fainting by the way.

We understand the truth of the following verses is more the thought of child-training and the purpose connected with chastisement, namely the peaceable fruit of righteousness. If we reverence our earthly parents who also chastise us, we should much more reverence our heavenly Father.

In verse 14 we are called upon to live peaceably with all men. We know God would not have us to be agitators, for all that we do should be done in order. The need of self examination is brought before us in verse 15. If this is carried out then there will be less possibility of us causing others to stumble.

We believe the lesson of Esau should teach us not to think lightly of God's blessings. [The lesson taught here in connexion with Esau is concerning the evil of profanity ; that is, putting to a wrong use a sacred thing. He sold his birthright, which he should have held sacred, for a mess of Dottage.—J.M.]

What we are come to, is given in the verses that follow—not a fearful appearance for us, no voice to strike terror to our hearts, no bounds that we dare not pass through—but through the new and living way, into God's holy presence and the many blessings for the obedient saint. [Here we have the contrast of the past and present dispensations, Israel, God's people, came to Sinai, with which

mountain, where the law was given, their service was connected. God's people in this dispensation are come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God. This passage views them collectively in association with the Mount of God, where in confessed obedience they are said to be "Receiving a kingdom (the Kingdom of God) that cannot be shaken": following which is the exhortation: "Let us have grace, whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe."—J-M.] How great the contrast and correspondingly how great the joy!

We recall that this epistle opened with the fact that God was speaking through a Son, and this fact is again prominent, especially in verse 25. Just as there is no escape for the sinner who refuses to listen to God's voice in the gospel, neither is there any escape for the saint who turns a deaf ear. The soul is lost in the one case and the life in the other. The marginal reading of verse 28, seems to be very helpful. "Thankfulness," begotten by appreciation of all that God has done, is surely the secret of acceptable service.

Compiled by J.T., J.B. and R.M.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The first section of our portion to verse 13 deals with the very important subject of the chastening of the Lord.

It would appear that this part of the chapter is closely connected with that which has already been spoken of in chapter 10. 32, 33. "The great conflict of suffering," etc., which, although coming from those who acted, no doubt, in hatred towards God's people, were nevertheless to be regarded by them as the chastening of the Lord.

Some of our number had difficulty in attributing any misfortune or suffering to either (1) the chastening of the Lord, or (2) the ordinary course of Nature, or (3) the devil. Several examples were given which seem to fall into one or more of these three categories.

(1) The Lord's punishment of the nations of Canaan through the Children of Israel, and vice versa. The chastening of those who discern not the body (1 Corinthians 11. 32).

(2) The eighteen upon whom the tower of Siloam fell (Luke 13. 4). Sickness due to neglect or indulgence. Poverty and suffering due to unemployment.

(3) The case of Job.

[The chastisement spoken of in Hebrews 12. quite evidently is affliction endured at the hands of men. In this connexion the Lord is spoken of as enduring the gain-

saying of sinners and enduring the cross. In this suffering because of obedience to God's word God is dealing with us as with sons, we are in God's school and by discipline we are being lit ted for greater things. That God may deal with us and chastise us in other ways is plain from other scriptures.—J.M.]

The Hebrews scripture, of course, deals with the chastening of sons, and we may take it that, whatever may be our affliction, the important thing is to be exercised about it before the Lord, for, we are told, this will yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness.

Verse 14 " Peace." How often we are exhorted to be at peace ; follow after things which make for peace. Surely this is a necessary condition if we are to progress in the Lord's things.

Verse 15. We each need to keep a careful watch, on ourselves lest the purpose of God's grace in us should not be accomplished. We may hinder it. Many times wrong feelings towards fellow saints are allowed to remain, and indeed are fed and inflamed, and not only ourselves, but the many are thereby defiled.

The latter portion from verse 18 speaks of those beings and things in the presence of God to which we are come, but we have much difficulty in understanding what it all means. Some were inclined to connect it with the drawing nigh into the Holy Place, referred to previously in chapter 10» But one of the things to which we are come is called " the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven," which according to Colossians 1« 18 is the Church which is His Body. If this is so, what part has the Church in the worship of the Spiritual House?

[No, the Church the Body is not the Church of first-born ones. Mount Zion, to which we, as a people, are come, is in contrast to Mount Sinai, to which Israel came, and with which their service for God was bound up.—

Others were of the opinion that it speaks of the future, comparing the heavenly Jerusalem with the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21. And others again, while not limiting it to the future, thought that, as the verse is in the present tense—" But ye are come "—a present experience was here referred to. Although we are not come to a mountain that might be touched, the things to which we are come are nevertheless real and living, and can be handled by faith, for we have learned somewhat of the truth of these things.

From verse 26 onwards, we are reminded that earth and heaven shall again be shaken and removed, but the Kingdom which we have received is enduring and can never be shaken. Surely since we have received so much it is fitting that we should " offer service well pleasing to God."

N. G. ADKINS.

From PAISLEY.—As verses 4-13 indicate a low spiritual condition of the people addressed in the epistle the exhortation to consider Him, in His endurance, seems to be necessary. We were reminded of Proverbs 24. 10. A condition similar in character is found in 1 Corinthians 11 • 31-32. We have various interesting cases of chastening in the Old Testament scriptures. We derived benefit from the following, which we would counsel our fellow students of the epistle to\* read, viz., Leviticus 26. 14-41. Here we have chastening as severe judgment for sins. 2 Samuel 24. 10-17-; Psalm 119. 67, 71, 75 ; Psalm 94. 12 ; and Isaiah, 26. 16. [We should, I think, be careful to distinguish here between chastening and punishment. These saints were suffering at men's hands for well-doing and the Apostle says : "It is for chastening that ye endure." One long ago put it thus : " It is for chastisement that ye are enduring, not for punishment, not for any evil purpose."—J.M.] God has His purposes in chastening although not always recognised at the time of trial. A present and future profit comes to those who are exercised thereby. The}- become " partakers of His holiness." The case of Job was considered, but his experience seems different to that mentioned here, though Elippaz speaks of him as being chastened of the Almighty (Job 5. 17). We thought the action of Achan (Joshua 7.) a fitting illustration of the lesson taught in verse 15. After the matter is put right the Lord said unto> Joshua, " Fear not, neither be thou dismayed " (chapter 8. 1). Such portions as 1 Corinthians 5. 6 ; 3 John 9-11\* ; 2 Thessalonians 3. 6-7, and Revelations 2. 14-15 have very direct bearing on individual behaviour in association with collective fellowship and testimony.

We suggest that verses 18-21 indicate the dangers that those under law were subjected to *in* their approach to God. These fears are done away with in verses 22-24 and the worshippers of the House of God are privileged to enter a heavenly scene without terror or restricting bounds.

[We have in verses **18-24** a contrast drawn **between** Mount Sinai and Mount Zion, and the service of God associated with each. Moses feared at Sinai and we are to serve God with reverence and awe, our God being unchangeable ; still a consuming fire.—J.M.]

S. THOMSON.

From **BARROW-IN-FURNESS**.—The antidote for spiritual weariness and faintness of soul is to be found in verse 3—" Consider Him." A mind and heart rightly directed produces a right condition of soul. There is no trial, discouragement or temptation that we are subject to, but that He has already known the same " In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (John 16. 33) were His own words, and **we** can rest upon them.

The subject brought before us in verses 3 to 13 is " chastisement." There seems to us to be a difference between "chastisement " and " trial." Job, for example, was not chastised for any wrong doing, but was tried, **with** God's permission, in order to prove to Satan the uprightness or his (Job's) character. (Compare 1 Peter 1-6-7).

Chastening seems to be the means used by God to cause exercise with, regard to sin committed. [See note in Paisley's contribution.] The object is to reprove (verse 5) for our benefit. When God deals with any of His people who err, it is always with the object that the one so dealt with should be exercised thereby and restored. The man of 1 Corinthians 5. was to be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. [Is this not judgment rather than chastisement?—J.M.] God's hand was also upon the Corinthians. (Read 1 Corinthians **11**. 17-34.)

Though chastening for the present seemeth grievous yet to those who are exercised thereby, it yieldeth peaceable fruit—even the fruit of righteousness. May we, as young men, young in the faith, humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God. May we be in subjection to the Father of spirits and thus we may be " partakers of His holiness."

Verses 14 to 17 shew us the need of being on our guard. We note the words "Looking carefully," and we are reminded of Ephesians 5. 15. How possible it is for us, like Esau, to sell our birthright with its spiritual blessings and our life.

The paragraph from verse 18 to 29 contains some difficult expressions, and we are again reminded of the words of Peter in his second epistle chapter 3. 15-16. Two scenes are brought before us. One is an earthly scene, and the other is a heavenly. The one speaks of the giving of the law, and the terrors associated therewith (verse 21) ; the other of Jesus, the Mediator of a new Covenant, and all the joys and blessings that flow from the blood of sprinkling (verses 22-24). The solemn words of verse 25 should not be passed over lightly, but let us turn our thoughts to Him Who speaketh from heaven, " for our God is a consuming fire " (verse 29). Here too, we are given a glimpse of the future, when that voice will speak again and the earth shall not only be shaken but removed. (Please read chapter 1. 11-12 ; 2 Peter 3. 10-13 ; and Revelation 21. 1.) This portion is a fitting conclusion to the doctrinal part of the epistle, and in the light of what has gone before, and of what follows, let us " refuse not Him that speaketh."

J. MCCORMICK.

#### SECTION XII.—HEBREWS 13. 1 TO 25.

From TORONTO.—This concluding chapter brings before us that new commandment of John 13. 34—" By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples." The importance of brotherly love cannot be overrated by those who go\* outside the Camp bearing His reproach, and a manifestation of that love will cause those in the world to consider. It's source is in " God Himself." May this Grace also be extended towards those who\* may be in adversity (verse 3), and towards those whom we know not (verse 2). See also 1 Corinthians 13. 13. Is there any suggestion in verse 2 of the possibility of angels visiting us? If not, what is the point of this statement.

[Reference is no doubt here made to Old Testament incidents, e.g., Genesis 18. 3, 19. 2. The thought of angels—heavenly beings—visiting us does not seem to be contained in the verse ; but entertained strangers may bring blessings, temporal and spiritual.]

How nicely the apostle puts this 7th verse. Leaders should always be an example of their Lord.

[Note the contrast between verses 7 and 17 " Remember them that had," " Obey them that have."—J.M.]

It was suggested by one that the " altar " of which these that serve the tabernacle " cannot eat " was the Lord Jesus Himself, while another suggested that the altar was located in heaven where the Lord is and refer-

ence was made to Isaiah 6. 6 and Revelation 8. 1-5. Yet another suggested that the " altar " was the " heart <sup>js</sup> established (or set up) in grace and from which there arose those sacrifices of verses 15 and 16 (see also 1 Peter 2. 5) and was located in the House of God. But this last thought raised the question "Where are such sacrifices offered? do we enter heaven to offer?"

[Those who served the Tabernacle eat of the meats which came to them through the altar—such eating was unprofitable. We partake of grace through our altar, the Lord Jesus Christ. The thought connected with the altar here is not the thought of giving but of receiving.—• J.M.]

Under the new Covenant there is no remembrance of sins. The Lord Jesus Christ after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God. (Hebrews 10. 12, 17, 18).

So to what purpose should there be anything approaching to the altar of burnt offering?

SAMUEL NICHOLL.

From BRANTFORD.—This chapter opens in a much different way from any other in the epistle and has a different character from the others. We must admit it is hard to\* love one another as we love ourselves ; hence the need of the exhortation <sup>ti</sup> " Let love of the brethren continue " this being in keeping with the new commandment of John 13. 34, 35.

The scripture in 1 John 3. 18 is surely for us at the present day, nevertheless this love is not to stop with brethren, but is to flow out to all whom we can be of service to. In this we will be following His steps, who truly loved His neighbour as Himself.

In verse 3, we are reminded that prayer for one another is a further way of showing love one to another, for we are one Body. See Romans 12, 4, 5, and 1 Corinthians 12. 12-14.

How vain it is to' trust in riches, but it is ours to trust in the Living God, He who is always providing for us, yea, Who provided the Lamb. Further we have His assurance " I will never fail thee." We are exhorted in the latter clause of 1 Timothy 6. 17 that we are not to have our hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. We have been considering in earlier papers some of the things and gifts that God has provided. So we ought to take refuge and courage in the words of verses 5 and 6.

It is suggested that verse 8 has a bearing on verses 7 and 9. With regard to verse 7 He was the perfect example whose faith they should imitate, and as regards verse 9 His was an unswerving attitude toward the will of His God : He was faithful unto death.

The truth contained in verses 10-15 seems to agree with 1 Corinthians 9. 13, also 10. 16-18, and we suggest implies worship.

In verse 7 the words are—"Remember them that had/' but in verse 17 it is "Obey them that have the rule . . . for they watch." This, no doubt, speaks of the shepherd care. They watch, for the well-being of the sheep. In this they are like the Great Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep.

In verse 18 the writer is requesting a favour that even the youngest disciple could do. Let us, therefore, in like manner pray for those who labour for the Master.

As we reflect on all that we have been considering we are caused to admit how well this epistle is closed :—  
"To Him be the Glory for ever and ever, Amen."

Compiled by J.T., J.B. and R.M.

From LONDON, S.E.—Let love of the brethren continue. By showing our love one towards another we manifest Whose we are and Whom we serve. We recall the words of Him Who loved us even unto death :—"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another ; even as I have loved you." (John 13. 34-35). Peter speaks of "unfeigned love of the brethren," (1 Peter *in* 22). In verse 2 of this epistle we are given encouragement to show love unto strangers. We have on record (Judges 13. 16, 21) how Manoah received one who proved to be an angel sent from the Lord, and we call to mind how those men at Emmaus met with their Risen Lord and Master and how their eyes were opened to behold One exalted above all angels. With regard to the remembrance of those in bonds, as being yourselves also in the body, we suggest this refers to the Body of Christ.

[No, this is not the Body of Christ, but the natural body of the believer, and being in the body, we, who may not at the moment be evil entreated, may according to the will of God be allowed a time of suffering. This should lead us to render succour and sympathy to such as suffer.—J. M.]

With the word of exhortation to contentment in verse 5, we may link 1 Timothy 6. 8. Wonderful truths to those who know the unchanging God Who opens His

hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Verse 7 tells us to imitate the faith of those who at one time spoke unto us the Word of God. These, we presume were overseers in the Assemblies of God. We have presented to us in verse 8 the everlasting faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ (compare Malachi 3. 6). Verse 9 makes known God's desire that we be established in grace. We are called upon in 2 Peter 3. 18 "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." With verse 13 we might profitably link Philipians\* 3. 10 and 20.

We have through Him the unspeakable privilege of offering unto God a continual sacrifice of praise, making confession to His Name, to exalt Him Whom God has made both Lord and Christ. Verses 16 and 17 exhort us to do good and to obey those who rule and watch on behalf of our souls. This undoubtedly speaks concerning overseers, and, when we remember such are appointed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20. 28), obedience and subjection to them is a solemn duty of discipleship.

The need of prayer was brought before us, that a good conscience may prevail. [No. The two statements are separate. "Pray for us": for despite what may have been erroneously laid to the apostle's charge he had "a good conscience."] By the life which He lives in God's presence for us, God perfects us to do that which is well pleasing in His sight. This is the fruits of the finished work of Christ, and God's complete satisfaction in Him. The sublime truths contained in this glorious portion close with exhortations to salute all the church or churches of God addressed.

GEO. PAIN.

From BARROW.—The theme throughout the epistle to the Hebrews has been the exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the last chapter however, at the commencement we are exhorted as to the principle which is one of the foundations of Christian experience—"Love." "Let love of the brethren continue." It was apparently no new thing to the Hebrews to love the brethren, but word is "continue." Much, of a profitable character, can be gleaned by reading scriptures dealing with this line of thought, such as:—Romans 12-9 and 10; 1 Thessalonians 4. 9; 1 Peter 3. 8; 2 Peter 1-7; 1 John 3. 10; 1 John 4-7. We quote but one. Speaking in respect of debt the apostle says—"Owe no man anything, save to love one another" (Romans 13> 8). May this be

our aim always to be in debt, when love of the brethren is at stake, and may we be always seeking to discharge that debt.

To entertain strangers (verse 2) is a noble work, and calls forth words of gratitude. (Read Romans 16. 1 and 2.) The Hebrews are also exhorted to "remember those who are in bonds " (verse 3). This it would seem, was an exhortation to continue their custom of chapter 10-32 to 39.

" The love of money " has led many of God's children astray, even in our day ; and this seems to have been true in the days of the apostles. The words in 1 Timothy 6. 10 are worthy of note. To be " content with such things as we have " is indeed a wonderful lesson, for the human heart seems always to be grasping after something greater and better than the things it possesses. The words of the Master Himself are instructive, (read Matthew 6. 19-34) and we recall experiences of Paul as found in Philippians 4. 10-13 and particularly the words, " I have learned " (verse 11). We are sure that in his trials the Apostle had realised in a very practical way the truth of the promise, which is now brought before the Hebrew believers, " I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee." Bearing this in mind, and taking his suffering into account, this great man of faith can say with good courage—

" The Lord is my helper, I will not fear :  
What shall man do unto me?"

The words of verses 7 and 17 are of particular interest to us as young men. " Remember them that had the rule over you," implies that these elders, or overseeing men had been called to their heavenly rest. They lived and died in faith, and such faith it was that others could be encouraged to consider and imitate it.

"Obey them that have the rule over you," is an instruction for the present, and should call forth from young ones that esteem and honour, which is befitting to those in whom God has placed an earnest care for the churches. (Their work is difficult and trying, and of times a task which is by no means pleasant). We can assist by our obedience and subjection to all things that are in accordance with the revealed will of God.

We were extremely interested to note in connexion with verse 11, that the blood of all sin offerings was not brought into the holy place. In the case of the individual offerer, the blood was not brought into the holy place, therefore the priests were permitted to eat of the

flesh. Of the flesh of the sin offering for the people the priests were not allowed to eat because the blood was carried into the holy place (see Leviticus 6. 25-30, also 10. 6-10). The carcase of the latter offering was burned without the camp. The Lord Jesus in verse 12 is brought before us as the One Who suffered for the people, becoming the sin offering whereby the people could be sanctified. Therefore He "suffered without the gate." Then once more the thoughts of the readers are directed homeward—to the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. All this calls for a ceaseless poean of praise from redeemed hearts—a sacrifice of praise to God continually making confession to His Name. And to do good and to communicate forget not, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. At the close of this paper, we would fain repeat the benediction of verses 20 and 21, which please read, and we would emphasise the words—"Jesus Christ, to Whom be the glory for ever and ever." And as we lay down our pen at the close of this study each and all, we trust, will add a fervent Amen!

J. MCORMICK.

From GLASGOW.—The writer as he concludes the epistle, seems to expand upon the things which have a practical application for the guidance of his readers in the great object he has set before them at the climax of his writing, namely, the acceptable service of God.

Although the primary application of the second and third verses seems to be within the circle of those who are linked in service, the truths may be applied generally. Godly fear and confidence go hand in hand in verses 4 to 6.

We seem to be returned to the early chapter of the Acts of the Apostles as we picture those who axe called to remembrance in verse 7. Their great testimony and power in the spirit had left its mark and example with those who are addressed and many a thrill must have been caused by recollection of instances of "The Lord working with them." To the centre of faith however, the apostle directs attention, "Jesus Christ," the Unchanging One."

From this the writer proceeds to warning against strange doctrines. These were evidently concerned with the ceremonial eating of meats which some must have considered necessary. Against this is presented the fact that this practise has benefited none. He has already instanced those whose hearts were stablished by

grace and not by ceremony. He then proceeds a step further to shew how far apart were the demands of the services of the old tabernacle and that to which they were called. They were called to share the reproach of the One who had suffered outside the gate and had no place inside the camp or with those there. He was the channel of acceptable service, several points of which are indicated in verses 15 and 16.

It seems from the wording of verse 18 that in the expression of the apostle's desire for prayer on his behalf, there was a need for the words which accompany it. It has been suggested that in view of the charges brought against him both by his accusers at Rome and probably by those in Jerusalem who, in view of that which he wrote, condemned his action there, he sought to assure them of his good conscience in all things, that their prayers might be effectual.

Verses 20 and 21 seem complex in that they cover the whole scope of God's desire and purposes in them and indicate the apostle's desire that the inspiration which alone could allow them to serve acceptably might work in and through them.

J. A. ARCHIBALD.

From PAISLEY.—The opening verses of this chapter deal chiefly with the relationship of one to another in united testimony. The writer brings before the Hebrews the promises of God to Israel in the past, and how fittingly does the case of the Psalmist agree with the circumstances through which they were passing. Reliance upon these promises would enable the sufferers to bear evil treatment. Compare James's exhortation (James 1« 2-4) to some under similar conditions.

We thought verses 1 to 5 were more of a warning than actual instruction. Verse 7 : The issue of the lives (we take this to mean they were murdered) [This thought that the elders had been martyred can only be arrived at by inference ; there is nothing in the words used to definitely assure us that this is positively correct. The elders referred to had had a certain manner of life worthy of imitating and that they maintained to the last. With them there had been no turning back ; no deflection from the word of God which they taught.—J.M.] of their departed rulers proved the sincerity of their convictions, therefore the Hebrews have encouragement to stand in an evil day. Then perhaps the greatest comfort of all, he brings before them the Lord Jesus Christ, as the eternal and unchanging One.

Much false teaching, probably Judaising, appears to have been existent. (Compare Galatians 2. 16 to 3. 5.) On the other hand the result of Divine order is seen in Ephesians 4. 11-16. Verse 10 lays down a clear line of separation between the adherents of the law and those "justified by faith." Scriptures cited John 14. 21 ; 1 John 3. 24 ; 2 John verse 6 ; 1 Corinthians 6. 19, 20. The altar (verse 10) would speak of Christ ; as also certain furnishings in the tabernacle are types of Him. He is here seen as the Offerer and Offering. This seems to be strengthened by the translation of the word "sacrifice" in verse 15, rendered "the slain animal." In the past the sacrifice went on continually, morning and evening (Exodus 29. 38-32). Verses 11 and 12 connect the Lord Jesus with the sin offering (Leviticus 4, 1-21) which made atonement for people. He takes the place of this type and consequently suffers without the gate. He was rejected and despised of men. If we are followers of Him our place must be like that of His, "Where I am, there shall also my servant be," John 12. 26. The apostle Paul could say, "Far be it from me to glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world hath been crucified unto me and I unto the world," Galatians 6. 14 (see verse 17 also). "If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you" John 15. 29.

S. THOMSON.

From LIVERPOOL AND BIRKENHEAD.—The main theme which has been before us in the epistle is "The House of God," particularly with regard to\* its worship and service Godward.

Chapter 13. deals mainly with things which concerned their behaviour towards one another. Let love of the brethren continue. In almost every epistle in the New Testament we have this exhortation given, as though we need to be continually reminded of it.

Verse 2. "Forget not to show love unto\* strangers." This seems to refer primarily to brethren who were strangers. We remember John's commendation of Gaius who had been host to those who were brethren and strangers withal (3 John 5.). "Angel<sup>M</sup>" here means "messenger," and reference may be implied to such cases as Abraham and Manoah.

Verse 3. "Remember them that are in bonds. . ." Feel for them just as though the fetters were binding you, you who are in the body, and can appreciate the suffering through which they are passing.

Verse 4. Think honourably of marriage. Perhaps some were already rising up of whom Paul speaks in Timothy "forbidding to marry/" Those in the House of God should think honourably of marriage. The world thinks of it very lightly. Many tell us it is a failure. These things should have no place in God's House.

Verse 5. <sup>a</sup> Be ye free from the love of money . . ." This is a danger with us all. To be content with such things as we have is a happy lesson to learn. To be able to say with truth <sup>c</sup> The Lord is my helper ; I will not fear ; what shall man do unto me?"

Verse 7. "Remember them that had the rule over you." Recall the issue of their lives, consider it and imitate it. This is something we can do.

Verses 8 and 9. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea and for ever." Some tell us that the present generation needs more than what the scriptures have to offer us, but grace, which established the hearts of the faithful ones now absent, is available to us. The Lord Jesus is the same to-day and His grace is sufficient for us. Is its sufficiency a reality? If it is, we will not be carried away with divers and strange teachings.

Verses 10-13. Meats have no place in the things of our altar ; they belong to that which is past. Under the law the priests could eat of certain sacrifices for sin, but they had no right to eat of those whose blood was brought into the Holy Place, for the bodies of such beasts were burned without the camp. The Lord Jesus suffered without the gate in fulfilment of the offering for the sins of the people (Leviticus 4. 1 to 21) in order that "He might sanctify the people through His own blood." And going out unto Him, the Hebrews would find themselves outside the camp of the temple ritual. We likewise will be found outside the religious, political and other camps of the world. We were reminded that "bearing " His reproach was no mere abstention from worldly pleasures. "All that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3. 12.

In verses 15 and 16 we have the type of sacrifices which God is now pleased to accept through our Lord Jesus Christ, namely, a sacrifice of praise to God continually, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name ; also doing good and communicating to the needs of others.

In verse 17 we have a solemn reminder of the Judgment Seat of Christ. Overseers are said to watch in

behalf of the souls of the saints as those that shall give account. What a great responsibility rests on such, and how careful we should be to give them no cause for anxiety. It seems from this verse that the account of the overseers will be taken into consideration when the Great Shepherd and the Chief Shepherd shall be manifested.

T. M. HYLAND.

## THE CAPTAIN OF OUR FAITH.

HEBREWS 12. 2.

LONDON, S.W.—Our friends at Liverpool and Birkenhead ask for the thoughts of others on this important subject, especially in its relation to our Lord's Deity and Humanity.

The scope of this passage shews that we have in view the Lord Jesus as the supreme example of that faith which we are to imitate ; He, in His humanity,—Jesus—is " the Leader and Perfecter " of faith. In chapter 11i we have before us the great army of the Heroes of Faith ; now, our eyes are directed to the Captain or Leader in whom faith is seen in its fulness and perfection. " Leader " expresses the thought here better than either " Author " or " Captain " ; for " the *archegos* himself first takes part in that which He establishes " (Westcott). Faith, in Him, finds its consummation. The Epistle we are studying testifies that His manhood was real (chapter 2. 14), full (chapter 2. 17), and perfect (chapter 2. 10). In Christ every virtue is " through suffering " brought to its full development and perfect manifestation.

The rulers testified " He trusteth: in God/" (Matthew 27, 43), speaking the truth at last, though in mockery ; and, again, these words are given as His own testimony : " I will put my trust in Him (God) " (Hebrews 2. 13).

But, it is objected, if He was man He was also God and, as God, omniscient : being, therefore, endowed with all knowledge past, present and future, He had no need of faith ; indeed, faith, as we know it, seems impossible.

In dealing with this question we need to realise the limited sphere of human reason. The personality of the Word made Flesh is unique, and beyond our finite comprehension. The sacredness of the subject, too, demands that we tread softly.

We do not fully understand our own personality ; even here there are mysteries as yet unsolved. It would, therefore, be not only unreasonable, but the height of

presumption to expect to explain the " Great Mystery of Godliness, even He who was manifested in the flesh/" in terms of human experience.

The facts concerning the Person of Christ lie before us in the Scriptures, but nowhere are they explained, or brought together into one formula. The facts may be summarised as follows :—(1) That as Son of God Christ was very God, one with the Father. (2) That as Son of man He was perfectly man, made in all points like unto His brethren. (3) That, though both God and Man, these are not two per sens but one. One Person is ever before us who is none other than the Eternal Son of God and in this Person the two natures, divine and human, are inseparably united. The same " I " had glory with the Father before the world was and gave His life for the sheep. The complete harmony of this is manifested in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and it may be that in following His steps and living a life of self-surrender and sympathy in fellowship with Him we shall obtain glimpses of the truth our minds cannot fully grasp.

The Epistle to the Hebrews contains some of the clearest testimonies to the Deity of Christ and, at the same time, some of the boldest statements concerning His humanity. May we suggest that our friends write down all the passages which state or imply the Deity of Christ, and also\* set down the passages which state or imply His humanity.

S. BURROWS.

### QUESTION AND ANSWER.

From BRANTFORD.—Question as regards Hebrews 12. 4.—Does this mean that a certain state of sanctification has to be attained in this life, that in the life to come, the privilege is granted of seeing the Lord—Or is there a sense in which, by faith, we can see the Lord now?

ANSWER.—This cannot mean that no-one shall see the Lord " in the life to come " without following sanctification ; for it is said that every child of God " shall see Him even as He is," and thus " we shall be like Him " (1 John 3. 2). It is said of Moses that " He endured as seeing Him who is invisible." Truly this is a paradox yet quite plain to men of faith. Again " Blessed are the pure in heart ; for they shall see God." Sanctification and purity of heart are essential to the revelation of God to us. Therefore let us follow peace and sanctification and so forth.—J.M,

RE CRITICISMS BY J.M. OF BRANTFORD'S  
PAPER (PAGE 118).

1. All I find in Numbers 16. is that Dathan and Abiram came to their tent doors. Because Korah isn't mentioned as having come to his tent door that is no evidence of his not being swallowed up with the rest. On the other hand we find in Numbers 26. 10 that Korah was swallowed up when the earth opened her mouth, although his sons died not. See also Jude verse 11.

E. T. GRIFFITH (Peckham).

ANSWER 1'. Re E.T.G.'s (London) criticism. Thanks for correction. The force of Numbers 26. 10 was not observed when comment was made. Deuteronomy 11. 6 makes no reference to Korah being with Dathan and Abiram, and Numbers 16. 19 might lead one to\* conclude that Korah was at the door of the Tent of Meeting with the 250 men who offered incense, and who were devoured by fire, and not with Dathan and Abiram among the tents of Reuben. What does the Tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiram mean? Does this mean more than their tents? It would almost seem so.—J.M.

2. Your grounds for saying that Hymenaeus was back in the Church at Ephesus seem to me to be very slender and quite insufficient to criticise the sentence in Brantford's paper.

I find in the verse you referred to (2 Timothy 2. 17) that Hymenaeus is held up as an example of one who had gone further in ungodliness and whose word did eat as a gangrene. Surely this does not mean to say he was back in the Church. On the contrary it seems to me that he was here (2 Timothy 2) again held up as an example of one who had gone wrong and known to the Ephesians. We also get Alexander of the same verse (1 Timothy 1. 20) referred to in 2 Timothy 4. 14, as one who had done Paul much evil (I believe these two Alexanders are one and the same).

E. T. GRIFFITH.

ANSWER 2. It is beyond question that Hymenaeus was in the Church in Ephesus when the Apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy. If he were not how could Paul call upon Timothy (with all that followed righteousness) to purge himself out from such persons. "If a man therefore purge (out purge) himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour." This is plainly a call to separation from such as held false doctrine.—J.M.

## NOTES FOR 1927.

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