

BIBLE STUDIES.

" Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, **in that** they received the word with **all** readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

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THE WAY OF THE HOLIES.

" The way **into** the holy place **hath not yet been made manifest**, while **as the** first tabernacle is yet standing " (Hebrews 9. 8). " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into **the** holy place by **the** blood of Jesus, by **the** way which **He** dedicated for **us**, **a new** and living way, though the veil, **that** is to say, His flesh; and having **a** great Priest over the house of God; let **us** draw near... " (Hebrews 10. 19-22). " The language of the Epistle to the Hebrews is largely sanctuary language, suited only to **a** collective people who know themselves together of God " (Needed Truth, Vol. 31, page 23. W. J. Lennox). These weighty words merit due consideration **if** we would grasp **the** special **message** of that Epistle. That **message** refers, we **suggest**, using again the words of **a** beloved departed leader, to "**the** house of God **in** its inner or devotional aspect " (N. T., Vol. 31, page 26). From the days of Abel **men** of faith learned how to come before God acceptably **as** individuals, but not until there was **a** divine dwelling place on earth could the people of God approach Him collectively.

Later, when God forsook His earthly dwelling place, godly **men** were able to approach **Him** in prayer and worship—witness Nehemiah and Daniel in Babylon—but there could be no collective approach of the people of God without the sanctuary and priesthood.

So **in** the present dispensation all God's children **can** approach their heavenly Father at all times, wherever they may be, **using** the blessed offices of Him who is Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (1 John 2. 1). But Hebrews 10. deals with the approach of **a** worshipping people into the Holies. There **must** be **a** people together constituting the house of God on earth, before there **can** be the "drawing near" contemplated **in** Hebrews 10. 22: "Let **us** draw near..." The people designated by **US** were clearly the **same** as those referred to **in** Hebrews 3. 4: " whose house are **WE**, **if**..." "

Chapter 9. of Hebrews tells **us** that the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry were copies of the things **in** the heavens (verse 23) and that its service **was a** parable for the **time** now present (verse 9). Not only was the tabernacle **in** the wilderness the place of the divine presence, but embodied in its construction was the way of approach for God's people. That " way " was by means of the **gate** of the court, the **screen** of the door and the veil. Each of these hangings **was a** means of approach, and each foreshadowed the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Aaron the High Priest **in** type traversed the way of the holies. Only once **in** the year was he permitted to pass within the veil into the holiest. **He** went **in** ALONE, performed his lonely service and then withdrew. The people saw that lone figure enter the door of the Tent, but no human eye saw him pass within the veil into the holiest. His **passage** within the veil was hidden from the people by the boards and curtains of the first tabernacle (*i. e.*, the holy place). Moreover his stay in the holiest was transient and needed repetition year by year. There was no resident priest ministering **in** the holiest. In all this the Holy Spirit signified that while the first tabernacle had yet a standing, the " way of the holies " was not made manifest.

It **is** clear that **in** the present dispensation the house of God **is** on earth. The priestly work of the Lord extends to both the house **and** the sanctuary.

In regard to the one **He is** said to be, " great Priest **OVER** the house of God " (Hebrews 10. 21), and to the other, " Christ entered not **INTO** a holy place [holies] made with hands,... but **INTO** heaven

itself " (Hebrews 9. 24). The prepositions **OVER** and **INTO** should be well noted. They shew that "house" and "holies" are not synonymous. The sanctuary is therefore in the Heavens. The house of God on earth **in** its relation to the heavenly sanctuary **is** clearly indicated in Genesis 28., where we have the first reference to the house of God **in** Scripture. From "the place" where Jacob slept and dreamed he beheld "a LADDER set up on the earth and the top of it reached to heaven: and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And... the LORD stood above it" (Genesis 28. 12, 13). When he awaked Jacob said of "this place, " "This **is** none other but the **HOUSE OF GOD**, and this **is** **THE GATE OF HEAVEN**" (Genesis 28. 17). This indicates that between the house of God on earth and the heavenly sanctuary there **is** a way of approach to God. This **is** "the way of the Holies" of Hebrews 10.

Our beloved Lord, the High Priest of our confession, was the first Man to enter the Holies and **is** Himself the "Way of the holies" of the greater and more perfect tabernacle. **He** first entered the heavenly sanctuary and He initiated the way for us. **His** presence "within the veil" makes our approach possible, **He is** our forerunner (Hebrews 6. 20). **He** entered, not **as** Aaron under the first covenant through the blood of goats and calves, but through **His** own blood and there "within the veil" **He** remains "a minister of the sanctuary" (Hebrews 8. 2). And here the type fails **us** for our blessed Lord **is** the Great Sacrifice **as** well **as** the Great Priest.

We need boldness to fulfil this solemn function of drawing **near** into the holies. **We** might well shrink from such high and holy service, but the blood of Jesus gives **us** boldness. **His** blood (that **is**, **His** death) is the ground of our boldness **in** performing this, the highest service possible to **men** on earth. And the **measure** of our appreciation of the great Atoning Sacrifice will be reflected by the boldness of our entrance into the holies.

There **can** surely be no question that when God's people are gathered together for the Remembrance on the first day of the **week**, then, **as** at no other time, do they conform to the conditions laid down **in** Hebrews 10. 19-22. Those precious symbols speak to the heart **as** nought else **can**. They focus the hearts of God's people on one adorable Person. The Holy Spirit unfolds through the medium of the loaf and the cup the excellencies of the Incarnate Redeemer and **His** great Atoning **Sacrifice**; and by our very participation **in** the Remembrance we "proclaim the Lord's death" (1 Corinthians 11. 26). All this produces **a** unity of heart **and** purpose which nothing else **can** effect: there **is** no substitute for it. It **is** then **a** holy priesthood **is** emboldened to draw near through the Great Priest into the heavenly sanctuary to worship the Father in spirit and truth.

This boldness of approach **is** very precious to God for with it **is** bound up **His** portion in **His** people. It **is** the central purpose of the **existence** of the house of God **in** its Godward aspect. It **is** this to which Peter refers in his first Epistle, "... a spiritual house, to **be** a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual **sacrifices**, acceptable to God through **Jesus** Christ" (1 Peter 2. 5, R. V. M.). **We** are repeatedly exhorted **in** the Hebrew Epistle to hold **fast** for there **is** grave danger of our letting go.

One inevitable result of wilful neglect **in** the observance of the Remembrance will **be** that **we** shall lose our boldness of approach **and** thus rob God of His portion in us. Hence the force of the exhortation in the **same** paragraph **we** are considering: "Not forsaking the

assembling of ourselves together, as the custom of some is " (Hebrews 10. 25).

Pursuing further our consideration of " the way of **the** holies, " we are told that it is **a** new and living way. Precious words ! **a fresh and LIVING WAY.** Here we identify the Way as our blessed Lord **Himself**—no construction of human hands, but a divinely constituted way to the sanctuary in the heavens. Thus our beloved Lord **is at** once the Great Sacrifice, the Great Priest and the Way to the sanctuary. Wondrous mystery ! Truly—our **ALL IN ALL is He.**

Finally we are told that the way is through the veil, that **is** to say **His** flesh. Here **is** revealed the typical teaching of the veil **in** the Mosaic tabernacle. It spoke of the flesh of the Lord. Through **the** veil of **His** flesh He has entered the holies. The Incarnate One **has** gone in, and **His** manhood **is** the veil through which we must enter the heavenly sanctuary. He **is** between us and God; none other could be, for He is Man yet God, Jesus, the Son of God (Hebrews 4. 14).

As the High Priest of old approached through the tabernacle into the holiest, passing through the gate, the screen and the veil, the same beautifully blended colours of blue, purple, and scarlet, together with the fine twined linen, met his gaze in each of these hangings. **His** vision was filled with those colours which spoke of the excellencies of the Man, Christ Jesus. So it **is** in " the way of the holies"; naught but the excellencies and glories of our blessed Lord are visible and these should fill the gaze and ravish the hearts of the worshipper.

When the Lord yielded up **His** Spirit on the cross the veil of the temple in Jerusalem was rent in twain from the top to the bottom (Matthew 27. 51).

This event, it has been suggested, shewed that the way to God once barred was now opened by the rending of the veil in the heavenly sanctuary. We have difficulty in accepting this view for the following reasons. No notice **is** taken in the Hebrew epistle of the rending of the veil of the temple. If it had any typical significance in regard to our approach into the holies we would expect some reference to be made to it there or elsewhere in the New Testament. Again it was the tabernacle with the veil intact that was a copy and shadow of the heavenly things and a parable for the time now present—not the temple with a rent veil. Does not the expression " within the veil " (Hebrews 6. 19) preclude the thought of an open or rent veil ?

Moreover, nowhere in Scripture can we find any reference to **the** flesh of our beloved Lord being rent. The soldier pierced **His** side, but the veil of the temple was not pierced but rent in twain from **THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM;** no human hand took part in that. We conclude then that the rending of the veil of the temple signified only that the Glory had departed, and that God no longer dwelt in a temple made with hands.

As, after the Lord's resurrection, the stone was rolled away to display to men an empty tomb, so the veil was rent that men **might** see the Holiest bereft of the Divine presence.

Now in the heavenly sanctuary **is** the true Veil through whom we can approach into the Holies. To fit us for this approach we have hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and bodies washed with pure water. On our part **is** needed **A TRUE HEART AND FULLNESS OF FAITH.** May we each have deep exercise of heart with regard to our holy priesthood service in the sanctuary. * Then indeed will the house of God become to us the very **GATE OF HEAVEN.**

T. M. Hyland.

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES.

Things Good and Profitable.

• **From Vancourver, B. C.** — Meekness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. It is not found in the old man but in the new. It was found in God's servants of old. The world tends to take advantage of the meek, but they look to God who is their Judge (Psalm 76. 9). It was gentleness (verse 2) which attracted many to Christ. "I beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10. 1). Gentleness is the manner required by those who would tend the sick. The men we meet daily are sick in sin and need to be handled carefully that nothing in us may hinder them from coming to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The importance of believers maintaining good works and behaving as becometh Christians cannot be over-estimated, as the reading of the pastoral epistles indicates.

In the Old Testament good works and righteous acts have a most prominent place. Because of Job's works, God said of him, "There is none like him in the earth" (Job 1. 8). He bore fruit and God purged him that he might bear more fruit.

In Titus 3. 10 we have what is akin to Matthew 18. 15-20 and 1 Corinthians 5. 13. * *H. M.*

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Lord's Promise as to His personal Return.

From Wigan. — The Lord's second coming may be described as the great event which will fulfil the most cherished hope of the Christian. It will be the opening of that glorious life to which their earthly sojourn is a preface.

As the subject this month is limited to the utterances of the Lord in connection with His return, our thoughts will mainly be led to the four Gospels. By far the greatest number of references to this happening are recorded by Matthew. Perhaps the best known example is in Matthew 24. Anyone reading such a chapter for the first time, without any other knowledge of the Lord's second advent, would immediately conclude that this event is hardly to be awaited with great joy, even though His coming will be the prelude to peace and prosperity. Verse 30 of the same chapter foretells the mourning of all the tribes of the earth at His appearing. The same person turning to the Lord's words in John 14. would immediately be struck by the obvious contrast. In this instance the Lord, again referring to His return, begins with those words of comfort, "Let not your heart be troubled." Furthermore, He makes reference to the heavenly mansions. Thus at first sight the reader would feel confused with these totally different descriptions. A closer examination and comparison will help us to understand the Lord's words. It is as a result of failure to do this that many have been led into error and confusion. Instead of making a distinction between the Lord's two descriptions they have endeavoured to combine both by forced explanations.

Certain details attract our attention in Matthew chapters 24. and 25.. Firstly, we observe that His coming is to the earth where He will set up His kingdom (Matthew 25. 31-33). In addition the Lord speaks of certain specific events which will immediately precede and be a sign of His coming (Matthew 24. 15). Another significant point is that in both these chapters the Lord is described as the Son of Man. A study of any verses which refer to the Lord as the Son of Man reveals

that **He** bears this title as the first or pre-eminent **One** in relation to mankind. This title **is** associated with the setting-up of **His** sovereign rule and authority on earth. A further point that **we** observe from Matthew 24. 36 **is** that apparently only the Father, not even the Son, knows the exact hour of **His** coming. Different opinions were expressed **as** to the correct translation of this verse. Perhaps the Editors might say what **is** considered the most accurate translation of verse 36. [As will be seen from the R. V. margin there **is** difficulty **as** to the actual **text** in Matthew 24. 36. The A. V. omits the words "neither the Son." But **we** also have the parallel passage in Mark 13. 32 where the words "neither the Son" are not in doubt as being in the sacred text. This can cast no doubt **as** to the omniscience of God the Son, but must be connected with **His** self-emptying, as in Philippians 2., and with what **is** bound up with the work of "Mediator" which **He** humbled Himself to undertake. **We** read of "the weakness of God" and of the Lord learning obedience, increasing in wisdom, and of **Him** **as** a Man of Prayer asking and receiving from **His** Father. **He** speaks of things that are within the Father's authority, in Acts 1. I, personally, can see no modification of the force of the words as applied to the Son, for whatever **we** make "neither angels," **we** must equally make "neither the Son." It would be playing with the passage to assert in answer to the questions, —Do the angels know? No! Does the Son know? Yes!—J. M.]

Whilst many instances are found in Matthew which describe the Lord's coming as **we** have already detailed it, the only portion which speaks of **His** second advent differently and at length **is** John 14. Turning to this chapter **we** especially notice that heaven **is** the principal scene of the Lord's activities in connection with **His** return. There **He** **is** preparing a place which **He** desires shall be occupied by **His** loved ones. **His** hearers are not advised to look out for certain events which will foreshadow **His** coming. On the contrary the chapter gives the distinct impression that very little time will elapse between **His** departure and return. Reference to the epistles confirms that this was also the impression which the disciples obtained. Throughout the chapter there **is** continually shown the close relationship between the Father and the Son (verses 6 and 11). The Lord **is** seen here as the Son of God. Even more interesting are the very close ties between the Lord and those to whom **He** will return (verses 3 and 23). This **is** so completely different from the general description in Matthew. Many other short references by the Lord to this coming might be quoted, but **we** would indicate just one more. This **is** in John 21. 22, where the Lord in **His** rebuke to Peter says, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what **is** that to thee?" **We** believe that this verse has added value because the promise was made by the Lord after **His** death.

Our conclusion after comparing these chapters (Matthew 24. and John 14. principally) **is** that two totally separate events are spoken of. **We** suggest, however, that the Lord regards them as different stages of one coming.

This study should be for **us** who have a part with the disciples a source of much comfort and joy. Indeed **we** might say that **we** can rejoice more than the disciples because the Lord's coming **is** nearer to **us** than it was to them **in** their day. As an encouragement to some whose hopes may have faded, and **as** yet another reason for rejoicing, **we** repeat **in** closing the last recorded words from the Lord referring to **His** promised return. Incidentally by doing so **we** shall have given a threefold cord which cannot easily be broken. **We** shall have quoted

the Lord's promise **before** (John 14.) and **after** His death (John 21. 22), as well as that given **after** His ascension to glory: " Surely I come quickly " (Revelation 22. 20, A. V.). We reply **with the** beloved Apostle: " Even so, come, Lord Jesus. " J. H. Ollerton.

From Kilmarnock. —The first hint the Lord gave of **His** coming again was after **He** and, **His** disciples had partaken of the last passover. When Judas the betrayer had gone out **He** said, " Little children, yet a little while I **am** with you " (John 13. 33). **He was** shortly going to leave them, but **He** directed their attention from the earth to the heavens where, **He** said, " I **go** to prepare a place for you. And **if** I **go** . . . I come again. "

In Matthew 24. **He** told them of what was to take place on earth ere **His** coming as Son of Man, but **in** John 14. **He** spoke of **His** coming for those who know **Him** as Saviour (see Hebrews 9. 28).

We note **His** coming is linked with **His** going away, and that it will be a personal return, as 1 Thessalonians 4. 16 also shows: " The **Lord Himself** shall descend from heaven. " In proof of **His** going away Luke 24. 50-51 makes this definitely sure, while Acts 1. 11 tells us: " This Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye beheld **Him** going into Heaven. " As **His** ascension was witnessed only by **His** few faithful followers, so **His** return will be unnoticed by the world at large.

The Apostle Paul tells of the Thessalonian saints, how they " turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and true God, and to wait for **His** Son from heaven. " As saints, this should be our attitude now. The apostle Peter, one of those who heard the Lord's promise, could say, " The Lord is not slack (or slow) concerning **His** promise . . . but is long suffering to you-ward, not wishing that any should perish " (2 Peter 3. 9). Although many may now be saying, " Where is the promise of His coming? ", we know " **He** is faithful that promised. " **He** will surely come again, and it should be our endeavour that " we **may** be found in peace, without spot and blameless **in His** sight " (verse 14).

The apostle John ere he, under the Holy Spirit, closed the Revelation, received this **message** from the Lord **Jesus**: " **Yea**: I come quickly "; may we be enabled from our hearts to respond, " Amen: come, Lord Jesus. " A. G. S.

From Birkenhead. —At the outset of our consideration of the Lord's promise about **His** coming again, it is important that the two phases of **His** coming should be clear and separate **in** our minds.

The main proof that the Lord's second coming will be in two **stages** is obtainable only by comparing scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments. For example, Isaiah's prophecy regarding the coming of the great Conqueror who shall deliver **His** people, marching **in** the greatness of **His** strength, treading the winepress alone in the day of vengeance (Isaiah 63.), must speak of a different **time** from that portrayed **in** 1 Thessalonians 4., where it is said that the Lord will descend from heaven with a shout, and the saints will **be** caught up **in** the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Throughout the history of this world God **has** only possessed one House on earth **at any** one time, and it is apparent that this House will be in Jerusalem **at the** time of the great tribulation (2 Thessalonians 2. 4). It is, however, evident that believers constituting the present

House will then be **in** those mansions of which the Lord speaks **in** John 14.

The coming of the Lord in Scripture **is** not that referred to in such scriptures as Isaiah 63. The Lord went to heaven without the knowledge of the world, but when He fulfils the prophecy of Isaiah, the world will know and will tremble in fear.

Throughout the centuries, the pilgrimage of the Lord's people has been lightened by the thought that, "yet a Very little while, **He** that cometh shall come, and shall not tarry" (Hebrews 10. 37). The delightful words of John 14. are like a sparkling fountain to which the Christian may turn when all other comfort has failed. The nations of the world plan their new orders and constitutions, but the great Architect who formed the universe **is** preparing a place in the heavenly mansions for the people He has purchased: "If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again." The Lord has promised, and though heaven and earth will pass away, the word of the eternal God will never pass away.

D. H., L. B. H.

From Ilford. —The opening words of John 14. show us the need of the Lord's promise to His own, as to **His** personal return. During the time that the Lord Jesus was travelling about preaching and healing He had gathered round **Him** a small band of faithful followers. They had grown to love **Him** intensely, and their sole hope was centred in **Him** and **His** promises. The time came, however, when He was to be crucified, and **He** had to tell them that He was going away to a place where they could not then come.

They did not understand why, so he explained that He was going to prepare a place in heaven for them, and that He would come again to take them to the place He had prepared. So **He** says, "Let not your heart be troubled." These were comforting words to those who loved **Him** and wished to be always with Him. They were words backed with a promise from His own lips.

This was to be their hope and comfort while He was away. In spite of the length of His stay, and adverse circumstances, the promise of **His** return was to be an ever present expectation. They might doubt and be troubled, but the Lord's own words were clear and definite, so who should doubt them? He was faithful that promised.

This promise still stands, for the Lord has not returned, and **it** remains to be fulfilled. So the Lord's own to-day may still look with the same earnest expectation as those to whom the promise was actually spoken. This principle is taught by such parables as those of the ten virgins and the servants left in charge of their master's goods while he was away.

Another aspect of the Lord's personal return **is** contained in the promise of **His** coming to judge the nations. In Matthew 24. 30 the Lord Jesus **is** finishing a discourse on the days that would follow His departure. Degeneration, evil, and iniquity would prevail in the world, and when iniquity was full the Son of Man would return in judgment, so this would be the next manifestation of Christ to the world.

EXTRACTS.

From Glasgow. —In our subject of the promise of the Lord's personal return **we** are struck by the intimate character of this promise as seen in John 14. 1-3. Here to the beloved disciples the Lord

reveals purposes **in** regard to Himself and them. **He** calls for confidence **in** Himself, a confidence such as they would place **in** God. **He** then speaks of the Father's house and reveals its many abodes, emphasising **the** fact that His purpose was to leave them and go to prepare a place for them. **He** established this personal promise, "If I go . . . I come again, and will receive you unto Myself."

In John 16. 16-22, the Lord speaks of "the little while" between His death and resurrection and the joy which will be theirs **in** such an hour of triumph; a joy which no man could take from them, for who could assail the infallibility with which the Lord in resurrection established **His** presence to these disciples?

To one of the seven churches **in** Asia this word of assurance **is** given: "I come quickly" (Revelation 3. 11). **Again at the** close of the Revelation the words of the Lord are established: "I come quickly; and My reward **is** with Me" (chapter 22. 12). In the words of 1 John 3. 2, 3, we **see the** likeness we shall bear when **He is** manifested: "**We** shall be like **Him**; for we shall **see Him** even as **He is**."

T. McIlreavy

From Derby. —The condition of the Lord's promise, "If I go," **was** fulfilled, for "as they were looking, **He** was taken up" (Acts 1. 9). Here too we have the promise of the personal return of the Lord Jesus **in** the words of the angels: "This Jesus . . . shall so come **in** like manner" (Acts 1. 11). No representative **is** coming for us, but "this same Jesus." **We** remember all **His** beauties so clearly displayed while on earth and we rejoice that it **is** this **same** Jesus who will return for us.

* **We** have a picture of the Lord's personal return in Genesis 24. Isaac longed for his bride, and his servant was sent out to find, under the guidance of God, the one that was to be his bride. The day came when Isaac was out in the field and met his bride, and "Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife" (Genesis 24. 67). So God has now sent forth **the Holy Spirit to gather together the Church as a bride for His Son. One day He will** come out to meet that bride and take her to be with Himself **in** the place **He** has prepared.

In conclusion we remember the figure given in the Song of Songs chapter 5., which adds a warning note. When the Lord Himself returns will **He** find us waiting and watching with our hearts burning with love towards Him, or shall we be sleeping? Let **us examine** ourselves, so that if the Lord were to return to-day, we "might have boldness, and not be ashamed before **Him** at **His** coming" (1 John 2. 28). *R. H.*

From Windermere. —It would appear that the first promise of **the** Lord to **His** own about **His** return for them was made in **the** large upper room, as recorded **in** John 14. 1-6. The subject of the coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ for saints of this dispensation **is** not found **in** the Old Testament Scriptures, but we do have such portions as Isaiah 25. 8, and Hosea 13. 14, which speak of the wiping away of tears, and deliverance from the powers of death and the grave.

The promise was made to those who were described by the Lord **in** John 17. 14 as "not of the world," and as being hated by the world. The Lord preceded **His** promise by a statement that **He** was going away whither at that **time** they could not come. **He** who had won their hearts was about to leave them, and they were troubled. Then followed

words of heavenly balm: (1) **He was** going to prepare a place for **them**; (2) **He** would come back **again** personally; (3) His own would be received unto Himself; (4) where **He** was, there would His own be also. This joyful prospect was not known to Old Testament saints, for the union of Christ and **His** church was hidden (see Ephesians 1. 9; 3. 1-11; and Romans 16. 25). No date **is** given by the Lord and no **sign is** to be fulfilled, but " **He is** faithful that promised. " In the repetition seven times of the personal pronoun " **I** " we get the seal under **His** own hand that " what **He** has promised **He is** able also to perform " (Romans 4. 21). The use of the salutation " Maranatha " in 1 Corinthians 16. 22 shews the expectancy in the lives of the early disciples regarding the fulfilment of this promise.

D. Banks.

[**We** welcome the first contribution from Windermere. —Eds.].

From Crossford. —The opening verses of John 14. are amongst the best known words of the Lord Jesus, yet there can be no doubt that in contrast to filling hearts with living hope and expectation, there **is** something which hides their import from many who doubtless know something of the Saviour's love.

Time cannot lessen the value or certainty of a divine promise, though the time of its actual fulfilment may be affected through condition or circumstance. Probably the state of the Lord's people will have a bearing on the time of **His** return, as truly as **His** long-suffering towards the sinner. [What actually **is** the meaning of 2 Peter 3. 9 ?] **He is** never slack concerning **His** promise. When the time of promise drew near **He** sent Moses to the Hebrews, so that manifestly their condition delayed the fulfilment of the promise. [Can it be so in view of the prophecy of the 400 years, in Genesis 15. 13? —J. M.].

Enoch before his translation was well pleasing to God. An exhortation lies behind this remarkable event which we would couple with the words: " We shall not all sleep. " We frequently find in the Gospel by John the words " a little while. " Again with a noticeable variation they appear in Hebrews 10.: " Yet a very little while. " If we place alongside this an expression such as **is** found in Matthew 25. 19, " Now after a long time, " we may be helped to see a balance in the teaching of the Lord concerning **His** promised return. On the one hand we should be in daily expectation, but this must not affect our grasp of the fact that we are obtaining ample time and opportunity to fulfil **His** purpose in us.

There is a very fine touch in the action of Isaac when he himself came out to meet Rebekah. It would have been so very different had she been ushered before all the greatness of Abraham's home to find Isaac there. **We** are destined, soon to see great changes, the glories of heaven, the presence of God, the innumerable hosts. The thought of being taken even by an angel into such an atmosphere, into such a blaze of glory, might well cause perplexity and fear; but the Lord Himself **is** coming, " this same Jesus. "

H. Brindle.

From Edinburgh. —In John chapters 12. and 13. we read words that the Lord Jesus spoke concerning **His** death. Having read these, we can understand that **His** disciples were very sad and down-hearted. The opening words of chapter 14. therefore would be to them like a mother's fond embrace: " Let not your heart be troubled. " After the Lord had died and risen, and had appeared unto the apostles

by **the** space of forty days, speaking the **things** concerning the kingdom of God, **while** they were with Him, **He** was taken up, " and a cloud received Him out of their sight. "

In the present dispensation, we, **as** disciples of **the** Lord **Jesus** Christ, look for the blessed hope of the coming of **the** Lord to the air. For, " Christ also, having been once offered to bear the **sins** of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to **them** that wait for **Him**, unto salvation " (Hebrews 9. 28).

Afterwards, Christ will return to the earth **as** Son of Man, with power and great glory. **We** believe that the opening verses of Isaiah 63. speak of this coming. The Lord will gather the remnant of Israel, and will march to Jerusalem, glorious **in** **His** apparel, marching in the greatness of **His** strength. Then every eye shall **see** **Him** who speaks **in** righteousness, mighty to save. Then will **He** set up **His** kingdom and reign **as** King of kings.

Kenneth M. H. Robertson.

From Knocknacloy. —**We** think of the words spoken by Peter: " In the last days mockers shall come with mockery, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where **is** the promise of **His** coming ? " (2 Peter 3. 3, 4).

Three times in Revelation 22. the Lord finally affirms **His** promise to return. The Lord **is** not slack concerning **His** promise, and **in** this book in particular **He** **is** described several times **as** the One who **is** faithful and true (*e. g.*, chapter 3. 14; 17. 11; 22. 6).

It **is** noteworthy that **His** promise to return was given to the churches; that is, the churches of God **as** described earlier in the book of Revelation. It **is** to His own and for **His** own that **He** will come, even **as** **He** did at **His** first advent (see John 1. 11). That **He** will return again **is** based upon the fact that **He** went back to heaven to the Father's right hand (John 14. 3). There **He** awaits the time in the Father's purpose when **He** will return for **His** bride, the Church, which **He** has purchased with **His** blood.

If we do not limit our thoughts to scriptures directly referring to the promise of **His** coming for **His** Church, there are many others that might be considered relative to **His** coming back to the earth as Son of Man in judgment.

It was from the Mount of Olives that **He** ascended, and **He** shall so come to the mount of Olives (Zechariah 14. 4). An example of **His** promises in connection with this wondrous advent **is** found in Matthew 24. 30. **His** promise to return **as** Son of Man **is** not given to the churches, but to disciples who were of the children of Israel (see Matthew 23. 39).

R. Anderson (Jun.).

From Broxburn. —The coming of Christ has ever been God's grand promise to **His** people, whether **in** the past or the present. The language of Job **in** describing the coming of the Redeemer (Job 19. 25), taken in conjunction with the Lord's words concerning Abraham, "Abraham rejoiced to **see** My day; and he saw it, and was glad, " indicates clearly that even in that distant day the coming of Christ was a most blessed hope to those who by faith had laid hold of God's promise.

The Lord Jesus has come according to promise and before leaving this world, we find **Him** seeking to comfort the hearts of those **men** whom **He** loved, and concerning whom **He** said, " **Ye** are they who

have continued with Me in My temptations. " Although the Lord told His sorrowing disciples plainly concerning His coming again, it is quite evident from John 16. 17, 18, that at that time they failed to grasp the import of His words.

Concerning the Lord's promise in John 14. 3, " If I go . . . I come again, and will receive you unto Myself, " it is clear that He was not speaking to those who represented the unbelieving nation, but to men who had heard His call.

The Gospel by John is distinctive from the others because the Lord Jesus Christ is presented as the Son of God. He said to Nicodemus, " If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you heavenly things " ? They were evidently heavenly things and a heavenly people that the Lord Jesus had in view, in John 14.

After the resurrection* He did not show Himself to the nation that rejected Him, but to witnesses chosen by God, " even to us, " said Peter, " who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. " Such were the men who saw Him leave this world, and also heard the promise of the two in white apparel: " This Jesus shall so come in like manner, as ye beheld Him going into heaven. " These words clearly indicate, that just as His going was witnessed only by a few, so His return will be only for His loved and His own. Not so His coming as Son of Man, for then every eye shall see Him when He comes in power and glory.

Henry Dyer.

From Cardiff. —One of the most sorrowful thoughts is that of death without hope. To die without Christ is to die without hope thousands are, we believe, passing into eternity in this state. God **in** wondrous foreknowledge and grace has wrought so that man's hope may be in God and not **in** the transient things of this life, so that he may know satisfaction for eternity. This can be found in Christ, who died that sinners might live, but death could not hold Him, the life Giver (Acts 2. 23-28), so God raised Him from among the dead ones. Previous to His death and resurrection we have this wonderful promise (John 14. 1-6) to His disciples, of His coming again to receive them unto Himself. The hope which His promise contains is a source of strength, comfort and help to His own in all conditions of life. C. W.

From Atherton. —Among the many promises which the Lord made to His disciples, that concerning His return is outstanding. John alone of the Gospel writers mentions the Lord's coming as Son of God to the air. John writes of Christ as the Son of God. In John 14. the Lord asks His disciples to believe Him as they believed God. The word " if " in John 14. 3 does not cast an element of doubt. The verse may be correctly rendered thus: " Just as surely as I go away, I will come again. " He directs their hearts also to the place He was going to prepare for them in His Father's house, where there are many mansions or abodes. This is the only mention of the word " mansions " in the Bible, though the same word is rendered " abode " in verse 23 of this chapter.

The question may be asked, " Will anything happen to indicate that the Lord is coming " ? We believe the answer to be in the negative, for while signs will precede His coming to earth, they are not promised in connection with His coming to the air. He will come first into the air as shown by the order given in 1 Thessalonians 4. and 5.,

i. e. (1) " The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout "; (2) " The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. " (See also Acts 1. 6, 7).

As to Acts 1. 11 it was suggested: (1) That the words, " in like manner " have to do with **His** coming to earth. As **His feet went up** from Mount Olivet so shall they **again** touch the **same** mountain (Zechariah 14. 1-4). Also, **as He** went in a cloud so shall **He** appear **as** the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory (Matthew 24. 30). (2) That they have direct application also to **His** coming to the air. As **His** going was private, being only witnessed by believers, so also will be **His** return. **He** went in a cloud, and **He** will come into the air. **He** went blessing them (see Luke 24. 50, 51), and when **He** comes back it will be to bless His own whom **He** purchased with His blood. ["In like manner " does not mean the place from which **He** went, but the " manner " of **His** going. Christ will so come **as** they beheld Him go. When **He** comes **as** Son of Man **He** will not come **as He** went. **He** will come with power and great glory followed by the army of heaven. Saints and angels will be in attendance. **He** will come to fight and to destroy His enemies. It was not thus that they beheld Him go into heaven.—J. M.].

G. A. Jones.

From London, S. E. —John tells **us** in verse 9 of chapter 20.: "As yet they knew not the scripture, that **He** must rise again from the dead. " This of course means the rising in three days, for they knew and believed in a final resurrection. Now in John 13. the Passover supper had been eaten, Judas had been told to go, and the Lord was alone with His own true disciples.

To these men who had left all and followed Him, **He** now says: " In My Father's House are many abiding places. " What **is** the meaning and scope of " My Father's House " ? **We** thought perhaps Revelation 21. 3 might have some connection with it. [The Bride **is** the New Jerusalem, and this **is** described **as** the tabernacle of God. But there **is** also the heavenly Jerusalem, which **is** the mother of **us** all. This, I would judge, **is** the Father's house, or the Father's house **is** therein, and there the Lord has gone to prepare a place for **His** own. — J. M.]. **He** also adds: " If it were not so, I would have told you, " **as** though to infer that **He** would not have asked them to follow **Him** unless **He** had something to offer them in return. Now **He** was going to prepare a place for them, and **as** a necessary sequence, " If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. "

As to Acts 1. 11, this was not a personal promise, but was given by the two men in white apparel. The cross **is** over, they have seen **Him** again, and their hearts have rejoiced (John 16. 22). Even so they are still obsessed with the thought of immediate triumph and the restoration of Israel to glory and power (Luke 24. 21; and Acts 1. 6). As **He** was talking with them **He** was taken up and a cloud received **Him** out of their sight. Luke tells us: " **He** led them out until they were over against Bethany; and **He** lifted up **His** hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while **He** blessed them, **He** parted from them, and **was** carried up into heaven. " How did **He** go ? While **He** blessed them. How will **He** return ? In like manner, in blessing.

H. J. Owles.

From Armagh. —God the Son now gives precious promises: (1) I go to prepare a place; (2) I come again.

Both Old and New Testaments speak of **the coming of the Lord** to earth to reign. **We** have His coming to the air brought before **us in type in what is recorded of Isaac as he went out into the field to meditate at eventide. He** lifted up his eyes and beheld Rebekah his bride coming, and he loved her and she became **his** wife (Genesis 24. 68-67).

Similarly the Lord **Jesus** loved **the Church** and gave Himself up for it. **He came** from heaven to purchase **His** bride by **His** precious blood. Having accomplished this great work, **He** now desires to comfort the hearts of those for whom **He** died. " Let not your heart be troubled, " **He** said, and then unfolded that **He** was going back to heaven to **His** Father's house which hath many mansions, to prepare a place for **all** who believe **in Him**.

The manner of **His** coming **again is** brought before us **in Acts 1. 11,** and also **in 1 Thessalonians,** where every chapter makes reference to the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The first reference **is in** chapter 1. 10, where the Apostle speaks of the Thessalonians **as** waiting for **His** coming. In chapter 4. of **1 Thessalonians** we have the details **as** to the **manner of His** coming, **His** descent from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God (*c. f.* **1 Corinthians 15. 52**).

In Revelation 22. three promises are given to **us:** (1) " I come quickly. Blessed **is** he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book " (verse 7); (2) " I come quickly; and My reward **is** with **Me,** to render to each **man** according **as** his work **is** " (verse 12); (3) " **He** which testifieth these things saith, **Yea:** I come quickly " (verse 20). Expecting **His** coming at any moment we should be **men and** women of one purpose—to occupy and serve until our deliverance comes.

Peter Clarke.

From Manchester. —There **is** something exceedingly sweet about a promise, especially when we know that **He** who makes the promise **is * the same** yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. " It **has** ever been God's way with **men** to invite their **faith in** promises which naturally **seem** impossible of fulfilment. Happy are they who, " looking unto the promise of God, waver not through unbelief, but wax strong through **faith,** giving glory to God. " It **is** our unspeakable privilege to await the return of **Him in** whom **is** " the yea " and through whom **is** the "Amen " to every divine promise (see **2 Corinthians 1. 20**).

Perhaps to most of us, however, the personal note of the Lord's promise **in John 14. is** more appealing than the thought of **eternal** mansions. " I go . . . I come **again** . . . that where I am ye may be also. " What ardent desire burns in these words from the Master's very heart, and how delightfully they accord with the assurance **in 1 Thessalonians 4. 16** that the Lord **Himself** shall descend from heaven with a shout! **He** will not delegate even to heaven's mightiest created beings the **calling to Himself** of the Church, " that **He** might present **it to Himself** a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any **such** thing. " Is not the fervent love of Christ for the Church the secret of **the yearning expressed in John 17. 24 ? He** desires that we should be with **Him** and behold His glory. Then will **He see** of the travail of **His** soul and be satisfied.

Such scriptures establish the fact that the Lord awaits with keen expectancy the fulfilment of His promise. Why then has it been so long delayed? It is not for us to know times or seasons, but it is at least suggestive that there were approximately 2,000 years from Adam to Abraham, and a further 2,000 years from Abraham to the Cross. May it not transpire that towards the end of another 20 centuries the Lord's promise will be fulfilled? If so, a millennium of Messiah's regal glory on earth would complete a cycle of 7,000 years which may be foreshadowed in the six days of creation plus the seventh day of rest.

Inherent in the promise of the Lord's return are solace in sorrow, stimulus in labour, and fortitude in tribulation. "Let not your hearts be troubled" were the comforting words which prefaced the first unfolding of this hope, while to some who had "turned unto God from idols, to serve a living and a true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven," the Apostle Paul could later write, "Comfort one another with these words." Several parables of the Lord emphasise that aspect of His promise which should impel to faithful service. Thyatira and Philadelphia were urged to faithfulness in the light of the coming of Him who walked in the midst of the churches (see Revelation 2. 25 and 3. 11). The Saviour's last recorded words in the page of sacred inspiration repeat the precious assurance, "Yea: I come quickly" (Revelation 22. 20).

G. Prasher, Jnr.

Question and Answer.

Question from Windermere.—Acts 1. 11, 12: Does this coming "in like manner" refer to the coming to the Mount of Olives, or the Lord's coming to earth as we have described in Zechariah 14. 4, or only to His coming for His church, as in our subject?

Answer.—It is not the place to which the Lord will come that is indicated in this portion, but the manner of His coming. He went privately and alone to heaven in the act of blessing His loved ones whom He was leaving. He will come in like manner. When He comes to earth He comes publicly in power and glory, attended by saints and angels, to execute judgment. The comfort that the angels brought to the disciples was that the same Jesus as had gone would come back to them and for them. Surely this is a hope worth living for and dying in.—J. M.

NOTES ON GENESIS.

Genesis 1. 1-23.

Genesis is a Greek word translated "generation" in Matthew 1. 1. Moses must have received the account of creation directly from God. The book begins similarly to the Gospel according to John (1. 1, "In beginning"). "Created" **is** a singular verb, while "God" (Elohim) **is** a plural noun: this shows the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) in united action.

God did not create the earth waste and void: "He created **it** not a waste" (Isaiah 45. 18). There **is** a close parallel between the chaotic earth and the ruined state of the human soul through **sin**; the brooding of the Spirit, and the conviction of the Spirit (John 16. 8-11); the command, "Let there be light." and the illumination of the believer through the gospel. See 2 Corinthians 4. 6.

The six days may be viewed in three pairs, **1** and **4**, **2** and **5**, **3** and **6**. No heavenly orbs are mentioned in Genesis 1. 3, but on the fourth day we have the great luminaries, sun and moon, and the stars also, to give light, and to rule, for signs and seasons, for days and years.

On the second day God made the firmament (expanse) and divided the waters above (Psalm 148. 4) from the waters beneath, and on the fifth day He made the fowls to fly in the face of the firmament and the waters brought forth abundantly. On the third day, the day of resurrection, the earth arose out of the waters and brought forth grass, herb and fruit tree. On the sixth day this resurrected earth brought forth cattle, creeping thing and beast; and lastly man, earth's lord, was created, the greatest of God's earthly creatures.

Genesis 1. 24—2. 3.

"And God created man in **His** own image." All other creatures that God created were "creatures without reason" (Jude 10), but **man** was a reasonable soul, he was a person, and personality demands a being (1) with reason, having the power of thought and reflection; (2) with a free will, with the right of choice and action, within certain limits; (3) with emotion, having the capability to love and to hate, etc.

God **is** a Spirit, hence man's likeness to his Creator must be spiritual **in** character, though the body of man, **in** man's upright going, was an indication of that uprightness of soul which **is** seen in the new creation of those who are created after God in righteousness and holiness of truth (Ephesians 4. 24; Colossians 3. 10). God made man upright (Ecclesiastes 7. 29), but alas, through sin, "his soul... **is** not upright in him" (Habakkuk 2. 4). Adam **is** a type of Christ, the last Adam (Romans 5. 14; 1 Corinthians 15. 45).

God rested on the seventh day and was refreshed (Exodus 31. 17); this **is** a shadow of rest in Christ (Matthew 11. 28), and of God's rest in **His** house (Hebrews 4. 4, 5) which **is** a sabbath rest for the people of God now (Hebrews 4. 9).

Genesis 2. 4-25.

Man as to his body was formed or moulded of **the dust of the** ground. This fact 1 Corinthians 15. 47, corroborates—"of the earth, earthy" or of dust. The soul **is** the result of **the**^v inbreathing of the breath of life. What sustains the body comes from **the** earth, and the

soul's need is met by what has come by the breath of God. See Job 33. 4; 32. 8; Deuteronomy 8. 3; 2 Timothy 3. 16.

A garden is a place surrounded by a hedge. Here is a place " within " in contrast to all that was " without. " **Man was made** outside and **was** then placed in the garden with responsibility and with a test of obedience in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God made for lonely man a helpmeet, one who would answer to his need spiritually, mentally and physically. No other creature was made as Eve. The woman (*Issah*) was builded from a rib taken from the side of man (*Ish*, an individual, in contrast to the name Adam, which is the name of mankind). In Adam and Eve we have a figure of Christ and the Church. See Ephesians 5. 22-33.

Genesis 3. 1-24.

The serpent, the most subtle beast of the *field*, entered the *garden* I here begins the story of the Fall. He challenges God's word, then denies it—" **Ye** shall not surely die. " By disobedience Eve is promised advancement—" **Ye** shall be as gods (*elohim*). ". She was thoroughly deceived (1 Timothy 2. 14). She eats the forbidden fruit and gives to her husband who also eats. Whilst making aprons of *fig* leaves to cover " themselves they are disturbed by the voice of the LORD God and flee to hide themselves among the trees, but neither *fig* leaves nor trees will cover them in the time of the finding out of sin (Psalm 32. 6, R. V. M.). There is but one tree (1 Peter 2. 24), and one covering for the guilty (Romans 3. 22). Adam blames Eve, and Eve blames the serpent for their sin. The serpent is degraded, and the woman's Seed would bruise the (old) serpent's head, a prophecy concerning Christ's triumph over Satan (Hebrews 2. 14; Romans 16. 20). The woman is to have increased sorrow and conception, the latter being necessary because of the entrance of death. The man must toil and sweat upon a cursed earth till he returns to the dust. After being sentenced, and clothed by means of death, they are driven out of the garden.

Genesis 4. 1-26.

All the human race have been born of fallen and banished parents. God devises means that the banished should not remain outcasts (2 Samuel 14. 14). God's way is seen in Abel's sacrifice, but Cain takes his own way—" the way of Cain " (Jude 11). Cain hearkened to, and consequently was of, the evil one (1 John 3. 12). God pleaded with Cain, that if he did well, as Abel had done, he would be accepted, but if he did not do well then sin would couch at his door. Sin is too strong for human strength; it can only be conquered and put away by death. Christ " was manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself " (Hebrews 9. 26). Sin in Cain, by the working of the evil one, caused him to slay Abel; for this he was cursed, banished and marked for divine punishment. Seth was given in place of Abel. In the Cain line we have polygamy, murder, and also various inventions.

Genesis 5. 1-32.

It is very significant that we find " Book " or writing at such an early period. It contained the generations from Adam to Noah, of the Seth line. The name given to man, male and female, was Adam, which means ruddy, and may have been given because of the red earth of which man was made, or it may be derived from the colour of his blood, which gives him a ruddy appearance. Whilst God named **Ada m**

parents evidently named their sons afterwards, **as** see verses 3, **29**. The names given reveal how **men** were thinking during the long period of 1, 556 years covered by this chapter. Seth **means** put or substituted; Enosh, mortal or frail, and **it** was then that men began to call on the name of the LORD. Enoch means to dedicate or discipline; Methuselah, man of a dart or spear. **On** the year he died the flood came. He lived 969 years, the longest life of all mankind, an evidence of God's patience, viewing his name **as** containing **a** prophecy of the coming deluge. Noah means rest. He was to be **a** comfort to those who had toiled amidst trials on **a** cursed earth surrounded by many adversaries. Adam lived 930 years and died when Lamech, the father of Noah, was **56** years of age.

Genesis 6. 1-22.

The descendants of Seth, the chosen line, called here the sons of God, unhappily joined affinity with the descendants of Cain, and took wives of their own choice. Apostasy now began its headlong career. The world was without salt to retard the progress of evil. God said that **His** Spirit would not strive (to rule or judge) with **man** for ever. Man's spirit had rebelled against the control of the Spirit of God. God now reduced the age limit to 120 years. In the days of the law, when men were made increasingly responsible, he reduced it **again** (Psalm 90. 10). The word "giants" means "fellers," which may denote, that, **as** a woodman fells trees, these men engaged **in** felling men, indicating acts of savagery, and, **in** consequence, the earth was filled with violence. The offspring of the unholy union of the sons of God and the daughters of men were men of renown, heroes, but not renowned for piety. When God said that he would destroy mankind, Noah found grace, **as** believers do now. He, by divine command, made **an** ark to the saving of his family and thereby condemned the world of unbelievers (Hebrews 11. 7). He was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2. 5).

Genesis 7. 1-24.

"They ate, they drank, they married, they were given **in** marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all" (Luke 17. 27). God forsook the earth that had forsaken **Him** and called Noah to Himself into the ark. Noah went **in** to God and the animals went **in** to Noah. There went **in** of clean beasts seven and seven, and of unclean two and two, also of fowls and creeping things. Seven days' grace were allowed ere the rain fell, which continued thereafter forty days and forty nights. The fountains of the great deep were broken up. Noah was 600 years of age when the flood came. The flood was not local, for "all the high mountains that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail" (verses 19-20). **J. M.**

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Lord's Promise **as** to His personal Return.

From Vancouver, B. C. —There was much indeed to trouble **the** hearts of the disciples that night, the night of the betrayal. The Lord had spoken of the betrayer being present **in** the little company, **and** that **His** time with them would be short. He also told them they would seek Him, and whither He went they could not go (John 13. **21** and **33**).

How needful then at this hour, amid their perplexity of heart, that **the** precious promise of **His** personal return for them be given! It would **be** like the balm of Gilead, **as** the Lord poured these precious words into their troubled hearts: "I come again, and will receive you unto Myself."

It is of more than passing interest to us, that the word "prepare" (John 14. 2) is said to refer to internal arrangements. **We** may well believe this, for **if** our blessed Lord thought the "pearl of great price," **in** the parable of Matthew 13. was worth "selling all that **He** hath," that **He** might possess it, then surely the place of its (or her) abode will be expressive of all that is **in His** heart towards her. What a precious truth to occupy our hearts!

The question might be raised why the Lord introduced this subject when **He** did. What **is** its practical use? It was a blessed and living hope for those forlorn disciples to cherish in their hearts, **in** years that lay ahead of them, as being a promise they had received from no other source than their Lord Himself. Thus John could write of **it in** a very practical way, whichever aspect of the Lord's return he had **in** view: "Every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as **He is** pure." If the Lord **is** preparing a place for us, we should be preparing ourselves for that place. (See also Revelation 19. 8).

Jas. Blair, R. Armstrong.

From Liverpool. —The disciples were distressed with the fact that the Lord was leaving them, and this beclouded the thought of **His** future return. It was only after they had seen the Lord raised from **the** dead, and ascending into heaven, that they began to understand **the** significance of those words. Then the **message** burned like a beacon **in** the hearts of believers: "I come again, and will receive you unto Myself."

The early disciples lived in daily hope and expectation of **His** coming; no prophecy had to be fulfilled before that took place. Paul **in his** letter to the Thessalonians links up this expectation with service, reminding them that they were called to serve a living and true God and to wait for **His** Son from heaven (1 Thessalonians I. 9, 10).

F. Jones.

From Victoria. —The disciples were not **free** from nationalistic aspirations. **We** hear their question: "Lord, dost Thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" If their Lord died and left them, it would be a great blow to their hopes. **Was** not **He** going to bring Israel into the greatness heralded by such scriptures as Isaiah 9?

The Lord's words to the disciples first definitely mentioned that **He** would first return not in triumphant glory **as** King of kings, but **as One** coming for a treasured possession, for such **is His** church. Theirs **is** to be a nearness in place to Himself. They were not to suffer and die without hope. Whether they lived or died it was the **same**. **He** would come **again** and receive them. In resurrection life they would meet Him, and **see Him** face to face.

How glorious **is** the Christian's hope! **He** rests on the promise of **the** Lord during **his** pilgrimage, **and** then **enters** those prepared mansions, to dwell with the Lord Jesus Christ for ever.

A. McL.

From Brantford. —The Christian who is **in** a good spiritual condition will long for the day when **the** Lord will come back for **him**, relieving him from the burdens of this weary world with its wars, tumults, confusions and apostasy, and take him into the place of **bliss** and rest. In John 14. 1-6 we have words from the lips of our Saviour that give the personal promise of His return in no uncertain manner. It is very blessed to think that the Lord entrusts the return for the saints to no one but Himself, as God would trust the work of redemption to no one but **His** Son.

In Revelation **22**. we have further words from the Alpha and Omega, the Bright and Morning Star, the King, who says: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me." Yes, He has promised to come quickly. John could say in four words what **is** our desire—"Amen, come Lord Jesus." *Alex Sproul.*

The Resurrection of the Body.

From Windermere. —As a prelude to the study of this important subject, we think the Lord's words in Matthew **22. 29-32** and Luke **20. 34-39**, should receive careful and prayerful consideration. They assure us:

1. That the dead will be raised.
2. That all live unto God.
3. That the power of God will raise the dead.
4. That the Scriptures contain all the necessary information about the resurrection.

1 Corinthians 15. makes it clear that the resurrection of Christ **is** the guarantee of the resurrection of the bodies of the dead "in Christ," and it might be profitable to consider something of what the Old Testament teaches in reference to the Lord's resurrection. This **is** definitely foretold in Psalm 16. 10, 11, and in type in the following portions:

1. Genesis **8. 4** says that the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the Mountains of Ararat. The *day* of the resurrection of the Lord seems thus to be foretold, for we remember that after the first passover the seventh month became the first month. It was on the 14th day that the passover was kept, and the Lord was raised three days after the passover, which would be the 17th day.
2. Leviticus **23. 11**. The waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits seems to set forth the Lord as the Firstfruits of them that are asleep. This was to be done on the morrow after the passover sabbath, the first of the week, which was the exact morn of the resurrection of the Lord.
3. Numbers 17. 6*9 gives an account of the twelve rods laid up before the Lord, and how Aaron's rod, without any eye to witness the change, put forth buds, and bloomed blossoms and bare ripe almonds. Moses brought out all the rods, and the people saw this evidence of God's power in resurrection. Acts 1. **3** tells us that the Lord showed Himself alive after His passion by many proofs.

This brings us to consider the resurrection of the body of Adam's race, for **1 Corinthians 15. 12-23** leaves us without doubt that there will be a resurrection of the dead. Two questions are asked, the answers given being very enlightening and profitable:

1. How are the dead raised ?
2. With what manner of body do they come ?

A parable from nature **then** follows. That which **is** sown first dies, then **is** quickened, and God giveth **it** a body **even as it** pleaseth **Him**, and to each seed a body of its own. The following contrasts concerning the bodies of the dead **in** Christ are very beautiful:

| <i>Sown.</i> | <i>Raised.</i> |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| In corruption. | In incorruption. |
| In dishonour. | In glory. |
| In weakness. | In power. |
| A natural body. | A spiritual body. |

It **is** evident that the body sown **is** the one raised, and that although described as "spiritual" it will still be a body; the word "spiritual" **seems** to set forth a body suited to the heavenly environment. Nevertheless, **in** it **we** shall have:

1. Sight—for we shall **see Him** (1 John 3. 2).
2. Knowledge—for **we** shall know and be known
(1 Corinthians 13. 12).
3. Image—for we shall bear the **image** of the heavenly
(1 Corinthians 15. 49, and Romans 8. 29).
4. Fashion—for we shall be fashioned a new . . . conformed to the body of **His** glory (Philippians 3. 21).

The Scriptures tell **us** plainly that all the evil, **as well as** the good, will be raised, some to life and some to condemnation (*e. g.*, Daniel 12. 2, John 5. 29, Revelation 20. 12, Acts 24. 15).

The order of resurrection appears to be:

1. Christ the Firstfruits.
2. The dead **in** Christ shall rise first; they which are Christ's at **His** coming.
3. All others included **in** "the first resurrection," at **His** coming to earth to set up **His** kingdom (Revelation 20. 4, 5).
4. The rest of the dead after the thousand years of Christ's reign (Revelation 20. 5).

It **is** of interest to note that **in** Philippians 3. 11 a slightly different word **is** used, adding: "ek," from or out of. The apostle says: "If by any **means** I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." As resurrection of the body **is** assured to all who die " **in** Christ," and **is** not dependent upon attainment, these words would **seem** to have reference to the present life of identification with Christ **in His** resurrection. **T. B.**

From **Armagh**.—The subject of 1 Corinthians 15. **is** the future existence of **man**. The word commonly rendered resurrection usually denotes our existence beyond the grave. The Apostle begins with a summary of the gospel which he had preached among them, namely the death and resurrection of Christ. Upon this foundation the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead **is** built. This truth **is** confirmed by Old Testament prediction and also by the testimony of many who saw Christ after **He** was risen from the dead.

There were some **in** Corinth who denied the resurrection of the dead. Against this the Apostle brings the fact of the resurrection of Christ, showing that **if** there be no resurrection Christ has not been raised. If Christ had remained under the power of death, **He** could not have delivered **us** from its power. The proof of the resurrection of the body **is** the resurrection of our Lord. **He** foretold **His** own resurrection and **He** actually rose **in** the **manner** predicted.

The Apostle establishes also the truth of the resurrection of the dead. Christ is the Firstfruits of them that sleep; as He has assuredly risen, so, in His resurrection, there is an earnest given that the dead will arise. He arose as the Representative, the Forerunner, of His saints. For since by man came death, by man would come deliverance from it, and as in Adam all die, in Christ will all be made alive.

In verse 35 the Apostle proceeds to answer two objections, "How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come?" The first was to be brought about by divine power, that power which all observe year after year in the death and quickening of the corn. Why should any be so foolish as to imagine that the man once dead cannot be made to live again by the same power which every year brings the dead grain to life? As to the second question, a change is made in the grain that is sown. God giveth it a body even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own. The grain ceases to be a grain of corn and springs into new life, and so will the dead, when they rise and live again. There is a great variety among other bodies, whether the flesh of beasts and birds, bodies celestial and terrestrial, or the heavenly orbs. The bodies of the dead when they arise will be changed, so that they will be fitted for the heavenly regions, and there will be a similar variety of glories.

As we have our natural body from the first Adam we shall have our resurrection body from the second Adam, Christ. He is the Resurrection and the Life (John 11. 25). The salvation God has provided for us includes the redemption of our bodies (see Romans 8. 23).
T. B. West.

From Vancouver. —There are types in the Old Testament which speak of the resurrection of the body.

In Genesis 22. when Abraham offered up his only son Isaac, he was assured that had Isaac actually been put to death, God was able to raise him up (see Hebrews 11. 19). Also in Genesis 23. 19 Abraham buried Sarah in the cave of the field of Machpelah, the meaning of which is "the way in, and the way out." [The name probably means "folded," hence "double." Machpelah was probably a double cave, either two caves joined or a cave with two entrances. Someone has evidently accepted the latter as a way in and a way out. We need to beware of such fanciful notions. —S. B.]

Job's faith in the resurrection in the midst of all his trials and suffering was sure, for he could say: "After my skin, even this body, is destroyed, then without my flesh shall I see God" (Job. 19. 26, A. R. V.).

We are reminded also of David's words as he looked forward to resurrection: "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17. 15).

Coming to the New Testament, there seems to be no doubt that what the Lord said and performed at the raising of Lazarus, is in keeping with the wondrous truth set before us in 1 Corinthians 15. 1-49. There is, however, the difference that Lazarus died again and saw corruption, whereas the dead in Christ shall be raised in bodies incorruptible.

Those who ask the question, "How are the dead raised? and with what manner of body do they come?" are foolish in their reasoning. For as what is sown in the earth is not quickened except it die, so it is with the resurrection. It was in this same connection that the

Lord Jesus answered the query of the Greeks in John 12. 20-24. Speaking of His own death and resurrection He used the same figure as we have in 1 Corinthians 15.: " Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone. " Christ is the Firstfruits of resurrection, then they that are Christ's, at His coming or presence (1 Corinthians 15. 23).

These scriptures give us an insight into the wondrous ways of God in connection with the resurrection body. The decaying remains of the believer in Christ which are laid in the silent grave are likened to a seed, a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but God giveth it a body, even as it pleased Him, and to each seed a body of its own. This makes it abundantly clear, that the body which is sown in corruption, dishonour and weakness, will be raised in incorruption, glory and power.

From the place where the believer's body finds its last resting place, whether in the dust, or destroyed and scattered, or disintegrated in the depths of the sea, from that place there will arise by the power of God a glorious body like that; of the Lord. The hands of the Master Workman will, in agreement with Philipians 3. 21, "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself. " We submit the thought that preceding the actual resurrection of the body from the grave, the soul of the believer will be united with the body, and thus will be complete and glorified, to meet the Lord in the air with the living saints (1 Thessalonians 4. 15, 16).

R. A., J. S.

From **Cardiff**. —In studying the resurrection of the body, our task is made easier by first considering its application to the believer and then to the unbeliever.

Regarding the believer, Paul, in his first letter to Corinth, sets forth a very solid argument. He first proves that there is a resurrection. If there is no such thing as resurrection then Christ hath not been raised, and if Christ hath not been raised then five things must obviously follow: (1) Our preaching is vain. (2) Our faith is vain. (3) We are found false witnesses of God. (4) We are still in our sins. (5) Those who are asleep in Christ have perished. If these five things were so, then indeed we should be "of all men most pitiable. "

But how precious should be verses 20-28 of 1 Corinthians 15. ! " For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. " Here we are brought face to face with the wonderful fact that God has provided a counterpart to the tragic results of Adam's sin. Let us confirm therefore our faith, our hope, and our love, so that we may grasp more firmly the fact that we shall be raised, and that it is unbelievers who are of all men most pitiable.

It is probable that the question raised in 1 Corinthians 15. 35 is that of the sceptic, and is intended to disprove that bodies, having returned to dust, will be raised again. From Acts 23. 6-8, it is seen that there was some controversy on this point at that time. The Apostle draws upon nature in his answer to the question: " That which thou thyself sowest is not quickened, except it die. " As from the seed which has died there springs forth a vigorous, lively plant, so will it be with the resurrection of the believer, except that whereas in the world of nature the transition, though great, is gradual, in our resurrection there will be an instantaneous change.

There are several scriptures which help us regarding the eternal state of the believer. The body of our humiliation will be fashioned anew that it may be conformed to the body of His glory (Philippians 3. 20, 21). Again, we know that we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him even as He is (1 John 3. 2). We shall be known to each other as former associates (1 Corinthians 13. 12).

We have little evidence regarding the resurrected body of the unbeliever. The reference in Mark 9. 48, 49, is a terrible one. The Lord Jesus speaks of hell or Gehenna, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For everyone shall be salted with fire." This suggests the thought of the unbeliever's body being preserved as with salt in eternal fire, and being capable of enduring the unquenchable flame. God will give him a body as it pleases Him (1 Corinthians 15. 38). This is very solemn indeed. The "salting with fire" makes us think of the burning bush which burned with fire but was not consumed.

Martin D. Follett.

EXTRACTS.

From Edinburgh. —The saints in Corinth had received the gospel which had been preached unto them by the apostle Paul, and and in it they now stood. He had delivered unto them the gospel which he had received from the Lord. The death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ were the foundations of their faith. Yet some, by saying that there was no resurrection of the dead, were undermining these foundations. For if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised.

The cause of doubt as to the resurrection of the dead is found, we think, in verse 34, "Some have no knowledge of God." We are in a position to benefit by their failure, because their failure caused the convincing words of this chapter to be written. How much we owe to God for the assurance contained therein! May we learn from them the lesson God intends that we should learn; and in the knowledge of the fact of the resurrection of the dead, let us take to heart the words of verses 34 and 58, and be ever awake to our responsibilities toward God and toward man, that in the coming day we may not be found wanting.

There are two main resurrections: first, the resurrection of life; second, the resurrection of judgment (John 5. 29). We look for the resurrection of life, which in itself has various stages. The resurrection of Christ, the first stage, has been accomplished, for now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the Firstfruits of them that slept. The other stages, yet to be accomplished, are the resurrection of the saints at the coming of the Lord to the air; the resurrection of Old Testament saints; the resurrection of the infant dead; and the resurrection of those who are the Lord's at the end of the tribulation.

Thomas Hope.

From Kilmarnock. —When we turn to the Scriptures of Truth there need be no difficulty about the resurrection of the body. The answer of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 22. 29 to the Sadducees who did not believe in the resurrection, was, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God." Where the Scriptures are acknowledged and, God's power, in some measure known, the resurrection presents no difficulty.

In John 5, 28, 29, the Lord Jesus, speaking with authority as Son of God says, "The hour cometh, **in** which all **that** are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth," and here **is** mentioned the "resurrection of life" and **the** "resurrection of judgment." Again **in** John 11, 24-26, **in** answer to Martha's assertion that her brother would arise **in** the resurrection at the last day, the Lord makes the wonderful revelation, "**I am** the Resurrection, and the Life."

From 1 Corinthians 15, 12 we find there were some in the assembly who said there was no resurrection of the dead, while 2 Timothy 2, 18 tells of those who affirmed that * the resurrection **is** past already, **and** overthrow the faith of some. "To combat these errors, the Spirit through the Apostle has made known that Christ has been raised **as** the Firstfruits, then they that are Christ's at His coming. This we understand **is** the "resurrection of life," mentioned in John 5, which includes **all** believers **in** Christ, and perhaps many more, although we are not clear on this point.

[In John 5, 24-29 we have three references to death: —

- I In verse 24 we have the passing of the believer from death to life, by the divine quickening of the Spirit and word of God:
- II we have in verse 25 the quickening of such **as** Lazarus, who **is** a type of the saints who will be raised in the coming of the Lord, — "they that are Christ's at **His** coming":
- III then we have all that are in the tombs, which **is** that great final resurrection which **is** seen in Revelation 20, to be associated with the judgment of the Great White Throne. In that resurrection there will be those to whom that resurrection will be "the resurrection of life," for their names will be found in the book of life, and there will be others who have done ill, to whom it will be "the resurrection of judgment."—J. M.]

Revelation 20, 12 gives us a view of another resurrection which we judge **is** the "resurrection of judgment" referred to **in** John 5. Alas for those who have part in this ! A. G. S.

From Derby. —The truths concerning the resurrection of the body and the coming again of the Lord are very closely linked. It **is** evident that the second coming of the Lord Jesus, that occasion on which He descends from heaven with a shout, is necessarily accompanied by resurrection, for "the dead **in** Christ shall rise" (1 Thessalonians 4, 16), and "in Christ shall all be made alive... **at His coming**" (1 Corinthians 15, 22, 23).

That there will be "a resurrection both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24, 15) **is** abundantly clear from God's word, for we **see** that the death of Christ overcame Satan's power (Hebrews 2, 14) and wrought deliverance for "all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage" (Hebrews 2, 15). Death shall be swallowed up **in** victory (1 Corinthians 15, 54). As the conquering Christ was **Himself** raised (1 Corinthians 15, 4), so **He is** "the Firstfruits of them that are asleep" (1 Corinthians 15, 20). The great harvest, of which **He is** the earnest, will be reaped when **He** appears "a second time,... to them that wait for Him, unto salvation" (Hebrews 9, 28).

There **is** naturally much speculation as to the form and character of the resurrected body, but we **feel** that we have sufficient assurance in such Scriptures **as** the following: (1) "we shall be **like Him**" (1 John 3, 2); (2) "like unto **His** glorious body" (Philippians 3, 21,

A. V.); (3) that " it **is** raised a spiritual body " (1 Corinthians 15. 44); and (4) that " we shall also bear the **image** of the heavenly " (1 Corinthians 15. 49). In that time faith will give place to sight, and " we shall see Him and not another. " Nor will He appear " **as** a stranger " (Job 19. 27, R. V. M.), for we " shall know Him by the print of the nails in His hand. " G.

From Manchester. —God revealed the future resurrection of the body to faithful **men** of Old Testament times. Job made mention of it when replying to **his** three comforters (Job 19. 25-27). David spoke of his satisfaction when he should awake in the divine likeness (Psalm 17. 15). Again, Daniel was told of the resurrection of the dead, as recorded in Daniel 12. 2.

How good it is to read words spoken by the Lord Jesus concerning **His** own resurrection and the resurrection of the dead. **His** words testify to scriptural accuracy and in ably answering the Sadducees He revealed something more about the subject (see Matthew 22. 24).

In the opening verses of 1 Corinthians 15. the apostle Paul speaks of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. He considers severally those people who saw the Master after He had risen and who could prove that **His** resurrection had taken place. He refers also to the vision he had of Jesus on the Damascus road; unmistakable proof that the Saviour who had died was now risen and glorified.

Many other truths are mentioned, but verse 32 **is** worthy of special notice. With what resolution and courage the Apostle withstood the Ephesian mob, for he knew that resurrection and eternity were certainties. If this were not the case his zeal and courage were of no avail, and he might just as well have directed his energies into other channels.

It was thought that the use of the words " sit " (Luke 13. 29) and " standing " (Revelation 20. 12) was remarkable, and was further evidence of the resurrection of the body. *N. L. Crabtree.*

From Atherton. —Job asked a question which doubtless has perplexed the minds of men throughout all ages, " If a man die, shall he live again ? " (Job 14. 14). Faith alone grasps the answer revealed by God. Men and women of all ages have died **in** faith, believing that God was able to raise them up again. They doubted not God's infinite power, their lives on earth being lived in the light of a sweeter and nobler life above. Hebrews 11. enlightens us here. They sought for a better country, but the means to this glorious end was a better resurrection (verse 35). The word resurrection occurs twice **in** this verse. It **is** clear that two distinct events are spoken of. " Women received their dead by a resurrection " (raised to life again), the mortal body receiving life, but only to die again. The better resurrection has in view, however, the incorruptible body, death never again taking place. In this sense the Lord Jesus **is** the Firstfruits of them that are asleep. He was the first to rise in the power of an endless life (Hebrews 7. 15, 16). The prophets raised men up to life, but they died again. The Lord Himself raised Lazarus and others, but they likewise died again. With the Lord it was entirely different, witness the Apostle's words, " knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more **j** death no more hath dominion over **Him** " (Romans 6. 9).

It **is** suggested that when the Lord was raised, **He** had the **same** body as that **in** which He had lived (see Luke 24. 36-40). A great

difference is noteworthy, however, for the vital part of **man's** life was absent from **His** resurrection body. There is no mention of the blood. Life **is** His, yea endless life, and that apart from blood which is essential to the life of a man on earth, " for the life of the flesh is in the blood " (Leviticus 17. 11).
G. Sankey.

From Crossford. —We shall each bear the image of the heavenly, but in varying degrees, for " **as** one star differeth from another **in** glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead. " This variety is probably in proportion to the Christ-likeness that we Hear in this life, and will be manifest **in** the saints immediately after resurrection. This seems to be a different thing from receiving rewards according to the deeds done in the body when we stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ.

" It is sown in corruption; it **is** raised in incorruption, " thus showing a wonderful triumph over death and the grave. We have no parallel to this **in** the Lord Jesus Christ, for **His** body never was corruptible.

" It **is** sown in dishonour; it **is** raised in glory. " This seems to bear out the consequences of sin **in** our bodies, in the dishonour that brings us to the grave. For death came by sin and all have sinned and come short of God's glory. " Raised in glory " shows the freedom from sin amid the unhampered enjoyment of the glory of God.

" It **is** sown in weakness; it **is** raised in power. " The death of the Lord Jesus Christ may well be referred to in this, for He was crucified through weakness, but He liveth in the power of God (2 Corinthians 13. 4). What humility was His that He should stoop so low to taste of death ! The believer's body **is** spoken of as an earthen vessel (2 Corinthians 4. 7), a picture of weakness and frailty; but when raised by the power of God, the saints will be in a fit condition to share with Christ **His** glorious throne.

A. Thomson, H. King.

From Knocknacloy. —Christ **is** the cause of the resurrection, not only of the believer, but also of the unbeliever. " In Christ shall **all** be made alive " (1 Corinthians 15. 22). This truth **is** further verified in John 11. 25 where the Lord said to Martha, " I **am** the Resurrection, and the Life. " Hence it **is** when He comes for **His** Church, that His power will be exercised on those who have died believing on Him.

As to the nature of the believer's resurrection body, we find that this will be like unto the body of Christ. Incorruptible and glorified we shall bear the image of the heavenly. Yet the great fact emerges that His body saw no corruption: " Neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption " (Psalm 16. 10). We shall have a spiritual body which will be in complete harmony with spiritual things. Moreover Christ's resurrection body was one of flesh and bone, it could be handled, and He ate and drank with **His** disciples after **His** resurrection. (Luke 24. 39).

Great importance **is** attached to our bodies by the Lord. In the act of redemption not only did the Lord purchase our soul, but also our body (1 Corinthians 6. 20). Therefore at the coming of the Lord to the air, the redemption of the body of the believer who has died, as well as that of the living saint will be complete (Romans 8. 23).

R. Anderson, Jun.

From Ilford. —A fact of fundamental importance is stated in verse 4 of this chapter: " Christ was buried; and He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and . . . He appeared to Cephas . . . " Both the Scriptures and many eye witnesses testified to the resurrection of Christ. Paul develops the fact of Christ's resurrection from the dead as being fundamental to our resurrection. If Christ hath not been raised, then our faith is vain and we are of all men most miserable, for we have foregone the enjoyment of earthly pleasures, for something which in the event will prove to be but a myth. The fact of the resurrection of Christ, is, however, without doubt, and was one of the first principles of Christian doctrine as emphasised again and again in such typical scriptures as Acts 1. 22; 2. 32; 4. 10, 33.

Christ's body in resurrection was of such a character that He could appear in the midst of His disciples, the doors of their meeting place being shut, and yet could also be handled and touched and still bearing in His body the outward evidences of His sufferings—the wound prints in His hands, His feet and His side. This would seem to imply similar bodily characteristics on our part in resurrection.

A. G. Jarvis (Jun.).

From Broxburn. —The resurrection of the body from the cold relentless grasp of death and the grave is God's vindication of His work in the creation of man. That which was acknowledged by Himself to be very good, as He viewed the result of His creative power and wisdom, was challenged by the great adversary with disastrous consequences to mankind. Genesis 5. is a sad commentary on the tremendous fact that " in Adam all die, " for there the death knell is heard to toll eight times. Enoch is one notable exception, for of him it is recorded, " He was not; for God took him. " The sad sequence of death is broken by divine intervention, and here our hope is in figure set before us.

Regeneration, or the possession of eternal life, necessarily involves resurrection. " He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day " (John 6. 54). Therefore the Apostle reminded the saints in Corinth of the gospel which he preached unto them.

The resurrection of Christ from the dead is the test and touchstone of all things with regard to the exercise of divine power. It is the standard miracle, the mightiest display of the power of God to which the Scriptures bear testimony, and is described in Ephesians 1. 19, 20, as "that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead. " When the Lord expired on the cross Satan's triumph seemed assured, and all the power of Hell was exercised to keep that lifeless body within the dark portals of the tomb.

The Lord Jesus having been raised from the dead is now in the presence of God as the Firstfruits of the great harvest that will follow. The fact that He is there is the divine pledge and guarantee that others will follow, but each in his own order or rank. There will be various ranks raised, all embraced in the first resurrection. If the dead are not raised, then baptism is meaningless (verse 29), for by baptism we pass in figure through death and resurrection. Why endanger our lives or contend for the truth of God, if death ends all? Why not eat, drink and be merry if we die to-morrow? Such is the deception of unbelief and ignorance of the plain teaching of God's word with which the Apostle reproached some in Corinth that he might move them to shame.

How are the dead raised ? and with what **manner** of body do they come ? Most certain it **is** that while individuality will **be** preserved there will **be** a marvellous difference between the body that **is** sown and that which will be raised. To contend that when the body disintegrates and **is** absorbed by the various elements of which **it is** composed, a seed will **remain** from which God **will** fashion the body anew, **seems** to be forcing the illustration too far. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body that shall be . . . But God giveth it [what **is** sown] a body even **as** it pleased Him. "

Henry Dyer.

From Glasgow. —We are apt to think of the resurrection **as** being solely a **New** Testament revelation, but the Old Testament abounds in types and shadows of this great truth.

For example, **in** connection with Abraham, we are told that he **was** made a father of many nations before Him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and called the things that are not, **as** though they were (Romans 4. 16-25). Such scriptures prove that Abraham trusted **in** God for resurrection, **in** spite of the fact that " his own body was **as** good **as** dead. "

Again the Lord refers to the experience of Jonah **as** typical of **His** own resurrection: " For **as** Jonah was three days and three nights **in** the belly of the whale; even so shall the Son of **Man** **be** three days and three nights **in** the heart of the earth (Matthew 12. 40).

Paul the Apostle, at the outset of this wonderful 15th chapter of **1st** Corinthians, says that Christ " was raised **again** the third day, according to the Scriptures. " The emphasis **is** on the last three words, and these clearly refer to the Old Testament Scriptures. Towards the close of the chapter he sounds a glorious note of triumph **in** verses 54-58, which we would again compare with words of Old Testament writ (Hosea 13. 14).

A. McIlree.

From Aberfan. —In New Testament **times** the nucleus of the faith **is** the resurrection of Christ. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, **says**: " If Christ hath not been raised, your faith **is** vain; ye are yet **in** your **sins** . . . but now hath Christ **been** raised* from the dead "; and " as **in** Adam all die, so also **in** Christ shall all be made alive. " The resurrection of Christ **was** God's seal that **He** was well-pleased with the atoning death of **His** Son, and now **He is** able to be just, and the **Justifier** of him that hath faith **in** Jesus. Satan tries to convince **men** that Christ was not raised from the dead, and that there **is** no resurrection. After the resurrection the guards were persuaded to tell a lie which **in** itself **was** incredible, for what evidence could sleeping **men** give ? God, however, has left **man in** no doubt **as** to a future resurrection of all men. (See John 5. 28, 29, Acts 17. 31).

To us who are believers, how blessed **is** the thought of resurrection ! **We** know that **if** we **remain** until the Lord comes, **we shall be** caught up together with those who have died **in** Christ, and so shall **we** ever be with the Lord. **We** know that these bodies of our humiliation will be conformed to the body of **His** glory, and **in** spiritual bodies **we** shall do **Him** service: **we shall see His** face, and **His name shall be** on our foreheads (Revelation 22. 3, 4).

Reg. Jones.

READINGS IN GENESIS.

Genesis 8. 1-22.

The waters **assuaged** at the end of **150 days** and the ark rested on the 17th day of the 7th month. The seventh month **was** later called the month Abib (Exodus. **13. 4**). On the 14th of Abib the passover **was** kept, and on that day Christ our Passover **was sacrificed** (1 Corinthians 5. 7). **He was** three days and nights in the heart of the earth and on the 17th day, the first day of the **week, He was raised** from the **dead**; the judgment **was** past.

Noah sent forth an unclean raven which Returned not again, **but** went to and fro, like the prince of darkness (Job 1. 7). The dove went and came, and **at** the second **time** brought **back** the token of resurrection life, a shadow of the Spirit-filled Son of God, who brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1. 10). Noah when **He came** forth offered his burnt offering of gratitude, and God smelled the **sweet** savour of **rest**, in contrast to the corruption which **existed** prior to the flood.

Genesis 9. 1-29.

God **added** flesh to man's dietary, **but** precluded the eating of blood. **He made** every man his brother's keeper, and would require his brother's blood **at** his hand (Genesis 4. **11**; Exodus 21. **13**; Deuteronomy 19.). **He** also established capital punishment of all murderers, no doubt in view of what had been happening before the flood. God **said** that **He** would establish **His** covenant with Noah (Genesis 6. **18**), and now gives the rainbow **as** the token of the covenant that **He** would not destroy the earth with a flood of water again.

The waters of Noah, answerable to **baptism** (1 Peter 3. **20, 21**), **did not put** away the filth of the flesh in Noah, for he **became** intoxicated and **Ham** saw his shame. Grace in the hearts of Shem and Japheth **caused** them to walk **backward**, contrary to nature. Canaan, **Ham's** descendant, was **curled** with servitude; **but** Shem, the chosen man, **was** blessed, and Japheth **was** to dwell in Shem's tents, the place of blessing, and Canaan **was** to **be** their servant.

Genesis 10. 1-32.

The descendants of Noah are here given, presumably in the order of birth, **if we** accept the marginal reading of the R. V.: " Shem . . . the brother of Japheth the elder. " Two names are of particular interest, Nimrod and Peleg. Nimrod means " rebel " and no doubt he **was a** hunter who led **the** chase with such **daring** intrepidity that **it became** proverbial to acclaim his prowess **as a** pattern for others: " It is said, **Like** Nimrod **a** mighty hunter before Jehovah. " His **success** encouraged him to **greater** things and **we** read of his kingdom, which **was** established in notable cities, particularly Babel. His greatest **act** of impiety **was** to build this city with its tower to the honour of man and to shut out the God **of** heaven. This resulted in the division of language and the consequent division of the earth in the days of Peleg.

Genesis 11. 1-25.

Jerusalem **was** the place of Jehovah's name (Deuteronomy 12. **14**; Psalm 78. **68**), **but** Babel **is** the **city** of man's name, where they **said**, * " Let us make us a name. " Babel was built of brick, the

, imitation of stone with which God's place **was** and is built (Psalm 102. 14; 1 Peter 2. 5). Babylon **is** built to-day of pseudo-christians, persons who are religious to a greater or lesser degree, but who are not saved by grace through faith in Christ, who **seek** by their works to reach heaven. God and His word are shut out of Babylon. The descendants of Shem, the chosen line, were involved in the world rebellion against God at Babel.

Language was **at** Babel, and still is, the great divider of men, but **men** go **in** herds and are Babylonian **in** outlook, and in time Babylon **in** its full fruition will. come, as **seen** in Revelation 17. and 18.

Soon after the scattering from Babel, Abram heard the call of the God of Glory (Acts 7. 2-4) in Chaldea, the land of darkness **and** rebellion. Note the **ages** of the **men** from Peleg to Abram.

Genesis 11. 26—12. 4.

God began with Adam in Creation; **He** began again with Noah in Salvation; and **He** now begins again with Abram in Separation. Abram was not the eldest of Terah's sons, for his father **was** 130 when, he **was** born. This we learn from the fact that Terah **was** 205 when he died, at which time Abram was removed into Canaan, and he **was** then 75. "Terah took Abram" though he **was** not called from Ur as his son was, and so long as he lived in Haran he hindered Abram in his pilgrimage. They set out for Canaan, but never reached there while he was alive. In chapter 12. **we** have the call and blessing. of Abram, in which Paul says that the Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith (Galatians 3. 8). Men built Babel and shut God out; now God calls Abram **and** shuts the nations out, and they will only **be** blessed through Abram and his Seed (Christ), by **means** of those who were outside all **men's** systems. **J. M.**

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Resurrection of the Body.

EXTRACTS.

From Birkenhead. —The last half of 1 Corinthians 15. should **be** a complete proof of the **fact** that resurrection **is** not a spiritual thing, **but is** a bodily matter[*]. In verse 42 **we** read that "**it is** sown **in** corruption." As neither the soul nor the **spirit can be** corruptible this **must** refer to the body.

The body that will clothe the Christian in that future day will have lost its earthly properties **and** **gained** new, heavenly ones. The **new** environment will require **new** characteristics. All the **weaknesses** that result from **sin** will have gone, to **be** replaced by strength. This is the transformation referred to **in** Philippians 3. 21. The Christian, with such a prospect before him **is** able to smile **at** death **and** to exult over the grave. Perhaps we realise something of the faithfulness of the **Hebrew** patriarchs when **we** remember that death **was** the horizon of their hopes, **and** Sheol the goal to which they journeyed.

[* Surely it is both. —S: B.] **L. B. H.**

From Liverpool. —There are in the Old Testament a few references to the resurrection, **as** in Job 19. 25, 26, **and** Ezekiel 37., **but** in no way **can** these **be** compared with the way this truth is expounded in the Apostle's writings. Here **in** Corinthians Paul **sets**

it forth **as a doctrine; as a mainstay** in the life of **a Christian**. If there is no resurrection we are of **all men** most pitiable. "But **now** hath Christ been raised from **the dead**, the firstfruits of them that are asleep." **We have in** the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ **an assurance** that the resurrection of the body **is not a fanciful imagination of the minds of men**, but **a reality**, the influence of which should be **seen** and known in every day of our life here on earth.

As to the form of the body in which we shall be raised, we thought that there was nothing very definite said about the matter. Indeed the Apostle deprecates any sort of scientific enquiry into the subject (verse 35 and on). Sufficient, that we shall be raised **in incorruption, in glory, in power, a spiritual body**. Our body **is an important and integral part of our personality**. The condition of that body and **the extent to which its activities are controlled by the Spirit**, will very materially affect our service here for God. In resurrection we shall have spiritual bodies. Not that we shall be spirits, but that we shall have bodies **in which we shall be able to perceive and know and experience to the full those spiritual, heavenly realities which now we see only as in a glass darkly.**

R. Sands.

From Wigan. —In the New Testament the outstanding case of resurrection **is** that of the Lord Jesus Himself. Not only is this **an evidence of the power of God and a token of our justification**, but **in the resurrected body of the Lord Jesus we suggest we have a likeness of the future resurrected body of the believer** (1 John 3. 2 and Philippians 3. 21). The miraculous powers inherent **in His resurrected body** are described **in the Gospels**, but we refrain from enquiring too closely **as to whether the resurrected body of the believer will be in all details like His.**

In addition to those raised from the dead by the Lord Himself, there **is a record of many leaving their tombs after His resurrection and of their being seen in the city of Jerusalem** (Matthew 27. 52-53). It **is assumed** that all such persons died at some later date. Perhaps the most remarkable New Testament case of resurrection **is** that of Dorcas (Acts 9. 40-42). We suggest it **is unique in this respect** that Dorcas, having died after the Lord's ascension to glory, must have gone to be with Him, and that her return to indwell her body must have meant a great sacrifice to her.

Two resurrections are yet future, as depicted **in John 5. 28-29**—some "unto the resurrection of life" and some "unto the resurrection of judgment." These two are separated by **a period of at least 1,000 years** (Revelation 20. 5). [See note **in** the paper from Kilmarnock, February issue. —J. M.]. The resurrection of the just, that is, the first resurrection, will occur at the return of the Lord **as Son of God to the air**. Enjoying the blessings of the first resurrection will also be those who will have died for the testimony of Jesus during the Great Tribulation. These two may be reckoned as the "wheat and the gleanings." The unjust which we may liken to the tares will be raised at **the end of the Millennium**, to appear at the Great White Throne judgment. There **is no description in Scripture as to what manner of body the latter shall have.**

R. B. P. M.

From Victoria, B. C. —The apostle Paul, writing to the Romans, reveals that the creation **is under the bondage of corruption, and thus it "groaneth and travaileth in pain"** (Romans 8. 22). Sin having marred the work of God's hand has caused the "brier and thorn" to

grow up instead of the " myrtle and the rose. " Man left the Creator's hand perfect, but became mortal by the entrance of sin into the world. These things being so, a change must take place. Job long ago voiced his conviction: "After my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet from my flesh shall I see God " (Job 19. 26).

In the new birth the believer is born from above. A new man is " created* after God in righteousness and holiness of truth " (Ephesians 4. 24). He has the characteristic of God inasmuch as he is a " partaker of the divine nature. " The believer's body is to be " fashioned anew, " that it may be " conformed to the body of His glory. " Thus it is fitted to dwell in the eternal tabernacles, where the child of God will see his Lord and be like Him. As the Apostle wrote to the Romans, those who are Christ's have been " foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son " (Romans 8. 29). A. M.

From Hamilton, Ont. —When the Lord Jesus openly declared that the Father had committed all judgment to the Son, he added, " Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done ill, unto the resurrection of judgment. " What a comprehensive statement! and to it must be added the great basic truth expressed by Himself to Martha, and upon which alone all the above is built, —" I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live. " Resurrection is associated with Christ, for if Christ Himself hath not been raised our faith and preaching are in vain, and if there is no resurrection of the dead, neither hath Christ been raised. But He Himself demonstrated this precious truth in the flesh, and was thus declared to be the Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness, by the *resurrection of the dead*. At the last trump the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we that are alive and are left shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Then will He fashion anew the body of our humiliation (corrupt or mortal) that it may be conformed to the body of His glory. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. In nature's seasons year by year the great truth of resurrection is silently declared.

W. Young.

From **London, S. E.** —We learn that our natural bodies must die or be' changed if we are to live at the Lord's coming. As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. " Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we *shall* see Him even as He is " (1 John 3. 2). So we would praise our God that His purposes are thus fulfilled in and through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We shall be in *His Likeness*, without sin and corruption, redeemed, glorified, being even as He is, having a body even as His glorious body, bearing the true image of Christ. Oh that our cry would be that of Paul's as we look forward to that day of manifestation: " O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God! through Jesus Christ our Lord! ".

So let us then be waiting for our adoption, looking for His coming, when we shall fully reflect in fullest glory the image and glory > of Him who died and lives for us in the power of an endless life.

G. A. Reeve, J. Dawson.

The House from Heaven.

From Atherton. —In chapter 4. of 2 Corinthians **Paul** draws a sharp contrast **between the transient** passing things that we are able to see, and **the eternal realities** yet unknown and **unseen** by us. In so doing **he** introduces **in chapter 5.** the "house of earth," that decaying, frail, and temporal structure which constitutes a habitation for the soul in time. **Sin** has reduced **man** to "enosh," a frail, mortal man. **We** groan, **waiting** for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body (Romans 8. 23).

Two things occupy the heart of the Apostle. (1) That apparently inevitable day when this temporary structure returns to dust, to the earth **as it** was (Ecclesiastes 12. 7). (2) The glorious day of the Lord's return to the air. Under the first aspect the great truth of a habitation from God, **lasting.** and durable **as** eternity **itself,** and of heavenly character, **is** presented **as** the happy outlook of every **saint** who has died **in** this dispensation or yet will die ere the Lord comes. Under the second aspect he views the groaning, sighing, and burdened **saint** wondrously changed **at** the Lord's coming, by reason of the descent of a habitation which will entirely swallow up everything of mortal character. Philippians 3. 21 indicates a radical change: "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of **His** glory."

In seeking to define what the "house from heaven" refers to, we are told that it is a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, **in** the heavens. The body of the believer **is** seen **in** the **figure** of a tabernacle. Sleeping children of God are **seen** as unclothed, but both the dead and the living **in** Christ will be clothed upon with this habitation from heaven. This **same** truth **is** emphasized **in** 1 Corinthians 15. 52-54, as the Apostle indicates the wondrous experience of dead and living undergoing the **same** complete transformation **in** a **minute** fraction of time, comparable to the twinkle of the eye, when the last trump sounds. Thus that which **is** corruptible puts on incorruption, and that which **is** mortal, immortality, everything appertaining to **sin** and death being swept away, overwhelmed **in** victory. Thus the temporal gives place to the spiritual and eternal, and well **it is** for **us** to consider, and earnestly desire the real and the eternal.

G. A. Jones.

From Knocknacloy. —**We** read concerning the creation of **man:** "And the LORD God formed **man** of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of **life;** and **man** became a living soul" (Genesis 2. 7). **Man** **as** to his bodily part **is** "of the earth, earthy" (1 Corinthians 15. 47). When **sin** entered, God said to Adam, "For dust thou art, **and** unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3. 19). Moreover, **it** will be observed that, **in** the Old Testament, **man's** body **is** regarded under the **images** of (1) a house of clay (Job 4. 19), (2) a clothing (Job 10. 11), and (3) a tent (Isaiah 38. 12). **We** thought that the Apostle perhaps had such scriptures before his mind when writing 2 Corinthians 5. and 1 Corinthians 15.

"Howbeit that **is** not first which is spiritual, but that which **is** **natural;** then that which **is** spiritual." There **is** a **natural** body, and there **is** also a spiritual body. **It is** of this spiritual body that the Apostle writes **in** 2 Corinthians 5., when he refers to the "building from God, a house not made with hands," and our "habitation which **is** from heaven." **He** contemplates the dissolution of the first **and** natural, and anticipates **the** putting on of the **eternal** and spiritual.

[Great care is **needed** in dealing with **the matter of the** resurrection of **the** believer, his house from heaven, and the present **tabernacle** in which he dwells. **At** the coming of the Lord the living believer, living in his mortal body, does not pass from that mortal body into his house which **is** from heaven, leaving that mortal body on earth **as a** thing which he has shed like the **case** of the chrysalis from which the winged insect has emerged. The house from heaven comes upon the tabernacle or body of the believer, and, in consequence, what is mortal is swallowed up of **life**. What **is** true of the living **saint is** true also of the dead. The body that is sown is raised, sown **a** natural body, but raised **a** spiritual body. As the mortal body puts on immortality, so the corruptible body puts on incorruption. To deny the resurrection of the human body **means** to deny the resurrection, and it **is** against this fatal error the Apostle writes at such length in 1 Corinthians 15. — J. M. J.]

As to when and how this takes place provoked much discussion. The following thoughts were suggested. When the Lord Jesus comes back again, both the dead in Christ and the living in Christ **as** to their bodily part will undergo **a** radical change: "**We shall all** be changed" (1 Corinthians 15. 51). This great change will involve **a** putting on, or clothing upon, for "this corruptible must put on incorruption" (referring to the dead **in** Christ), while "this mortal must put on immortality" (referring to the living in Christ) (1 Corinthians 15. 53). This change is further described **as** a swallowing up of death in victory (verse 54) and **a** swallowing up of mortality in life (2 Corinthians 5. 4).

As to the clothing upon with the habitation which **is** from heaven, **we** do not visualize heavenly bodies being stored in heaven against the day of resurrection. Nor do we contemplate heavenly bodies descending when the Lord comes. [Is not the **language** of 2 Corinthians 5. very plain, that there is **a** house in heaven which answers to the need of this frail tabernacle of our mortal body? Moreover, the Apostle says, "Longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven," so that this house which **is** at present in heaven will come from heaven, to clothe the saints, not their souls merely, but their bodies, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up of life. In the realm of heavenly things **we** cannot think of storing bodies, after the **manner** in which our friends speak, but the Apostle **tells us** quite plainly that we have **a** house in heaven which will one day come from heaven and will clothe **us**. — J. M. J. Rather we believe that when **He** who is the Resurrection and the Life descends, His commanding shout will speak into being an incorruptible, heavenly, and spiritual body **for** each of the dead **in** Christ. As the wheat maintains **a** relationship to the grain that was sown (1 Corinthians 15. 38), so will the spiritual body bear **a** relationship to the earthly body that was sown. Likewise **He** who is the Life, by the **same** creative power, will give to the living **in** Christ **an** immortal body. **We** marvel, yet we are not confounded, when we remember that the **same One** spake into being the vast universe.

It **seems** evident from 2 Corinthians 5. that believers at present **at** home with the Lord are **in an** unclothed state. **Paul** did not desire such a state, but lived **in** the expectancy of being alive when the Lord returned.
R. Anderson (Jun.), J. Drain.

From Broxburn. —The human body, **man's** earthly house, contains within **it** the elements of decay and dissolution; therefore it is only **a** tabernacle or temporary abode. It belongs to **an** order of things that **is** passing away or temporal. There has been imposed by God **a** definite **line** of separation between **inanimate** things and those

that possess a bodily structure, between the animal creation and man, between that which is of the flesh and that which is of the spirit, and the one may not invade the domain of that order of things which is higher or superior to it. Even so, "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." How then is the gulf to be bridged? The only possible way is by a change of body, according to the divine declaration, "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed," and again, "Who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory" (Philippians 3. 21). How this change will be wrought is made known to us by divine revelation. The saints of a past dispensation looked for a general resurrection at the last day, even as Martha said, "I know that he (Lazarus) shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Concerning the resurrection from the dead they knew but little. 1 Corinthians 15. 52 indicates the instantaneous nature of the mighty change wrought by the touch of Omnipotence in the bodies of the saints whether dead or alive at His coming. Those who have died and whose bodies have gone to corruption will receive or put on incorruption, while those who are in mortal bodies will put on immortality. The result in both cases will be the same, for as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Such will be the building from God, a structure abiding and eternal, in contrast to our present dwelling in which we groan, longing for the great and wondrous change which we shall yet experience.

It is quite evident that the Apostle did not desire the disembodied state, which he describes as being naked, and is the portion of the saints who die prior to the Lord's coming (2 Corinthians 5. 3). While it is true that to depart and be with Christ is very far better, in contrast to our earthly lot, this is not the consummation of our hope and expectation.

There was diversity of mind concerning the statement in verse 3, "If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked." Some thought the condition of nakedness applies to those who will be destitute of works in that day, and several scriptures were cited in support of this, including Revelation 16. 15 and Revelation 6. 11: "And there was given to each one a white robe." There was a distinction made between the words "naked" of verse 3 and "unclothed" of verse 4. [Unclothed or naked means to be in a disembodied state; to be clothed is to be living in a mortal body; and to be clothed upon means that our house which is from heaven covers this body and swallows up all that is mortal. —J. M. J. *Henry Dyer.*

EXTRACTS.

From Armagh. —Paul was not absolutely sure that his body would be dissolved, but hoped that he might be alive and remain at the coming of the Lord, when he would be changed and be for ever with the Lord without passing through death. When he saw it to be possible that he should be numbered among those who die in Christ, however, he did not shrink from the prospect.

We are tripartite beings, composed of spirit, soul and body. "May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5. 23). Our souls are saved, but we are waiting for the redemption of our bodies. "For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven" (2 Corinthians 5. 2). "And not only

so, **but** ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even **we** ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body (Romans 8. 23).

The redemption of our bodies will not take place until the coming of the Lord, when the dead in Christ shall be raised **and** changed, **and** those alive at **His** coming shall **be** changed. The perfected spirit will then **be** clothed upon with the house from heaven, dwelling in **a** body adapted to its glory. [It is not merely the spirit or spiritual part of the believer that is clothed upon with the house which is from heaven, **but** the body of the believer is clothed upon with this house. Note, in proof of this, the words " that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life. " Mortal and immortal describe body conditions and do not relate to the soul or spirit of **man**.—J. M.]

T. B. West.

From Manchester.—The metaphor used to describe the **natural** body is striking. It **is** translated "tabernacle " or " bodily frame, " the Greek word *skenos* bearing the thought of **a** " hut or temporary residence " (c. f. also John 1. 14 and 2 Peter 1. 14).

While writing his second epistle to the Corinthians, **Paul** seemed to be particularly impressed with the frailty of his own bodily frame (see chapter 4. **16**; 10. **10**; 12. 7). **One** result was to throw into relief the blessedness of a heavenly habitation. It was suggested that 2 Corinthians **5. 1** may refer to the provision God has made for believers who die in Christ. The " building from God " appears to be provided for those whose bodies are dissolved. While to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord, it would seem that the souls of such believers are in an unclothed state (see verses 3 and 4). [A re-reading of the passage will show that what is true of those who die is equally true of those who are alive at the Lord's return. This is clear from verses **2** and **3**, where it is contemplated that the habitation from heaven will clothe the living saint so that he shall never be found naked, as are saints at present with Christ. The house which is **in** the heavens answers the need of those who dwell **in** a tabernacle or mortal body, **as** it does those whose bodies are dissolved.—J. M.] The Apostle's greatest desire was to know the glorious consummation of being immortalised without dying. If the Lord willed otherwise, however, he was assured that God had prepared **a** building, not made with hands, eternal, **in** the heavens. That the "building (*oikodome*) **in** the heavens " of verse one, **is** different from the " habitation (*oiketerion*) **from** heaven " of verse two **is** suggested also by the **use** of different words in these connections. [I do not follow this difference. In my judgment the house not made with hands **is** the habitation which **is** from heaven.—J. M.] 1 Corinthians 15. **50-56** speaks of death being " swallowed up " **in** victory, while in 2 Corinthians **5**, that which **is** mortal **is** " swallowed up " of life. These similar expressions indicate **a** sudden and complete transformation. An alternative translation to " swallow up " **is** " **gulp** entire, " which emphasises the nature of the transformation.

The expression, " clothed upon, with our habitation which is from heaven " suggests that the change of abode from our earthly tabernacle will be quite effortless so far as we are concerned. The word translated " clothed upon " has the sense of " sinking into **a** garment. " With similar ease, it would seem, we shall take possession of our heavenly habitation.

The citations **in** 1 Corinthians 15. from Isaiah **32. 8** and Hosea 13. 14 show that the Holy Spirit had foretold through Old Testament

prophets the vanquishing of death. They doubtless were unable to fill **in** the detail, perhaps realising little more than the common belief of the Jews **as** expressed by Martha in John 11. 24.

G. Prasher, Jun.

From Hamilton, Ont. —When we are saved by God's grace, we are born from above and we are **made a new** creation in Christ Jesus. This new **man** is something of God or from heaven. Similarly, when the resurrection of the body takes place, the new habitation or house must necessarily come from heaven. Just **as** we could not enter the holy presence of God **in** our sinful state, so our natural bodies cannot enter **His** presence, and **it** is necessary that we be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven.

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ differs **in** this respect from that of others. The body prepared for Him was perfect and spotless to begin with. He lived **a** perfect life, and after **His** resurrection He still possessed the same body when **He** manifested Himself to the twelve and showed them **His** hands and side. The Lord though He died saw no corruption (see **Psalm** 16. 10), therefore He was different from us ! If we are dead when the Lord comes, then this corruptible will put on incorruption, and **if** we remain alive this mortal will put on immortality. Then shall come to pass the words of 1 John 3. 2, " We shall be like **Him**: for we shall see **Him** even **as** He is. "

W. McKay.

From Crossford. —In the first part of 2 Corinthians 5. the Apostle **is** shewing the contrast between the outward man, or earthen vessel, which **is** temporal, and the house from God which **is** eternal. In the one we groan, being burdened, because our body **is** mortal; **in** the other groans and sufferings can never be known, for then we shall have glorified bodies. We shall be like Him, for we shall see **Him** even **as** He is (1 John 3. 2).

In the twinkling of **an** eye this great work will be accomplished, and that which **is** mortal will be swallowed up of **life** (verse 4). The habitation from heaven, **we** understand, **is** the spiritual body which **we** shall have **in** eternity which comes into being simultaneously with the resurrection of the dead, or when the living are changed. [But notes what **is** said **in** 1 Corinthians 15. . " It **is** sown **a** natural body, it **is** raised **a** spiritual body. " In my judgment the spiritual body **is** what **is** raised plus the house which is from heaven. In other words, " This corruptible must put on incorruption. "—J. M.]. We do not understand that the building from God will come down from heaven, but that **its** origin **is** from God, and that by the power of God the natural body **is** changed into **a** spiritual body. [**We** cannot grasp what our friends mean. The house and the habitation signify the **same** thing and saints at the Lord's coming will be clothed with this house, at the time of the resurrection of the dead and the changing of the living. —J. M.].

Alex. Thomson.

From Glasgow. —Adam involved **us in** his ruin, with the **result** that death has power over our body. Solomon's description of death and corruption **at** work in the mortal body (Ecclesiastes 12.) **is** solemn **in** the extreme. " The dust shall return to the earth **as** it was. " What

we **inherit** from the first **man** (Adam) **is** doomed to decay. The eye will lose its lustre, **the limbs** their strength, the passions their fervour, the mind its grasp. " Behold, I tell you **a** mystery: we **shall not all** sleep. " The Apostle discloses **the** great secret. There is going to be **a** change—" In **a** moment, in the twinkling of **an** eye, at the last trump. " This stupendous event will be sudden and instantaneous. Corruption must put on incorruption and mortal must put on immortality, while death will be swallowed up in victory. Death has no place in the new creation. The victory has been wrested from its grasp.

John McIlvenna.

From Birkenhead. —At the present time the Christian dwells in **an** earthly tabernacle. It is apparent from **2** Corinthians **5**. **2** and **1** Corinthians **15**. that it is not an exchange of bodies which will take place. In fact, the Scriptures are so worded **as** to preclude the possibility of this. Mortality shall put on immortality, and not be supplanted by it. Death shall be swallowed up in victory, not thrust out by it. **We** long to be clothed upon by the habitation from heaven, not to exchange our earthly tabernacle for **some** spiritual body from heaven. There **is**, however, no doubting the fact that the body will be so changed that it will be in power new, although probably **in** form it will not change to any great extent.

Mortality and corruption are not positive things. Death **reigns** because of the absence of immortality, and therefore the positive things which will follow the resurrection, immortality and incorruption, will not expel, but swallow up the negative things.

J. R. T., L. B. H.

From Ilford. —It appears that the house from heaven **is** the spiritual body which will be ours when Christ returns for **His** own. The body which **is** ours now **is** a corruptible one, but that which will **then** be given **us** will be eternal and incorruptible. [If the spiritual body **is** our house from heaven then there would be **a** complete discarding of this natural body, and the effect would be that there would be no resurrection. This of course cannot be, for the bodies of the dead **will** be raised. This **is** one of the plainest facts of scripture, though it **is** **a** fact so profound that faith alone can grapple with it. —J. M.] **Paul** points out the great advantages of this heavenly body over the earthly body. The thought of home was an incentive for him to desire rather to be absent from the body and at home with the Lord. There **is** not that joy in the present **life** which will be ours **in** **a** future day. This is partly due, no doubt, to that within **us**, which leads us to do things which are not in accordance with God's will for us, and which are therefore not well-pleasing to **Him**. Paul seems to sense this, and exhorts that we should make it our aim, in this present life, to be well-pleasing to Him.

In **1** Corinthians **15**. **58**, **Paul** makes it clear that we who have been redeemed through the precious blood of Christ have much to **be** thankful for, especially **as** **He** has wrought so great **a** victory on our behalf. In return it **is** only becoming that we should be steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding **in** the work of the Lord, forasmuch **as** we know that our labour **is** not vain in the Lord.

E. H. Jarvis.

From Vancouver. — " For we know. " These words take us back to the preceding chapter, which brings before us the truth that at present we are in a scene where suffering abounds. It gives us also the long range view of the child of God. We cannot but be affected by the present light afflictions, or whatever may affect us adversely while here, but we are not wholly taken up with that, we look beyond that, paradoxically seeing the unseen.

Our present dwelling being earthly can only be temporary, for even the heavens and the earth themselves shall be dissolved, new heavens and a new earth taking their place. Long ere this, we know that we have a building from God. If momentarily we share in " the light affliction, " we shall share also in " a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. " Our house there is " a building from God " as to its weight of glory. " Our house there is " a building of God " as to its source or Maker, " eternal " as to its duration, " in the heavens " as to its location at present. No wonder Paul, who knew this so well, writes: " For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. " In chapter 15. of 1 Corinthians, and in 1 Thessalonians 4., the time of this great event is revealed. We notice that the judgment seat of Christ is associated with this, and while in this we groan, it is also in this we can be ambitious, that whether present or absent we may be well-pleasing unto Him. The highest use to which we can put these bodies in which we groan, is to present them " a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.

J. Blair.

From **Cardiff**. — The words " house from heaven " undoubtedly mean a spiritual body, which comes from heaven. The earthly body has earthly characteristics, it is weak, fragile, subject to decay and death. [See remarks on this point elsewhere.] It cannot enter heaven, where there is no death and no decay, so must be changed into a heavenly body. The heavenly or spiritual body will be permanent and eternal.

When the Lord's coming takes place, there will be a great and instantaneous change in the believer's body. We shall then receive our heavenly bodies, death will be vanquished, and there will be great victory over death. Therefore death will not have any power over us.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 5. earnestly desired to be clothed with the heavenly body rather than live in this world of sin. This fact is found in Philipians 1. 23: " But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better. " They had such a view of heaven as their home that they were willing at any time to depart and be with Christ.

* Verse 3 refers to the fine linen garments which we shall wear over our heavenly bodies. These garments will be greatly varied (Revelation 7. 9). [There is no indication in this passage that there is any variety whatever in the robes that those redeemed ones wear. Moreover, these are not saints of this present dispensation, but are those who shall come triumphant out of the great tribulation. The Bride of the Lamb, in Revelation 19. will be arrayed in linen which is the righteous acts of the saints. Perhaps our friends are confusing the two passages. — J. M.] The beauty of the linen garments depends on the extent we please God on earth.

Eric Toms, John Follett.

From Windermere. —It seems clear that the house from heaven is not " My Father's house " of John 14. 2, but a term used to express the body that will be, the dwelling place of the soul throughout the eternal ages. We learn that the Greek word used here is *oikia* denoting a dwelling [or a house]; this is not used elsewhere in connection with God's house or tabernacle, the word *oikos* being used for the latter.

Being unclothed (to strip) figuratively denotes the putting off of the body at death, and the persons entering upon a state of waiting for the " body of glory " at resurrection.

T. *Barnett, D. Banks.*

Prom Edinburgh. —" All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. " These words might well bring sadness to any heart. All know their truth. But how comforting to His people are the words which follow, " The word of our God shall stand for ever " ! (Isaiah 40. 6-8). Through the word of our God, we are enabled to look not at the things which are seen, which things are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal. His word tells us that though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4. 16-18). Our God has wrought us not for destruction, but for resurrection. To this we look forward with assurance, having received the earnest of the Spirit, who beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God (Romans 8. 16).

When our outward man is dissolved, our inward man, being thus unclothed, will require to be clothed again, and at the resurrection he will be clothed with a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. [But what of the body that will be raised ?] This change is necessary, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. For this reason those also who are still alive at the time of resurrection will require to be changed.

William Muirhead.

From Kilmarnock. —In the opening words of 2 Corinthians 5. the Apostle speaks with confidence when he says, " We know... we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens. "

We, as children of God, are passing through a scene which is opposed to the new nature within us and we are caused oftentimes to " long for our habitation which is from heaven. " The Lord has redeemed our souls from Satan's power and will yet redeem our bodies from the presence of sin (Romans 8. 23).

When a believer departs from this life he is "with Christ, which is very far better " (Philippians 1. 23), but it is not then that he receives his house from heaven. It is evident from 1 Corinthians 15. 54 that this will take place when the corruptible bodies of sleeping saints put on incorruption, and the mortal bodies of those alive put on immortality.

Philippians 3. 21 gives us more light. Here we note it is the Lord's purpose " to fashion anew the body of our humiliation (or the body which humbles us) that it may be conformed to the body of His glory. " We understand " the body of His glory " is the body in which He rose from the dead, the body in which He appeared to the apostles through closed doors and said, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold

me having, " and did **eat** before them (Luke 24. 39. See also Acts 10. 40, 41). If we are correct, **we take** it that this **is** what our " house from heaven " will **be** like; not **a** spirit, but **a** " spiritual body, " having " flesh and bones " **as** the Lord's, so that " **as we** have borne the image of the earthy **we** shall also bear the image of the heavenly " (1 Corinthians 15. 49).

A. G. S.

Questions and Answers.

Questions **from** Atherton. —(1) Colossians 1. 18: "Who is the Beginning "; has this to do with **His** being the Firstborn from the dead?

Answer. —As **we** have in verse 15 an explanation of who He is in whom we have our redemption—" Who is the Image of the invisible God, the firstborn of **all** creation, " so **we** have in verse 18 a further explanation of who the Head of the Body is. " Who is the Beginning, the Firstborn from the dead. " " The Beginning " here **is** undefined and I **take** the view that this description **is** not to **be limited** either to His headship of the Body or to **His** being the Firstborn of the dead, **but is** the **same as** He describes **Himself** to be in Revelation 22. 13, " I **am** . . . the Beginning. "—J. M.

(2) 1 Corinthians 15. 22: Do the two terms " **all** die " and " **all** be made alive " refer to one and the **same** people ?

Answer. —"All" in each **case** is coextensive. Adam **was** the **cause** of death, Christ **is** the **cause** of men being made alive. It **must** not **be** read **as** meaning—So also all " in Christ " shall be made alive. —J. M.

Questions from Birkenhead. —(1) Psalm 6. 5, 1st clause, and Psalm 115. 17. Would these scriptures allow the thought of the possibility of the unconscious **state** of the soul **at any time** after death ?

Answer. —Luke 16. shows that the righteous are in a **state** of conscious comfort, and the wicked in conscious suffering. See also Jude, where Sodom and the other **cities** of the plain are said to **be** in a **state** of suffering—" suffering the punishment of eternal fire. " Revelation 6. 9-11 speaks of the souls of martyrs crying to God for vengeance on their slayers. An unconscious **state** in regard to those " with Christ " could not be very far **better** than the portion of saints on earth.

There **is** no such thing in Scripture **as** " soul sleep, " or an unconscious state, so far **as** the environment of those who have died is concerned. In Psalm 6. 5 we have first **a** body condition: " In death " (as to the body) " there is no remembrance of thee, " for, **as** Ecclesiastes 9. 5, says, " The **dead** know not anything. " You can say what you **will** in the presence of **a** **dead** man, he knows nothing. Life and consciousness have gone.

Then **as** to the soul this verse says, " In Sheol who shall give Thee thanks ? " There is apparently no indication that Sheol **was a** **place** of divine service, though, **as we** have pointed out from Luke 16., it **was a** place where the righteous were in comfort and the **wicked** tormented.

As regards **Psalm** 115. 17, the dead cannot even speak, **far less can** they praise **the LORD**. But the living may say, **as in** verse 18, "**We will bless the LORD**."—J. M.

(2) Ecclesiastes 9. 5-10. Please explain.

Answer. —Regarding these verses, we have to **remember** that **in** the main this book deals with things under the sun, and verses **5** and **6** very particularly relate to the living and the dead as to bodily-condition. To say, in another **sense**, that there is no reward after death would destroy **all** that God says in many places as to the reward of the righteous, and the recompense of the wicked. Surely it is plain that the dead know nothing here, they have no reward here, for their possessions, if they have any, pass to others, and their memory **is** very soon forgotten. Their love, hatred and envy perish and they have no more any portion **under the sun**. Note the words " under the sun. "

Surely it **is** plain that the dead in Sheol have no knowledge, etc., of earthly things, but to say that the dead **in** Sheol are unconscious would be the opposite of what God says elsewhere **as** we have before pointed out. —J. M.

Questions from Ilford. —(1) What does the **figure** of the earthly house denote, **seeing** that the tabernacle **is** our earthly frame ? If this earthly house **is** contrasted with the heavenly house, what does the heavenly house denote ?

Answer. —" Earthly house " **is** the " tabernacle, " which **is** the weak, mortal body of the believer. The house which is " eternal, " and is " in the heavens, " is God's **answer** to the need of this temporal, mortal body. It **is, in** our judgment, described **as** immortality or incorruption in 1 Corinthians 15., which the mortal and corruptible bodies of the living and the dead put on at the Lord's coming. The house not **made** with hands, the building from God, **will** clothe and swallow up **all** that **is** mortal **in** the believer's body. It **seems** to the writer that the house **will** descend and cover the tabernacle and permeate it with immortal life.

(2) 2 Corinthians 5. 9. How can **we** be well-pleasing to **Him**, when **we** are **at** home with **Him** ?

Answer. —If this passage **is** read carefully **as** punctuated it will be **seen** that what the Apostle **is** setting before the mind of his readers **is** a condition of **being** well-pleasing to the Lord, **because we must all be** made manifest **at** the judgment seat of Christ. It is not the thought of being well-pleasing, when saints are **at** home with the Lord. If **we** read it thus, leaving out " whether **at** home or absent, " " wherefore also we **make** it our **a i m . . .** to be well-pleasing unto Him. For **we must all** be made manifest before the judgement seat of Christ, " **we** shall no doubt grasp the Apostle's meaning. The words, " whether **at** home or absent, " are added by the Apostle **as** showing that whether here on earth or with the Lord when **He** comes is **of no** great consequence; the chief **aim in** life, and that which will **be manifest at His** judgment seat, **is** whether or not **we** have **been well** pleasing to Him. —J. M.

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

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EDITORIAL.

We have before us this month the delightful theme of the realisation of our hope to meet **the** Lord **in** the air, to see His face., and to enter upon **the** service which is so beautifully linked with the seeing of His face. There will **be** a real simplification in service then, for the order of it will **be** part of the order of heaven, **and** we shall not have the clouds of earthly life to dull our spirits, and **damp** our ardour. It is pleasant and profitable to **muse** upon the service to be given in resurrection life. There **can** be no doubt that it will pre-eminently be a service of worship, and if that is so then it may help **us in** our present **service** to consider what **is** indicated concerning the heavenly service. "A disciple is one who **has** tasted of the powers of the **age** to come." Worship **is** an eternal work now done in the limitations of the body, but the essential characteristics **remain** the same.

Strictly speaking, worship denotes **an** attitude of mind, which may be associated with **an** attitude of body. It **can** be done **in** silence or with the accompaniment of speech. **Praise is** not worship, but the adjunct of worship. Jacob had finished speaking when he leaned upon the top of his staff and worshipped. The Psalmist says **in** Psalm 95. 6, "**O** come, let **us** worship **and** bow down; let **us** kneel before the LORD our Maker." The four and twenty elders of Revelation 4. 10, before they say anything, do three things: they fall down before the **One** on the throne, they worship Him that liveth for ever, and they cast their crowns before the throne. Posture, acts, and speech are thus the concomitants of worship, but not the worship itself, though we commonly use the word in a much wider **sense** than **is** strictly correct. If we are to learn anything from these examples it **is** that reverence **is** absolutely necessary for true worship. Our service to God should be "with reverence and awe" (Hebrews 12. 28). See Ecclesiastes 5. 1, 2.

It **is** worthy of remark that the very first illustration of worship in the Revelation is associated with the recognition of the Creator, **Him** who liveth for ever, **in** contrast to the created things. It **is** the four living creatures which have no rest as they cry Holy to the great Creator, the Timeless One. It **is** said that they thus give glory and honour and thanks (4. 9). It **is** no strange thought that living creatures lacking the glory and gifts of **men** yet delight to give glory to God. In a coming day all creatures, even those **in** the sea, will make this evident. As the Psalmist confidently asserts, "All Thy works give thanks unto Thee," he leaves **it** to the saints to bestow the blessing (Psalm 145. 10). Which of **us can** adequately listen to the **music** of creation? Addison's lovely hymn speaks of the solemn silence of the heavenly bodies, and yet of their telling forth that the Hand that made them **is** divine. Truly there **is** no speech or language, yet their voice goes out to all the earth.

"And **when** the living creatures shall give glory and honour and thanks," certain others, of a **higher** order of creation, are stimulated to action. Theirs is the higher service. "Awake up, my glory," says the Psalmist (57. 8), and **it is** the glory of a **man** that **he has** a voice and a tongue to express **his** appreciation. Thus the four and twenty elders give a reason for the thanks of **the** living creatures, and theirs **is** the glory to praise God intelligently. **We** shall all do that **in** heaven though we may fail to do so here. If our praise **is** lacking in either depth or height **it is** because we have failed **in** worship, we have not sought to appreciate God and **His** Son. **We** should note **the** little word "when" emphasised above. The intelligent creatures, gifted with **the** ability to speak direct to God, wait **as** it were upon the stimulus of the creatures which can only speak indirectly, of God rather than to God. As those who are called upon to sing praises with understanding (Psalm 47. 7) we would be startled indeed **if** the very stones were to cry out (Luke 19. 40), but no doubt such an experience would rouse us to a sense of our responsibilities.

There **is** another example **in** Scripture **in** which the **same** word "when" has great significance. Jehoshaphat took counsel with the people in the face of the **enemies** of Judah, when they had every reason to **fear** the issue of **the** battle. The result of that taking of counsel (2 Chronicles 20. 21-22) was not so much the ordering of the men of war but that of the appointment of them that should sing unto the LORD and praise the LORD in the beauty of holiness. As their thanksgiving ascended on high, "when" they began to sing and to praise, God set liars in wait. How often does God wait to act until there has been action by us! When our spiritual state **is** low, our discernment of God and **His** grace is feeble, our gratitude for His mercies **is** sparing, when there **is** a spiritual famine in the Assembly, and the voice of thanksgiving **is** feebly lifted, when worship has been de-vitalised, and the glory of man **is** dumb, why should we expect blessing to follow our indifferent service? God says, "Them that honour Me, I will honour."

We cannot possibly over-estimate the importance of reverence in connection with worship. The very schooling of ourselves to consider where we are, and before Whom we are, sweetens and aerates the thoughts, and intensifies the spiritual blessing. The response of our hearts **is** proportional to the stimulus, and it **is** the duty of all true worshippers to maintain the spirit of reverence. One other stimulus to worship and praise **is** in thankfulness, and the apostle pithily sums up **the** nature of our service Godward when he says, "Let **us** have thankfulness (R. V. M.), whereby we may offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe." If even living creatures were thankful because by God's will they were, and were created, what should be the degree of thankfulness of the redeemed! **We** cannot be too thankful, but we can express it in too familiar a way, hence the caution as to reverence and awe, "for our God **is** a consuming fire."

In heaven the external conditions will conduce to a perfect state of reverence before the face of **Him** that sits upon the throne, but **He is** the same God before whose face we now present ourselves, so that we do well to perform earthly service on heavenly principles. A. T. D.

NOTES ON GENESIS.

Genesis 12. 5-20.

Abram leaves Haran, on the death of his father, with Sarai his wife and Lot **his** nephew, and all the souls that he had gotten **in** Haran. They come to Shechem, to the oak of Moreh (teacher). There he was **taught** two lessons, one of adversity on the one hand, for the Canaanite was then **in** the land, and one of promise on **the** other, for Jehovah appeared to him and said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land"; and **as** was proper, **he** builded **an** altar and called upon Jehovah, who had appeared unto him. Adversity, promise and sacrifice, were co-mingled in this great **man's** life, and we trust **in** ours also. From there **he** removed southward to Bethel, and then went still further south. Then **came the famine** with its trial of faith. Alas, he left the land which **was** given to **his** seed. In Egypt we have the eclipse of his faith and almost disaster. It was the seed plot of later domestic unhappiness, and here too was the start of Lot's fall.

Genesis 13. 1-18.

Abram returned " unto the place of the altar, " which he had left, between Bethel and Ai. What a blank there was between his going and returning, so far as altar service was concerned ! There was no altar in Egypt where he could worship. He came back a very rich man in worldly possessions. Often worldly riches signify spiritual poverty. Lot too " had flocks and herds and tents. " Here were two groups with two heads, and it was not long before the cause of cleavage arose. Lack of pasture was the surface reason for the separation, but we must remember that Lot had not been called to Canaan, and his residence in Egypt had played havoc with his spiritual life. Because the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelt in the land, and for the sake of the testimony of the LORD, Abram said to Lot, " Let there be no strife... between me and thee;... for we are brethren; ... separate thyself, I pray thee, from me. " He gave Lot first choice where he would go, and he chose, alas, the well watered plain of Jordan, a very desirable place, but a very wicked one; and Lot moved his tent as far as Sodom. After that Jehovah renewed to Abram His promise of the land of Canaan, and that his seed would be as the dust of the earth.

Genesis 14. 1-24.

This chapter tells of a battle between two confederate armies in the Vale of Siddim, now the site of the Dead Sea. Sodom and Gomorrah were taken and Lot was carried captive. When Abram heard of this he led out his trained men, 318, and pursued after the victorious army, and with the assistance of certain Amorites, he fought and defeated it in a night battle and brought back the captives, of whom Lot was one, and the goods. The king of Sodom went out to meet the victorious Abram, but ere he reached him Melchizedek, the king-priest, met him and strengthened him with bread and wine, and blessed him of God Most High, and received from Abram a tenth of the chief spoils. Christ is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek, as the Hebrew epistle and Psalm 110. declare. When the king of Sodom came, Abram refused his tempting offer. This is a picture of how our High Priest can succour those that are tempted.

Genesis 15. 1-21.

Abram seems to fear the consequences of attacking and defeating Chedor-laomer, and is assured by the LORD not to fear, that He is his shield, and his exceeding great reward. In view of God being his rewarder, he asks, " What wilt Thou give me seeing I go childless ? " He is told that he will have a son and seed as numerous as the stars, and that his servant will not be his heir. Abram believed in the LORD, and his faith was counted unto him for righteousness. He was justified by faith (Romans 4.). God covenants with him, through the covenant sacrifices (see Jeremiah 34. 18, 19, where men passed, in figure, through death in making a covenant, also Hebrews 9. 15-22), to give him the land of Canaan as an inheritance, but ere his seed came into possession, they were to be afflicted 400 years by the Egyptians, which affliction began in the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael, the son of Hagar the Egyptian (Genesis 21. 9; Galatians 4. 29).

Genesis 16. —50.

(Owing to paper shortage, and, in consequence, the reduced size of this magazine, it is necessary to summarise and bring these notes to an abrupt conclusion.)

Sarai's impatience to have children brings Hagar, her handmaid, into the picture drawn in the Holy Scriptures for our instruction. Waiting on the Lord is as important as working for the Lord. Sarai's action led to serious domestic trouble and unhappiness, and eventually the persecution of the chosen seed, Isaac, by Hagar's son, Ishmael. Ishmael is a true type of the flesh and the natural man, as uncontrollable as a wild-ass, " his hand against every man, and every man's hand against him. " Yet for all that, there was no such thing as separation in his experience, as in Isaac and his descendants; Ishmael was to " dwell in the presence of all his brethren. "

In chapter 17. we have the Covenant of circumcision, which is associated with the walk of Abraham, that is, Abraham's conduct before the LORD. In connexion with this, God promised "to be a God" to Abraham and to his seed after him. Paul says, "Circumcision indeed profiteth, if thou be a doer of the law: but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is become uncircumcision" (Romans 2. 25). He also says, "I testify again to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law" (Galatians 5. 3). Though Ishmael was circumcised when he was thirteen years old, it meant but little, for he never lived as Abraham wished him to live, when he said to the LORD, "Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee!" His circumcision became as uncircumcision, to use Paul's words.

Chapter, 18. gives us the angelic visitation to Abraham and the promise of the birth of Isaac that year. Paul says that some entertained angels unawares, by which he encourages hospitality. In this chapter too we have Abraham's pleading for Sodom, in view of Lot being resident there. May we all be pleaders for those who are unsheltered from coming wrath!

Chapter 19. follows with the angels in Sodom at the house of Lot, and it gives us an insight into the awful condition of that city. Lot's warning to his sons-in-law falls on deaf ears. Lot's deliverance, Lot's wife, and Lot's daughters, pass before us in the divine record, and against such a dark and melancholy background shines God's remembrance of Abraham and his pleading.

In chapter 20. we have the partial eclipse of Abraham's confidence in God's faithfulness, and God's intervention on his behalf. How clearly the full purpose of Satan is seen in this chapter with reference to Sarah, in view of the birth of Isaac as recorded in the following chapter!

Chapter 21. records the birth and weaning of Isaac, the persecution (as Paul describes it in Galatians), and the casting out of the bondwoman and her son, all of which contain many lessons.

Chapter 22. gives us the supreme test of Abraham's faith in the offering up of Isaac. In consequence of Abraham's obedience we have God's oath in that He swore by Himself relative to the fulfilment of His promises to Abraham.

Chapters 23. and 24. are taken up with the death of Sarah and the bringing of Rebekah from Mesopotamia to be Isaac's wife. In chapters 22., 23. and 24. we have typical pictures of the death of Christ in the offering of Isaac, the casting away of Israel in the death of Sarah (for as Sarah was the mother of Isaac, so is Israel in the pictorial language of Revelation 12. 1-6), and the Church, the Bride of Christ in Rebekah.

Chapter 25. is one of genealogy of the sons of Abraham's wife Keturah, and the sons of Ishmael, followed by the sons of Isaac. Here too we see the importance of the birthright which Jacob bought and Esau despised, the importance of things spiritual over things natural. The believer to-day should never despise or sell his birthright. The subject is one of great importance and profit to seekers after divine things. Here right in the middle of this book enters Jacob, and he continues right to the end, to chapter 50. What a large place God has given to this remarkable man in a book which covers a period of close on 2, 400 years!

Chapter 26. tells of Isaac's trouble amongst the Philistines, who were ever troublesome to God's people. It is important to notice that he digged, again the wells that his father had digged, and called them by the names that his father had called them. We should, if we would be right, adhere to the names given to things in the Holy Scripture. The refusal to do this has led many into serious error.

In chapter 27. we learn that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, that men receive God's blessing. God's purposes stand according to election; neither scheming nor blindness can alter the fulfilment of divine purpose.

Chapter 28. tells how Esau's marriages and his intent to murder Jacob were turned to Jacob's ultimate blessing. God made the wrath of man to praise Him.

In search of a wife and a home Jacob found himself, first of all, in God's house. How strange are God's ways ! Here in Bethel, in the hills about 10 miles north of Jerusalem, rises that stream of divine truth relative to the House of God, which runs throughout all scripture. The House of God is ever on earth, not in heaven, but as is seen in Jacob's dream there was a way or ladder between the House of God and Heaven.

Chapter 29. tells us how Jacob met Rachel, the shepherdess, his future wife. It tells too of Laban's duplicity, and of Leah and her sons.. In the birth of her first three sons Leah sought her husband's love, but when Judah, the fourth, was born, the LORD filled her thoughts. " This time " she said, " will I praise the LORD. " Judah, which means praise, God placed at the head of his brethren, and it is well when we too rise above all natural desires and place praise first.

Chapter 30. describes the domestic struggles of Rachel and Leah in which they built the house of Israel (Ruth 4. 11). Here too is told Jacob's wrestling with Laban in connexion with his hire. His profound knowledge of the art of sheep-rearing does not pass unnoticed by Moses, who was himself a shepherd for many years. The black sheep, and the speckled and spotted goats were to be Jacob's. He had no white ones. This is like the Lord's flock—all were black and spotted sinners. Such is the hire of our Great Shepherd.

In chapter 31. Jacob returns to his own land at the bidding of the God of Bethel and is pursued by Laban, who accuses him of flight and theft of wives, children and flocks, and even his gods; the hist mentioned being taken, not by Jacob, but by Rachel. Puny gods indeed, for Rachel could sit on them ! God intervened and Jacob escaped La ban's wrath. They made a covenant and Galeed was the witness and mark that they were not to pass to do each other harm.

In chapter 32., at Mahanaim, Jacob is met by the angels of God, but he who is met by angels is shortly to meet Esau and this brings into play the wisdom of this man who had deep knowledge of human nature. He was a firm believer in what his great descendant said at a later time, "A gift doth blind the eyes of the wise. " But Jacob had to learn what all astute men who handle divine things need to learn, that dealings with God are of vital importance, and that they must not lean on their own understanding. Thus we have the story of Peniel in which we are told that Jacob was lamed for life, but he had seen the face of God and that far more than compensated for his lameness.

In chapter 33. Jacob meets Esau, finds grace in his sight, but refuses Esau's offer to go with him or to receive the assistance of his men. But, alas, at the end of the chapter he buys a piece of land at Shechem and would have settled there, for there he builded an altar with the loud sounding name of El-elohe-Israel, but this is not Beth-el. How many of God's children have settled down short of THE PLACE—Beth-el, the House of God !

In chapter 34. tragedy entered the home life of Jacob. Dinah opens the door to it by going out to see the daughters of the land, an innocent enough thing to do, it may be thought, but what a sequel this story had ! Simeon and Levi, to wipe out the stain of their sister's disgrace, shed the blood of innocent men, bringing lasting reproach upon their names, and Jacob is greatly troubled.

Chapter 35. tells us of Jacob's return at God's bidding to Beth-el. Ear-rings and gods and filthy garments do not befit the House of God, in Jacob's estimate of the place. Here he builds an altar, and also sets up a pillar as he did at a former time. But he left Beth-el and then trouble like an angry sea beat down upon him. First Rachel died by the way-side in child-birth, next came Reuben's guilty act, and then (passing over the recounting at the end of this chapter of the sons of Jacob, and the death of Isaac, and the genealogy of Esau's descendants in chapter 36.) we have the selling of Joseph in chapter 37., and Jacob's going down to Egypt later on, where he died. It is not ours to say what might have happened had Jacob remained as he was commanded to do at Beth-el, but he left Beth-el and died outside the promised land.

From chapter 37. to chapter 50. the stories of Jacob and Joseph are woven together as the warp and woof of these closing chapters, and space forbids even indicating briefly many precious things that glitter and sparkle in this divine record. Paul in Hebrews 11. puts his finger on *the* pulse of faith which beat high in the bosom of these two men. By faith Jacob blessed the two sons of Joseph, giving them a place amongst the tribes of Israel, and Joseph spoke of the departure of Israel from the land of his glory to a better country, where he himself commanded his bones to be **laid** to wait the day of Messiah. *J. M.*

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The house from heaven.

From Brantford, Ont. —We note from 2 Corinthians 5. that these bodies of ours are spoken of as earthly houses or tabernacles and in them we groan, being burdened. Over against this we observe that we have in prospect a building from God, eternal, in the heavens. The soul of man can be either clothed with a body, or naked when the body returns to the dust from whence it was taken. At first sight the phrase, "habitation which is from heaven" of 2 Corinthians 5. 2 may appear to conflict with the expression "we shall be changed" of 1 Corinthians 15. 52, but we suggest the Apostle refers to the fashioning anew of these bodies of our humiliation that they may be conformed to the body of His glory (Philippians 3. 21).

2 Corinthians 5. 1 presents a difficulty if we take the "we have" to imply, that we shall receive our house from heaven immediately upon the dissolution of our earthly house, which we understand to be death. We suggest it may help us if we view this somewhat in the same light as Romans 8. 30: "whom He justified, them He also glorified." Here believers are spoken of as being glorified and yet for many this **is** still only in prospect. Yet the prospect **is** so positive and assuring that we can speak of those heavenly bodies as though we had them. This throws us back on the last verse of chapter 4. for in so doing we are able to look upon the things that are unseen and eternal. *J. Thomas, Jas. Bell.*

Reunion and the place of meeting.

From Edinburgh. —It appears that some of the saints in Thessalonica had fallen asleep, and as those who were left had not apparently learned the truth in this connection they had reason to be sorrowful. They had turned unto God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven, but evidently they expected Him to come during their lifetime. What then was to become of those who had fallen asleep? Further, what if they also should fall asleep before His coming? Lest this sorrow and uncertainty should undermine the faith of the saints, and lest the labour of the apostle Paul and his brethren should be in vain, they sought to enlighten the saints on this subject. They believed already that Jesus had died and risen again, so, building upon this fact, the writers asserted that, "even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Then they told what would happen at the coming of the Lord.

In our discussions two suggestions were made as to the meaning of the statement, "even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." The first was that the words refer to the souls of those who have fallen asleep, and the inference is that they will be brought back from heaven to earth to be reunited or clothed with their bodies. Then with those who are yet alive and who have been changed, they will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, the whole operation taking place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. A difficulty with regard to this suggestion lies in the words, "will God bring with Him."

The other suggestion was that this statement, built as it is upon the fact that Jesus died and rose again, refers not to His coming, but to the resurrection that will take place at His coming. The following scriptures seem to support this view. "How hath Christ been raised from the dead, the Firstfruits of them that are

asleep " (1 Corinthians 15. 20); and again, " He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also (i. e. those who have fallen asleep) with Jesus, and shall present us with you " {2 Corinthians 4. 14). In this sense, them that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Jesus from **the** dead. Although Christ has been raised, and they are yet to be raised, their resurrection will be a further stage of the resurrection of which He **is** the Firstfruits.

We need not therefore be ignorant or sorrowful concerning those who fall asleep, or concerning their portion at the Lord's coming. For we that are alive shall not precede them, but when the Lord descends from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord **in** the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Loved ones who have been separated, the dead raised and the living changed, will be caught up to meet **Him**, being united into one company.

John J. Taylor.

From London, S. E.—**One** of the great sorrows of this life **is** the separation of loved ones, whether by distance or death. The words we have under consideration were written that the saints might not sorrow, even as the rest which have no hope, and an added assurance **is** given that it **is** by the word of the Lord that these things are made known.

It will be in one vast company that all believers, whether dead or living at **His** coming, will be caught up to **meet** the Lord in the air, to be for ever with the Lord. **All** who are " **in** Christ, " clothed **in** changed and heavenly bodies, will rejoice together **in** their Lord.

It was suggested that the events connected with our Lord's descent, **f. e.** the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, would take place perhaps over a period. Others held the view that 1 Corinthians 15. **52** implies that it will all take place "in the twinkling of an eye." The expression " the last trump " **in** this verse was noted. Verse 14 was commented on, and the reading in the margin preferred, although even this does not **seem** quite clear. [There **is** no scripture which says that the Lord will descend from heaven **in** the twinkling of an eye, though **His** coming **is** often spoken of in this way. The change that takes place **in** the bodies of saints, from beginning to end of the operation, **is** in the twinkling of an eye, and it takes place " at the last trump. " It **is** not clear to the writer whether this **is** the last of a series of blasts, or the crescendo at the end of the blowing of the trumpet. At any rate the word " last " **is** of significance. The Lord's descent from heaven **is in** a shout, **in** voice of archangel, **in** trump of God; the time, long or short, the 4th of Thessalonians does not say. Time as we understand it counts for nothing **in** such an event. If we would be correct in our thoughts we must observe the very words of scripture and leave it at that, without importing our own ideas **to fill in** what God does not say. --J. M. J.]

With regard to the " air. " where the meeting with the Lord take? place, it was thought that this meant literally the air belt surrounding the earth, and not the interstellar space, or " ether. "

A query was raised regarding Revelation **20. 5**, which states that the resurrection which will take place prior to the millennium **is** " the first resurrection. " The resurrection **of** the dead in Christ would be considered, it was thought, as something apart from this first resurrection, but the help of the editors **in** this will be appreciated. [Those who are **of** the first resurrection " shall reign with **Him** (Christ) a thousand years. " Compare this with 2 Timothy **2. 12**, " If we endure, we shall also reign with Him "; and he would be a bold man who would say that all who are " **in** Christ " endure " **in** the present sphere of testimony and service for Christ. **All** who **are** " in Christ " will go to **be** with **Him** at **His** coming, for " whether we wake (watch, R. V. M.) or sleep, we should live together with **Him** " (1 Thessalonians **5. 10**), but not all such shall reign with Him. My understanding of this matter **is** that the Church, the Body of Christ, forms a group of saints who

are contemplated as being raised (though all will not fall asleep) prior to those who are of the first resurrection. The generally accepted idea, of course, is, that the first resurrection includes all who are Christ's, but, in my judgment, scripture does not bear this out. —J. M. J. *E. W. Peel.*

From Manchester. —Unmistakable assurance of reunion with those who have died in Christ is afforded by 1 Thessalonians 4. 13-18. Doubt on this point had troubled some of the saints in Thessalonica, and the Holy Spirit confirms that when the Lord returns to the air, the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Jesus take place first. It is clear from 1 Corinthians 15. 52 that their bodies will be raised incorruptible, and it was thought that these resurrected saints would immediately be caught up in the clouds. The passage under consideration in 1 Thessalonians 4. would not appear to permit the thought of reunion between resurrected and living saints here on earth, prior to their ascension.

It would seem that living saints will be changed and caught up immediately after the resurrection of the dead in Christ, and that reunion will take place in the air. [This is not exactly what 1 Thessalonians 4. says. What it says is—"Then I we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air," so it is evident that a junction is made between the living and the dead "in Christ" prior to their meeting the Lord in the air. — J. M. J.] There appears to be no definite indication whether we shall be engaged with the joy of meeting loved ones before our thoughts are centred in Him. The passage rather stresses the comforting thought that those who die in Christ will not have a secondary place when He returns. It appears that having been caught up into the clouds we shall immediately meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with Him. While there will undoubtedly be joy in recognising one another, earthly relationships will not have the same significance in resurrection (Matthew 22. 29, 30) and it is suggested that we shall be wholly preoccupied with the Lord when He is manifested to us. [Who can say this now?] The tenor of the passage would lead us to expect that the resurrection of dead saints, the changing of living saints, and the meeting with the Lord in the air will take place in rapid succession (c. f. also the urgent note of 1 Corinthians 15. 52, and the lightning speed of the Lord's return to earth as Son of Man—Matthew 24. 27).

It was thought to be significant that the meeting with the Lord Jesus should take place in the air. Ephesians 2. 2 and 6. 12 indicate that the air is a sphere of activity which is dominated by Satan and his satellites. Satanic power is challenged by the choice of the air as the rendezvous between Christ and His Church. Perhaps the descent of the Saviour to the air is also a reflection of His ardent longing for this union. For from Ephesians 4. 10 we learn that He ascended far above all the heavens, while Hebrews 4. 14 speaks of His passing through the heavens, and Hebrews 8. 1 tells us that He sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. Such scriptures impress on us the significance of His descending through the heavens to the air at the time appointed.

It is interesting also that the clouds are associated with His return, for they are frequently mentioned in connection with divine manifestations (e. g., Exodus 24. 16; 1 Kings 8. 10; Psalms 97. 2 and 104. 3). On the Mount of Transfiguration a cloud, overshadowed the Lord Jesus (Matthew 17- 5), at His ascension He was received up into a cloud (Acts 1. 9), and at His return as Son of Man He will come on the clouds of heaven (Matthew 26. 64).. *G. Prasher, Jun.*

From Glasgow. —From the Lord's resurrection we draw the basic principle of our subject of reunion. Paul with the gentleness of Christ comforted the saints at Thessalonica concerning the departure of loved ones: "We would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, *even* as the rest, which have no hope." Truly hope deferred maketh the heart sick.

As the disciples in the boat on Genesaret were troubled unduly by the rough waters and mighty wind, so the saints in Thessalonica were troubled in their hearts as to what would happen to those who had fallen asleep when the Lord returned.

Hence Paul in his letter to them says, " For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. " When we come to the opening words of verse 16, " For the Lord Himself shall descend, " we have the best note struck that could ever fall on a believer's ear, for indeed we shall see Him as He is.

Much discussion centred round the expressions " the shout, " " the voice of the archangel, " and " the trump of God. " Some thought that the shout came from the voice of the archangel through the trump or trumpet of God. 1 Corinthians 15. 52 speaks of the last trump: " for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed. " There will be no uncertainty about this sound, but rather that which will gather the Church together, to be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There was also the thought that this shout' was a shout of encouragement, the voice one of authority, and that the trump of God denoted the triumphant victory. These three things are all connected, being for this one purpose of raising the dead, and gathering the Church in preparation for the rapture.

Fred Harvey.

EXTRACTS.

From Kilmarnock. —In 1 Thessalonians 4. 18-18 we have the reunion of all who are " in Christ. " Not one sleeping saint and not one living saint in Christ will be left on the earth. All will hear the " shout " (or word of command), and living saints who may be dull of hearing will respond to the voice of their Lord.

In John 11. we have a beautiful illustration of the reunion of saints. Sorrow had come into the home by the loved one " falling asleep, " and Martha's restricted knowledge of God's ways thought of her brother rising again at " the last day. " The arrival of the Son of God and His life-giving voice brought Lazarus to life and restore/1 him to his loved ones, while chapter 12. shows- them reunited and in fellowship with the Lord Himself.

From Luke 20. 35 we believe earthly relationships will not be known in resurrection, but surely there will be some recognition of those with whom we had fellowship while on earth. Would the case of Jacob, in Genesis 37. 35, when he says, " I will go down to the grave to my son mourning, " not give some light on this ? David also says of his child, " I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me " (2 Samuel 12. 28). From 1 Corinthians 13. 12 we take it that we shall know things in a way that is not possible now. [It is to me one of the most elementary facts of scripture that there will be recognition in the eternal state. The Lord in Luke 16. 9 spoke of certain receiving their friends into the eternal tabernacles. And in the story of the rich man and Lazarus in the same chapter recognition is plainly taught by the Lord, not only of those who had known each other on earth, but of such as had lived, I judge, long before. Peter, James, and John recognised Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. Will these apostles be less known in eternity than they were in time? Space fails to go into this matter fully, but certain am I that there v, ill be recognition in eternity, as there is in time, though earthly relationships will then be no more. —J. M. J. A. G. S.

From Ilford.—The Apostle draws a contrast between the hope of those in the world who have lost loved ones and those who believe in Christ. In the one case no hope, in the other a certainty of believers in Christ rising again because He has risen. So we may look forward to seeing beloved fellow Christians when the Lord comes. It will indeed be a glorious time to meet again those whom we have loved and with whom we have had sweet fellowship. More than this, we shall be with the Lord Jesus Himself. This is indeed a time for us to look forward to, but we are sure that the Lord Jesus Himself also looks forward to the event with even greater eagerness, for He will be meeting the Church which He has redeemed.

The Lord Himself, who at present is in heaven, will descend and with a shout from Himself, and the voice of an archangel, and the trump of God, a wonderful thing will take place. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the dead shall be

raised and we shall be changed. Then by the mighty power of God we shall be raised to meet the Lord Himself in the air. He will be in the air to meet us. We must presume that the same power by which He was raised to heaven on the day of ascension will be operative in this case when all the saints are raised.

A. S. Glover.

From Cardiff. —It is very evident from 1 Thessalonians 4. 13-18 that the time of the reunion is when the Lord will come for saved ones, and that the place of meeting is in the air.

In John 11. and 12 where we are shown the deep sorrow caused by the death of Lazarus, we find an example of reunion after death. The sorrow was very-great, yet it was not the sorrow of those who had no hope, for Martha said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Nevertheless after such sadness we should expect the contrasting gladness of reunion. In chapter 12. a feast has been prepared and the sisters are with their loved one. Even now is it Lazarus who is the central figure of rejoicing? No, the feast was prepared for the Lord Jesus and it is **Him** that all the attention is being paid. Lazarus is mentioned as "one that sat at meat with him." So it will be at the great reunion. **His** presence will be foremost in our minds, although we shall have been reunited with our loved ones.

A. G. Stockwell.

From Atherton. —Reunion can be seen in two aspects, that of the reunion of dead and living, and that of reunion of both with the Lord Jesus. Regarding the first aspect it is very noticeable that the living when the Lord comes will not precede those that are asleep. The Apostle seems to stress that the living will have no advantage whatever over those that are asleep. But here we have the divine order, the dead in Christ first, then we that are alive. What a grand reunion this will be! This will undoubtedly be eclipsed as both the dead and living are united with Christ. The Lord Jesus Himself seems to lay the thought of this event very much to **His** heart, as we see from John 14. 3: "That where I am, there ye may be also." This is confirmed by John 17. 24: "I will that, where I am, they also may be with Me." Again in Acts 1. 11 we have the words of the angel that He "shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven."

G. Sankey.

From Broxburn. —The Lord would have us know that those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise take precedence over those who have fallen asleep. No advantage will accrue to them. Blessed though it be to remain till the Lord returns, it will confer nothing upon us. Indeed, the dead in Christ shall rise first. It will be theirs to feel the first touch of that divine power, which shall conform both them and us to the image of our Lord.

It is the Lord Himself who shall come for His saints. When the purposes of God for the restoration of Israel begin to ripen, it is the angels who shall be sent forth to gather **His** elect from the four winds of heaven (Matthew 24. 31). Those celestial beings will be **His** servants to set in motion everything that will be required for the accomplishing of that great work. But in our case no angels are in view. None but the Lord is seen and it is into the air He descends. Just as Isaac went out into the field to meditate at eventide, in the direction from which he expected Abraham's servant to arrive with the desired bride, so will the Lord Himself come to meet us. The air will be the meeting place, between the Lord and His saints.

The statement of verse 17 that the dead and living shall "together" be caught up would suggest the possibility of the saints being actually reunited on earth prior to meeting **Him** in the air. God is a God of order, and we can scarcely conceive the thought of a disorderly multitude rising to meet the Lord at the appointed place of meeting. [There is no indication that there will be any such reunion on earth as our friends suggest. We must remember that it is God who speaks of the "first" and the "then" — "the dead in Christ shall rise first," —

then we that are alive... shall together with them be caught up. " The change takes place **in** the bodily condition of the dead and living so suddenly as to be compared to the twinkling of an eye, and I would judge that **He** who catches up His saints will by **His** power place each in **His** place, so that there will be no disorder or confusion **in** the upward flight of the saints to glory. —J. M.].

Henry Dyer.

From Birkenhead. —1 Thessalonians 4. makes clear three definite facts. The saints will be caught up simultaneously from all parts of the globe; the Lord will descend in person from heaven; and the place of meeting will be the air. Not necessarily, of course, the atmosphere of this tiny globe, but perhaps some part of the universe that the eye, or the inventions of man have not yet discovered. [Remembering that the Scriptures were written for ordinary folks like ourselves, I take it that " the air " just means what it says. The presence of the Lord will be very near to the earth, not in some remote part of the universe; though even to say that would be no argument against our friends, for neither time nor space is anything when we are confronted with the fact of infinite power. I take it that the Lord will descend **from** heaven to the air and there He will meet His ascending saints. —J. M.].

The descent of the Lord **is** heralded by the voice of the archangel. This may be only a description of the Lord's voice, but it is just as probable that the hosts of God, led by Michael, may accompany Him. [There is no suggestion that the Lord will be attended by angels in His coming to the air, as in His coming as Son of Man. —J. M.].

It is interesting to note that in a description of a descent or an ascent from or to heaven there is almost invariably a cloud mentioned. This can hardly be merely the ordinary clouding effect of the water vapour in the atmosphere, but is rather an act of God to hide from the view of mortals the person who is ascending. [I am doubtful as to the speculation of our friends. —J. M.]. In Matthew 26. the Lord says that He will descend on the clouds, and as men will then see Him, the cloud will no longer hide Him, but will serve to show **His** glory and terrible power to the earth.

> **L.** **B.** **H.**

From Windermere. —The scriptures dealing most definitely with the subject of reunion (1 Corinthians 15. 51-57, and 1 Thessalonians 4. 13-18) appear to have as a background the following circumstances: —

1. Those who were denying the resurrection of the body (1 Corinthians 15. 12).
2. The safety of those who had fallen asleep (1 Thessalonians 4. 13).
3. The comfort of those who were mourning the loss of loved ones (1 Thessalonians 4. 18).

The truth then annunciated was effective in ministering to the needs of the saints in early times, and **as** the same conditions are with us to-day, nothing less will suffice for our spiritual help and comfort.

As regards the expression " caught up, " the idea of the word used (*Harpazo*) is " to force suddenly " as in Matthew 11. 12, or " take by force. " This word **is** used **in** 2 Corinthians 12. 2-4, " caught up to Paradise "; also in Acts 8. 39, " The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip "; and again in Revelation 12. 5, the man child " was caught up to God and to **His** throne. " These scriptures seem to set forth the manner in which the " power of God " will be used in bringing together the Church to meet the Lord.

" The Lord Himself shall descend. " How beautiful to contemplate this personal return ! Does it not show **His** heart's deep affection for **His** blood bought people ? The descent will be with—

1. A shout (a call, summons, a shout of command).
2. Voice of the archangel (the Lord speaking with archangel voice—John 5. 28).
3. The trump **of** God.

The order should be noted, but **as** all **take** place when the Lord descends from heaven, and affect simultaneously the dead and the living, there/does not **seem** any interval of time in the sounding of the trumpet, albeit **at** the last trump the dead shall be raised and **we** shall **be** changed.

To some* the subject of reunion has a special reference to recognition and **causes** them to look with joy to the meeting again of loved relatives plucked away by death. Without doubt we shall meet our loved ones again. Recognition of saints **is** borne out by 1 Thessalonians 2. 19 and other scriptures. The Apostle speaks of those he **meets** in the Lord's presence, using the words "**ye** are our glory and our joy" (verse 20). **We** therefore learn that recognition **up** yonder has a bearing upon those for whom "**labour** in the Lord" **was** expended in the Lord's service down here. Relatives who are the Lord's will undoubtedly be attached to their kith and kin by their labours on their behalf. In some cases, parents who have prayed and laboured for their children, but who died before their longings were realised, will have great joy in welcoming them in heaven, and of learning that their prayers were answered and their labours rewarded. **T. B.**

From Knocknacloy. —The reunion of believers who **because** of death or other reasons were separated on earth, raised certain **issues** in our mind. It is the cherished sentiment of many hearts that when the Lord comes again there will **be** a restoration of the happy privileges and joys of fellowship between the reunited dead in Christ and living in Christ. Do **we** contemplate that this will be realised actually **as we** ascend to **meet** the Lord? There does not appear to be any scriptural warrant for this assumption. **We** would judge rather that the main thought will be to **meet** the Lord. Surely the anticipation of this will be much stronger even than the desire to **meet** loved ones. Nevertheless **we** believe that all the practical possibilities of reunion **exist** potentially from the moment the Church **is** brought together **at** the Lord's coming.

We observed the importance of the word "together" in verse 17. This confirms the thought that whilst the dead in Christ shall rise first, they will not ascend to **meet** the Lord first, but will be joined by the living in Christ who have been changed. Thus one vast company will rise to **meet** the Lord in the divinely appointed meeting place, the air. **R. Anderson, J. D.**

From Hamilton, Ont. — "For **if** we believe that **Jesus** died and rose again, **T.** so also them that **are** fallen asleep in **Jesus** will God bring with **Him.**" **By** this we understand that when the Lord **Jesus** comes **as** Son of God those who have fallen asleep will be raised and go to be with **Him**, and **we** are assured by the word of the Lord that those who are alive shall in no **wise** precede them. The dead, **as it** were, will be re-united to those who are alive and both shall **meet** the Lord in the air. It is beyond our human apprehension to realize that **so** much can happen in a moment's time—the Lord shall descend, the dead shall **be** raised, **we** shall be changed and together we shall ascend to meet our Lord. [See comment in paper from London.] What a reunion that will be when **we** look upon **Him** who loved **us** and loosed **us** from our sins in **His** own blood!

As **we** look forward to **His** coming it fills **us** with joy and hope, **but it** also reminds **us** of the solemn **fact** which we apply sometimes to the unsaved: "Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." As in that **day** their opportunity is passed, so also is our opportunity for service gone. In the light of this what manner of persons ought we to **be** in all holy living and godliness? **J. Ramage,**

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).'

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EDITORIAL.

Last month we touched upon the theme of the heavenly worship and the lessons we may derive from a consideration of the Revelation, and we desire to return to the subject this month. We have brought before us in later pages the glorious theme of the Lord's coming, when His presence will effectively stimulate our hearts above all that we have imagined to be possible to us down here. The alternation of feelings from the contemplation of His glorious majesty and of His marred visage will surely cause an up welling in the heart which will find expression in the words of the lips. The appearance of the Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, is the signal in Revelation 5. for the adoration of the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders. There has been diversity of opinion as to these elders, some holding that they are redeemed creatures or typical of redeemed creatures, and others holding the view that they are heavenly beings. The arguments for and against these views depend largely upon whether the word "us" should occur in the expression "and hast redeemed us" of verse 9 (A. V.). One thing is certain, that they have an apprehension of the great truth of the worthiness of Christ in relation to the redemption of men, and their hearts are uplifted in song before the throne.

"He that is joyful, let him sing." Is there any cause for real joy comparable with that of the joy of redemption? It required the experience of redemption from Egypt, and the experience of the passage of the Red Sea; to produce in the hearts of the children of Israel those feelings which caused them to burst forth in song: —

I will sing unto the LORD, for He hath
triumphed gloriously:....
The LORD is my strength and song,
And He is become my salvation:
This is my God, and I will praise Him.

In my understanding, the Scriptures do not shew that angels sing, though many hymns suggest that they do so. Angels *say*, and they have not had that deep experience which causes the heart to overflow or the lips to give expression to joyful song. The new song of eternity will doubtless reach to notes beyond our present capacity, the expression of our joy will be clothed in words beyond our present powers of language, but the great and eternal theme will still be the glories and the excellencies and the mercies of the Lord who died for us and gave Himself for us.

The angelic host will share in the giving of praise to the Lamb, when they, along with the twenty-four elders, will ascribe a seven-fold praise to Him. It is worth noting that in Revelation 4. we have a three-fold expression of praise in connection with the created beings, and that when all the **created** things of earth, and heaven, and sea, join together in the praise unto the Lamb, they **express** a four-fold **praise** (5. 13); glory and honour occur in each, power **in** the former, blessing and dominion in the latter. There **is** precision of language, without doubt, in all these things. The power **is** ascribed to God, the blessing and the dominion are **ascribed** to the Lamb. The seven-fold expression of praise to the Lamb (5. 12) leaves out the dominion, but includes the other three ascriptions, together with power, riches, wisdom, and might.

We could profitably take these one by one and consider their aptness and significance in relation to the appreciation of Christ.

After this expression of praise to the Lamb, the four living creatures utter the Amen, and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship. **We** need not again point out the distinction between **praise** and worship, **but it is** desirable to note the Amen. If there **is** one thing that **we** lack it is the fitting **use** of the Amen. It **is** the great concluding note of heavenly worship.

" Amen, one lasting, long Amen,
Blest anthem of eternal days . . . "

Yet in our earthly worship and service we almost grudge the open expression of the Amen. Heaven's hosts waited on the living creatures to say, Amen. It would undoubtedly help to deepen our appreciation of our collective **exercise** if there were more concern **as** to the responsibility to say the audible Amen.

One more scene **is** revealed to **us**, in Revelation 7., when the great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all **tribes** and peoples and tongues, stand before the throne and the Lamb, being arrayed in white robes, and with palms in their hands, and they cry with a great voice, " Salvation unto our God . . . and unto the Lamb. " The angelic host, **as** they contemplate such a marvellous scene, fall down and worship, and begin their **praise** of God with " Amen. " For **ages** they have seen the things of **time** rolled out before them, they have marvelled at the grace of God to fallen men, and they have known, no doubt, of the great sorrow of the Cross. Here **is** part of the great fulfilment, with heaven thronged with a mighty host of the redeemed. Here **is** the moment when they, who have not known the sin of earth by experience, **see** a people raised from the dunghills of earth, to **be** far above the angelic hosts. Not theirs to **be** raised to such heights, and also not theirs to repeat the error of Satan who would have lifted himself to the level of God, **but it is** theirs to say the Amen to the ways of God. There **is** something touching about this, that the angelic host can say Amen and **see** an earthly people raised to heights of heavenly dignity. They **lift** up their voice and utter a seven-fold praise to **Him**, differing only in one thing from the seven-fold **praise** ascribed to the Lamb. In place of " riches " **we** have " thanksgiving. " How apt! Riches are for the Lamb, **but** thanks are expressed to God.

It **is** the intermingling of thanksgiving and praise which constitutes our collective service, **but it** would **be** a very unbalanced service which consciously stressed one **at** the expense of the other. The remembrance of what the Lord has done for **us** will never fade in eternity, and indeed **it is** quite likely that the value of that sacrifice will grow upon us. Heaven **is** not a place where we forget **all** the experiences of earth, and earth should not **be** a place where **we** are not conscious of the heaven **we** are going to. It **is** remarkable that the apostle, after slimming up in Ephesians 2. the theme of the **ages** to come, and the revelation of God's exceeding grace, after having directed our thoughts to the highest glory, says, " Wherefore **remember** . . . " A. T. D.

THE ORACLES OF GOD.

It was amazing to read some time ago that, in London before the War, a hundred Jews (presumably Rabbis) could be found whose knowledge of the Scriptures (Old Testament) was such that they could if need be between them transcribe the whole from memory ! This fact seemed to provide a striking commentary on Paul's words when, speaking of the Jew, he says, " They were intrusted with the *oracles of God* " (Romans 3. 2).

Without any question a vast and largely unacknowledged debt **is** owed by the nations, and particularly by Christians, to the Jew for the way in which he has discharged the solemn responsibility laid upon him. Indeed if Christians had fulfilled their obligations in regard to the New Testament as the Jew has to the Old how much more significant would John's words be to us to-day, " I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth **in** you. " And in writing thus we are neither unmindful of the sad fact that the Jew by his traditions made void the Law, to the preservation of which he had contributed so diligently, or on the other hand of the truth of the words, " The letter killeth but the spirit giveth life. " Alas ! if we, whose *position* is so wonderful, should in any way drift back from the standing of " men of the Book " which undoubtedly characterised our spiritual forebears. Example however **is** better than precept and to view the way in which by the diligence of the Jew the Scriptures have been preserved for us with such remarkably integrity may, under God, prove a stimulus to us to " give heed lo *reading* " and to seek to *know* " the sacred writings which are able to make wise unto salvation. "

Not only have the past 50 years of our history been remarkable for God's dealings in restoring the House and the testimony—" small thing " though it be—but this same period has provided the student of the Word with a wonderful armoury in archaeological discovery and literary research, confirming the veracity of the Scriptures and strengthening his faith.

It is a fact meriting serious thought that so many great minds have directed their powers to the elucidation and establishment of God's word—thus proportionately increasing our indebtedness and responsibility. Not least of such God-used men was Dr. Ginsburg, who in 1895 published the " Massaretico-critical Text of the Hebrew Bible " with, in 1897, his " Introduction. " It is the purpose of these notes to present some of his findings if only as a challenge to us as young men of the Fellowship.

For 500 years, since the days of Wycliffe, Englishmen have been privileged to read the Old Testament Scriptures in their own tongue, but the Hebrew text from which the translations have been made had existed for 1500 years before this, and for a similar period prior to this had been in course of compilation. How **is** it then that we to-day can read the sacred writings with much assurance of their accuracy nearly 3, 500 years after that great scribe—Moses, the Law-giver—first put pen to papyrus ? Our indebtedness is to the Massorites—Jews to whom were " intrusted the oracles of God "—the name signifying the " giving of something into the hand of another so as to commit it to his trust. "

Before, however, reviewing their work, let us briefly consider the great task of the editors—Sopherim as they were called—of the Hebrew Bible. [The Sopherim are " the scribes " of the Gospels. —S. B.]

After the return from the captivity in Babylon, some **500** years before the birth of the Lord, the need became evident for the settling of the Canon and Text of Scripture. A generation had arisen which was largely ignorant of " the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms " ; moreover many uncanonical records existed, certain of them included in the Apocrypha, still to be found in some Bibles at the end of the Old Testament.

This work of editing was commenced under Ezra and Nehemiah and the well-known verse (Nehemiah 8. 8) tells us how " they read in the book, in the law of God distinctly ; and they gave the sense, so that they understood the reading " (see also margin R. V.). The Jewish Talmud comments on this scripture as

follows:—"The book" means *The original Text*; "distinctly" (i. e., explaining it) means the Chaldee paraphrase; "gave the sense" means the *division according to the sense*; and "caused them to understand the reading" means *the traditional pronunciation of the words*. Ezra we remember was "a ready scribe in the law of Moses... even the scribe of the words, of the commandments of the LORD, and of His statutes to Israel" (Ezra 7. 6, 11). According to Jewish traditions, he and Nehemiah were responsible for the establishment of a council known as the "Great Synagogue" consisting at first of 120 members, subsequently, however, reduced to 70 and finally known as the Sanhedrin or Council of the Elders (Luke 22. 66; Acts 4. 5, etc.).

One of the first tasks of this Council of the Sopherim was the transcription of the Text of Scripture from the old Phoenecian characters into that with which the returned exiles were more familiar (Assyrian or Aramaic). This of itself resulted in various readings owing to the interchanging of similar letters. Eventually, however, within two centuries of the birth of Christ agreement was reached as to the standard text of the Hebrew Bible, and so was completed the work of the Sopherim who not only had copied the Text, but decided as to which books were canonical; as to what readings were to be included in the text and which in the margin; as to the treatment of the Divine names, etc.—these and many other *canons* (rules) were carefully recorded. When they had done their work the responsibility of guarding the sacred text now passed to the Massorettes, to whom in a special sense, among all Israel, were "intrusted the oracles of God." [It should be noted that all Israel were "intrusted" *by God*, and the Massorettes only *by men*, even though these were of Israel.] How they discharged their trust will be set forth in a subsequent paper.

A. Chamings.

EXAMPLES OF PRAYER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

"The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Proverbs 15. 8)—what a wonderful aspect to the all-important subject of prayer, that the great God of heaven derives pleasure from His creature's supplications! We are prone to dwell more on man's call in his need for answers to his petitions, but it is God's desire, despite the fact that He knows our troubles and trials better even than we know them ourselves, that we should pray to Him always. (1 Thessalonians 5. 17).

Almost the first recorded example of prayer in the Old Testament writings is, happily enough, that of a woman, illustrating what an important part sisters can take in the matter of prayer. Hannah, wife of Elkanah and mother of Samuel, we read, prayed long and wept sore for a man-child. Prayed—weeping—how deep must have been her desire and how persuasive her petition! "She continued praying before the LORD... now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard" (1 Samuel 1. 13). What a wonderful lesson! How often could those words be reversed, the lips are moving, the voice is heard, but the heart is not speaking! Let us make sure that our prayers, public or private, are heart-talks with our God and not mere lip-service. Hannah says further that she poured out her soul to the LORD in prayer with the result that her request was granted: "For this child I prayed, and the LORD hath given me my petition."

When grievous times came upon the children of Israel at the death of Eli and the loss of the Ark of God, -Samuel, prepared of God, trained and nurtured by a praying mother, stepped into the breach, and his first recorded action on the Ark's return was to call the people together to pray unto the LORD: "And Samuel prayed" (1 Samuel 7. 5). Three times it is repeated in chapters 7. and 8., showing how near Samuel was to his God and how in any extremity, and on every occasion where a decision was required, he turned instinctively to God in prayer. Truly a worthy example of how we should turn away from all of earth to Him who is able to do all for us.

Travelling on in time, we come to Daniel, the one whom we know so well, *who withstood* King Darius and all the laws of the Medes and Persians, inasmuch as they were contrary to the will of the God of heaven. Whence was his source of

power? **Of** Samson, the people and the lords of the Philistines desired to learn wherein his great physical strength lay, but with Daniel there **is** little difficulty in finding wherein his great spiritual strength lay. Daniel 6. 10 records that he went into his house (despite a definite command of the king debarring all supplication to God or man save to himself) and he kneeled **in** prayer three times a day—praying and giving thanks to the God of heaven—not just in view of the extreme danger of the moment, but, as the scripture goes on to record, "as he did aforetime" or "as his custom was." Daniel was distinguished above the leaders of the land because an excellent spirit was in him. In Daniel 9. we find him setting his face unto the LORD God to seek by prayer and supplication with fasting and sackcloth and ashes, what the future would hold in store for the nation of Israel. The portrait gallery of Hebrews 11. gives just a glimpse of the great faith of this man of prayer, the mighty man who "obtained promises and stopped the mouths of lions." It was a faith sustained by prayer, receiving help of God's spirit by earnest supplication.

The great prophets of difficult days, Jeremiah and Isaiah, prayed oft to the LORD, leading the nation of Israel in prayer and thereby fulfilling that wonderful function of the House of God: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples." What a real counterpart should be found in the spiritual House of this dispensation of grace, "praying for all men," as the apostle Paul enjoins in his epistles!

Let us with the Psalmist David fully grasp the wondrous fact that "Thou (God) hearest prayer" (Psalm 65. 2). Let us pray without ceasing.

J. G. Taylor.

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Lord's **Coming** (1 Thessalonians 2. 19, etc.),

Manifestation (1 John 3. 2; Colossians 3. 4, etc.),

Appearing (Hebrews 9. 28), Revelation (1 Corinthians 1. 7).

From Knocknacloy. —It will be observed from a concordance study of the words indicated in the subject for this month that all these words are applied by the Holy Spirit both to the return of the Lord Jesus for the Church the Body and to His return as Son of Man to earth.

The Lord's Coming. The word translated "coming" is derived from a verb meaning "to be there, to be present, to be at hand." It has in its meaning the thoughts of arrival and presence. The word obviously has a wider range of meaning than that of a mere advent, but it **is** also clear that the idea of arrival **is** very prominent. We thought of the word as telling us of the actual arrival in the air of the Lord Jesus in person, and of this arrival as that which will initiate and involve a series of events. The thought of Christ's arrival seems to be prominent in such scriptures as 1 Thessalonians 4. 15; 5. 23; that of **His** actual presence in 1 Thessalonians 2. 19. In 1 Corinthians 15. 23 we have reference to the resurrection in appointed order of all the redeemed, all who are Christ's, and this takes place in **His** coming. We suggest that in this verse there **is** the thought of **His** coming as covering a series of events, which events will be separated by varying intervals of time. [I do not follow our friends here, that the Lord's coming covers a series of events separated by varying intervals of time. The Lord's coming **is** one in two stages, to the air, as Son of God, to the earth, as Son of Man, and the different groups or companies of such as are Christ's rise in association with **His** coming to the air and to the earth. —J. M.]

The hordes Manifestation. This aspect of the Lord's return is conveyed in verbal forms of the word, and the meaning of the verb **is** given as "to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown." At present Christ **is** seated in heaven and **is** actually hidden from persons on earth. When He returns He will be manifested or made visible to **His** own. **Of** those who have died with Christ and have been raised together with **Him** it **is** stated, "Your life **is** hid with Christ in God," The day of manifestation **is** coming. **He** will **be** manifested and

with **Him** we shall be manifested in glory (see Colossians 3. 1-4). When He came to earth and was manifested in the flesh **His** glory was veiled. Though at times He manifested it (see *e. g.*, John 2. 11), yet they were few who beheld **His** glory. [Glory in John 2 cannot, I judge, have the same meaning as when He is manifested in glory. In John 2. He manifested **His** glory in **His** act of changing water into wine. There was nothing of a luminous kind such as was seen on the Mount of Transfiguration. —J. M. J.] But **when** He returns His glory will be manifest and **His** own will be like **Him**, beholding **Him** even as He is (1 John 3. 2). Then again, shepherds of the flock as they tend the sheep should have the consciousness that one aspect of the return of the Lord is that of the manifestation of the Chief Shepherd on whose behalf they have laboured (1 Peter 5. 4).

The Lord's Appearing. In Hebrews 9. 28 we read that "Christ... shall appear a second time." The prominent thought in the word "appear" seems to be that of being seen. The verb is used actively in Revelation 1. 7, "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him." In the great day of atonement in Israel the high priest entered into the holy place to perform the services directed by the LORD. For a time he was unseen by any human eye. Then he emerged again, he appeared, he was seen, i This may perhaps serve as an illustration. The Lord Jesus after **His** resurrection entered into heaven itself. He will appear again, He will show Himself, **He** will be seen by **His** own. He was seen by men nailed to the Cross when He died as the great Sin-bearer. He will not be seen thus again.

The hordes Revelation. This word is close in meaning to the word manifestation, but it seems to be more comprehensive. In relation to the Lord's return it seems to suggest that associated with the coming of the Lord, **His** appearing and manifestation, there will be a great unveiling of Christ to **His** own, disclosing to them His Person, His glory, His offices, His functions. In particular it would appear to us that the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ will have as a prominent feature the Lord's office and work as God's ordained Judge, and the context in which the expression is used in 1 Corinthians 1. 7; 1 Peter 1. 7, 13 would suggest its connection with the Judgment Seat of Christ. *R. Anderson (Jun.), John Drain.*

From Birkenhead. The various words cited in the syllabus are used in association with the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Parousia (noun): often translated "presence" in R. V. margin. The verb is used in Acts 10. 33, being translated as "present." It describes the period following an arrival, as well as the arrival itself, but the period has always a definite conclusion. It is used to describe the period which begins with the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ into the air to meet **His** saints (1 Thessalonians 4. 15; 2 Thessalonians 2. 1; 1 Corinthians 15. 23; James 5. 7), and continues until **His** revelation and manifestation to the world—the manifestation (*Epiphaneia*) of **His Parousia** (2 Thessalonians 2. 8). [I am doubtful as to the coming of the Lord covering the period from **His** coming to the air to **His** coming to the earth. The Lord's coming, presence or arrival, is either associated with **His** coming to the air or to the earth, but never, so far as I know, with the interval between these events. —J. M. J.] This period, we suggest, synchronises with the "day of Christ" (Philippians 2. 16). [The "day of Christ" is the day of **His** coming for saints of this dispensation of grace, with which is evidently associated the Judgment Seat of Christ. Would not our friends' suggestion lead to confusion between the "day of Christ" and the "day of the Lord," the latter day being ushered in by the Lord's manifestation or appearing to men in judgment?—J. M. J.] During the *Parousia* of the Lord in the air Paul expected to give account of his stewardship at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 4. 1-5, 1 Thessalonians 2. 19).

The word *Parousia* is also used to describe the period commencing with the coming of the Son of Man, during which **He** deals with the nations in preparation for **His** millennial reign (Matthew 24. 27).

Phaneroo, *Optomai*, and *Apokalupsis*. We suggest that these words are used to describe in different ways various features of our Lord's return without necessarily fixing our attention on a given point of time. Thus, we would judge, that the *Apokalupsis* of 1 Corinthians 1. 7, takes place at a different point of time from that of 2 Thessalonians 1. 7. The former occurs during the *Parousia* of the Son of God "in the air," the latter during the *Parousia* of the Son of Man on the earth.

Phaneroo, "to be manifested," means more than "to appear," namely, "to be revealed in one's true character." The Lord Jesus will be manifested to His saints at His *Parousia* "in the air." "We shall see Him even as He is" (1 John 3. 2). The effect of this will be that "we shall be like Him." Subsequent to this we shall be manifested with Him in glory (Colossians 3. 4). The likeness of our Lord will then be seen in us for ever. It will radiate from our countenances: "His name shall be on their foreheads" (Revelation 22. 4).

Optomai: This word means "to be seen." It is used in Acts 1. 3 to describe the appearances of the Lord to His disciples during the forty days between His resurrection and ascension, and elsewhere to describe the appearances of angels. The reference in our syllabus (Hebrews 9. 28) appears to be the only instance in which it is employed in association with the Lord's return. This appearing is here connected with His priestly office and bears some analogy to the coming forth of the High Priest from his unseen service within the sanctuary into the vision of the waiting people outside the tabernacle.

Apokalupsis means "an uncovering." All awaits the great unveiling, the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will be revealed first to the saints of this dispensation, later to the righteous dead of former dispensations, then to those on earth at His coming as Son of Man, and finally to those who will be raised to appear at the Great White Throne. At His revelation will be brought, to some, grace, glory, praise and honour; to others, vengeance and eternal destruction. [I do not follow this dissection of the Lord's coming—"later to the righteous dead . . . then to those on earth." Does this mean a distinction in time as well as in fact?—J. M. 'j.

From Liverpool. —The writers of the New Testament spoke often of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as they sought to encourage the saints by enlarging on this great hope they used different words to describe that advent. These words are not used indiscriminately, but their derivations indicate certain aspects, certain lines of thought, which the writers desired to emphasize in connection with the Lord's second coming.

The word in 1 Thessalonians 2. 19 (*Parousia*—presence) seems to be limited simply to the thought of expecting a person, our Lord Jesus Christ in this case. The same word is used by the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 7. 6 to refer to the arrival of Titus, and similarly in 1 Corinthians 16. 17. The disciples had experienced the joy of fellowship with Him in daily life, and their consolation in His absence was to look forward to the time when they would again be with Him, in His presence.

The word manifestation (*Phaneroo*) seems to take us beyond the thought of His presence, either with us or in the world. A consideration of some of the scriptures in which the word is used may help us to understand its meaning. 2 Corinthians 5. 10 refers to our manifestation before the Judgment Seat of Christ, when what we are now will be made clear before the Lord. Colossians 3. 4 says: "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with Him be manifested in glory." From the context we understand that we died with Christ so far as this world is concerned, and as He was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven, we have been raised and "made to sit with Him in the heavenly places" (Ephesians 2. 6). Our lives are "hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3. 3): "As He is, even so are we in this world" (1 John 4. 17). The world saw Him no more after His body was placed in Joseph's tomb. The same thought can be observed in 1 John 3. 2 where we read, "Now are we children of

God. " The world cannot see us as such (although we ought to reflect the likeness in our lives), " and it **is** not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him. " It will be made clear to the world when we return with Him that we are children of God. In connection with that time the following may be read with profit. (Zechariah 14. 1-9; 2 Thessalonians 1. 7-10; Jude verses 14, 15; Revelation 1. 7; Revelation 17. 11-16).

The " appearing " of Hebrews 9. **28** simply means "to be seen. " He now appears at the right hand of God for us as Advocate and Intercessor, unseen except by the eye of faith, but when He shall appear for us a second time, we shall see **Him** as He is.

The fourth word, revelation or unveiling (*Apokalupsis*), **is** used by the Holy Spirit to bring before our minds the whole vista of the course of events from the shout of the Lord when He returns for **His** saints to the final restoration of all things to the will of God, when we shall indeed behold **His** glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. *G. Jacques, R. S.*

From Windermere. —The word " coming " **is** more frequently used in the A. V. In almost every instance the original word **is** *Parousia*, which literally means presence, and **is** so rendered by the revisers' marginal notes. Therefore it may be concluded that the word translated " coming, " speaks of an arrival and the consequent presence of the person who has come. The word *Parousia* **is** used in the following connections: —

- (1) The Lord's first coming: 2 Peter 1. 16.
- (2) The Lord's coming for the Church: 1 Thessalonians 5. **23**; James 5. 7, **8**; 2 Peter 3. 4, 12.
- (3) **His** coming with **His** saints: 2 Thessalonians 2. 8.
- (4) The Man of Sin: 2 Thessalonians 2. 9.
- (5) The Lord's coming as Son of Man: Matthew 24. 3, **27, 37, 39**.
- (6) Stephanas and others: 1 Corinthians 16. 17.
- (7) Titus: 2 Corinthians 7. 6, 7.
- (8) Paul: 2 Corinthians 10. **10**; Philippians 1. **26**.

These scriptures make it clear that not only **is** the Lord's momentary [?] coming alluded to, but also **His** presence with **His** blood bought Church from that moment onwards.

The word used in the original in 1 John 3. 2 and Colossians 3. 4 **is** *Phaneroo*, meaning to make visible, lay bare, reveal. This **is** translated in the A. V. by the word " appear. " It would seem that the translators of the R. V. concluded that something more than to appear was intended, and the word " manifested " **is** substituted. The meaning of manifested **is** " to be revealed in one's true character " which **is** something more than to appear only. The nine instances in the Gospel by John where the same word **is** used support this view.

In the syllabus reference **is** made to Hebrews 9. **28**. The Greek word here **is** *Optomai*, meaning " to see, " or in the passive sense " to appear. " This word **is** used **57** times in the New Testament, *e. g.*, four times in 1 Corinthians 15. 5-8, translated in the R. V. " appeared, " in the A. V. " was seen. "

The word in Corinthians 1. 7 **is** *Apokalupsis*. This word **is** not used very frequently in reference to the Lord's coming. It **is** used in 1 Peter 1. 7, **33**, and in relation to the judgments of God in 2 Thessalonians 1. 7, and Revelation 1. 1. The significance of the word **is** "to unveil. " *T. Barnett.*

From Hamilton, Ont. —Well may we ascribe blessing to God who has begotten us again unto a living hope, and are now guarded by the power of God, through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, and well may the proving of our faith be found unto praise, and glory, and honour, at the revela-

tion of Jesus Christ. The end of our faith will give place to the sight of Himself and ours become complete salvation, for He shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to them that wait for Him, unto salvation. Waiting is our present attitude and that for the fulfilment of the promise. " This Jesus shall come. " He who was the Word, and became flesh and dwelt among us, again cometh in the flesh. The Lord HIMSELF shall descend from heaven, —we shall meet Him in the air, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord. What a blessed prospect, to be with the Lord from heaven ! This thought should stimulate us to strive for effectual sanctification, that our spirit, and soul, and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is coming from the place of our citizenship to perfect us as citizens, and to do so shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation and conform it to the body of His glory, and so in the manifestation of Himself we also with Him shall be manifested in glory. Beloved, we know that if He shall be manifested we shall be like Him for we shall see Him even as He is, but let us not forget the sobering thought bound up in the exhortation, " My little children, abide in Him, that if He be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him at His presence. " Let us call to remembrance what we were, and still are of ourselves, and consider that He is not ashamed to call us brethren.

Then in the light of the above let us be sober and set our hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ, yea, looking for the blessed hope, and the appearing of the glory of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. What is our attitude in relation to His appearing ? Is it similar to that of the Apostle ? Thus spake Paul, " Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give to me at that day, and not only to me, but to *all* them that have *loved* His appearing. " If He Himself is sincerely the object of our love, and we can truly say, "Whom not having seen we love, " then we shall surely anticipate with waiting and watching the day of the revelation of Himself. Like David and Jonathan, being knit together in love, we shall thus be unproveable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. May the daily language of our lips and hearts be Maranatha, Amen; come, Lord Jesus.

John Young.

EXTRACTS.

From Atherton. —1 Thessalonians 2. 19 speaks of the saints as " our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing " in the coming or presence of the Lord. (*Parousia*). This word may refer to the time when we meet Him. In the verse before us, we are taken to the Judgment Seat of Christ, indicating that the thought here goes beyond His arrival and covers a period of time.

In Hebrews 9. 28 we have brought before us that which is past, present and future. The past when He was once offered as the Sin-bearer; the present in the waiting attitude of those who have already known salvation from the penalty of sin and are waiting for His second appearing; the future when we shall be taken from the presence of sin altogether.

The revelation of the Lord Jesus covers a very wide field, and goes far beyond the period of the Lord's coming for us.

G. A. Jones.

From Glasgow. —The manifestation mentioned in 1 John 2. 28 appears to be an intimate one when the saints meet the eyes of the Lord, for everything which would tend to make us conscious of guilt will be settled before His manifestation to the world. Then they will behold Him whom they despised accompanied by those whose lives are hid with Christ in God, who to them had been " the filth of the world, the off scouring of all things " (1 Corinthians 4. 13). The unlovely things which mar us now will be gone for " we shall be like Him, for we shall see **Him** even as He is " (1 John 3. 2). What searching of hearts it should arouse as the many traits which are ours are surveyed in the light of that day when we shall be manifested with Him in glory (Colossians 3. 4) to be seen of men and bring praise to **His** name !

Peter ever remembered the day on the Mount of Transfiguration, for as an eye-witness of such majesty an indelible impression had been stamped on his heart and mind. A foretaste of the glory which shall be revealed was experienced on that day (1 Peter 5. 1). The manifold grace of God in all its fulness will be displayed and its effects seen at that revelation (1 Peter 1. 13). Paul also reminds us of that glory which shall be revealed to usward when, as we gaze upon that blessed One, we shall be constrained to say as one who beheld the ascent of Solomon,⁴⁴ "The half was not told me."

From Leicester. —Here on earth we can but dimly comprehend the wondrous life that we possess in Christ (Colossians 3. 3, 1 John 3. 2), but when He is made manifest, the scales will for ever drop from our eyes, and we shall be partakers of His glory.

In Luke 24. we see the appearing of the Lord Jesus to the two disciples, whereof they could say, "Was not our heart burning within us?" But when He was revealed unto them, though but for a fleeting moment, they could not contain themselves. So it may be at His coming that the moment of His appearing will precede the full realisation of His person, which will flood our hearts with joy unspeakable.

So these things are written not only that we might have hope, but to stir us up to walk worthily of Him who called us, actively awaiting His coming (1 Thessalonians 1. 9-10), loving His appearing (2 Timothy 4. 8), and earnestly desiring His revelation (Romans 8. 19). **F. B.**

From Manchester. —It seems that the word *Parousia* is most frequently used in the New Testament to describe the return of the Lord Jesus, whether for the Church, or as Son of Man (see 1 Thessalonians 4. 15 and Matthew 24. 27). Whether referring to the resurrection of the saints (1 Thessalonians 4. 15), our condition of heart at His return (1 John 2. 28), patience in view of that hope (James 5. 7) or the dissolution of the heavens and the elements (2 Peter 3. 12), we find the same term employed. This may suggest the comprehensive significance of the Lord's *Parousia*, and in such a scripture as 2 Peter 3. 4 it would seem to embrace both His coming as Son of God and His return to earth as Son of Man.

The word translated "appear" in Hebrews 9. 28 is understood to come from a root meaning "to gaze with wide-open eyes as at something remarkable." Its use in other connections bears out this thought, each occurrence being associated with a startling or unique incident (*e. g.*, Matthew 9. 4; Luke 1. 11; Acts 2. 3; Revelation 12. 1). Hence the use of this word to describe the Lord's return for those who wait for Him would seem to emphasize the wondering and glad surprise of that happy advent.

Another Greek word (*Epiphaneia*) is translated "appearing," as in 1 Timothy 6. 14, 2 Timothy 4. 1, 8, and Titus 2. 13. It seems to bring out the thought of the brightness of the glory of His return, and probably includes both aspects of His coming. Thus Timothy was to keep the commandment until this appearing, evidently at the Lord's return for His saints. [I judge the appearing of 1 Timothy 6. 14 to be the Lord's coming to earth. —J. M.] In 2 Timothy 4. 1, however, "His appearing and His kingdom" would seem to have a broader significance, including the Lord's appearing in glory to the world. **G. Prasher, Jun.**

From London. —Associated with the hope of the coming of the Lord is the reward of all those who have been instrumental in leading souls to Christ, even the glory of meeting them in the presence of the Lord (1 Thessalonians 2. 19). From this it may be deduced that there will be mutual recognition in heaven.

"Now are we children of God" (1 John 3. 2). While in this scene it is our privilege to put on Christ; that is, to grow into His likeness or to be conformed to the image of God's Son. That which is our aim will be our glory at His appearing, for we shall be like Him. Meanwhile we may in degree bear His image (*c. f.*, 2 Corinthians 3. 18, and 1 Corinthians 13. 12).

At His first coming the Lord **must** needs suffer, but God raised Him from the dead and He is now seated at God's right hand. With man the next stage after death is judgment. With Christ it is the bringing in of final salvation for those who wait for **Him** (c. f. Romans 13. 11). Christ's return will mark the completeness of **His** work. He shall see of the travail of **His** soul and shall be satisfied.

When considering 1 Corinthians 1. 4-7 there was some diversity of opinion. Was Paul thanking God that the saints in Corinth came behind in no **gift**, or was he showing concern on their behalf having in view the revelation of those things done in the flesh by each one, at the Judgment Seat of Christ? [I cannot understand what our friends wish to know. Paul thanked God that they came behind in no gift, having been enriched in Christ **Jesus** in all utterance and knowledge, with the consequent **result** that the testimony of Christ **was** confirmed in them. The Lord **Jesus** would confirm them unto the end that they should **be** unprovable in this present day, which **is** the day of the Lord **Jesus** Christ. See also 1 Corinthians 5. 5; 2 Corinthians 1. 14. —J. M. J. ']

It **was** suggested that "the gift" referred to is not a spiritual **gift** as in 1 Corinthians 12. 4, but refers back to chapter 1. 4, indicating the inward graces of Christian life. *E. C. Leamy.*

From Ilford. —The coming, appearing, manifestation, and revelation would seem from a study of the scriptures given to be four aspects of one and the same Lord **Jesus** would confirm them unto the end that they should be unprovable in event. We have seen in previous studies that the coming of the Lord **Jesus** Christ for His own **is** most definitely assured, and **is** foretold by the Lord Himself. In connection with the fourfold view of His coming under consideration, a common factor **is** that His saints are associated with it and, moreover, the fruits of a Christian life are prominently brought before **us** as a goal to be aimed at (1 John 3. 2; 1 Thessalonians 3. 13; 1 Thessalonians 5. 23). **His** coming is a blessed hope, but it should **be** a sobering truth. Even such a grand anticipation should have a practical influence on our daily lives here and now. In the first place it **is** something for which we should be prepared. As we are exhorted in 1 Corinthians 1. 7 we should be "waiting for the revelation of our Lord **Jesus** Christ."

It **is** a wonderful fact that when **He** **is** manifested we shall be like **Him** for we shall **see Him as He is**. No longer with the eyes of faith "through a glass darkly," but then "face to face." The great redemptive work accomplished He hath "entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," and rejoicing in **His** finished work our day by day anticipation should be His appearing a second time (Hebrews 9. 28).

We must also bear in mind in studying the subject of the Lord's coming that the Scriptures speak plainly not only of a coming for **His** saints, but also of a coming with **His** saints. What **is** divinely revealed concerning this appearing should also have a practical effect on our manner of life. **His** appearing for us will be a time of untold joy to **us** and to **Him**, but our appearing with **Him** will have terrible repercussions (see Jude verses 14, 15; 2 Thessalonians 1. 7-10; Revelation 1. 7; 19. 11-16). Then **He** will come as Judge "rendering vengeance to them that know not God." *A. G. Jarvis, Jun.*

From Edinburgh. —The saints at Thessalonica were the fruit of the labours of the writers of this epistle, and **because** of their "bright testimony were also their glory and their joy. Further, in view of the coming of the Lord, they were their hope, joy and crown of glorying. In that day these saint* **will** be the evidence of the work of the Apostle-Paul and his brethren, who will rejoice to **see** that their labour has not been in vain. Whatever fruit these saints have borne will **add** to this rejoicing. The hope, joy and crown of glorying are eternal things. They will be realised **at** the Lord's coming, but will continue eternally.

⁴⁴ The Son of God has been manifested already in certain ways (see 1 John 3. 5, 8; Acts 10. 40-41) and **He** has been manifested to **us** (see John 14. 21-23).

But the manifestation referred to in 1 John 3. 2, and Colossians 3. 4 is evidently of a different nature, being future, and connected with His coming (see 1 John 2. 28). The thought of this should encourage us to purify ourselves and to seek to be conformed to His image: This latter we can do only in a spiritual sense meantime, but in that day our bodies will be conformed to His.

[Several contributors have associated Colossians 3. 4 with the Lord's coming to the air, but is it so? The manifestation of verse 4 must be the contrast to the hiding of verse 3. Hid from whom? manifested to whom? would be fruitful questions to answer. If it is, as it seems to be, hid from men, it must also be manifested to men, and not simply the Lord's manifestation to His saints. This I judge is the obvious meaning of "manifested" here. —J. M. J.]

The saints at Corinth were waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. To this Peter refers in his first epistle (chapter 1. 7, 13) and in the Book of Revelation we have the revelation of Jesus Christ as given to the Apostle John. Although in a measure we have received a revelation of Jesus Christ we wait for a fuller one, which as far as we are concerned will begin at His coming to the air, and will continue throughout eternity. "Now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known" (1 Corinthians 13. 12). Then His love, His grace, His righteousness and all His characteristics will be fully revealed. *Alex. Taylor.*

From Vancouver. —A careful study of the scriptures where the Lord's coming, appearing, manifestation or revelation are mentioned, should help us to distinguish between things that differ, and will preserve us from falling into confusion of thought which abounds to-day regarding this important subject. An erroneous teaching exists that there is only one appearing, both for saved and unsaved, which will take place at the conclusion of the seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy. This implies that the saints of the present dispensation who are alive on earth must pass through the great tribulation. It is, however, made very clear in the Scriptures that this is not so. The Lord Jesus will first come to the air for His saints, at which glorious event both the living and the dead in Christ will be raised and summoned into His presence. This is the first unfulfilled prophecy which must come to pass, and will take precedence over any of the other prophetic events which herald His appearing as Son of Man and the setting up of the kingdom. (See 1 Thessalonians 4. 13-18, and 1 Corinthians 15. 50-54).

In searching for O. T. shadows concerning the Lord's coming we thought of Joseph, and in Genesis 41. 1 we read, "It came to pass at the end of two full years that Pharaoh dreamed a dream." This time had elapsed since Joseph suffered the injustice in Potiphar's house, at which time he was imprisoned. In chapter 45. we read of the time when he was manifested to his brethren, and their evil plight is but a shadow of Israel's sons in their dire need at the close of the great tribulation, Awaiting mercy and deliverance. Nearly two thousand years have run their course, since the rejection and crucifixion of Christ at the hands of His Own people, and the time of His appearing is drawing near. *R. Armstrong.*

Question and Answer.

Question from Knocknacloy. —Does the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ mentioned in 1 Timothy 6. 14; 2 Timothy 4. 8, refer only to that stage, of His coming indicated by the word in 2 Timothy 4. 1; Titus 2. 13; 2 Thessalonians 2. 8 (manifestation)?

Answer. —Yes, I judge that these scriptures all refer to the same appearing of the Lord, His appearing to men and not simply to His saints. —J. M.

BIBLE STUDIES.

" Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

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THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Lord's Coming (1 Thessalonians 2. 19, etc.),

Manifestation (1 John 3. 2; Colossians 3. 4, etc.),

Appearing (Hebrews 9. 28), Revelation (1 Corinthians 1. 7).

From Victoria, B. C. —We understand that the word " coming " in 1 Thessalonians 2. 19, refers not to the point in time of His coming, but rather to a period of time as suggested in Philippians 2. 16, where Paul speaks of glorying in the " day of Christ. " In 2 Corinthians 1. 14, we see that the saints and the apostle will glory in the day of our Lord Jesus. The R. V. M, has the word " presence " for " coming " in 1 Thessalonians 2. 19, and it could be rendered " at His presence " or " *Parousia*. " This will begin when the Lord comes and includes the " day of Christ. "

It was the desire of the Lord Jesus that His disciples should be in His presence and behold His glory (John 17.). As He lived, so the child of God shall live also. Saints who were nothing in this world will be associated with His glory and majesty.

When Christ who is our life shall be manifested, then the saints shall also be manifested with Him. Throughout the ages to come the saints will be manifest with Him, showing forth in the church the manifold wisdom of God. [Note, however, the force of the word " now " in Ephesians 3. 10. This manifestation of the wisdom of God is accomplished on earth in the period now present, though of course eternity will give a fuller manifestation. —A. T. D.]

Perhaps an illustration of manifestation may be seen in the incident when the Lord appeared to the two on the way to Emmaus. They did not know Him while He unfolded the Scriptures to them by the way, but finally He was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Hebrews 9. 28 shows that the Lord Jesus will appear or show Himself to those that wait for Him, not to make propitiation for sin, but to cause all who have believed on His name to enter into their salvation.

In 1 Corinthians 1. 7; we have the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, which signifies the uncovering or revealing of Himself to us (see also 1 Peter 1. 7). In 1 Peter 4. 14, His glory is unveiled before all and will be something for the saints to rejoice in. However, the revelation of the Lord Jesus seems to be much associated with His return as the Son of Man, when He will be revealed in power and flaming fire to the world.

R. A. Fryer* P. T.

The Judgment Seat (or Bema) of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5. 10, Romans 14*: 10.

From Kilmarnock. —1 Corinthians 4. 1-5. According to these verses, the Apostle seems to realise that he is being judged by some of the saints, and points out to them that this "is a matter of no consequence, because it is the Lord who will judge or examine him when He comes. We understand this refers to the *Bema* of Christ when all shall be made manifest and " each man shall have his praise from God. " Service that may have been applauded by men will then be assessed at its true value.

2 Corinthians 5. 9, 10. The Apostle's ambition (which should be ours also), was " to be well-pleasing unto Him. " ;

Although there is "no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, " because of His atoning work, from this scripture we learn that all saints, as individuals, must be made manifest before the tribunal or *Bema* of Christ, as to their works since conversion. How important then that we seek to please Him, who always did the things that pleased the Father (John 8. 29)!

In 1 Corinthians 3. 10-15, we think the Apostle was viewing a collective work. He spoke of himself as a " wise master-builder, " having laid the foundation of the Church in Corinth, while others were building thereon. He warned them, in view of the testing day, to see that the material used was of the right sort and would be able to stand the test of the righteous Judge. We think this is a word in season especially for overseers.

In Hebrews 13. 17 (R. V. M.), saints are exhorted to be "obedient" and "submissive " to rulers, so that they (the rulers) may be able to give an account with joy and not with groaning.

As the *Bema* of Christ will take place when the Lord comes, which may be very soon, we should each so exercise ourselves that our behaviour and works may be approved by Him and that we may receive a " full reward " (2 John 8).

A. G. S.

From Ilford. —In considering this subject, it is helpful to notice from various scriptures in the Old Testament that a judgment day was a long established purpose in the mind of God.

In Psalm 62. 12 we read, "Also unto thee, O LORD, belongeth mercy: For Thou renderest to every man according to his work. " (See also Genesis 18. 25 and Proverbs 24. 12). It is clear from such scriptures that the thought of judging His people was no new one, and we can now turn to scriptures which point to the One whom God has ordained as Judge. " For neither doth the Father judge any man, but He hath given all judgment unto the Son " (John 5. 22: see also John 5. 27, Acts 10. 40-42, and 17. " 31). •

According to* Romans 14. 10-12 and 2 Corinthians 5. 10, it is obvious that we shall be judged according to the use made of the gift which each has received, and also according to the light given. This brings a great responsibility on each one of us who has been redeemed through the precious blood of Christ, especially when we remember that each man's work will 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. " May each one of us be so using the gift we have, and be so living, that we may hear from the Master in that day, " Well done, good and faithful servant, " and also receive the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give. For the day is not far hence, as we can see by Revelation 22. 12:

" Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to render to each man according as his work is. "

E. H. Jarvis.

From Atherton. —A few outstanding questions were raised regarding the Judgment Seat of Christ. (1) Will judgment be delegated to a number, or will one alone judge? In the R. V. text we note a slight distinction between the two

scriptures chosen for our consideration— " Judgment Seat of Christ " (2 Corinthians 5. 10), and " Judgment Seat of God" (Romans 14. 10). These terms do not clash, but indicate to **us** that **God is** going to judge through or in **His** Son. (See John 5. 22, 26, 27.) The Lord Jesus will Himself judge and there will be no delegation to others. (2) Who are to be judged ? Only believers, it would appear, of this present dispensation, seeing that only they are raised at this particular time. For it seems that each judgment, including the *Bema* of Christ and those subsequent to it, will immediately follow some phase of the resurrection (see Revelation 20. 11-13). The words of 2 Corinthians 5. 10 are very comprehensive, " **We must all** be made manifest. " (3) Where will the judgment take place ? When the Lord comes we shall not meet **Him** in heaven, or upon the earth, but in the air, which **is** at least very suggestive (Revelation 22. 12). It was thought that this would be the place of judgment, for as our failure in many things will be revealed, it could not take place in heaven (see 1 Corinthians 4. 5). [Does this follow ?]. As our failure will be brought before us at this time, there will be many tears accompanied by grief or groaning (see Hebrews 13. 17, R. V. M.), and we find no mention whatever **iii** God's word of tears or grief in heaven. On the other hand it was suggested that the Judgment Seat of Christ will be set up in heaven itself and not in the air, and that when Christ comes for **His** own we shall be taken direct to heaven, passing through Satan's domain. It was not thought likely that the Lord would set up His place of judgment in the midst of Satan's sphere as prince of the power of the air.

The parable of the talents in Matthew 25. **is** suggestive of our giving a personal account before the Lord [Very great care **is** needed **in** applying Matthew 25. 14-30 in this connection. How **is** it possible to apply verse **30** to a believer, that he should be cast out into outer darkness ? For many reasons I am doubtful **if** at the Judgment Seat of Christ there will be any conversations of this type. **As** to what may be fittingly deduced, **see** paper from Broxburn. —A. T. D.]. It was noted that the word " account " **is** the familiar Greek word " *Logos*. " **It is** the time of reckoning: " The Lord of those servants cometh and maketh a reckoning with them " (Matthew 25. 19). The servants themselves speak; the Lord does not tell them what they have done, but they tell **Him**. In a similar way we too shall give account. Everything will be made bare, laid out before Him. In Hebrews 13. **17** we have brought before us the greater responsibility devolving upon rulers over God's people. They are to watch on behalf of souls under their care and render an account in that day. **It is** the desire of the Chief Shepherd that such should have joy in giving this account and not grief or groaning.

After the trial **in** fire comes the matter of rewards. It was suggested that various rewards will be given for certain work, as for example, the crown of Revelation 3. **11** which **is** given for patience in suffering. This would apply to other rewards indicated in Revelation 2. and 3. In each of the seven letters to the churches the Lord says, " I know thy works. " **We have in** the story of David and his men a fitting type of the day of reward. Among David's men in the day of his rejection there were those who served him loyally, having the right motive—love to David their leader. When David became king their love was abundantly requited. So too when we meet the Lord our suffering with **Him** and service for **Him** will be fully rewarded. *G. Sankey.*

From Cardiff. —When considering the subject of the Judgment Seat of Christ, it **is** well to understand clearly that we shall not be judged for our **sins** as **sinner**s (for our sins were put away for ever when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ), but rather " that each one may receive the things done in the body, whether it be good or bad " (2 Corinthians 5. 10).

In 1 Corinthians 3. **13** we read that our works will be tried by fire, and **if** any **man's** works shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. It **is** interesting to notice here, that we have an example of God's principle, which **is** to accompany commands with a reward, —whereas men inflict punishments **if** their commands are not duly carried out.

We do well to **make** out a trial balance of our lifework hitherto. **On** the debit side go " wood, hay and stubble, " and on the credit side, " gold, silver and costly stones. " Although wood, hay and stubble are all very useful in many ways, yet they are all **dead** things, and have the common characteristic that they are rapidly destroyed by fire. Every thought, every word, **and** every work in our lives, even the beautiful, useful and necessary, which does not emanate from the Spirit, is dead **and** cannot survive the trial at the Judgment Seat.

When **we** build gold we do so **as** partakers of the divine nature through Christ: when silver, **as** partakers of Christ's redemption: and when costly stones, **as** partakers of Christ's glory [?] Truly we must confess that of ourselves " **we** are nothing at all, but **Jesus** is our all **in** all. " "And such confidence have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to account anything **as** from ourselves; but our sufficiency **is** from God " (2 Corinthians 3. 4, 5).

We think that this great review will take place directly after the coming of the Lord for His saints, two scriptures which guide **us** **in** this connection being: " Wherefore judge nothing before the **time**, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and **then** shall each man have his praise from God " (1 Corinthians 4. 5); also, " Behold, I come quickly; and My reward **is** with Me, to render to each **man** according **as** his work **is** " (Revelation 22. 12). *Alan F. Toms.*

EXTRACTS.

From Broxburn. —The Lord Himself will **in** that day " bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts. " " Wherefore, " adds the Apostle, " judge nothing before the time. " This **is** **man's** day, when **men** judge according to the evidence that **is** available, often very incomplete; but in that day there will **be** nothing lacking **in** arriving at a just estimate of our works, for " **He** shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of **His** ears. "

As to the principles upon which the Lord will reward **His** servants, much that **is** helpful and profitable may be gleaned from studying the parables, particularly those of the talents (Matthew 25. 14-30), the pounds (Luke 19. 11-27), and the labourers **in** the vineyard (Matthew 20. 1-16). In the **case** of those who received the talents and the pounds they were rewarded **in a manner** commensurate with the degree of wisdom and faithfulness with which they had used, for the profit of their lord, that which had been entrusted to them!! So also **in a** corresponding degree did he **suffer** loss, who hid his talent **in** the earth. In the parable of the labourers **in** the vineyard it **is** more the spirit **in** which service **is** rendered that **is** prominent, for the Lord evidently detected a wrong spirit **in** Peter when he said, " Lo, we have left all, and followed Thee; what then shall we have ? " Peter would have struck a bargain with the Lord, by offering his service for a corresponding recompense, thus degrading his service and bringing it down to the level of the hireling. It was to check such a tendency that the Lord spake the parable. Those labourers who wrought without any **agreement** **as** to, wages, satisfied that he who had hired them would give them what was just and equitable, received the **same** recompense **as** those who made **an** agreement for a penny. The **parable** closes with those words that point the moral, " So the last shall be first, and the first last. "

Some helpful thoughts were suggested by a comparison of the gold, silver, **and** precious stones, with the materials **used** **in** the building of the tabernacle **and** its vessels. Gold typifies divine glory, and **in all** our **service**, whether Godward or manward, the glory of God should be our **aim**, that God may be glorified **in us** and **we** in Him. Silver speaks of redemption, typified by the silver sockets upon which the boards of the tabernacle rested. - Not the least among the precious privileges of those who serve in God's House is that of proclaiming the Gospel and showing forth the **excellencies** of **Him** who called **us** out of darkness into **His** marvellous light. The workmen by whose skill and divinely given wisdom the vessels of the tabernacle were fashioned, were also considered. May it be ours to **wait** upon God. for wisdom to work that which is well pleasing **in His** sight.

Henry Dyer.

From Hamilton, Ont. —With the Judgment Seat of Christ in view how careful we should be in our service, and our walk as children of God ! We have the assurance from the Scriptures that we shall be rewarded for every little thing we do for the glory of God while in the Master's service. We are reminded by the Apostle, in 1 Corinthians 3. 13, that each man's work shall be made manifest, and be tried by fire. Surely the desire of every heart in that day will be to hear the Lord Jesus say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." No service done for His glory will be too small to be rewarded; the poet has said: "Deeds of merit as we thought them, He will tell us were but sin, Little acts we had forgotten, He will say were done for Him."

How solemn are the words in 2 Corinthians 5. 10, "For we must all be made manifest before the Judgment Seat of Christ" ! It is then that every man's work must come into judgment. In Matthew 12. 36 the Lord Jesus could say that men will have to give account of every idle word they speak. In view of that day, it is necessary that we should examine ourselves; are we learning of Him ? (Matthew 11. 29). We should be learning, and serving, for it is written, "Each one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14. 12).

The word of the Apostle to the Colossians was, "Whatsoever ye do, work heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men" (Colossians 3. 23). Surely God desires wholeheartedness in all that we seek to do for Him. In Psalm 9. 1, we find the psalmist praising the LORD with his whole heart, while again in Psalm 119. 145 we read, "I have cried with my whole heart; answer me, O LORD." The service that will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ is that which we have done whole-heartedly to the Lord. Therefore let us run well, like the Apostle, for the promise to such is that they will obtain an incorruptible crown. Paul, who himself fought the good fight and kept the faith, looked forward to that day when he would receive the crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4. 8). Another crown is mentioned in Revelation 2. 10, with the promise to the church in Smyrna: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life."

R. Dryburgh, Jun., A. Davidson, T. Davidson, B. Davidson.

From Edinburgh. —While we look forward with joy to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to our meeting with Him in the air, the thought of that which follows, our appearing before His Judgment Seat, is very solemn. This thought should cause us to be often on our knees before God in earnest prayer, in connection with our service to Him, that we might work works which will stand the fire, and not waste time on what is worthless and will be burned. Well might we pray, "Establish Thou the work of our hands" (Psalm 90. 17). Though we may have sorrow and tears when we see how little of our work has stood the fire, afterwards God shall wipe away every tear, and the sorrow will be gone for ever.

Men may judge us while on earth, but this we need not fear. Also if we judge ourselves and know nothing against ourselves, we are not thereby justified, but He that judgeth us is the Lord. He is the righteous Judge, "who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall each man have his praise from God" (1 Corinthians 4. 3-5). Though we have laboured together in one work, each shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted," is a scripture the truth of which will be fully, manifested then. Especially is this so in the case of Christ Himself. We know already that God has approved of His work in that He has raised Him from the dead, and the coming of the Holy Spirit has proved that God has exalted Him to His own right hand, and made Him both Lord and Christ. But in that day we shall see Him in His exalted position, He who humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross; to His righteous judgment we shall say, "Amen."

John A. H. Robertson.

From Southport. —There are many judgments in Scripture, but the one we have in mind is the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Judgment Seat of the "One Anointed." The anointing of men in the Scriptures indicates that they are chosen

of God. We find the Lord Jesus chosen for many things, and one position He is to occupy is that of Judge (Acts 10. 42). *

The Apostle in 2 Corinthians 5. is speaking to those who have been quickened, as in Ephesians 2. 1. This judgment is not against sin, as mentioned, for example, in John 5. 24 and in Romans 8. 1, for when the Lord comes He will come apart from sin (Hebrews 9. 28). But we all must appear before Christ's Judgment Seat, when will be reviewed our works done in the body.

Men's works are likened to gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay and stubble. We are warned to take heed how we build (1 Corinthians 3. 10), for each man's work will be revealed in fire (1 Corinthians 3. 13), of what sort it is whether it be good or bad (2 Corinthians 5. 10). How sad it would be to build but a bonfire !

We each have a course* to run, for Paul says, " I have finished the course " (2 Timothy 4. 7), while Ephesians 2. 10 tells us that there is a course which God afore prepared that we should walk therein. This course is not to be confused with the Way of Acts 9. 2, but it is as the special portion of the track at the games set apart for each runner. 2 Timothy 2. 5 shows that except a man contend lawfully he is not crowned; hence it would appear that we could be disqualified.

From Matthew 25. 14-30 and Luke 19. 11-27 it would appear that equal praise was given for the faithfulness of men (Matthew 25. 21-23), but " thou wicked and slothful servant " were the words uttered to the unfaithful. The rewards however vary. A large reward is given for much work faithfully performed, a smaller reward for less work, and so on. The man who has not used his talent or his pound loses his talent or pound and has nothing left; surely this is like wood, hay and stubble, which burns to nothing.

The reward for saints who strive lawfully is a crown. One crown is the crown of life. This crown is given for faith (Revelation 2. 10) and for them that love Him (James 1. 12). Daniel was faithful and the presidents and the satraps could not find any error or fault in him (Daniel 6. 4). Abraham believed God, was faithful, and he was said to be righteous (Romans 4. 3). Therefore faith and righteousness are closely allied. The Lord the righteous Judge will give a crown of righteousness to them who love his appearing (2 Timothy 4. 8). It was thought that these two might be connected. **W. S. Holden.**

From Windermere. —The word *Bema* occurs in the following scriptures: Matthew 27. 19, John 19. 13, Acts 7. 5, Acts 12. 21 (translated throne), Acts 18. 12, 16, 17, Acts 25. 6, 10, 17, Romans 14. 10, 2 Corinthians 5. 10. The two last scriptures are the only ones that mention the *Bema* of Christ. The word *Bema* primarily had the meaning of a step, as in Acts 7. 5, translated " to set (his foot) on, foot-room, " and ultimately came to be used for a tribune, in which sense it is used in all the other scriptures set out above. It is well to note that Romans 14. 10 is linked up with judging one another and setting at nought our brother for whom Christ died. In the light of this scripture and the words of John 13. 35 what godly care ought to be exercised by us, for each one of us shall give an account of himself to God!

We are told something of what will take place:

- (1) We shall all stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
- (2) We shall all be made manifest there.
- (3) Good and evil will be under review, for each will be requited for things done through the body, whether good or bad.
- (4) Our work will be tried (1 Corinthians 3. 13-15).
- (5) Shepherds will give account of their watching on behalf of the souls of those in the Assembly (Hebrews 13. 17).
- (6) Each of us will give account of himself to God (Romans 14. 12).

Concerning **each man's** work:

- (1) **AH** service should be done **in** the light of that day (2 Timothy 4. 1-8).
- (2) Soul winners will have joy in that day (1 Thessalonians 2. 19, 20).
- (3) The righteous acts of the saints are seen in their array of fine linen (Revelation 19. 8).
- (4) Judgment of others as to service should be deferred **until** this time. How intensely solemn are the words concerning hidden things, and counsels of the heart (1 Corinthians 4. 5) !
- (5) Crowns will be awarded (1 Peter 5. 4, Revelation 2. 10, James 1. 12, 2 Timothy 4. 8, 1 Corinthians 9. 25, Revelation 4. 4).
- (6) **A** full reward may be ours (2 John 8., Revelation 22. 12), or it may be we shall be ashamed (1 John 2. 28). *D. Banks, T. B.*

From Leicester. —The subject matter of the scriptures before us **is** amongst the most precious jewels of truth recovered in these last days. Right into the last century, pious men were still trying to reconcile these things with John 3. 16 and other scriptures, as to the believer's standing before God. A careful survey of 2 Corinthians 5. 10, Romans 14. 10-12, together with 1 Corinthians 3. 13-15 reveals that our standing **is** not in question, but rather, our state—" He himself shall be saved " remains a cardinal truth.

From 1 Corinthians 3. 12-15 we see that the Lord Jesus will not occupy the Judgment Seat **in** the capacity of one passing sentence, but rather **as an** assessor. We are reminded thereby of **His** lowly earthly days, of which it **is** written that He was " in **all** points tempted like as we are, yet without sin " (Hebrews 4. 15). He knows our every circumstance, He knows the value of every thought, word and deed; motives too, are naked and exposed before **Him** (Psalm 44. 21). He Himself said, " For there **is** nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that **shall** not be known " (Matthew 10. 26).

So in these things righteous judgment will be meted out, and it **is** our solemn responsibility to **lay** up against that day things that will emerge from the great conflagration with enhanced value, purged of all dross.

It was thought that **as** to time, this judgment must of necessity be between the Lord's coming for and with **His** saints. **His** coming for us will end **all** opportunities so far as service **is** concerned, while when He comes with **His** saints it will be for the overcomers a day of reward (2 Timothy 2. 12). *F. B.*

From Manchester. —The Greek word *Bema* means Judgment Seat, **as** illustrated by its use in Matthew 27. 19, where we read that Pilate " was sitting on the Bema. " In 2 Corinthians 5. 10 we have the *Bema* of Christ, but in Romans 14. 10 the *Bema* of God. These are thought to be one and the same, bringing out the truth that the Father " hath given **all** judgment unto the Son. " In both cases **it is** believers of the present dispensation who are contemplated **as** the subjects of judgment.

It was considered that the Lord Jesus would try the works of **His** children very soon after their gathering unto Himself. This **is** suggested by Revelation 19. 7-11, where the Church the Body **is** represented **as** being prepared for presentation to the Lamb prior to **His** return to earth in judgment. **We** read that " the fine linen **is** the righteous acts of the saints, " which implies that the quality of our service will already have been tried **at** the *Bema* of Christ.

While disclosing little **as** to the method of judgment, the two scriptures quoted in the syllabus, together with 1 Corinthians 3. 13-15, bring out certain principles which contain both comfort and warning. The criterion by which our works are judged will be faithfulness to God's word and love to the Lord Jesus Christ. The motive of our actions will be more important than results achieved. The materials symbolising work which will be to God's glory in **that** day are purified by fire, while those symbolising other works are more bulky, but easily

combustible. Yet it is a comfort to realise that even though a man's work be burned, he himself shall be saved. The Apostle Paul repeatedly emphasises the importance of not misjudging another's motive in view of that day when each man shall have his praise from God.

' Reference was made to the parables of the talents and the pounds as illustrating principles of reward and retribution which will obtain at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Old Testament shadows are found in the histories of Eli and Lot. Eli's neglect of his solemn responsibilities led to the loss of that which was the most sacred trust committed to Israel. Lot's compromise with evildoers resulted in his life's work being burned up, he himself being saved, but so as through fire.

G. Prasher, Jun.

From Glasgow. —Romans 14. 10-12 and 1 Peter 5. 6, 7 were written regarding children of God in different connections, the first being when they are on earth, when they have the opportunity to take a humble place under the mighty hand of God, that God might exalt them in due time. We suggest that the second scripture takes in all mankind, believer and unbeliever, although in this particular portion the Apostle is exhorting the saints to take a humble place before each other, reminding them of that future day when all shall bow the knee. We do not here suggest that the believer and unbeliever will come up in Judgment together, but we know that both shall be judged.

The believer will never be judged for his sins; God has given us a full assurance that our sin and iniquities will be remembered no more, as we are reminded in 1 John 4. 17. Nevertheless we must appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body whether it be good or bad.

We believe this manifestation will take place shortly after our being caught up to meet Him in the air. How blessed it will be for those in that day who have been approved of God, because they have built according to the work of the Lord, for they shall receive a blessed reward.

Jas. Gartshore.

From London, S. E. —Having been saved through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, there is no condemnation for us, and we have eternal salvation, but in various scriptures we read that the works of the believer will be judged.

2 Corinthians 5. 10 says, " We must all be made manifest before the Judgment Seat of Christ, " or *Bema* of Christ. In ancient Greece, the *Bema* or judge's stand was an elevated seat upon which the umpire sat to pronounce results and make awards to contestants in the games. Romans 14. 10 states that we shall all stand before the Judgment Seat of God (A. V., " of Christ "). The whole context of this chapter seems to be in keeping with the judgment of believer's works at the *Bema* of Christ.

" It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful " (1 Corinthians 4. 2), so that when at the *Bema* we are called upon to give an account of our stewardship, He may find we have been " faithful and wise stewards " (Luke 12. 42), and we may hear from his lips, " Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things " (Matthew 25. 23).

" Then shall each man have his praise from God " (1 Corinthians 4. 5). Everyone without a solitary exception [?] will receive praise, some less, some more. Various crowns will be distributed, and it seems abundantly clear that believers will not be all on the same level in the life to come.

The Judgment Seat of Christ follows the rapture, for Revelation 22. 12 says, " Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is. " There will be various rewards given and it is for us to strive to obtain the prize, as we read of Moses that he looked unto the recompense of the reward (Hebrews 11. 26).

Wm. F. Shulver.

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so " (Acts 17. 11).

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THE ORACLES OF GOD (*continued*).

It may be **as** well at this point to retrace our steps and consider a little more fully that which preceded the work of the Great Synagogue to which reference **has** been made. In the days of the Lord the belief of the Jew, expressed **in** the Talmud, was " that Moses received the Book of the Law from Sinai, and delivered, it to Joshua; Joshua delivered it to the elders, the elders to the prophets, and the prophets to the men of the Great Synagogue, from whom it passed to the heads of the families of the scribes (Sopherim). " Now, although the Talmud contained much which was merely traditional (said the Lord, " making void the word of God by your tradition" (1)), and even absurdly irrelevant, there is no doubt that many of its statements, which have come down to us from remote antiquity, are well attested and substantiated by Scripture.

We recall that more than **3, 000** years ago, after the strife with Amalek, Moses was bidden to " write this for a memorial in a book and rehearse it **in** the ears of Joshua " (2). **Of** his further writings—the Law—it is stated that he " delivered it unto the priests, " who were to " take this book of the law, and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant " (3). Every seven years it was to be read before the people, (4) and Joshua himself read every word " before **all** the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the strangers " (5).

Perhaps more "striking even than this was the divine requirement that the king himself should write out " a copy of this law in a book, . . . and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein **all** the days of his life " (6). Moreover at his coronation it **seems** clear that the precious manuscript of " the testimony " should be placed in his hands (7). Joshua (8) and Samuel also added to what was written, and of the latter it **is** recorded, " He told the people *the manner of the kingdom*, and wrote it in *the* Book and laid it up before the LORD " (9), —the Tabernacle and afterwards the Temple being the depository of the sacred manuscripts.

Alas for Israel, that the day should come when, at **the beginning of Hezekiah's reign**, access to these oracles of God was denied—the doors of the House of the LORD were shut (10) ! The faithfulness of the king resulted, however, in a provision whereby the priests and the Levites were enabled to " give themselves to the **law** of the LORD " (11), **as in a** later day another man of God was earnestly exhorted to give himself " wholly " (12). And to-day, eighteen centuries further down the march of time, the insistent demand remains, for men who will study to present themselves approved, " handling aright tie word of truth " (13).

⁶⁴ The men of Hezekiah, " we are told, copied out the proverbs of Solomon, and **sang** the psalms of David and Asaph; sad indeed therefore it **is** to find that **again in a** later reign, that of Josiah, **we** read of the lost and almost forgotten " Book of the Law, " (14) and of the sensation caused at its discovery by Hilkiah. The finding of this Temple manuscript (about B. C. 623) would enable existing copies of the law to be corrected, and would undoubtedly assist **in** preserving **future** manuscripts from corruption. And so we are brought back again to the post-captivity period and the work of Ezra and the Sopherim.

Perhaps it may be fitting to conclude this section with **an** extract from Josephus, who **at the end** of the first century (A. D.) wrote: " **We** have not **an** innumerable multitude of books, as the Greeks, but only twenty-two, which contain the record of all past times, and which are justly believed to **be** divine . . . During so many **ages** as have already passed, no one has been so bold **as** to add anything to them or to take anything from them, or to **make** any change **in** them; but it becomes natural to **all** Jews from their birth to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines, to persist **in** them, and. **if** occasion be, willingly to die for them. "

From **all** of which we learn something of God's overruling providence for that Word which **He** had **magnified** above **all His name** (15) and preserved for **us** by **means** of the Jew to whom were entrusted **His** " oracles. " A. C.

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| 1. Mark 7. 13. | 9. 1 Samuel 10. 25. |
| 2.. Exodus 17. 14. | 10. 2 Chronicles 29. 3. |
| 3. Deuteronomy 31. 9, 26. | 11. 2 Chronicles 31. 4. |
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THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The **Bema** of **Christ** (2 Corinthians 5. 10; Romans 14. 10-12).

From Vancouver. —Between the coming of the Lord for the Church **as seen in 1** Thessalonians 4. and the marriage of the Lamb **in** Revelation 19., there comes the Judgment Seat of Christ. The more we learn of this important fact, the more we shall appreciate the exhortations of Ephesians 5., not only **as** to grosser types of sin, but also to be careful of our very speech, the more so **as** our Lord **Himself** declared " that every idle word that **men** shall speak, they shall give account thereof **in** the day of judgment " (Matthew 12. 36).

The writer **in 2** Corinthians 5. **is** ambitious to be well pleasing to the Lord, *' whether at home or absent, " and there are two things mentioned to account for his ambition. First, " Knowing therefore the fear of the Lord " (verse 11). This

appearing before the Judgment Seat of Christ was no light matter to Paul, but while he speaks of the "fear of the Lord" here, he looks forward with joy to that time in 2 Timothy 4. 7, 8. Second, "For the love of Christ constraineth us" (verse 14). As we think of 1 Timothy 1. 12-15, we may well believe that this was the greatest motive in his life and service, as a bondsman of Jesus Christ.

We suggest reaching Nehemiah 3. as an instructive illustration of God's interest in the details of our service. We shall further suggest that this chapter is only an abridgement of the actual record in heaven, yet surely sufficient to cause us to think of Hebrews 6. 10.: "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and the love which ye shewed toward His name." How God must have watched these men and women (verse 12) as they laboured together until the wall was completed, even the goldsmiths and merchants (verse 32) being engaged in the work!

But note also verse five: "and next unto these the Tekoites repaired: but their nobles put not their necks to the work of their LORD." Here we see that their LORD and ours takes notice of whether it be good or whether it be bad. J. 5.

From Birmingham. —If we want to confirm the date of an eventful day in the history of the nation, such as a great victory in battle, we only need to turn to our diary. Man has set great store by such events, and year by year they are commemorated.

God, too, has recorded in His "diary" (His precious Word) eventful days for both sinner and saint.

In Acts 17. 31 Paul speaks of God "having appointed a day in the which He will judge the world... by the Man whom He hath ordained." Praise God, we shall not have to face the ordeal of the judgment when the only verdict will be "guilty." For "there is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8. 1).

But the Apostle also speaks subsequently of another judgment, and this when writing to the Corinthian saints—the Judgment Seat of Christ. Just as the unforgiven sinner cannot escape the Judgment Day mentioned in Acts 17., so the saint of God *must* appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5. 10).

We shall stand before that Judgment Seat as servants, not as sinners, when our works, not ourselves, will be tried.

Our faithfulness to Him in this life may evoke contempt and scorn from our fellow men, but it will have its ultimate acknowledgment by God. "The Master praises, what are men?"

Reg. Darke.

[We welcome this first contribution from Birmingham. —Eds.]

From Victoria, B. C. —We now consider a subject of vital concern to the child of God. The *Bema*, or Judgment Seat of Christ, takes place in the day of Christ, that day unto which the saints in Philippi were exhorted to be found "sincere and void of offence" (Philippians 1. 10). It will be a great day for the believer, the results enduring, for gain or loss, throughout the coming ages of eternity.

There is a time for judgment and no one can escape this reality (Hebrews 9. 27). The judgment will be in righteousness by the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 17. 31), all judgment being given into the hands of the Son (John 5. 22). This will take place at God's ordained, time. Concerning the saints, the Apostle Paul exhorts them to judge nothing before the time, "until the Lord come" (1 Corinthians 4. 5). All will be revealed at the coming of the Lord for His saints, but this judgment in no way affects the eternal welfare of the child of God. It is as the Lord Jesus cries in Revelation 22. 12, "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me." He comes as the enriching One. He is the Lord, who having gone to a far country, returns and renders to each man as he has laboured. A. M.

" The Presentation of the **Church to Christ and** of the saints to the Father " (Ephesians 5. 27; Colossians 1. 22, 23; Jude 24, 25).

From Manchester. —That there will be, a formal presentation Of the Church to Christ is made clear from such scriptures as Ephesians 5. 27. The word " present " (*Paristemi*) is similarly used in Luke 2. 22, where Joseph and Mary brought the babe Jesus " to present Him to the Lord, " and again in Acts 9. 41 where Peter presented Dorcas alive. It was thought that Colossians 1. 23 and Jude 24 referred rather to the presentation to God of those who are the fruit of Christ's redemptive work, although it would seem that both presentations are closely associated.

The unimpeachable righteousness of the saints and their glorious fitness for the divine presence are emphasised in each of the three, passages mentioned in the syllabus, and the common use of the expression "without blemish" (*Amomos*) is significant. The same term is found in Ephesians 1. 4, where we learn that one of God's eternal purposes was to have us before Him without blemish. Of the Lord Jesus it is twice written that He was without blemish (1 Peter 1. 19, and Hebrews 9. 14), and both these scriptures refer to His atoning death. Only by this means could His unsullied righteousness be ascribed to us, but such now is our glorious standing through divine grace and the full reconciliation by the blood of His cross. Hence the force of the contrast between our natural alienation and enmity to God, and our being presented holy and without blemish before Him (Colossians 1. 22-23).

Other adjectives describing the condition of the redeemed in that day are worthy of special note. In Ephesians 5. 27 the Church, is described as "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. " The word " spot " has the thought of " stain, " while wrinkle reminds of age and decay. The Church will be seen in perfection, co-sharer of the perpetual youth which belongs to Him who was raised in the power of an endless life.

Then Colossians 1. 23 declares that we shall be unreprouvable before God. What **but** the righteousness of Christ could ensure freedom from blame in the presence of infinite holiness ? A grasp of divine assurances on this subject will save us from the error that one may be saved to-day and lost to-morrow, for we shall share the Apostle's confidence that " He which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus, and shall present us with you " (2 Corinthians 4. 14). It is interesting that the presentation is here referred to with as much assurance as the resurrection. [Note the force of "if so be " in 1 Colossians 1. 23].

Yet it seems evident from a comparison of Revelation 19. 7, 8 and Psalm 45. 9-14, that while the ascribed righteousness and glory of Christ will provide the foundation of the array of the Church, the results of faithful service will also be reflected. Reference was made to Isaiah 61. 10, where " the garments of salvation " are distinguished from " the robe of righteousness, " while in addition we read of the bride's adornment with jewels. From Revelation 19. 8 we read that the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints, while Psalm 45. 13, 14, refers to " clothing inwrought with gold " and to " brodered work. " It was thought that such expressions bespoke the painstaking work. of the Holy Spirit, who enables us to be conformed increasingly to the divine image, and to render service acceptable to God. In the day of presentation it would seem that such service will be manifested to the glory of God in the array of the Church, and perhaps with greater emphasis on individual achievement when the saints are presented to the Father.

G. Prasher; Jun.

From Broxburn. —The epistle to the Ephesians deals preeminently with the blessings and privileges of the saints in association with Christ their risen Head, and this transcendent theme reaches its apex in chapter 5. 27. This notable

passage appears to be the designed climax of the teaching of this epistle, **and** though found here **in** the midst of **an** exhortation to husbands to love their wives, this apparently incidental introduction is quite in harmony with the way in which the Holy Spirit introduces many other most important truths.

The teaching here concerning Christ and the Church is based **upon** the divine institution of marriage, that is of two individuals joined together in wedlock **and** thus being regarded by God **as** one, for said He, " They shall be one flesh " (Genesis 2. 24).

The purpose of God in bringing the animals to be named by Adam **was** designed to signify the delegated authority over them entrusted to Adam. **But** there was also another and more profound object effected thereby; for thus **was** Adam made to realise his loneliness. So after he had been occupied in naming the animals, God caused **a** deep sleep to fall upon him, and while he slept **a** rib **was** taken from his side and builded into **a** woman. Thus was found **a** help meet for him, and thus also was foreshadowed the mystery of Christ and the Church. For when God brought the woman to the **man** the **man** said, " This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh " (Genesis 2. 23). Adam saw the result of his sleep, and he was satisfied. **But** in all this the leading thought **is** not of Eve, but of Adam, albeit she **was** necessary to him, even **as** the Church **is** complementary to Christ, being the fulness of Him that filleth all **in** all.

" **He** shall **see** of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied " (Isaiah 53. 11). " Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself up for **it** ": His love led Him to the cross and there **He** died that the divine purpose might be realised. Thus everything that is here stated with regard to the work of the heavenly Bridegroom **is** traced up to, and interpreted in the light of its blessed source. In all this we have no hand; we have been accepted **in** the Beloved.

In turning to Colossians we noted that the headship of Christ is given prominence for **He** is the **One** who has the preeminence, and **we** are complete **in** Him. **It is** our privilege and responsibility " to walk worthily of the Lord unto all pleasing, bearing fruit **in** every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God " (Colossians 1. 10): This presents the other side of the picture and brings before **us** our responsibility so to walk now that the Lord may be able to present **us** holy and without flemish and unreprieveable before **Him**. "If so be, that ye continue, " shews that this **is** conditional.

Jude writes " to them that are called, beloved **in** God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ, " exhorting to contend earnestly for the faith which **was** once for all delivered unto the saints. The Lord Jesus said concerning those whom the Father had given Him, " While I was with them, I kept them in Thy **n a m e . . .** : and I guarded them " (John 17. 12). It is the Lord's desire that He might present **us** with joy before His Father. **But** what of those who have failed to guard themselves and whose garment is spotted? The Lord Jesus said, " Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven " (Matthew 10. 33).
 , " *Henry Dyer,*

From Southport. —Christ will present the Church to Himself *** &** glorious Church, " not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. " **What is** this Church? All are baptized **in** the Holy Spirit into one Body (1 Corinthians 12. 13). Although so many in number, believers form one Body in Christ (Romans 12. 5 and 1 Corinthians 12. 20). This one Body includes both Jews and Gentiles, **a** mystery hidden from past generations, but revealed unto **His** holy apostles and prophets **in** the Spirit (Ephesians 3. 5).

Christ gave Himself up for the Church that **He** might sanctify it "by the washing of water with the word. " Indeed no **man can see** the Lord unless he is sanctified (Hebrews 12. 14). There was much discussion concerning the **meaning** of the word sanctify. Does it mean merely, set apart or set apart without

sin unto God ? [There **are** at **least** two kinds of sanctification in the New Testament. (1) The sanctification of **the** Church and each member thereof by Christ through the work of the Spirit whereby persons who were common become' holy ones, that is, saints. Christ has sanctified the Church through His atonement and by the laver (or washing) of regeneration in absolute, abiding sanctification. (2) There **is** progressive sanctification and consequent holiness which **we** must personally follow. Hence the exhortation of Hebrews 12. 14, " Follow after **peace** with all men, and the sanctification, " etc. During our life here we should **be** seeking to attain unto greater sanctification. 2 Corinthians 7. 1 speaks of " perfecting holiness, " and 1 Thessalonians 4. 3 of the will of God being " your sanctification. " The Lord prayed that **His** own might be sanctified in the truth (John 17. 17). The consequent deduction one would make from such portions **is** that **we** should increasingly set ourselves apart from defilement and every defiling influence in this scene in agreement with the commandments and exhortations of the word of God relative to such matters. But in contrast to this we are sanctified in Christ eternally in such **a** way that no defilement can ever reach us. —**J. M. J.**

It **is** not known when the Church will **be** presented to Christ, but it was suggested that the presentation would be at the coming of the Lord **Jesus** Christ.

It would **seem** that when the Church has been Presented to Christ, Christ would then be in **a** position to present the saints to the Father.

Who will be presented to the Father ? Colossians 1. 22 and Jude 24 read " you. " The " you " in both cases obviously refers to the people to whom the book **is** addressed; in Colossians " to the saints and faithful brethren **in** Christ which are at Colossae, " and in Jude " to them that are called, beloved in God the Father, and **kept** for **Jesus** Christ. " From this it would appear that Old Testament saints are not included.

It would appear that to **be** holy, without blemish and unproveable **is** conditional. Yet **we** know that all the saints are, holy, without blemish and unproveable, in that God **sees** them through Christ, but in the sense that we are all continually committing sin, **we** are far from unproveable, **W. S. Holden.**

EXTRACTS.

From Windermere.—The glorious things of the dispensation of Christ and His Church, were **a** mystery hid from all **ages** and generations, until they were manifested to the saints, through Christ's holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit, to whom revelation **was** given by God. Nevertheless, in Old Testament days **we** get glimpses of these things so dear to the heart of God. The word " present " **used** in Ephesians 5. 27 **is** of fairly frequent occurrence in New Testament Scriptures, being **used** 39 times, and it conveys the thought of nearness, so near, **as** to **be** placed alongside of someone. Can anything richer **in** glory engage our thoughts ?

At the threshold of the Sacred Writings, we are told of the presentation of the woman to the man, and the **means** whereby God brought this about.

We next have **a** glimpse, when **a** natural father **is** seeking **a** bride for his son (Genesis 24.), and the means **used** to bring this about illustrate the gracious Holy Spirit's work in winning for Christ **His** Church. The presentation to Isaac and the comfort that followed **is** **a** faint portraiture of the coming event in Immanuel's Land. How significant too, that this should take place after **the** death of Sarah, type of the giving up of Israel !

We pass, on to **a** scene of conflict in Exodus 2. 17-21, where Moses strives with the shepherds, resulting in the winning of **a** bride, and, telling **us** in type of the strife of Golgotha, resulting **in** **a** glorious Church for the Victor who triumphed over all our foes.

Surpassingly sweet **and** beautiful is Psalm 45. The glories of the Christ set forth in this Psalm are sufficient, " the mind and heart to **fill**," but our **cup** overflows when we read in verse 9, " At Thy right hand doth stand the **Queen** in gold of Ophir. " How near ! The word used for " gold " indicates " pure gold. " Another beautiful simile is, " She shall be led unto the **King** in brodered work. " *T. B.*

From Glasgow. —In considering our present subject we are brought **face** to face with two aspects of the presentation of the Church of this, dispensation.

Ephesians 5, 22, 23, reveals an indissoluble bond existing between the Church which is **His** Body and Christ the Head. The simile is that of husband and wife, a condition of things demanding obedience and love. Therefore **it is** written that " Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for it; that **He** might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. " Here we have before **us** one of the objects for which Christ died, an object which had gain for **Him** and which in itself will be of great delight to **His** heart.

Somewhat different **is** the aspect of our subject contained in Colossians 1. 22, 23, and Jude 24, 25, where God has reconciled through Christ, in the body of **His** flesh through death, all who believe on **Him**, in order that they may be presented before **Him** holy and unblameable in **His** sight, but only on condition that they continue in the faith. Every believer will be brought before the Father, but every believer will not be presented in such glory as being holy and unblameable, unproveable. For great **is** the success of the adversary in thwarting this purpose, and many have gone back to the beggarly elements of this world; but never will they escape the presence of the glory of the Father (Jude 24, 25) when they will be presented before Him.

There **is** the collective presentation as well **as** the individual. Paul had espoused the church of God in Corinth to one husband, to present it to Christ (2 Corinthians 11. 2). Here one church is to be presented **as** a chaste virgin to Christ, now much more to God the Father. [I have thought that this presentation of Paul's work in Corinth of the Corinthian assembly to Christ was in the present time and not in the future. **As** having been presented to Christ by him, he **is** jealous with a godly jealousy, lest what happened in Eden should be repeated. For after the woman had been presented to the man then **came** the serpent and in subtlety deceived her. Even so in Corinth, after Paul had presented the church there to Christ, then came the deceitful works, the false apostles, ministers of Satan, to deceive and lead away that assembly from the simplicity and purity which **is** toward •Christ. I judge that this should not be confused with Christ's presentation of the Church to Himself in unsullied purity, or the presentation of saints to the Father, in the light of which they are to continue in and contend for the faith. —J. M. J. **As** certain companies from among the people of God in a past day, were to receive honour above others (Ezekiel 44. 10-16) because of their faithfulness, so also companies who have kept the faith in true love will be brought before the presence of **His** glory to give delight to God the Father, in that there **is** found faith in the earth.

From Liverpool. —We notice a very significant difference between the scripture in Ephesians and those in Colossians and Jude. In Ephesians we read that Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that **He** might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle. **He** will be able to present the Church to Himself in that day, spotless and without blemish, because of **His** own atoning work. When we come to Colossians, however, we read that **He** has reconciled us, " to present you holy and without blemish... If so be that ye continue in the faith. " Here we **see** that although **we** have been reconciled through **His** death so that we **can** be presented, yet the condition of continuance in the faith must be fulfilled by **us** if we are to **be** unapproachable before God.

The scripture **in** Jude speaks **of a** presentation before the presence of the glory of God, **and** (by linking up with the expression " unto Him that **is** able to keep you from stumbling ") also appears to be conditional. The question now is, do these scriptures refer to the **same** presentation ? [I should say that they do. —J. M.]

It **was** suggested that there were two presentations envisaged, Ephesians **5.** referring to the presentation of the Church to Christ, and Colossians **1.** referring to the presentation to God, when the Lord will finally deliver all things to the Father. **On** the other hand some thought that the scriptures **in** Ephesians and Colossians **at** any rate referred to the **same** presentation. The Apostle **in writing** to the Colossians addresses himself to individuals, exhorting them in view of that presentation **as** part of the Body of Christ, that their lives here might correspond with their condition and position then. In Ephesians, he **is** thinking of the Church **as a** whole, the Body of Christ without **a** spot. Just **as** of old God said that **He saw** no perverseness in Israel, so in that day there will be no spot or blemish in that Body with which the Lord Jesus Christ will present Himself. [There **is a** condition contemplated in Colossians **1.**, but none in Ephesians **5.**, hence they cannot be one and the same. —J. M. J. *R. L. Sands, R. S.*

From London, S. E. —Those who know the Lord Jesus Christ **as** Saviour and have continued in the Christian pathway should look forward in joyful anticipation to the day when they shall **see** God. This tremendous **issue** in the believer's experience **is** apparently divided into two separate and distinct occasions; i. e. (i) the meeting with the Lord Jesus; (ii) the meeting with God when presented by the Lord Jesus.

A future meeting **was** promised to the redeemed in John **14. 3** by the Lord Himself, where **He** stated: " If I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto Myself; ' that where I **am**, there ye may be also. " And also in John **17. 24**: " Father, that which Thou hast given Me, I will that, where I am, they also may be with Me. "

The great plan of redemption will thus have obtained its culminating point, for the lovely position of Genesis **2.** will be once more re-gained and God will be able to look upon the face of **His** creature and dwell with those so long debarred from **His** presence. *Reginald D. Wood.*

From Birkenhead. —As the bridegroom takes unto himself his bride at the marriage ceremony, so Christ will take to Himself His Bride, " the Church, " in a coming day. This Bride will be without blemish because of Christ's sanctifying work on the cross (verse 25). How great was the love of Christ for His Church that He should give Himself up for it in order to sanctify it for presentation to Himself glorious and without spot! There are no conditions here, for this sanctification does not depend on our individual behaviour, but upon the divine value of the work of Christ.

Paul in Colossians expresses the desire that the saints might be presented blameless and spotless before God, who has demonstrated His love by the sacrifice of His Son. This presentation of the saints to the Father differs from the presentation of the Bride in that if we are to appear before God blameless, it will depend upon the extent of our continuing in the Faith. " If so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, etc. (Colossians **1. 23**).

So that in these two presentations there is a wonderful 'mystery. Collectively as the Bride we shall be glorious before God, and sad to think that as individual saints there will be that great measure of disappointment as we reflect on our lives since we first came to know the Saviour, and see what opportunities of witnessing we have missed and how little we have done in return for all that Christ has done for us. [I cannot conceive what our friends here say that the shadows of past failure will haunt us and destroy our joy when We are with Christ. Surely there

must be an end, when we give our account to Christ and God as servants, to all the disappointment and grief which arise from a correct conception and appreciation of wasted lives and opportunities. When servants receive their due measure of praise then that must be the end of what is past with a new life of happiness to enjoy the consequences of rewards with the Lord, and if the rewards are small this cannot becloud the joy of the heart of the saint in the Lord and His glorious land—the King's Country. To be under a ban of the Lord's displeasure or the reproach of our own consciences would sour the lives of saints—so I would think with present light. —J. M. J.

From Kilmarnock. —Our mind was directed to Matthew 16. 18 when the Lord, in reply to Simon Peter's confession of Him as " Son of the living God, " said, " Upon this Rock I will build My Church. " This was something that had not been made known to past dispensations and it was to be specially His own. In John 17. it is obvious the Church was in the Lord's mind when He prayed in verse 9, " I pray for them; I pray not for the world " (see also verses 16, 17). Like the parable of the merchant seeking goodly pearls in Matthew 13., the Church is as the " pearl of great price, " for which He gave Himself, but as the pearl would have to be purified, so those who compose the Church were " by nature children of wrath even as the rest " (Ephesians 2. 3) requiring to be cleansed from sin by the precious blood of Christ.

All saints will have been made manifest at the Judgment Seat of Christ, and all unrighteousness will have been judged and put away for ever.

Then may the saints be presented " holy and without blemish, and unproveable before Him. " In view of that time it should be our aim even now to " cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God " (2 Corinthians 7. 1).

A. G. S.

From Atherton. —Revelation 19. seems to indicate that the presentation of the Church to Christ must be subsequent to the Judgment Seat, for after the rewards have been distributed, the Lamb's wife is seen having made herself ready, arrayed in fine linen, which is the righteous acts of the saints. [I am not at all certain that the presentation of the Church to Christ by Himself, as in Ephesians 5., is equivalent to the marriage of the Lamb. Clearly no human works play any part in the presentation of Ephesians 5.. There the Church is seen in all the unsullied purity of the work and preserving power of Christ, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. But in the day of her marriage as the Lamb's wife it is given her to array herself in garments of her own making, for the fine linen of her marriage dress is said to be the righteous acts of the saints, not the righteousness of Christ which is upon the believers. Clearly the Judgment Seat of Christ is past in Revelation 19. The carnal works of saints have been burned up, as in 1 Corinthians 3., and only that which has stood the fiery trial of the Judgment Seat remains. With these the Bride stands arrayed to be joined to her Bridegroom, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh, His complement and wife, His Eve and help meet, in whose love He shall nevermore be lonely nor she in His. —J. M.. Whilst the Church has been procured entirely by and for Himself, we seem to be taken to a different aspect of things, when the great and many good works that have stood the fiery testing are seen in the pure unspotted garment that adorns her, and whilst it may be that many " shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, " and " as the stars for ever and ever, " differing in honour, glory, and lustre from others, yet here the Lamb's wife is seen as a wondrous whole, having won His approbation.

The presentation of the saints to the Father is referred to in Colossians 1. 21, 22, and Jude 24. 25, and appears to take place at a later time than the marriage of the Lamb. [Can we be sure that it is later ?] We are caused again to take note

of the intrinsic value' of the cross-work of our Lord Jesus, for first He reconciles to God and then waits to set us in the unsullied holiness of His Father's presence. Surely that will be an awe-inspiring moment, when ushered into the blaze of eternal Glory we hear the words in fulness " Behold, I and the children which God hath given Me ! "

It was suggested that in the two scriptures quoted we have a dual aspect of presentation; a redeemed company, holy and without blemish, through the blood of Christ, and a conditional aspect (applied here to the Colossian assembly in particular) dependant upon our continuing in obedience to the will of God.

With reference to Colossians 1. 22, 23 it was suggested that the Apostle does not terminate what he has to say at the word " Him " (verse 22), but goes on to add, " If so be that ye continue in the Faith. " The word " if " in verse 23 would thus suggest a conditional presentation, which may be supported by such scriptures as Revelation 3. 5. [See answer to question from Windmere]. *G. Sankey.*

From Ilford. —Such is the value and efficacy of Christ's work that He not only redeems in the first case, but continually cleanses the saints as they make their way through the world. In due time the Church will be presented to Him without spot or wrinkle. In Revelation 19. 7, 8 we get the garments of the Bride described as " the righteous act of the saints. " We come again back to His work, for all the righteous acts we do are but the promptings of the Holy Spirit. He will be able to say in that day when the Church is presented to Him, " Thou art all fair, My love; and there is no spot in thee " (Song of Songs 4. 7).

One thing about the presentation of the Church to Christ is the joy of the occasion. In addition there is the presentation of the saints to the Father, not one will be lost whom the Father had given Him (John 17. 4, 12). This He does with exceeding joy (Jude 24, 25). All this is traced back to the Cross of Calvary, when His all sufficient work of sin atoning and cleansing enabled Him to present a glorious Church to Himself and also every saint before His Father.

Austin S. Glover.

From Edinburgh. —In the Church which is Christ's Body, God sets each member as it pleaseth Him, and one member cannot do without the others; each has its function to fulfil (1 Corinthians 12. 18-22). God desires that we should " grow up in all things into Him, which is the Head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love " (Ephesians 4. 15, 16). Thus the Church is being built up and prepared for the time when Christ will come to the air to receive it to Himself. [The building up of the Body by the ministry of the gifts and by every joint of supply with a view to the saints attaining unto the (1) unity of the faith, and (2) the full knowledge of the Son of God, as in Ephesians 4.. must not be confused with the condition of spotless purity in which the Church ever is and must be as seen in Ephesians 5., and is in such a condition at any time to be presented by Christ to Himself. Human attainment and divine perfection are two entirely different things. There can, in the sense of Ephesians 5., be no gradual process of preparation through upbuilding, as in Ephesians 4, with a view to the presentation of the Church. —J. M.].

After the Church has been presented to Christ and the Judgment Seat of Christ is past, the saints will be presented to the Father. God will set us before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy (Jude 24). It was suggested that though we are presented to Him, we shall never actually see God the Father, except through Christ, who is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1. 15). [Such mysteries of being presented to the Father yet not being able to see

the Father we had better leave till the shadows flee from our minds. Suffice it to say that even John, in Revelation 4, could see the throne and One sitting upon it, and he described what He was like. He also saw the Lamb and the seven Spirits of fire. —J. M. J.

Questions and Answers.

Questions from Atherton. —(1) Will the Judgment Seat of Christ be set up in the air ?

Answer. —I do' not think that any positive answer can be given to this question. —A. T. D.

(2) Will there be such a thing as nearer places to Christ, because of faithfulness down here, when we are in Glory and a corresponding difference of appreciation ?

Answer. —In Revelation 3. 4 *some* that had not defiled their garments are promised that they shall be with the Lord in white, " for they are worthy. " Evidently others will not be deemed worthy of this, and so there is a difference in the place of nearness, as regards some, so that it is a fair deduction to answer the question by the word, yes. —A. T. D.

Question **from Windermere.** —How can we reconcile 2 Timothy 1. 18 (finding mercy) with Romans 8. 1 (no condemnation).

Answer. —In Romans 8. 1 the reference is to there being no condemnation on account of the sin inherent in the believer and the sin done in his body, those things which are the source of grief to the Apostle in the previous chapter. At the Judgment Seat of Christ there will be no explicit condemnation, but obviously those who practise sin will have no claim for the rewards of the Lord in that day; that is, there is an implied recognition of these sins. At the judgment, the Lord who errs not will divinely balance the positive and negative acts of men; those who have recovered others from error will " cover " many of their own errors; those who have refreshed others, as Onesiphorus did, may find, perhaps to their surprise, that the Lord sets a high value on their mercies, and so gives greater weight to their loving service as against many other matters. I would judge that the mercy referred to in 2 Timothy 1. 18 refers to the balance of judgment by the Lord. —A. T. D..

Questions **from** London S. E. —(1). Presentation of saints to the Father; is this scriptural ? , %.

Answer. —It should be clearly seen that the presentations of Ephesians 5. and Colossians 1. are two distinct things, the former based entirely on Christ's work, whereby the Church is presented to Christ without spot, whilst the latter is conditioned by—" If so be that ye continue in the faith. " The latter must be to a certain extent individual, whilst the former is highly collective. Some continue in the faith and some have made shipwreck concerning it. Paul says, " The Spirit saith expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith " (1 Timothy 4. 1).

Can it be that those who have denied the faith and made shipwreck will be presented without blemish and unproveable? Surely not! "Before Him, " I take to be before God, and with this, I judge, Jude agrees. —J. M.

(2). Does the Judgment Seat of Christ come between the two presentations ?

Answer. —It may. —J. M.

Question from Atherton. —What is the meaning of Colossians 1. 23?

Answer. —It lays down a condition necessary to saints being holy, without blemish and unproveable in the time of their presentation to God. —J. M.

Question from Windermere. —Jude 24, Colossians 1. 22: Will those who stumble and those who cease to continue in the faith take part in the events of these verses ?

Answer. —There is no indication as to saints who. stumble, etc., that they will not be presented, to God. It may be that there is something here that fits such statements as " We must all be made manifest before the Judgment Seat of Christ " (2 Corinthians 5. 10). " Each one of us shall give account of himself to God " (Romans 14. 12). " Then shall each man have his praise from God " (1 Corinthians 4. 5). We have much to learn from such sobering words. —J. M.

EDITORATE.

Our beloved brother George Prasher, Jun., has rendered such acceptable service in preparing manuscripts for the press that it is deemed fitting that he should be added to the list of editors.

BIBLE STUDIES.

" Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures, daily whether these things were so " (Acts 17. 11).

VOLUME

II.

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THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The presentation of the **Church** to Christ, **and** of the saints to the Father (Ephesians **5. 27**; Colossians 1. 22, **23**; Jude 24, 25).

From Vancouver. — Verse **27** of Ephesians **5**, looks on to the time **when** His purchased possession will be presented to **Him**. The day of **His** marriage **will** come (Revelation 19. 7), " the day of the gladness of **His** heart " (Song of Songs **3. 11**).. The words Solomon breathed into the ear of Pharaoh's daughter[?] are **used** by the Spirit, shall we say, to prepare us for the breathings **in** our ear of a **Greater** than Solomon. **As** being " all glorious, " her clothing " inwrought with gold, " she shall be " led unto the King in broidered work " (Psalm **45. 13**; Revelation 19. 8). Now while the Church is seen as perfect before God, " complete **in Him** " (Colossians 2. **10**, A. V.), " the fulness of **Him** that filleth all **in** all " (Ephesians 1. 23), she **is in** this condition solely as being the workmanship of God (Ephesians 2. 10). Let us be careful to notice that we are " created in Christ **Jesus** for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them. " For **we noticed**, "And it was given unto her that she should array herself **in** fine linen, bright and pure: for the **fine** linen **is** the righteous acts of the saints " (Revelation 19. 8). The doctrine **is** our Lord Jesus Christ's, but we can " adorn it. " **As we live in** the enjoyment of that blessed event, we can even now " follow after righteousness, faith, love, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart " (2 Timothy **2. '22**), and thus help **in** the weaving of that " fine linen, bright and pure, " which will adorn that wonderful Bride, **as** presented to the **King** of kings.

" The virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto Thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be led: they shall enter into the **King's** palace " (Psalm 45. 14, 15). What a wonderful event **is** the marriage of the Lamb ! This climax of the eternal purposes of God, associated **as** it will be with the " **summing** up of **all** things **in** Christ, " may well be the occasion of the " silence **in** heaven about the space of half an hour. "

" Blessed are they which are bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb, " and the statement that " the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a **gift** " (Psalm 45. 12), give food for thought. *James Blair.*

The Breaking of the Holy People under Antichrist.
(Daniel 12. **7**; Matthew 24. **15-22**; Revelation 12. 13-17).

From London. — " *The people (Israel)*" This phrase occurs frequently **in** the Scriptures; Israel was chosen by God and dedicated to **His** service. **Yet in** spite of this fact, and perhaps because of it, Israel's suffering has **been** and **is** now very great, and **it** will be much greater still, when Christ has taken **His** Church out of this scene.

The second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is connected with an epoch of crisis which includes many events and will involve the fulfilment of many inter-related prophecies. All these prophecies recorded in the synoptic gospels connect the coming with conditions prevailing in the earth, and are always spoken in the third person. The title "Son of Man" is frequently used, allusion is often made to the world at large and to Israel in particular, and the terms used signify a visible return of the Lord Jesus in power, majesty, glory and judgment.

This visible return will be preceded by a time of unparalleled tabulation. The power of the holy people will be broken in pieces (Daniel 12. 7), and the cup of Jacob's trouble will be full. God will visit in wrath, and for approximately 3½ years (Daniel 9, 27, Revelation 13. 5) the Jewish nation will be involved in outstanding persecution and the nations in unprecedented troubles. This visitation of wrath is not the final doom of the impenitent dead, but judgment upon the living. "The major part of the book of Revelation has reference to this period, and discloses its characteristics as wars, famines, pestilence, earthquakes, cosmical disturbances, violent death—a picture terrible beyond description."

But it is to Israel we must make special reference. The whole world will have its hour of trial, but Israel will be the principal sufferer, for then there will be no restraint to Jew-hate. "It is even the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30. 7). After their age-long endurance of tribulation, there will be a final combined attempt to annihilate the Jews "as the last vestige on earth of any visible witness to the reality of a living God." [Is it not necessary to distinguish between the Jews as we see them to-day and "the holy people"? Many Jews, as the Lord showed in John 5. 43, will receive the Antichrist; these will in consequence know no persecution, but will be amongst the persecutors, even as the people of Israel joined with Herod and Pontius Pilate in the rejection and crucifixion of the Lord. But "the holy people" are those indicated in Daniel 11. 32, "the people that know their God" (He whom the apostate Jews who acknowledge Antichrist know not), and against these the Antichrist will hurl all His power and hate, and break them in pieces; so much so, that the Lord asked the question in Luke 18. 8, "Howbeit when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find (the) faith on the earth?" This means, I would understand, shall He find a collective people carrying out His will proper to that time? He seems, in His question, to indicate the possibility of the holy people being so broken and scattered that their collective service and testimony has ceased.—J. M.] Israel had been separated from other nations, specially trained and privileged, equipped and commissioned to a work of witness to which she proved grievously unfaithful. This witness will be reinforced and amplified by God's "two witnesses" (possibly Moses and Elijah, or Enoch and Elijah), but opposition will reach its foul climax under the Antichrist.

The re-gathering of Israel to the promised land is frequently alluded to in the Scriptures (*e. g.*, Isaiah 35.). For God's earthly people their promises are "earthly" and we suggest that they are to be re-gathered—at least representatively—to their own land even though unconverted. The trickle of return to Palestine which has begun in recent decades will probably become a series of converging mass movements. Jerusalem is specially mentioned as being one of the centres of judgment (Ezekiel 22. 19).

In his persecution of the Jew, Satan will use as his chief tool the Antichrist, the Man of Sin (2 Thessalonians 2. 3, 9), the first Beast of Revelation 13. As his answer to the incarnation of our Lord, the Adversary will himself incarnate the man who will be absolutely his instrument. The image of the latter will possibly be "the abomination of desolation, - which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet" (Matthew 24. 15). After the years of unprecedented persecution, the Antichrist will sweep into Palestine with mighty forces at his disposal, bent on the utter extermination of the Jewish race. For *as* this race has been the object of divine choice and kindness, so surely will it be the object of Satanic defestation and cruelty. Deliverance will only be accomplished by the personal return of our Lord Jesus Christ with His mighty host.

From Edinburgh. —After the coming of the Lord to the air, there will begin, on earth, the last of the seventy weeks which are decreed concerning Israel, according to the vision revealed to Daniel (see Daniel 9. 24-27).

Though all believers will have been taken from the earth, God will create for Himself of those who remain, a holy people. The Holy Spirit will take up men and use them to this end, causing them to understand the times, and to preach the gospel which applies to those times. And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (see Acts 2. 17-21). Jerusalem will be, once more, the centre of God's work, though the holy people will probably include not only Jews, but also men of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues (Revelation 7. 9 and 14). It appears that the holy people will, increase during the first half of the week, and that, just before the tribulation of the second half of the week begins, a hundred and forty and four thousand servants of God out of the tribes of the children of Israel will be sealed with the seal of God upon their foreheads (Revelation 7. 2-8). They will be seen later standing with the Lamb on mount Zion (Revelation 14. 1-5). [Which mount Zion is this? If Revelation 14. gives in any sense a sequence of events, then this 144, 000, who are described as virgins who had been purchased out of the earth, are seen standing with the Lamb on mount Zion prior to His coming to earth as the Son of Man. If they are standing with the Lamb on mount Zion prior to His descent to earth, then the mount Zion must be that of Hebrews 12. 22, and not mount Zion in Palestine. In the light of this, can the 144, 000 who are sealed of the tribes of Israel, in Revelation 7., be the same as those of chapter 14? I am very doubtful of such a conclusion that they are the same. —J. M. J. In the midst of the week, the sacrifice and oblation of the holy people will be caused to cease, and the abomination of desolation will be set up, and will stand in the holy place (Daniel 9. 27; 11. 31; Matthew 24. 15). Then for the second half of the week the earth will pass through a time of great tribulation such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until then, nor shall be afterwards. Yet in spite of all this tribulation, and in spite of the eternal gospel which will be proclaimed, warning them of the judgment of God (see Revelation 14. 6, 7), many will not repent of their evil works. Nay, rather will they be incensed against God and against His holy people. Thus, for the holy people, this will be a time of great danger and difficulty. The Lord Jesus Himself gave warning to those that dwell in Judaea: "When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation... standing in the holy place,... let them that are in Judaea flee unto the mountains." They are to consider nothing but their lives. Earthly possessions must go. They will meet with both spiritual and physical difficulties. The Devil himself will be on the earth then (see Revelation 12. 7-12). The false Christ and false prophet shall show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray if possible even the elect. Refusing to receive the mark of the beast, they will be unable to buy or sell. Those times will be such that except they had been shortened no flesh would have been saved, but for the elect's sake they shall be shortened. Though the holy people throughout the world will suffer affliction, it seems that those in Judaea will bear the brunt of it. For them, we judge, there will be a place of refuge (see Daniel 11. 41; Revelation 12. 6 and 14) to which they may flee, and where they may await their Deliverer.

John A. H. Robertson.

From Glasgow. —It is sad yet true that the holy people will be broken under the Antichrist. In piecing together many scriptures we can see the picture taking shape. It would appear that the two witnesses are on the earth in the first part of Daniel's seventieth week of prophecy doing a great work among God's people the Jews, who will then be back in their own land. A restored temple, offerings and sacrifices, and a covenant of security for seven years with the ruler of that day prior to his being manifested as the Antichrist, will be something of a tonic for them at that time (Daniel 9. 27). Freedom to worship God is their heart's desire, and what a rekindling of faith will take place through the testimony of the two witnesses!

When these witnesses have completed their testimony, the Beast that cometh up out of the abyss will slay them (Revelation 11. 7). The Beast or Antichrist

will break his covenant and cause the continual burnt offering to cease. He will also sit **in** the temple setting himself forth as God (2 Thessalonians 2. 4). This will be the sign of the times as spoken of by the Lord **Jesus** to His disciples on the Mount of Olives (Matthew 24. 15-22).

Certain saints of God will flee to the mountains where they, will **be** cared for by God, and will find refuge in Edom, Moab and Ammon. But do all the saints of God find safety? Zechariah 13. **9** tells **us** that the third part will be brought through the fire **in** a refining process **as** silver, and they will be tried **as** gold **is** tried. This **is** the people against whom the Antichrist will set himself **in** all his, fury, trying every device to make them renounce God.

There would appear to be two covenants: (1) that which Antichrist himself **makes** with the Jewish people but breaks it in the middle of the week; (2) the other is **the** Holy Covenant against which the Antichrist has indignation, being the covenant made or renewed between God and the holy people.

Revelation 6. **9** refers to some of this same people who lay down their lives **in** the struggle for the word of God and the testimony which they held. They are robed in white for they are worthy, and are told by their Lord to rest for **a** little time, until their fellow servants also and their brethren should be killed even **as** they. Wonderful deeds of heroism will then be done by the people of God **as** we read **in** Daniel 11. 32. Many **will** fall under the stroke of the Antichrist, for we read **in** Revelation 13. **7**: "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." Again **in** Daniel 7. **21, 22**, "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed' against them; until the Ancient of Days c a m e" *J. Rae.*

EXTRACTS.

From Vancouver, **B. C.** —The fact that many of the sons of Jacob have returned to their own land of Palestine, **is** a strong indication that the time to which our present subject has reference **is** drawing near. We realize, however, that the small infiltration at the present **is** but the preface to that **final** chapter of Israel's dark history, which precedes and leads up to the coming millennial kingdom. Yet events in keeping with the direct voice of prophecy will not really commence for them until after the Church has been taken from the earth to be with the Lord.

The power of the holy people **is** destined to be broken beneath the crushing heel of the Antichrist. This being so, they must, prior to that time, be established **again** **as** a nation amongst the nations, and very probably their standing **as** such will be given to them by the same one who will later crush them (see Daniel **9. 27**; **12. 7**). However, their status **as** such will be of short duration, and no divine help will be manifested to assist them in holding their national position, before the onslaught of the beast.

The end of three and **a** half years will mark the breaking of the covenant, when the beast will begin his relentless persecution of Israel, the main objective **being** to gain possession of the fabulous wealth of Palestine, which will be the richest spot in the world, in both agriculture and mineral wealth (Daniel 11. 41-45). [**I am** doubtful of the interpretation of the words **in** Daniel 11. 43, "the treasures of gold and of silver" as indicating the fabulous wealth of Palestine, both agricultural and mineral. I have heard nothing yet that would lead to the conclusion that Palestine **is** outstanding in either mineral or agricultural wealth **as** compared with such wealth in certain other lands. The treasures of gold and silver would indicate (would it not?) the massed wealth of the nations which will be under the control of Antichrist. The precious things of Egypt have special mention in this verse. —J. M. J. Evidences of the great strides being made **in** this direction are already apparent.

The tribulation, **as** such, has two aspects, Godward and manward. Manward, it demonstrates the Antichrist's fierce hatred towards the Jew, and his avaricious **greed** to possess their wealth and control their land. The temple will house his

image. Signs and wonders will be wrought by the hand of the false prophet, who will deceive the world (Revelation 13. 11-16). Between the temple and the sea will be the palace of the Antichrist (Daniel 11. 45).

Godward, the tribulation is the divine method of breaking the stony heart of the sons of Jacob, that they may be purified and restored for the future kingdom. Those who are in view for kingdom blessing are only such as have not received the mark of the Beast, who discover his deception and look for their own Deliverer.

R. Armstrong.

From Kilmarnock. —In Matthew 24., the Lord is foretelling the terrible things that will take place at the end of the age to the temple and to the nation of Israel. This is in striking contrast to the comforting words of John 14. where He tells of His coming again for His Church, which may take place at any time.

Revelation 12. is worthy of notice in connection with this great tribulation. Satan and his angels are cast down to the earth, and because of this he causes a great persecution. It would seem that God uses this as a means of chastising Israel and making them ready to receive their true Messiah (Daniel 11. 35). But as His chastisements are always mixed with mercies, He prepared a place of escape for faithful ones, when they see the "abomination of desolation" placed in the temple. As a nation they rejected the Lord Jesus as their Messiah; they will receive one who comes in his own name, viz., "the Antichrist," and their power will be broken under his authority (John 5. 43). [Not such as receive Antichrist, but "the holy people" will be broken]. So terrible will be the conditions then that unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved. The Lord's words are, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24. 13). *A. G. S.*

From Winder mere. —Prophecy is beginning to be fulfilled. Some few of the nation of Israel are back in the land promised by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God will resume His dealings with them. The temple will be restored, sacrifices again offered, but Israel will not be free from Gentile authority. The following scriptures foretell of 7 years that are to be fulfilled (Daniel 9. 27; Matthew 24. 15-51; Revelation 12. & 13.). It would appear that some woes will have been poured out during the first 3½ years, in judgment on the Gentiles, although Israel does not seem to be marked out for special suffering during this period, but the last 3 J years is spoken of as the great tribulation. The harmony of the Scriptures dealing with this time is very beautiful—unlike many books written on prophecy which are at great variance with each other.

It should be noted that the temple of God, with its altar and worshippers, occupies its proper place in restored Israel, and divine cognisance is taken of these, in that one with a reed is bidden to measure these evidences of the divine presence. On the other hand the court is to be given to the nations and is not to be measured. The holy city is also to be trodden under foot for 42 months (3½ years). We notice the difference made between the sanctuary and its worshippers and other places, although in very near proximity. How significant the words concerning the abomination, "It standeth where it ought not"!

The great mystery of the woman, who is seen crying out, and travailing in birth and in pain to be delivered would seem to portray the people of Israel. Again 1260 days are mentioned, and we are told in Romans, a remnant shall be saved, while it is of this nation that Christ according to the flesh came. The child, of whom it is said, "He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron," who is caught up to the throne of God, speaks of Him who has ascended to the right hand of God, whom the heavens must receive until the restitution of all things.

D. Banks, T. B.

From Atherton. —The great tribulation would seem to take place after the events of Revelation 12. 7 in which Satan is cast down and his angels with him. The people who hear and receive the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 24. 14)

seem to be the ones who are persecuted. Nations will hear the **message**, who have not heard of Christ before (Isaiah **66. 19**), and many of these will **be** slain in the tribulation and will stand before the Throne (Revelation **9. 14**). The words "breaking in pieces," **we** learn, are from the **same** Hebrew word **as is** used in Judges **7. 19**, and Jeremiah **48. 12**, which would bring home to our hearts the terrible pursuit by the adversary of the harassed people of God. In Daniel **8. 24** **we get** some **idea** of the manner in which he will do this. **He** will destroy wonderfully, and in the R. V. margin it says he will "corrupt" the holy people, so that not only **is** the national life here involved, but that which **is** more important still, the spiritual life. This **may be** seen in the setting up of the "abomination of desolation" (Daniel **9. 27**).

The object of tribulation **is** to break completely the power of the holy people, so that when the Messiah comes a second **time** to earth, they will **be** glad to welcome **Him** (see Zechariah **12. 10, 11**, and Isaiah **63. 4**). It **was** noticed that some Jews will **escape** death during the tribulation, **but** although they flee to the mountains, they will feel to a certain extent privation due to that terrible time, and **it seems** from Matthew **24/26** that some will **be** there to tempt them with certain **messages** to try and bring about their worshipping of the beast.

Revelation **7. 1-4**, **was** referred to, and a query **was asked** concerning the 144, 000 whom God seals, **as** to whether this sealing will **be** symbolical or not. It **was** suggested that here we have a seal that will **be** visible, that will mark out this remnant of Jehovah's, but others thought that the sealing would **be** symbolical. Seeing that this number **is** sealed it **was** asked, would these need to **flee** to the mountains from the presence of the **Beast** seeing that they are marked out by God? It **was** said that they would need to flee to the mountains for refuge, **because** anyone who would not fall down to the Beast would **be** slain. *G. Sankey.*

[The sealing **is** not, I judge, symbolic any more than the fact that saints to-day are sealed with the Holy Spirit symbolically. These 144, 000 are said to **be** "the servants of God," and they belong to the twelve tribes of Israel (Dan excepted). They are sealed on their foreheads, but **we** cannot say that such sealing will **be visible** to men. They are sealed with the **seal** of the living God. **We** cannot say that these **will** form that company who will flee over Jordan to the mountains of Moab and find sanctuary in the lands of Moab, Edom and the chief of the children of Ammon, nor can we say from the brief details of Revelation **7**, that they will **be** preserved through the great tribulation. This chapter presents two companies (1) **144, 000** out of the twelve tribes of Israel, a defined company **as** to number; (2) a great multitude, which no man could number, all Gentiles, I judge, who will **be** slain during the great tribulation. —J. M.]

From Broxburn. —In considering the subject it is necessary to determine who the holy people are in order to avoid confusion of thought. That the description applies to the people of Israel in that day, and not to the godly remnant thereof, **is** abundantly clear, **because** the Antichrist will break in pieces the power of the holy people (Daniel **12. 7**), while in Daniel **8. 24** he **is** said to destroy the mighty ones and the holy people. Some may have a difficulty in reconciling the nation of Israel in unbelief with the holy people, but **we** are assured from Romans **11. 16** that "if the firstfruit **is** holy, so **also is** the lump: and if the root **is** holy, so are the branches." They are beloved for the fathers' sake. So also are children **said to be** holy **because** of a godly parentage (1 Corinthians **7. 14**). [I have in London's paper indicated the opposite view to that which **is** here expressed, so I need not repeat what I have said. As to Romans **11. 16**, if a part **is** to **be** described **as** holy **it must be** of the **same** quality **as** the whole, and if branches are holy they **must partake** of the holiness of the root. Hence when branches failed to partake of the holiness of the root they were in judgment broken off and those were grafted in who did partake of that holiness, though they naturally belonged to the wild olive. Belief and unbelief were and are the vital factors in connexion with a place in the olive tree and in the participating in its fatness.

Again, the children of **an** unequal marriage, where the parents remain together, are said to be holy, so that the holiness of children in 1 Corinthians 7. 14 is not because of godly parentage. —J. M. J.

The great sign seen in heaven (Revelation 12. 1) we identified with Israel, and the **fact** of the woman being arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, revived memories of Joseph's dream, in which the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to him. Since the interpretation of the dream **was** so obvious, his father and mother and his brethren applying it at once to themselves, we have no difficulty here in recognising the nation of Israel **as** typified by its great progenitors. The first **five** verses of the chapter have now been fulfilled. Israel has brought forth the man child, the Lord **Jesus** Christ, the One who **is** destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and whom the great red dragon sought to slay in **His** infancy. Satan found **a** ready instrument in Herod when he sought the young child's life, but the second Beast of Revelation 13. will eclipse even Herod's cruelty, in persecuting the **Jews** with relentless cruelty.

The words of Isaiah 26. **20** no doubt apply here also, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." For the elect's sake, that **is** for the godly remnant of Israel, those days will be shortened, for salvation in that day will be **a** test of endurance according to the words of Matthew 10. **22**, "**He** that endureth to the end, the **same** shall be saved." God mercifully will deliver **His** people at the end of a thousand two hundred and ninety days, by causing the Beast to hear tidings out of the **east** and out of the north that shall trouble him and divert his attention. There will thus be **a** brief respite given, **a** waiting period which we suggest will be terminated at the end of a thousand three hundred and five and thirty days by the coming of the Son of Man. [I do not follow our friends in their association of Daniel 11. **44** with the end of 1,290 days, nor do I think that the Son of Man comes at the end of **1,335** days. If the time of the tribulation **is** 1,260 days, $3\frac{1}{2}$ years, then the Lord must come at the end of this period. —J. M. J.]

Henry Dyer,

From Southport. —The holy people includes more than just the Jews. It does include one hundred and forty-four thousand **Jews** (Revelation 7. 4) and also "... **a** great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues..." (Revelation 7. 9). These **we** know are the people who have come out of the great tribulation (Revelation 7. 14). [I would be quite disposed to the thought that the holy people will not be exclusively Jewish **as** to its composition. Yet it **is** Jewish in character. Note in Daniel 12. **7** the time given **is** "**a** time, times, and an half." This period **is** the half of the last week of the **70** weeks of Daniel **9.**, and these **70** weeks are prophesied over the people of Israel. God will resume **His** dealings with Israel and **use** the believing part of the nation to preach the gospel of the kingdom to all nations, and no doubt those of the nations who believe the gospel will **be** found in collective testimony with the faithful remnant. These will resist the evil, idolatrous character of Antichrist's kingdom unto blood, and Antichrist's bitter and malevolent purpose will be to break in pieces any collective witness. This **was** Paul's work in his early days, to destroy¹ collective testimony, and **is** Satan's purpose in any age, either by external persecution or internal corruption. —J. M. J.]

The last **week** of Daniel's seventy weeks **is** in two parts. For the first half of the week the Beast shall keep **a firm** covenant with the Jews, but in the middle of the week he will **cause** the **sacrifice** and oblation to **cease** (Daniel 9. 27), and then will be seen the abomination of desolation, standing in the holy place, setting himself forth **as** God (2 Thessalonians 2. 4). The tribulation lasts three and **a** half years, for from the time that the abomination that maketh desolate **is** set up shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days (Daniel 12. 11). At first sight this does not **agree** with the statement in Revelation 12. **6**. which says one thousand two hundred and sixty days. The Jewish year **is** composed of twelve months of thirty days. Every seventh year an extra month **is** added to allow for their months

being very short. Therefore some time during the seven years of Daniel's seventieth week, thirty days will be added, but from Matthew 24. 22 those days will be shortened for the elect's sake, which would account for the shorter time in Revelation 12. 6. [The Jewish year consisted of 12 lunar months of alternately 29 and 30 days. The intercalary month of 30 days, Ve-Adar, was added every second or third year. —S. B. J. *W. S. Holden.*]

From Manchester. —It is evident that Satan's designs for the extermination of the holy people will be executed through a super-man who will be energised by the Adversary himself. We have heard that Antichrist cometh (1 John 2. 18), and that his outstanding characteristic will be denial of the Father and the Son. This characteristic is the clue to the identity of one spoken of by Daniel, by the Lord Jesus, by the Apostle Paul, and by the Apostle John. For in Daniel 11. 37 we learn of one who " shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods. " The Lord Jesus solemnly warned that the abomination of desolation would stand in the holy place. From 2 Thessalonians 2. 4 we glean that the man of sin " opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God. " Through the seer of Patmos we are told that the beast " opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, " and made all that dwell on the earth worship him (Revelation 13. 6, 8).

Similarly prophecies regarding Antichrist associate his power with great signs and lying wonders of Satanic origin (c. f., Matthew 24. 24, 2 Thessalonians 2. 9, and Revelation 13. 3, 13).

The testimonies of the prophets therefore unite to foretell a day when Satan will cause the Antichrist to claim universal worship, backing up his claim by lying wonders. The breaking of the power of the holy people will be a natural consequence of this claim, for a remnant of faithful Israelites will resist the blasphemous demands. Details of their resistance and surrounding events are less clear to the student of prophecy than the main trend of developments, but the vision of Revelation 12. 13-17 suggests that some Israelites will find a place of refuge " in the wilderness " (perhaps the mountains of Edom and Moab—see Daniel 11. 41). That the dragon went away to make war with the rest of her seed may indicate the concentration of the nations against Jerusalem, for Zechariah 14. 1-4 shows that half the city will already have been taken when the Lord finally returns in deliverance. Certain it is that the economic and military forces of the world will be united under Antichrist against the holy people (Revelation 13. 7, 13). So will the nations fill up the cup of their iniquity, the fulness of the Gentiles will come in, and then

" There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer;
He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob " (Romans 11. 26).
G. Prasher, Jun.

Questions and Answers.

Question from London. —Is it true that in the Greek the number 666 " is made up of two characters which stand for the name of Christ, with a third character, the figure of a crooked serpent, put between them " ?

Answer. —The Greek letters having the numerical value of 666 are *chi* — 600, *Xi* — 60 and the double consonant *st* — 6, and I see no need to introduce Christ's name and that of Satan into the number 666 and make it still more mystical. It is said to be the number of man. —*J. M.*

Question from Kilmarnock. —Matthew 24. 2. Does this apply to the temple destroyed in A. D. 70 by the Romans, or is it to a later temple ?

Answer. —It refers, according to my understanding, to the temple which the Romans destroyed. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

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EDITORIAL.

Amongst a number of mysteries which are mentioned in the **New** Testament is "the mystery of lawlessness" or of iniquity. Paul **said** of it in his **day**, it "doth **already** work." Like all mysteries, it is given only to some to understand them, in a measure, like **as** the Lord **said** of the kingdom of heaven, "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, **but** to them it is not given" (Matthew 13. 11). In **due** time that which is now a **secret**, only known to those who are the favoured friends of the Lord (John 15. 14, 15), will **be** openly revealed. Thus it will **be** with the mystery of lawlessness. Satan, the evil spirit that works in the sons of disobedience, **is** energising men, restraining, controlling, guiding, men in a path of rebellion against God, which has a day of manifestation in front, the revelation of Antichrist, who will **be** revealed in his own season.

The ancient attack of Satan against the throne of the Almighty, no doubt alluded to in Isaiah 14. 12-15, and Ezekiel 28. 11-19, and its calamitous sequel, has taught the evil one no permanent lesson, and whilst he will never again lead an assault against the throne of heaven, he will lead the attack, **by** the man of his choice, against the throne of Jehovah, the throne of David, being established amongst men, and will for a brief period of 3½ years place his man upon the throne in Jerusalem and give him world dominion. In a word, the mystery of lawlessness has one central feature, and that **is** to thwart God's purpose in the establishing of divine government and worship amongst men in Jerusalem, the **city** chosen **by** God from ancient **times** **as** the **seat** of **His** government and the place where **He** has designed that men ought to worship (we are, of course, not speaking of truth peculiar to this dispensation).

The organised and international rejection and crucifixion of Christ on Golgotha, seen **in** the representatives of the nations and people of Israel, **was** part of the great plan and secret. "For of a truth in this **city** against Thy holy Servant Jesus, whom Thou **didst** anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together" (Acts 4. 27). **He** who **is** to rule the nations with a rod of iron, the Man Child, **must** **be** got rid of and so pave the way for the realisation of the long-planned and deeply-laid schemes of Satan. The Lord **was** not ignorant of the **deep** things of Satan. **He** **accused** the **Jews** in their design to **murder** **Him** that they were of their father the devil, who, he **said**, "was a murderer from the beginning." Again **He** said, "I **am** come in **My** Father's name, and ye receive **Me** not; if **another** shall come in his own name, him ye will **receive**" (John 5. 43). It is somewhat remarkable that the Lord **uses** the Greek word *Allos* here and not *Heteros*. A Greek scholar **writes** of these words thus. — "*Allos* denotes numerical, *Heteros* generic distinction, 'different.' "

Quite evidently the meaning of this verse is not that of the **diverse** characters of the two indicated, but of the Christ who **came** and presented Himself to Israel and **was** rejected, and of the false Christ or Antichrist who would present himself and **be** accepted. As the true Christ **was** One who **was** born to rule the nations, the King of the **Jews**, as **He** is called in Matthew 2. 2, so the coming Antichrist will **be** for a brief season a world emperor, and in Revelation 13. he is identified as the **first** beast.

Some have sought to maintain that the first **beast** of Revelation 13. is a Gentile, **but** the second **beast** a Jew. Without the least atom of evidence in this chapter, and by a process of reasoning, they maintain that the kind of man the apostate **Jews** will **accept** as their Messiah **must** be a Jew. If there should **be** doubt as to the identification of the Antichrist, Ezekiel 21. 25-27 should, in my judgment, settle the matter: "And thou, O deadly wounded wicked one, the prince of Israel, whose day **is** come, in the **time** of iniquity of the e n d I will overturn, overturn, overturn **it**: this also shall **be** no more, until **He** come whose right **it** **is**; and I will give **it** Him." Who has the right to crown and mitre **but** One only, the Christ of God? **But** in contrast to **Him** is one who is called the prince of Israel, and **He** is the deadly wounded, lawless one. Who **fits** the **picture** here **but** the one with the death-stroke, of Revelation 13. 3? This deadly wounded one **is** the prince of Israel. It may **be** open to debate as to whether the apostate **Jews** will **receive** as their Messiah a Gentile in the darkness of their unbelief, **but** there **is** not a loophole to **evade** the **issue** in Ezekiel 21. 25. The **time** of the appearance of this prince **is** the **time** of the iniquity of the end. Can **it** **be** doubted that this **is** the **same** **time** as that of Ezekiel 35. 5, when God will deal with Mount Seir, which means Edom or Esau, when Seir will **be** desolated, in the day of the LORD'S vengeance, in the year of recompense in the controversy of Zion? **See** Isaiah 34. which speaks so awfully of God's judgment on that land and the perpetual desolations that will follow. Can we doubt **at** all that the **time** of iniquity of the end, **is** the **time** when transgressors are come to the full? (Daniel 8. 23), when the king of fierce countenance will stand up against the Prince of princes only to **be** broken without hand, for this Prince of princes has the right and God will give **it** **Him** and **He** will know how to deal with the deadly wounded one, who, in lawlessness, without the least shred of right on his part, will occupy the place that **is** the right of our only sovereign Lord and **Master**, **Jesus** Christ.

The Lord in Matthew 24. 24 draws clear distinction between false Christs, and false prophets. The false prophet **is** not the false Christ. The business of the false prophet **is** to **make** all that dwell in the earth to worship the first **beast**, whose death-stroke **was** healed (Revelation 13, 12). To this end he will **exercise** the first **beast's** authority, and note the words, "in his sight." **He** will **be** under the eye and control of the **first** **beast** on whose behalf he **speaks** and for whose honour he performs his **great** signs. Moreover, whilst he gives breath to the **image** of the beast, **it** **is** not he who **makes** the **image**. "**He** deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by reason of the signs which **it** **was** **given** him to do in the sight of the **beast**; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should **make** an **image** to the beast, who hath the stroke of the sword, and lived" (verse 14). What have we here? Is this an acknowledgment and an honouring of scientific attainment?—"that they should make an **image** to the beast." Who are the "they"? Only such, **it** **seems** to me, who are so skilful as to **make** such an **image**, and, moreover, such an **image** as this only required breath to **be** given **it** and then **it** would speak. It seemed to be imbued with intelligence. This lying wonder **seems** to **be** Satan's last word in deception. In the beginning of human history we read, "God created man in **His** own image." Now **at** the end of the **career** of human lawlessness, men make the **image** of a man, the **image** of that personification of lawlessness, the **beast**, the Antichrist, the man of sin, **but** the only purpose of such a human, or shall we call it inhuman, invention, such an affront to Deity, **is** that **it** should **cause** men, 'holy men, made in the **image** of God, to **be** slain, men who will neither worship such an idol as this **image** is, nor yet the **beast** himself.

May we now briefly **seek** to piece together **by** a few portions of scripture a **picture** of that which **affects** the people of Israel in the days that are in front and

in the time of the great tribulation? We see clearly from the Scriptures that the Jew returns in two ways to his own land. First God will drive them back as He drove them away.

⁴⁴ Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be said, As the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, As the LORD liveth, that brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north, and from all the countries whither He had driven them: and I will bring them again into their land that T gave unto their fathers. Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the LORD, and they shall fish them; and afterward I will send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks. For Mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from My face, neither is their iniquity concealed from Mine eyes " (Jeremiah 16. 14-17). This seems to indicate clearly that as the result of Gentile persecution and action in other ways, the Jews will be brought back to Palestine, and brought back in unbelief in the true Messiah, prior to the time of Daniel's 70th week.

Then in the beginning of the Millennium they will be brought back with great care and kindness, when kings shall be their nursing fathers and **queens** their nursing mothers. " They shall bring thy sons in their bosom, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders " (Isaiah 49. 22, **23**; **60**. 4-9; 66. 19-22).

The return of Jews in numbers prior to the time of Daniel's 70th week sets the stage for the great drama of the close of Gentile supremacy. In my judgment, no one can say in truth that immediately the Church the Body is taken from this scene the 70th week of Daniel will commence, or that there will be an interval, long or short, between the Church's going and the commencement of the 70th week. Only this would I say to such as hold that the Church's going ushers in Daniel's 70th week, that it is not possible to hold such a divine doctrine and also hold that the coming of the Lord for the Church may be at any moment, for as yet the prince who will make a firm covenant with the Jews for a week of years is not in sight, nor have the Jews a temple in being in which to sacrifice. It is not consistent with holding the imminence of the Lord's coming to the air, the holding that this dispensation of grace is immediately followed by the commencement of Daniel's 70th week, and that only 7 years intervene between the coming of the Lord to the air and His return to the earth.

Already we see the beginning of the return of the Jews to Palestine, and events which will ensue from the present war must hasten the return of Jews in larger numbers. The present development of the land will admit of these larger numbers being absorbed in productive industry, and greater development lies ahead. Whether we may expect any considerable repentance on the part of Jews at the close of this dispensation may be doubtful, but when the Church is gone it seems beyond doubt that a number, which may be considerable, will accept Jesus as the true Messiah. Such conversions will be necessary to make possible the preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom in the whole world for a testimony unto all the nation (Matthew 24. 14).

It will have been noticed by many that Matthew 10., which gives us the account of the sending forth of the twelve apostles, seems to contemplate no dispensational break, such as has taken place by the intervention of the present dispensation of grace. The Lord says to the twelve, " But when they persecute you in this city, flee unto the next: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone through the cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come " (Matthew 10. 23). The coming of the Son of Man is yet future. The preaching of the same gospel as the twelve were sent forth to preach, which had the King and the kingdom for its theme, which was rudely set aside by Israel in the days of the flesh of the Son of Man, will again be heralded, by men, I judge, of the same nationality as those who went forth to preach the gospel at the first. It seems evident that their preaching will be richly blessed from the fact that the Gentile martyrs in the time of the tribulation will be a multitude which no man can number. Who but the preachers of the gospel of the kingdom brought so many Gentiles into the light?

The preaching of the gospel of the kingdom will not be limited to the cities of Israel; it will be preached **in the** whole world and to all nations.

In addition to this world-wide testimony will be the testimony of the two witnesses **in** Jerusalem during the first half of Daniel's 70th week, a period, **as** Revelation 11. 3 tells us, of a thousand two hundred and threescore days. No doubt one of these witnesses will be Elijah, who **is** yet to come; but whereas the testimony of Elijah failed to recover Israel from the idolatrous worship of Baal, and whereas John the Baptist's witness-bearing, he who came **in** the Spirit and power of Elijah, failed to bring Israel to repentance, the testimony of the **two** witnesses will then have a salutary effect on the people of Israel. When the beast comes up from the abyss he will make war with and slay the **two** witnesses. At the same time Satan **is** cast down from heaven (Revelation 12.), and then commences **the** compulsory worship of the beast and **his** image **in the** tribulation. The woman (Israel) will flee into the wilderness from the persecution that refusal to worship the beast will bring, but many may not be able to follow the Lord's commands to **His** followers of those days. "When therefore ye see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing **in the** holy place (let him that readeth understand), then let them that are **in** Judaea flee unto the mountains. " **His** command **is** followed by many, for **in** Revelation 12. 14 we read, "And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she **might** fly into the wilderness unto her place, where **she is** nourished for a time, and times, and half a time., from the face of the serpent. " This forms the main body "of the true Israel, the holy people, for then as ever, " They are not all Israel, which are of Israel " (Romans 9. 6). This woman, Israel, has many seed, those who hold the **same** doctrine and are consequently of **the same** character, and of these **it is** said, that they "keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus " (Revelation 12. 17). These the old serpent and the beast, his confederate in wickedness, will persecute and slay with the greatest fury. **J. M.**

THE ORACLES OF GOD *{continued}*.

A frequent challenge thrown down by those who do not believe **in** the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is, that supposing it to be true, the **frequent** transcription which has been necessary **in** order to transmit the **text** down through the **ages has** resulted **in** such hopeless corruption that to-day **at** any rate any degree of word perfectness must be well nigh impossible. And this view point can be appreciated especially **if** one has done much proof reading of books. Some years ago **in** checking over **the text** of a book about to be published, I discovered to the author's surprise at least a thousand errors of various kinds, although the proof had already been gone through by two others! How **then** did the Massorettes succeed in preserving so accurately the sacred **text** handed on to them by the Sopherim? At any rate whatever the errors then present these also were faithfully recorded and **exist** even **in** our present translations. For example **in** Genesis 18. 22 where **we** are told that " Abraham stood yet before the Lord, " the Hebrew **text** shows that when the Sopherim transcribed **it** from **the** original they deliberately reversed **the** striking statement that " the Lord stood yet before Abraham "—presumably out of a mistaken **sense** of reverence. And yet how wonderful to think of God " stopping behind " to hear Abraham plead! Such variations are known **as** the " Emendations of the Sopherim. " They are at least 18 **in** number, and their occurrence **is** shewn by the Massorettes **in** their marginal notes and references; the latter constitute the Massorah. " **One** jot or one tittle shall **in** no wise pass away from the law, " said the Lord, and there **is** a **sense** **in** which the Massorettes so hedged about the sacred **text** as to enable this to be well nigh literally accomplished. Every peculiar feature they noted, listing words and phrases, preparing treatises and summaries, including a **mass** of elaborate rules and calculations. They counted the letters, recorded the number of words **in** each book and even the middle word, but most striking of all prepared a system of cross references remarkable for the fact that, to be of use, the subsequent transcriber **must** know the **text** virtually by heart—this was a fact, and **is** true of many Jews to-day! The first verse of Genesis will provide a good illustration of the systematic way in which the whole of **the text** was so guarded and " tied up " that it was well nigh impossible

for error to creep in. The Massorah shows that " in the beginning " occurs three times at the commencement of a verse; that " God created " occurs three times, and that " the heavens and the earth " occurs thirteen times throughout the whole of the Old Testament. Moreover it showed that the word *Bereshith* (Hebrew for " in the beginning ") is to be found **in** the three places referred to in connection with the words " God, " " establish, " and " righteous, " so that a marginal reference " God establisheth the righteous " reminded the instructed Hebrew of the occurrence of *Bereshith* not only **in** Genesis 1. 1, but also **in** Jeremiah 26. 1 and 28. **I** where the **names** of Jehoiakim (meaning " *Jah establishes* ") and Zedekiah (part of the root of which means " the righteous ") occur. From this it will be gathered that for the whole of the text a vast amount of material of all kinds accumulated which could not possibly be accommodated **in** margins alone unless these greatly exceeded the space allotted to the text itself. The fact **is** that the Massorah became dispersed over innumerable different manuscripts and it was **the** examination of these on which Dr. Ginsburg laboured for **30** years, eventually gathering the whole into three large folio volumes which now stand **as** a monument to his own labours **as** well **as** a testimony to the diligence of the Massorettes. It **is** a joy to know that, although a Jew, he was nevertheless a Christian, and that during the past year the first **10, 000** copies of the New Testament **in** parallel English and Hebrew have been distributed amongst Jewish families and that its Hebrew text was Ginsburg's translation of the original Greek. [This translation by Ginsburg was based on the work of another Hebrew Christian, Salkinson, and **is** published at 9s. 6d., but copies are now available for distribution free of charge to Jewish families. Will any readers having Jewish friends to whom a copy might profitably be sent, please communicate with Mr. A. Chamings, " Westwood. " Quorn, Loughborough ?].

Surely **as** we ponder over the diligence of these **men in** respect of the Word, we should be constrained to emulate them and more and more aspire to the experience of the Psalmist who could say, " Oh how love I Thy law ! It **is** my meditation all the day. " If this be our portion then with him we shall also be able to say, " Thy commandments make **me** wiser than mine enemies; for they are ever with **me** " (Psalm 119. 97, 98).

A. Chamings.

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The Breaking of the Holy People under Antichrist.

(Daniel 12. 7; Matthew 24. 15-22; Revelation 12. 13-17).

From Ilford. —In previous studies we have seen how the Church which **is** **His** Body will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Thus a great restraining influence on the latent evil forces at work will be taken away, and lawlessness will eventually be headed up **in** Antichrist. **As** **his** name implies, he **is** opposed to all that **is** of Christ, and it **is** only natural therefore that during his ascendancy all who seek to be faithful to God and **His** Christ will suffer tribulation. This mighty world ruler will be energised with Satanic power, and the world, which to-day **is** looking for a leader of outstanding ability, will follow him and give allegiance to him. It **is** evident, however, that there will be faithful ones **in** those days for we read **in** Revelation 13. 7 that " it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them. "

The laws that are passed **in** those days will test the faithfulness of true disciples for none will be able to buy or sell, " save he that hath the mark, even the **name** of the beast or the number of **his** name. " Even to-day one can **see** how this could come about, for with government controls of one kind and another buying and selling **is** almost impossible without authorisation from the central authority. This tendency will be intensified in the days of Antichrist and will no doubt have an international or world-wide application. It was thought that the holy people would comprise some of all nations and tongues, but in the **main** a saved remnant of God's ancient people the Jews.

A. G. Jarvis (Jun.).

The Coming of the Son of **Man** in Flaming Fire.
(Matthew 24. 30; 2 Thessalonians 1. 7-9; Revelation 19. 11-21).

From Kilmarnock. —In Luke 21. the Lord tells His disciples what will take place at the close of the " times of the Gentiles, " " men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world. " While all nations will suffer it would appear that the Jewish nation will be most affected. Verse 28 gives a word of encouragement and may be connected with Malachi 4. 1, 2: " For, behold, the day cometh, it burneth as a furnace;... But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings. " We take it this refers to the coming of the Lord as Son of Man, when He shall deliver His people from the power of the Antichrist and set up His kingdom that shall not be destroyed (Daniel 7. 14). Revelation 19. described the Lord as the " Faithful and True, " called " the Word of God " and " King of kings, and Lord of lords, " coming forth with His armies, to smite the nations. This is in striking contrast to what we read in Matthew 21., when He entered Jerusalem, " meek, and riding upon an ass, " and was acknowledged only by the few. In Matthew 24. 37 the Lord refers to the condition of the world in the days of Noah, when men were engrossed in " eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. " These things are legitimate in themselves, but men left out God from their thoughts and were destroyed. Such will be the condition ere the Son of Man comes, and alas ! we see signs of this even to-day.

It is important to mark the contrast between two stages of the Lord's coming again. As Son of God, He comes alone and to the air, and all in Christ are taken in blessing and all out of Christ left (1 Thessalonians 4; 16). As Son of Man, He comes with the angels of His power to the earth (2 Thessalonians 1. 7; Zechariah 14. 3, 4), and those taken are taken in judgment, while those left are left for blessing during the millennium (Matthew 13. 41, 43). [See note at end of this issue].

In view of the great things that are yet to take place, we, as disciples of the Lord, would do well to take heed to the exhortations given in Jude 20, 21 and 2 Peter 3. 11, 18.

A. G. S.

From Atherton. —The word of prophecy concerning divine vengeance in the day of the Lord is oft repeated. God's created lights will fail at that time (Matthew 24. 29). At the death of Christ there was darkness. There seems to be significance in God causing darkness on these notable occasions (see Amos 5. 18-20; Joel 2. 1, 2, 10, 11). If a? these scriptures suggest there is going to be a state of complete darkness it was thought probable that the Son of Man will come in flaming fire and not symbolically so. What a fearful sight ! complete darkness around, but the Son of Man standing out so prominently (2 Thessalonians 1. 7, 8). Malachi 3. 2 also stresses the importance of that day. " Who may abide " ? " Who shall stand " ? For those who are His enemies the day of the Lord will be ushered in by a period of terrible judgments as plainly revealed in Revelation. It is associated with His revelation in flaming fire—a time of vengeance of the most fearful kind, including the destruction of Satan's superman, the lawless one, ' the man of sin. At that time they shall call on the mountains and the rocks to fall upon them and hide them from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb (Revelation 6. 16, 17). Unlike His coming to the air, His coming in flaming fire will not be private. " Every eye shall see Him, and they which pierced Him " (Revelation 1. 7). "As a thief in the night " is an apt description of His coming (1 Thessalonians 5. 2). Judgment will fall when least expected (Matthew 24. 38, 39). The majestic appearance of the Lord stands out in bold contrast to the time when He was seen as the meek Lamb, dumb before His shearers. His name is " Faithful and True, " and our minds are taken back to the time when He was faithful even unto death, being ever true to the Fathers eternal and sovereign will. His eyes are a flame of fire, speaking of His all-piercing nature, eyes which are capable of reading the thoughts and intents of the heart. Men will quail before Him, having no word of self-justification (Isaiah 52. 15). He is arrayed with a garment sprinkled with blood (dipped, R. V. M.). The question arises—" Is this blood symbolical or actual blood ? [Isaiah 63. 3 tells us that in

consequence of His having trodden the winepress alone " their lift blood is sprinkled upon my garments. " **We** would readily conclude, I judge, that the treading of the winepress **is** a figure of speech. The Lord will not cast **His** enemies into a literal winepress and literally trample upon them, consequently **if** what **is** said about the winepress is symbolic of the fearful crushing of the power of His foes, so must also the literal sprinkling of **His** garments with blood. I take it to be a dramatic picture of **His** judgment upon Edom and such like enemies. —J. M. J. If it is the blood of **His** enemies whom He has trodden in the winepress, then it would seem to be the mark of their blood, and the margin of R. V. already stated adds weight to this, giving the word for sprinkled as " dipped. " The sword proceeding out of **His** mouth would speak of **His** all-powerful Word, which had been the cause of blessing to many when He was upon **the** earth before, and now the cause of the death of many. We noted the power of **His** Word in the garden when **His** adversaries fell backward (John 18. 5, 6).

On the other hand it was thought that this sword may indicate something definitely visible [I do not think this thought **is** correct. —J. M.] by which the Lord will strike terror into the heart of **His** enemies. **His** blood stained garment beareth a name, also His thigh, the thigh being suggestive of power and might (c. f. Jacob's wrestling with the Angel in Genesis 32. 25, and contrast Psalm 147. 10).

In that day will be gathered together those whom we have recorded **in** verse 19. This great concourse of armies will be at Armageddon (Revelation 16. 10), puny **men** gathered against the Lord of heaven and earth, seeking to frustrate the effort of the Almighty **One** to set up His kingdom. Here we have the fulfilment of Psalm 2., for of a truth **He** that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision. G. A. Jones.

From Ilford. —The coming of the Son of Man, **in** flaming fire, **is** the fulfilment of Daniel 2. 34. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the **image** upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them **in** pieces. " This coming will take place immediately after the great tribulation, and the object of the coming will be vengeance and judgment, not judgment undeserved, but judgments which are just and righteous, for do we not read **in** Acts 17. 31, " Inasmuch as **He** hath appointed a day **in** the which **He** will judge **the** world **in** righteousness by the Man whom **He** hath ordained " ? During the great tribulation the nations have had as it were natural judgments or indirect judgment! of God, but now follows God's direct judgment, when indeed the desire will be fulfilled which was expressed **in** Revelation 6. 10, " How long, **O** Master, the holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth " ?

We should indeed be thankful that we have been chosen **in** Christ, and that these terrors will not be our lot. E. H. Jarvis.

EXTRACTS.

From Broxburn. —While the mind of the believer may dwell with joy upon the prospect of a millennium of peace and righteousness, as he anticipates by faith, even amidst **the** alarms of war and the social evils of **man's** day, the blissful and benign **reign** of the Son of Man, we do **well** to remember also **the** dark night of woe which this guilty world will experience ere that fair morning dawns. " Behold, the day of **the** LORD cometh, cruel with wrath and **fierce** anger; to make the land **a** desolation, and to destroy the **sinnners** thereof out of **it** " (Isaiah 13. 9). When the Lord stood up to read **in** the synagogue at Nazareth, **as** recorded **in** Luke 4., we do well to ponder the significance of the point at which **He** closed the book; **the** words **which** **He** left unuttered—" **the** day of vengeance of our God. " These **He** purposely omitted **in** view of the fact that their fulfilment was yet future. The utter depravity and wickedness of man precludes the thought of an era of peace and righteousness being established **in** the earth apart from the moral cleansing **which** only divine judgment can effect, and this **is** further emphasized by the words of **the** Lord **in** Matthew 13., concerning the parable of the **tares**, which deals with **the** consummation of the age and the gathering out of **His** kingdom of all things **that** cause stumbling and them that do iniquity, which statement **is** followed by

the words, " Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. " The words of Isaiah 26. 9 were also noted in this connection, " For when Thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. "

The mighty spectacle portrayed in the words, " when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be marvelled at in all them that believed " (2 Thessalonians 1. 10), will fully attest the wisdom and power of God, for no doubt the saints here referred to are the saints of the present dispensation, that is the Church the Body of Christ, and this receives confirmation from the fact that " believed " is in the past tense, and furthermore the words in the parenthesis clearly shew that the Thessalonian saints will be among such. No doubt there will be others, for " the armies which are in heaven followed Him " (Revelation 19. 14), but He who is seen in His official character as the executor of divine judgment is preeminent, and His name is called " The Word of God. " This august title, which reveals the Lord as the perfect expression of the divine will towards man, is applied to Him in a threefold way. In John 1. following the declaration of verse 1 that " In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, " which indicate His eternity and divinity, there follows the statement of verse 3, " All things were made by Him. " He is seen here as the Word in creation. He is also the Word in incarnation, for the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (verse 14), and lastly He is the Word of God in judgment (Revelation 19. 13). God's work in creation had a further and fuller object in view, even the display of His glory and grace in redemption, and this could only be realised by the Word becoming flesh and revealing all that lay in the mind of God. But ere reconciliation can be fully accomplished and the kingdom delivered up to the Father that He may be all in all, lawlessness must be suppressed and punished and this work of judgment the Lord Jesus Christ will also accomplish.

Henry Dyer.

From Southport. — God will send two witnesses before the great and terrible day of the Lord, who will witness in sackcloth for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (Revelation 11. 3). It is known that Elijah will return (Malachi 4. 5). " The sun will be turned into darkness, and moon into blood " (Joel 2. 31), " * . . . and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken " (Matthew 24. 29, Mark 13. 25). The nations will prepare for war (Joel 3. 9). They will also be brought into the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 13. 12). God will draw Gog and all his hordes, as with a hook in his mouth (Ezekiel 38. 4) to the people who dwell in the middle of the earth (Ezekiel 38. 12). [See Revelation 20. as to when Gog and Magog come against Jerusalem. — J. M.]

Jerusalem will be compassed by armies and will fall (Zechariah 14. 2). Many people will fall by the edge of the sword (Luke 21. 24), [Luke 21. 24 has to do with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A. D. 70, and the consequent state of the Jews, not with the events prior to the Lord's return, to earth, as in Zechariah 14. 2. — J. M.] and half of the citizens of Jerusalem will be taken captive (Zechariah 14. 2), also the children of Judah (Joel 3. 6). The people will be in sore distress and they will call unto the Lord and He will hear. God will say " It is my people, " and they shall say, " The LORD is my God " (Zechariah 13. 9). Then will God deliver them. It will be the Lord Jesus Christ Himself who, will come " on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory " (Matthew 24. 30). He will be followed by the armies which are in heaven (Revelation 19. 14). It would appear that His followers will not perform any of the fighting. For the Lord Jesus Christ will smite the nations with the sharp sword which proceedeth out of His mouth (Revelation 19. 15). Isaiah 63. 3 says, " I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the peoples there was no man with Me. " The blood will reach " unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs " (Revelation 14. 20).

W. S. Holden.

From **Edinburgh.** — During the years of the great tribulation, the holy people will long for the coming of the Son of Man. Isaiah 64. indicates the nature of their prayer, and Psalm 46. their attitude and their confidence in God. Various signs will be seen when His coming is very near.

When Christ first came to earth, only those who were looking for Him knew of His having come, *e. g.*, the wise men from the east, Simeon, etc. So when He returns to earth only the godly who are looking for Him will understand the signs of His coming. The ungodly will be like those in the days of Noah, who were eating and drinking until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away. To them He will come as a thief in the night, to render vengeance, being revealed from heaven with the angels of His power in flaming fire.

The beast and the kings of the earth, and their armies will gather together against the Lord and His armies. The beast and the false prophet will be taken and cast into the lake of fire, and the others will be killed by the sword of the Lord.
Alex. Taylor.

From Manchester. —That the Lord should associate His title " Son of Man " with His coming **in** glory is significant, as this title is also used by Him when speaking of His dealings with men **in** redemption and grace, *e. g.*, " The Son of Man **is** come to seek and to save that which is lost. " It would seem that one of the most striking features of His revelation to the world will be that the nations will have a glorified Man to deal with in the execution of divine judgment.

The Lord's return as Son of Man will be a time of sorrow both for the nations in general (Matthew 24. 30) and for Israel in particular. The recognition of the One who was crucified as Messiah will call forth the bitterest mourning from the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (Zechariah 12. 10-14). They will ask in wonder, " What are these wounds between thine arms ? ", and learn with deep self reproach—" Those with which I was wounded in the house of My friends. " Perhaps the language of Isaiah 53. may well be on the lips of Israel in that day, as they recall that He had been despised and rejected of men, and realise that Messiah was in very truth wounded for their transgressions. We recalled the remarkable prophecy of these events in the story of Joseph. He did not reveal himself to them in his glory until his dealings with them had brought them to a repentant condition of heart. His ultimate manifestation found them truly contrite and fearful of the consequences of their guilt. It seems that similarly Israel will tremble before Him whom they have so long despised and hated, but their mourning will be turned to joy as they see His delivering hand on their behalf.

There are other Old Testament types and prophecies of Messiah's glorious advent as Son of Man. From Jude 14, 15, it would seem that Enoch enjoyed a revelation of the day when ungodliness would be summarily dealt with in divine judgment. Daniel was enlightened as to the weeks of years to be fulfilled upon the holy people " to bring in everlasting righteousness, " and probably the vision of One sitting **in** judgment (Daniel 7. 9) refers to the manifestation of the Son of Man with His attendant myriads (*c. f.*, Revelation 19. 14-15).

Solomon's execution of judgment on David's enemies before the commencement of the reign which so clearly pre-figures the millennium may also be a type of the advent of the Son of Man.
G. Prasher, Jun.

From London, S. E. —It was thought that a period of years was necessary between the rapture and the seven years of tribulation leading to the setting up of Antichrist and the edict for all to have his mark. The Holy Spirit Himself will be removed so that the man of sin might be revealed, though the influence of the Spirit will still be manifest in all who will allow of **His** operation. [Perhaps the statement of our friends is based on the erroneous teaching that " until he be taken out of the way, " of 2 Thessalonians 2. 7, refers to the Holy Spirit. Far from the Holy Spirit being taken out of the way or removed, there will be a world-wide outpouring of the Spirit, as foretold by Joel and quoted by Peter at Pentecost. " I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh " (Acts 2. 17). The Church the Body of Christ will be taken from this scene at the Lord's coming to the air, but there is no scripture which speaks of the Spirit being removed. —J. M.] The scene will then be one of strife, famine and war the world over, and as depicted in Matthew 24., the elect will be anxiously waiting for the relief they know is coming.

That relief is the coming of **the** Son of Man, and **is** wondrously portrayed in Revelation 19. We have read of wars and famine, but now we read of the **sun** and moon and stars not giving their light. God **in** the beginning gave the **sun and** moon to shine, and for the second time in the world's history **the sun's** light **is** withheld, the first being when the Lord was crucified..

God has determined a day when **in** royal and spectacular manner **He** will declare the universal Lordship of **His** beloved Son by causing **Him** again to appear to a rebellious recalcitrant world.

Some have wondered whether the people of the world will see the Son of Man or whether they will only see the flaming fire **in** the heavens, but Revelation 1. 7 says, " Every eye shall **see Him**, " and again in Luke 21. 27, " Then shall they **see** the Son of Man. " It was suggested that the vengeance would not be immediate as Matthew 25. seems to indicate a gathering together of **all** nations that they may be tried by the one and only righteous Judge. Summary judgment and vengeance would be executed on the armies gathered together before Jerusalem (Zechariah 14.), when **His** feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives.

It was queried whether the flaming fire was actual or was the great glory of the Lord, as it appeared at the door of the tabernacle like unto devouring fire. [It will in my judgment be fire, but fire as the Lord speaks of fire not **as we** understand fire with our limited knowledge. It will not be like devouring fire. —J. M.].

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus spoken of in 2 Thessalonians 1. 8. —what **is** this ? The day of grace **is** ended. Are these who disobey this Gospel the Christ-rejectors of this age who are left behind when the Lord comes for **His** own ? [Though the dispensation of the grace **'of** God applies to this church period, the day of grace will by no means end with this dispensation. Multitudes will be saved after the Church has gone to be with Christ. The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is, I judge, the Gospel of the kingdom, which will be preached in the period between the Lord's coming to the air, and **His** coming to the earth. The subject of the Gospel of the kingdom **is** the same **as** that of the Gospel of the grace of God which **is** preached to-day, which **is** our Lord Jesus Christ; the Gospel of God **is** concerning **His** Son (Romans 1. 3). —J. M.]. *A. J. Riley.*

From Glasgow. —Before the day of judgment approached the inhabitants of the earth will be doing very wickedly because **when** " sentence against **an** evil work **is** not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of **men** **is** fully set in them to do evil " (Ecclesiastes 8. 11).

In these days also we see God's loving character shining forth **in** that **He** will give the peoples of the earth an opportunity to repent and believe the gospel which shall be preached as a testimony unto all the nations. Like **as He** did **in** the days of Jonah the prophet when the people of Nineveh repented at Jonah's preaching, God withheld **His** judgment, so also in that terrible day shall those who repent and believe God's message, be delivered from judgment. **We** learn also from Revelation 14. that an angel from mid-heaven will proclaim **an** eternal gospel unto them that dwell on the earth and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people, saying with a great voice, " Fear God and give **Him** glory; for the hour of **His** judgment **is** come: and worship **Him** that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters " (Revelation 14. 6, 7). In spite of this grace and mercy shown to sinners, many shall **fall** by the sword, being content to go with the Adversary, and being deceived by the Antichrist they receive the mark of the beast, a **final** seal of their doom. They shall be saying, " Peace and safety, " but instead there shall be sudden destruction, for the day of the Lord will come **as a** thief **in** the night.

When we come to Revelation 19. 11-16, we have depicted before **us** the mighty Conqueror, **He** whose garments are sprinkled with blood and **His** name **is** called " The Word of God. " Truly the Lord **is a** man of war and sendeth forth judgment unto victory; hence the prophet Joel speaks of **Him** **as** such: " The **LORD** shall roar from Zion, and utter **His** voice from Jerusalem; **and** the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the **LORD** will be a refuge unto **His** people, and a strong hold to the children of Israel " (Joel 3. 16). *Fred Harvey.*

From Vancouver, B. C. —The coming of the Son of Man will finish the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21. 24), and the many cries of the Jews are answered in the glorious appearing of their Redeemer—but lo ! He is the One whom they pierced, whose fan is in His hand throughly to cleanse His threshing floor (Matthew 3. 12).

As regards the condition of the nations at that time it does not differ from the days of Noah or Lot except it is much worse. The warnings of Noah went unheeded and so God's warning and judgment as revealed in Revelation are ignored by the many and the Judge Himself suddenly appears, " rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and to them that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus " (2 Thessalonians 1. 8). He who is the Herald of God's grace and mercy will then become the Herald of God's anger and righteous judgments.

Revelation gives light on the character of those on whom His judgment will fall, for " men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, " chapter 16. verses 9, 11, 21. There was no repentance shown by man in those terrible days. The Lord bore with a people in the past till there was no remedy and so with the nations at that time.

The coming of the Son of Man will be like lightning (Matthew 24. 27) and with power and great glory. Preceding His coming the heavenly orbs are disturbed, the sun is darkened, the moon does not shine and the stars fall from heaven. Revelation 6. 12, 13, says the sun became black as sackcloth of hair and the moon as blood. The stars fell like figs from a fig tree in a very strong wind.

The picture given of the Lord in Revelation 19. is that of One going forth righteously. He is called Faithful and True, with a Name written on His vesture and thigh, King of kings, and Lord of lords, a much greater name than Pilate wrote on the cross, and He is called the Word of God. By the spoken word from His mouth, which in the days of His humiliation dispensed healing and comfort, now spreads calamity among the nations who righteously deserve it. The beast and the ten kings will war against the Lamb, but shall quickly be overcome (Revelation 17. 12-14).

There are with the Lord when He comes the holy myriads (Jude 14, R. V. margin). Also the " called and chosen and faithful " are with Him, which savours of this day of grace, and we suggest the church is here referred to, as they or we undoubtedly return for the millennial reign (Revelation 17. 14).

Although the fighting seems to be done by the Lord Himself, as in Isaiah 63. 1-6, there will be much action seen by such as are mentioned in Psalm 149., in those most momentous days soon to come. *H. M.*

Note on Paper from Kilmarnock.

The matter of those who are taken when the Lord comes to the air and when He comes to the earth, and the latter especially, calls for some little comment. We may say that we are in hearty agreement with what is said as to all that are in Christ, that is, all who are members of the Church which is His Body, being taken up to meet Him in the air when the Lord comes as Son of God, but some elucidation is called for about His coming as Son of Man to the earth, as to who are taken then. The assumption seems to be that those that are taken, when two are in the field and two at the mill (see Matthew 24. 40, 41), are the wicked and the righteous are left. Is this so ? I am doubtful as to the correctness of this view, if this is the view presented by the writer. Let us consider briefly what takes place at the coming of the Son of Man, and here let me say that I am not dealing with the dead who shall be raised in association with His coming, but only with those who are alive at that time.

When the Lord comes to earth He comes " with power and great glory "; He will be attended by the armies which are in heaven (Revelation 19.), and by saints who are called, chosen, and faithful (Revelation 17. 14). " He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other " (Matthew

24. 31). This seems to be almost the initial act of the Lord. This act of the angels in gathering the elect will result in taking one in a field and leaving the other, taking one at the mill and leaving the other, and taking one from bed and leaving the other. Note here that the gathering of the elect is the work of angels, and not as in the case of those in Christ, who are caught up and when they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air a bodily change takes place. No bodily change is indicated in the case of those who are gathered by the angels. All that is said of them is that they are gathered together.

Following this the Lord deals with the people of Israel and He will begin with the refining of the sons of Levi (Malachi 3. 1-3). Many, alas, of the sons of the kingdom (men of the nation of Israel) shall be cast into the outer darkness (Matthew 8. 12). Then, I judge, all (living) nations (Gentiles) will be gathered to Jerusalem where the Lord will sit on the throne of His glory (Matthew 25. 31-32), and there in the valley of Jehoshaphat, the valley of decision, the King will deal with the nations (Joel 3. 11-15). He shall separate them as sheep from goats, and the deciding factor in that trial will be, how they treated those who are His, His elect of Matthew 24. 24, 31. Then in an earth purged by judgment He will begin His reign of righteousness for a thousand years. Such events are matters of entrancing interest, and any comments by our fellow-students will be welcomed. —*J. M.*

Questions and Answers.

Questions from Atherton.

(1) Is there a space of time between the end of the tribulation and the coming of the Son of Man ?

Answer. —Revelation 19. 11-21 shows how the tribulation will close, when, as 2 Thessalonians 1. says, the Lord will come in flaming fire. The beast and false prophet will seek to withstand Him with gigantic armies. Their armies will be slain and themselves cast into the lake of fire. There will be no interval between the tribulation and the Lord's coming to earth. —*J. M.*

(2) What is meant by Matthew 10. 22—"He that endureth to the end shall be saved" ?

Answer. —We should ask ourselves the question, Saved from what ? It cannot mean that saved people, God's elect, are saved from hell by final perseverance. Zacharias, John the Baptist's father, explains, I believe, what is meant when he said, "He . . . hath raised up a Horn of salvation for us . . . Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us" (Luke 1. 69, 71). See also Psalm 106. 10 as to what He did for His people in Egypt. See also Isaiah 62. 11. —*J. M.*

Question from Glasgow. —Is the "Gospel" mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 1. 8 the same gospel as is preached to-day ? If so, then shall that be preached just before the day of the Lord ?

Answer. —The Gospel of 2 Thessalonians 1. 8 will, in my opinion, be the Gospel of the kingdom, but the Son of God is the subject of this Gospel as He is of the Gospel of the grace of God which is preached to-day. The Gospel of the kingdom proclaims the imminence of the manifestation of the King and the setting up of His kingdom. The Gospel in any age is similar as to its basic facts, though there may be features different. What Paul calls "my Gospel" has features different from the Gospel of the kingdom. —*J. M.*

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so " (Acts 17. II).

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THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. Comments.

[We have now entered upon a stage of our studies in which there is scope for experimental investigation of the Word of God, calling for theories to be tested and avenues of possible truth to be explored, in order to reach the fullest and most consistent interpretation of prophecy in so far as the veil may be lifted. Last month J. M. invited comments on some remarks by him as to those who are taken and those who are left when the Son of Man comes (p. 106) and S. B. responds to this, leading to further remarks. Also our esteemed brother G. E. H. offers some comments regarding Gog and Magog. It is hoped that others will be exercised, for Bible Studies is, and should be, a medium for interchange of thoughts exploratory of the Word of God. —A. T. D.]

The Coming of the Son of Man.

With reference to the note last month (p. 105) on Kilmarnock's contribution it should be said that the view they give is that generally accepted by our spiritual forefathers and is expressed by a writer in the series of articles on "The Coming of the LORD" in *Needed Truth*, vol. 2. (These articles were commended by Dr. Luxmoore in his "Bible Readings on the Gospels" in his notes on Matthew 24.). In *Needed Truth*, vol. 2, p. 19, the writer states, "this gathering up of the wicked will PRECEDE the gathering of the elect... " for He shall say to the reapers, "Gather ye together FIRST the tares and bind them in bundles" to burn them " (Matthew 13. 30), and on p. 21 he says in reference to Matthew 24. 38-41, "Taken in judgment—left for blessing." A booklet "The Coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ" by the same author, published by N. T. P. O. a few years later, deals with the matter at greater length. On p. 8 he says, "Moreover, when He comes as Son of Man, there will be no resurrection of dead ones. When that scripture is fulfilled, 'then shall two be in the field, the one shall be taken and the other left; . . . ' each of those taken will be taken in judgment, while they who are left, will be left for blessing. * For as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man; "As it was in the days of Lot so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. ' Those who were taken in the days of Noah and of Lot, and those who were left in the days of Noah and Lot, are our Lord's illustration to make us understand who will be taken and who will be left in the time that characterises the coming of the Son of Man. Who then were taken in the days of Noah? . . . Lot?; who were left in the days of Noah? . . . Lot? The wicked were taken in the days of Noah; . . . Lot; the righteous were left in the days of Noah; . . . Lot. So shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. " Many writers we should regard as orthodox on prophetic truth could be quoted to the same effect.

I am at the moment only concerned to show that what our friends in Kilmarnock say is not something novel, **but** what many of us have been taught in **days gone by.**

S. B.

The **parable of the Tares of the Field must be read in the light of other statements and parables.** A vital question to ask is, Where does the severance between the righteous and the wicked take place? and on whose decision does the severance **take** place? on the Lord's, or on that of the angels? If the angels sever the wicked from the righteous all over the earth and gather them first and the righteous afterwards, how then **are** we to understand the judgment of the living nations which are gathered before the King in the valley of Jehoshaphat? Wherein lies the need of the king separating the righteous from the **wicked**? when it **is** said, " " Before Him shall be gathered **all the nations:** and He **shall separate** them one from another **as** the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats " (Matthew 25. 32).

The parable of the drag net says the **same as** that of the sheep and the goats. The severance of wicked and righteous does not **take** place in the **sea, but** all in the net are dragged to land and then the good are severed from the bad. This, I **take it,** means the **same as** Matthew 25., that whilst the angels **are** used to sever, they are **used as** police officers are **used** under the order of the judge, the judge having the deciding voice **as** to whether the man in the dock should **be severed** from law-abiding citizens **because** of the deed committed or whether he should **be** restored to live his normal **life** in freedom.

If the parable of the Tares of the Field were read alone **we** should conclude that there **was** no such thing **as** the judgment of the living nations **at** Jerusalem, **but** that the angels went out into the field, the world, and there bound the tares **first** and took them forthwith and **cast** them into the eternal fire leaving the righteous **as** in Matthew 13. 43. **But** even that **seems** to disagree with verse 30 where the wheat (the righteous) **is** gathered into the barn.

I do not understand such an interpretation to **be** correct in view of other words of the Lord. The separation of righteous from the wicked takes place **at** the King's judgment throne. There the angels sever between the righteous and wicked, they being the executors of divine judgment under the King's direction.

In **my** humble judgment this quotation from *Needed Truth* takes no account of what **is said** in Matthew 25. 40 of a class distinct from the righteous and **it is** the treatment of this class, called by the King, " My brethren, " that **is** the deciding factor in the judgment. Those who are called here " My brethren, " I take to signify those who during the Tribulation stood faithfully for " the faith " against all the onslaughts of the **Beast** and his followers. For these " the elect's sake " the days of the Tribulation shall **be** shortened. These elect cannot **be** deceived **by** the evils of that **time** (Matthew 24. 22, 24). These are **quite** evidently, from Matthew 25. 40, a distinct class of persons.

I think, too, **it is** a far fetched application to apply the words, " As **it came** to **pass** in the days of Noah, even so shall **it be** also in the **days** of the Son of Man, " **as** applicable to one taken and another left. The words I **submit** have no application to such a **matter at** all, or again to Lot's time. The similarity of the **tiros is** found in the character of those days. " They **ate,** they drank, they married and were given in marriage, " such **is** the comparison the Lord **draws** and no other. Indeed **if we** compare the **times** of Noah and Lot with the days of the Son of Man, the **fact is** that the righteous were taken in Noah and Lot's **time** from amongst the wicked, and the rest were left for judgment. Then when the judgment fell on the wicked **the** righteous were, of course, left in the earth.

The question boils down to this—**Are** the tares and the wheat of Matthew 13. indicative of the **same** persons **as** the sheep and the goats of Matthew 25. ? If they are, then who are " My brethren " of Matthew 25. 40 ? If they are not the same, **it will** require to **be** explained what peoples the tares and wheat refer to **as** distinct from the sheep and the goats.

Further, an examination of Matthew 24. 40-44 and Luke 17. 31-37 and again Matthew 24. 23-31 will show, I submit, that the references to two in bed, at the mill and in the field, contain facts upon which the Lord bases His exhortation to be in a state of watchfulness. See especially Matthew 24. 42 which immediately follows the reference to the mill, in which verse the Lord says, " Watch therefore: for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh. " The simple meaning seems to **me** to be that as they work in the field or grind at the mill they—the elect—are to be **in** a state of watchfulness against being gathered by the angels as in Matthew 24. 31, for the exhortations of Matthew 24. 42-51 are closely allied to what is stated in verses 40 and **41**.

I shall be glad of criticism of what I here say 'and the more severe the criticism the better. " **J. M.**

Gog and Magog.

In J. M.'s remarks *re* Gog and Magog, in connection with Southport's contribution (p. 102), he **infers** that the invasion of Palestine by these nations described in Ezekiel **38.** and **39.** is the same event as that foretold in Revelation 20. I do not think that this is so. It is clear that the latter scripture deals with that which will take place after the millennium, but I believe that Ezekiel writes of what will happen before the millennium.

I would ask careful consideration of the following.

The rebellion in Revelation **is** led in person by Satan. There is no suggestion of this in Ezekiel. The hosts there are under the leadership of the prince of Rosh.

Ezekiel 38. 8 appears to envisage a people recently returned from captivity, and a land which has been waste, and not those who have been ruled by Christ for a thousand years, during which the land has been most fruitful.

In Revelation the armies are devoured by fire. In Ezekiel every man's sword is against his brother, and God rains upon them great hailstones, fire and brimstone. Would not the fire of Revelation 20., which devours the armies, also burn up the weapons of wood ? In Ezekiel these weapons are used for fires for seven years.

I suggest that the hordes of Ezekiel will be found at Har-Magedon, where the kings of the whole world are to be gathered (Revelation 16. 14-16).

The invitation of Ezekiel 39. 17-20, I suggest, is the same as given in Revelation 19. 17, 18. If the armies were devoured by fire as in Revelation 20., would there be anything for the birds and beasts to feed upon ?

Most convincing of all to me is that God says, " So the house of Israel shall know that I **am** the LORD their God, **from that day and forward**, and the nations shall know that the house of Israel went into captivity for their iniquity " (Ezekiel **39.** 22, 23). Would such words as " from that day and forward " be used after the Millennium ? Then Israel and the nations will have known these things for a thousand years. **G. E. Home.**

The Resurrection of Old Testament saints, **and** of those **that**
triumph over the beast

(Daniel 12. 2, **3**; Isaiah **26. 19**; Revelation 11. **15-18**; **20.** 4-6).

From Liverpool. —In considering this subject the question arises as to when the resurrection of Old Testament saints is to take place. That they lived and **died in** expectation of the resurrection is shewn in their writings and **in** their **attitude** to the things of this life. For example, Abraham " became a sojourner in the land of promise, as in a land not his own . . . , for he looked for the city which hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. " And again, " Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to be evil entreated with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; accounting the reproach of Christ **greater** riches than the treasures of Egypt: for he looked unto the recompense of

reward. " Equally true of them as of saints of this dispensation **are** the words of the Apostle: " If in this life only we have hoped in Christ, we **are** of all **men** most pitiable. " And so the time will come, spoken of **in** Revelation 11. 18, " —the **time** to give their reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear Thy name, the small and the great. "

This brings us back to the question of when that time **is**. The arrangement of the Book of Revelation is, of course, rather confusing **as** to the exact **sequence** of events, but the prophecy in Daniel 12. places the resurrection at the time of the deliverance from the tribulation which **is** to overtake the people of God. Revelation 19. **11-21** tells us how that deliverance **is** to be accomplished and then chapter **20**. tells of another company who will be raised to live and reign with Christ **a** thousand years. These are they who remained faithful to God, even unto death, during that time of trouble (see Revelation 6. 9).

It was suggested that " they that are Christ's " (1 Corinthians 15. 23) includes Old Testament saints and those that triumph over the beast, **as** well **as** saints of this dispensation, but that " in Christ " (1 Thessalonians 4. 16) refers only to saints of this dispensation. *M. Sands, R. S.*

From Southport. —When the Lord Jesus Christ was talking to Martha before raising Lazarus, Martha said, " I know that he shall rise **again** **in** the resurrection at the last day " (John 11. 24). The truth of resurrection was known to the Jews, but it was being challenged **in** the time of our Lord Jesus Christ, because the Sadducees were a sect which said that there **is** no resurrection (Luke 20. 27).

The various stages of the resurrection are in a definite order: " But **each** **in** his own order: Christ the Firstfruits; then they that are Christ's, at His coming " (1 Corinthians 15. 23). Hence the resurrection of the Old Testament saints must be after the raising of the Church, the Body of Christ. Also it will come before the millennium for otherwise they could not reign with Christ.

The souls of the people who are slain during the tribulation are told to rest under the altar until the rest of their brethren are slain (Revelation 6. 11). Then after the tribulation those who triumph over the beast are **seen** upon thrones (Revelation 20. 4). The holy people who pass through the greatest tribulation of history, will then live and reign with Christ a thousand years. *W. S. Holden.*

From Manchester. —**We** are assured from 1 Corinthians 15. 21 that all shall be made alive in Christ, but each in his own order. Some have suggested that Old Testament saints are included among " those that are Christ's, " and deduced that they will consequently be raised at the same **time** **as** believers of this dispensation. It is significant, however, that the word *parousia* is used in 1 Corinthians 15. 23, and we have seen from earlier studies that this covers all aspects of the Lord's return. Speaking broadly, Old Testament saints are among those that are Christ's (in the sense of 1 Peter 1. 11) and the resurrection of all who have died in faith appears, to be associated with one or other phase of the *parousia*. Yet the simultaneous resurrection of Old Testament saints and believers of this dispensation **is** contradicted by other scriptures such **as** the following: —

- (1) Daniel 12. 2. This prophecy relates primarily to Daniel's people, and the promise of resurrection follows the foretelling of the great tribulation.
- (2) Similarly Daniel 9. 25-27 indicates that the consummation of divine dealings with Israel will take place at the end of the 70th week, whereas **it is** clear that the rapture of the saints of this day will occur before the final heptad.
- (3) Scripture unites to prove that believers of the present dispensation are uniquely privileged, being baptized in one Spirit into one Body, and the limits of God's dealings in this way are defined by the Pentecostal outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the call of the Church to glory when the Lord returns to the air.

- (4) It **seems** probable that redeemed saints of the present dispensation will **mingle** in the acclamation of Revelation 11. 15-18, suggesting that we shall **be** in heaven when the rewarding of the prophets is still future.
- (5) The association of Old Testament saints with the resurrection of those who have passed through the great tribulation seems to accord with the fact that God will again take up Israel, particularly during the 70th week of Daniel's prophecy.
- (6) That the resurrection of Old Testament saints must be pre-millennial **is** borne out by Matthew 8. 11, which apparently pre-figures the literal establishment of divine rule on earth.

Certain it **is** that from the patriarchs onwards ultimate resurrection was cherished as a lively hope (see Job 19. 25-27). With many it appeared to be a remote prospect, and the more immediate prospect of Sheol with its relative gloom cast a shade over the tomb, of which Hebrews 2. 15 says that " through fear of death " they " were all their lifetime subject to bondage. " The lament of Hezekiah in Isaiah 38. 10-20 typifies this attitude: " For the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. " Nevertheless Isaiah could elsewhere joyfully declare with divinely imparted assurance, " Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust " (chapter 26. 19).

While the Lord Jesus " led captivity captive " when He ascended from Sheol, this deliverance of those who died in faith in a past dispensation was but a fore-taste of the fuller blessing which shall be theirs when resurrection bodies are prepared for their still unclothed souls. Herein **is** the saying true that " apart from us they should not be made perfect. "

G. Prasher, Jun.

EXTRACTS.

From Glasgow. —The manifestation of the power of God **in** resurrection, **is** a truth that occupies a large place in the Scriptures, for **as** the writer to the Hebrews states, " God **is** able to raise up, even from the dead. "

In Daniel 12. 2, we read, " Many of them that sleep **in** the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. " It was suggested by some that there **is** no break between these two classes, both being raised together. Others said that Daniel 12. 2 was similar to John 5. 28-29. Have the words of the Lord in Matthew 8. 11, 12, an application here ? [It **is** of more than **passing** interest, in view of the important statement in Revelation 20. 6, " Blessed and holy **is** he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power, " that we should understand what the Spirit says **in** Daniel 12. 2. At once, in the light of the Revelation scripture, **we** begin to, question what **is** meant when it **is** said—" some to shame and everlasting contempt. " Can it be that such as are " blessed and holy " can be raised " to shame and everlasting contempt " ? Surely such words cannot be said of such **as** are blessed and holy. Thus our minds reason out the case. But we are not the first to find difficulty here, for students of prophecy have sought long ago for a correct solution of the apparent problem. Light has been shed upon the passage by that able and profound student Mr. S. P. Tregelles, who renders and interprets the passage **thus**, " these (that awake) to everlasting life, and those (that awake not) to **shame** and everlasting contempt. " Accepting the view of so eminent a Hebrew scholar **and** student of prophecy we see that those of Israel who shall not share **in** Messiah's reign will not rise **in** the first resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt, **but** will be amongst the rest of the dead who rise not till the millennium **is** past. Accepting the above view Daniel 12. 2 **is** not the **same as** John 5. 28, 29. That of John 5. **is** the resurrection associated with the judgment of the Great White Throne. Then **all** that are **in** the tombs will be raised. This **is** important. It **is** not here a matter of many being raised, but it **is** the resurrection of all the dead that are **in** the tombs. In that resurrection there will **be** some raised to live **and** some to

judgment, for Revelation **20.** indicates the probability of some being written in the book of life. Those whose names are not inscribed therein will be **cast** into the lake of fire. I judge **that** Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, **as** in Matthew **8. 11** will be amongst those who shall arise to everlasting life, according to Daniel **12. 2.** — J. M. J.]

Daniel **was** told (verse **13**) that he would stand in his lot at the end of the **days**, agreeing we judge with Isaiah **26. 19**, when Daniel will find his place with his people in the kingdom. Ezekiel **37. 12, 13** is instructive in this connection.

The great voices in heaven of Revelation **11. 15** are the vocal expression of the four and twenty elders. [Can we be quite certain that the " great voices " are those of the twenty four elders ?—J. M. J.] They are occupied with the kingdom and its establishment on earth. Satan **was** willing to surrender the kingdoms of the world to our Lord on condition of homage, but now **it is** the overthrow of the kingdom of evil, and the thanksgiving to God that the hour has come for the manifestation of **His** great power. Is not the blowing of the seventh trumpet the time when they are raised ? [See what **is** said in Revelation **10. 7** about the sounding of the seventh angel. **We** are told that when he **is** about to sound then **is** finished the mystery of God, and this mystery **is** according to the good tidings which He declared to **His** servants the prophets. Old Testament prophecy had **a** glorious future in view and that **was** the reign of Messiah. My understanding **is**, comparing Daniel **12. 1, 2** with Revelation **11. 18**, that Old Testament saints will **be** raised in association with the Lord's coming to earth. Matthew **8. 11, 12**, adds weight to this view.—J. M. J.]

" This **is** the first resurrection, " **was** said by some to **be** a unique statement, and had application only to those who suffered under the Antichrist. Emphasis **was** laid on the pronoun " he " of verse **6** **as** referring to those of verse **4** who had been slain for their testimony. Others held that there are many stages in the first resurrection.

What about the company of verse **4** who are seen on thrones ? Are they not included in the " they " who lived and reigned with Christ **a** thousand years ? [Note the force of " and " in the words " and I **saw** the souls of them, " etc., **as** speaking of others besides those who are sitting upon thrones. My judgment **is** that the first resurrection includes more than those who come triumphant from the beast. —J. M. J.] J. McIlvenna.

From Edinburgh. —There **is** much evidence in the Word of God that Old Testament saints, even in earliest times, looked forward to **a** resurrection of the dead.

Job, who lived in **a** comparatively early day, had **a** wonderful vision, and his words (Job **19. 25-29**) are **a** remarkable prophecy, not only of resurrection, but also of judgment. He said, " I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that **He** shall stand up **at** the last upon the earth: and after my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet from my flesh shall I see God: . . . Wrath bringeth the punishments of the sword, that ye may know there **is** **a** judgment. " David, in Psalm **16. 10**, spoke prophetically of the resurrection of Christ, in whom (**we** learn from **1** Corinthians **15. 20-23**) all shall **be** made alive. To Daniel it **was** revealed that many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt (Daniel **12. 2, 3**). King Herod, when he heard of the works of the Lord **Jesus** Christ, believed that John the Baptist had risen from the dead (Mark **6. 14**).

We had some difficulty with regard to when the resurrection of Old Testament saints will take place. It **was** suggested that **it** will take place when Christ comes **as** Son of Man to earth, and that Old Testament saints will **be** with **Him** on earth during the millennium. But **is** this the case ? The scriptures we are considering which speak of this resurrection (Daniel **12. 2, 3**; Isaiah **26. 19**; Revelation **11. 15-18**) **make** no mention of the millennium, **but** speak, on the other hand of everlasting life, of some who will shine **as** the stars for ever and ever, and of Christ

reigning for ever and ever. This seems to indicate that Old Testament saints will have no part in the millennial kingdom, and that their resurrection will take place after the millennium. [See note in paper from Glasgow. Luke 13. 28 speaks of men seeing Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God; this clearly indicates that these have been raised from the dead, and that they will share in the glories of the Messianic reign. —J. M.]

The resurrection of those that triumph over the beast will take place prior to the millennium and they will live, and reign with Christ a thousand years. (Revelation 20. 4-6). * *Thomas Hope.*

From Ilford. —In 1 Corinthians 15. 23 we read concerning the resurrection that Christ is the Firstfruits, then they that are Christ's at His coming follow after. Up to the present time only the first part of this operation has taken place. We all know that Christ has risen, and in view of this we believe that we too shall rise at some future time. The word "we" in this case means all those who believe on Christ in the present dispensation. This would seem to be the general strain of the whole of 1 Corinthians 15., but it must be considered whether this will comprise *all* those who will be raised by virtue of His being raised. Does the second part of the operation, namely, "they that are Christ's at His coming," include others beside New Testament saints? It was considered that this did include both Old Testament saints, New Testament saints and those that triumph over the beast. It should be noted that this is associated with the words "at His coming" or "presence," this being His coming in great glory in manifestation to the world, and not His coming for His saints. [All who are "of Christ" and consequently belong to Him shall be made alive in His *parousia*. His *parousia* for those who are of Him in this dispensation is when He comes to the air, and His *parousia* for the Old Testament saints and for those who are victorious in the time of the tribulation is that of the Son of Man, when He comes to earth. Each will rise in his own rank or order. —J. M.]

It has been previously shown that we shall be raised when Christ comes for His saints, after which we shall be for ever with the Lord. This part of the operation has been placed, in point of time, before the great tribulation. The next part of the operation appears to take place after the great tribulation, as is indicated by such scriptures as Daniel 12. 1-3, where the "time of trouble" is mentioned, and immediately after this a resurrection is referred to in verse 2 (assumed to refer to Old Testament saints). In Revelation 11. 15-18 it is stated that the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ. This is followed by a statement of God's wrath on the nation (taken to be the great tribulation) after which a judgment and dispensation of rewards takes place to God's servants the prophet? (Old Testament saints), to saints and those that fear His name.

Again, in Revelation 20. 4-6, we get the resurrection of those that triumph over the beast. This must take place after the tribulation, since it is only during this period that these particular saints have believed and suffered persecution and death. They are indicated as taking part in the first resurrection and as living and reigning with Christ during the millennium. This seems conclusively to position this event at almost the same time as the Lord is manifested in glory to the world.

The result is that the Church [When speaking of the Church being joined with others in the matter of the administration of the kingdom we must remember the word in 2 Timothy 2. 12, "If we endure, we shall also reign with Him." This shows that reigning with Christ for saints of this dispensation is conditional. — J. M.] already caught up and now with the Lord, the Old Testament saints, and those that triumph over the beast, are all joined together and with the Lord administer the kingdom of God during the millennium. Stress was laid on the scripture in Hebrews 11. 35, where Old Testament worthies are promised a better resurrection in view of their faith that God was going to provide them with a city which could not be moved. The full realisation of this promise seems to commence with this resurrection at the beginning of the millennium. *A. S. Glover.*

From Atherton. —Perhaps the most important feature of **this subject** is to determine when the resurrection of the Old Testament saints will **take** place. Revelation 11. tells **us** of this resurrection. The great cry is heard, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ." This points primarily to the millennium. Is it not a little significant that following the great voice mention is made of Old Testament saints, God's servants, the prophets, and them that fear His name being raised? The question was asked whether the words of Luke 13. **28-30** define the **time** of their resurrection. It was suggested that the Lord had in mind here the judgment of the wicked dead, which will take place after the millennium, the weeping and the gnashing of teeth having to do with eternal torment. [I take it, comparing Luke 13. **28** with Matthew **8. 11, 12**, that those who are cast out are the sons of the kingdom, sons of Israel who ought to have been believers in the promised Messiah, but who are not. These men who are alive in the flesh when the Lord comes to earth shall **see** Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets, who have been raised from the dead to share millennial glories together with many gathered from east, west, north and south. The people, privileged above all others, shall **see** all this, but they themselves, through their unbelief, will not share the glory of the kingdom, but instead shall **be cast** forth without. **See** note in Glasgow's paper, which indicates that none of the wicked will be raised prior to the millennium. —J. M. J.]

Revelation 11. **18** gives **us** a sequence of events. (1) "The nations were wroth," pointing **us** to the time near the end of the tribulation when the nations will rise up against the Jewish people. (2) "Thy wrath came," reminding **us** of the time when God will command the bowls and the vials to be poured out. (3) "And the time of the dead to be judged," judgment of the dead ever involving their resurrection. (4) Then we are told who these dead are, —"And the time to **give** their reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear Thy name, the small and the great." The three classes mentioned indicate that these are the Lord's redeemed ones only. This sequence of events surely then takes **place** before the millennium, the sounding of the seventh angel taking place **at** the end of the tribulation. Daniel's prophecy pursues the **same** course—a time of trouble (the tribulation), at that time comes deliverance, and then, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life." These are clearly Old Testament saints, the latter portion of the verse referring to those who awake later to appear before the Great White Throne. The **message** comes to Daniel, who finding himself in that three-fold category of Revelation 11. is told to go his way and rest, for "thou shalt stand in thy lot, at the end of the days." What days? Until the days shall be finished, the time, and times, and half **a time** (verse 11).

Revelation **20. 4-6** was referred to, and comment was made on the words, "Judgment was given unto them," the question being raised, "Who are these that sit upon the thrones, to whom judgment is given?" [These are they whom the Lord deems worthy to reign with **Him**, who belonged to dispensations previous and to such **as** lived in the time of the reign of Antichrist. The apostles for instance were to sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke **22. 30**). If we endure we also shall reign with Him. —J. M. J.] Some thought that **we** have three classes of people here. (1) They that **sat** upon the thrones being saints from the past dispensation and this present dispensation, both reigning together. (2) Those that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, it being thought that this clause referred to those who had stood up over a lengthy period, in persecution, eventually to die by the sword. (3) The remaining **face** of great class, of those which had not worshipped the Beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, reminding **us** of those whose testimony may not have been of such an extensive period, but suddenly being stricken down. **G. Sankey.**

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so" (Acts 17. 11).

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Comments.

Gog and Magog.

I welcome the criticism of our esteemed correspondent, G. E. H. and I would make only brief replies to points raised.

- I. I should say that though Satan is the prime leader in the rebellion in Revelation 20., he will then do as he has ever done—work by human means in the leadership of men gathered as they will be in such masses.
- II. Note the security of Israel in such a time as that when Gog seeks to encompass the people of Israel. Can it be said that Israel dwells securely prior to the Millennium? Is it not the same time as that referred to in Ezekiel 34. 25, which beyond question indicates the security from harm of millennial times?
- III. Again it is clear that upon the hordes of Gog in Ezekiel 38. 22, God rains fire and brimstone, etc. (which agrees with Revelation 20.), yet despite this there are both bodies to be buried and weapons to be burned. Moreover in the battle of Har-Magedon the forces of the beast are slain by the sword of Him that sat upon the horse (Revelation 19. 21).
- IV. Further, the land of Israel is a land brought back from the sword (Ezekiel 38. 8), can this be true in the days prior to the Millennium? Does not all scripture show that. to be a time of war and trouble?—*J. M.*

There is a third alternative, favoured by some students of prophecy, that these events occur at the beginning of the Millennium. On the whole, however, I prefer the view set forth by our friend G. E. H.; the objections raised above hardly seem strong enough to set aside the arguments of the last paragraph of his article.—*S. B.*

The **Coming*** of the Son of Man.

Matthew 24. 37-42. Reply to J. M. 's remarks on pp. 108-9. The way **in** which we regard the events of prophecy as being fulfilled will depend very largely on the general outline of prophetic truth we have in our minds. Here the word " taken " despite much that has been said to the contrary on both sides, does not help **us**, and the same is true of the word " left. " The argument from the days of Noah **is**, I agree, unconvincing. The language suggests something sudden and this fits the apprehension of evil does much better than the removal of the good, even though for ultimate blessing. Indeed I would go so far **as** to say that **it** does not fit the latter idea at all. There is something incongruous in supposing that the good are reft from their homes, their work and even their beds. There is a removal of the wicked from among the righteous as Matthew 13. 41 and

49 show and it is not easy to avoid the conclusion that **it is** to this severance that Matthew 24. **37-42** refers. I **am** aware that many fair minded commentators, who admit the possibility of either view, regard the other **as** the more probable, but it must be remembered that the alternatives for them are the rapture of the saints and the removal of the wicked, and from their point of view, I should say they are right, but among those who believe that all the saints are caught up before the tribulation the general belief **is** that in Matthew 24. **40, 41**, **it is** the wicked who are taken.

The remarks under review question this interpretation of the parables of the tares and the drag net, but on no sufficient grounds. Any interpretation of these parables must begin with the Lord's own interpretation and here the emphasis **is** undoubtedly on the removal of the wicked. There **seems** to be nothing precisely answering to the gathering **in** of the harvest or the drawing of the net to the shore, nor **is** it easy to **see** how there could be unless we suppose that both good and bad are removed, but I can find no suggestion of this; on the contrary Matthew 24. **40, 41**, shows quite clearly that those who are taken are taken from the ordinary situations of **life and** not from before the King's judgment throne. Moreover it **is** said that the Son of Man shall **send forth His** angels which does not at all **fit** their acting merely **as** warders at the King's judgment throne.

I cannot agree that Matthew 24. **42-51** in any way supports the idea of watchfulness against being gathered by the angels. The parable of the faithful and wise servant looks quite the other way. The watchfulness **was** to be against being found unfaithful and their portion appointed with the hypocrites.

I will just say this further, that while Matthew 24. **36-51**; Matthew 25. **31-46** and Joel 3. **2** are, no doubt, related they do not, **in** my judgment, relate to the **same** events. Joel 3. **2 is** to be connected with Zechariah 12. and Revelation 19. 11-21. Whether the nations are then supporting Antichrist or opposing him **in** his war against the chosen nation will determine their place at the judgment of the nations of Matthew 25. which, it would appear, takes place at the beginning of the Millennium. The battle before Jerusalem **is** but the culmination of a long course of hatred by Antichrist and the nations supporting him against God and **His** people. Immediate judgment is meted out to Antichrist and his **armies** (Revelation 19. 19-21), but the set judgment determining the place of the nations **in** the millennial kingdom comes later; also, I suggest, the gathering out of **His** kingdom **all** things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity. It **is** possible to **see** something of this kind arising out of the present war—a judgment of nations and of individuals whose works have been evil. **S. B.**

Much has been said regarding the days of Noah, and it will be noted that S. B. **agrees** with J. M. that the argument from the days of Noah **is** unconvincing. Below J. M. adds a note relative to this Old Testament analogy, with which I agree. I have always leaned to the view that it **is** the righteous who are taken, and I **see** nothing incongruous in this, any more than most will **see in** the sudden rapture of the saints, so that incongruity hardly enters into the matter. [This would be so, I agree, **if** the gathering of the elect could be regarded **as** the miraculous translation of **men** in the flesh from all over the world to Jerusalem, but I know of no reason why we should suppose this to be the case. —**S. B. J S. B.** is careful to point out that the interpretation **of** the passage under consideration depends very largely upon the general view we take as to the course of events. With this J. M. **agrees** and tabulates for us his understanding of the course of events. **A. T. D.**

My understanding of the events **in** the coming of the Son of Man in the order that I think they **will** take place, **is** as follows: —

- I. At the time of the descent of the Son of Man the **angels** are sent to gather **His** elect (Matthew 24. 29-31).
- II. **He** has come to fight the nations gathered to fight **against Him** under the leadership of the Beast (Zechariah 14. **1-7**; Revelation 19. **11-21**; 16. 12-16). **His** feet shall stand on the mount of Olives.
- III. The destruction of Edom (Isaiah 63. **1-6**; 34. 5-17).

- IV. The return of Israel to Zion after being **in** asylum in Moab, Edom and Ammon to which they had fled (Revelation 12. 6, 13-17; Daniel 11. **41**; Isaiah 35. 3-10; 51. **11**; Matthew 24. 15-22).
- V. The rewarding of the prophets and of saints and of them that feared **His** Name (Revelation 11. 18).
- VI. The judgment which involves the removal of the righteous from the wicked begins with the purification of the sons of Levi, the priestly family that was ritualistically nearest to God in the past dispensation and will be **as** God's priests in the Millennium (Malachi 3. 1-4).
- VII. The judgment of Israel when the wicked from amongst them, though called the sons of the kingdom, will be cast into the outer darkness (Matthew 8. 11, 12; Luke 13. 22-30). The wicked Israelites are clearly indicated in John 5. 43.
- VIII. The gathering of the living nations (or Gentiles) to Jerusalem, to the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3. 2, 4) where the King will separate them from each other and when the judgment will be based on how these Gentiles treated those who are called " My brethren. " See Matthew 25. 40, 45. It will be seen clearly that " My brethren " are quite a distinct class from the righteous who are set on the King's right hand. Who can they be but the elect of Matthew 24. 31 ?—who are in " the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other " and are probably those described as " the rest of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus " (Revelation 12. 17).

This separation of wicked from the righteous **is** indicated in Matthew 3. 12 as chaff from wheat, as wheat from tares (Matthew 13. 38-43), **as** bad fish from good fish (Matthew 13. 47-50), as sheep from goats (Matthew 25.).

J. M.

There may be many other scriptures which would prove the events above stated. Further, **in** view of past contention in N. T. that the wicked are *first* taken, and in proof of this the days of Noah and Lot are cited, surely the most superficial examination of what happened then shows that the righteous were *first* taken before the judgment fell on the rest—Noah was called into the ark and Lot and his family were led out of Sodom by the angels. They were taken, the others were left, and those left were the wicked. **Of** course after judgment had swept away the wicked the righteous were eventually left, but we are dealing with the actual course of events at the Lord's coming, and what **is** meant be " one shall be taken and one left. "

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD **JESUS** CHRIST.

The Resurrection of Old Testament **saints**, **and** of those that triumph over the beast

(Daniel 12. 2, 3; Isaiah 26. 19; Revelation 11. 15-18; 20. 4-6).

From Vancouver. —The question might be raised whether both Isaiah 26. and Daniel 12. may have in view a general resurrection of Old Testament saints, or **a** resurrection of saints who have died during the specific time with which these scriptures deal.

The closing words of Isaiah 26. 20, alongside Daniel 11. 36, would place events in Isaiah 26. as relating to the last week of Daniel's prophecy. Just **as** 1 Thessalonians 4. was written for the comfort of saints of the present dispensation, so Isaiah 26. was written for the encouragement of many who will live **in** that terrible day, and who with horror will see many of their brethren slain for their faithfulness to God. **As in** our own day, we draw comfort from such scriptures **as** 1 Thessalonians 4. 15-18, so in those awful days many hearts will find comfort as, perhaps in secrecy, loved ones are consigned to the grave. Those precious words will be brought to their notice: " Thy dead shall live; My dead bodies shall arise " (Isaiah 26. 19). **His** in life, He claims them still as **His in** death (Psalm 116. 15; 72. 14).

In Revelation 20. 4 we suggest we have the dead of " that day " (Isaiah 26. 1), and " that time " (Daniel 12. 1) in view. John saw the souls of them that were beheaded for " the testimony of Jesus. " Somehow we cannot think of Old Testament saints being beheaded for the " testimony of Jesus, " so that here at least we have those that triumph over the beast. What follows in this verse (Revelation 20. 4) definitely places them as having lived during the time of the antichrist.

In considering the resurrection of Old Testament saints, the question arises whether they will all be raised at the same time.

Hebrews 11. presents to us a record of men and women who were not concerned about an earthly inheritance. Like Abraham (heir of the world though he was), they " looked for the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God * " (verse 10). They certainly sought " a country " (verse 14), but it was " a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city " (verse 16). What God thought of them is tersely stated in the words, " Of whom the world was not worthy " (verse 38).

Shall we suggest that all such as are in view in Hebrews 11. will be among the blessed who are bidden to the " marriage supper of the Lamb " (Revelation 19.), and who, long before Revelation 20. 4, have had " part in the first resurrection, and have been seen (representatively) near the throne from Revelation 4. onwards in the " four and twenty elders " ? [The idea that the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders represent men, that is the redeemed, probably of different dispensations, rests on, I would judge, whether " us " of Revelation 5. 9 A. V. is part of the inspired word or not. The A. V. gives " redeemed us, " but the R. V. says " didst purchase, " the " us " being omitted. If the four living creatures are four living creatures, and their description so carefully given—faces, eyes, wings and words all being mentioned—is so like to that of the living creatures of Ezekiel 1. 5-10, as to warrant the conclusion that they are the same, then the case for the inclusion of " us " in Revelation 5. 9 breaks down. " They " of verse 9 in "And they sing " refers to both the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders, not merely to the elders. My own view is that the four living creatures are four living creatures, nothing more or less, not representatives of a multitude of the redeemed, and this being so, I also view the twenty-four elders who sit on twenty-four thrones as twenty-four and no more. Are we going to say that the twenty-four mean thousands upon thousands ? then, if so, there are equally thousands upon thousands of thrones. Moreover it would imply (would it not ?) that all redeemed persons whether they have been obedient or not will be crowned in heaven and will have a throne. Is not this a denial of all that is taught in scripture as to the need for becoming an Overcomer to wear a crown ? See, for example, Revelation 2. 10; 3. 11. I do not attempt to say anything as to the textual matter as to the authority for including or omitting " us " in Revelation 5. 9.—J. M. J.

Psalm 45. would indicate there will be many guests there, this being the climax of all God's purposes in relation to His beloved Son. J. Blair.

The gathering of the elect, **and** the gathering of the living nations to judgment (Matthew 24. 29-31, 37-42; 25. 31-46).

From Edinburgh. —Throughout the tribulation the elect will wait patiently and will watch for the coming of the Son of Man, and while waiting will, no doubt, find comfort in the words of the Lord Jesus, " He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved " (Matthew 24. 13). When He comes, this promise will be fulfilled, for immediately after He is seen coming in the clouds of heaven, He will send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. Thus it will be that from the field, one will be taken and one left; and from the mill, one will be taken and one left. His elect will be taken, gathered together to Him, and the others will be left, awaiting the time when they will be called before the Son of Man for judgment.

While it is true, in connection with the coming of the Son of Man, that of that day and hour knoweth no one, but the Father only, certain signs will immediately precede His coming, and these will be seen with joy by those who have given heed to the warnings of God, and who are watching for Him. On the other hand, as in the days of Noah, there will be, in those days, unrighteous ones who will give no heed to the warnings of God, but will indulge in worldly pleasure and in disobedience until He-comes. To them His coming will be a sudden and unexpected event.

When the Son of Man has sat down on the throne of His glory, all the nations shall be gathered before Him, and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will call upon those on His right hand to come and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world, and will command those on the left hand to depart into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.

We had some difficulty with regard to who those sheep are. It appears that they are not the elect, for the elect have been previously gathered together, and it is evidently to the elect that the sheep have shown kindness. Who, then, are the elect? Do they include all who have not worshipped the beast or received his mark? If they do, the sheep must be of those who have received the mark of the beast. It was suggested that this was the case, but that it was out of fear of the consequences of not doing so that they received the mark of the beast, not of their own free will; and that out of natural kindness of heart they did acts of kindness to the elect. But is it possible for any who has received the mark of the beast to inherit eternal life? The scriptures do not seem to teach this, *e. g.*, "If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God... and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone... and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night" (Revelation 14. 9-11). Moreover these words are spoken after the proclamation of the eternal gospel, "Fear God, and give Him glory; for the hour of His judgement is come: and worship Him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters" (see Revelation 14. 6, 7, 9-11). This appears to indicate that those who receive the mark of the beast do so deliberately with a knowledge of, or a disregard of, the consequences, which are worse by far than the temporary consequences of not receiving his mark. "Be not afraid of them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10. 28). Then in Revelation 13. 8 we read, "All that dwell on the earth shall worship him *fi. e.*, the beast), everyone whose name hath not been written in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world," and in Revelation 20. 15, "If any was not found written in the book of life, he was cast into the lake of fire." It appears, therefore, that the sheep have not received the mark of the beast, and if this is the case, the elect cannot include all who have not received it. It was suggested, therefore, that the elect are those of Israel who have not worshipped the beast. The words, "My brethren" (Matthew 25. 40) seem to support this view. If this is so, it is evident that the sheep are those of the nations (other than Israel) who have refused to worship the beast, having acknowledged God, and, in what way they could, having helped His elect. Are they not those spoken of in Revelation 7. 9, a great multitude, which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, concerning whom it is said, "These are they which come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb" (verse 14)? Do not the words, "the Lamb... shall be their shepherd" (verse 17) support this view? Further, the sheep are referred to as the righteous in Matthew 25. 37 and 46. It was argued that if these had not received the mark of the beast, they would not have had wherewith to give meat to the elect; but it seems that persecution will not be so severe in all parts as it will be near the centre of government, in Judaea whence the holy people are warned to flee; and it may

have been that they had not much to give, but gave what they could; for which little they will receive a reward.

The goats are those who have refused to show kindness to the elect, having disowned the God of the elect. "And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life." *J. J. Taylor.*

From Birkenhead. —To understand who are the elect of Matthew 24. 29-31, it is essential that we distinguish between the heavenly elect of this age, and the chosen race of Israel. It must be of these latter—the earthly elect—that the passage speaks. It seems clear that the time of Jacob's trouble will stir the Jewish nation from its present lethargy, and that they will return to the Lord their God. The promise of God recorded in Deuteronomy 30. 4 will then be fulfilled, and the nation wandering as outcasts will be gathered even from the uttermost parts of heaven. The circumstances of this great gathering are depicted; the Lord sends forth His angels and there is the sound of a great trumpet. This trumpet, we suggest, may be that of which we read in Revelation 11., when the kingdom of the earth becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. The method of returning is said to be by the agency of the angels and this appears to conflict with such words as those of Isaiah 60. 9 when the ships of Tarshish are said to bring the sons of Israel from afar. The angels may of course merely act in a supervisory capacity. [In my humble judgment, bearing in mind the vast movements in the early days of the coming of the Son of Man, "His elect" are not the sons of Israel whom the kings, queens and nations will bring as an offering to the LORD to His holy mountain, (see Isaiah 49. 22; 60. 4; 66. 20), but will be those who will be the active upholders of the word of God and testimony of Jesus, the preachers of the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 10. 22, 23; 24. 14; Revelation 12. 17). Perhaps we can best explain our meaning by a comparison with the time which preceded the Cross. At that time you have two purposes running concurrently. I. You have the nation of Israel, largely, though not entirely, in unbelief, going on with the Temple, and its ritual, the keeping of the Passover and the things of the Old Covenant. II. Then you have the Lord and His apostles and many other disciples engaged in preaching the new order in the gospel of the kingdom. The preaching of the kingdom was rudely interrupted in the murder of the King, and instead of kingdom hopes being realised, the King returns to heaven and the present Dispensation of Grace commences to run its course. This Dispensation must be completed in the building of the Church the Body ere the preaching of the kingdom will recommence, but recommence it will. For after the Church has been caught up God will deal with Israel first calling them to repentance. An elect people will respond like to the apostles and disciples of the Lord and these will carry the tidings of the kingdom to Gentile cities, for it will be preached to all nations. As the preachers go out, no doubt the order will be then as ever—to the Jew first and also to the Greek. A mighty divine movement will take place with a rich and far reaching outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2. 28-32; Acts 2. 17). This people, as definite a people as were the saints in the early days of this dispensation, will pass through times of great tribulation, but nothing will damp their ardour or quench their zeal. At the same time events politically and internationally will be moving in Jerusalem and Palestine and throughout the earth. The reign, wealth, influence and oppression of the great city of Babylon will first spread their baneful influence in the earth. Then the beast will ascend from the Abyss in the middle of Daniel's week, at which time also the Devil will be cast down from heaven. The worship of the beast and his image will be instituted. The faithful adherents of the worship of the true God amongst the Jews will repudiate such rank idolatry and will flee to the place prepared for them in the wilderness beyond the Jordan where they will be nourished from the persecution of the Serpent for three and a half years. - This people will return to Zion at the beginning of the Millennial reign. Kings, etc., will bring the scattered Jews from all parts, Jews who have not bowed to the beast, nor received his number or mark. But besides these there are the elect, the active propagators of the truth for that time—the gospel of the kingdom, in the testimony of Jesus. —J. M. J.]

We cannot imagine the scenes of that great day, and the sorrows of Israel as they look upon Him whom they pierced and mourn for Him as one mourneth for **an** only son (Zechariah 12. 10). This day also marks the commencement of that era of unparalleled blessing for the Jews, the time of restitution of all things of which the Lord spoke by the mouths of all **His** holy prophets.

That day will usher in a judgment, or, as Matthew 25. 32 terms it, a separation. The nations will then be gathered before Him. It **is** not clear from this passage, whether the judgments are passed upon the nations as such, that **is** as corporate bodies, or whether the separation **is** effected amongst the individuals who constitute them. It would seem, however, from Matthew 16. 27 that the latter course **is** adopted. The sheep, which are the righteous, are set at **His** right hand; the goats upon His left. What **is** the basis for judgment? This **is** clearly indicated by the Lord. It **is** the attitude which has been manifested towards His brethren, brethren after the flesh, the Jews. It will be clear from the narrative that the righteous are quite unaware of the reason for their preferment; their conduct seems to have been dictated by humanitarian rather than Christian motives. It **is** true that the giving of a cup of cold water in Christ's name will not go unrewarded, but this does not appear to be the reason in this instance for reward. It should be further noted that the rewards are not given as a result of the acceptance of Christ, but purely as an outcome of works. [Works here must be the outcome of faith, but the test is more severe than to-day—G. P., Jun.].

The eternal destiny of an individual **is** decided not upon his works, but upon his attitude towards God's revelation, and in particular his attitude to the Lord Jesus. While this attitude of heart should be shown forth in works, yet the primary feature upon which the reward of eternal life is based is faith, not works. The reward awarded by this tribunal **is** the inheritance of the kingdom, the privilege of enjoying, though in a subjective capacity, the rule of the Prince of Peace. The kingdom mentioned here lasts but through one short age of one thousand years.

W. Rowan.

EXTRACTS.

From Liverpool. —The tribulation of those days (Matthew 24. 29) will be a sore trial for those whom the Lord calls His brethren. Tribulation such as the world has never seen, we are told, they will have to endure who refuse to worship the beast, and so it will be no easy thing to give a helping hand to a Jew in those days. The persecution will be so great that it may be as much as a man's life **is** worth to offer a Jew a drink of water or even a word of comfort in his distress. It **is** upon this, their attitude and conduct towards the worshippers of God, that the judgment of the living nations **is** based when the Lord comes as Son of Man and sits upon the throne of His glory (Matthew 25. 31).

After the tribulation of those days, we read in Matthew 24., the Son of Man shall come with power and great glory and will send forth His angels and they shall gather together **His** elect from one end of heaven to the other. These " elect, " we take it, are the same as those in verses 22 and 24 of this chapter; those who have endured the rigours of the great tribulation. Those of the children of Israel and of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, who will stand before the throne of God, having washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb (Revelation 7.). Many of them will have been killed because of their testimony, but those who are still alive will welcome with unutterable joy the appearing of the Deliverer.

A. Carson, R. S.

From Hamilton (Ont.). —It **is** noticeable in looking at the word " elect " that they are gathered from the four winds of heaven. This same expression **is** used in Revelation 7. 1, where we read about the four angels holding the four winds and being commanded not to hurt the earth till the hundred and forty-four thousand are sealed. These will be sealed out of the tribes of Israel. The four winds no doubt signify the length and breadth of the earth, and other scriptures **as** well as present day events show that Israel **is** scattered throughout the world. So it **is** logical to conclude that the elect of Matthew 24. 3] are God's ancient people. [See note in paper from Birkenhead.]

As regards the condition of the world at that time, verses **37-42** show **us** how far away men are from God. They are in the same condition as in Noah's day, a condition which caused Jehovah to say " I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground. " And as we look around us to-day it seems that this period of time is not far in the future, for truly " the wickedness of man is great in the earth. "

In connection with the judgment of the living nations, this judgment will no doubt take place on earth. It will be presided over by One who has at last taken up His rightful reins of government and is called the King in Matthew 25. 34. This judgment is not one of degree, but is a separation of the sheep and goats. The sheep, or those on His right hand have honoured God's elect, while those on His left hand have not done so. It seems therefore that this judgment, which we suggest is a judgment of individuals who go to compose the nations that are gathered before Him, is based on their attitude toward God's elect. •

N. McKay.

From Broxburn. —" But unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings; and ye shall go forth, and gambol as calves of the stall " (Malachi 4. 2). These words indicate the joy that will fill the hearts of God's elect as they view the coming of the Son of Man to break the power of the great oppressor and bring deliverance to His suffering saints. " He shall send forth **His** angels with a great sound of a trumpet" would suggest that while no physical change will be experienced by those who are thus gathered together, yet divine power will be exercised in bringing them from one end of heaven to the other. The days of Noah were said by the Lord to be illustrative of what shall be when the Son of Man comes. In Noah's day God made a separation between the righteous and the wicked, by calling Noah and his family to where He Himself was, inside the ark. That is, Noah was brought to a place of safety ere divine judgment overwhelmed the wicked, and when the judgment was past, he emerged upon a purged earth. So will it be in the coming of the Son of Man. Those who are taken are taken for blessing and the rest are left for judgment.

With regard to the judgment of the living nations, God has a controversy with the nations because of their attitude to **His** ancient people the Jews. According to Joel **3.**, when the Lord comes as Son of Man He will gather all nations and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat near to Jerusalem. "And He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats " (Matthew **25.** 32). The attitude of the nations to **His** elect people during the great tribulation period will determine their position either on **His** right hand or on **His** left. With regard to the statement that " these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life, " is punishment or blessing allocated to them simply because they have given succour to God's suffering saints, or, vice versa, refused such aid, apart altogether from the work of Christ? [In a former paper our co-editor has said correctly, we believe, " works here must be the outcome of faith. " Note the principle laid down by the Lord in Matthew 10. 40-42—" He that receiveth you receiveth Me; and he that receiveth Me receiveth **Him** that sent Me. He that receiveth a prophet *in the name* of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man *in the name* of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward, " etc. Man's attitude to what God's saints stand for will involve them in the blessing of that for which saints stand. Their attitude to the messenger will truly describe their attitude to the message and to **Him** who sent the message. Contrariwise to-day, the person who harbours a deserter from the army shares **in** the deserter's punishment. To provide for suffering saints will be rewarded as though they so treated a suffering Saviour. —J. M. J. *Henry Dyer.*

(Editors regret that several papers have had to be left over until next month).

BIBLE STUDIES.

"Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that **they** received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily whether these things were so " (Acts 17. 11).

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UTOPIA.

Ever since Sir Thomas More so entitled a book exposing social and political evils of his day, the world has used the word "Utopia" to describe an ideal state of society where security, plenty, and equal rights could be enjoyed by all. This ideal has possessed philanthropists and statesmen of many generations, and finds its modern reflection in current thought about the prospects of building a fine new world when the present holocaust of war has passed. The Atlantic Charter, with its ideals of freedom from want and fear, admirably sums up the high aspirations of post-war statesmanship, which have their strongest appeal to well intentioned people, conscientiously seeking the best means of bringing about a happier state of affairs in the world.

What is the attitude of the student of Scripture to these ideals? "We have the word of prophecy made more sure; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place" (2 Peter 1. 19). By the discerning ray of prophetic revelation we are privileged to pierce the intervening darkness of this age, and visualise something of the glory of the divinely established "Utopia" which will obtain during the millennial reign of Christ. Our recent studies have emphasised the futility of human effort to obtain universal security and plenty. Whatever measure of success may temporarily attend post-war reconstruction, the prophetic scriptures show that the last days shall wax worse and worse spiritually, while wars and rumours of wars will persist until He come whose right it is. Even unto the consummation, and that determined, divine judgments will be multiplied as men's progressive apostasy fills the cup of their iniquity to overflowing.

Against this dark background the Christian's positive hope for the adjustment of the world's problems stands out in glorious relief. For "Christ who is our life shall be manifested"! As the clue to men's failure is their rejection of God's Anointed, so the key to the blessing of millennial days will be their acceptance of Him whom God hath set upon His holy hill of Zion (Psalm 2.). The Lord Jesus referred to the Millennium as "the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory" (Matthew 19. 28). In Acts 3. 21 Peter declared that the heavens must receive the Lord Jesus "until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began." Until that time the furtherance of divine purposes on earth is through human instrumentality, and the absence of direct intervention has been aptly referred to by Sir Robert Anderson as "the silence of God." The regeneration will be accomplished only by an irresistible manifestation of divine power:

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The vain dream of some that the Millennium will gradually dawn as mankind evolves to spiritual perfection is banished by the Lord's assurance that "as the lightning cometh forth from the east, and is seen even unto the west; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man."

One practical outcome of this year's studies should therefore be a deepened understanding of the reasons for our separation from the world's schemes to bring about a modern "Utopia." Certain epochs of human history have enjoyed relative peace, and in the longsuffering of God it may conceivably be within His purpose to allow a similar time of opportunity after this war. If so, are we to be allured by the deceptively scintillating prospects of earthly advantage, into devoting all our time and energies to promoting ideals impossible of full realisation? Shall we not rather in the light of Christ's *Parousia* consecrate ourselves anew to the furtherance of His kingdom? "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus... and by His appearing and kingdom; preach the word," declared Paul to his true child in faith. So may we realise more fully that "our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

G. P., Jun.

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.

The gathering together of the elect and the gathering
of the living nations to judgment.

From Ilford. —We found some difficulty in deciding who exactly comprise the elect referred to in Matthew 24. 31. On the one hand it was suggested that as the rapture of the Church, His Body, has already taken place, the term "elect" might include the Old Testament saints and those that triumph over the beast. On the other hand it was pointed out that we are referred to in the Epistles as "God's elect" (Colossians 3. 12) and as an "elect race" (1 Peter 2. 9) and from this it was suggested that the whole of the redeemed from Adam until the end of the age might be included in the Matthew reference. This point of view was re-inforced by reference to the fact that the elect are gathered not only from the four winds, but also from "one end of heaven to the other." [Revelation 7. 9 speaks of a vast number of people of all nations who, I judge, are slain during the great tribulation under the persecution of the beast. These are seen in Revelation 20. 4 raised from the dead—"they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." See also verse 6. In my judgment angels will not gather these, but they will be raised by divine power. Those who are gathered, in my view, are those who have endured to the end and are saved from the persecution of Antichrist by the coming of the Son of Man. They are God's elect who are alive and living in all parts of the earth. These will be gathered to the Lord to Jerusalem, I would understand. —
J. M].

A. G. Jarvis {Jun. }.

From Atherton. —We suggest that in Luke 17. 26-37 and Matthew 24. a comparison is made between the days of Noah, the days of Lot, and the day when the Son of Man comes. The histories of the days of the building of the ark, and the wickedness of Sodom, indicate that those who were wilfully indifferent, and heedless of the word and will of God, were swept away in fierce destruction, but those who valued the claims of God were spared. In other words the righteous were spared and the wicked taken.

The disciples' enquiry in Luke 17. 37 shews further light, when they ask, "Where, Lord?" and He said unto them, "Where the body is, thither will the eagles also be gathered together." This implies the feeding of the birds of the air on dead flesh—the flesh of those taken in the judgment of God, and the godly ones live on to know His blessing and care. [It is rather a mixture of ideas to compare the angels to eagles in this way as feeding on "dead flesh, the flesh of those taken in the judgment of God." The days of Lot should help us out in our understanding of what the angels will do in the coming of the Son of Man by comparing what they did in Lot's days. Did they not enter Sodom, go to Lot's home, and from thence

the next morning gather out Lot from amongst the wicked ? If we apply " where Lord ? " to that day, then where the eagles were gathered together was not at the houses of the wicked, but at the house where the righteous were and these they removed. The angels being compared to eagles is not that they are like in nature to the eagles which are birds of carrion, but they will gather to what is intended to be removed, as eagles descend upon the prey, with swift and sure descent. —J. M. J. Zechariah 13. 8, 9 seems to indicate this same principle of divine judgment in the land of Israel, when two-thirds of the people are cut off and die, but one third is left to be **refined** and saved for the Lord's pleasure. *G. Sankey,*

From Kilmarnock. —We note that before the end of Daniel's seventieth week " the gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole inhabited earth " (Matthew 24. 14, R. V. M.). We think possibly the preachers will be those referred to in Daniel 11. 33 and 12. 3, and that those who receive their message concerning the coming King and His kingdom will be the elect or chosen ones, just as those who believe the gospel of God's grace in the present dispensation are " elect " (1 Peter 1. 1 and 2. 9) and chosen in Christ (Ephesians 1. 4). Then according to Matthew 24. 31 the Son of Man shall send forth His angels and gather together these elect ones. There are many Old Testament prophecies that seem to foretell this (e. g., Isaiah 11. 12; 56. 8; Ezekiel 20. 34-38), and yet many who will return to their own land will not have the fear of God in their hearts. Would the 144, 000 who are sealed not be the " elect " ? (see Revelation 7. 3, etc.). Matthew 25. 31 describes " the gathering of the nations. " There seems to be no question as to receiving the message of the kingdom, but as to the treatment given to the brethren of the King. Those who had shown kindness to the Jews during the time of the tribulation were accounted righteous by the Judge and were given a place in His kingdom. It is noteworthy that the treatment given by the righteous was given with no thought of reward, and is an example for the people of God now. May this be a fulfilment of the words of the Lord in Matthew 8. 11, 12 ? A. G. S.

From Glasgow. —During Daniel's 70th week there will be godly Jews who will evangelise, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and will be consistent and fearless in their testimony, many of them sealing their testimony with their blood. We see the result of their work in Revelation 7. 9. The Gentile martyrs will be an innumerable company. When the Lord returns as Son of Man He will send His angels to gather His elect, all those who have remained faithful to Him during the tribulation, from the four winds, which we understand to mean from all parts of the earth. It is concerning this gathering that the Lord speaks in Matthew 24. 37-41. There will be those who will be taken, and taken for blessing, to enter into the kingdom, and others left to be judged. The Lord uses, as a solemn illustration, the case of Noah, being taken and preserved in the ark, while the rest perished, and, in Luke 17. 28, the case of Lot, saved out of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the awful judgment of God descending upon those that remained.

During the tribulation there will have been those of the nations, who have been kind to the Jews; Gentiles who will be hospitable to them, succour, and shew kindness to them. God has spoken of His people as being the apple of His eye (Deuteronomy 32. 9, 10; Zechariah 2. 8), and those who have shewn kindness to them will not **be** overlooked. *A, McL*

From Manchester. —Presumably the gathering of the living nations will be a representative one, as it seems unlikely that every individual of all nations will personally be gathered before Him. If all were so gathered, there would hardly be need for the angels to be sent forth as in Matthew 13. 41 to gather out of His kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity. May it be that representative leaders of all nations will be gathered before the Lord Himself, and that others will be dealt with through angelic messengers ? While appreciating the Lord's ability to gather every individual before the throne of His glory, it is difficult to find a place for the angelic activities of Matthew 13. 41-42 if the former

proposition **is** accepted. [We appreciate the point of view of our beloved co-worker, and whilst favouring the view of the gathering of " all the nations " and not merely representatives of **the** nations, we leave this for the consideration of fellow-students. —J. M.]. *G. Prasher, Jun.*

From Vancouver. —The elect, we suggest, will include the hundred and forty-four thousand, who, during the seven years of the prophecy of Daniel, will herald the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 24. 14). These have the seal of God, and are spoken of as **His** servants (Revelation 7. 1-8). As a result of their faithful testimony, under God, many of the sons of Israel will be saved. The message will be similar to that of John the Baptist in his day. The words **in** Romans 11. 26 will then be fulfilled, " and so all Israel shall be saved, even as it **is** written, There shall come out of Zion a Deliverer. " The words " all Israel, " however, **seem** limited in their scope, and should be considered in the light of Romans 2. 28-29, also 9. 6-8, and Isaiah 10. 20-23. These will also be included in the elect; although they will receive the message concerning their King and **His** coming kingdom, they will remain in the countries whither they are scattered, until **He** **is** manifested in power, and the signal **is** given by the great trumpet for their ultimate return to the land of their fathers.

Then there are those of Judah who will flee from Palestine to escape the persecution of the beast, finding a hiding place in Edom, Moab and Ammon, which **will** be delivered out of his hand. (Daniel 11. 42; **see** also Revelation 12. 6). These also we judge will form part of the elect, and will remain in hiding until Gentile rule **is** forever destroyed by the Son of Man, who will be their Deliverer.

Further far-reaching results from the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom are seen in Revelation 7. 9-14 where John saw a vast "multitude which no man could number, out of every nation, and of all tribes and peoples and tongues. " These will be saved, and come out of the great tribulation. *R. Armstrong.*

The Millennium. (Revelation 20. 4).

From Kilmarnock. —Comparing Daniel 7. with Revelation 19. 20 we **see** the end of the dominion and authority of the Antichrist, and with the binding of **Satan in** the abyss for 1, 000 years we have the beginning of the millennial reign of Christ. It **is** then, we judge, that **Psalm 2. 8, 9** will be literally fulfilled and God will give the nations for Messiah's inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for **His** possession.

Revelation 20. 4 shows that those **slain** during the tribulation, for refusal to bow to the Antichrist, will be raised and reign with Christ. It would appear from Matthew 19. 28 that the twelve apostles will also be associated with the Son of **Man** in judging Israel's tribes, while overcomers in churches of God will have a place of authority in the coming kingdom. (See Revelation 2. 26).

Isaiah 11. presents a description of the Ruler who shall come forth, " a shoot out of the stock of Jesse. " Righteousness will be the " girdle of **His** loins, " and the result of **His** righteous rule will be peace and prosperity. The span of **life** will also be extended and men shall long enjoy the fruit of their labours on the land, as Isaiah 65. 20-21 indicates.

While the wild beasts will lose their ferocious nature it **is** worthy of notice that the curse will still remain on the serpent, and dust shall be its meat. (See Genesis 3. 14).

Psalm 72. (a psalm of Solomon) would **seem** to be typical of Christ's millennial reign, but **as all** types **fall** short of the Antitype so Christ's glory will far surpass Solomon's; and while the latter failed, there will be no failure with the Son of **Man**. **While** Jerusalem will be the centre of **His** rule, it shall extend to **all** nations

as Isaiah 2. 2 shows: "All nations shall flow unto it. " Judgment will fall on those who go not up " to worship the King, the LORD of hosts " (Zechariah 14. 17). Such is the fair scene that shall be presented to a wondering world, when " **He** shall come whose right it is. " " So shall He startle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths because of Him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider" (Isaiah 52. 15, R. V. M.). A. G. S.

From Broxburn. —That the Lord Jesus Christ, as Son of Man, will reign in person upon the earth, and not in some vague or mystical way as some have supposed, the Scriptures bear abundant testimony. Jesus of Nazareth, who **is** also the Christ, was of the house and lineage of David, and consequently was in the line of succession to the throne of Israel. Death did not invalidate His claim for the divine promise has been made secure to Him in resurrection, as the Apostle's statement in Acts 13. 34 clearly shews: "And as concerning that He raised Him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, He hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. " In proof of this the writer reverts to a quotation from Isaiah 55. 3, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. " What then are these sure mercies, and what proof do they afford of the Apostle's statement? Isaiah undoubtedly refers to promises which God had covenanted with David concerning his Seed, and these were holy or sacred because they were divinely uttered and related to a divine Person. In verse 4 the scope of the promise **is** associated with a personal reference to the Messiah: " Behold, I have given Him for a . . . Leader and Commander to the peoples. " The prophet, through the Holy Spirit, is without doubt referring here to the oracle uttered by Nathan in 2 Samuel 7. 13-16 concerning David's dynasty, which was to continue for ever. It was no foreshortened view of the kingdom that Nathan was given to see ending in Zedekiah, but the prophetic vision embraces as in a mighty panorama the whole of David's posterity until the line is seen to end in the Lord Jesus Christ. But if death should strike One so exalted the promise would be falsified, therefore He is endowed with an endless life, for resurrection involves superiority to death. Consequently He will occupy the throne of His father David for ever, without pause and without successor.

Henry Dyer.

EXTRACTS.

From London, S. E. —The literal meaning of the word millennium **is** a period of a thousand years; so " The Millennium " **is** *the* thousand years, that is, the thousand years of Christ's reign in person on this earth. The term **is** not found in the Bible until Revelation 20., but it occurs **six** times in that chapter. Yet " the conception literally permeates the whole of the Old and New Testaments, and **is** demanded by both prophecy and history. "

It **is** sometimes rather difficult to distinguish clearly which Old Testament Scriptures refer to the millennial reign of Christ and **His** saints, and which to the eternal kingdom, but some of the essential fundamental characteristics are, - to a certain extent, common to both. Some outstanding features of the millennial kingdom of righteousness will be as follows: —

It will be the reign of Christ (Revelation 20. 4).

There could be no Millennium without Christ; this period of blessedness **is** bound up with Him, and the Lord shall reign. **His** saints will reign with Him, but the personal presence of Christ **is** demanded, and He will be the soul of all. This disposes of the false teaching that the second coming of the Lord **is** post-millennial and that the millennial reign of Christ has already commenced. Human government will give place to the world-wide reign of the Prince of Peace, and the Great King will manifest a glory " akin to, though immeasurably greater than, that of Solomon. "

Satan will be bound (verse 3).

The arch-enemy of man **will** cease to hinder; **he is** to be bound and **expelled**, and **his** agents are to **be** destroyed. Being in prison, the Adversary **will be** unable to initiate vast schemes of iniquity. Sin **will** still be in man, and men **will still** be born and die; but there will be much to discourage the manifestation of sin, and the duration and joy of **life** will be enlarged. The reign of the usurping world ruler **is** to be superseded by the beneficent reign of Christ.

Unprecedented prosperity (Isaiah 35. 1-9, 55. 13).

The curse declared to the first Adam **will be** banished during the earthly reign of the last Adam. Thorns and briars will give place to the fir trees and myrtle trees respectively; deserts will blossom, and in short, the very ground **will** be unimaginably fertile. Want and fear will no longer haunt any man, " ye shall **eat** in plenty and be satisfied " (Joel 2. 26).

In the light of these extraordinary changes, it has been questioned whether one man will be able to carry on the complicated business of a universal government, but it must be remembered that *the Man* appointed by God for this purpose **is** omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent. In **His** glorified body, our Lord **is** not confronted with any difficulties of space, matter, time or sense. *F. L. E.*

From Cardiff. —We are reminded of the words: " Now **if** their **fall is** the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness ? " (Romans 11. 12). Associated with millennial days can be seen the fulness of Israel. Isaiah (with his grand and glorious themes **full** of those twin truths of the Throne of God and His government), Jeremiah, Daniel, **Ezekiel**, Micah, Nahum, and Habakkuk, are only **a few** who in that day will contribute something in regard to the glory and majesty that **will** be so evident, shining " **as** the brightness of the firmament;... **as** the stars for ever and ever " (Daniel 12. 3). These were men who in their day and generation knew much of suffering, and will then know the fulness of glory and will occupy their God-given place in association with their King. Indeed, whilst Isaiah was oftentimes burdened with the sufferings of the nation and prophetically of the coming Messiah, the **message is** never left dismal or woeful, but he lifts his hearers out of the depths with that inspiring message of **a** glorious reign after their sufferings. *M. A. J.*

From Manchester. —The predominance of Israel **is** one of the most striking features of Christ's millennial reign. It **is** fitting that **we** should learn little about that era from **New** Testament scriptures, whereas prophets under the Old Covenant gloried in foretelling their nation's future ascendancy under Messiah's benign rule.

Through Isaiah particularly the Holy Spirit has stressed the complete reversal of the nations' attitude to the Jew, " For the **LORD will** have compassion on Jacob, and will yet choose Israel, and **set** them in their own **l a n d** : . . . and they shall take them captive, whose captives they were; and they shall rule over their oppressors " (Isaiah 14. 1, 2). Kings shall lick the dust of their feet (49. 23), nations shall come to their light, all that afflicted them shall bow themselves down at the soles of their feet (60. 3, 14), and aliens shall be their plowmen and vine-dressers (61. 5). " **All** that **see** them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed " (61. 9).

With this recognition of God's earthly people will go the restoration of their land (Isaiah 14. 1) and the elevation of Jerusalem **as** the centre of worship and rule. Isaiah 2. 1-3 describes the mountain of the **LORD'S** house **as** being " established in the top of the mountains, and all nations flowing into it. From there **will** go forth the law, and the word of the **LORD** from Jerusalem. Equally emphatic **are** the assurances of chapter 62. 1-3, from which **we** learn that Jerusalem's righteousness will go forth **as** brightness, and her salvation **as** a lamp that burneth, while she will be called by **a** new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. To this Zechariah again bears witness **as** in chapter 14. 16 he speaks of the annual journey of the nations to Jerusalem for worship, and in verses 20, 21, of the unsullied holiness of Zion in that day **J** *G. Prasher* Jun.*

From Glasgow. —Then shall His name be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, for the government shall be upon His shoulder, to establish it and to uphold it with judgment and righteousness from henceforth for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts shall perform this. For He must reign till He hath put all His enemies under His feet. Then we shall see the fulfilment of Romans 8. 21, so the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

As a result happiness will abound " and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away " (Isaiah 35. 10). " For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace " (Isaiah 55. 12). And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in My people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

Although the earth will enjoy such blessings for a thousand years, when the thousand years are finished, Satan is loosed. He will be able to deceive the nations, and gather an army in number as the sand of the sea to make war against Messiah. Fire will come down out of heaven and devour them, after which Christ's eternal kingdom will finally be established.

James Gartshore.

From Ilford. —The question of who will share in millennial reign with Christ covers a wide field, but as we see in the letters to the churches of Revelation 2. and 3., the promise is chiefly to those who are overcomers (c. f. Matthew 19. 28 and 1 Corinthians 6. 2).

What a pleasant thought we have in Zechariah 8. 4, 5 ! Boys and girls will be playing in the streets of Jerusalem. We cannot imagine what it would be like in our big cities without the cheerful sound of children's voices. Christ could say during His sojourn on earth, " Suffer the little children to come unto Me. " Can we not see Him in that future day, spending a great deal of time amongst the boys and girls ? Moreover, animals which to-day are continually at war with one another will then be led by a little child.

E. H. Jarvis.

From Hamilton, Ont. —"And they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Revelation 20. 4). Can we understand what this will mean ? The apostle Paul reminds us in 2 Timothy 2. 12 that it is those who endure who will reign with Him. Surely we should question ourselves to-day ! Are we enduring for our Master's sake ? One hour in His presence will make up to us for all we might suffer for His sake. To reign with Him will mean no more sorrow, pain, or partings, no sin to mar our joy in Him. For Satan will be bound for a thousand years, the King of kings will be on the throne and the government on His shoulder (Isaiah 9. 6). With righteousness He will judge the poor (Isaiah 11. 4).

Robert Dryburgh, Alex. Davidson.

From Edinburgh. —The people of the millennial dispensation will engage in divine service, and the Lord, as well as being King, will fulfil the office of Priest. " Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold, the Man whose name is the Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the LORD : even He shall build the temple of the LORD: and He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon His throne; and He shall be a Priest upon His throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both " (Zechariah 6. 12, 13). " How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty ! " (Zechariah 9. 17). Psalm 110. contains a beautiful picture⁴ of a people engaged in divine service during the Millennium. " Thy people offer themselves willingly in the day of Thy power: in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning. Thou hast the dew of Thy youth. " Then the nations will come from afar that they might worship Him. Under Him there will operate a priesthood. " Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: over these the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years " (Revelation 20. 6).

In Zechariah 6. 14 as well as worship, there is mentioned a memorial. This, we suggest, is the last memorial so far as Israel is concerned. The first memorial is mentioned in Exodus 12. 14. That in Zechariah 6. is the twelfth.

William Muirhead.

From Southport. —It was suggested that as Satan is the cause of sin, when he is bound for a thousand years sin will not be present. On the other hand we read, "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death" (1 Corinthians 15. 26), so that death can take place up to the end of the Millennium (see also Isaiah 65. 20). But death is the result of sin, for "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6. 23), and so we conclude that sin will then be present. From Isaiah 2. 3 it would appear as if a law will be in existence, and law makes the presence of sin known (Romans 5. 13). [This means of course only where sin exists, but is not detected where there is no law, but we must also think of a state where law exists without sin. —J. M. J.]

Living waters will flow out from Jerusalem (Zechariah 14. 8). They will flow from under the threshold of God's house, waters sufficiently deep to swim in, a river that cannot be passed through (Ezekiel 47. 5). It proceeds eastwards to the eastern sea (Dead Sea) and westward to the western sea (Mediterranean) (Zechariah 14. 8). Parts of the river are to be given up to salt (Ezekiel 47. 11) [This is not the river that is referred to, but the marshes of the Dead Sea that will not be healed by the waters of the river, but will be given up to salt. —J. M. J.] On the banks will grow every tree for meat, whose leaf will not wither and will be used for healing (Ezekiel 47. 12). This portion in Ezekiel was thought to refer to a river on this earth, and not to the river proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the new heaven and new earth, because the sea is mentioned in Ezekiel 47. 8 whereas it is known that there will be no sea in the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21. 1).

W. S. Holden.

From Liverpool. —It was thought by some that peace and happiness would not necessarily be universal, at least at the beginning of the Millennium. Doubtless that period will commence with the overthrow of Antichrist, but the early part will be characterized by the subjugation of Christ's foes, a work which would not be accomplished in a moment. Many scriptures indicate that there are judgments to be inflicted and enemies to be subdued after the nation of Israel has settled peacefully in its land under the protection of Christ (*e. g.*, Micah 5. 5, Ezekiel 38., Isaiah 34., 63.; 66. 16). [It is at least debatable whether the scriptures quoted necessarily refer to the reign of Christ. —G. P. Jr.],

Most thought, however, that these scriptures referred to the time immediately before the commencement of the Lord's reign and that the judgments culminated in Satan being taken and bound for a thousand years. It was argued that with Satan bound, the cause of sin and rebellion against God would be removed from men's hearts and that therefore for the duration of Satan's captivity men would not sin or in any way rebel against the authority of the King, the Lord Jesus Christ. But against this it was argued that if this were so there would be no need for the rule of the rod of iron, for a king reigning in righteousness and princes ruling in judgment (Isaiah 32. 1). Attention was also drawn to Zechariah 14. 16-19, where it speaks of the plague that shall come upon those, out of the residue of the nations who came against Jerusalem, who go not up year by year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.

As far as eternal relations between men and God are concerned it would seem that many will be converted to God in heart during that time. Conversion has never come about, but by the operation of the Holy Spirit and many scriptures indicate that the Holy Spirit will be very active during that period. (See Isaiah 32. 15; Ezekiel 36. 25-27; Joel 2, 28, 29).

L. Jones, R. S.

From Atherton. —One essential feature of the Millennium will be the reconstruction of the Temple (Zechariah 6. 12-15). In this connection two thoughts were expressed: (1) That the Lord will Himself build the Temple, as this seems to be a direct act of the Lord Jesus when **He** returns to the earth. [What **is** meant by " a direct act " ? Solomon built the Temple, but he used other men in the work. Do our friends mean that the Lord will not use human instrumentality ?—J. M. J. (2) In contrast to this it was asked whether the temple that will be in existence during the tribulation be destroyed, for there seems to be no scriptural proof of this, suggesting that the same temple will be in existence during the millennial period. [It **is** clear that the Lord will build the Temple, hence it cannot be the same Temple as that in which the man of sin will sit. This seems perfectly plain. Do our friends think that the Temple of 2 Thessalonians 2. will be kept as a relic or memorial of that wicked time during the Millennium ?—J. M. J.]

Ezekiel 44. 9 says " No alien shall enter My sanctuary. " This had taken place during the Tribulation, when the Abomination of Desolation was set up. It was therefore Suggested that this Temple would be destroyed, and a Temple raised up by the Lord Himself which will not have been profaned and defiled. It seems that service will be taken up from where it was left off in a past day, when Israel went astray (Ezekiel 44. 15).

Ezekiel 43. 4 was referred to, it being pointed out, that the glory of the Lord, *can* and *will* only fill the millennial Temple, as we have it in this chapter. Ezekiel 37. shows a divine order, a people gathered together, and idolatry gone. God will not pretend to place a sanctuary amidst a divided people. *G. Sankey.*

From Vancouver. —The one thousand years **is** outstandingly associated with the people of Israel, and in many ways **is** a material fulfilment of many Old Testament promises of God from the patriarchs down to Zechariah. Amidst Israel's failure we have a clear promise of God in Numbers 14. 21: "All the earth shall be filled with the Glory of the LORD. "

Above all the glory of millennial splendour will shine the Lord of Glory Himself as He rules as King and Priest from Jerusalem, sending forth **His** Law. " The LORD of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before **His** ancients gloriously " (Isaiah 24. 23).

Israel **is** seen as head of the nations and many precious promises are fulfilled for them. (Isaiah 41. 17-20; Isaiah 51. 11; etc.).

There will be changes in the geography of the earth. After the sore judgments in Revelation considerable rehabilitation will be necessary. The mountains and hills will be affected.

The truth that the meek shall inherit the earth **is** fulfilled at this time. (Matthew 55.; Psalm 76. 9). The meek will come into their own headed by the Lord Jesus who **is** the great exponent of meekness. That which **is** seen only as weakness by men **is** shown to be the greatest form of strength. *H. McL.*

Questions and Answers.

Question from Glasgow. —Do the kings of Psalm 2. still retain their power as such during the Millennium, and will they be actually kings ?

Answer. —In Psalm 2. a message **is** sent to kings and judges of the earth to be wise and to kiss or worship the Son. If they do they will be treated with the measure of favour that their recognition of the King of kings will bring forth in their case. If they rebel they will perish in the way. That there will be both nations and kings in the Millennium many portions of the Scriptures plainly teach, as for instance, Isaiah 49. 7, 23; 52. 15; 60. 10-12. 16. Indeed it **is** clear from Revelation 21. 24 that there will be both nations and kings **in** the eternal state. — J. M.

Questions from **Birkenhead**. —(1) Matthew 25. An explanation of the following is desired. Verse 32 states that *all* the nations shall be gathered before the Lord for judgment and shall be separated one from another. The sheep shall inherit the kingdom and the goats go into eternal punishment. From which of the foregoing come those of Revelation 20. whom Satan gathers together to the war at the close of the Millennium ?

Answer. —As those who are symbolised in the goats pass into eternal punishment, the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, described as Gog and Magog, cannot spring from such, hence they must spring from those who are called the sheep. It must be remembered that 1, 000 years come in between the beginning of Christ's reign and the end; hence between the judgment of the living nations and the time of Gog and Magog comes in the Millennium. Many successive generations are born during that period, so that whilst the Millennium begins with a righteous people it is evidently far otherwise with many at the close, and they are only too glad to be deceived that they may take the spoil and prey of the land of Israel that has known rest and prosperity during the reign of Messiah (Ezekiel 38); so they will, as Revelation 20. says, go up against the camp of the saints and the beloved city (Jerusalem). —J. M.

(2) What is the duration of the day of the Lord ? 2 Peter 3. 10 would seem to indicate that it includes and goes beyond the Millennium.

Answer. —The day of the Lord begins with the coming of the Son of Man in judgment and continues till the Great White Throne judgment, when the heaven and earth will pass away. It is more than 1, 000 years in extent. —J. M.

Question from Atherton. —Will those who live through the Millennium who are eternally saved people (apart from those of previous dispensations) require to know a change as in the case of believers of this dispensation who are living when the Lord comes ?

Answer. —Revelation 20. shows, in the revolt of Gog and Magog, that living in the Millennium does not in itself change the nature of men. Though the possibility of living a righteous life will then be easier than at any time of the world's history since the fall, the change that faith in Christ works in the heart must then be known as well as at any other time. It may be that of Israel it will then be true—Jehovah Tsidkenu. It may be noted the same must also be true of all other righteous people. —J. M.

COMMENTS.

Referring to J. M. 's list of '* Events in the coming of the Son of Man in the order... they will take place " (see B. S., page 116), does it not appear from Isaiah 34. 5, 6, that the sword of the Lord descends directly from heaven upon Edom ? Then from Isaiah 62. 6 to 63. 1, etc., the watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem ask, —" Who is this that *cometh from Edom*," etc.

If the above is correct would it not place event No. 3 in the list before event No. 2 ?

R.

T.

H.

H.

SERVING.

"And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon " (1 Kings 4. 28).

Thus the sacred historian describes the days of peace and plenty under the reign of Solomon. The struggles of David for God, His people, and His house, had yielded precious results. God had greatly blessed the labours of His servant David in the abounding wealth which he had amassed in order to bestow it upon the magnificent palace he purposed to build for Jehovah, the Theocratic King of Israel; and He blessed too the deep and genuine repentance of David in the

matter of Bathsheba in giving him Solomon by her means. (How precious is real repentance in the sight of God !). Had there been no suffering David there would have been no glorious Solomon. Their reigns were the complements of each other. David and his men, who trudged through the lone and barren wilderness, laid the foundations of that kingdom which was the admiration of all kingdoms, when Jerusalem was the joy of the whole earth. Many gloomy thoughts filled the mind of Israel's rejected king, and no doubt the minds of his men also, in the days when insecurity, as men viewed things, was especially the portion of that fugitive band !

Such word pictures as the Spirit of God has printed in the divine history of these men and these times have their antitypical fulfilment in the Lord, the Son of David, and His disciples.

In the night of His betrayal He said, " Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as My Father appointed unto Me, that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom; and ye shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. " " Y e . . . have continued with Me in My temptations. " In the lone hours of His human struggles against the forces of evil these men who little understood what their Master was passing through had by their very presence been a comfort to Him.

In that last night when He took them with Him to the garden of Gethsemane, He sought the comfort of their presence there in His agony, and especially the comfort of the three whom He often chose to be His closest friends, Peter and James and John. Into the deeper recesses of the garden He went with those whose love and friendship He so highly valued, and He said to them " My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, abide ye here, and watch with Me. " Alas, on His return He found them sleeping; thrice He found them thus, and the comfort of their watchfulness He greatly missed.

He is still the Rejected of men and we may still be faithful to the rejected One though we cannot minister comfort to Him as was possible to those who were with Him in the days of His flesh, but we can be true to Him. We can refuse the friendship of the world in its pleasures and plans. " Ye adulteresses, " says James, " know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God ? Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an enemy of God " (James 4. 4).

Can we shake the hand of the world which is yet red with the blood of the Son of God ? It has no place for Him who in the twentieth century is as truly rejected as in the first century of this era. His word is despised now as ever it was.

A world without Christ is a vain, empty thing, yet, wonderful to think, it is the world that God loved and for whose sin Christ is the propitiation. It can never know security apart from its Saviour. Regeneration is the keynote of harmony in this scene, in the regeneration of the individual—" Ye must be born again " (John 3.) and in the regeneration of human society—" Ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel " (Matthew 19. 28). Here is the true base of security—a complete change of government and policy. Those who were the world's outcasts are coming into their right. Nothing can stop the flow of divine purpose. The regenerated followers of Christ will share with Him in world government. New forms of world government which men propose are but temporary structures, as all forms of human government have ever been. Systems of government have arisen like the waves of the sea, each new form to fall upon the former and submerge it. Babylonian, Persian, Grecian and Roman followed each other in succession, each having its own value and strength. Besides these, other systems have grown and languished, but one will at length come, the last, the greatest and best of all kingdoms, that of Messiah and His saints, which will destroy all previous empires, which shall become as dust upon the threshing floor. Complete dissolution of man's forms of rule will come and for His law the isles will wait.

David's day passed, the sound of the trumpet and the din of battle had faded away, and **in** Solomon's reign Judah and Israel from Dan to Beersheba dwelt securely, every **man** under his vine and **fig** tree. Such was Solomon's day and such will be Messiah's—what **is** said of the Millennium in Isaiah 44. **22, 34**, is repeated by Micah (4. **2, 3**), for the two prophets were contemporaneous. When God speaks the same words twice they are words of great importance. After Micah wrote Isaiah's words, closing with the words "Neither shall they learn war any more," he said, "But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." Fear is gone because war is gone. No fear of being attacked because there is no army to wage war. "His" vine and fig tree will continue to remain **his** vine and fig tree. A just Judge shall render wars unnecessary for the Lord shall "judge between many peoples, and shall reprove (decide concerning, R. V. marg.) strong nations afar off."

In the Millennium there shall be private property. Men will have their own vine. Even in heaven there will be private ownership, as the Lord shows **in** that word "Lay up for **yourselves** treasures in heaven... for where thy treasure **is**, there will thy heart be also." Communism **is** but a passing phase, an unsubstantial dream of earth's dark night; it is but a negative ideal in an endeavour to eliminate the natural covetousness of the human heart. A community of goods for a community of people, even at a time when it **is** said that the disciples had all things common in Acts **2.**, never existed. It was never contemplated or there would have been no need of making collections for the poor **as** in **1** Corinthians 16. and elsewhere in the Scriptures.

God gave to Israel His people allotted portions of the land of Canaan. These were entailed in the families of the original owners and errors were corrected by redemption, or in the year of Jubilee when lands which had been sold returned to the true owners. God gave to His people that they according to **His** law and of their own free will might give to Him. This divine arrangement will be continued in millennial days, **for** then the human heart will be given an outlet to show its appreciation of the blessed King that will then reign in Jerusalem. The small beginnings in Matthew **2. 1** when the wise men came from the east with their gold, frankincense, and myrrh to present to the young child, will then reach a mighty flow.

"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents:
The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.
Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him:
All nations shall serve Him." (Psalm **72. 10, 11**).

But not only will men bring gifts to the Lord in that coming day **as** never before, but "in that day, saith the LORD of Hosts, shall ye call every **man** his neighbour under the vine and under the **fig** tree" (Zechariah **3. 10**). Though **men** shall sit under their own vine and fig tree, **as** Micah says, yet there will be no complacent selfishness, no polite conservation, which gives when it gives at all, like a bottle with a narrow neck which gives little with loud resounding "blobs." Men will then call every man his neighbour under the vine and fig tree. **Man** will be **as** neighbourly to the poor **as** to the rich. There will be no Pharisaism saying "Who is my neighbour." How sweet will be the life of men in those days! A cold, hard world will under Messiah's smile be made warm and affectionate. "Love thy neighbour **as** thyself" will be the rule of life. Men will have neighbours everywhere. The priest and Levite will not then pass by on the other side, but willing hearts will help the low and lift the fallen.

How different all this is from the mode of education in some lands to-day! Destruction and misery are in their way and the way of peace they have not known. But then all will be changed. The teaching of Christ will then be law and men will be happy both to give and to get, to minister and to be ministered unto, though even then it will be more blessed to give than to receive. **J. M.**