

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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DAVID:

" **A man after My heart, who shall do all My will.** "

This year's study centres around a unique man of God, whose life-work bore a special relationship to the achievement by Israel of the Divine purpose for them **in** holy nationhood. Hence the practical value of much that we can learn from David's life and character. For it is in connection with the holy nation of the present dispensation that the issues of our lives are being worked out, and **we** therefore do well to examine with fresh interest the abiding principles of acceptable service to God in a position of such privilege.

The remarkable achievement of David's life is seen in clearer perspective, when placed in its setting in the 2, 000 years of Old Testament history during which God's major purpose was the calling out of a nation which would be to Him **a** peculiar treasure from among all peoples. That purpose had its spring in Abraham's century of pilgrimage with God. It came to fruition as Moses led the emancipated hosts of Israel through the Red Sea towards the promised land. God had waited for over 400 years while Abraham's seed developed into virile nationhood. Now was possible the great Divine ideal expressed so clearly in Deuteronomy 26. 16-19, particularly God's longing to make them "high above **all** nations which **He** hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour." With that ideal within the grasp of every succeeding generation, it is a sorry reflection that for almost 500 years the nation of Israel failed, through their disobedience and lack of faith, to aspire to that position of supremacy among the nations! The lamentable record of the forty years in the wilderness was typical of much that followed in the days of the judges. Bright spots there were during those centuries, and noble leaders earned **a** well deserved place in the dignified line of men whom God has delighted to honour. Yet Israel was never led to a condition of unity and power for sufficient length of time to establish her undisputed ascendancy over the surrounding nations. Temporary prosperity would be undermined by the back-sliding of the next generation, and once more enemy nations would **make** fierce attacks upon the Israel of God. As Asaph describes it in Psalm 78.: —

" **He** gave His people over also unto the sword; and was wroth with **His** inheritance.

Fire devoured their young men; and their maidens had no marriage-song.

Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation. " That was the general picture until the reign of David, who assumed power **in** Israel about 550 years after the Exodus, and who was enabled of God for the first time really to consolidate Israel so that they obtained a complete ascendancy over the nations around. The days of David's mature power and the reign of Solomon proved a veritable hegemony of the people of God (see Psalm 60. in illustration). They were the zenith of her national experience, and the most glorious expression of holy nationhood achieved by God's earthly people.

The 1, 000 years of succeeding Old Testament history enhance the achievement of David still further. For they reveal the division of the kingdom after Solomon's death, and the avalanche of apostasy which' carried the northern kingdom into Assyrian captivity within 250 years, and the southern kingdom to Babylonish bondage only 150 years later. Those who returned after 70 years to rebuild the house of God and the city of Jerusalem fulfilled a valuable task within the line of the Divine purpose, but the restored remnant enjoyed a mere fraction of the Solomonic glory. When Messiah came, Israel was in servitude beneath the yoke of Rome, a mere satellite instead of being " above all nations in praise, and in name, and in honour. "

It is a solemn reflection that of the 1, 500 years from the Exodus to Christ Israel fully achieved her divinely purposed destiny **as** head of the nations for only about 70 years, i. e., the last thirty years of David's reign, and the forty years of Solomon's rule.

Let us repeat that it was through David's devotion to the LORD that this high pinnacle **was** reached. Asaph's summary of the history of Israel in **Psalm 78**. leads up to the high-water mark of the choice of this **man** after His own heart: —

" He chose David also His servant, and took him from the sheepfolds:
From following the ewes that give suck **He** brought **him**,
To feed Jacob **His** people, and Israel **His** inheritance.
So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart;
And guided them by the skilfulness of his hands. "

Two aspects of the life of David will be prominent in our study. Firstly, **we** shall examine with more than mere academic interest the formative influences in the background and training of one whose character showed such integrity of heart and skill of hand. Those **same** characteristics we shall strive to emulate for the upbuilding and blessing of the present-day holy nation under the authority of " great David's greater Son. " Secondly, we shall seek spiritual wisdom **and** understanding to discern the principles which form the foundation of God's dealing with **a** holy nation and dwelling among them. These principles shine out with delightful clarity in the experiences of David. It **is** easier to discern them when God's will for Israel was fully achieved, for we see the holy nation functioning in such a way as to demonstrate to advantage the ideal so dear to the heart of God.

Right at the outset let **us** pause to refresh our spirits with the words of Divine grace **in this** choice of David to be the instrument of such high purpose. David fittingly asked at the zenith of his power: —

" Who **am** I, **O** Lord GOD, and what **is** my house, that Thou hast brought **me** thus far ? "

What indeed was his father's house ? **We** trace back his lineage to Judah the son of Jacob, but hasten past the sordid associations of the birth of Perez, **to** wonder at the " grafting **in** " of such **a** character **as** Rahab the harlot to become **a** " partaker of the fatness of the olive tree. " Our wonder grows **as** we contrast the ugly origin of the Moabites **in a** cave near Zoar with the dealings of God

towards a daughter of that race **900** years later; for Ruth was a Moabitess, a stranger from the covenants of the promise, yet she was woven into the scarlet cord of regal lineage. So David's house was the product of a line **in** which God's grace had been eminently manifested. All that David ever accomplished had its root in the undeserved favour of God, who delights to cause His grace to abound exceedingly where sin abounded. One outstanding excellence of David's career **is** the humility of heart which never forgot the lowliness of his origin. It was a fundamental factor **in** his rise to leadership of God's people. So at the outset of our study we are met with one of those remarkable paradoxes with which the Scriptures abound, for " My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the LORD. " Out of the thousands of Israel, upon whom does Jehovah set His favour ? Upon one of the least! The exceeding greatness of the power will be of God, that He alone may be glorified.

Remarkable though his natural talents were, the man chosen to lead Israel to the crest of her power must be *trained* from boyhood **in** a divine school. Integrity of heart and skilfulness of hand found early expression **as** he defended his flock, unawed by lion or bear. Implicit faith in the living God developed through those years. Yet even after David's spectacular triumph as the slayer of Goliath, his excellencies of character must be refined and tested through fiery trials for more than fifteen exacting years before he was allowed to wield the sceptre over all Israel. Humbling himself under the mighty hand of God, he was exalted in due time !

G. Prasher, Jnr.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

His early life.

From Cowdenbeath. —The Divine record of the life of David proves both interesting and instructive. When his life-work and service for God **is** summarised, we are told that he turned not aside from anything that God commanded him all the days of his life, save only the exception which **is** faithfully recorded (1 **Kings** 15. 5). Notwithstanding all, the standard of service set **is** high and it **is** ours to seek to emulate it, that when our life **is** reviewed **in** a future day, **we** may merit the commendation, " Well done, good and faithful servant. "

It **is** evident that David sprang from Judah (Ruth 4. 17-22, Matthew 1. 2-6). It was God's choice that the sceptre should not depart from Judah (Genesis 49. 10), and **in** measure **at** least this scripture **is** fulfilled **in** the words, " and Jesse begat David the king " (Matthew 1.).

Though the **names** of **men** only **are** required to prove lineal descent, God places on record the names of three Gentile women whom **He** used to **His** glory (Matthew 1. 3, 5).

Some of David's progenitors are scarcely mentioned elsewhere **in** scripture apart from the genealogy, yet such apparently unimportant **men** were used to fulfil God's purposes regarding " the man after His own heart, " though he, David, was the least of his father's house (1 Samuel 16. 11). In all this we learn that God's ways are past tracing out.

Two cities **in** scripture it would seem merit the title of City of David; one **is** Jerusalem, the other Bethlehem (2 Samuel 5. 9; Luke 2. 4). Scripture **is** silent on the circumstances attending the birth of David, " the prince over Israel " (2 Samuel 5. 2), nevertheless, the term City of David, as applied to Bethlehem, would lead us to believe that David was born there, as Bethlehem fulfils the word of prophecy regarding the birthplace of the Lord Jesus (Micah 5. 2). Also, he was the son of a Bethlehemite.

The first mention we have of the young man David is in the matter of keeping sheep (1 Samuel 16. 11), and we do not doubt that in this calling God was preparing His man. He had keen powers of observation, quick to discern the hand of God in the wonders of creation, both terrestrially and celestially (Psalms 8.; 19.; 24.; 29.). As a shepherd, David's life would essentially be one of solitude, given to meditation, yet it was active service, for he not only tended but he defended the sheep. When he was before Saul (1 Samuel 17. 84) he recounted his adventures with the lion and the bear. Through such experiences David knew the delivering hand of God, and by this, God was moulding him.

The safety of Israel depended upon one who was both willing and able. "The LORD will deliver into mine hand" (1 Samuel 17. 46) was the language of David's heart as well as his mouth.

What a victory he wrought for Israel that day ! and what blessings ! but thanks be to God for the Victor of Calvary who came down and who went down to deliver us from so great a death.

" He chose David also His servant
And took him from the sheepfolds:
From following the ewes that give suck He brought him,
To feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance " (Psalm 78. 70, 71).

Robert Ross.

From Kirkintilloch. —Time and again we read in the Scriptures of men of God spending their early years in some obscure place, in solitude with God, before being brought out to fill an important place in God's service. Such was the experience of David, the youngest son of Jesse the Bethlehemite. He kept his father's sheep, and it is evident that he was a seeker after God in his youth. His early trust in God is borne out in his slaying of the lion and the bear, for he unselfishly acknowledges that although he delivered the lambs from the lion and the bear, it was the LORD who delivered him.

When Saul was rejected because of his disobedience to the word of the LORD, Samuel said to him, "The LORD hath *sought* Him a man after His own heart" (1 Samuel 13. 14). Then we read in Psalm 89. 20, "I have *found* David My servant, " and further in Psalm 78. 70, "He *chose* David also His servant, and *took* him from the sheepfolds. "

In 1 Kings 15. 3, we read that the heart of David was perfect with the LORD his God. This word "perfect" is the Hebrew word "shalom," which is the word for the peace-offering, and indicates "harmony between two parties." What a delight it must have been to God to share such communion with David !

One important difference between Saul and David is brought out in Acts 13. 21-22, where we read that "God gave unto them Saul, " but of David it is said that he was "raised up" to be their king. The wording here is significant, for the raising up of David includes those days of patient learning in the seclusion of Bethlehem. In this, God's principle is exemplified, that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, but he that exalteth himself shall be humbled. "

The Lord Jesus Christ humbled Himself, and was born in a stable in Bethlehem, the village where David dwelt (John 7. 42, Micah 5. 2), so that He might know the experience of being raised up through all the vicissitudes of life, and finally raised from the dead and exalted to God's right hand.

The triumph of David over Goliath is a clear type of our Lord Jesus Christ and **His** victory over him who had the power of death, that is, the Devil. The terms of the battle in the valley between David and Goliath are instructive. The question of the enmity between Israel and the Philistines was to be settled in a contest between a champion from each side, and this contest was to determine the freedom or the slavery of the entire people. This clearly typifies the great issues which were at stake in the conflict between the Lord Jesus Christ and the Devil. The destiny of the human race, whether bondage under sin, or freedom from sin, was settled in the triumph of the Saviour.

H. King, W. Sneddon.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —David occupies a unique place in the direct Messianic line. **His** obscure birth in Bethlehem, and **an** almost unknown youth, bear striking resemblance to that of his "greater Son." But while he was yet but a lad. "The LORD sought him, a man after **His** own heart" (1 Samuel 13. 14). **Ho** found such a man in the stripling.

It is significant that there are **35** (i. e., **5** by 7) generations from Adam to David. Perhaps this reveals a man with human weaknesses, yet having something of the perfection of divine character, for it is written of him that his heart was perfect with the LORD. But the generations from Adam to the Messiah are **63** (i. e., **3** by **3** by 7)!

When troubled Saul desired one to play skilfully for him upon the harp, David was the choice. The eloquent testimony of Saul's young man places the young shepherd beyond all rivals (1 Samuel 16. 18), and reveals in him an amazing beauty of character and presence, together with evident ability in business. Early burdens and responsibilities develop character.

"The everlasting power and divinity" of God are revealed in **His** works of nature, "the things that are made" and seen, and the Word shows that all God's men have been acute observers of these—David not the least. "Shepherd lessons," for example, are wondrously woven into Psalm 23., where David displays an illuminating insight into the ways of God with men, and this in relation to the seven Jehovah titles:—

1. "Jehovah **is** my Shepherd. " Jehovah-raah.
2. "I shall not want. " Jehovah-jireh (i. e., The LORD will provide).
3. " **He** leadeth **me** beside the waters of rest. " Jehovah-Shalom (i. e., The LORD our peace).
4. "**He** restoreth my soul. " Jehovah-ropheca (i. e., The LORD who healeth).
5. " **He** guided **me** in paths of righteousness for **His** Name's sake. " Jehovah-tsidkenu (i. e., The LORD our righteousness).
6. "For Thou art with me. " Jehovah-Shammah (i. e., The LORD **is** present).
7. "Thou preparest **a** table before me in the presence of mine enemies. " Jehovah-nissi (i. e., The LORD our victorious banner).

The glory of David's youth **is** surely his victory by the Name of the LORD of Hosts over Goliath (1 Samuel 17.). This incident **is** laden with food for the soul. Israel stood in jeopardy of their lives before the Philistines. Weapons of natural

choice **were** of no avail—but one small smooth stone of five! Would to **God** that in spiritual conflict we could see that " the weapons **of** our warfare are **not** of the flesh, but are mighty. " These weapons require divine skill and practice, for their skilful use. Our Lord Jesus, when engaged by the Evil One *in the wilderness* used the one stone of five—the correct one. He discomfited the Devil by the dexterous use of the stone *for the wilderness*, the book of Deuteronomy, the last of Moses' five. Perhaps further study will reveal where **and** when He used or will **use** the others !

Finally, it is a sad reflection on his brethren that they so lightly esteemed David. He should have been truly " Beloved " by them, but when " he **came** unto his own, they received him not, " although his heart **was** disposed to them only **in** love. But he was undaunted, knowing the purpose of the LORD **in** his life. Here **is** strong encouragement to the young disciple ! " Let no one despise thy youth "—but only **if** it **can** be said of you, **as** of David: " The LORD **is** with him. " "
David L. Baird.

From Birkenhead.—The importance of David's early life **in** which he learned to lean upon God cannot be over-estimated. **He** was of the tribe of Judah, and the grandson of Obed, the son of Boaz and Ruth. Boaz **is** described **as** a wealthy man, but there **is** nothing to suggest that the family of Jesse was other than an ordinary family **in** Bethlehem. From among the eight sons of Jesse, God chose the youngest—David, who **was** a man after God's own heart. Things which happened during his ordinary vocation **as** a shepherd gave him awareness of God's loving protection over his life, and fitted him for the time when God took him from the sheepfolds to be shepherd over **His** people Israel.

Early training brought out the virtues of courage, zeal, fearlessness, dependance upon God, faithfulness and humility, which were to be characteristic of him throughout his life. Inevitably such virtues brought him into prominence, but not of his own seeking. The youthful David **was** not easily thwarted **by** opposition, and his training showed him how to act wisely **in** difficult situations to overcome all obstacles.

As he fought the battle of life **in** the field, so he battled with those who would destroy the inheritance of the Lord. To him it **was** the armies of the Living God that had been defied, not merely the armies of Israel. All this **was in** great contrast to Saul. **He** early prepared to acknowledge the LORD, **as in** his first contact with Saul, keeping always a right balance between his own acquired skill and the sureness of the LORD'S deliverance.

The delight with which he speaks of the care of the LORD **as** his Shepherd **in** Psalm 23, no doubt springs from his own experiences with the sheep.

His intimate acquaintance with the glories of the heavens and the earth became the subject of his songs of praise to God, whom he recognizes as the LORD of Creation **in** such Psalms **as** 19., 24. and 29. Exploring God's laws of creation, he skilfully combines them with the moral and spiritual laws of God which were his delight.

In all his ways he thus honoured God, and **became** a worthy forerunner of his greater Son, the Lord Jesus. What he began **as** a youth, he continued to the end of his days, so that the best that could be said of **any man** **was** said **by** God of him, that, **in** his own generation, he served the counsel of God (Acts 13. 36).

L. S., N. A.

EXTRACTS.

From Atherton. —We **recall** the precious words of David's great-grandmother, Ruth, " Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God " (Ruth 1. 16), and again, the words spoken of his great-grandfather Boaz, " Do thou worthily **in** Ephrathah, and **be** famous **in** Bethlehem " (Ruth 4. 11). David's **name means** " beloved, " **which** suggestively reminds us of the Lord, the Son of David, God's well-beloved **One**.

Bethlehem was honoured in being the birthplace of one of Israel's first kings, and also of the Lord who will yet **sit** on the throne of His father David (Micah 5. 2).

David's early days were with the sheep. The lad revelled in this training ground, with its daily hardships and problems, while at the **same** time taking pleasure in the wonderful works of creation, and trusting in the God thereof. Only a divinely guided mind could observe and speak of such things **as** are given to us in Psalm 19. None other than one skilled in pastoral activities could observe God's parallel shepherd dealings as those outlined so fully and delightfully in Psalm 23.

The attitude of David's brethren was similar to that of the Lord's brethren according to the flesh. They despised and treated **Him** with absolute contempt; yet **He** loved them still, in spite of those malicious accusations and cruel taunts. " Misunderstood by all " are words characteristic **of** the beloved Master, and also of **His** lowly faithful followers. **We** must all long at times for a determination like David and like Paul, to love and serve the people of God, despite any unworthy opposition to ourselves.

E. Birchall, J. K. Southern.

From Broxburn. —David's ancestry, though nothing to boast of naturally, **is** raised to a noble standing by the grace of God. **We see** in Ruth, Rahab, and Perez, divine choice. There **is** nothing definite regarding the time when David came to know the God of Abraham **as** his Saviour, but it seems evident it was early **in** life. **He** had a very real and deep conviction of his need, and he tells us, in Psalm 116., " I love the LORD, because **He** hath heard my voice and my supplication. " The Psalm further tells us of the dread effects of the cords of death and pains of Sheol, and he says he was brought low, and the LORD saved him. From this momentous **time** in David's life he saw everything in the light of its Creator, and the day came when he could read nature **as** he could read the book of the Law.

We have from David's pen in Psalm 29. a magnificent account of a thunder-storm. Seven times over **he** brings before us the "voice of the LORD " **in** its might and majesty. The disciples would never have said, " Lord, carest Thou not **that we** perish ? " had they learned what David had learned.

We have a peaceful setting in Psalm 23., the shepherd with his sheep, leading them beside still waters, and making them to lie down in green pastures. The more David learned of God's greatness from God's wonderful works, and **His** holy and righteous law, the more he humbled himself before God, and sought to obey God's law; and the day came when God said, and millions no doubt have heard of it, " I have found a man after Mine own heart. "

God wrought through the **man**, whose heart was right with Himself, and gave Israel a great victory over their **enemies**; thus David **was** brought to the forefront **in** Israel, for God **was** with him.

George Richardson.

From Cardiff. —A man who can earn such a high commendation from God —" A man after My heart "—must surely have a secret in his life. We felt that, without doubt, the secret of David's greatness is found in fellowship with his God. David was the youngest of a large family, and it fell to his lot to care for his father's sheep. Many were the lonely hours he spent upon the mountains, but his God was with him, and he was training him for His own work. The contrast between Psalm 23., which is so restful and quiet, and Psalm 29., which would appear to be David's description of a thunderstorm, proves to us the variety of his experiences.

We judge David's brethren to have been noble and worthy **men**; Eliab means " God, my Father, " and Abinadab, " Father of willingness. " However, God passed them all by, and chose David, the man whom He was training, who was " ruddy and withal of a beautiful countenance and goodly to look upon. "

The men who stand out most prominently in Old Testament days are those who had a love for God's House, and His people. In this connection David is outstanding: "And I will dwell in the House of the LORD for ever " (Psalm 23. 6).

From Crowborough. —It is obvious that David was born in Bethlehem, " the house of bread. "

The Psalms give a wonderful insight into David's contact with the things of nature. His intimate knowledge was so great that he could call upon all creation to render praise to God (Psalms 145. to 150.). He viewed God in many aspects of His character, in the marvels of creation.

As David grew older his love and knowledge of the flock entrusted to his care would be more evident. The purpose behind his shepherd life was to fit him for the later call to shepherd the people of God, and guide them into paths well-pleasing to Him (Psalm 78. 70-72). In John 10. 11 we read of the good Shepherd, the Son of David, who was sent to lay down His life for the sheep. David cared for an earthly flock to the extent of putting his life in danger. Yet here, beyond doubt, we view the struggle which was to issue in the willing surrender of the Redeemer's own life, in order to rescue His sheep from an impending doom.

We feel sure that the main source of David's energy was the outworking of the Spirit of the LORD within him (1 Samuel 16. 13). We read that he *ran* to fulfil his father's commands and often we are reminded of his quick action, **but** in his heart was manifest the same zeal and desire for the things of God. (See Psalm 132. 4, 5). Let us seek to follow the example of David and the Lord, in our readiness to serve our Heavenly Father.

It is not surprising that David's brethren did not appreciate, but rather despised, his efforts for their good, and reproached his humble calling. We know something of his feelings when he wrote the words of Psalm 69. 8. We have the parallel of this in John 7. 3-5, for we read that even the Lord's own brethren reproved Him and would have sent **Him** away because they did not believe on Him.

D. N. Barton, B. V. French.

j We welcome this, the first contribution from our friends in Crowborough —Ed. j.

From Glasgow. —The ancestry of David indicates that he came of a line of faithful people, of whom his immediate forbears were notable examples. His shepherd calling took him to the hills around Bethlehem, where he learned the art of caring for the flock, and where he learned to love his Divine Shepherd, as Psalm 23. shows. This psalm, possibly the product of his youth, shows how deeply David valued the Lord's care. His experience of God is an incentive to all those who seek to know Him.

The secret of David's progress in divine things **is** to be found in God's own testimony to him. "I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who shall do all My will." How different he was from Saul, the people's ideal of a king! Saul had no shepherd heart, and, it would seem, was more concerned with his own popularity and wellbeing than with the affairs of his flock.

God seems to have brought out his men from time to time to display the virtues of the coming Christ, and David was one of these. **His** humble birth and quiet submission to the will and power of God spoke for themselves; and when the day of his manifestation came in the Vale of Elah, his brethren misinterpreted his action and reproved him for his supposed naughtiness. David was, however, undaunted, and continued to demonstrate the power of God in his life. **His** characteristics had an historical significance not understood by his contemporaries, and we must be ever thankful to our God that we are privileged to know the fuller meaning of David's life and work.

J. J. P.

From Hereford. —On looking into the lives of David's great-grandparents, we find Ruth (David's great-grandmother) was a Moabitess—of the tribe concerning which God said they should not enter into the assembly of the LORD (Nehemiah 13. 1, 3), whilst Boaz was the son of Rahab the harlot. A consideration of **the** lineage of David brings the realization that God can use even base material for the furtherance of **His** will when that material **is** subjected to **His** moulding, and this fact **is** borne out by the words of John the Baptist which he spake to the Pharisees and Sadducees—".... think not to say within yourselves, **We** have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God **is** able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."

Bethlehem, which knew the husbandry of Boaz, was the birthplace of David. Here David kept his father's sheep and here was the well that contained refreshing water for which he longed in later years when confronted with his enemies. While David was still a youth, he proved he was no hireling, for in the presence of king Saul he testifies that he kept his father's sheep even against the attacks of the bear and the lion. This well typifies the Good Shepherd who could say, "While I was with them, I kept them in Thy name which Thou hast given Me: and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled."

His shepherd care **is** also to be **seen in** the Psalm 23., for here we see he knew what was to be desired for the welfare of the sheep and this welfare he claims for himself at the hand of God. Furthermore, so engrossed was he in his work and **in** his contemplation of the works of God, that during his shepherd days he experienced the joy that godliness with contentment **is** great gain, for **he** ends Psalm 23. with the words, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow **me all** the days of my **life**: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

J. O. Tidmas.

From Ilford. —**We** noted David was of the kingly tribe, Judah—even so, the Lord **is** the Lion that **is** of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David.

David, as the youngest son of Jesse, and the least esteemed among his brethren, was used of God mightily. We commented that God takes the things of little worldly significance and uses them, **if** they are attuned to **His** will, as was David by his intimate acquaintance with the things of God and with God Himself. How evident **is** the need for quiet meditation and contemplative thought of God, together with direct communion with Himself through prayer! **We** learned lessons from the quietude of David's **life in** the wilderness, **as** he contemplated the majesty and the warmth of God, portrayed **in** the works of **His** hands (Psalm 29.), **and** the loving care of God for **him, as** revealed **in** Psalm 23.

We felt how grand was the testimony to David by one of Saul's servants in 1 Samuel **16**. 18—A mighty man of valour, prudent in speech, and the Lord is with him. We compared this to Luke **2**. **40**, **52**. *Roland G. Brunton,*

From Kilmarnock. —David, born about 1085 B. C. at Bethlehem, was the youngest son of Jesse, who was of the tribe of Judah, which was to be the ruling tribe according to Genesis 49. 10. His faith was in the living God and this enabled him to meet the Philistine champion later on. His readiness in carrying out his father's wishes, in spite of being slighted and misjudged by his brothers, showed the excellent spirit he possessed. In all these things we see how much he typified the Lord Jesus Him who was sent by His Father "unto His own (things), but His own (people) received Him not" (John 1. 11). And He it was who "rendered powerless" the great Adversary of God and man (Hebrews 2. 14). From 1 Samuel 18. 18 (R. V. M.) we see another trait in David's character. Saul wished him to become his son-in-law (for his own ends), but David's reply was "Who am I, . . . that I should be son-in-law to the king?" Many a young man might have felt elated by such a proposal, but David was of a humble mind; reminding us of the Lord Jesus, who was "meek and lowly in heart." It is well for all young men to remember, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Matthew **23**. 12).

David was chosen of God to be leader of His people Israel (see 2 Samuel 7. 8), and no doubt his training as a shepherd and his subsequent experience fitted him for that exalted position.

The Apostle **Paul** says that shepherd or oversight work is a "good (or noble) work," **but** every one cannot fill that position. There are qualifications necessary (see 1 Timothy **3**. and Titus 1. **7**, etc.), but where these are present and the work carried out faithfully, there will be the "unfading crown of glory" as a reward (see 1 Peter **5**. 4). *A. G. S.*

From London. —In Ruth 4. 17-22 we get the royal line. This is taken back to Perez. Why? Referring back to Genesis **38**. 29 we find Perez had made a breach for himself and was therefore so-called. God, too, by bringing Ruth into the royal line, had made a breach. She was a Moabitess, but became the wife of an Israelite. So David was the son of both Israel and Gentile. Would Ruth take the nationality of Boaz, as she was barred by Deuteronomy **23**. 3 from coming into the assembly of the Lord? [1]. It was thought David's earlier life was characterised by his attitude to God's House, which he loved so dearly. He was not long established before he took steps to restore the Ark of God.

David's first public appearance, as God's man, was in answer to the challenge of an Adversary. Already God's anointed king, he must wait God's appointed time. Judging David to be about seventeen when he faced Goliath, and thirty when he succeeded Saul, means that he was born when Saul had been reigning ten years (Acts 13. 21), and for thirteen years had to wait.

Jesse sent him to his brethren, and he went as Jesse had commanded him. It was his mission to see how his brethren fared. Even so did Moses, and even so did the Lord Himself, who gave Himself for us, and has now gone back to heaven awaiting the time to come again.

His elder brother Eliab thought he had come out of boyish curiosity and was completely out of touch with his father's heart. David's answer again shows his character. "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" He had heard the taunting of the adversary and was astonished there was no one to take it up.

David the youth prevailed with sling and stone, for he had no sword. He used Goliath's sword to cut off the head of his enemy. **One** day the Lord **Jesus** will take the sword to slay **the** devil. Some thought this unscriptural. What then **is** the significance of cutting off his head. Revelation **20**. speaks of him being taken and cast into the lake of fire, which **is** later spoken of **as** the second death [2]. *H. J. Owles.*

From Hamilton, Canada. —As we think of the experiences of Naomi and Ruth in the land of Moab, and Ruth's decision to return to Bethlehem—Judah, resulting eventually in the birth of David, "The man after God's own heart," truly we can say, like Paul in Romans 11. 33, "Plow unsearchable are **His** judgements, and **His** ways past tracing out!"

Here, near Bethlehem, David had experiences with the God of Creation, as **is** evidenced in Psalm **29**., where we judge David **is** describing an experience in a thunderstorm. He seems impressed with the power and majesty of God; power which we, as sons of the mighty, should recognize and ascribe unto **Him** the glory due unto **His** name.

In Psalm 23., this gem of scripture, we have a display of David's knowledge of shepherd life, a knowledge which he uses to express his inmost thoughts concerning his Lord. **He** begins with the expression, "I shall not want." **He** knew that the shepherd's duty was to provide for the sheep; to go before, and find good pasture and pure water. And has not our Shepherd, and David's, fulfilled **His** duty by providing for us "All things that pertain unto life and godliness?" David's experience told him that as soon **as** suitable pasture was found, the sheep would be contented. In the words "Lie down" there seem to be a sense of rest and satisfaction.

"He restoreth my soul" reminds us of the fact that a sheep could stray to the property of another, and would have to be bought back or restored or redeemed. This was also David's experience and ours, for "All we like sheep have gone astray . . . but the LORD hath laid upon **Him** (thus restoring us) the iniquity of us all."

Many of the paths for the sheep led through dangerous territory. Sometimes through valleys which in eastern lands were named according to their characteristics—"The valley of robbers," etc. Such was David's confidence in **His** Lord and Shepherd, that even though he went through the worst of these valleys—"The valley of the shadow of death," he would fear no evil. The rod and staff would be his comfort; the weapons for defence and guidance.

"Preparing a table" * continues the theme of shepherd care, we think, rather than that of a banquet house; for the shepherd prepares this table or pasture by stopping up the adders' holes, and making sure no dangerous animals are around to prevent the sheep from feeding. Then at the end of the day of shepherd care, the weary sheep are anointed with olive oil, and given a brimming cupful of water to drink.

No wonder, as David thinks of all the many-sided care of the shepherd, **so** necessary for the well-being of the sheep, and how he had experienced this **same** care in a spiritual sense, he can make the assertion, "surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life," and may we all echo his worthy ambition, "I will dwell in the House of the LORD for ever."

N. McKay.

From Brantford. —In the story of Joseph a break **is** made in chapter **37**. to permit the inclusion of the story of Judah and Tamar, which, as we view it now, was **another** link in the chain of royal ancestry which culminates in Matthew 1. God's ways are not our ways.

Saul was head and shoulders above the rest, but when David put on **Saul's** armour, he did not say **it was** far too big for him, but rather that he had not proved it. As to David's strength, it was suggested (apart from the part the Lord played) **that** to rend **a lion and a bear** it took no **mean** strength [3]. Also to **sling** the stone that sank into Goliath's forehead took great power. Most **felt** David **at this time was** around twenty-one, a year when most men, **as far as** physical fitness **is** concerned, are at their peak.

But the lovely character he portrays **in** divine things leaves a far greater mark. He didn't idle away his time **in** the Bethlehem fields, but rather set his heart to learn more of the God of Israel **as** portrayed **in** nature. It is enough for us that God saw him **as** the **man** of **His** choice. What a wonderful testimony !

Alex Sproul, Brantford, Canada.

COMMENTS.

[1], (London). —Despite the fact that it was **a** wrong thing for Naomi's son, Mahlon, to marry **a** Moabitess, she nevertheless by that marriage, and **seeing** she had cast her lot amongst the people of God, **came** under the Levitical **law**, that **a man's** brother **was** responsible to take his deceased brother's wife, should his brother die without issue, and raise up the **name** of the dead upon his inheritance (see Deuteronomy 25. 5-10; Ruth 4. 5, 10). Boaz bought the field, as **a** redeemer (see Leviticus 25. 25), and also purchased Ruth the wife of Mahlon to be his **wife**. Consequently the son of Boaz (Obed) became the heir to Mahlon's estate, so that the line of Elimelech and Mahlon **was** joined to that of Boaz **in** Obed. Obed **was** not reckoned **a** Moabite (though his mother was **a** Moabitess), and consequently he was not precluded from the assembly of Jehovah. Had the law of Deuteronomy 23. 3 operated, and Obed been reckoned **a** Moabite, so also would David the **king** have been. Ruth herself sought grace. **As** **a** Moabitess, **in** herself, she had no claim, but she found grace **in** the eyes of **a** redeemer (Ruth 2. 2, 10, 13), and through the grace of her redeemer she knew both redemption and rest (Ruth 3. 1, 2). So also have we known redemption and redemption's rest. —*J. M.*

[2] (London). —When Satan attacked God's creation his attack was made against Adam the head of all. When the head was destroyed, all was brought to chaos. So the prophetic word concerning the Redeemer was, that He was to bruise the serpent's head. David's attack was made against Goliath's head. He did not **aim** low to wound, he aimed to kill, and he finished the job with Goliath's own sword. —*J. M.*

[3] (Brantford). —Does it say that David rent the lion and the bear ? I think not. —*J. M.*

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Question from Crowborough, **Cardiff, and** Brantford. —In the light of 1 Samuel 17. 12-14, and 1 Chronicles 2. 13-15, **can** it be explained why David **is** referred to **as** the eighth son **in** the former and the seventh son in the latter scripture ?

Answer. —It **is** clear from 1 Samuel 16. 10 and 17. 12-14, that Jesse had eight sons and that David was the youngest. **As far as** I know the Spirit of God has not told **us** what happened **in** Jesse's family that one of his sons **is** not mentioned **in** the genealogical record of the family **in** 1 Chronicles 2. 15, and that David steps up one place **and is called** the seventh. Sometimes God explains family tragedies **and** sometimes **He** does not, **if** family tragedy **lies** behind the omission of the **name** of **a** son. **As far as** I **am** aware, this **is** one of the secret things that belong to the LORD, but someone else may have more light than I have on the point. —*J. M.*

NOTICE.

As some are interested in the Minor Prophets we take this opportunity of saying that that subject will be resumed D. V. **in** due course.

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 LORD'S ANOINTED. "

This month's study of the three anointings experienced by David will help us to see more clearly the broad outline of the first forty years or so of his life; the details of those years will be filled in later. Let us set out clearly the chronological sequence of the three anointings:

- (1) He was anointed by Samuel when about 17 year's of age.
- (2) He was anointed by the men of Judah when: 30 years of age.
- (3) He was anointed by the elders of Israel when 37½ years of age.

A striking parallel with Joseph is suggested, for when 17 years old Joseph was sold into Egypt, and he was raised to power at the age of 30, to witness the humbling of his guilty brethren just over seven years later. Of him we read,

" Until the time that His word came to pass;
The word of the Lord tried him " (Psalm 105. 19).

So it was with David ! Samuel's anointing was by the word of the LORD: upon that divinely given pledge David must learn to trust. Through keenest adversities that word of the LORD tried him. For the most part David's faith burned brightly through the intense trials in his young manhood. Psalm 57. is typical of his normal confidence in ultimate victory; yet David had his moments of spiritual depression ! (e. g., 1 Samuel 27. 1).

The similarity of God's dealings with Joseph and David is illuminating. Both men knew the cold shoulder of their brethren; both were cruelly wronged despite exemplary faithfulness; both had to endure more than a decade of what seemed to be frustration and delays. All this reinforces the principle that men chosen by God to bear responsibility in connection with His people may expect to be taught through trying experiences to rely upon the word of the Lord, however keenly tried by it. The Lord knows too well the tendencies of the natural heart for Him to thrust responsibility on an unproved novice, " lest being puffed up lie fall into the condemnation of the devil. "

Here are both encouragement and challenge for fellow-students in a similarly preparatory stage of their experience; strong encouragement to persevere through disappointing difficulties; inspiring challenge to realise that certain young men have so responded in this school of experience under God's hand, that He has been able to entrust them with high responsibility of leadership at the relatively early age of 30. It was true then as now that "tribulation worketh patience; and patience, probation; and probation, hope." Certain qualities of spiritual character may be inwrought by no other means than tribulation, much as processes which subject **the** metal to fierce heat must be used to produce the finest tempered steel.

The king whom God would use to quell Israel's adversaries was forced by circumstances to excel in the art of war, especially in tactics by which a smaller force could outdo a more numerous enemy. David learned the inexorable truth that there **is** no easy way to high achievement; it comes only by hard experience, and perseverance in spite of apparent failure.

Looking back from our vantage point as students of a completed revelation from God, we are even more impressed with another outcome of those years of tribulation. For was it not primarily as a result of his own sufferings that David was a fit channel through whom the Spirit of Christ could testify beforehand the sufferings of the Christ? Fully allowing for the fact of divine inspiration, David's experiences led him to feel in measure those very emotions which the Lord Jesus knew in greater intensity. **We** may take fresh courage to realise the rich fruitfulness of these years of David's life. To him at the time they were years of frustration, even to despair; in retrospect God has assessed them as among the brightest of his spiritual experience. Perhaps the Judgment Seat of Christ will reveal, in our trials in youth, a value to God which we barely realised.

For thirteen years David must have derived great spiritual strength from that first anointing **in** the freshness of his youth. How significant the words, "The LORD'S anointed"! One psalmist wrote of the young shepherd,

"With My holy oil have I anointed him."

The unique fragrance from that holy anointing oil would fill the house of Jesse; the abiding gratitude in David's heart of thankfulness to God for so graciously choosing him would sweeten many a sorrowful day on the rugged road to the throne. **His** own care in regard to Saul (as expressed in 1 Samuel 24. 6 and 26. 9) **is** a measure of the weight he attached to the divine favour of being chosen for kingship. Hence the inspiring and sanctifying effect of that first anointing. Not only did it strengthen him to **realise** the great divine purpose through his **life**, but it caused him to cleanse his way in the light of his high calling. Many years later, Nathan's pointed indictment in the matter of Bath-sheba opened with the words, "I anointed thee..." **His** actions had grossly denied all that was involved in that holy anointing for kingship!

While in one sense it **is** helpful to remember that David was a man of like passions with us, it **is** a refreshing contrast to turn our thoughts to Another, born in Bethlehem of David's line, born a King, yet uniquely anointed **by** God at the outset of **His** public ministry. Because **He** unswervingly loved righteousness and hated iniquity, God hath anointed **Him** in resurrection with the oil of gladness above **His** fellows. All in heaven recognise **Him** as the Anointed One, yet the majority on earth disown that claim. David's years of rejection and suffering, from the anointing by Samuel until **his** assumption of power over Israel **and** the surrounding nations, faintly pre-figured the sequence of **suffering** **and** glory designed **in** the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God for our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

G. P., Jr.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

His Anointings.

From Barrhead and Paisley. —Samuel, the judge and the prophet in Israel, **is** met at Bethlehem by the elders of the city. They ask **if** he comes in peace, but his business **is** with David, the son of Jesse. The youth **is** called from the flock, and, when he appears before Samuel, **is** revealed as the chosen of the LORD. " This is he, " Samuel is told, " arise, anoint him. " And there, beside the smoking altar, and in the presence of his brethren, the responsibilities of a sceptre are given to David, as he **is** anointed king.

The honour and power associated with such a position are not immediately his, and a period of isolation and privation mould him **as** a leader, and he proves himself worthy of his calling. After the death of Saul, however, he is directed to Hebron where he receives his first acknowledgment by the people as Saul's successor, when the men of Judah again anoint him, and in so doing accept God's choice of **a** king for them. Not long after he receives the final confirmation, when he makes **a** covenant with the elders of Israel, and **is** anointed as king of all Israel, officially and finally taking over his divinely bestowed position.

The oil used **in** these ceremonies was the holy anointing oil of the sanctuary (Psalm **89**. 20), which, compounded strictly in accordance with God's instructions, was not to be imitated or used for any personal purpose. Its fragrance was for God alone, and it sanctified whatever it touched. **He** realised fully the significance of the anointing. It **is** also significant that it should be the oil of the sanctuary which was used on such an occasion, and this link between the throne and the sanctuary causes us to remember Melchizedek who was priest and king, and to anticipate the time when the Lord will unite for ever those two offices.

The writer of Psalm 133. compares brethren, dwelling together in unity, with the oil with which Aaron was anointed. If we are united and dwelling in accordance with God's instructions, each playing his own part and the whole functioning properly, we shall give God great pleasure.

In David we have **a** type of the Lord, and perhaps the anointings of David also have their corresponding incidents in the life of the Lord.

In comparing Psalm **2**. and Acts 4. 26, we see that the Lord was anointed for his earthly sojourn for service, but we know that this anointing received no acknowledgment from the people. As king **He** was rejected and died in rejection, but **as** in the case of David whose second and third anointings followed his period of rejection, so also **it is** suggested that the second and third anointings of the Lord (figuratively speaking) will take place when He returns to earth [1].

As was the case when Saul died, the people were looking for a leader and a king and gladly acknowledged David as such, so in a future day when the nation of Israel **is** in **a** perilous position, the Lord will return to the Mount of Olives and deliver **His** distressed people.

Gladly will they acknowledge Him as the long-promised *Messiah* (Anointed One), but only those immediately affected by **His** return will do so. The others will recognise **Him** when they **see Him** seated on the throne of **His** father David, ruling in peace, and will acknowledge **Him**, not only **as** King of all Israel, but as King of kings and Lord of lords. We suggest that such events may be the parallel of the anointings of David.

J. McK. Gault.

From Cardiff. —In Acts **10. 38** Luke **recalls** the baptism of the Lord **Jesus** and comments on the ensuing **life** of service, accompanied with divine power. When the Lord visited Nazareth **He** entered the synagogue and, taking the roll of Isaiah, read the prophecy concerning His anointing and future work. **Paul** also speaks of our anointing, for "He . . . that anointed **us** is God," for "in one Spirit were we **all** baptized into one **Body**, . . . and were **all made** to drink of one Spirit." So too the apostle John refers to our receiving of the Spirit, and says, "The anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you."

During the lifetime of Saul David exercised prudence, **and** remained in the background. Upon Saul's death he goes up to Hebron, and meets the **men** of Judah, who anoint him king. The Lord in Matthew 16. speaks of **a** future kingdom, presumably set forth in His transfiguration. The disciples who **saw** the Lord transfigured would have the fact confirmed, that He was none other than the Son of God, King of Israel. This had been **a** divine revelation, for flesh and blood had not taught them this. Following this revelation, it was inevitable that the kingdom should be taken from those who rejected the King, and "given to **a** nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." In Luke 12. **32** the Lord Jesus says, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

David's anointing by Israel has **a** distinctly national aspect, so that **as a** consequence **a** New Testament parallel will most likely lie in **a larger** sphere than that of the few disciples, who were the embryo of **a** "holy nation, **a** people for God's own possession." Hebrews 1. **9** gives **us an** intriguing instance of the word "anointed," and cannot be overlooked. Owing to the completion of God's work the Lord Jesus is exalted, and is seated at God's right hand, and anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. The fellows of Christ are those who have been called by God "into the fellowship of **His** Son, **Jesus** Christ, our Lord."

In the millennial reign **all** flesh shall be in subjection to Him, and *'the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, **as** the waters cover the sea."

J. C. Tucker.

From Kilmarnock. —**1 Samuel** 16. opens with the LORD'S **message** to **Samuel**, "Fill thine horn with oil and go . . . to **Jesse** the Bethlehemite: for I have provided **me a** king among his sons." **We** note, Samuel **was** not instructed whom he was to anoint, he **must** be guided by the Spirit, and although the elder sons may have good outward appearances, he had to learn, "the LORD looketh on the heart." No doubt the father would **be** astonished **as** one after the other of his sons was rejected, but the youngest **must be** brought, **and** David was anointed "in the midst of his brethren" (verse 13). Thus the LORD pointed out the one whom **He** had chosen and caused **His** Spirit to come upon him. —Although David was thus honoured of God, it did not **cause** him **to be** proud, for he returned to the keeping of his father's sheep (see verse 19).

Our mind **was** directed to the **scene** we get in Luke 3. 21-22 when the Lord **Jesus** was baptized and the Holy Spirit **descended** and the voice from heaven came saying, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I **am** well pleased." God thus pointed out to the people the One whom **He** had anointed (see Luke 4. 18, 19), but **He** was rejected by the nation **as a** whole.

According to dates in Newberry's margin some eight years have elapsed **since** David was anointed by **Samuel**, when Saul **was** removed **by** death. Then he enquires of the LORD (2 Samuel 2.), and the LORD'S **answer** was "Go up . . . unto Hebron." The LORD **was** thus leading him on **and He** moved the hearts of the

men of Judah who came and anointed David " king over the house of Judah. " Accompanying David **are** the men who had been with him, **men** who had been faithful to him in his wanderings and trials. It was only one tribe, **a small** company compared with the other tribes that followed Saul's house. While it may not be typical, we think the action of the tribe of Judah illustrates those of God's children to-day who have heard God's call out of the systems of **men** and acknowledge **Jesus** not only **as** Saviour but **as Lord**.

We learn from chapter 2. 10 that Ishbosheth's reign over Israel lasted two years. The elders of Israel came to Hebron after David had reigned seven and a half years there, and king David made **a** covenant with them and " they anointed **him** king over Israel " (chapter 5. 3). Thus God's purpose was fulfilled and he reigned over all Israel and Judah.

May this not illustrate the time of the prophecies of Zechariah, when " the Lord shall return unto Zion and dewll in the midst of Jerusalem " (Zechariah 8.) ? Then shall **He** reign whose right it is (Ezekiel 21. 27). A. G. S.

EXTRACTS.

From London, S. E. —We have three anointings of David mentioned. The first **is** his anointing of the LORD by Samuel the prophet. God's testimony is clear, " I have found David the son of Jesse, a **man** after My heart, who shall do **all** My will " (Acts 13. 22). Samuel had been informed that the LORD had sought **Him** a man after His own heart and had appointed him to be prince over **His** people (1 Samuel 13. 14). Also in **Psalm 89. 19, 20**, we read, " I have laid help upon one that **is** mighty: I have found David My servant, with My holy oil have I anointed him. " Although David at this time **was** a youth, yet he was **a man** after **His** own heart, because of his faith in Him. God gave him " integrity of heart " and " skilfulness of hands " qualifying him for feeding and guiding Israel (Psalm 78. 72).

We find **in** the **New** Testament the Messiah **is** specially distinguished **as** the Son of David.

After the fatal battle on Mount Gilboa when Saul and Jonathan were slain, David **is** solemnly anointed **a** second time at Hebron. David first consulted the LORD before going to Hebron, saying, " Shall I go up ? " and " Whither shall I go up ? " God had previously sent Samuel to anoint David, and now **He** constrains the men of Judah to follow suit. Gradually the period of rejection **is** being brought to **a** close, and the exaltation follows. **He** **is** now thirty years of age (2 Samuel 5. 4), and he reigned seven years **and** six months over Judah.

After the murders of Ishbosheth and Abner, **all** Israel accepts David **as** their king and anoints him. David now establishes **his** government in Jerusalem.

The third anointing **is** based on (a) a common bond of relationship, " thy bone and thy flesh, " (b) David's bravery and skilfulness, " it was thou that leddest, " etc. (verse 2), (c) the word of the LORD, *' Thou shalt feed, and be prince " (verse 2), and (d) a covenant before the LORD (verse 3). These qualifications have their present day counterparts in our " David, " for we read that the government shall be upon **His** shoulders and of **His** kingdom there shall be no end.

Wm. F. Shulver.

From **Broxburn**. —David says in Psalm 23. " Thou anointest my head with oil. " It is interesting to look at the historical side first, before we look at the spiritual. David was anointed by the LORD before he went to fight Goliath. He knew he was divinely chosen.

What did this anointing signify ? This ! that the anointed of the LORD would sit upon the throne of Israel. Time and circumstances eventually brought David into view, and although not recognised at first by others, he was the man who had been chosen by God, to be the leader and shepherd of Israel. " The Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward, " and in the Spirit's power resting upon him he was able to perform many great exploits (1 Samuel 17. 34-37). We read with interest Luke 4. 16-20, where the Spirit of the LORD came upon David's great Son, the Christ, the Anointed of the LORD. Later we note Peter's words: " God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power " (Acts 10. 38).

Like David, the Lord was unknown in the locality where He was brought up (see Luke 4. 22), but the day is coming when His claim to kingship will be universally acknowledged.

The holy oil, instructions for the compounding of which are given in Exodus 30. 22-33, was to be used in anointing the king (1 Kings 1. 39), and thus with that holy oil was David, God's servant, anointed (Psalm 89. 20). David's anointing was confirmed by the men of Judah and Israel (1 Samuel 22. 2). All who were in distress, and in debt, and were discontented, gathered themselves unto David, but many failed to recognise that he was the LORD'S anointed. Similarly the Lord Jesus Christ was not recognised as God's Anointed, only a few had their eyes open to recognise who He was. But the word remains that " of the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;... therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows " (Hebrews 1. 8, 9). The epistle to the Hebrews has to do with priestly service and this quotation is taken from Psalm 45. 6-7. The Lord is yet going to sit as Priest upon His throne (Zechariah 6. 13). The offices of King and Priest are combined in Christ. This anointing is in connection with the Priest, and could never have taken place while the Lord was upon earth, only after He went back to the Father.

John McGregor.

From Hereford. —Kings and priests were anointed at their inauguration, as also sacred vessels of the Tabernacle and the Temple (1 Kings 19. 15-16 and Exodus 29. 29). It is symbolical of a sanctification or a setting apart to and for the service of God. Thus anointed persons and vessels were removed from ordinary and common use and separated to an appropriate dignity and rendered holy or sacred for use in divine service.

We noticed that at the time Samuel anointed David they seemed to be sacrificing anywhere in the land, though, in this case, commandment was given by the LORD. HOW do we view this in connection with Deuteronomy 12. ? [2].

But though Samuel anointed David to be king over Israel, yet many refused to acknowledge him. In the anointing of David we surely have a very precious type of the anointing of the Lord, Messiah, in Mark 1. 9-11, when he was anointed with the Holy Spirit as He came up from the waters of Jordan. Here, too, God's anointed king, His chosen one, was unrecognised by Israel, although anointed in the midst of his brethren.

The Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from the day of his anointing. How like the Lord Jesus when He read from the Scriptures, " The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, *because* He anointed Me to preach good tidings " (Luke 4. 18)!

A **small remnant** only acknowledged that He was the **King of** the Jews, as foretold in Daniel 9. 24 and Psalm 2. 2. Some individuals did (John 1. 49; 11. 27; 12. 13). David is a very clear type of the Lord in his patient waiting until there was heart acknowledgment of his kingship.

Later the men of Judah acknowledged and anointed him king over their tribe. We observe that Judah means praise. Have we in this anointing a type of the anointing of our Lord Jesus Christ as King-Priest over and for his people (Hebrews 2. 8-13), or of His anointing at His resurrection (Hebrews 1. 9), and of His acknowledgment by His disciples (Luke 24. 52; Matthew 28. 16, 17) ?

A combined deputation of the elders of all Israel then acknowledged him and anointed him. David possessed the first and indispensable qualification for the throne, that of being an Israelite (Deuteronomy 17. 15). We think that we have here a clear type of the Lord when He is owned as King of kings and Lord of lords in a coming day, when the whole universe will own Him as Lord (Revelation 11. 15-17, 12. 10). Like David, His enemies will have been dealt with and He shall reign supreme.

H. Jefferson,

From Glasgow. —The three anointings of David mark three distinct stages in his progress from obscurity to the throne. In his obscurity he was displaying those qualities which marked him out as a man after God's own heart, and God chose a man from among the common people. 1 Corinthians 1. 28 teaches us that God chooses " the things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are. "

The instruction to Samuel to go and sacrifice at Bethlehem is interesting, both as to its use as a stratagem and as to its being a sign of the times. There was no House of God in these days and the sacrifices could apparently be offered in different places and by people of varying callings [3]. The elders of Bethlehem were invited and presumably witnessed the anointing of David and the passing over of his brethren, who, by all accounts, were men who might well have filled the place as Israel's king. But God " looketh on the heart, " and had been so looking on the hearts of the men of Israel for some time previously. The Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward, an expression which some have interpreted as meaning that the Spirit came upon David at intervals rather than continuously [4].

The anointing by Samuel does not appear to have reached Saul, as his jealousy of David is dated from the singing of the women after the battle in the Vale of Elah. Nevertheless, God was working out His purpose, and possibly preparing David by hard experiences, for his duties as king. Time matters nothing to God, and He waits His opportunity to bring His intentions to maturity. The men of Judah, however, had observed the LORD'S hand at work and transferred their allegiance from the Louse of Saul to David. It is, however, strange that there is no connecting reference in the anointing by the men of Judah to the previous anointing by Samuel, such as we find in 1 Chronicles 11. 3. They are to be commended for their discernment in the dark days in which they lived, when the will of the people seems to have supplanted the will of the LORD.

The third and last anointing of David, this time by the elders of Israel, took place two years [see paper by G. P., Jnr. —seven years] after the second anointing, and in circumstances which suggest that it was delayed only by the stubbornness of Abner and his fellow-conspirators. 2 Samuel 3. 17 shows us that the elders of Israel had previously sought for David to be king, but were over-ruled by Abner.

On his suggestion, they were only too willing to anoint David **king** over all Israel and Judah. How they **came** to know of David's anointing of the LORD **is** not stated, but **we can** assume that they had heard of this ceremony and had **been** confirmed **in** its authenticity by the wise behaviour of David **as** compared with the ill-temper and jealousy of Saul.

In these developments **in** David's **career we can see** some principles of **divine** working. The Lord **Jesus** taught that the kingdom of **heaven is** like unto a grain of mustard seed which **a man** took and hid **in** his field, which tiny seed grew and became **a** tree wherein the birds of heaven found shelter. In David **we see a man** of small beginning, who under the guidance of God became Israel's great **king** and who also, **in** many ways, typified the Great **King** who **was** to follow **in** his line, Whose coming to the earth would bring salvation to all **men. J. J. P.**

From Kirkintilloch. —The **significance** of the **act** of anointing **is** important, and **it is** borne out **in** Exodus **30. 30**, where **we** read that those who were anointed were thereby sanctified.

We read in the Scriptures of objects **being** anointed, of Jacob's Pillar (Genesis **28. 18; 31. 13**), of the vessels of the Tabernacle (Exodus **30. 26-29**), of persons, of priests: Aaron and his sons (Exodus **30. 30**), of kings: Saul (1 Samuel **10. 1**), David (1 Samuel **16. 13**), Solomon (1 **Kings** **1. 39**), and on one occasion **a** prophet: Elisha (1 Kings **19. 16**). There are various words used **in** the Scriptures for "anoint," but the word which **is** used **in** connection with the priests and kings **is** the Hebrew word "Messiah," which **is** the **same as** the Greek word "Christ." The pouring out of the oil typifies the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Luke **4. 14-21; Isaiah 61. 1; Acts 10. 38**).

David's anointing by Samuel **is** the one referred to **in** Psalm **89. 20**, "I have found David My servant; With **My** holy oil have I anointed him." God did not anoint David twice, therefore the anointings at **the** hands of **the men** of Judah **and** Israel were only acknowledgments of God's anointing.

In connection with **the** anointing of David by the **men** of Judah, **we** thought of the great future sorrow and repentance of Judah, when they turn **again and** look upon Christ (Zechariah **12. 7-14**). It would appear from this Scripture that Messiah will first be received by the tribe of Judah, "The Lord also shall **save** the tents of Judah first" (verse 7). *John Alston, Wm. Whitelaw.*

From Crowborough. —David's first anointing **by** Samuel, **in** the presence of his brethren, **was** thought to **be a** foreshadowing of the anointing of the Lord Jesus, **as** shewn **in** Psalm **45. 6-7** and quoted **in** **Hebrews** **1. 8-9**. This thought **was** strengthened by the **fact** that although David was anointed to be king, he was not given his rightful place for some considerable time, even **as** now, "**Our** Lord **is** now rejected, and by the world disowned."

When at length the **time came** for him to take the God-given place, he was anointed by the **men** of Judah only, **and** over them he reigned for seven and a half years. It was thought that this would speak of the **fact** that even now the Lord Jesus **is** owned by the loyal **few**, "By the many still neglected, and by the **few** enthroned."

David's third anointing by all the tribes of Israel seemed to foretell plainly the **time** when the Lord Jesus shall indeed have **His** rightful place, and shall reign over the earth from sea to sea, when " **His** kingdom stretch from shore to shore, till moons shall wax and wane no more. " *J. Taylor, J. French.*

From Birkenhead. —We learn from Exodus 40. that the first anointing of men and things was by divine commandment. Moses took the holy anointing oil to anoint the Tabernacle and **its** vessels, then poured it on the head of Aaron, the high priest, and his sons, the priests, to sanctify them that they might minister in the priest's office. The purpose of anointing them was to declare a divine choice for some particular high and holy service, whether it be for priesthood, kingship, or for prophets. Apparently, the full significance of the first anointing of David was a secret between Samuel and the LORD. TO David it **was** the coming to him of a mighty spiritual power, but only by degrees did his brethren and others come to realise, through the mighty acts and character of David, that he was the one whom God had chosen to fill the throne eventually. At what point it was made evident to David's brethren it would be difficult to decide. Perhaps it was when his brethren and all his father's house went down to him to the cave of Adullam.

The considerable lapse of time between the anointing of David by Samuel and his acceptance by all Israel has its parallel in the Lord's own life, whether we consider the Lord's anointing from eternity past when He was appointed Heir of all things (Hebrews 1. 2), or from **His** birth, **as** in Luke 1. 32, when **He** was appointed to the throne of **His** father David, or from the anointing with the Holy Spirit, at **His** baptism (Luke 3. 22, and 4. 18, Acts 10. 38), or the anointing with the oil of gladness above his fellows (Hebrews 1. 9). **His** claims were rejected by the Israel nation at the cross, and **He is** and will remain **as** the despised and rejected One, until that future time when they shall say of **Him** at **His** second coming, " Blessed **is He** that cometh in the name of the LORD. "

Anointing in this dispensation **seems** to be the portion of all born-again ones, **as** in 1 John 2. 20, but the anointing for a particular office or service would appear to be the choosing of the Holy Spirit, and the recognition of the **same** by the laying-on of hands. *D. H., N. A.*

From Cowdenbeath. —Samuel, **as** directed by the LORD, instructed the elders of Bethlehem to sanctify themselves, then he sanctified **Jesse** and **his** sons, thus separating this household for the divine purpose of choosing therefrom God's anointed king (read 1 Thessalonians 4. 3, Hebrews 10. 10). It would appear that in this David was the least esteemed, for **he** was left in the fields, even though there was a sacrifice and feast at his father's house.

In David's careful and tender solace for **his** flock, we have a type of the Good Shepherd, who gathers the lambs in **His** arms, and carries them in **His** bosom (Isaiah 40. 11), who laid down **His** life for the sheep. It **is** strange that Samuel, who had witnessed the failure and rejection of Saul, whose countenance and stature recommended him, should, on the occasion of this anointing, judge by that **same** rule. Men judge by the sight of the eyes, but the LORD looks on the heart. Had it been left to Samuel or Jesse to make the choice, one of the elder sons would most certainly have been chosen, but God will magnify **His** sovereignty.

Divine power accompanied the anointing with oil to fit him for the task before him, and to make him a type of the Messiah, the anointed One, who received not the Spirit by measure (John 3. 34).

But although David was rejected for a number of years by the nation, there were many in Israel who separated themselves unto him, till his forces were considerable (1 Chronicles 12. 22); so David, even in his rejection, had a powerful following. Thus when David was commanded to go to Hebron and be there anointed king of Judah, he took his following with him, those who had suffered with him. Thus if we endure with the Lord Jesus we shall also reign with Him (2 Timothy 2. 12). David was acknowledged king by Judah first (the Lord shall save the tents of Judah first (Zechariah 12. 7)). The rest of Israel refused the one the Lord had selected for them. David was herein a type of Christ, whom Israel would not submit to, though anointed of the Father, to be a Prince and a Saviour to them. But after seven years of successful administration on the throne of Judah, the other tribes are encouraged by David's good work to acknowledge his right to the throne. So David, in measure, typifies that One, even Him who shall yet be King of kings in Jerusalem. *D, McLelland.*

From Atherton. —The divine testimony concerning Aaron might well be applied to David, "No man taketh the honour to himself, but when he is called of God" (Hebrews 5. 4). The people's choice in Saul was conspicuous for failure, God's choice in David was crowned with blessing for men of all time. God saw wonderful traits of character in David, and human testimony agrees in that a young man described him to Saul as "a mighty man of valour, and a man of war, and prudent in speech, and a comely person, and the LORD is with him."

David, the youngest of Jesse's sons, was anointed "in the midst of his brethren.*" Some took the view that the anointing of Psalm 23. 5 referred to David's daily experience.

The two subsequent anointings recorded in 2 Samuel 2. and 5. seem to have the significance that they were necessary from the manward side. Thus God's purpose in David was only attained after a long period of trial and testing for him. In the mercy of God this brought out in David those characteristics which eminently fitted him for the sphere he had to fill.

We sought to trace out the typical teaching of the three anointings. It was considered that the anointing by Samuel was a foreshadowing of the Lord's anointing at His baptism by the Holy Spirit, but we had difficulty in connection with the other two anointings, in their application, typically, to the Lord. Some thought that Daniel 9. 24, "to anoint the most holy," had reference to the Lord, but others thought it referred to the temple (see R. V. M.).

It is very clear that there will be no division in the Israel nation when the Lord sits as King. Please read Ezekiel 37. 22.

It was suggested that, in the Lord's accession to the throne in the Millennium, He will be publicly acclaimed as Israel's King, and not only so, but "shall be King over all of the earth." In that day shall the Lord be One, and His name one (Zechariah 14. 9). Others considered that the Lord will not be anointed by men since God has Himself anointed Him.

It is precious to observe that in Christ we know an anointing too. This glorious truth is brought before us in 2 Corinthians 1. 21, 22, and 1 John 2. 20. This is the portion of every believer. Yet it is the purpose of God that this great work of grace should have its outworking in our lives, and men should see that clear distinctive mark in each one of us.

J. Bullock, (i. Sankey).

From Ilford. —The anointings show David the shepherd of sheep, transformed by the power of the LORD into David the shepherd of God's people Israel. The three anointings have a parallel in the life of the Lord Jesus Christ—the first, and most important, corresponds to God's acknowledgment of His only begotten Son (Acts 10. 38); the second, to recognition of Christ Jesus as Lord and Saviour by the House of God; and the third, to recognition—at the second coming of Christ—by all who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first followers of David (1 Samuel 22. 2) might correspond to the first followers of the Lord Jesus during His brief stay here, since these also were fugitives from the hands of those who would not accept the Lord's anointed one.

K. II. Gibbons.

From Knocknacloy. —When Eliab passed by, Samuel was inclined to look on his outward appearance, but the LORD looked on the heart and told him to anoint David. How apt we are to look on the outward appearance, as Samuel did, instead of waiting on the Lord! We like to think of how the LORD chose the one who occupied the humblest position in Jesse's household. This reminds us of the great humility of the Lord Jesus while here on earth.

The fact that only a part of Israel anointed David king reminds us that only a part of His redeemed own Christ as Lord to-day.

On the other hand, in chapter 5. of 2 Samuel, we have all Israel owning David as king and bowing the knee to his authority. This foreshadows the millennial reign of Christ when every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. *W. Woods, S. Fulton.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Barrhead and Paisley). —If there is an exact parallel between David and the Lord, would this not be seen in the fact that He who was sent was (1) Christ, the anointed One? Then He was (2) anointed with the Holy Spirit and with Power at His baptism in the Jordan for His public ministry as Jehovah's Servant. In resurrection He has been (3) anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. —J. M.

[2] (Hereford). —The sacrifice in 1 Samuel 16. 2, 3 was allowed by God, because of what Samuel said, that Saul would kill him if he heard of him anointing one of Jesse's sons to be king of Israel. This in no way clashed with the general rule of offering sacrifices at the "Place of the Name." But the times of Samuel

and Saul were days of darkness and spiritual declension in Israel, and Israel sought not unto the Ark in Saul's days (1 Chronicles 13. 3). A state of general spiritual depression and deadness existed (1 Samuel 7. 1, 2), and idolatry raised its ugly head amongst God's people, consequently many irregularities appeared in those sad times. —*J. M.*

[2a]. (Hereford). —David was not a priest, though he danced on one occasion before the Ark girded with a linen ephod. I should think that the anointing of the Lord in resurrection, as King-Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, according to Hebrews 1. 9, is the answer to the anointing of Aaron as priest, but I think it is impossible to make the anointings of David the exact picture of the Anointings of the Lord. —*J. M.*

[3] (Glasgow). —See note on paper from Hereford. See also 1 Kings 3. 4; 2 Chronicles 1. 3-6; 1 Chronicles 16. 39; 21. 29. It is quite clear that in the early days of David the Tabernacle of the LORD was still the place of sacrifice, though the Ark of God, which had been taken from the house of God in Shiloh, was in the house of Abinadab. It would be quite wrong to conclude because Samuel offered a sacrifice, in the special circumstances of David's anointing, in Bethlehem, or again in Mizpah, in the distressing circumstances there, that the people were at liberty to offer in different places contrary to what is said in Deuteronomy 12. Declension from God never sanctions departure from the statutes of God. —*J. M.*

[4] (Glasgow). —The words of Psalm 51. 11 prove that the Spirit of God did not come upon David at intervals. That of course does not mean that there would not be special times of Spirit-manifestation when the Spirit was manifestly using him. But the Spirit was not taken from David and he was not cast away, as was true in Saul's case. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from London. —2 Samuel 2. 1. When David inquired of the LORD saying, " Shall I go up ? " was it by the Urim and Thummim ?

Answer. —It does not specifically say so. But remembering that Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David, when all his father's house were murdered by Saul through Doeg (1 Samuel 22. 18-23), and that Abiathar the priest brought the Ephod with him (1 Samuel 23. 6), and that David was in the habit in times of difficulty of telling Abiathar to bring the Ephod (1 Samuel 23. 9; 30. 7), it does not seem far-fetched to think that the Ephod with the Urim and Thummim were brought into service on this occasion. Connect 1 Samuel 22. 10 with 2 Samuel 2. 1. —*J. M.*

Question From Glasgow. —Did David's anointing of the LORD precede the battle with Goliath ? If so, how do we arrive at this opinion ?

Answer. —As chapter 16. is before 17., so I judge are the events of chapter 16., amongst which is David's anointing, before those of chapter 17., in which we have the slaying of Goliath. —*J. M.*

Question from Cowdenbeath. —Had David any knowledge that he was God's chosen king, prior to the anointing of Samuel ?

Answer. —I know of no scripture that would indicate that David knew, prior to the coming of Samuel to Bethlehem, that he would be king of Israel. —*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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"WISDOM IS THE PRINCIPAL THING."

God teaches us much by comparison and contrast. The Spirit-drawn portraits of David and Saul present more of contrast than comparison. Saul's leadership of God's people finally resulted in disastrous defeat. David's work not only retrieved the disaster, but brought Israel to the threshold of a long and prosperous peace. If the Lord does not come soon, many fellow-students of to-day will no doubt become leaders in the Fellowship. Will such leadership bring spiritual progress or decadence? Much will depend upon our heart-appreciation of one of the salient contrasts between Saul and David, which we shall emphasise in this article.

Perhaps familiarity sometimes dims the importance of such well-known verses as,

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom:

And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding" (Prov. 9. 10).

We wish to reaffirm the vital importance of gaining this wisdom and understanding. It is an essential part of preparation for effective spiritual leadership, yet it may sometimes be overlooked. How may it be acquired and developed? Referring to His statutes and judgments to Israel, God said,

"Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding" (Deut. 4. 6).

Here lies the secret! An earnest regard for the will of God as revealed in His word leads to a right "fear of the LORD." In that attitude of heart our instinctive reaction to every problem will be, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" In some matters we have a direct word from the Lord in the Scriptures; in other things we need to discern His will through the application of principles to our circumstances. Now Saul failed signally from both standpoints at an early stage of his kingship. He had a direct word from God in regard to the Amalekites, but did not carry it out; earlier he had in haste offered the burnt offering, fear impelling him to forget the principle of waiting for the LORD. This basic lack of true wisdom and understanding was to undermine the foundation of Saul's throne and kingdom.

This tendency of heart was shown more fully when David's victory over Goliath excited the admiration of Israel. Personal jealousy of the young hero first aroused Saul's hate. Then David's growing popularity, and successive proofs of God's favour upon him, made Saul fear that his own son's succession

to the throne would be jeopardised. How typical of the flesh were the **frantic** efforts made by Saul to bring David to ruin! Treacherous attempts at direct murder were followed by despicable intrigue against his life. The words of **James 3. 14-16** may well be applied to this attitude of Saul:

"But if ye have bitter jealousy and faction in your heart, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom is not a wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish."

Here is an intensely sad picture; a man anointed of God to a place of high privilege and responsibility, but in a wrong condition of heart. The wisdom directing his policy was of the flesh, earthly, sensual, devilish, so that **his** kingdom became a scene of confusion and every vile deed.

Let us seek grace to examine the motives of our hearts! Saul could have quenched the spark of bitter jealousy at the outset; but fed by hatred and fanned by evil ambition the flame finally consumed him and his kingdom. If ever tempted to imagine that actions, prompted by bitterness or faction, **are** glorifying the Lord, we do well to pause and consider that this wisdom cometh not down from above.

The behaviour of David towards Saul stands out in happy contrast. The Holy Spirit strongly emphasises David's wisdom:

He "behaved himself wisely" (1 Samuel 18. 5).

He "behaved himself wisely in all his ways" (1 Samuel 18. 14).

He "behaved himself very wisely" (1 Samuel 18. 15).

He "behaved himself more wisely than all" (1 Samuel 18. 30).

Each fresh perplexity seemed only to draw out a fuller expression of the "wisdom that **is** from above." David must have often cried to God for wisdom, and it **was** given liberally without upbraiding. Close fellowship with the LORD brought the needed supply to meet every new circumstance.

Soon the crisis came to a head. David was forced to flee from Saul; meanwhile his trials were intensified. Yet it **is** lovely to trace the characteristics of the wisdom that **is** from above in David's attitude to his oppressor. For that wisdom **is** "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness **is** sown in peace for them that make peace." Severe temptation to take Saul's life in the cave or the encampment was resisted in the strength of that wisdom which is "peaceable, gentle... full of mercy." Against the urgings of Abishai, so typical of the flesh, the man after God's own heart spared the life of his enemy. The flesh might clamour that David would only endure more sorrow in return, but the principle was borne out "that the fruit of righteousness **is** sown in peace for them that make peace." David was yet to reap the fruit of his integrity. Such seeds of mercy sown in the hearts of all Israel showed beyond gainsaying that David was for peace. Ultimately Saul fell in battle **as** the result of **God's** hand in judgment, and then David reaped the fruit of his wisdom **and** righteousness. No better commentary could be given than the words of James 3. 13: "Who is wise and understanding among you? let him show **by** his good life his works in meekness of wisdom." The weight of a good life, directed **in** meekness of wisdom, must surely prevail.

Among the last words that Saul spoke to David was the confession, "I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly" (1 Samuel 26. 21). To such an **extreme** of folly had his self-determined course led him. Similarly his original rejection of one of God's commandments finally resulted **in** the gross sin of consulting the witch of Endor. With bitter lamentation he cried to Samuel, "God is departed from me, and answereth **me** no more." **Yet** all the divine wisdom **seen** in David would have been available to Saul, **if** only his attitude of heart had **been** right.

Let us not be high-minded, but fear; with chastened spirits let us respond to the promise of God in James 1. 5.

" Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom:
Yea, with all that thou hast gotten get understanding.
Exalt her, and she shall promote thee:
She shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her . . . "
(Proverbs 4. 7-8).

" But he that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul:
All they that hate Me love death " (Proverbs 8. 36).
G. Prasher, Jr.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

The Three Anointings of David.

From Brantford. —" Jehovah seeth not as man seeth " (1 Samuel 16. 7). Thus when David was finally brought before Samuel, he, at the command of Jehovah, anointed him in the midst of his brethren. We conclude that this anointing of David as king was not a secret. Perhaps his brethren did not enter into its full meaning.

David did not commence to reign until after the death of Saul, and for seven and a half years he ruled over the house of Judah alone, while Ishbosheth was king over Israel. On the death of Ishbosheth the elders of Israel accepted David as their king and anointed him king over Israel at Hebron.

We have a parallel, in David's anointing, with our Lord Jesus Christ, who was anointed with the Holy Spirit at His baptism. " He anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor " (Luke 4. 18), was fulfilled in His case. And, like David, He was not accepted immediately as King, nor has He been yet, but the day is coming when He shall be, and to Him shall all bow the knee.

G. Soper, H. Wood.

David and Saul.

From Broxburn. —Saul was the LORD'S anointed, and as well as being the people's choice, was also the LORD'S choice. He was a man in a divine position, and if his condition had corresponded with his position he would have undoubtedly been a power for God. Here we have a type of the disobedient saint who, although in a right position, is in a wrong condition. Through his disobedience he was divinely set aside (1 Samuel 16. 1), though he remained in the position for a long time afterwards. David's victory brought out the hatred that was in Saul's heart, who said in effect, He has the people, what more can he have but the kingdom? We are inclined to think that Saul's hatred for David arose from the women's song. " Saul eyed David from that day and forward" (1 Samuel 18. 7-9).

On that day David exposed Saul's weakness. Another had taken Saul's place and had fought the battle that he should have fought. If we apply this to our assembly life we may find one brother envious of another, who is being used by the Lord.

David was a good shepherd, well-trained and solicitous of his father's sheep. But not only did he find them green pastures, he was skilful with his weapons of war in defending them from attacks by wild beasts (1 Samuel 17. 34-37). His outstanding gifts and abilities were noted by the servant of Saul who rehearsed them in the ear of Saul. Truly a man's gift maketh room for him (1 Samuel 16. 18). What a catalogue of virtues to be found in a young man!

After Saul was anointed, God gave him another heart, and the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he prophesied (1 Samuel 10). But alas, because of Saul's disobedience, the Spirit of the LORD later departed from him and an evil spirit from the LORD terrified him. It is remarkable how quickly the servants of Saul perceived this change (1 Samuel 16. 15). From that day Saul was a **man** after the flesh.

David also noted that the Spirit of the LORD had left Saul, and, seeing the disastrous effects this had upon Saul, cried in Psalm 51. 11, "Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." David, prudent and skilful in speech, had the fear of the LORD always before him; and, "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." A great deal that David learned was acquired in his youth. He was known as a man of war. It was no novice who went out to fight Goliath or stood before Saul. David could bend a bow of brass, and was endued by God-given qualities (see Psalm 18).

The lessons from the Scriptures are firstly that which is natural, then secondly, that which is spiritual. Both Saul and David were anointed to fulfil a divine purpose, but Saul was found wanting in serious matters. Instead of acknowledging his failures and humbling himself, he is found persecuting the LORD'S anointed. Saul knew that David was destined to sit upon the throne (1 Samuel 24. 20), and this knowledge wrought bitterness in him. On the other hand, Saul confessed before men that he was doing wrong in hunting David, and he also said many excellent and true things to David (1 Samuel 24. 17, 18). Yet he never was a repentant man. Neither did he take steps to seek a reconciliation with David in his lifetime, and in this condition, judgment overtook him and he was cut off. Saul is typical of the man "after the flesh," David of "the man after God's own heart." Between those two there must ever be warfare. This warfare was perpetuated between the house of Saul and the house of David (2 Samuel 3. 1). In Galatians 5. 17 we read, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other."

David is a true type of the Lord Jesus in manifesting divine grace and kindness to his enemy (see 1 Samuel 24. and 26., and compare 2 Corinthians 8. 9). Indeed David opposed the urgent promptings of his followers to put Saul to death and thus put an end to his troublesome persecutor (1 Samuel 24. 3-16). A revengeful heart would have done so, but David was actually keeping the law and showing grace. This is a divine precept, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12. 21).

David neither spoke evil nor did evil against the LORD'S anointed (1 Samuel 26. 23), but rather, as in Psalm 141. 3, he said, "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." He was typical of that Blessed One who came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them, and of whom Peter wrote, "When He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2. 23).

In reading the historical, we found it interesting to place alongside the spiritual significance, as in Psalm 57. 1-4. These words indicate plainly that David did not seek safety in his own strength. He found his refuge in the shadow of the wings of the LORD.

John McGregor.

From Atherton.—It is God's desire that men should dwell peaceably together. David fully recognized this. His whole attitude to Saul, commendable in the extreme, was the result of his response to the Word of God. Saul, in sad contrast, despised and flouted that same Word. Samuel rightly summed up Saul's life in the words, "Thou hast rejected the Word of the LORD" (1 Samuel 15. 23). David could well align himself with the man who wrote, "Thy Word have I laid up in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee" (Psalm 119. 11). Saul's attitude towards David at the beginning had been good. The minstrel he loved greatly. Goliath's conqueror he was bound to admire. The sad story begins when he sees others admiring David (1 Samuel 18. 6-9). Hatred takes the place of love, jealousy the place of admiration. In all this Saul fully knew that he was fighting against God, but strange to say, like many another who has pursued this fatal, ruinous and disastrous course, he went on rebelliously thinking to establish his kingdom. The extent to which the blind, jealous hatred of Saul would carry him to achieve his end is seen when he vilely slew the priests of the LORD (1 Samuel 22. 18, 19). Against all this David did not retaliate. The

teaching of the Lord for His people to-day—" Love your **enemies**, "—found its full answer **in** David. **He** realized, too, that God's law said, " Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart, " and " Thou shalt not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour **as** thyself: I **am** the LORD " (Leviticus 19. 17, 18).

The news of Saul's death gave no joy to David. He rejoiced not, nor did his men (2 Samuel 1. 11, 12). The Song of the Bow reveals in magnificent language the unstained heart of David. He still loves, admires, and praises Saul.

David's great patience, **as** he waited for the LORD to work, stands in sharp contrast to Saul's impatience that led to his undoing. We see in David not the least self-assertion. Even after Saul was dead, he must needs inquire of the LORD before he takes one step forward. Inquiry after inquiry " of the LORD " had been David's procedure his whole course through, but Saul had long since departed from this golden rule. He had begun to inquire rather of familiar spirits, partly because of this the LORD slew him (1 Chronicles 10. 13, 14). In David, too, we see a deep, passionate longing for the House of God (see **Psalm 26. 8; 27. 4**), which was maintained throughout his long trial. The word of the LORD to Saul was considered: " For now would the LORD have established thy kingdom for ever " (1 Samuel 13. 13). How are we to understand this in the light of God's faithful promise to David and to his seed ? [1]. The case of Jacob and Esau was cited **as** indicating an outstanding example of God's sovereign dealings.

In the light of David's calm trustfulness in God during dark and stormy days, how sad to observe that he fails to trust God just when the trial **is** almost over ! (1 Samuel 27. 1). Men sometimes fail in what seems to be their strongest point. Solomon's wisdom did not prevent his downfall. Moses, the meekest man in **all** the earth, failed to exercise this excellent trait of character at **a** most needed time.

D. H. Butler, G. A. Jones.

From Glasgow. —The relations of Saul and David underwent considerable development during the few years they lasted. At the beginning, David was introduced to Saul by one of his young **male** attendants **as** a very comely person, who was cunning in playing the harp. These qualities made **a** good appeal to the unhappy Saul, who sent for David to play before him that his spirit might be refreshed.

After the battle in the Vale of Elah Saul's relations with David developed quickly. Saul took him to the palace and would let him go no more home to his father's house in Bethlehem. Things went well for **a** time, David became the lifelong friend of Jonathan, and, for his wise conduct, Saul promoted him in the army. But the good relations between the two were short-lived. The women's song touched evil chords in Saul's heart, and brought him sharply to realise that the man whom he had so honoured was destined of God to replace him **as** king. **His** indignation took the form of deadly jealousy, which, under the influence of an evil spirit from the LORD, drove Saul to an attempt on David's life.

From this point onwards the evil mind of Saul thought out schemes for the destruction of David, and after each failure, his disappointed rage drove him from evil to evil. But David knew the mind of the LORD that he should be king in place of Saul, and thus guided he withstood **all** attacks by Saul without **a** vestige of retaliation.

We note that in chapter 18. 9, " Saul eyed David, " and **in** verse 29 " Saul was David's enemy continually. " " Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to put David to death " (1 Samuel 20. 33). Yet we shall search **in** vain for any evil thought or word from David. Even in the cave, when Saul was at his mercy, David spared his **life** for the LORD'S sake. The Song of the Bow **is** by **a** man indwelt by the Spirit of God, who, in respect for God and **His** commandment, so controlled his emotions that he achieved greater things than Saul, though **he** was **in** exile.

As to the two **kings**, there **is** more of contrast than of comparison. Saul had no shepherd heart, but **was** like the hireling shepherd, who cared for himself rather than for the sheep. David, on the other hand, was a true shepherd, and under his skilful guidance Israel progressed far more in his reign than **in** Saul's, although they were of the same duration. Saul had no exercise in things of God, whereas David led Israel to the LORD, and set on foot plans and preparations for the establishment of God's House among His people. *Jas. Park.*

EXTRACTS.

From Knocknacloy. —The Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from the time Samuel anointed **him**. When the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul **an** evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. In 1 Samuel 16. 21 **we** read, *' He (Saul) loved **him** (David) greatly; and he became his armour-bearer. " Very soon, however, Saul tried to kill David; thus his attitude was changed. David behaved himself wisely before the people, and Saul was afraid of him. This reminds us of David's greater Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who did those things which were pleasing to **His** Father and behaved Himself wisely before men, who marvelled at **His** wisdom and understanding. Later, the opportunity came to David to kill Saul, but he spared him because he was the LORD'S anointed. After the death of Saul this strife between the house of Saul and the house of David continued. *George Thompson, Thomas Shaw.*

From Paisley and Barrhead. —The Scriptural principle which **is** enunciated: " That **is** not first which **is** spiritual, but that which **is** natural; then that which **is** spiritual, " **seems** to be clearly manifested in the two men, Saul and David. Saul **is** typical of man, almost completely dominated by the carnal nature, while David, in spite of many a fall, displays those fragrant qualities of the divine nature. Saul was certainly the LORD'S anointed, but was also the people's choice. **His** superb physique must have captivated the fleshly minds of Israel. God may grant us our heart's desire, although this be far from **His** will for us.

Saul's infatuation for David after the slaughter of the Philistines, soon turned to cruel jealousy, because the women ascribed to him the greater glory. Jealousy, fear, hatred ripened into the evil obsession to kill! In the face of it all, the future king deported himself with truly admirable restraint. Once and again he could have slain his malicious pursuer, but he refrained. And when the situation was disclosed to Saul, there were wrung from his hard heart tears, and the confession, " Thou art more righteous than I, "—and yet he continued his malicious pursuit.

The distressed, the debtors and discontented who resorted to David in Adullam's cave, never seem to have questioned his authority (excepting the occasion when Ziklag, their city, was sacked by Amalek). Even Saul's daughter, David's wife, remained faithful to him. In contrast, Saul could not trust even **his** immediate lieutenants, who had but little heart for his cause.

Finally, he was caught in the vortex of mad despair, resorting even to the help of witchcraft!

Both Saul and David were men with a purpose and ambition in life. Saul, moved with jealousy, " cruel as the grave, " must assert **himself**, especially in relation to David. In contrast, David, moved with love **for the** LORD, was jealous for **His** honour, especially in relation to **His** people. Young men and women must be zealous and humbly ambitious—to do **His** will. " Wherefore, I **am** ambitious, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto Him. "

David L. Baird.

From Cardiff.—The attitude of David to Saul was governed by the condition of his heart toward God. Saul is very early found transgressing the commandment of the LORD, and is told that his kingdom would not be established (1 Samuel 13. 14). It is only after it is revealed that Saul has shown little place for the LORD that David appears on the scene. David, naturally talented, is brought out of obscurity as the one who is zealous for his God and obedient to His will. He takes a very humble position, content to tread the pathway that the LORD would give him. Because of his wise behaviour his word is much appreciated.

Our Saviour was ill thought of, and cruelly treated, by those whose hearts were evil, but He continued in the will of His Father until His task was complete. If we are faithful to our Master, we, too, will experience the like merciless antagonism that David experienced.

Anon.

From Kilmarnock.—It was a good recommendation that one of Saul's servants gave concerning David as a player, and a warrior and a statesman, adding, with effect, "the LORD is with him" (1 Samuel 16. 18). Our mind was directed to what we read in Luke 4. 16, etc., when the Lord Jesus spoke publicly in the synagogue to the people of Nazareth, how "they wondered at the words of grace," but they changed their attitude when He spoke words of truth.

In striking contrast to Saul's enmity which later developed, David manifested a gracious spirit, and "behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him" (1 Samuel 18. 14). We note, too, how that, when he could have taken Saul's life on two occasions, he forbade his men to touch him, and acknowledged him as the LORD'S anointed. In all David's actions toward Saul we have an illustration of the manner of life of the Lord Jesus amongst men. Although He showed love and kindness to all, the rulers ever sought to lay hold of Him and to put Him to death. He hath left us an example to follow His steps (1 Peter 2. 21).

From 1 Samuel 10. it would appear that after his anointing Saul was a man of humble spirit. In a few years' time, however, his wayward spirit was made manifest when he disobeyed the LORD concerning the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15. 24). His subsequent life was disastrous, for the LORD had rejected him from being king over Israel. In comparison, David's outward appearance did not indicate greatness, but he was a man after God's own heart (see chapter 13. 14), and "was loved by all Israel and Judah." In all his varied experience he sought to honour God, and although he had failures (of which he repented), God honoured him and caused him to reign over His people Israel for forty years (1 Kings 2. 11). God thus proved the truth of His words, "Them that honour Me I will honour, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed" (1 Samuel 2. 30).

*

A.

G.

S.

From Hereford.—Saul's attitude to David was the outworking of a jealous heart. This condition of heart had been brought about by Saul's own disobedience. The sequence of events leading up to this condition is sad indeed—the rejection of God as King (1 Samuel 8. 7)—the anointing of Saul (1 Samuel 10. 1)—Saul's disobedience (1 Samuel 15. 9)—his consequent rejection (1 Samuel 15. 23), and, finally, the departure of the Spirit of the LORD from him (1 Samuel 16. 14). When the Spirit of the LORD had departed from Saul and had come mightily upon David, at his anointing, the malevolent attitude of Saul manifests itself towards David. Whilst considering the vehemence of Saul (1 Samuel 18. 11 and 19. 10, 11), one cannot but remember the vehemence of those (the scribes and Pharisees) who pressed upon the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 11. 53, 54, see also Psalm 22.).

David, a **man** after God's **own** heart, **in** return for Saul's malevolence showed enevolence.

Saul, although the LORD'S anointed, chose to obey the voice of the people in preference to God's command (1 Samuel 15. 24). David, on the contrary, refused to hearken to the people (his servants) who sought to slay Saul, because he was the LORD'S anointed (1 Samuel 24. 6 and 26. 9). David waited patiently on the LORD—he behaved wisely—and the LORD **was** with him (1 Samuel 18. 14). How graciously David dealt with Saul, **again** causing us to consider Him, who, when on the cross could utter such words as—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Saul, the people's choice, was head and shoulders above all the people, but he had to be brought low. David, God's choice, **was** a shepherd boy, but God honours His word and David was exalted in due time.

David's desire towards the ark of God was entirely different from that of Saul's. How pregnant were David's words: "Let **us** bring again the ark of our God to us: for we sought not unto **it** in the days of Saul" (1 Chronicles 13. 3). This **seems** to be the key to David's success and Saul's undoing. *Robert Tidmas,*

From Kirkintilloch. —We noticed that the word "mightily" **is** used both concerning the Spirit of the LORD and the evil spirit (1 Samuel 18. 10), **meaning, in** both cases, "to take possession of **a man's affairs,**" showing us the different power **in** the lives of David and Saul, namely, the Holy Spirit and the evil spirit. **We** thought **that** Satan was behind the **scenes** and that God had allowed the evil spirit to take possession of Saul because of his disobedience. It is difficult to understand **the** words, thrice repeated **in** scripture—"An evil spirit from God" —**in** the light of James 1. 13. "Let no **man** say when he **is** tempted, I **am** tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, and **He** himself tempteth no man." **We** would like some help **in** this matter [2].

Saul's hatred of David increased daily, and his attempts on David's life reminded **us** of the Lord **Jesus when we** read—"And they rose up, and **cast** Him forth out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city **was** built, that they might throw **Him** down headlong. But **He** passing through the midst of them went **His** way" (Luke 4. 29, 30).

It **is** strange how Saul, a Benjamite, skilled to **use** both the right hand and the left (see 1 Chronicles 12. 2), missed David **twice** (1 Samuel 18. 11 and 19. 10).

What **a** lovely person David was! In all Saul's hatred and jealousy toward him **he** never once retaliated, nor did he ever speak evil of Saul, but honoured him **as** being the LORD'S anointed. How like the Son of God, "Who, when **He** was reviled, reviled not again"! (see 1 Peter 2. 23). Despite such trying circumstances, David behaved himself wisely **in** all his ways (1 Samuel 18. 14). The word "wisely" is the word "Maschil," **as in** Psalm 47. 7 (R. V. M.), meaning "with understanding." In all his afflictions, David understood God's purposes, and this **is** what kept him going on in faith. May **we** all be like David **and** be not foolish, but understand what the will of the LORD **is** (Ephesians 5. 17).

In the life of David **we see** one who delighted the heart of God. The trials and persecutions **he** received at **the** hand of Saul only brought out all the more the beauties of Christ **seen in** him. The secret of David's life **was in** his bowing to God's word and will at all **times,** and **as** a result God's blessing rested upon him. "Them that honour **Me** I will honour" (1 Samuel 2. 30). In contrast, Saul's life **was a sad** and unhappy one. Disobedience to God's word will always bring **such** results.

William Ure, John Scott.

From Crowborough. —We thought that David would sing of the glories and mercies of his God as he played upon his harp, but, instead of being restored to God, Saul became embittered and sought to vent his displeasure on David. Soon the persecution became so acute that David had to flee for his life, and was pursued by Saul to the rocks and the caves. All this reminded us of the attitude of the Jews, especially the rulers, towards the Lord Jesus as He sought to honour **His** Father before men. They sought the Lord's life and welcomed the betrayer.

During **this** time of persecution, David manifested great patience, forbearance and love. Though subjected to great provocation, he never retaliated. It was a great trial of David's faith in the promises of God, when Saul lay at his mercy. The same spirit, though in much greater measure, was manifested by the Lord, as men sought to take his life, even to the restoring of the ear of Malchus.

Saul was a typical man of the world, with worldly ambitions, seeking the glory of men. David was a man after God's own heart, and his desire was for the glory of God. Saul, as king, answered the specification as demanded by the people, while David answered to the man for God, and won the esteem of the people. When Saul's transgression was brought to his notice he repented, but godly sorrow was never manifested. David sinned grievously, but with repentance came humility of mind and spirit and real sorrow. Saul **sums** up his life in the words " I have played the fool, " while David behaved himself wisely. Saul sought to destroy the counsel **of** God, **while** David served the counsel of God.

S. S., E. S.

From Cowdenbeath. —During Saul's early relationship with David he did not realize that the young man who stood before him was the man whom God had chosen to fill the throne of Israel. Saul was attracted by David's skilful handling of the harp and his charming personality. The testimony borne of Saul at this period was—"he loved him greatly" (1 Samuel 16. 21). It was when Saul saw David as a potential rival that his love changed to jealousy. Saul loved to be honoured in the eyes of the people (1 Samuel 15. 30), and he could not bear to see David obtaining preference. This change of attitude led **to** the persecution of David, who was eventually forced to flee. To Jonathan's question, " What hath he (David) done ? " Saul could supply no answer, but only reveal his bitter hatred of David by casting a spear at his son who had dared to defend David.

Thus was David's Lord treated by the rulers of Israel. They were jealous of the Lord's popularity with the people. They were afraid of losing their place in the eyes of the people. Pilate saw the motive behind their cry for His blood. He knew that for envy they had delivered him up.

How different was David's treatment of Saul! Twice David had his enemy at his mercy, but he acted in the spirit of Romans 12. and returned good for evil. In this he typified Him who, when He suffered, threatened not.

How sad are the closing scenes of Saul's life ! He is a picture of a believer who has unfitted himself for God's service. One of the sins of Saul was that he failed to enquire of the LORD and sought ungodly means (1 Samuel 28.). **Of** David God said, " He shall do all My will " (Acts 13. 22). Saul had no desire for the house of God. The ark of God was not sought unto, all the days of Saul. David **was a man** who loved the House of God. *James K. D. Johnston.*

From London. —The strange attitude of Saul towards David seems to move from love to indifference, indifference to animosity, animosity to persecution, and finally from persecution back to complete indifference and coldness. The Holy Spirit compares Saul and David in Acts 13. 21-24.

The first reaction of Saul to David is to love him greatly. David willingly exhibits a true spirit of humility. Many would have considered it beneath them to play the servant when potentially a king. The testimony borne to David's character by Saul's servants is very striking, and influenced the decision of the king in summoning the keeper of sheep to his court.

David is a fine type of Christ, since all who **came in** contact with him are deeply moved. First Saul, then Jonathan, Michal, and, later, his valiant men, together with Israel, all loved him. To an onlooker it must have seemed rather paradoxical, to see the "king to be" soothing the reigning monarch. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

When David is brought to Saul as the man prepared to face the giant, Saul does not appear to recognise him, and, even after the great victory, Saul asks Abner, "Whose son is this youth?" To understand the full purport and chronology it is helpful to consider 1 Samuel 17. as a parenthesis. Alternatively, the query of Saul may have called for an enquiry unto Jesse's household [3],

As the pace quickens and the atmosphere becomes more tense, David decides that discretion is the better part of valour and flees from the court of the king. Saul is not satisfied with the departure of David, but still continues his intrigues, and, gaining confidence, reaches the point when he throws reticence to the wind and publicly announces that he is seeking to bring about the slaying of David.

After being spared a second time by David, Saul says, "I have sinned: return my son David: for I will no more do thee harm, because my life was precious in thine eyes this day: behold, I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly." This must have cost something to say, especially as he goes on to say, "Blessed be thou, my son David: thou shalt both do mightily, and shalt surely prevail." After this Saul accepts the inevitable and, although the effect of David's sparing had worn off, he does not again pursue when news arrives of the whereabouts of David. "He sought no more again for him." One very emphatic truth emerges from these episodes, namely, that Saul in his fiercest spirit of persecution, falters from his purpose immediately he hears the voice of David, and discerns in his actions the spirit of lovingkindness. What a lovely ending might have followed, had Saul, like his New Testament namesake, realising that he was kicking against the goad, fallen at the feet of David and owned him as the LORD'S anointed! May this important lesson not fall upon deaf ears, but make us all alive to the fact that our attitude, in every sense of the word, will change if we listen to the Lord's voice and perceive the loveliness of His actions.

The man after God's own heart portrayed very strongly in his early days many of those delightful traits which were to characterise the One who became his greater "Son." In point of fact, there appear to be no blemishes in this period of his life, for it is only after his ascension to the throne that he falls. Persecution often purifies, while luxury frequently destroys.

On David's part there is no rejoicing at the death of Saul, but he is smitten with a deep and honest sorrow. To the young man, the Amalekite, who thinks he is bringing good tidings, David wreaks the judgment which befits those who tamper with the purposes of God. David's "psalm" on Saul's death (2 Samuel 1.) describes some of the finer qualities of Saul.

In after years he remembers his promises to Saul, and sends for Mephibosheth and gives him a place at his table. If Jonathan's love passed the love of women, surely David's was the perfect example of Divine Love. Towards the end of David's life he has Saul's bones buried in Zelah (2 Samuel 21.). *Reginald D. Wood.*

From Hamilton (Ont.). —A young man recommends David to Saul for his tuning in playing the harp, and other qualities, and that the LORD was with him. David is given the honoured position. David suited perfectly, and Saul loved him greatly. War breaks out with the Philistines, and David courageously disposed of the Philistine champion. This endeared him to the hearts of Israel, and to Jonathan especially. Jonathan loved him as his own soul. The question arose whether the slaying of Goliath was prior to David being received as Saul's armour-bearer in chapter 16. for three reasons: —1. chapter 16. —David is a mighty man of valour and a man of war; 2. chapter 17. —When Goliath defies the armies of Israel David makes his appearance as a shepherd boy; 8. Saul enquires whose son he is, although in chapter 18. it seems that directly after the slaying of Goliath, Saul receives David into his house and sets him over the men of war [4].

The women sang that Saul had slain his thousands, but David his ten thousands. The words of that song turned Saul's love to hatred, " and Saul eyed David from that day and forward. " David, nevertheless, behaved himself wisely, he behaved himself very wisely, yea, he behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul.

Let us remember, "A man's gift maketh room for him", and let us not hinder the purposes of God in one another. Saul was unsuccessful and so will we be. Saul was David's enemy continually, but how different was David's attitude, when at least on two different occasions he could easily have disposed of Saul! but he refrained from putting forth his hand against the LORD'S anointed. Let us not avenge ourselves, beloved, but commit ourselves to Him who judgeth righteously. Saul typifies the nature of the flesh, but David the nature of the Spirit.

P. Thomas, J. McPherson.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Atherton). —At this time David had not been anointed. Saul's failure and loss was of his own doing. What God says in this verse is much like what we read of again and again in the word. For instance, the desire of God is that all men should be saved, but that God's desire in this will not be realised, by man's own wanton disobedience, we may be perfectly certain. God's desire to establish Saul's kingdom was frustrated by Saul himself, yet in another sense God's purposes stand according to election. God only can accurately balance Divine election and human responsibility in the exercise of man's free will. —*J. M.*

[2] (Kirkintilloch). —This is not a case of Saul being tempted of God, but that an evil spirit was sent or allowed by God to come upon Saul to trouble or terrify him. This was the result of Saul's wrong-doing. —*J. M.*

[3] (London). —I do not think that 1 Samuel 17. is a parenthesis. Chapter 18. is the sequel of chapter 17. and the chapters which follow continue the flow of the historical narrative. Note that the question of Saul to Abner was not—" Who is this youth ? " but—" Whose son is this youth ? " This is like the questions the Lord asked the Jews—" What think ye of Christ ? Whose Son is He ? " David told whose son he was, but when the Lord claimed to be the Son of God they refused to believe Him. —*J. M.*

[4] (Hamilton, Ont.). —I think we need not doubt that the events of chapter 17. followed those of chapter 16. David was a youth in chapter 17., but he was such a youthful warrior as has scarcely had an equal, and certainly none surpassed him. One who could slay a lion and a bear, and Goliath as well, was all that the young man said of him in chapter 16., that he was " a mighty man of valour, and a man of war. " There was not another like him amongst all the men of Israel. Such a warrior could well be the king's armour-bearer. See note in paper from London on the question of whose son David was, not who David was. —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Brantford. —Hebrews 1. 9: what is the **meaning** of the **Lord** being anointed with **the** oil of gladness ?

Answer. —The fellows of Christ were those who were in the Fellowship in days of the apostles, **and**, in consequence, are such **as** are in **the** Fellowship of the Son of God at any time. Christ has been anointed with that peculiar oil called **the** oil of gladness over such fellows in resurrection. —*J. M.*

This expresses the spiritual joy which the Son received from the Father, marking Him out **as** above or beyond His companions or partners. Exultant joy is the portion of the Son **as** a direct result of His sojourn on earth Cp. Isaiah 61. 3. —*F. L. E.*

Questions from Winnipeg. —

Question (1). —"An evil spirit from the **LORD** troubled him" (1 Samuel 16. 14). Please explain to what extent this principle of God's dealings with **men** is seen in Scripture. Does God directly use the powers of evil to **effect** His purposes of chastisement ?

Answer (1). —Our friends ask a difficult and profound question. God does not take His Holy Spirit from any of His children to-day because of their disobedience, and in consequence such a thing **as** an evil spirit from the Lord being allowed to trouble God's children, **as** in Saul's case, cannot take place. Saints may, however, fall into the snare of the devil (2 Timothy 2. 26), or may be devoured by the devil (1 Peter 5. 8), or again they may be corrupted by Satan (2 Corinthians 11. 3). Again, Satan filled the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira to lie to the Holy Spirit. —*J. M.*

Question (2). —Please explain why in 1 Samuel 16. 14-23 David **is** represented **as** a "man of war" who habitually stood before Saul, and was well known to him, whereas in the following chapter he appears to be unused to implements of war (armour) and to be unknown to Saul.

Answer (2). —I have already commented on this matter in papers from London and Hamilton (Ont.). David was a man of war in chapter 16., and the proof of **it** is seen in chapter 17., but he did not fight with sword and spear, **as** the men of Israel, also Goliath and the rest, but in a manner which was much more effective. God **is** said to be a Man of war, and **He** fought Pharaoh with the waters of the Red Sea, which were much more powerful than the chariots of Pharaoh. —*J. M.*

Question (3). —Why is Elkanah described **as** an Ephraimite in 1 Samuel 1. 1, but **as** a Levite (of the family of Kohath) in 1 Chronicles 6. 27 ?

Answer (3). —Elkanah was a Levite by descent, but an Ephraimite by domicile, in that he dwelt in the hill country of Ephraim. —*J. M.*

Question (4). —**Was** Saul's sin in 1 Samuel 13. 8-14 that he usurped a function reserved for the priests or Levites ? Or was **it** that he failed to wait for Samuel **as** commanded by the **LORD** ? If the former, does it not seem from such Scriptures **as** 2 Samuel 24. 25 that others sacrificed such offerings without incurring Divine displeasure ?

Answer (4). —Saul failed in that, in the weakness of his faith and the impatience of the flesh, he forced himself to do what he knew was contrary to the **LORD'S** will that he should do. **He** should have waited for the coming of Samuel. Here was his **test** and he failed **in** it, and **was** in consequence rejected **as** unfitted to be king of Israel. **We** need to learn to stand, **if** necessary, alone against the enemy. The **man** who will so stand and keep the Lord's command **is** suited for leadership. —*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.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.

The friendship of David and Jonathan has become proverbial wherever the English language is spoken. In simple but striking terms the Scriptures describe the deep affection upon which that friendship was based. Three times it is written of Jonathan that he loved David as his own soul, and in lamenting the death of his friend, David declared,

" Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. " There could be no doubt about the reality of this affection, which shines out clearly through every phase of the relations of these two men. Even at the crucial juncture when Jonathan left David to depart alone into exile, the genuine grief which rent the heart of each is recorded by the Spirit of God. Moreover, Jonathan's love had proved its worth through most severe testings. " Love envieth not . . . seeketh not its own, " wrote Paul many centuries later. It is a high tribute to the quality of Jonathan's love for David that he did not envy the young shepherd's victory over Goliath. Whereas Saul was incensed at the praise given to David, Jonathan's reaction was one of unqualified admiration and thankfulness. Willingly he stripped himself of his princely robe and apparel, even to his sword and his bow and his girdle, and bestowed all upon the youthful conqueror. That unselfish gesture of appreciation was typical of Jonathan's attitude so far as the popularity of his friend was concerned; he envied not! Even when it became evident that David was God's chosen king, this did not arouse the resentment of the heir apparent. He said,

" Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee. " That he had come to this conclusion even before David went into exile is suggested by Saul's scathing reproof in 1 Samuel 20. 30-32. Jonathan consistently championed the cause of his friend, even at the risk of his own life, for Saul assayed to kill his son when he defied the king's order to co-operate in the destruction of David.

Nor should our preoccupation with the remarkable quality of Jonathan's love for David allow us to overlook the other excellencies of his character. Outstanding among these were his fearlessness and valour. It would seem that he was a relatively young man at the outset of Saul's reign, yet he figured prominently in military leadership against the enemies of Israel. He is first mentioned in connection with the smiting of the Philistine garrison in Geba (1 Samuel 13. 3); he was the hero of the outstanding exploit recorded in chapter

fourteen of the same book; his life ended in unflinchingly resisting the foes of God's people. David's words provide a fitting epitaph:

" The bow of Jonathan turned not back. "

Space forbids to dwell on other characteristics of this remarkable **man**, but illuminating glimpses are given of his wisdom, grace and faithfulness. **Perhaps** his personality is best described by again culling from the song of the bow those words,

" Very pleasant hast thou been unto me. "

Jonathan was one whose life had been lovely and pleasant; his qualities of heart and mind uniquely commended him to the friendship of David, **a man** of great mental and spiritual stature. It is helpful to assess in true perspective the pleasantness of Jonathan's character, and particularly his true love for David, because it is of importance for us in a place of Divine separation to realise that we shall meet many Jonathan-like characters in the Christian world to-day. We cannot but admire their devoted manner of life, which savours much of Christ; their achievements in the warfare against the great adversary of souls are often outstanding; they invariably attest their allegiance to Christ before worldly scoffers or religious philosophers of the modern school. An outstanding lesson from the story of Jonathan is that such pleasantness of Christian character, even when allied with daring and aggressive evangelism, is not in itself sufficient if the vital importance of companying with the Lord where His will can be fully accomplished is overlooked.

Let us try to analyse Jonathan's thoughts as he walked sorrowfully homeward to the city after saying farewell to David (1 Samuel 20. 42). What drew him back to his father's camp when God's anointed had been driven into exile? Perhaps family sentiment played a part. Probably he fancied that he could serve David's cause more effectively by staying with Saul, and trying to influence affairs to the advantage of his friend, from the council chamber of the kingdom. The story shows the futility of these hopes, for without doing David any good, Jonathan bound himself up with the cause of his father, and ultimately shared his doom on Mount Gilboa. In a word, he had failed to discern that the purpose of God had brought Israel to a critical time of division, when loyalty to David was the only course to the spiritually discerning. This division had been forced upon David; it was not of his own seeking, and Jonathan should have taken his place with his friend in exile, " outside the camp. "

This failure has often been repeated. There has been vagueness of vision **as** to the issues involved, with consequent failure to take a decisive step **in** separation to the Lord Jesus Christ. Separation was forced upon our spiritual forefathers because hard experience taught them the impossibility of fulfilling the will of their Master in its entirety in their former associations. Some in that generation, though " lovely and pleasant in their lives, " failed to realise the issues involved or shrank from giving effect to the truth. Still to-day there are many *' Jonathans " whose character and achievements excite our admiration, but who have not realised the necessity for uncompromising separation from circles where the Master's will has been set aside in greater or lesser degree.

Does not this emphasise one important aspect of our study of God's word? For only through a balanced understanding of its principles can the people of God be guided at a time of spiritual crisis. Only as we are equipped to explain those principles to others will they be helped to take their stand in separation to do the Lord's will. There are many voices in the world advocating compromise and union in place of divine unity, and the pleasantness of the lives behind those voices often influences Christians to follow such a course. Our safeguard is to cleave only to the Word of God; our strength **is** to match the appeal of the pleasantness of those lives by fuller consecration, being transformed increasingly into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3. 18).

Beyond the tragedy of Jonathan's failure, and consequent sharing of his father's doom, we **see** with gratitude God's recognition of the spiritual discernment which caused him to enter into a covenant with the Lord's anointed. This illustrates clearly that Jonathan had a realistic faith in the fulfilment of the

divine promises to David. Nor **did** David forget. He showed **the kindness** of God to Mephibosheth, whose children and grandchildren **served** the Israel of God **in** their generation. Singularly enough, **we** learn from **1 Chronicles 8. 40** that **certain** of Jonathan's descendants excelled **in** archery, **an interesting fact in view** of the distressing power of the Philistine archers when Jonathan **was slain at** Gilboa. The **abiding** faithfulness of God shines out despite human failure; He is ever " the LORD, the LORD, a God full of compassion and gracious. "

Happy **we** are **if** our souls **are** knit to the soul of Christ **in** loving appreciation of His **saving** grace ! Yet **in** the last resort He assesses the value of our friendship by our obedience to His word :

" **Ye** are My friends, **if** ye do the things which I command you. "

He **is** the **Friend** that sticketh closer than **a** brother; **if** we part from His company the initiative will come from ourselves. **He** deigns to invite **us** to share His path of rejection. Will our friendship stand the test ?

G. Prasher, Jun.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

David and Saul.

From Vancouver, B. C. —David was **a man** of all-round ability **and** humility. **He** ascribed all his ability to God and to Him he looked for success **and** prospering **in** all that he **did**. David depended on God for **guidance and** moved at **His** bidding, so **success** followed him whithersoever he went. David learned not to lean upon his own understanding, but to trust God at all times.

In **1 Samuel 20. 32** **we** read, " Wherefore should he **be** put to death ? what hath he done ? " A resemblance indeed to David's Lord, when Pilate **answered** the cry of " Crucify Him, " " Why, what evil hath this Man done ? I have found no **cause** of death **in** Him. "

Although David was **a** mighty man of valour, there were times when he **was** afraid. **He** could **face** the giant boldly when the armies of Israel **were** defied, but for his own deliverance sometimes his faith was low. Yet he learned by experience not to **be** moved, **and** his soul was with him **as a weaned** child, for he says, " Surely I have stilled **and** quieted my soul; like **a weaned** child with his mother " (Psalm 131.). The peace of God which passeth all understanding **was** his.

Saul **was an** example of the heart of man governed by the flesh. At first Saul loved David, but when jealousy **came in** it affected Saul so much, that murder **was** openly manifested **in** his heart. Love which **is** of the flesh **can** easily turn to hate, but love of the Spirit never faileth. Saul acknowledged that David **was** more righteous than himself. Saul's tears **seem to be** of little worth. Moments of contrition were few **and** soon forgotten. **He was** unstable **and** allowed the hatred of the flesh to prevail. Tears are not always **a** good sign. They often speak only of emotion. An emotional person can **be** moved to tears one moment, **and** have the hardest of hearts the next.

" **He** that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh **a** city " (Proverbs 16. 32).

Communicated by H. McL.

Jonathan and David.

From Hereford. —When David was speaking to Saul the heart of Jonathan **was** won. **He** could not escape the contrast **as** they spoke together—Saul, his great height only emphasising the **sad** fact that no longer **was** he the saviour of the nation, **and** the youth **David**, clutching the gory head of the giant with which he had returned to the slopes of Elah. Here he **sees** **a** youth whose living faith **in** God ennobled his character **and** endeared him to the hearts of all the people.

And so Jonathan loved David deeply, **and** he showed his love openly **by** giving David his own garments **and** weapons. Although David had **been** accustomed to the clothing of **a** shepherd, when dressed **in** princely garments he aroused not jealousy, **but** the love of both the people **and** Saul's servants.

The friendship grew very wonderfully between the two young men as Jonathan struggled to do right between Saul and David, and saved David time and again from death. We may not know just when Jonathan came to understand that David was God's chosen king, but Saul's evil outburst in chapter 20. 80 must have exercised his heart in the matter, and by chapter 23. 17 he was so convinced of God's plan for the future that he encouraged David, being assured that he would yet reign, and thought that he would be next to him in the kingdom.

We shall surely find much interest and instruction in considering the subsequent events and the fact that Jonathan never did enjoy the position which he anticipated for himself in chapter 23. 17. God's dealings with men are ever righteous, so we may search for the reasons for Jonathan's disappointment. In the first place, Jonathan seems to have overlooked an elementary principle of fair dealing among men, for we cannot fail to notice that his meetings with David appear to have become only occasional and short visits, after which he "went into the city" or "went to his house." The anointed king, whom he loved, fled into the forest or the wilderness, but Jonathan returned to the comfort of city and home. (Contrast the sturdy and unselfish loyalty of Uriah in 2 Samuel 11. 11). Would it have been proper for David, when eventually acknowledged king, to have given the highest honours to Jonathan, in preference to the mighty men who had suffered and fought and risked their lives, time and again, for David, when he was a fugitive? How could Jonathan expect to have pre-eminence over, say, those three warriors who hacked their way through to Bethlehem's gate and back again, to bring their beloved David the cold water from his favourite well? No, God's servants must take thought for things honourable, in the sight of the Lord, and in the sight of men.

Whilst Jonathan was prepared up to a point to suffer *for* David, we do not find him suffering *with* David, and there must be joint suffering in the wilderness if there is to be joint glory in the kingdom. This principle is very clearly confirmed for us in N. T. Scriptures, e. g., John 12. 26; Romans 8. 17; 2 Timothy 2. 11-12; and Hebrews 13. 13.

Finally, it seems that Jonathan should have made his decision for David at the point of 1 Samuel 20. 30; here he has at least an intimation that David was to be king, and also that Saul was determined to kill David and anyone who defended him. Jonathan had only one life to give, and the question he had to face was whether to give it to God's anointed, or for David's enemy. There seems to be a sorrowful note in the lamentation, that Saul and Jonathan in their death were not divided. Jonathan should have realised what many had learnt before and many have found since, that God sometimes divides even between father and son. Filial subjection is right and good, but where the father opposes the will and work of God, then obedience to God overrides obedience to parents, and families are divided (Luke 12. 51). It is indeed a lamentation that Jonathan, who could have been second to David in the kingdom, died at the hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, whose defeat by young David had first won his heart for David, God's chosen king. *E. H. M.*

From **London**. —The story of David and Jonathan, the love they had for each other, and how it was manifested in their actions and influenced their lives, is full of interest.

They had much in common, both being men of valour. Jonathan was as skilful with the bow and arrow as David was with the sling. And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as his own soul, and Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him and gave it to David, and his apparel, even to his sword and to his bow and to his girdle. David had won a loyal friend.

Saul did his utmost to turn Jonathan against David, but Jonathan delighted much in David, and he warned David that he should hide in a secret place while he sought to act as mediator. Jonathan communed with his father

and recounted all that David had done, and Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan, and Saul swore, " As the LORD liveth, he shall not **be** put to death. " So David **was** again brought into Saul's presence **as** beforetime. However, **he is** again forced to flee for his life, and Michal, his **wife**, lets him down through the window at night, for the house **is** watched. David **is** not distressed, for his conscience **is** clear of offence, and he expresses his thoughts in the words of the 59th Psalm: —

" I will sing of Thy strength;
Yea, I will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning;
 For Thou hast been **my** high tower,
 And **a** refuge in the day of my distress. "

In chapter 20. David seeks an interview with Jonathan to know what he had done to arouse such hatred in his father's heart, and asserted that there **was** but a step between him and death. **Was** David's faith failing here? And Jonathan said, " God forbid, thou shalt not die, " and **assured** David of his willingness to do whatsoever his soul desired. A plan **is** **devised** and Saul's intentions are again tested, with the result that these friends **are** forced to part, and David becomes an exile. A touching scene takes place in the field. A covenant **is** made between the house of Saul and the house of David, which covenant was faithfully kept by David. This **was** a sad moment for both, and they kissed one another, and wept one with the other until David exceeded, and Jonathan said to David, " Go in peace, forasmuch **as** we have sworn both of **us** in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD shall **be** between **me** and thee, and between my seed and thy **seed**, for ever. " And David arose and departed.

Later, Jonathan found David in the wood **at** Ziph, and strengthened his hand in God, and said, " **Fear** not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt **be** king over Israel, and I shall **be** next unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth. " And the two made a covenant before the LORD. This **seems** to **be** the last **time** they met on earth.

Some may criticise Jonathan for not joining David in the wilderness, **but** there **is** little doubt that Jonathan felt that **it was** his duty to remain at his father's side, and that he hoped to **be** able to warn David when danger **was** close. Perhaps loyalty to his father and the throne kept him from going with David into exile. Could the Holy Spirit speak so highly of Jonathan's love for David, **if** failure to go into exile was **a** wrong? Others thought that Jonathan lacked that utter surrender of Hebrews 13. 13. [1].

The following scriptures present a comparison between human and divine love and **a** contrast with human hatred: —1 Samuel 18. 1, Jeremiah 31. 3, and 1 Samuel 18. 10; 1 Samuel 18. 4, John 19. 2, and 1 Samuel 18. 29; 1 Samuel 18. 3, Judges 2. 1, and 1 Samuel 19. 1; 1 Samuel 18. 4, 1 Timothy 2. 5, and 1 Samuel 19. 15.

E. C. Leamy.

From Crowborough. —Doubtless Jonathan's heart first went out to the humble son of Jesse when he **saw** him returning from the slaughter of Israel's great foe. This **was** the beginning of this wonderful friendship, and of the covenant relationship **made** that day. The following scriptures tell **us** how the friendship grew between them: —1 Samuel 18. 1, 3; 1 Samuel 19. 2, 4; 1 Samuel 20. 4, 17. And David knew that Jonathan loved him (2 Samuel 1. 26). Similarly our hearts have gone out in love to the Lord Jesus, **because** of **His** great victory over a mightier foe. Perhaps Jonathan realised that **but** for that victory he himself might well have become a dead man, **as** we too realise that, but for that victory of the Lord Jesus, eternal death must have been ours. How wonderfully God united these two, one **a** prince, **used** to the splendour and pomp of the palace, and the other **a** humble shepherd, in one of the most intimate friendships ever recorded! It **was** more than **a** mere being " drawn " together; they were " knit " together. The expression here used **is** the **same as** that **used** of

Jacob's affection for Benjamin. It is said, " His life is bound up in the lad's life " (Genesis 44. 80). How wonderful too that there is friendship between the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, and us, creatures of the dust!

Jonathan, as intermediary with his father, pleaded, " Wherefore should he be put to death ? What hath he done ? " This reminds us of the words of Pilate concerning David's greater Son and David's Lord, " Why, what evil hath He done ? "

Jonathan, in the zeal of his first love, stripped himself of all he possessed, but, because of the limitations of his love, he never made the sacrifice of going forth unto David to take his place with him in his rejection. How sad it is that Jonathan never severed his connections with Saul his father, whom God had rejected ! Jonathan failed to give himself to David. The scripture is, " My son, give me thine heart " (Proverbs 23. 26). In 2 Corinthians 8. 5 we read of the Macedonians that " first they gave their own selves to the Lord. "

The Song of the Bow comes from the lips of a man who truly loved Jonathan. And how precious was Jonathan's love to him ! May we not learn from this how dear to the Lord Jesus are our failing affections towards Him.

B. V. French, J. H. B.

EXTRACTS.

From **Kirkintilloch**. —David's victory over Goliath in the vale of Elah had a definite reaction upon Jonathan, for as he stood and listened to David speaking with Saul, " his soul was knit with the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul. " This beautiful expression is used also of Jacob and Benjamin (Genesis 44. 30), and it indicates the unity which this knitting process of their hearts had effected.

In 1 Samuel 20. 8 David says that it was Jonathan who had brought him into a covenant of the LORD with him; then in verse 17, " Jonathan caused David to swear again, for the love that he had to him. " The terms of their covenant were two-fold. Jonathan desired that he would have a place next to David when David became the king of Israel (see 1 Samuel 23. 17), and also that David would remember to show the kindness of the LORD to Jonathan's house when the LORD had subdued all his enemies.

How little Jonathan knew of what it would cost him to be next to David upon his throne ! His ambition was similar to that of James and John, who came with their mother to the Lord Jesus Christ, and desired that they might sit, one on His right hand, and one on His left hand, in His kingdom (Matthew 20. 21). The Lord's reply to them is full of instruction—" Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink ? " He thus showed that a place with Him in glory was not to be easily obtained, but necessitated fellowship with Him in His sufferings. Jonathan evidently did not appreciate this, for when the time came for David's separation from the house of Saul, and his rejection, Jonathan made his sad choice, and went back to his father's house, while David went into the wood. We observed that from this point in the life of Jonathan, his name is never mentioned in the Scriptures until the day of his death. The Holy Spirit has nothing to record of a man who is now out of touch with the man of God's choice. What an obvious lesson this teaches us to-day, to be ever in touch with our Lord Jesus Christ in this the day of His rejection !

H. King, W. Sneddon.

From **Barrhead and Paisley**. —We can appreciate Jonathan's admiration when he sees the youthful shepherd save the situation in the vale of Elah, an admiration which deepens into love when he perceives the sterling qualities which David possesses. This friendship, thus begun, is sealed almost immediately in a covenant, Jonathan surrendering to his deliverer his robe, his girdle and his sword, etc.

Soon, however, Jonathan is torn between his affection and allegiance to Saul, his father, the king, **and** his love for the persecuted David. In such a position he tries to take the middle course, but only succeeds in incurring his father's displeasure and eventually in losing the companionship of David. We cannot doubt Jonathan's love when it is portrayed so beautifully in the Scriptures, but we can see its limitations when Jonathan fails to go out to David in his rejection.

Surely in Jonathan we see something of the sinner who in view of the load removed from him, and in the light of the deliverance of Calvary, surrenders himself completely to the Lord in his first love; but when separation is demanded of him, family ties and responsibilities deter him from completely separating himself unto the Lord Christ, and so denies himself full communion. There is no doubt Jonathan was the loser, so also is the believer who does not go forth without the camp to the Lord Jesus, and share His rejection.

We are not told what was Jonathan's own opinion of his actions, whether he was satisfied that he had fulfilled his responsibilities to David, or whether his conscience was troubled because he had failed to join him. Separation to God means, not only withdrawing from sinful ways, but also from sects and religious organisations which are not of God. Even in the face of family ties and responsibilities the divine requirement is complete separation, regardless of consequences.

Are we right in assuming that the covenant between Jonathan and David was solemnized in the same way as the covenant between Abraham and God? (Genesis 15.) [2]. * *J. McK. Gault.*

From Birkenhead. —Against the dark background of Saul's enmity is the moving story of Jonathan's love to David. Love desires to covenant, and to sacrifice, yea, to give of its best to the one beloved. This is what Jonathan did.

We are reminded of the LORD'S love towards Israel when He speaks of Himself as One who drew them with the cords of a man, with the bands of love (Hosea 11. 4). True love did beget faithfulness, even though it meant to Jonathan some suffering. In spite of the growing enmity and evil intentions of his father, Jonathan is prepared to speak well of David, even to intercede for him in such a manner as to turn away, at least for a time, the enmity of Saul.

Thinking again of Jonathan as speaking of " ourselves, " and David, of " the Lord Jesus, " we have a good example in Jonathan's faithfulness. Seeing we have tasted of the love of Christ, we should at all times be prepared to testify on His behalf in that ministry of reconciliation which He has entrusted to each one of us, not simply as a duty, but out of love and gratitude to Him.

We may wonder why Jonathan did not choose to be with David in the place of his rejection. We think of the noble decision of Ruth, " Intreat me not to leave thee . . . whither thou goest, I will go, " and the desire of Ittai in 2 Samuel 15. 21, " As the LORD liveth . . . surely in what place my lord the king shall be, whether for death or for life, even there also will thy servant be. " If Jonathan lacked the willingness to cut himself off from his father's house and take his place with David in rejection, it certainly did not seem to be for lack of love on his part, but there was limitation in his love for David. Lovely and valiant as to earthly things, Jonathan had not the spiritual vision and hold on eternal things that David had. The Psalms bear abundant testimony to David's love for the LORD, as history does in 1 Samuel to Jonathan's human love.

It can at least be said that Jonathan remained loyal to Saul as king. If Jonathan had gone over to David, Saul might have considered this an act of rebellion. Perhaps also he may have felt he could do no better service for David than continue his efforts with his father, or even succour David whenever he was able, as in fact he did later on in the wilderness of Ziph.

Whilst some of the acts of David on this occasion might suggest he was spiritually at a low ebb (which Jonathan would undoubtedly notice), the words of Psalms 34. and 59. show that throughout this severe testing time he was maintaining that quiet confidence in God, which later was to reach such splendid heights.

David's fine tribute to Jonathan and his love is touchingly expressed in " the Song of the Bow, " which he taught Israel to sing in memoriam, especially the moving reference to " my brother Jonathan. " It is significant, however, the LORD'S name is not in this song. There is much of earthly glory in deeds of love and war, but nothing of divine glory, for David realised the true nature of this defeat.

P. K., N. A.

From **Knocknacloy**. —David, in his slaying of Goliath, is a type of Christ, who did the mighty work of salvation for us on the cross of Calvary. Jonathan, we think, typifies the believer, to-day, who recognises his salvation and loves his Saviour with an ever-increasing love. Jonathan, still the type of the believer, pleads with Saul, who, we think, typifies the unbeliever, to be reconciled to David, his saviour. But the limitations of Jonathan's love are clearly shown in his turning back from taking his stand with David in his day of rejection. So some believers, to-day, who love the Lord in some matters, turn away from Him in others, instead of continuing steadfastly in the apostles' teaching.

We think we see Christ's love to the sinner even though he is despised and rejected by him. We remember how Christ, too, wept over Jerusalem.

William Woods, Samuel Fulton.

From **Atherton**. —There was much in common between these two wonderful characters. Both were God-fearing men, of great faith and courage; prepared to sacrifice self in most hazardous and dangerous exploits. But Jonathan's courage failed him when he heard the giant defy Israel's God. The mighty act of David's faith attracted him. From that moment mutual love sprang up between them.

It is a striking picture of Christ the Son of David, whose mighty work, in defeating the arch-enemy of mankind, draws men to Himself! That mighty love has won the hearts of very many; and the terms of the new covenant are clearly outlined in the New Testament writings.

Although Jonathan's love was soon put to the test, he delighted much in David, and whatsoever he desired he was prepared to do for him, to shield and protect him, to arbitrate for him and to extol his dearest friend, and to hazard his own life for him. But David's love was ever the stronger—a true type of the Bridegroom, whose love many waters cannot quench. But in the closing words of 1 Samuel 20. we see the limitations of Jonathan's love; he was ever *for* David, but, alas ! not *with* him. How often is the cost of " going outside the camp " to the Lord far too high a price for many who love the Lord! How solemn in this connection are the words of the Lord Himself in Matthew 10. 34-39. So that while David was in rejection, although Jonathan strengthened His hand in God, his last recorded words to David are most touching, "Fear not: for the hand of Saul my father shall not find thee; and thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be *next* unto thee; and that also Saul my father knoweth " (1 Samuel 23. 17). We wonder if Jonathan was right or wrong in not associating with David. It was suggested that if he did wrong, his failure would be so outstanding as to call for divine censure, or, at least, divine comment. The absence of this is very important. David, too, never refers to any failure on Jonathan's part. Against this view, 2 Samuel 1. 23 does condemn Jonathan. Jonathan did everything possible in his love for David. Perhaps Jonathan was seeking to obey the law of God, " Honour thy father and mother, " or he was recognising his father as Israel's king, the LORD'S anointed [3]. We thought that the death of Jonathan on Mount Gilboa was not God's judgment on him for not going out to David, but rather does it indicate God's inscrutable plan and purpose, for Jonathan must needs be out of the way, for David to take the throne after the death of Saul [4].

Reference was made to 1 Samuel 20. 5-11. Was David's plan relative to his supposed visit to Bethlehem justifiable ? [5]. Some felt that here we see David's failure, for under no circumstances was it right for him to tell what was clearly a lie. Jonathan, too, failed in not correcting David, and both should have devised some other plan [6].

E. Birchall, G. Sankey.

From **Cardiff**.—The story of David and Jonathan ranks amongst the most engaging and delightful of Scripture. Jonathan had worthy aspirations in connection with the throne of Israel and the honour of the LORD. His work, as intermediary between David and Saul, proved useful and the Scriptures show that Jonathan worked for David's success. Jonathan is to be much admired for his exertions on David's behalf, exertions which brought his life into danger. For this reason the great failure in Jonathan's life is tragic and lamentable. There came a time when Saul told his servants they must slay David, and David was hunted far and wide. Jonathan continued to keep in touch with him, but did not number himself with those who were in distress, in debt, and discontented; who gathered themselves unto David in the cave of Adullam. We read that Jonathan went out to David when the latter was in the wilderness of Ziph in the wood, but we also read that he returned to his house. It seems that Jonathan saw David no more. He was not with David in those thrilling but dangerous encounters he had with Saul in the wilderness of Ziph and in the hill of Hachilah. Instead he fought alongside Saul in Mount Gilboa (in which battle David and his men did not engage), and lost his life, and his body was fastened to the wall of Bethshan.

Those who desire honour must first practise humility, and those who desire glory must learn obedience and suffering. The two sons of Zebedee wished to sit on either side of the Lord in His kingdom. Like Jonathan, they did not know what they asked, and the crucial question was asked by the Lord, "Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him. This was not Jonathan's portion when David came to the throne, for his bones then lay buried under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh. What will be our portion when great David's greater Son reigns in righteousness and rules the nations unto the uttermost parts of the earth?

Martin Follett.

From Cowdenbeath.—"Love envieth not" (1 Corinthians 13. 4). How true in Jonathan's case! Being the heir to Saul's throne he might have viewed with envious eyes the youth who wrought the victory and who rightfully merited the praise. Three times we read that Jonathan loved David as his own soul, and that we might appreciate the oneness which existed between these two men the statement is given—"His soul was knit with the soul of David." The word here translated "knit" is the same as is translated "joined together" in Nehemiah 4. 6. As the completion of the building made the wall one, even so were David and Jonathan virtually one. "Jonathan delighted much in David" (1 Samuel 19. 2). This is a picture to us of the believer's inward rejoicing in his Saviour. "Jonathan spake good of David" (1 Samuel 19. 4). In a household which was opposed to, and hateful of, David, he showed his love by speaking unto others on his behalf. "He was grieved for David" (1 Samuel 20. 34). The true nature of Jonathan's love is seen here. When his father spake disrespectfully of the object of his love it was more than he could bear, and he went out in fierce anger, not because Saul had cast a spear at him, but because he had done David shame. Thus, within his own home, he bore a bright testimony, but a more severe test awaited Jonathan.

A more touching scene could not be witnessed than that of those two men locked in one another's embrace with the tears streaming copiously. Yet Jonathan said to David, "Go," and having watched him depart, he chose to return to the city. David became the outcast living in the wilderness and the cave, whilst Jonathan returned to the comforts of home life in the city. In applying the teaching to ourselves, how fitting are the words of Hebrews 13. 13! "Let us therefore go forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach."

Jonathan had a noble ambition. "Thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee" (1 Samuel 23. 17). He did not, however, realise its fulfilment. This reminds us of the scripture which says, "If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2. 12).

He remained in the house of Saul and with Saul he perished. On the day that the glory of the kingdom of Saul departed, Jonathan fell on the field of battle. What a solemn consideration this is and how strongly it emphasises the truth, that places of honour in our Lord's kingdom shall be given only to those who have continued with Him ! " Y e . . . have continued with m e . . . and I appoint unto you a kingdom " (Luke 22. 28, 29).

David and Jonathan made three covenants. The first in chapter 18. 3. The second in chapter 20. 16. The third in chapter 23. 18 [7]. *James Bowman.*

From Hamilton (Ont.). —Jonathan's love triumphed over many obstacles, but it had its limits in so far as his faith was limited. He did not take the step of faith and find himself in the despised place with David.

In 1 Samuel 20. in the meeting of Jonathan and David, the love between them was most prominently displayed in the tears which mingled and fell. We read that David exceeded, and then we read these sad words, " Jonathan went into the city. " Our thoughts turned to so many children of God, to-day, who are quite content to love our Lord Jesus Christ to an extent of showing much fervour in reaching souls, but (how sad!), when approached about the separated pathway and the true disciple attitude of obedience, they shrink back.

Regarding Jonathan's love and its limits, we contrast the love of the Lord Jesus, who because of His great love gave His all for us. The hymn-writer asks, " I gave my life for thee ! What hast thou given for me ? "

Can it be that the things of this life are having too strong a pull on our lives ? Let us, after a perusal of this month's subject, seek to have a closer walk with God, and a severing of those ties which would hold us back. Is our love practical and true ? David, in his lamentation, recognised Saul's and Jonathan's virtues, and he magnified them. To-day much strife could be averted in Assemblies of God if the same could be said of our hearts. God does not want whisperers, backbiters, or any of these things which are of the flesh. Sincerity seems to have always been the root of David's great love, and in his lamentation he is most emphatic in his praise of the one who had been very pleasant unto him, and for whose death he was much distressed. *John Young, Alex Davidson.*

From **Toronto** (Ont.). —Jonathan's love for David was first kindled when the latter stood before the people of Israel as the conqueror over Goliath of Gath, but it grew to maturity as he stood before Saul. A covenant was made between the two. Of this covenant Jonathan was the instigator, for he loved David as his own soul. We can liken him to Nicodemus, a believer, but one who was not separated to the Saviour.

When the women sang their song of triumph, Saul rejected David. Thus, too, did the leaders of Israel, on the banks of the Jordan, reject our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Jonathan plays the part of an intercessor before his father Saul.

Jonathan's love was not quite great enough to cause him to separate himself from his father's house. David's lamentation we likened unto the Judgment Seat of Christ, when the hay, wood, and stubble are burnt up and only the gold, silver, **and** precious stones **are** left. *John McCart, James Scalf.*

From **Broxburn**. —As David stood in Saul's presence with the evidence of victory and spake with him, Jonathan saw in David Israel's saviour and his saviour, and he loved David as he loved his own soul, so they made a covenant, because of Jonathan's love for David. Jonathan, in divesting himself of his robe and apparel and handing all to David, seems to say, "Thou art heir to the throne."

When Saul spake to Jonathan and his servants to slay David, Jonathan spake good of David unto his father. Here we reflected how sad it is that many a gifted man can speak well of our Saviour and rejoice in His wonderful salvation, yet they have never owned Him as Lord, and taken their place with Him outside the camp. We feel sure, if Jonathan had taken his place with David, he would never have fallen in battle at Mount Gilboa, but would have had a place near to David in the kingdom.

Saul and Jonathan are brought before us in the Song of the Bow as great warriors on the field of battle, and by their speed and fighting ability had won great spoil from time to time, and clothed in scarlet the daughters of Israel. They are seen as linked in life and not divided in death.

In God's own time David ascends the throne, but, alas, Jonathan has no place with him, neither is he numbered among David's mighty men. This surely shows the great necessity of taking our place with our Lord in the time of His rejection, and fighting the good fight of the faith, if we would find a place with Him in His coming kingdom.
Geo. Richardson.

From Kilmarnock. —Not only did Jonathan make a covenant with David, but he stripped himself and gave up his belongings to David, a proof of his love; so believers are exhorted to present their bodies a living sacrifice... to God (Romans 12. 1). Jonathan's reasoning with his father, telling of all David's good works and how he had risked his life in slaying Goliath, succeeded in saving David's life, and in bringing him back to the king's presence. This reminds us of the apostle Paul making his defence and telling of his conversion before king Agrippa, causing the king to confess "With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian" (Acts 26. 28). Also, how many believers, in a humbler way, have led others to Christ by their testimony!

Jonathan, by his faithfulness and love, showed he was truly *for* David, but, alas! he was not *with* him in his wanderings and persecution. Had he shared these, we doubt not but David would have given him a place of honour in his kingdom.

How many of God's children to-day rejoice in Christ as Saviour, but fail to take their place with Him "outside the camp," owning Him as Lord by obeying His commands! According to Romans 8. 17 we understand it is only those who endure with Christ that will reign with Him (see also 2 Timothy 2. 12). After all the suffering that David received at the hand of Saul, it is wonderful the gracious manner in which he laments at his death; reminding us of the Lord weeping over Jerusalem. His true love and friendship for Jonathan is fully expressed in verse 26—"I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan... thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." His kindness also to Mephibosheth showed he did not forget his covenant with Jonathan (see 1 Samuel 20. 15-17 and 2 Samuel 9. 1).
A. G. S.

COMMENTS.

[1] (London). —Jonathan had to choose between what may be regarded as loyalty to his father Saul, the rejected king, and loyalty to David, the LORD'S anointed king in the stead of his father. Could Jonathan ever be right in following one who had turned back from following the LORD? See 1 Samuel 15. 11. Saul's course could only end in disaster, and in such a disaster all who followed him must share, and so, alas, it happened with Jonathan and others. There are still all too many children of God follow other children of God who do not follow the Lord, and both leaders and led will share in the loss of such a course. Let us learn from Saul and Jonathan, and be wise!—*J. M.*

[2] (Barrhead and Paisley). —We have no reference to such an act in the covenant between David and Jonathan. It seemed to have been, from Jeremiah 34. 18, 19, a practice in Israel to act similarly to Genesis 15., for those who entered into covenants to divide the covenant animal and to pass figuratively

through death. In the absence of evidence in David and Jonathan's case, we cannot say. Jonathan put David under oath, **as we are told**, "Jonathan caused David to **swear** again" (1 Samuel 20. 17). —*J. M.*

[3] (Atherton). —**See** note in paper from London. **We** must balance "Honour thy father and mother" with—"If any **man** cometh unto Me, and hateth not his own father, and mother... he cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14. 26). Jonathan evidently missed the mark in failing to appreciate the fundamental matters of the rejection of his father **as king** by the LORD, and the anointing of David in his stead. Such matters should have had **an** over-riding consideration with Jonathan if he **was** to be in line with the purposes of God then being fulfilled. Whatever considerations to-day keep God's saints in many cases from being with the Lord in this time of His rejection, none of these considerations is of weight in the solemn and all-important matter of going forth to the Lord outside the camp. We all could go into the city and leave our David **as** Jonathan did, but we would be going into the city too soon. We shall go into the city in due time, but it will be one where the Lord Himself holds sway. Note the contrasts in such words—"And Jonathan went into the city. Then came David to Nob" (1 Samuel 20. 42; 21. 1). Nob was where God's house was. Let those who would share in the Lord's rejection turn to God's house in their troubles and trials. —*J. M.*

[4] (Atherton). —But **was** not Jonathan the man who said, "Fear not: . . . thou shalt be king over Israel, and I shall be next unto thee" (1 Samuel 23. 17). Why the disaster on Gilboa if his words had a modicum of truth in them respecting Jonathan's place in David's kingdom? It was, alas, but wishful thinking. Jonathan sought to walk in by-path meadow. **He** would sit next to Saul and next to David too. The sweets of both kingdoms would be his. **He** is a true picture of many of God's children who want a full cup of pleasure out of the world that now is, and a high place in the Lord's kingdom to come. It just cannot be done. Jonathan could never have it both ways, and neither can we. Let us learn from Jonathan's failure, and let **us** not seek to have an incorrect view of Jonathan's actions. It is one thing to be **for** Christ, and another to be **with** Him. —*J. M.*

[5] (Atherton). —David was dealing with a wicked and cruel man who would have murdered him, and he had to act wisely. I am not certain whether he went to Bethlehem at this time. It may very well have been that he did, in view of the attitude of his parents to him at this time, as stated in Psalm 27. 10. —*J. M.*

[6] (Atherton). —Rather strong language! —*J. M.*

[7] (Cowdenbeath). —Were not the covenants of chapters 20. 16, and 23. 18, but the re-affirming of that of chapter 18. 3? —*J. M.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Vancouver, B. C. —What effect had the music on the evil spirit leaving Saul? If worldly music was played would it have had the **same** effect?

Answer. —The effect of David's playing on Saul was, that "he was refreshed and **was** well." Then we are told that "the evil spirit departed from him." **We** are not told that the evil spirit was affected by David's playing at all. The probable meaning of the passage is, that Saul **was** so soothed and refreshed by David's playing that the evil spirit, foiled in the mischief he made in Saul's mind, **saw** there **was** no purpose in his remaining with Saul while David played. So he left Saul for the time being, only to return, when David **was** absent, to carry on his peace-destroying work within Saul. So the contest went on **in** the mind of Saul between the evil spirit and David. It is a big subject—the effect of music on a human being, and the momentary soothing by its means. This must never be confused with the permanent peace that comes through receiving the word of God by faith. Eloquent preaching of the word of God to those who hear, but with the hearing of the ear, may **be** but **as** a lovely song and like playing upon **an** instrument (Ezekiel 33. 32). —*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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FOREWORD.

A few matters call for attention. Will correspondents please use one side only of paper and leave a margin ? This helps editors and printers. To keep up to our title, we would welcome papers of a student-nature, and we encourage our friends to contribute. The inclusion of these expected papers will call for a more drastic pruning of papers on the subject of our study, but we feel sure that our fellow-students will realise that the great gain has already been obtained by the writer, before it reaches the Editor's desk. If correspondents would endeavour to write **as** tersely as possible, it would obviate Editors having to prune papers to the size of our monthly. We apologise for having to cut down papers so much.

I am sure we shall all follow with our prayers our beloved co-Editor, Mr. John Miller, in his visit to North America. Students in that vast Continent will welcome **one** who has taught us much of God's way for His people, and who has ever encouraged young men in their study of the Word of God. *Jas. M.*

'REMEMBER FOR DAVID ALL HIS AFFLICTION. "

In the dismal refuge of the Cave of Adullam the afflicted exile establishes his first headquarters. To him resorted a motley group impelled by mixed motives to throw in their lot with him. Their leader could say,

⁴⁴My soul is among lions; I lie among them that are set on fire.
Even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows.
And their tongue a sharp sword. "

Could there possibly be anything of God in such a movement ? Yes, for again God **was** to show that He would choose the " weak things of the world, that He might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, **and** the things that are despised. " From such insignificant beginnings was to spring a force which became the nucleus of the army which raised Israel to **her** divinely destined place among the nations.

Yet what was the attitude of the average Israelite to this stand taken by David ? Many shared the outlook of Nabal, who churlishly said,

" Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse ? there be many servants nowadays that break away every man from **his** master. "

Comfortably enjoying the material benefits of **an** inheritance which David's valour had preserved for them, they took little thought for the injustice which he had suffered, and were unprepared to risk associating themselves with one whose

prospects of success seemed so slim. A minority of spiritually discerning folk saw beyond this carnal view. Their thoughts were eloquently expressed by Abigail, as she voiced her confidence, that "though **man** be risen up to pursue thee, and to seek thy soul, yet the soul of my lord shall **be** bound up in the bundle of life with the **LORD** thy God; and the souls of thine enemies, them shall **He** sling out, **as** from the hollow of a sling." Abigail had the assurance of faith that David would be king over Israel, and her faith was proved by her works as **she** bravely went forth to share his exile.

Here, then, was a crisis of division among the people of God. Both Saul and David fought against the Philistines; but now the tragedy of civil war had been forced upon God's people by the departure of Saul from God's word. A man who had been privileged with divinely appointed leadership had been set aside in favour of one who would do all God's will. Those who would share the ultimate glory of David's reign must side with him in his time of affliction. To do this needed spiritual discernment, for it was easy to compromise or avoid the issue by saying that Saul was the king anointed by Samuel, and he was still the leader of the people against the Philistines. And how much more is such discernment needed to-day in the midst of so much confusion among those who have a knowledge of God! To many the issue appears simply as one of loyalty to fundamentalist and evangelical principles, a common front against infidelity or false religious philosophy. They regard as eccentric the desire to do **all** the will of our Lord **Jesus** Christ, looking on those who separate for that purpose as introducing "civil war" among the children of God. Yet **if** the words of our rejected Master are to find effect in our experience, it can only be **as** we go forth unto Him, determined that only **His** will shall govern us. Though in a very small minority, a powerful divine purpose may be worked out through a separated and devoted band of God's people.

Let us note well the importance of devotion as well as separation! The band in the cave of Adullam would never grow into a mighty army by passively settling on its lees. Its early history was one of devoted heroism scarcely matched in Israel's distinguished annals. The four hundred were bound together in the power of a great ideal; they vied with one another in their loyalty and love to David. This personal affection for David alone made Adullam tolerable. The place of separation to-day will prove most distasteful if affection for the Lord is lacking; but let the heart be vividly conscious of **His** presence, and then the circumstances assume much **less** importance. Because of their affection for David, no sacrifice was too hard for his men. His slightest longing became their command. **We** do well to ponder the lovely incident recorded in 1 Chronicles 11. 17-19, noting especially that in a "little thing" the love of these men was reflected to highest advantage. To-day, separation involves patient continuance in assembly service, and many regard **as** only "little" things of relative unimportance such matters **as** baptism or the breaking of the bread. This story illustrates the appreciation of the **LORD** where sacrifice **is** made to please **Him**; what a joy to be companying with Him in association with others, so that **His** will can be given expression to according to His word! Men sacrifice much for far lower ideals. May we be gripped by our privileges, and inspired to greater sacrifice! The blurring of vision **as** to divine principle, which has resulted from a so-called tolerant attitude **in** many Christian circles, may well infect the unwary, and there will follow a complacent attitude towards the Lord's things, as though we had nothing to strive or sacrifice for. One has well written,

" No wound, no scar ?
 Yet, **as** the Master shall the servant be,
 And pierced are the feet that follow Me.
 But thine are whole: can he have followed far
 Who has nor wound nor scar ? "

Devotion and readiness to sacrifice are vital, but only careful training **in** warfare can enable us to prevail. The days of David's **exile** were days of hard training for him and his men. In constant peril, they must ever be on their **guard**, ready to **exercise** their skill in arms. While our wrestling **is** not against flesh and blood, our warfare is incessant, and the spiritual foes will concentrate their

energies against those who company closest with Him. If the small separated company is to overcome and grow, there must be awareness of the need to **put on** the whole armour of God, and skill in the use of the offensive weapons of prayer and the handling of God's word. Longings to serve the One we love will most effectively be realised **as** we become proficient in our understanding and use of the Scriptures. This involves earnest study and application. There is no easy path to efficiency in any sphere, and how much less in the things of God? In the realm of prayer, strength **is** gained only by exercise and personal experience. If we are conscious that we have been divinely led to **a** place of separation unto Him, of what value are we in the forward progress of those with whom we serve?

Identified **as** we shall be until the Lord's return with **a** struggling minority who seek in weakness to give effect to His will, we do well to "remember for David all his affliction." Our afflictions will seem small in contrast to his. God's faithfulness in bringing him through severer trials will brace us to endure for Christ's sake. To realise that David was as much in the Divine purpose during days of affliction **as** during later days of glory will help us to maintain **a** right balance about the present remnant phase of God's dealings with those separated to the will of the Lord. Yet we shall be given also that earnest purpose to press on in anticipation of God's being glorified through **a** people that, knowing Him, achieves exploits against great odds. Which of David's veterans would wish to have been deprived of the honour of sharing those days of exile?

G. Prasher, Jun.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

David in Exile.

From Glasgow. —Although David was **a** man after God's own heart, with the Spirit of God upon him, he was human and suffered failings common to us all. Some have asked if David was right in going into exile when God had chosen him **as** king and had, through Samuel, anointed him. It may **seem** strange that, having been delivered from the paws of the lion and the bear, and having slain the giant of Gath, David should flee from Saul. The explanation may be found in the words of Jonathan in 1 Samuel 20. 22, "Go thy way; for the LORD hath sent thee away." David's exile may therefore be regarded **as** included in the purposes of God, that he might suffer hardship **as** **a** soldier of God before his glory **as** king [1].

His first appearance in exile is at Nob, where there appeared to be some kind of divine service. Little is known about how the priests came to be there or what service was carried on, but David found refuge and advice with the priests [2]. The Lord Jesus tells us in Mark 2. that he entered into the house of God and was sustained with holy bread. It is regrettable that David should have found it necessary to mislead Ahimelech as to the real nature of his visit, thereby placing the priests in danger of their lives. It is the more regrettable that David should have done all these things in the presence of Doeg, the Edomite, whom he regarded as suspect from the first. David's failure to disclose his real business and his lack of foresight as to the consequences thereof, occasioned the death of all but one of the priests and brought him to belated remorse. In this first lesson of his exile we **see** that his treatment of Ahimelech revealed his simplicity, and taught him the need of vision and forethought [3].

David's two attempts to live in Gath coincided with periods of despondency and fear of Saul, and we may regard them as indicating how David suffered under the strain of exile, with his life always in danger. We may feel that these incidents suggest **a** weakness in David's faith, but we must always remember our own position **as** voluntary exiles in this world. His presence there should be **a** warning to us all.

Later, David came to the cave of Adullam, where he enjoyed the protection of the LORD. Here about four hundred men joined David, and found in him **a** companion in distress and **a** leader in recovery. It is interesting to note that his father and his brethren joined him at Adullam, they having intimate knowledge

of God's purposes **in** David. David's **band** was growing, and the lesson of Adullam would **seem** to **be** that God works with, **and** for, those who **are** separated to Him **and** who **are** not entangled in the land.

In the incident at Keilah we **see** that David's success in evading Saul lay in **his** decision to enquire of the LORD for directions. But more **was** to follow. **He** moved into the wilderness of Ziph, there to meet further disloyalty in the Ziphites, until God **again** delivered him by distracting Saul.

So the process of gaining hard experience went on until the dark days of Ziklag, **again** the result of David's seeking shelter among the enemies of the LORD. His previous experience of this false security under Achish had apparently not convinced him of its futility, and it was only a matter of time till the Amalekites raided Ziklag and ruined it. This brought David nearer to downfall than any of the machinations of Saul. From inside his own followers dissension arose, so much so that the people spoke of stoning him. But David had the good sense to enquire of the LORD, and a way out **was** graciously provided. What a lesson Ziklag ought to be for any of God's present-day people who would seek refuge **in** any but the Lord !

The experiences of David's exile were not lost upon him, and though he learned **in** a hard school, he learned thoroughly. **His** reaction to the various situations are recorded for **us** in Psalms 52., 54., 56., 57. These all shew how **much he was cast** upon God and how **he** valued the **help** that **came** from the ever-present Help in time of trouble. J. J. P.

From Cowdenbeath. —In anger Saul commanded Jonathan to send and fetch David **that he** should die (1 Samuel 20. 31). Then followed the tense scene of the two friends weeping, and the parting words from Jonathan, " Go in peace " (1 Samuel 20. 42). Thus **was** the **man** of God's choice rejected **by the** leaders of Israel in that day.

At Nob David entered into the house of God, and requested of Ahimelech bread to satisfy his and the young **men's** hunger. Only Shewbread was available that day, and so they partook of the holy bread. Although it **was** unlawful for David to eat the Shewbread, the rigidity of keeping the law **was** overshadowed by **the** principle, "**I** desire mercy, **and** not sacrifice" (Hosea 6. 6, cp. Luke 6. 1-5).

David knew that Doeg would betray his movements to Saul (1 Samuel 22. 22). **He** wrote of Doeg in Psalm 52. 2:

" Thy tongue deviseth very wickedness;

Like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. "

What a trail of destruction followed in **the** wake of Doeg's lie ! Only Abiathar escaped. No doubt Doeg went to his own place (Psalm 52. 5).

David **was** to learn **the** truth of the words in Proverbs 29. 25 when at Gath (1 Samuel 21. 10). The fear of Saul had driven him there. **He was** soon recognised **by** the servants of the king of Gath **as** the person to whom Israel had ascribed their praise for deliverance from Goliath of Gath.

Noble mention **is** made of his brethren **and** all **his** father's house who came down to David **in** the cave of Adullam (1 Samuel 22. 1-2). The analogy is striking between David's brethren and the Lord's brethren, who are mentioned **as** being gathered together with the other disciples after the conflict of Calvary, recognising in Him, **the** first-born of Mary, their Saviour and King (Acts 1. 14). Discontented, distressed and debtors were some of the types of men that gathered around David, united in purpose of heart to serve him during his period of rejection. Later, **in** Mizpeh of Moab (1 Samuel 22. 3), David sought asylum for his father and mother until **he** should know further the will of God. This scene reminds **us** of the time in the Lord's life when He entrusted **His** mother to the beloved disciple with those loving words, " Woman, behold, thy son ! " (John 19. 26). God spake to David, **and he** returned to Judah, for there work was awaiting him to deliver the **men** of Keilah from **the** enemy. **What base** ingratitude they shewed **in** return to David!

Peter writes of the possibility of denying the Lord (2 Peter 2. 1). Against such actions we are warned.

Through the furnace of affliction David went until, in God's good time, he was recognised as the rightful king by all Israel (2 Samuel 5. 3). In this he typifies the Lord Jesus, who fulfilled the prophetic words uttered by David in the Psalms with regard to His sufferings, and who now awaits the time appointed by the Father for the restoration of all things, when He, the rightful King, will reign in righteousness.

Robert Ross.

From Birkenhead. —This is an important period in the life of David. The use of the Shewbread: —the Lord Jesus speaks of this incident in Matthew 12. 1-8, pointing out that in certain circumstances the law could be waived. He pointed out that He is Lord of the Sabbath, and we should be concerned about pleasing and following Him rather than seeking to observe laws and customs [4].

In Psalms 34. 11-16 we read of David's experience in exile, and find him speaking words of wisdom and comfort to his followers. This period of David's life is typical of that of the Lord Jesus Christ in the day of His suffering. It brings to mind the words, " If we endure with Him, we shall also reign with Him. " The men who were with David in Adullam were with him when he came to the throne.

Ahimelech, when called before Saul, spoke of the faithful character of David to the loss of his own life.

We find there were many occasions when David could have taken Saul's life, but though he knew him to be his enemy, he speaks of Saul as " the LORD'S anointed, " and shewed love and mercy towards him. How like the Lord Jesus Christ who died for those who were his enemies !

In Psalm 52. we have an account of the character of Doeg which shows that he was a wicked man. David, though a wonderful man, had his periods of weakness. This is a condition which we should always seek to guard against.

When David was before Achish, it is evident that he failed in not putting his trust in God. Notwithstanding that, according to Psalm 34. 5-7, he was in a very good spiritual condition. If we are prepared to put our trust in God, He has promised that He will neither fail us nor in anywise forsake us.

P. Kelly, Ken. Home.

EXTRACTS.

From Toronto. —David laid aside his personal ambitions to defend the things of God. This zeal for God's things did not immediately result in his promotion, but rather he was hunted and pursued by Saul, and finally exiled. His rejection reminds us of the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who left the throne of glory and came to be despised and rejected of men, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. In considering those who rallied to David's side, we find the debtors, the discontented, and the distressed, and we were reminded of our own condition before we came to the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly we were greatly distressed, and we could never have paid our own debt. We were discontented with the world; but though our Leader is still rejected by the majority, we, who love Him and are willing to share His reproach, will one day share with Him the glories of His eternal kingdom. Saul's acknowledgment of his error in pursuing David, yet his persistence in following him, even after this confession, shows to what extent a person may go who falls away from God. 1 Chronicles 11. was read, and consideration was given to the years that David spent in the cave. What a trial of faith ! David, although patient and faithful, had a lapse in his going to Achish, and he said, " I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul. " God's will is carried out in spite of all this, and at last David's faith triumphs. Some of David's glorious Psalms were written during this time, and some of his mightiest deeds were performed in the days of his rejection. So may our best work be done, not with eye-service, as men pleasers, but with singleness of heart as unto God.

W. R. Todd.

From Atherton. — "Exile, " a strange word, yet to all born-again ones **it** brings to mind the couplet of the well-known hymn: —

" Toil on, and **in** thy toil rejoice,
For toil comes rest, for **exile** home. "

Yes, to a greater or lesser degree, according to our love to the Lord **Jesus**, we are **exiles** (John 17. 14, 15). Then, too, the word has the thought of banishment (Genesis 3. 23, 24). It also involves separation, and this was true **in** David's **case**, for he knew separation and banishment from the people whom he loved.

We considered David's thoughts **as he** approached Nob, the city of priests. Here **was** God's dwelling place, neglected and despised by Saul, who thought little of God's priests. He **was** instrumental **in** their death, and **in** the destruction of their city.

We felt it **was** so unnecessary for David to speak **in such a way** to Ahimelech (1 Samuel 21. 2), and to behave so disgracefully before Achish (1 Samuel 21. 13) [5].

Chapter 21. depicts David **in** a low spiritual condition, out of touch with God, though **his** periods of mistrust and lack of faith **seem** to have been of short duration. Perhaps his loneliness may have had something to do with this. Chapter 22. reveals **a** great change when four hundred men, of varying conditions, join David, who now lays hold upon God, and in Psalm 34. **we** have **a** delightful insight into David's trust **in** God.

God's preservation of Abiathar is important, since it **seems** to suggest God's purpose that David should use him **in** inquiring of the LORD, for **we** see David's immediate inquiries of the LORD after Abiathar joined **him** (1 Samuel 23. 2, 4, 9, 10).

David, **in** going time and again into Gath, went outside the **wall** of separation and thus put himself into the hands of God's enemies. Had he looked up to God, God would have preserved him **in** the land. David's action at this time was compared with those who leave the Fellowship of God's Son **in** our day. Despite **all his** failure, David's affection for the House of God and the place of the **Name** **was** maintained.

G. Sankey, J. K. Southern.

From Hamilton (Ont.). —David, fleeing **in exile** from place to place before **Saul**, reminded **us** of our blessed Lord who was pure and holy, undefiled and separate from sinners, yet who could say, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have lodging places; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." **He**, too, had enemies who sought His life daily. The servants of Achish mention "the song that the women sang." This song once caused deep envy **in** the heart of Saul; it now caused David to be afraid **in** the presence of the king Achish, so **much** so that he changed his behaviour and feigned madness **in** order to escape. In contrast, the Lord Jesus was fearless in the presence of His enemies, and when the soldiers **came** to take Him, they fell backwards with astonishment. The discontented **men in** Adullam reminded us of the many sick and sad ones that were brought to Jesus, who healed all and brought peace to their troubled hearts and **became** the Captain of their salvation.

David showed forth his love for Saul in spite of the **ill** treatment at his hands, and greatly lamented the death of Saul and Jonathan. How typical of our Lord Jesus, who, when **He** was reviled, reviled not again, who could say at the culmination of **man's** hatred toward Him, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" ! **He Himself** has taught us by example how to love one another, and to love our **enemies**.

David Todd, Andrew Todd.

From Crowborough. —In the taking of the Shewbread, to which our Lord alludes in Matthew 12. 3, 4, we saw God's provision for David's need, although it involved the breaking of the law (Exodus 29. 32-34) [6]. But with a wicked man like Doeg present, witnessing all that took place, it would seem that David's behaviour was not becoming as the "LORD'S anointed" [7], for it is obvious also that David told Ahimelech a direct falsehood (chapter 21. 2). Therefore may we take heed, that our behaviour before unbelievers shall not bring dishonour on our "Saviour's Name." Yea, before believers also, we should in no wise become stumbling blocks to them that are weak (Romans 14. 20, 21; 1 Corinthians 8. 9-12). In the awful slaughter of the priests we saw God's over-ruling power, that His word might come to pass, in the judgment passed on Eli's house (1 Samuel 2. 30, 31; 3. 11-14). Ahimelech was a descendant of Eli (14. 3; 22. 20).

In Adullam's cave we pictured the lonely outcast, calmed, as he waits before His God and takes refuge beneath the wings of the Almighty. He now waits patiently to "see what God will do for him," and henceforth we observed that God's working for him was more evident. Indeed "God works for them that wait for Him" (Isaiah 64. 4). But all the cares and trials of the pathway do not make David unmindful of "the first commandment with promise" (Ephesians 6. 1-3).

David's rejection has a touching resemblance to that of our Lord and His followers to-day. It is because of the resemblance that so many of the Psalms, penned by David, may be read in a deeper sense as the utterance of "the Other." The faithful comrades of David were repaid when their leader became king, and we who now gladly bear the reproach of our Master for the little while until He comes, shall indeed be sharers in His future kingdom. *D. N. B.*

From London. —The behaviour of Doeg typifies the methods used by Satan in his warfare against God's people. Even among the Churches there were seemingly righteous and upright men seeking to bring to nought God's plans. David's companions in the cave consisted of his brethren and his father's house, who had witnessed his anointing, and who recognised him as the LORD'S chosen. There were also some Gadites, men of war, "whose faces were like the faces of lions, as swift as the roes upon the mountains" (1 Chronicles 12. 8). These men by some marvellous revelation separated themselves unto David. Then everyone that was in distress, or debt, or bitter of soul, men whose condition was obviously brought about by the misrule of Saul, joined themselves to David. The words of the Lord come to us as we read of David's companions—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11. 28). That He will receive them, as did David, is made more abundantly clear in the promise, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

During these troubled periods, the band of the outlawed increased to over six hundred. "The Word of God grew and multiplied." Two points are noticeable from David's sparing Saul at Engedi and Hachilah—David's nobility of character and Saul's reaction to David's defence. In his gentleness and loyalty David anticipated Christ's teaching—"Blessed are the merciful" (Matthew 5. 7), "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you" (Matthew 5. 44), and "Avenge not yourselves... give place to wrath... Vengeance belongeth unto Me; I will recompense... If thine enemy hunger, feed him... overcome evil with good" (Romans 12. 19-21).

Following these incidents David's faith appeared to waver, and through fear, without God, yet relying on the strength of the flesh, he was carried into dire trouble, and found himself in the wrong camp. Many Christians have taken the easier path and to avoid persecution have consorted with the world. The solemn thought of the Unequal Yoke comes to our mind. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? what concord hath Christ with Belial? ... Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate."

Only the **grace** of God prevented David from fighting against his **own** people and from the intention of Achish (27. 12.) How often does God have to over-rule to prevent His children from erring! It is quite obvious that God caused **the** complaint to come from the princes of Philistia, so that David was delivered from the precarious position he had drifted into. Although David displeased God in joining Achish, he conducted himself wisely and no evil was found in him (1 Samuel 29. 3-5).

The bitter lesson he had learned after the sack of Ziklag caused him to cleave more to the LORD and to enquire by Urim and Thummim (1 Samuel 30. 8).

And so, after the death of Saul and Jonathan, David's exile finished, and he was anointed king over Judah, and later over all Israel. David suffered greatly before he ascended to the glory of his kingship—**He** left his father's house—he was rejected and thrust into exile—he was persecuted and his life was -attempted on many occasions. His adherents were persecuted with him; but God wrought the mighty victory for him and so he reigned with his fellows in exile. What a type of Christ is David here ! Christ, the LORD'S anointed, left His Father's house, was persecuted, His life attempted. **He** was betrayed and cruelly crucified at Calvary, and **He** wrought the mighty victory. **He** bestowed blessing on **His** followers. " Blessed are ye when **men** shall persecute y o u . . . for My s a k e . . . great is your reward in heaven " (Matthew 5. 11, 12). *A. Reeve.*

From Broxburn. —The towns to which David **came in** his exile ultimately had a place in **his** kingdom; thus David had to seek refuge **in** places that were his by right. This reminds us of the Lord Jesus who was forced to wander, a homeless stranger, **in** the world **His** hands had made, (see Matthew 8. 21).

Perhaps the calamity at Ziklag (chapter 30.) was the rod of correction upon David's back for the wrongs he had committed, but the LORD, **in** David's day, **as in** ours, would not allow **His** own to be tried above that which they are able to bear. Behind the historical acts of David we have **his** spiritual experiences revealed **in** Psalm 34. Sometimes we, like David, place ourselves foolishly **in** difficult circumstances, but **if we** repent and look to the Lord, **He** comes **in** and changes everything.

Many lessons **can** be gleaned from David's contact with Nabal (1 Samuel 25.). How unlike his great progenitor, Caleb, **was** this **man!** for **in** derision **he** asked, " Who **is** David ? and who **is** the son of Jesse ? " This brought down upon him judgment. The Lord Jesus to-day **is** sending out messages of grace, which, alas, are often treated with contempt by those who fail to recognise that everything of good comes through Him, who sustains and upholds all created things. Abigail, Nabal's wife, knew that judgment would fall unless she " hasted. " She had no doubt that David was the LORD'S anointed, and that he would certainly sit upon the throne (verse 30). It **is** wonderful to know the Man in whom all God's purposes are centred.

Ziklag **was** one of David's saddest experiences, in the days of his rejection. **His** two wives and his sons and daughters were taken captive whilst he **was** at Gath. Under this calamity the spirit of many a leader would have failed, but David, we read, encouraged himself **in** the LORD his God. The language of his heart **is** touchingly expressed **in** Psalm 56. (which please read).

In 2 Samuel 2. and 5. the sufferings of David draw to a close. He inquired of the LORD (verse 1), " Shall I go up ? " He knew his destination, but experience had taught him not to take any step without first asking and obtaining the guidance from the LORD. **He** goes up to Hebron (means fellowship). The **men** of Judah anoint him king over Judah. Six and a half years later the **men** of Israel come to the **king** and **king** David **is** anointed **king** over all Israel, a dual anointing.

John McGregor,

From Cardiff. —The incident of David partaking of the Shewbread is referred to by the Lord Jesus (Matthew 12.; Mark 2.; and Luke 6.). Whilst passing through the cornfield on the sabbath they plucked and ate. In their defence against the Pharisees, the Lord Jesus says, " Have ye not read even this, what David did, when he was an hungred... how he entered into the House of God, and did take and eat the Shewbread.

(1) In what sense could the house of Ahimelech be " House of God " when it was not the place of the Name ? [8]. The ark with its cherubim, it would appear, was in the house of Abinadab at this juncture, at Baale Judah (2 Samuel 6. 3, 4), where it was for twenty years (1 Samuel 7. 2).

(2) It would appear from Joshua 18. 1 that the settled place of God's dwelling was at Shiloh, and from 1 Samuel 3. 3, Samuel ministered " in the temple of the LORD where the ark of God was. " It is also referred to in 1 Samuel 2. 29 as " My habitation. " What happened actually to Shiloh when it was forsaken ? [9].

(3) Could the sons of Ahitub, great grandsons of Eli, be acting before God in view of the curse in 1 Samuel 3. 14 ? [10].

The tribulations which David experienced taught him obedience, even so the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, " declared to be the Son of God with power, " learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Doeg the Edomite (whose character was known to David—1 Samuel 22. 22) was of the line of Esau, of whom God had said, " Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated. " The line of Esau was destined to judgment from early times.

H. R. Dodge.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —It would seem necessary that all God's great men must experience a time apart, in the wilderness, with its temptations and sorrow, before emerging for public service. Moses in the Old and Paul in the New Testament each saw visions and heard words from God when separated, because of " the reproach of Christ. " In David's exile we see something of this day in which " our Lord is now rejected, " and when few cleave to Him, as the anointed King, with subject hearts, within His kingdom—" If we *suffer*, we shall also *reign with Him*. "

David's exile began with Saul's three attempts on his life. Subsequent upon this, we repeatedly read that " David fled. " Was this weakness ? We think not, although human frailty sometimes succumbed in allowing him to go where he should not, thus creating embarrassing and dangerous situations. The moral for us is that we should, as much as in us lieth, be at peace with all men. Wisdom from above would teach us when to flee, but never at the expense of our testimony or acknowledgment of Christ's Lordship.

At Nob was the man who " made not God his strength "—Doeg. As his name was, so was he, —" anxiety "—and with the tongue of wickedness and deceit, he betrayed David. And later, to advance his own selfish interests, he fell upon the priests of the LORD. Had David not shown himself at Nob, perhaps the priests had not died, and he would have been spared such " anxiety " for them. At Nob, too, David is reminded of his finest hour when, lacking a sword, he is given that of Goliath—such tangible evidence of victory from the LORD, and, perchance, he takes this very sword with him to Gath.

Then, at Mizpeh of Moab, we have a glimmer of prophetic truth. He seeks a refuge there for " his own " in Moab, as shall the people of Israel in the day when they see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. The word, once again, is " flee. "

With David and **his men** in exile, **as** with **us** to-day, there **is** no "abiding city" **in** this scene of His rejection. Neither can we, **as** could not the Lord **Jesus**, trust men. Although Saul had just confessed to him: "Thou shalt surely prevail!" and with the prospect of his reign almost in sight, David sighed, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." Had he not already endured privations, perils, threats and sorrows such as would have broken most men? But he "strengthened himself in the LORD his God." In that strength, **as** he later said, "he could **fall** upon a troop." But, in contrast, our Lord **Jesus** ever had *the joy* set before Him. Never was sorrow like unto His sorrow, and surely never such joy. As we reflect upon His calm, patient endurance, and anticipate the glorious increase of **His** kingdom, we are encouraged, even now, to "despise the shame."

David L. Baird.

From Kilmarnock. —From David's reply to Ahimelech in 1 Samuel 21. we wonder **if** his faith in God had weakened for the time being, **as** his answer was entirely untrue. Sometimes when a believer **is** under trying circumstances, he says things he ought not. David and his companions had been journeying for about three days and were feeling the pangs of hunger, and so David enquired for bread, but there was nothing but the Shewbread at hand. Under certain conditions the priest gave the Shewbread to David, and, **if** we refer to Matthew 12. 3-4, the Lord's words to the Pharisees **seem** to approve of David's action.

How careful God's people should be in **all** their actions! Here, **in** David's case, the great adversary wrought through Doeg, who acted **as** spy, giving Saul information regarding David, part of which was untrue. **We** note, when David heard through Abiathar of the terrible calamity that had **fallen** on Ahimelech's family, and on the city of Nob, he said, "I have occasioned the death . . . of thy father's house," and **Psalms** 52. expresses his thoughts then. It makes us wonder **if** David had made a mistake in going to Nob that day.

In his many wanderings David sought unto God by means of the "Ephod," and God guided him in safety. In his experience we have **an** example of the Lord **Jesus** **as** the One who **is** rejected by the world and disowned **as** Lord by many of **His** own, but it **is** for those who would be faithful to **Him**, "to go forth unto **Him** without the camp bearing **His** reproach" (Hebrews 13. 13), knowing that "the crowning day **is** coming by and by." **A. G. S.**

From Hereford. —The phase in the **life** of David when he fled brings to remembrance the occasion when the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and agreed that the Lord **Jesus** must be put to death, so that the Lord walked no more openly among the Jews.

It was suggested that David's answer to Ahimelech was perfectly legitimate but evasive (1 Samuel 21. 2), whilst others thought that David during a time of great stress stooped to tell a lie. How much anxiety and distress might have been avoided had he inquired of the LORD through Ahimelech **as** he did through Abiathar on a later occasion in respect of Keilah!

The motley crowd in the cave was well disciplined, for when they sought to persuade David against the counsel of the LORD in the matter of Keilah (1 Samuel 23. 2-4), David's command was obeyed, and the Philistines were subdued. The measure to which they were under control **is** again **seen** on the occasion when David cut off the piece of Saul's skirt and suffered them not to rise against Saul. On a later occasion he prevented Abishai from slaying the LORD'S anointed. The influence of David over those who flocked to him brings to mind the influence of the Lord over **His** disciples, for on one occasion it **is** recorded of Peter and John that the people having heard them speak, marvelled, for they perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men.

Whatever the shortcomings of David during the period of his exile, it **is** delightful to read in the **Psalms** his constant supplication for mercy and **his** continued delight **in** the **will** of God.

J. O. Tidmas.

From Kirkintilloch. —When we compare the account in 1 Samuel 21. of David's strange behaviour before Ahimelech and before Achish, with the record of his own spiritual condition in Psalm 34, we see the contrast between the natural man and the spiritual man. Who would have thought that the man feigning madness to deliver himself was, in reality, crying to God for His deliverance? (see Psalm 34. 3-6).

How significant that the sword of Goliath was " behind the ephod " ! Perhaps Doeg the Edomite thought the priest was going for the ephod to enquire of God for David, and he went away and told this to Saul. This lie of Doeg is the subject of Psalm 52.

It is good to notice what is said of these men who came to David in the cave. " and he became captain over them. " They gladly acknowledged him as their leader. We were reminded of how the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of twice in Hebrews as a Captain. Firstly, as Captain of our salvation in chapter 2. 10, and as Captain of faith in chapter 12. 2. Those who come to Him, as Saviour, bow their hearts to Him as such, but how many have acknowledged Him as Captain of faith by bowing to His will and word ! David's men became his companions in the cave of Adullam; truly an unpretentious abode, but they are like the disciples of whom it is written, they rejoiced " that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonour for the Name " (Acts 5. 41).

The men of Keilah were not willing to share in David's reproach, although they knew him as their saviour. How like many of God's children to-day, who follow the popular choice in spiritual matters, and refuse the Man of God's choice, and the place of God's choice ! Compare in this connection, Hebrews 13. 13—
" outside the camp. " W. W.

From Knocknacloy. —When David came to Nob, he came to the right place, the House of God (see Matthew 12. 3-4). But the only bread there was holy bread, which none but the priests should eat (Leviticus 24. 5-9). However, Ahimelech gave to hungry David and to his young men this holy bread. Also in the House of God was Doeg, the Edomite, a wrong man in a right place. Ahimelech also brought out the sword of Goliath and gave it to David. Perhaps here David was depending on his own strength instead of upon God. For soon afterwards he had to feign madness before Achish, the king of Gath, even with the sword of Goliath at his side. This is where we also fail, if we depend upon fleshly energy instead of asking God's help and guidance.

In the cave of Adullam David's brethren must have changed their attitude towards him from the time when David was sent by his father to see how his brethren fared in the vale of Elah, for at that time his eldest brother rebuked him for his pride and naughtiness. We have a catalogue of David's mighty men in 2 Samuel 23. 8-89, and in 1 Chronicles 11. Truly these were mighty men who did great exploits for their captain. The record puts us to shame. These men saw in David the rightful king, and they looked forward to his enthronement. Jonathan, too, knew that David would be king over Israel, and he desired to be next unto David, but he was not prepared to suffer any reproach for it. Similarly our Lord was earth-rejected, but is heaven-enthroned. David's mighty men would speak to us of the few disciples who owned him as Lord, and were found with **Him** in the upper room (Acts 1. 13). We suggest the following scriptures: I Peter 3. 15, Matthew 10. 34-39, and 2 Timothy 2. 11-12 should be read.

As we review the sufferings David had to endure before he was recognised as king, we are caused to think of the sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ for our sins. May we learn to love Him more, for the sake of His name.

George Thompson, Thomas Shaw.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Glasgow). —There are, no doubt, **many** reasons for David's exile, **such** as, David had to know a time of training to fit **him** for future work, and also God **was writing** in his life's experience truths typical of what would be true of **the Lord and His** followers. But perhaps the chief reason for his exile, **as far as** Israel **was concerned, was**, that God's people were ignorant largely of God's purposes centred in God's chosen man. They adhered to Saul and were quite complacent. The daughters of Israel, who had a large pull on their men-folk, were quite satisfied with a king who clothed them " in scarlet delicately, " and a peace at any price **was** more congenial to the minds of the easy-going and naturally-minded subjects of Saul. —*J. M.*

[2] (Glasgow). —It **is** quite clear from Matthew 12. 4 (is it not ?), that the House of God, the Tabernacle which Moses made, **was** at Nob in those days. Consequently the divine service connected therewith would be rendered by **the** priests of the house of Aaron. —*J. M.*

[3] (Glasgow). —It **is** a heavy weight of responsibility to lay the cause of the murder of the priests of Nob **at** David's door and not **at** the door of **the** real perpetrators of this awful crime—Saul and Doeg. It is well to remember, I think, the Spirit's comment on the life of David, in **1 Kings** 15. 5. —*J. M.*

[4] (Birkenhead). —**We** must distinguish between laws and customs which are of men and those which are divine. **We** cannot follow the Lord apart from the law of Christ and the godly customs of the saints in the days of the apostles. Think of what **is** said of the Lord Himself: " **He** entered, **as His** custom **was**, into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up to read " (Luke 4. 16). See also Acts **17. 2**. —*J. M.*

[5] (Atherton). —Whatever may be said about David's words to Ahimelech, and for myself I prefer to reserve my judgment, I think his action before Achish was that of a most astute leader, who had to act **in** such a way **as** would get **his men** as well **as** himself out of the **fix** into which his mistake **in** seeking sanctuary in Gath from the persecution of Saul had got them all. All the while he was acting as a madman he was trusting **in** Jehovah, **as** Psalm 34. abundantly proves. The historical narrative **in** 1 Samuel should be studied **in** the light of this Psalm. —*J. M.*

[6] (Crowborough). —Should we not say rather the " suspension " of the law ?—*J. M.*

[7] (Crowborough). —What was an Edomite doing at the house of God, and what does it **mean** that he was " detained before the LORD " ? **He** was evidently a wrong **man in a** right place. —*J. M.*

[8] (Cardiff). —The house of Ahimelech was not the House of God. It **is** evident from the Lord's allusion to the incident **in** David's life when he ate the Shewbread that the Tabernacle was at Nob at that time. Later it **is** found at Gibeon (1 Chronicles 16. 39). God forsook Shiloh **because** of the **sin** of Eli's sons, **and** the general condition of Israel, and never returned thither again. Zion at length became the place of **His** manifest choice. —*J. M.*

[9] (Cardiff). —God forsook Shiloh, **as** Psalm 78. 60, 61 shows, and delivered the Ark of **His** strength into the hands of the Philistines. The Tabernacle had then no indwelling God of Israel. As to what our friends **mean** in their question **as** to " what happened, " we do not quite understand. —*J. M.*

[10] (Cardiff). —What do our friends imply **in** their question as to acting before God ? God was not **in the** Tabernacle **as He** had been up to 1 Samuel **3**. The Ark was gone and there could be no conformity to the requirements of God, **as** to the day of atonement, for there was no Mercy Seat **in** the Tabernacle on which to sprinkle the atoning blood. If there **was** no annual atonement then the **sins** of Israel would remain unforgiven with all the alienation this would involve Israel **in**. **As** to the sincerity of the sons of Ahitub, that need not be questioned. The plight of Israel **in** those days was serious, **viewing** the priesthood and the nation **in** their acting before God. Sincerity **is** one thing **and** truth quite another. Men who serve a lie may be very sincere, and **men in** the truth very insincere. Let **us** have both sincerity and truth. —*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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A MIGHTY MAN'S WEAKNESSES.

Few of David's warriors had risked more for their lord, few could show more battle scars, yet we search in vain for his commendation among those specially selected for honourable mention in Samuel or Chronicles. His name was Joab, which means " Jehovah is his Father. " Was it because he did not go down to Adullam that he is missing from the roll of honour ? It is not clear whether he sojourned with David in those early days of exile, for he is not mentioned by name, but his brother Abishai was there, and we may at least give Joab the benefit of any doubt. Certainly he fought valiantly on David's side from the time that Abner took up Ishbosheth's cause, after the death of Saul. So we must search further for the solution to our problem. The record of his service in David's cause is worthy of brief review.

After distinguishing himself in the war against Ishbosheth's supporters, Joab's magnificent prowess in first scaling the rugged defences of Jerusalem brought him the high honour of being chief general of Israel's armed forces. This responsible post was held by him for the remaining thirty-three years of David's reign, with the exception of perhaps a few weeks when Amasa was put in his place (2 Samuel 19. 13). That he could retain such a position amidst so many distinguished warriors for so long is in itself a tribute to his military skill. There are clear illustrations of this. He is seen to best advantage in 2 Samuel 10. 11-12, when Israel was hopelessly outnumbered, but Joab's rallying call and able strategy were used of God to *give* victory over the Syrians and Ammonites. Skill in the field was equalled by persistence and ability in static warfare, for the taking of the Ammonite city of Rabbah after a long siege was no mean exploit. Ten years later Joab skilfully handled David's inferior forces in the battle that vanquished Absalom, while the abortive rebellion of Sheba was a failure because of Joab's vigorous action. Yes, Joab was undoubtedly a mighty man, who was used of God to contribute powerfully towards the establishment and maintenance of David's kingdom.

Before passing to examine the fatal weaknesses of this mighty man, let us pause to remind one another of the spiritual counterpart in the present day of such ability and zeal as Joab showed. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, and our study of God's word together is intended to make us able soldiers of Christ Jesus. That is an excellent thing in its place. But let us pray to be delivered from great ability in God's word without a balancing growth of grace in the heart. Some men mighty in the Scriptures, and full of zeal, have miserably failed to bring joy to the heart of the Lord and blessing to God's people, because

their very strength has caused them to stride ahead in carnal energy. They have not sufficiently learned that " if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries **and** all knowledge; and **if** I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I **am** nothing . . . and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth **me** nothing. " **We** shall **see** the evidences of carnality in Joab, and how sadly this nullified the value of his service to David, despite all the energy and sacrifice involved.

Joab loved position, feared able rivals, had a hideous capacity for revenge, and did not hesitate to stoop to the most underhand tricks to accomplish his own ends. There was a streak of harshness in his disposition which never knew the mollifying power of Divine grace, and which grated on the remarkably tender heart of David, who had shown through the bitterest experiences his readiness to love them that hated him. Little wonder that David declared,

" These men the sons of Zeruiah be *too hard* for me. "

The sons of his own sister identified with him through much trial, Joab and his brothers nevertheless repeatedly acted out of line with David's known desires. Joab stands out as a man who was in the right place among the people of God, but who frequently brought dishonour upon his lord through acting in a way which would have ill behoved the least instructed Gentile.

Two murderous acts especially stained the record of Joab. David's dying charge to Solomon included a reference to them: " Thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did unto me, even what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon the girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. " What prompted such gross evil? In the case of Abner the motive was primarily revenge for the death of Asahel, Joab's brother; yet Abner had dealt in fairness with Asahel, as 2 Samuel 2. 20-23 abundantly shows. Perhaps Joab's action was partly due also to fear lest Abner should displace him from his generalship. Jealousy of Amasa was certainly the motive which drove the sword of assassination into his unsuspecting cousin some thirty years later. For in anger at Joab's deliberate disobedience in slaying Absalom, David appointed Amasa captain in his stead. Taking advantage of Amasa's failure to pursue Sheba quickly enough, Joab exploited the opportunity to regain his post. Revenge and jealousy! What fearful havoc such carnal motives have often wrought among the Israel of God! Shall we not learn to *crucify* the flesh when it stirs such thoughts about our fellow-servants?

Other incidents reveal Joab as a master of subtle, unprincipled intrigue. He had no qualms about conniving with David in the murder of Uriah. He engineered the plot by which an unrepentant Absalom was restored to Jerusalem and ultimately given the king's kiss of peace. David quickly suspected that the scheming Joab was behind the appeal of the wise woman of Tekoa! Even his own men realised that their unprincipled captain would not stand by them if it suited his personal interests (see 2 Samuel 18. 13). It is intensely sad when mighty men develop a reputation for underhand dealings. To be " harmless as doves " is a desirable characteristic, and as for vengeance or jealousy such things ought not to be named or practised among the saints.

One remarkable feature about the narrative of David's reign **is** that Joab was on certain important occasions right when David was wrong! He had a clear practical outlook which enabled him to discern the vital facts of a situation and **assess** the need for action. He was right in urging David to come and claim the capture of Rabbah rather than tarry still in Jerusalem, immersed in remorse. **He** was right in arousing David to the importance of recognising the victory over Absalom instead of mourning the loss of his son. **He** was right in his opposition of the numbering of the people. Men of such ability often are right in matters affecting the head rather than the heart. But what of Joab's decisions in regard

to matters calling for true spiritual insight, particularly the vital question of succession to the Throne of Israel? He judged by outward appearance! First the attractive personality of Absalom won his favour, for such a man would appeal to Joab as a likely leader; but Absalom dealt treacherously, and Joab took relentless vengeance as soon as the chance occurred. Later he was led by the same carnal outlook to espouse the cause of Adonijah; here was a man who exalted himself, who was aggressive and full of action. Surely this would be the ideal king from among David's sons! So reasoned the calculating Joab. God had other purposes, which he revealed to the man after His own heart, and effected despite the challenge of Adonijah.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." That verse might have been a fitting epitaph for this mighty man. At Solomon's direction he was violently killed by the sword of Benaiah, and was buried in the wilderness! All the valour and sacrifice of forty years' service for David were outweighed by the failures which brought this humiliating and bitter judgment at the close of Joab's life. Do we sometimes pride ourselves on our knowledge of the word, the battles we have fought in defence of the truth, the sacrifices we have made for the Master's sake? All that may be true, but as we reflect on the sombre end of this mighty man, we recall the words,

"What doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

If justice, mercy and humility are lacking, of what avail are knowledge, sacrifice, ability and zeal?

True strength is in proportion to our felt weakness; Paul, possibly the mightiest man of the present dispensation, would rather glory in his weakness than the power of Christ might spread a tabernacle over him! Himself a spiritual giant, he yet would be prepared to abstain for ever from meat if his indulgence might stumble a weaker brother; such was the secret of the strength of this spiritual warrior. David could sweetly write,

"Thy *gentleness* hath made me great."

Let us covet that true greatness in God's sight, beloved!

G. Prasher, Jun.

THE LIFE OF DAVID.

David in Exile.

From Melbourne. —See Mark 2. 23-26. Some say this is rather a dark spot in the life of David, but the Lord does not make any adverse reference thereto. It is noteworthy that Nob was the place for the priesthood (Nob means "high place"). In contrast to David's feigned madness before Achish, note the behaviour of the Greater David. Paul says, "I charge thee in the sight of God . . . and of Christ Jesus, *who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession*" (1 Timothy 6. 13). Psalm 56. shows how the fear of man had almost engulfed him, yet underneath was a confiding trust in God.

Adullam means "justice of the people." Though there is in *Adullam* an angle of the Gospel aspect, there is also a very precious line of thought for us. We go forth unto Him, without the **camp** even as those Israelites went from Saul to David to Adullam. David himself was there, he became a captain over them. The Captain of our salvation is the greater David—the Lord of Glory.

Ziph is where David hid, in the strongholds, in the hill country. As we journey through this wilderness scene to the glory, the strongholds and the hill country to us are Christ and the place of the Name (Colossians 3. 3).

David's brethren went to him in the cave, and became his companions. In Acts 1. 14 we are told that both men and women, including Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brethren continued in prayer. David's companions in sufferings eventually shared his glory. If we endure we shall also reign with Him (2 Timothy 2. 12).

T. L. Fullerton, S. Stoope.

DAVID'S MIGHTY MEN.

From Atherton. —David seems to have commenced his period of trial and exile with just a few men around him (1 Samuel 21. 2 and 3). Then the number was increased to 400, when he was in the cave, and later to 600. Then 1 Chronicles 12. —a most enlightening chapter—tells us that there came to David from day to day a great host, like the host of God (verse 22). From this great number a comparatively small and select band is spoken of as the mighty men that David had. These men, companions to David in the day of his reproach, knew fellowship with him in his sufferings, since they were drawn by love. Thus their steadfast love and devotion to David guided David in his decisions as to the place each one should occupy in his kingdom. Our thoughts immediately turned to the sad, dark night of the Lord's betrayal when to those few, faithful ones, He could say, "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" (Luke 22. 28 and 29). Then we recall such men as Stephen, the first martyr; Paul, who endured; right down to such men as Wycliffe, Tyndale, and others, who gave their lives for the Gospel as they knew it. In our own time, too, there have been, and are, those who have responded to the Divine call and have "gone forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach." These shall all be honoured by the righteous Judge in the day when He meets out rewards to those who have loved Him and kept His Word. There shall also be those who will suffer persecution during the great tribulation. Great shall be their reward (Revelation 20. 4-6). Thus the question arises again, "Who are they that shall *reign* with Him in His coming Kingdom?" Indeed, it is true, that those who endure with Him, shall reign with Him (2 Timothy 2. 12). The question of rewards for service is clearly an individual matter; "Each shall receive his reward according to his labour."

David's mighty men, according to rank, were the first three, Jashobeam, Eleazer, and Shammah; and the second three, Abishai, Benaiah, and an unnamed third, possibly "Amasa." In 2 Samuel 23. the grouped names number thirty-one, but in verse 33 Shammah, the Hararite, one of the first three, is again mentioned, so that, excluding him, the number *is* thirty. This makes the total number only thirty-six, and thus the question arises—"Who *is* the one whose name *is* presumably absent?" A suggestion was given that this was probably Joab, who became captain and chief. There *is* abundant evidence to prove that Joab played a leading part in putting David on the throne of Israel, and in establishing his kingdom. Others dissented from this view, saying that Joab *is* one of the notable omissions from the lists. He was a cruel man, and did not really love David. He sought his own pre-eminence always, and thus his motives were wrong. 2 Samuel 10. 12 and 1 Chronicles 21. 1 to 6 were referred to *as* indicating some good points in Joab. The Lord will make no mistakes in the day of reward. Motives will count with *Him*, constancy of purpose and faithfulness in service allied to undivided love will be richly rewarded. *J. Bullock, G. A. Jones.*

From Barrhead *and* Paisley. —Just a few, compared to the thousands *in* Israel, were those who left all to follow David. They were not the princes, or the elders of the people, but the debtors and the distressed of many tribes and families. Their love and devotion to their leader inspired them to heroic deeds, and although *a* motley band, and perhaps outcasts, their names are recorded in holy scriptures, and an account of some of their deeds narrated therein, that we might consider their faith and confidence in their leader and imitate their behaviour.

Joab, we read, was the leader, although his name is not recorded with his fellows. We wonder why? The principle, as in the case of Moses and others, where privileges and honours were withheld because of some previous disobedience, may have been upheld here, and Joab's name omitted from the list. The driving motive of these mighty men was surely love and not the possibility of reward or of fame. It could not have been the lure of fame, because they had thrown in their lot with David at a time when his position was very precarious and when there was the possibility of Saul being successful in his aggression toward David, nor was it the hope of spoil which inspired them, because all received an equal share, whether they were actively engaged or whether they were only caring for the baggage.

They had come to David at harvest time, when they might have been engaged in the festivities and ceremonies which the Law of Moses required at such a time, but they had set aside these things in the crisis which took place in their lives. In type, the Messiah had come, and the law of Moses was being set aside.

What can we learn from these men? This, that they appear to be typical of disciples to-day who, gathered from every tribe and tongue, have been identified with Christ in **His** hour of rejection, motivated only by love and devotion. We should be so acquainted with the word of God that like the sword of Eleazar, it should become a part of us, enabling us to tackle heavy odds in the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged. What has been given to us to hold fast, those precious doctrines and truths, we should defend at all costs against all comers, just as the plot of lentils was defended. These desires of our Lord that we should follow him as disciples, and dwell together according to the divine pattern, should become commands to us, our main object in life to fulfil them.

We should not be inspired by thoughts of reward or fame alone, either here or in the glory, although every deed done in faithfulness shall be rewarded in a future day, but the example of our Master, and love for Him, should be the driving, irresistible force in our lives.

J. McK. Gault.

From Brantford (Canada).—Many men who lived in Israel during that period of time between the rejection of Saul and ascension of David to the throne, found themselves exercised in heart regarding their leader. To some it would be apparent that Saul lacked much of the power of leadership which characterized him in his early days. Gradually the news was carried to exercised hearts of the young man of valour who dwelt in exile, and no doubt the report that Jehovah was with him would be the magnet of attraction to many.

Nationally, Israel followed Saul, but it is to the credit of all those who individually were willing to cast in their lot with David, for he, though despised, was the man of God's choice. We have a parallel in David's greater Son, for nationally Israel did not receive Him, but we admire those who were willing, at whatever cost, to align themselves alongside Jesus of Nazareth. They did it to their eternal credit. He still is by the many still rejected, and it will be to our eternal credit to go forth unto Him bearing **His** reproach, having as our incentive that if we suffer with Him, we shall also reign with Him.

We say "Amen" to the Spirit's use of the word "mighty" to describe such men as followed David. We feel it was not their prowess only, nor yet their desire to be decorated, but their unquenchable love for David that moved them to do such exploits. May we seek to imitate these worthies, and be always valiant for the truth, having as our banner—The love of Christ constraineth us, accounting all we do to be a labour of love (1 Thessalonians 1. 3)!

In comparing the defence of the plot of lentils by Shammah in 2 Samuel 23. with the defence of the plot of barley by Eleazar in 1 Chronicles 11. we noted that Shammah stood alone, whereas Eleazar stood accompanied by David. In contending earnestly for the faith, some may have at times felt they were alone, but the knowledge that the precious deposit they were defending belonged to

Him, whom they loved and adored, has given courage to the degree that of some it could be said, "They were stoned, they were slain with the sword" (Hebrews 11. 37). However, if we draw our simile from Eleazar, who stood with David, we have in our day the presence at our side of Him who said, "Lo, I am with you alway" (Matthew 28. 20). No greater morale-sustaining words have ever been spoken.

We pondered the thoughts of the three who risked their lives to obtain water from Bethlehem's well as they saw David pour it out upon the ground. We feel they were not disappointed. They had fulfilled the desire of their master, and no doubt had received fitting words of praise from himself. There may be times when, after enduring much, hopes are not realised, and all seems to have been for nought. But the knowledge that we have fulfilled His desire, and will one day receive His "Well done!" fills our hearts, and we can truly say, "He understands."
Jas. Bell.

EXTRACTS.

From Cardiff. —The Samuel account of David's mighty men and their exploits seems to set out events in order of happening, while the Chronicles account seems to be a retrospective historical narrative; for example, in the Books of the Chronicles we have mention made of "the chronicles of king David," "the histories of Samuel the seer," etc. This may be the answer to certain apparent discrepancies which appear when the two accounts are compared.

The mighty deeds were done around the time when David sojourned in the cave of Adullam, and they were remembered in the day of exaltation to the throne. Very forcibly was the truth brought home to our hearts, "If we suffer with Him we shall also reign with Him." The Adullam experiences were thought to be somewhat of a parallel with the "days of His flesh," when "He learned obedience by the things which He suffered" (Hebrews 5. 8).

In 2 Samuel 23, the mighty men are divided into a first three, a second three, and a further thirty. The name of one of the second three is omitted. Shammah is mentioned twice (in verses 11 and 33), and verse 24 states there were *thirty* mighty men, and verse 39 that there were *thirty-seven* [1].

The inclusion of Uriah the Hittite was unusual—a Gentile, who had recognised in David God's rightful king, and faithfully served him. His place was outside the covenants and promises, yet he was with David in his rejection and kingdom until his untimely end. Thus, from a mixed, discontented rabble, David welded together a fine body of "men who shewed themselves strong in his kingdom" (1 Chronicles 11. 10). Very much in the same way the Lord Jesus had the formidable task of moulding the characters of those who in His rejection recognised in Him God's King. Among the followers of David soon appeared men who had learned to rule, trained for war, with faces like lions. We compared the result of the twelve sojourning with the Lord—from vacillating, very human beings, they changed to be men who "turned the world upside down."

K. Berrisford.

From Kirkintilloch. —Hebrews 11. 33-34 mentions men of like character to David's mighty men. Their first mighty deed was in going out to David in his rejection and having fellowship with him. This is what should characterise disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ to-day, going forth unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach (Hebrews 13. 13). They were a comfort to David as were the disciples whom the Lord Jesus commended in the words, "Ye are they that have continued with Me in My temptations" (Luke 22. 28).

Practical lessons can be learned from the deeds of valour of those mighty men. Eleazar smote the Philistines until his hand was weary and his hand clave unto the sword. May we be so attached to our Bibles, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6, 17), that we can take it up and use it to profit!

David felt so unworthy of the love of the three men who brought him refreshing water from Bethlehem, that he poured it out as a drink offering unto the LORD, who alone is worthy of such love and sacrifice. It is noticeable that Jonathan's name is not mentioned in the roll of honour. He did not suffer with David, therefore he did not reign with him, a great scriptural principle.

Precious teaching is contained for us to-day in such scriptures as 2 Thessalonians 1. 5 and Philippians 3. 8 to 10. To be truly with our King to-day will mean suffering, tribulation and loss, as it did in David's day.

William Ure, John Scott.

From Broxburn. —David was the leader of these mighty men, and much of their greatness was attributable to their leader. It is due to their relationship to David that their names have been inscribed in the sacred page. The men who made their mark had ambition and vision. The great failure to-day is lack of these attributes. Their objective was David's honour and to see him crowned on the throne. Oh ! for men and women to-day to show themselves strong. Of some in early N. T. times it is recorded, " these have turned the world upside down "" (Acts 17. 6).

Benaiah crowned his exploits in slaying an Egyptian, with the Egyptian's own spear. The Egyptian is a type of the worldly man who is well-trained in worldly wisdom and philosophies. We thought that Benaiah spoke of the man of God, well-furnished with the Word of God, and well able to meet the man of the world, and defeat him with his own weapons (Job 5. 12, 13).

The crowning day and the day of rewards did eventually come. This would remind us of the judgment seat of Christ, where we will all have to appear. Meantime we, like David's men, have to take our place with our Lord outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

We read of men of rank in David's army who slew their hundreds. We also read of men who were mighty for God in N. T. times (Acts 2. 41). Peter at Pentecost preached with such power that on one day there were added three thousand souls. Truly a great victory was wrought for the Lord, and hundreds were delivered from eternal death. Success attended the apostle Paul's ministry as he witnessed for his Lord before kings and rulers and the common people. We were reminded of the converts in Caesar's household.

The faithful behaviour of David's great men reminded us of 2 Timothy 2. 12, " If we endure, we shall also reign with Him: if we shall deny Him, He also will deny us. "

There were others who might have had honour, but they either fell out by the way, or did not continue with David. Our thoughts were centred around that most lovable character Jonathan. Some might have occupied a prominent place in the kingdom of God to-day, but they have turned away for various reasons. It behoves us to be very humble. Other omissions are Joab, Absalom, whom we compared with such men as Demas (2 Timothy 4. 10), and Diotrephes (3 John 9). We ought to be ambitious, with godly desires, in this our day, to be well pleasing unto the Lord.

John McGregor.

From Melbourne. —David could have given an order for someone to fetch water from the well of Beth-lehem; but he merely expressed a desire. Three mighty men unhesitatingly broke through the host of the Philistines and secured for David this much coveted water. Here is a precious line of thought. It is commendable to abide strictly by the word, fulfilling it but nothing more, but it is far better if we seek diligently to please the Lord by our willingness to go much further. We likened the plot of ground, full of lentils, to the Truth of God, and we encouraged ourselves ever to be on the defensive against the religious world which the Philistines may pre-figure.

Many men have been loyal to David's greater Son, being constrained by the love of Christ. Here are a few: James the brother of John was killed with the sword (Acts 12. 2), Stephen, " a man full of faith, " was stoned (Acts 6. 5), and John, that disciple whom Jesus loved, was a companion in tribulation (Revelation 1. 9), while Paul was poured out as a drink-offering (2 Timothy 4. 6, R. V. M.). " **Yea**, and all that would live godly **in** Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3. 12).

T. L. Fullerton, S. Stoope.

From London. — 1. *Jashobeam the Hachmonite.* — Separated from his comrades, he remained fighting against heavy odds, undaunted, inspired no doubt by his love for David, until his enemies were vanquished. By the mention of the word spear we are reminded of Ephesians 6., where, although not specifically mentioned, the spear **is** likened to prayer, and **is** one of the Christian's offensive weapons.

2. *Eleazar the son of Dodo the Ahohite.* — When the men of Israel were gone away he stayed and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary and clave to his sword. Through him the people enjoyed a great victory and returned to reap the fruit thereof. The sword again reminds us of Ephesians 6., where the sword of the Spirit **is** the word of God, another weapon in the Christian's armour.

3. *Shammah the son of Agee the Hararite.* — Through his dogged tenacity, God wrought a great victory when Shammah had been deserted. Perhaps the plot can be likened to the word of God, which provides us with our spiritual nourishment. Men have been martyred for the sake of this Word, and through the endeavours of earnest Christians, the Bible has been translated into many languages, preserved and handed down to us.

All the above three possibly took part in another feat, that of fetching the water from the well at Bethlehem [2]. David, overcome by their display of love and loyalty, could not drink the blood of these men, and had to pour it out **as an** offering to God. In contrast to the way in which David's desire was fulfilled, we have the occasion when the Lord received, **as an** answer to **His** plea, " I thirst, " hyssop soaked in vinegar. All **His** followers had gone.

These were all companions of David in his rejection. They prove once again that men will always be attracted to a fine noble upright person rather than to an abstract ideal. What caused them to love David was not merely his character, but David himself. They may have had their eye on their future aggrandisement, but that **is** doubtful. Nevertheless they were rewarded, for David, **as** king, gave each a responsible place in his kingdom.

It may be that the third of the second three was Joab. **He was** revengeful, bold and unscrupulous, jealous and disloyal. **He was** valorous, but not honourable, and therefore deserved no reward.

" Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you . . . Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great **is** your reward in heaven. " " For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us-ward. " " If we endure, we shall also reign with **Him**: if we shall deny **Him**, **He** also will deny us. " *D. G. E.*

From Birkenhead. — David himself was a mighty man of valour, **as** well as a man after God's own heart, and in choosing and honouring his own mighty men we may expect that they would be like-minded men after his own heart.

In 2 Samuel 23. the three mighty men with David are Josheb-basshebeth, Eleazar, and Shammah the Hararite, then two of a second three, Abishai (Joab's brother), and Benaiah, followed by a list of the mighty men of the **armies** said to be thirty-seven in all. In the comparable account of 1 Chronicles 11. Shammah is not mentioned by **name** with the first three, and again only two of the second three are mentioned, then the names of thirty others are given **as** mighty **men** of the **armies**.

David himself was undoubtedly the inspirer of these men whose love and loyalty to him as the Lord's anointed in the day of his rejection moved them to such notable deeds of valour. Their reward came, unsought by them, as soon as David came into his kingdom. This is the day of our Lord's rejection, but in the crowning day that is coming His faithful and loyal hearted saints will have the joy of realising fully how much their sacrifice and devotion were appreciated by Himself.

The defence of the plot of lentils by Shammah in 2 Samuel 23., and the plot of barley by Eleazar and another in 1 Chronicles 11., when all the people had fled, was not measured by the smallness of the area defended, but by the fact that it was a portion of the Lord's inheritance, which it was vital to defend, at that time, and they were prepared to lay down their lives in the defence of it. So it is with the faith which once for all has been delivered to the saints; every article, at one time or another, needs earnestly contending for, however small and insignificant such may appear in the eyes of men. The measure in which we appreciate the Person and place to which God has brought us will be the measure of the stand we take in the defence of God's truth.

Although Joab was probably with David in the days of his rejection, it is evident he was not one with David in heart and mind. His actions suggest he was more of a menace than an asset in the kingdom. He knew well David's desires and had his excellent example, but he placed his own will and desires before those of David. We remember how he slew Absalom, David's son, his revengeful slaying of Abner when he knew it was not David's will, and his joining in revolt with Adonijah towards the end of David's days. His death at the altar in Solomon's days was a sad end to a man who, though a very courageous leader, was never one in heart with David and in God's purposes in the kingdom; like some men of to-day who may be mighty in the Scriptures, yet lack that subjection to the will of the Lord and heart devotion to His cause. It would seem that Joab's name is deliberately left out of the list of David's mighty men, so that its very omission, after the faithful recording of his valiant deed, might have its voice to all who take the trouble to consider why. He is as "the righteous man who turns from his righteousness to commit iniquity,.... his righteous deeds which he hath done shall not be remembered" (Ezekiel 3. 20). N. G. A.

From **Kilmarnock**. —On comparing 2 Samuel 23. with 1 Chronicles 11. we find difficulty in placing the men according to their rank, but we think the first three were *Adino* (or *Jashobeam*), who slew eight hundred men at one time, *Eleazar*, who defended a parcel of ground with barley, *Shammah*, son of Agee, who defended a piece of ground with lentils. Of the second three, *Abishai* was captain, he slew three hundred, while *Benaiah* did many mighty acts; the third name does not seem to be stated. What Eleazar and Shammah did does not appear an aggressive act, but when we consider it was David's and his companions' food they defended, it was very important and well worthy of recognition. The Epistle of Jude (verse 3) exhorts the saints to "contend earnestly for the faith," and we judge that those who do so now will not be overlooked by the Lord in a coming day (see Revelation 2. 13 and 17).

We note that Joab, who was a nephew of David, is omitted from the list of his mighty men. Although he was captain of the army, he was a very difficult man to deal with, and one who caused David much sorrow (see 1 Kings 2. 5-6). We think he gloried more in his position than in being loyal and devoted to David.

The Lord's answer to John and James, who desired to sit on his right hand and on his left, shows the spirit that is necessary among those who would serve the Lord now; "Whosoever may be desiring to be your chief shall be servant of all" (Mark 10. 44, Roth. Ver.).

May we be—

"Content to fill a little space.
If Christ be glorified."

A.

G.

S.

From Cowdenbeath. —Were we **as** attached, **as** David's **men** were, to the Person and **cause** of the Captain of our salvation, and **as** eager to show our love and gratitude toward Him, how ready we should be for every service! Let us, then, **be** willing to venture in the **cause** of Christ, even when it **is** a suffering cause, assured that it will prevail, and that we shall be blessed beyond all earthly computation. May **we** take to heart the exhortation of the Apostle **Paul**, "Take thy part **in** suffering hardship, **as** a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2. 3, R. V. M.)! It **is** intensely sad to find that Jonathan has no place with David at this time, not even mentioned among the mighty men of David. **He** clung to Saul while the road to the throne lay by the way of Adullam's cave. There **are** many to-day like Jonathan, whose love for the Lord cannot be questioned, but who have never come to realise that the place where the Lord Jesus suffered was "without the gate" (Hebrews 13. 12).

If this list was compiled at the beginning of David's reign, we would express some difficulty **in** finding a reason for David omitting the name of Joab. The acts which might justify David for omitting his **name** were deeds done during David's reign. **We** cannot forget the words of David to Solomon, his son, "Thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah *did unto me* . . . and shed the blood of war **in** peace" (1 Kings 2. 5). These words "what he did unto **me**" would take **us** back to 2 Samuel 18. 5, "Deal gently for my sake with the young **man**, even with Absalom, " a command which Joab disobeyed most flagrantly, **an** action which caused the **king** much grief. Let us take heed, for it becomes **us** to be both faithful and obedient. In our obedience God finds joy, in our disobedience **His** name is dishonoured and **His** heart grieved. *David McLelland.*

From Hereford. The men in David's list of honour were not only mighty in valour and carnal warfare, but they were high-charactered men, "who shewed themselves strong with him in his kingdom" (1 Chronicles 11. 10, R. V.). They were one in heart and mind with him and his cause, being faithful to their leader and king. They were absolutely convinced that **he** would sit upon the throne, and they did all **in** their power to hasten that day.

The exploits of some of these **men** are worthy of special mention. So long did Eleazar **fight** that **his** hand adhered to the hilt **of** the sword. Our thoughts went to the words of the Apostle Paul concerning himself, "And I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls" (2 Corinthians 12. 15). May we, too, **be** skilful and effective **in** our use of the sword of the Spirit, which **is** the Word of God! The Lord wrought a great victory through this man. Ephesians 6. 10-18 comes **in** here, **we** think. Shammah **is** another valiant man, who dared to stand **when** all seemed lost, to defend a seemingly insignificant, yet important, plot of lentils. This plot was necessary to the sustenance of David and his men, and it could not **be** yielded at any price. **We** are reminded of the exhortation, "Contend earnestly for the faith." There are certain truths which to some appear but trifles, **but** which must be defended with godly tenacity. "Watch ye, stand fast . . . be strong" (1 Corinthians 16. 13).

There were three men who loved David intensely, who went in danger of their lives to satisfy David's thirst. In pouring out the precious water from Bethlehem unto the LORD, David showed his thankfulness to God for **such** men. Paul said, "I hold not my life of any account, **as** dear unto myself" (Acts 20. 24 and 21. 13). **We** would rank these men with those of Acts 15. 26 and Philippians 2. 30.

H. Jefferson.

From Toronto (Ont.). —It was suggested that the omission of Joab's name, by the Spirit's over-ruling, was because of Joab's later behaviour, his disobedience, his cruelty, his vengefulness, all of which lost for him the place which was his among **the** annals of those bravest of the brave, though he was of the second three, and not the first [We have no proof he was even in the second three].

Scripture gives us a detailed account of the daring of Benaiah, qualities which **in** later years marked him out for leadership of the host. Though we may in our walk face much opposition from without, yet, if we experience the fellowship of our David in the outside place, we shall also share in the glory with Him. What a comfort and joy to realise that we are not alone in our wrestlings, nor without His secret companionship. Though many despise the day of small things, the small scattered assemblies comprising the House of God will surely be honoured by our God.

Concerning David's pouring the precious water on the ground as a drink offering to the LORD (2 Samuel 23. 16), we referred to Psalm 22. 14, "I am poured out like water," and Isaiah 53. 12, "He poured out His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors." When pouring the water on the ground, we noted that in 2 Samuel 23. David's address was in the form of a thanksgiving, whilst in 1 Chronicles 11. it is in the form of an address, presumably to those then present, who witnessed his act. This difference appears to be not without some significance [We cannot see the difference our friends suggest in the words used].

From Crowborough. —Under David's leadership the motley crew who had fled in distress to him came to be a band of devoted and loyal followers, and from these were drawn those described as the mighty men whom David had. These brave fellows had learned to love their leader, as was shown in the way in which they proved themselves to be loyal and true. In 1 Chronicles 12. we read of more who were clever and able men, who had faces like the faces of lions, and were as swift of foot as roes upon the mountains. Some came even from Saul's own tribe.

In all this there **is** a clear picture in David of our rejected Lord, and **in** David's followers of those who are prepared to go to Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. Under David's leadership a crowd of distressed men were transformed into a valiant band. So we, too, worthless by nature, may become fruitful in His service, if love be the constraining power. *J. Taylor.*

From Glasgow. —Men who were dissatisfied with Saul and his weak regime, and who had found in David a ready answer to their discontent, by David's resolution and uprightness were encouraged to hope that one day they would receive justice and better conditions in Israel. It is reasonable to suppose that some of the early followers had a knowledge of God's purposes in David, and when the opportunity came, they were ready to go with David into the hardships of exile.

The sincerity of David as opposed to the deceitfulness of Saul, bound his men to him. They grew to respect him and to love him to such an extent that they were ready to die in his service. 2 Samuel 23. reveals this. The record of their commendation, however, reveals some notable omissions. There is no mention of David's own brethren, of Jonathan, or of Joab, all of whom had opportunity to find a place in 2 Samuel 23. Was it true of David's brethren that they did not believe in him, or were they afraid to associate with him? [See 1 Samuel 22. 1 concerning his brethren].

Faithful subjection to David seems to have been the great quality of David's mighty men, and what an example they have left for us who follow David's Lord in these days !

*J.**J.**P.*

From Hamilton (Ontario). —Of these thirty-seven mighty men there were some outstanding even in this group, whose exploits have been recorded, such as Benaiah. But why, we wonder, did he not attain to the first three ? [3]. All the deeds that were done by the mighty men were motivated by their deep love for their rejected king. We remember that these men were comprised of those who were in distress and those in debt and everyone that was discontented (bitter of soul) (1 Samuel 22. 2). This reminds us of our greater David, who was accused by the Pharisees of receiving sinners and eating with them.

The love of these mighty men for David was exemplified by the three who heard David's desire for a drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem. How much more earnestly should we, who have heard our Lord's desire, " This do in remembrance of Me, " endeavour to fulfil His desire !

Some fifty-five years ago a few great men of God defended truths that seemed small in the eyes of men, just like the plot of lentils, but how valuable these truths were to God, eternity alone can reveal; and as the great deeds of David's mighty men were recorded, so a record is being kept to-day of the mighty men who are defending the faith.

As we contemplated the notable omissions, such as Jonathan and Joab, from the list, we would say, " Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure " (2 Peter 1. 10). *D. Beck, J. Ramage.*

From Knocknacloy. —David's men stood by him faithfully in all his sufferings, no matter how slender the prospects seemed to be of his ever reaching the throne. There are also those to-day who, despite reproach or scorn, have bought the truth and will not sell it. The men who were faithful to David during his period of reproach were those who reigned with him in his day of glory. This foreshadows how it will be with those who to-day suffer the reproach of Christ, by being together in the one thing for God. *William Woods.*

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cardiff). —As our friends indicate, there is difficulty in computing thirty names and thirty-seven names from the list given. From 2 Samuel 23. 24 to 39 there appear to be thirty-one names, omitting "the sons of Jashen." If we reckon *two* (at the least) of Jashen's sons, unnamed, we have thirty-three. Taking from this number Shammah the Hararite (verse 33) who is already mentioned in verse 11, we have thirty-two. To this may be added the first three (Adino, Eleazar, and Shammah), and the two of the second three who are named (Abishai and Benaiah) bringing the total to thirty-seven (as in verse 39). If this is correct reasoning, the unnamed hero of the second three must be amongst those names in verses 24 to 39. We are making no suggestion as to who comprise the thirty. —*Jas. M.*

[2] (London). —It would seem) that the three who brought David a drink from Bethlehem were the second three, Abishai, Benaiah, and one unnamed. —*Jas. M.*

[3] (Hamilton). —In the matter of assessing worth, or place, or rank, our God can never err, whether it be with regard to judgment already given, or future judgments. The answer to this " why " we must leave with Him who can read men's hearts and value aright their words and deeds. —*Jas. 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.

" One t h i n g t h a t w i l l I s e e k a f t e r . "

Raised to the throne of Israel, David had a wide range of responsibilities calling urgently for attention. First in Hebron and later in Jerusalem his administrative ability needed to be applied earnestly to the reorganisation of a defeated and demoralised people. The Philistines soon attempted to overcome the newly crowned king, realising the danger to their own position if David built up Israel's power. Amidst all these demands upon his time and energies, it might have been excusable if David had overlooked the fact that the ark of God had not been sought after as it should have been by the nation He had chosen. But the 27th Psalm well expresses the true spiritual balance of this man of God,

" One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after;
That I may dwell in the House of the LORD all the days of my life,
To behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in His temple. "

David realised that military glory, material prosperity, and efficient administration were all valueless apart from the Divine presence of the God of Israel. He appreciated the truth that Israel's highest glory was the honour bestowed by God to place His Name among them, to dwell in their midst. As he read the words of Deuteronomy 12. 5 during the early years of His reign, he might well have asked, " Where is the place to which God would now wish Israel to gather ? "

The history of the dwelling place of God among Israel during the four centuries between the days of Joshua and the reign of David is worthy of thoughtful study. When Israel began to occupy their possessions in the days of Joshua, God evidently chose Shiloh as the place of the Name. Joshua 18. 1 shows that the Tabernacle was erected there, and the service of God's House was evidently maintained in Shiloh for three hundred years (see Judges 18. 31, 1 Samuel, 1. 3, etc.). Of Shiloh God could say through Jeremiah, " where I caused My Name to dwell at the first. " Perhaps as one reward of the faithfulness of Joseph, it was among the tribe of Ephraim that the sanctuary was first established in the land, with its ordinances of Divine service. But one day the ears of all in Israel tingled with the disastrous tidings that the ark of God had been taken in battle; with that dire judgment God ceased to recognise Shiloh as the place of the Name. A dying woman realised the awful truth that the glory had departed from Israel; Ichabod's presence in Shiloh would be a testimony throughout his lifetime that God had forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He had placed among men; and delivered His strength into captivity, and His glory into the hand of the adversary ! The ark of God was never to return to Shiloh. Yet apparently

a form of worship under the terms of the old covenant **was** maintained **there**, for 1 Samuel 14. 3 suggests that the priest Ahijah, great-grandson of Eli, **was** still associated with the service of God in Shiloh. **On** the other hand, a little later in Saul's reign, Nob is spoken of **as** the city of the priests (1 Samuel 22. 19), and the Shewbread was there. Nob is in the tribe of Benjamin, a few miles north of Jerusalem, and it may have been that Saul used his influence to have the tabernacle moved there for political reasons. In any case, we are told with certainty that the ark of the covenant was not in its Divinely appointed place throughout those years. It abode in the house of Abinadab, in Kiriath-jearim, from the time it was recovered from the Philistines until David took it to Jerusalem—a period of about 100 years. (The statement in 1 Samuel 7. 2, " for it was about twenty years, " must be read in conjunction with the fact that the ark was still in that place when David became exercised about it. Baale-Judah of 2 Samuel 6. 2 is the same as Kiriath-jearim.)

So when Saul came to the throne of Israel, the ark had been away from its proper place in the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle for approximately fifty years. It seems remarkable that Samuel was never directed of the LORD to take steps to restore the ark to the tabernacle, emphasising that God had finally revoked the choice of Shiloh as the place of the Name, and was awaiting the liberation from the Jebusites of the " Mount Zion which He loved. " Saul's heart was not sufficiently in touch with God to discern the importance of the ark of God and all that was associated with it. He is typical of the carnal mind which places material prosperity before the great end of God's dealings with His people, even that His Name should be honoured and His word obeyed. They sought not unto the ark of God all the days of Saul. How well those words accord with Saul's record of disregarding certain of the LORD'S commands !

With what joy, then, would God behold the awakening of keen desire in David's heart in relation to the ark of the covenant ! After a century's neglect, Israel is stirred by David's leadership to seek unto the ark of God. By Divine revelation it must have been unfolded to the man after God's heart that

" The LORD loveth Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. "

So from Kiriath-jearim the ark was brought to Jerusalem, and there David pitched a tent for it, where it abode until a more glorious structure was designed and built. It is clear from such portions as 1 Chronicles 23. 28-32 that the service of the House of God was restored before the end of David's reign. The bringing up of the ark was the first step in that plan. Whether the original tabernacle building had endured, and could be re-pitched in Jerusalem, is not clear. Perhaps after 500 years parts of the original fabric had been worn out. It seems significant that David should pitch a tent for the ark according to 2 Samuel 6. 17, but at any rate it is clear from 1 Chronicles 23. 32 that before the temple was built there was functioning in Jerusalem a sanctuary recognised by God as His dwelling place, containing both tent of meeting and holy place. [See answers to questions from Melbourne and London, page 84].

The realisation of this cherished design was marred by what might seem to some a very harsh judgment for a relatively trivial offence. The death of Uzzah displeased David at first. The neglect of Israel in regard to the ark found reflection in ignorance of, or disobedience to, the letter of the ordinance, when **at** last they gathered to take the ark to Jerusalem. It seemed a relatively innocent thing to substitute the idea of carrying the ark on a cart for the Divine instruction that it should be borne on the shoulders of the Levites. This sharp lesson **made** David resort to the Word of God to correct his mistakes. **We** realise that this **was** written aforetime for our learning. The higher our privilege in connection with the House of God, the more responsible **we** are to learn and obey **His** will in its detail. Hence the vital importance of our close study of **His** word together. That alone can be the **basis** of acceptable service.

With the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem and the restoration of the **service** of the House of God according to the ordinances, David **gave** fitting expression to the spiritual longing which burned in his heart: the **one thing** he desired above every earthly ambition **was** " to dwell in the House of the L O R D to behold

the beauty of the L O R D to inquire in His temple. " Let **us learn** well the lesson. Many will be satisfied with achievements of various kinds, such **as** large-scale proclamation of the gospel; but good **as** that **is** in its place, the present-day Divine purpose sets before us the possibility of being in the place of the **Name**, where we may serve with acceptance according to the ordinances of Divine service pertaining to the **new** covenant. From the days of Eli to the **reign** of David the glory had departed from Israel; **a** form of Divine service was carried out, but it was shorn of the Divine Presence through the failure of those who had such a privileged position. Our continuing in present testimony **in** the House of God **is** **a** conditional matter. It calls for earnest consecration **and** diligent study of God's word. Till **He** come, let us seek grace to set before **us** the worthy desire of David **in** regard to God's House !

G. Prasher, Jr.

ON READING.

" They read in the book of the Law of God . . . and the people understood **{the law}** in the **reading**" (Nehemiah 8. 8, LXX). "Till I come, give heed to **reading**" (1 Timothy 4. 13).

When Paul exhorted Timothy to give heed to reading he was not referring to private reading, but to the reading aloud of the Scriptures in the assembly. Such **is** the meaning of the word **anagnosis** (Acts 13. 15; 2 Corinthians 3. 14; 1 Timothy 4. 13; Nehemiah 8. 8, LXX). The corresponding verb **anaginosko** has **a** more general significance; it **is** used for private reading (e. g., Acts 8. 28, 30, 32) **as** well **as** for public reading (Luke 4. 16, Acts 13. 27, 15. 21, 2 Corinthians 3. 15, Colossians 4. 16, 1 Thessalonians 5. 27, Revelation 1. 3).

The disciples of the early centuries were much more dependent on the public reading of the Scriptures than we are now; only the rich could afford to have copies of the Scriptures for themselves, and the public reading in the assemblies was, therefore, given **a** prominent place. **One** of the very earliest references to **a** Christian assembly, written about the middle of the second century, says, " On the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place and the Memoirs of the Apostles [i. e., the Gospels] or the writings of the Prophets are read **as** long **as** time permits " (Justin Martyr, 1st Apology 67. 3).

To-day **a** generation has grown up which **is** almost ignorant of the Bible, and we cannot assume **a** knowledge of even the main facts or the most elementary truths of Scripture. The reading of the Scriptures, and Bible teaching, while always important, now require **a** new emphasis.

Quite apart from the needs of to-day the Holy Scriptures should be highly esteemed amongst us, and given **a** definite place in their own right in our assemblies. **We** should honour the Word of God before the saints and before the world. In the Gospel Meeting the reading should have **a** prominent place. The reading of the Word **is** more important than anything we **can** say about it.

From this it follows that **no** pains should be spared to make the reading **as** accurate and worthy **as** possible; to hear the Scriptures well read **is** **a** delight. Reading aloud is, unfortunately, **a** lost art. To read **a** passage of Scriptures well needs careful study; its message must have been understood by the mind and appropriated by the heart. The latter **is** of paramount importance; it **is** this that gives unction to the reading and affects the hearts and consciences of the hearers. This **is** well illustrated by the story of the aged minister of **Christ** and the orator, who at one of the services in the course of **a** sea voyage had **each** agreed to read the 23rd Psalm. When the orator had finished his reading there was applause from the audience; **as** the minister sat down after his reading there was silence, but tears were in every eye. Turning to the minister, the orator, his own eyes wet with tears, said simply, " I know the Psalm, you know the Author. " Feeling, or that quality which moves the hearer, **can** only be imparted to our reading when **we** feel deeply ourselves. For this, meditation and prayer are necessary; we are thus in touch with the Author and by communion with **Him** we learn the secrets of **His** Word.

It must not, however, be thought that the reading **can** take care of itself **and** needs no special study or preparation. Reading **is** an art and **as** such requires study **and** practice **in** the **same** way **as** singing, to which it **is** closely allied.

The following notes do little more than indicate the scope of the subject, and reinforce the plea for more attention to a really important matter.

The Voice.

Without the voice the soul **is** imprisoned. Flat, soulless reading **means** either that the matter **is** not understood or that the voice **is** not equal to its task. Some attention, therefore, should be given to this. There are excellent text books on the subject, and **a few** lessons by an expert need not be despised. There can be little doubt that the power of the great orators was due in large **measure** to the quality and flexibility **of** the voice **as** the effective instrument of the mind and heart. As **we** read their speeches or sermons **we** wonder what moved the multitudes; it was that which **we miss** in cold print—the living voice.

Articulation.

The consonants should be clearly enunciated, special attention being given to final **t**, **d** and **g**, and to the double consonants, e. g., **si**, **sn**, **sk**, **st**, **lm**, **ds**, **ps** (many double consonants are pronounced **as** single, i. e., **ph=f**, initial **ps =s**, **as** in psalm). It should not, however, be overdone, "mouthing" **is** objectionable to listeners.

Pronunciation.

The articulation of vowels comes under this head. No two people pronounce the vowels alike, and between different parts of the country differences are considerable, but extremes should be avoided. On the usual reckoning there are twelve pure vowel sounds and seven diphthongs, but **we** must refer our readers to the standard text books for details. The neutral vowel, however, because of its bearing on Rhythm, needs special mention. The final vowel in China gives **the** sound, **but** almost any vowel may take this sound in unaccented words or syllables.

Rhythm.

Rhythm is natural to poetry, but not to prose. None the less, good writing flows smoothly, the writer imparts a rhythm to his work, **which** in the **best** examples, e. g., the Authorised Version of the Bible, approaches poetry. The reader **must** reveal this rhythm, not spoil it. This **is** done by shortening the unstressed syllables and lengthening the stressed syllables. The neutral vowel helps, it is a rhythmic device. An example may help. **We take a passage** which is often spoilt by wrong emphasis—John 1. 1.:

In the beginning—was the *Word*,
and the *Word*—was with *God*,
and—the *Word*—was *God*,
the *same*—was in the beginning—with *God*.

Small letters indicate the neutral vowel, italics the emphatic words, and the dash a slight pause between the parts of the sentence, each of which should **take** about the **same time**. The pause **must** not **be** overdone or the reading will **be** jerky. By the **use** of the neutral vowel the reading **is** given a rhythm which is impossible **if** every vowel is given its full value. The third line should be specially noted; too often the emphasis **is** put on "*was*," this **is quite** wrong; "*God*" should receive the emphasis.

Emphasis.

This **is** very important; wrong emphasis may entirely alter the meaning. There **is** a story of a **curate** who, in reading the story of the old prophet (1 Kings 13. A. V.) placed the emphasis on "*him*," possibly deceived by the italics, — "And he spake unto his sons, saying, Saddle *me* the **ass** and they saddled *HIM*."

Luke 15. 29, 30 is seldom read correctly. Read, — ". . . thou never gavest me a KID . . . thou killedst for him the *FATTED CALF*. " Nothing too little for me, nothing too much for him.

Negatives should receive special attention; they are often emphatic and seldom read correctly. Thus in the ten commandments the reading is often spoilt by placing the emphasis on "*shalt*." Read, — "Thou shalt have *no* other gods before me"; "Thou shalt *not* steal"; and so on. In 1 Corinthians 13., too, most of the negatives should be emphasised, — "but have *not* love" "seeketh *not* its own" "Love *never* faileth."

In Genesis 1. 3 read, — "God said—Let there be light—and—there was *light*." Matthew 2. 18, "because they are *not*." Generally avoid laying the emphasis on *are, was, were*. But we must be on the look out for exceptions; e. g., 1 Corinthians 1. 28, first clause, emphasise "*not*"—"things that are *not*." Second clause, emphasise "*are*"—"things that *are*." Revelation 4. 11, "For Thy pleasure they *are*, —and were *created*."

Inflection.

Under this head a single example must suffice. The rising and falling inflections are indicated by these marks over the words, — rising, -< falling. The passage is John 9. 19-21.

"And they asked *them*—saying, —Is *this* your son, —who ye say was born *blind*?—How, then, doth he now *see*?—His parents answered, and *said*, —We know that this is our *son*—*and*, that he was born *blind*: —but, how he now *seeth*, —we know *not*; —*or* who opened his *eyes*, —we know *not*; —ask *him*; —he is of *age*; —he shall speak for *himself*."

This passage illustrates the rule that in simple questions, which permit a simple "Yes" or "No" for an answer, the voice should be raised; in other questions the falling inflection is usual. The first question to the parents illustrates the former, the second question the latter.

Now read aloud the story of the Samaritan Woman and the Lord's dealing with her in John 4.

Hymn Reading.

Hymn reading also needs care. We know the hymn? so well that there **is** a strong tendency to sing without thinking of the meaning of the words. It **is** the privilege of the reader to make his listeners aware of that meaning, so that all sing with heart and voice. If the reader **is** unable to do this, then he should read **no** more than the first verse; to do more **is** time wasted. S. B.

DAVID'S TREATMENT OF THE ARK.

From Kirkintilloch. —When the people of Israel were in a poor spiritual condition, the ark of God had little or no place in their thoughts, but in times of spiritual reviving, the ark had a prominent and exalted place among them. This is typical of what place we give to the Lord amongst His people to-day. Do we exalt **Him** and *give* Him the place of honour which is His by right?

In the battle against the Philistines "the ark of God was taken" (1 Samuel 4. 11). But the underlying truth really was that God had forsaken the tabernacle of Shiloh, and had delivered His strength, His glory (the ark) into the enemy's hand (see Psalm 78. 60-61).

We paused to consider the seriousness of what the men of Beth-Shemesh did (1 Samuel 6. 19). They looked into the ark of God! To do so they must needs remove the mercy-seat, and thus they were face to face with God's holy law, with no mercy-seat between them, and they perished instantly.

Finally the **ark** was taken to the house of Abinadab in the **hill**, where it remained for the twenty years (1 Samuel 7. 2); following were the forty years of Saul's reign, when Israel sought not unto it.

One of the first things David did when **he** became king over all Israel **was** to find a place of rest for the LORD. Psalm 132. refers to this exercise and affliction **in** his soul to find out the place of the LORD'S rest. David did not choose **Zion** as the place, but he says, *'The LORD hath chosen Zion; He hath desired it for **His** habitation. This is My resting place for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it " (Psalm 132. 13-14).

The ark has various titles in the Scriptures, and the title used at this period **is** "the ark of God, which **is** called by the Name of the LORD of hosts that dwelleth between the cherubim. " It speaks of the LORD **as** the One who dwells **in** the midst of **His** people. The One whom God has exalted to the highest place **in** heaven, also desires a place of habitation on the earth.

We notice that this great spiritual movement to bring up the ark to Zion, was the result of deep spiritual exercise. Such an exercise must be directed by the Word of God. Despite the zeal and enthusiasm of David and the people, the carrying of the ark of God on a new cart was nothing less than **a** failure to enquire in the Word of God. David confessed afterwards, saying, " **We** sought **Him** not according to the ordinance " (1 Chronicles 15. 13).

This serious mistake cost a man's life, for their folly became manifest when Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark, and the LORD immediately smote **him**. At this sudden visitation of God's judgment, the most grieved person **was** David himself, for he was the most deeply exercised about bringing up the ark. It **was** carried aside to Obed-edom's house, where it remained for three months, until David learned that none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites.

When the ark finally was resting in its place, it was no longer to be carried about from place to place, for when Zadok carried it out of the city into exile with David, David said, " Carry back the ark of God into the city " (2 Samuel 15. 25-29).
H. King.

From Cardiff. —It **is** necessary to **a** correct apprehension of the events of 2 Samuel 6. to note the instructions given to Moses and Aaron relative to the service of the tent of meeting. They were directed to take the sum of the sons of Kohath and also of Gershon and Merari, giving each of the three companies, **as** directed by the LORD, what was called " their charge " or "a burden. " **We** must note that the sons of Kohath were given the peculiar honour of bearing the sanctuary upon their shoulders, being instructed not to touch it " lest they die " (Numbers 4. 15). The LORD commanded that covered wagons and oxen should be given to those connected with the service of the tent of meeting, excepting to the Kohathites, to whom no wagons were assigned " because the service of the sanctuary belonged unto them; they bear it upon their shoulders " (Numbers 7. 9).

David's wrong **in** providing a new cart was not justified by his good intentions, and the punishment of such wrong-doing fell upon one, **Uzzah**, because they sought the LORD their God " not according to the ordinance " (1 Chronicles 15. 13). **In** a later day, the house of Jacob found delight in drawing nigh unto God, not forsaking the ordinances of their God. Nevertheless, the LORD rebuked them since they found their own pleasure, continuing in their own ways, and **He** reproved their condition of heart (Isaiah 58.). The Corinthian saints **came** " together not for the better but for the worse " for which **cause** Paul says, " many among you are weak and sickly, and not a few sleep " (1 Corinthians 11. 17 and 30). How careful we should be in our approach to Divine **things**. Fruitfulness in spiritual spheres will not become the portion of those who are not mindful of the law of the Lord.

" The LORD blessed Obed-edom and all his house "; what a contrast with David's failure and displeasure! Obed-edom, a doorkeeper for the ark, had sons who themselves begat sons, and it **is** recorded that they were " able men **in** strength for service " (1 Chronicles 26. 8). Solomon wrote " Blessings are upon the head of the righteous " (Proverbs 10. 6). How true !

David learned one of his many lessons before attempting a second time to bring up the ark, but what exultation **is** expressed **in** Psalm 68. the first verse of which **is** similar to the words Moses uttered " when the ark set forward " (Numbers 10. 35).

The ark had now come to Zion, the place of God's choice, which David recently (2 Samuel 5.) took in triumph from the Jebusites. But only during the reign of Solomon did Zion provide a place for God's habitation, **as** expressed in the words of Psalm 132., " This **is** my resting place for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. " Paul makes reference to the temple of the present dispensation **as** a sanctuary of God in the Spirit, quoting the words of Leviticus 26. 12. Perhaps God's walking in the midst of His people could be compared with the presentation of One like unto a Son of Man walking in the midst of the seven golden lampstands (Revelation 1.).

From Crowborough.—David appreciated that the ark of the Covenant was very precious in God's sight. It occupied the inmost place in the tabernacle and the temple, and spake of the presence of God amongst **His** people. **As** soon **as** David had established his kingdom, he earnestly desired to bring up the ark to Jerusalem. According to Deuteronomy 17. 18, it was the duty of the king, when he sat upon the throne, to write out the words of the law, and familiarise himself with God's requirements. Instead of following the commandments of God, David followed that which the uncircumcised Philistines had done. God had said that the ark must be borne on the shoulders of the Levites. The irreverence of using **a** cart brought down the wrath of God upon Uzzah. Even to-day, men, with great zeal, seek to serve God after their own traditions and not according to God's expressed will.

David was displeased, but learned what ought to have been done, and on that occasion there was great rejoicing amongst all the people. David's wife did not enter into the spirit of the matter, and brought **a** curse upon herself. David realised that God did not intend the ark to abide in **a** tent for ever, thus he planned to build **a** house for God, and bring therein the ark to its resting place. At the time of Absalom's rebellion, the priests who had care of the ark brought it to David, but this time David made no mistake, and sent it back to the city.

We learn in all this that they who would serve God in connection with **His** house must do so **in** the way **He** has chosen. **S. Swift.**

From Broxburn.—In things pertaining to the sanctuary, the priests had charge (1 Chronicles 15. 2 and 14). Sanctified and appointed by God, they were responsible for the priestly service in connection with those things pertaining to the sanctuary. Saul during his reign had no interest in the ark of God, but David **was** different. **He** gathered together all the chosen men of Israel, and his purpose was to bring up the ark of God to the city of Jerusalem, the place of God's choice (2 Samuel 6. 1). It **is** most remarkable that David sanctioned " **a** new cart " to be provided in the light of 1 Chronicles 15. 2. This was a hasty procedure **in** violation of the express command of God. The Kohathites ought to have borne the ark by the staves provided for that purpose. Whilst it was **an** excellent thought in David's heart " to bring from thence, " his method was wrong. Doing **a** right thing in **a** wrong way merited God's displeasure in this instance. This sad occurrence not only threw **a** cloud over the joyous scene, but entirely stopped the procession. We live in **a** day of innovations, when sects

and systems of men seek to serve God **in** ways which they think **are** fit and proper. How careful we should be to see that all we do **is** in accordance with God's word. We must not import anything that **is** not according to the scriptures into the work of the sanctuary. What might be the consequences to-day, **if** God dealt in the same way with the errors that are made regarding the holy things? We thought also of the men of Beth-shemesh, whom the LORD smote (1 Samuel 6. 19).

David stood still; he was not **a** self-willed man. Here **is** a principle that **is** worth noting; if we are in any doubt about any service for the Lord, we should call **a** halt. It **is** a blessed thing when one opens one's home to the things of the Lord. In this connection see John 1. 37-39, where the disciples of John abode with the Lord that day. Also note Acts 16. 14-15 **and** 40, where Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened, in turn opened her house to the Lord's servants. She showed hospitality. There are many ways **in** which we can consecrate ourselves and our homes, and show the Obed-edom touch. *John McGregor.*

EXTRACTS.

From Hereford. —Following another's ways, to the exclusion of God's appointed way, can only bring disaster. God's word **is** the only sure guide, and **if** we abide by this we shall never go astray. It **is** interesting to note David's attitude when God smote Uzzah. Although he **was** displeased at first (2 Samuel 6. 8), yet we see in verse 9 that he "was afraid of the LORD that day." Although very disappointed, he realised that something **was** amiss. Well indeed can **it** **be** said he regarded "not lightly the chastening of the LORD." **He** indeed had the wonderful experience of Hebrews 12. 11, "All chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous, but grievous: yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness." This **is** borne out by subsequent events—his bringing the ark of God into the city of David with joy (2 Samuel 6. 12)—his sacrificing of an ox and **a** fatling after the ark had gone **six** paces (verse 13)—his dancing before the LORD with all **his** might (verse 14), and so on.

The first attempt to bring up the ark of God **seems** to have **been** of **a** military character (2 Samuel 6. 1)—the second of **a** priestly character (verse 14). Having brought up the Ark of God to Jerusalem, David realised how incongruous it **was** that he, poor mortal man, should dwell in an house of cedar, whilst the ark of God dwelt "within curtains." David's humble attitude **is** again displayed **when** Zadok and the priests bare out the **ark** from Jerusalem. **He** realised that it, should remain in its resting place. **He** placed himself entirely in God's hand, that God might do unto him **as** it seemed good. Well, indeed, might **we** adopt this attitude and, like the poet, say: —

⁴⁴ And whether Thou dost give or not,
Tis love that grants and love denies. "

Robert Tidmas.

From Cowdenbeath. —All during the **reign** of Saul the ark of God **was** forgotten. "The time was long"; that **is** how the Spirit of God describes the period when the ark was in the house of Abinadab. The **time** was long for God, who had to wait until there was **a** desire on the part of **His** people. David **was** **a** man who had longings after God, and when he was established on the throne of Israel his desire was to bring the ark of God up to Jerusalem. David made **a** great mistake in emulating the mode of transport used by **the** Philistines. Among the sects to-day we find man-made innovations, observed by many dear Christians, who **in** their reverence and sincerity would put **us** to shame. Surely the staves which rested **in** the rings of the ark and which were never to be withdrawn should have reminded David of the God-given manner of transportation.

Passing over the years we come to a critical moment in David's reign. Rebellion had raised its ugly head in the kingdom, and he was forced to flee. Many valiant men who loved David took their place with him. Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, were men who loved David, and they thought that the ark of God should be where David was. David sent them back to Jerusalem. Let us ever remember that the Divine presence is not associated with the person of a man, however worthy, but with a Divinely chosen place.

James K. D. Johnston.

From Glasgow. —David's exercise of heart concerning the ark must have been a delight to the LORD after the long lapse in Israel's interest in it. The comment of 1 Chronicles 13. 3 is sad that "we sought not unto it in the days of Saul," which, according to Acts 13. 21 covered the space of forty years. Altogether the ark must have been neglected more than a lifetime. The fact that David appreciated its importance in God's dealings with His people indicates that David had a sound knowledge of Israel's history and of the dealings of God with them.

After their first failure David returned for the ark, having learned a good deal in the interval about the carriage of the ark. "None ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites," said David in 1 Chronicles 15. 2; and in this correct manner the ark was brought into the city of David, to rest in a tent which David pitched for it. It is strange that David should have done this when the original tabernacle, and some of the vessels, were to be found at Gibeon, but David's action may be explained by his knowledge of God's repudiation of the Tabernacle in Shiloh and his own secret idea of building for God a permanent house, an idea which he did not apparently express until he had rest from all his enemies. He seemed to appreciate that the Tabernacle was appropriate so long as Israel journeyed, but now that they had settled in the Land, a more permanent structure was desired.

David's determination to have the ark in the city of David was further seen when, during Absalom's insurrection, he ordered Zadok to take it back to the city. Although David may have erred on points of detail, his general movements were in the right direction, and, in days of declension, such good leadership of God's people must have been a joy to the LORD, especially as that same ark spoke of that greater Son of David, who was coming.

J. J. P.

From Melbourne. —No judgment had fallen upon the Philistines for using a new cart to bear the ark of the LORD, but Israel, to whom the oracles of God had been committed, was in that position where implicit obedience to the Word of the LORD was incumbent upon them. David may have been influenced by the action and example of the Philistines, together with his consultation with the leaders of Israel. Is there not here a lesson for us that while the sects and systems of men may introduce methods, answering to the new cart, into their service towards God, the Churches of God must be careful not to follow their example in anything? The Word of the LORD is all sufficient and alone must be our guide in matters pertaining to the service of His House.

With regard to the judgment which fell upon Uzzah, it has been suggested that a New Testament counterpart is found in 1 Corinthians 11. 27-34, where some in the Church at Corinth had brought themselves under the judgment of God by their careless handling of sacred things.

In David's dancing before the ark and uncovering himself to behave as one of the common people, do not we see a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, laying aside His glory and being found in fashion as a man, to be despised and rejected of men, as was David by Michal?

T. W. Fullerton,

From London. —In all that we may consider in the life of David, one of the most important features is his attitude to the House of God. It is evident that, from an early age, he loved God's house, and he was not long established upon the throne before he took steps to secure the ark of God (1 Chronicles 13. 3, 2 Samuel 6. 1-2). Is it possible that with the advent of ease and prosperity we can forget—forget our Lord and Saviour, whom this ark so definitely typifies? Nevertheless David remembered and gave orders that it should be brought up to the city where God desired to have His House. What a wonderful sight it must have been to observe this great procession of priests and Levites as they began to bring the ark up. No doubt Psalm 132. would refer to this triumphant march.

However, one fatal mistake was made by David, and that procession, which started with great joy, ended in sorrow, and David was greatly dismayed. He had to learn something of the holiness of God and of His things—a lesson obviously fully appreciated by the words of Psalm 93. 5. Divine service, if it is to be to the praise and glory of God, must be carried out according to His will and purpose through the mediator of the new covenant—the Lord Jesus Christ. Once assurance had come to David by the good report concerning Obed-edom, he brought the ark and set it its place in the midst of the tent of meeting that he had pitched for it. This was not to be the end of things for David in his treatment of the ark of God. He experienced a deep exercise of heart to provide a more suitable resting place. It must be in a house which would befit the God of Israel. Are we satisfied that Christ has the rightful place in our hearts? Permission to build the House was not granted to David, but the fruition of his desire is seen in 2 Chronicles 35. 3, in the House which Solomon built which gives rest to the Levites. May we seek to imitate David's great faith in his desire to be a green olive tree in the House of God!

L. H. Taylor.

From Ilford. —It is interesting to note that in Numbers 7. the sons of Gershon and Merari were allocated oxen and wagons, but that the sons of Kohath had none, but had to bear the ark on their shoulders. It was disobedience to this command that led to such a fearful thing befalling Uzzah. From this time onwards, David's appreciation of God's will increased. This zeal is expressed when he has it laid on his heart to build a house for the ark to replace the dwelling-place within curtains. David's understanding is still more emphasised when he orders the ark back to the city, as if realising that this was only a symbol of God's presence, and that it was God's will to give him ultimate victory without the presence of the ark.

It seems quite clear from this study that God has a way for man, the knowledge of which brings responsibility.

From Kilmarnock. —Three months after the death of Uzzah David called for Zadok and Abiathar, the priests and the Levites, and they "bare the ark of God upon their shoulders, and it was set in the tent that David had prepared for it, and 1 Chronicles 16. gives us David's song of thanksgiving to the LORD" and all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD. While this condition of things was no doubt pleasing to the LORD, yet David was not yet satisfied. So he purposed to build a house for the LORD. The LORD'S message through Nathan the prophet was, that he would not build a House for the LORD, but his son would do this.

When Zadok and Abiathar carried the ark out of the city to David at Kidron (2 Samuel 15.) he was apparently afraid for the safety of the ark, and commanded them to carry it back to its place in the city, thus showing his deep concern for the LORD'S things while committing himself into the LORD'S hands. In David's treatment of the ark, we have an example for those who are in the place of testimony now, not only to be in the right position, but to be in the right condition, and to do all things in the right way according to the LORD'S will. A. G. S.

From Atherton. —The ark spoke of the Divine Presence and of the strength and glory of God. It is typical of the Lord Jesus Christ in the fullest expression of His wonderful attributes. What a deserving place **He** rightly received **in** the hearts of those eleven apostles, **as** they " beheld His Glory " ! whilst Israel, **as a** people, had no concern for the One who was manifest in the flesh.

Two failures were manifested in the manner in which the ark was being brought up. In addition to the error of using **a** new cart, the sons of Abinadab, who carried out the ark, were men of Judah, which tribe had nothing to do with the handling of the furniture of the House of God. Some thought that Abinadab and his sons were Levites. [It is true that their home was in Judah's portion (1 Chronicles 13. 6, 7), but according to the historian Josephus, Abinadab was probably **a** Levite. We would suggest, in that Abinadab's son, Eleazar, was sanctified to keep the ark, that they were of the tribe of Levi. —*Jas. M. J* To whom must the blame regarding the treatment of the ark be laid ? Primarily the responsibility rested upon the Levites, since to them God had entrusted the bearing of the ark. Nor was David entirely free from guilt in the matter. It is evident that the law relative to the ark had been forgotten, but as soon as David learned the will of the LORD he put the matter right (1 Chronicles 15. 2).

Some thought that the most important task **in** connection with the Tabernacle was the carrying of it by the Kohathites (Numbers 4.). Reference was made to the less important tasks of the Gershonites and the Merarites, but all the tasks were equally necessary. In this we have **an** important lesson, not to despise the lesser or menial tasks that the LORD may appoint us to do. What can we learn from the carrying of the ark of God on the shoulders of the Levites? It was stated that carrying the ark, shoulder high, would speak to us of God's purpose, that the glorious person of Christ should be held up before men. The new cart **is** suggestive of man's level, the ark on the shoulders of the Levites as God's level.

The anti-type of the wonderful day on which the ark was returned to Jerusalem seems to be seen on the day of Pentecost, when the declaration was made that the Lord was now honoured in His rightful place as Lord and Christ; and what a blessing resulted! From 2 Samuel 7. 2 we see David's dissatisfaction that the ark should dwell within curtains, while **he** himself dwelt in a house of cedar. What **a** great man David was, with the honour of God ever before him! We rejoice at the Holy Spirit's approbation in 1 Kings 8. 17-19. Shall we not emulate this worthy servant of God ? *E. Birchall, G. Sankey.*

From Toronto. —When one day the Ark of God turned into a field, drawn by two milch kine, there was revealed to Israel that God desired to dwell among them. This marked the beginning of a divine movement. The Ark settled in the house of Abinadab on the hill. David heard of this and sought to bring it to Jerusalem, but did not bring it in the God-appointed way, but copied the Philistines. No wonder he failed, because he had not inquired from the Word of God, but had relied on human intelligence which will never bring us to God.

David then caused the Ark to be turned aside into the house of Obed-Edom, the Philistine [Obed-Edom was **a** Levite of the family of Korahites, descended from Kohath (1 Chronicles 26. 1 and 4-8, and Numbers 16. 1). **He** is called "the Gittite " **in** 2 Samuel 6. 10, probably because he was of the Levitical city of Gath-rimmon, which **was** assigned to the Kohathites (Joshua 21. 24-25). —*Jas. M. J* who had **an** open door, and God greatly blessed him. When David sought **a** second time to bring up the Ark of God, he first inquired by **whom** and how it should **be** brought up. **He** had discovered the hard way, that God had **a** right way to bring **up** the Ark, and, also, chosen **men** for this purpose; teaching **us** if **we** would **please** God, **we** must **go** according to the Word of God. David's appreciation of the moving of the Ark of God to Jerusalem is **seen in** the 24th Psalm.

John McCard

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Questions from Crowborough. —(1) Was the ark reckoned as part of the **furniture** ? (Exodus 31. 7)

(2) Is there any evidence as to **what happened** to the contents of the ark which Moses put therein, **but** which **were** not there when Solomon brought the ark into the temple ? (see Hebrews 9. 4 and 1 Kings 8. 9)

Answers. —(1) The word " furniture " in Exodus 31. 7 is the **same** Hebrew word translated " vessels, " twice in verse 8 and once in verse 9, a word meaning " apparatus, implement, utensil, etc. " (see Strong). It means in these scriptures those " vessels " that were associated with " the Tent " (verse 7), the table (verse 8), the lampstand (verse 8), etc. In that sense, we would scarcely name the ark as "part of the furniture. " It stood alone as "the table" stood alone. However, in modern English usage, it would appear quite correct to say that " the ark, and the table, and the golden altar, etc., formed the furniture of the Tabernacle. "—*Jas. M.*

(2) I know of no evidence as to what happened to the contents. In Exodus 25. 16, Moses was instructed to put the Testimony into the ark. Moses had previously been instructed to lay up " before the Testimony " the pot of manna (Exodus 16. 34), and the same words are used concerning Aaron's rod in Numbers 17. 10. Instruction as to the Testimony is clear, i. e., " into the ark, " but the location of other items is not just so definite. It is probable that when the ark was moved from place to place, the pot of manna and Aaron's rod were placed " inside " the ark. The writer of Hebrews 9. 4 indicates that, and therefore would in his analogy visualise the Tabernacle and not the Temple, for when the ark rested within the Temple, built by Solomon, only the two tables of stone (the Testimony) were therein. —*Jas. M.*

Question from Melbourne. —Was the tent which David pitched for the ark the original of Exodus 25. ? Had replacements been made ? or could we gather from such a scripture as 1 Samuel 3. 15 that there had been something more substantial in existence at any period ?

Answer. —The tent which David pitched or prepared in Jerusalem for the reception of the ark (see 1 Chronicles 15. 1 and 16. 1) was **not** the tent or tabernacle of meeting originally made by Moses in the wilderness. Please read 2 Chronicles 1. 3-6 for definite evidence.

I do not think we can say anything about " replacements. " If the shoes and clothing of the children of Israel needed no renewals, we venture to suggest no replacements were needed for the Tent of meeting.

I do not think from the word " doors " (1 Samuel 3. 15) and " door post of the temple of the LORD " (1 Samuel 1. 9) that we can judge the building was other than the Tent of meeting. See Joshua 18. 1, where the tent of meeting was set up at Shiloh, and still was at Shiloh in Eli's day (1 Samuel 1. 9, 24). —*Jas. M.*

Question from London. —What significance lies in the two tents of meeting—one in the right place and the other in Gibeon—a high place ?

Answer. —This question refers to 1 Kings 3. 4 and 2 Chronicles 1. 3. We judge our friends mean by " the right place, " Jerusalem. It is clear from a study of 2 Chronicles 1. 3-6 that the tent David pitched was not "the Tent of meeting. " Therefore there were not two tents of meeting as our friends' question assumes. The Temple took seven years to build (see 1 Kings 6. 38). When this was completed, the ark of the covenant and the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels thereof were brought therein (2 Chronicles 5. 4-5 and 1 Kings 8. 4). Then there was no need to go to Gibeon for the " glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD " in Jerusalem (1 Kings 8. 10-11). —*Jas. 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.

THE CONSOLIDATION OF A KINGDOM.

In a few illuminating verses at the close of 1 Chronicles 18. we are given a summary of the ordered structure of David's kingdom, when finally his authority had been recognised. **As** we have followed the growth of his power from the cave of Adullam, it is helpful to contrast that original band of men with the established kingdom. In Adullam were those who were distressed, discontented, and in debt, some four hundred men **with** little in common except loyalty to David. Their recognition of his authority had finally led to the establishment of God's will throughout the Kingdom of Israel under the hand of David. In a day when spiritual anarchy and individual licence are often mistaken for Christian liberty, we do well to emphasise the principles underlying the gathering of a people in divine testimony according to the will of God. All the elements of discord and individualism were present at Adullam. But those who would share in the purpose of God must learn that to the LORD'S anointed had been given divine authority. The resulting order of the Kingdom of Israel reflects the lovely scene described by Balaam as he saw the encampment of the nation on pilgrimage:

" How goodly are thy tents, **O** Jacob,
Thy tabernacles, **O** Israel !
As valleys are they spread forth,
As gardens by the riverside " (Numbers 24. 5, 6).

The order of all God's ways is wonderfully evident in creation. Subjection to **His** will must always bring **His** people into an ordered unity. The **anarchy** of the days of the Judges, when every man did that which was right in his own eyes, fell far short of the divine ideal. There are still those who prefer to do what **is** right in their own eyes, especially in matters affecting the gathering of disciples to fulfil the commission given us by the Lord in its fulness. The delightful ideal

of New Testament days, when, unity and order were seen among the Churches of God, **is** regarded by them **as** no longer important. In its place is substituted the loose-knit union of Christians in groups which hold widely divergent views on many important doctrines. In forceful contrast to that decadent compromise, we read,

" Giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit **in** the bond of peace. There **is** one Body, and one Spirit, even as also ye **were** called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism... " (Ephesians 4. 3-5).

That Spirit-indited exhortation may not **be** modified by circumstances, **and** when obeyed it leads to a state of unity similar to that which prevailed in David's kingdom. Ordered government among the people of God was effected through a united elderhood in New Testament times. It pleases the Lord to **use** human instruments to attain this divine unity.

" Remember them that had the rule over you, which spake unto you the word of God" (Hebrews 13. 7).

This authority **is** delegated by God to the elders of the Churches of God, just **as He** entrusted the responsibility of the government of Israel to human instrumentality; and the fact that David failed at times **in** this responsibility may help us to place in right perspective any failure of those at present charged with the care of God's people. The failure of one chosen by God for such work must never be confused with the divine principle that **His** people should be kept together in ordered unity by the rule of elders equipped of the Holy Spirit for this work.

It **is** instructive to notice the details given by God of the different responsibilities entrusted to David's ministers. Joab was over the host; Jehoshaphat was recorder; Zadok and Ahimelech were priests; and Shavsha was scribe. In **a** united kingdom, each man exercised his particular gift under subjection to David, contributing to the good of the whole. This brings to mind the principle of differing gifts harmonised by the Spirit of God for the advancement of the Holy Nation **in** the days of the apostles. Following the words quoted above from Ephesians 4. " we read,

" And **He** gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ. "

A parallel passage in 1 Corinthians 12. emphasises the unifying power of the Holy Spirit in relation to the exercise of the differing gifts. Our concern, **as** students together of God's word, should be to ensure that our particular gift or gifts be exercised for the good of the Israel of God in our day of opportunity. The recorder, with his gift of administrative accuracy, and the priest with his detailed knowledge of the law of God, were **as** necessary for the maintenance of David's kingdom **as** the men gifted to stand in the limelight of military glory. So to-day the Fellowship of God's Son has need **in** the rising generation of those who will be like Ezra, " **a** ready scribe in the law, " who had set his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to teach. Some movements may swing along on **a** superficial understanding of the Scriptures, bolstered up by emotionalism. But **the** strength of the Churches of God **lies** in **a** clear appreciation of the " pattern of sound words "; **as** the details of that pattern are learned, and **seen** to be **a** complete revelation of the will of God governing **His** people throughout the present dispensation, the importance of holding fast **is** impressed on the heart. " Much study **is** **a** weariness to the flesh, " but for those who have the ability,

dedication of time and energy to the study of God's word will bear rich fruit in blessing to God's people. Faithfulness in detailed administrative work is also of great value in modern assembly service; young men with opportunities of training for that type of service should *be* exercised about using it in relation to the work of God. Examples could be multiplied, but let us rest assured that each has a responsibility in regard to the* gift bestowed by God, for "unto *each one of us* was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ."

When it came to the question of the service of the House of God, the same principles are clearly illustrated in the reorganisation which David effected, to adjust the irregularities and carelessness which had resulted from long years of neglect. We notice first the order and authority which beautified the arrangements governing the service. Chenaniah was over the song: he instructed about the song, because he was skilful (1 Chronicles 15. 22). "A man's gift maketh room for him," and good it is for the people of God when such gift is recognised and given scope for exercise. Similarly for Heman, Asaph, and Ethan there was an appointed place, and so on right down to the door keepers for the ark. As the apostle discussed the service of the House of God in his letter to the Corinthians, he said, "For God is not a God of confusion." Perhaps he had in mind the delightful order of the service inaugurated by David. In any case, as we read the divine chronicle, and imagine the song of praise rising from the gifted lips of Chenaniah and his brethren, we realise that the order of God's House in that day contributed to the beauty of the holiness in which they worshipped the LORD.

G. Prasher, Jun.

DAVID'S TREATMENT OF THE ARK OF GOD.

From Brantford. —Many years had passed since the Ark of God had been in the land of the Philistines. Throughout the time of Samuel and Saul the Ark remained in Abinadab's house, but David's heart had been stirred, and he decided that the Ark should be brought back again; also, "for the thing was right in the eyes of all the people." They brought the Ark from the house, and placed it upon the new cart, pulled or drawn by oxen. It was with great joy and jubilation that the procession started on its way, but, because the oxen were restless, Uzzah put his hand to the Ark. Here was a tragedy indeed—for God was angry because of this deed, and smote Uzzah. Here was a tragic ending to all of David's plans; what was wrong? True, he had the right thoughts, but he had gone about doing it in the wrong way. So the Ark was placed in the house of Obed-edom, where it remained for three months, but David's heart had been exercised, and he sought out the right way, and made preparations now according to the word of Jehovah. When all things were ready, and the right people in their right condition and positions, then they brought back the Ark with great joy and much singing, and praising God, to the place prepared for the Ark.

Here then, with the Ark in the tent that David had prepared, the people gathered to offer burnt-offerings and peace-offerings before God. This was the place, and here was the place of worship. God desires worship, but only in His way, and in the right place. To-day God has a right place, and only one place where His people can gather to worship before Him.

David had a single eye to accomplish the desires of his heart which were toward God, and his heart was stirred with a love for the Ark of God, so let us also have a single eye for our Lord, seeking to carry out His mind and will.

J. J. Thomas.

THE NEW SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY.

From Birkenhead. —It was in David's time that an important development of the service of the House of God took place, namely, the introduction of the service of song. This was brought into being even before the temple was built and was the expression of his own desires and affections towards the LORD and **His** dwelling place. Priests of **the** sons of Aaron had from Moses onwards ministered continually at the altar of burnt-offering and in the holy place, while the Levites, as well as assisting them, had been the burden bearers of the tabernacle and its vessels as the LORD had appointed through Moses. Now that the Ark of the LORD had found its resting place in Zion, and the Levites' work of carrying the Ark from place to place was almost at an end, from the three brandies of the tribe of Levi, Kohath, Gershom and Merari were appointed the leaders of the service of song; Heman the singer, Asaph who stood on his right hand, and Ethan (or Jeduthan) on his left, with their sons according to their order (1 Chronicles 6.). The burden bearers have now become the leaders of song, a fitting picture of those, who, having borne the burden and heat of the day in the LORD'S service on earth, will have the joy of being prominent amongst those who will lead the praise of heaven **in** a coming day. The greatest burden bearer, the Lord Jesus Himself, will have the joy of leading the song of praise **in** the midst of the great congregation (Psalm 22. 22).

The placing of the Ark in its resting place was the signal for the commencement of the new service of song, which was accompanied by instruments of music —psalteries, harps and cymbals. David himself seems to have made or provided many of the instruments, and many were the words of praise he composed in skilful psalms **as** guided by the Spirit of God, —words of thanksgiving, praise, and worship, unto the LORD for **His** marvellous works in creation and in redemption, also, **His** loving-kindness and tender mercies to **His** people. God had, indeed, put **a** new song into his mouth, even praise unto his God (Psalm 40. 3).

Asaph and his brethren were those through whom David first ordained to give thanks and praise before the Ark of the LORD, delivering to them the words which he had written, afterwards known as Psalms 105. and 96. It will be seen that the words of praise were sung by the Levite choir, the people themselves responding with Amen, and praising the LORD (1 Chronicles 16. 36). The service of song was, properly speaking, by the human voice, as its name implies, and the instruments of music served only to accompany and sustain the song.

The service of song before the Ark **in** Zion and **in** the Tabernacle **in** Gibeon went on continuously until the temple was built by Solomon, then **a** permanent service of song was instituted which was part of the pattern of the service of the House of God which David had received by the Spirit of God (1 Chronicles 28. 12-13).

There was **a** perpetual song of praise in God's House day and night (1 Chronicles 9. 33), and this **is** probably alluded to **in** Psalm 134.: "Behold, bless ye the LORD, **all** ye servants of the LORD, which by night stand **in** the House of the LORD."

Now, sacrifice and offering at the altar have ceased because of the Perfect Sacrifice which has **been** offered once for all, but the song of praise goes on **in** God's House **in** the service of the holy priesthood, the sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips **in** psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody in our hearts unto the Lord (Ephesians 5. 19).

In a coming day, in the glory, many are the songs appropriate to the singers, and it is interesting to notice the part the Song of Moses will still have, along with the Song of the Lamb (Revelation 15. 3).

T. M. H., N. G. A.

From Glasgow. —David's exercise of heart concerning the Ark of God embraced not only its removal to the city of David, but also the manner of its removal. We learn from 1 Chronicles 15. that he had profited from the severe lesson he learned when bringing the Ark from the house of Abinadab. He apparently consulted the Law of God relative to the Ark for, says he in verse 2, "None but the Levites should carry the Ark." This discovery had apparently taught him that the movement of the Ark was an occasion for ceremony, and, as though to emphasise this fact, David ordered the appointment of singers, with instruments of music, to sound aloud and lift up the voice with joy. This led to the institution of a service of praise which had not before existed in Israel. Although the Law apparently contained no command requiring this form of divine service, it would seem that God had put this thing into David's heart, for His acceptance of this service is never in doubt. In fact, it is called for in many subsequent scriptures such as Hosea 14. 2; Hebrews 13. 15.

The leaders of the new service were chosen from the Levites, whose privilege it was to engage in the service of God. They were apparently set in their places for the bringing up of the Ark from the house of Obed-edom and were subsequently confirmed in their office when the Ark had rested in the tent that David had pitched for it. These Levites were men skilled in music, who had the ability and zeal to carry on the work they undertook. Thus from its inception, the service was of a high order, as well it might be. The service of God in any sphere demands the best that men can offer, the sacrifice of praise being not a whit behind the other sacrifices in its purity. It is the form of service given to God's people in these days whereby they may express collectively their appreciation of Him and of Christ whom the Ark typified. In this connection it should be noted that the service of song was associated with the Ark and that the appointed Levites were to minister before it continually (1 Chronicles 16. 4).

The use of instrumental music; in David's day, and the absence of any mention of this in connection with the worship of the new covenant people, has brought difficulty to many. The propriety of instrumental worship in Old Testament times is evidenced by God's acceptance of it, and by many exhortations found in the Psalms, e. g., Psalms 92. 3; 98. 5; 147. 7. While the use of instruments in the material House is understandable, when the Glory of God was present behind the veil, it is, of course, unthinkable that such means should be required by the people of God when, in the Spirit, they rise into Heaven itself to worship and praise with their lips. Material things such as musical instruments would be entirely out of place, and accordingly, it is hardly surprising that there should be no mention of them in the New Testament.

J. J. P.

From London, S. E. —David's ambition was not only to dwell in the house of the LORD, but also to "behold the beauty of the LORD" (Psalm 27. 4). Living in the house was only a means to the great end of reaching God Himself. The beauty of the LORD is seen in various manifestations, but in His house it is distinctively beheld. Thus David deemed that it was not enough to bring the

Ark to its appointed place of rest, but he must needs make arrangements for the new service of the sanctuary.

There was a three-fold organisation of specific duties: — 1. Aaron and his sons (*a*) offered upon the altar of burnt offering, (*b*) offered upon the altar of incense, (*c*) did all the work of the most holy place, (*d*) made atonement for Israel. All these duties were performed "according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded" (1 Chronicles 6. 49). 2. The Levites were appointed "for all the service of the tabernacle of the house of God" (1 Chronicles 6. 48). 3. Certain Levites were "set over the service of song in the house of the LORD." They ministered with song before the tabernacle and waited on their office according to their order (1 Chronicles 6. 31-32).

The Levites were, in some respects, the first of all the tribes of Israel, dignified and distinguished with the inestimable honour of the priesthood. All the honours and privileges of their office depended upon their descent, so they were naturally more concerned than any other Israelite to preserve and prove a clear pedigree. Thus we have a clear account of ancestry in 1 Chronicles 6.

David had earlier been responsible for the LORD God making a breach upon Israel, for they "sought Him not according to the ordinance." This mistake was now to be corrected. Wise and good men have been guilty of errors, but they seek to correct them as soon as they are fully aware of their folly. David did not attempt self-justification, neither did he try to saddle the blame on others (1 Chronicles 15. 13). He owned the earlier guilt and now sought God in the appropriate manner. So the Levites sanctified themselves—the right people, in the right position, in the right condition, doing the right work. So "God helped the Levites that bare the Ark of the covenant of the LORD" (1 Chronicles 15. 26), and they brought in the Ark of God. Complete conformity to the mind and will of God brings success, thankfulness, joy and praise. "If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them."

The Ark now being at rest, David arranged for continual service of song, the ministry lasting until Solomon built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem. This ministry was two-fold: —(*a*) a choir (1 Chronicles 6. 31-47) with an instructor, Chenaniah (1 Chronicles 15. 22); (*b*) an orchestra (1 Chronicles 15. 16, 19) with psalteries, harps, cymbals, and trumpets.

A cursory glance at the Old Testament is enough to enable us to observe the devotion of the Hebrews to the art of music, practised in the home or in the fields (Genesis 31. 27, Numbers 21. 17, Job 21. 12).

The first glimpse we have of David's skill in music is his having been chosen as the best minstrel to charm away Saul's evil spirit. It is possible that he received further training in the schools of the prophets, who accompanied their prophesying with psaltery, timbrel, pipe and harp (1 Samuel 10. 5). Eventually he emerged as "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Samuel 23. 1), and [possibly] a deviser of "instruments of music" (Amos 6. 5). It is not surprising, then, that God used David to organise the ministry of song for His holy temple. As the congregation worshipped, the singers sang and the instrumentalists played. Each man had his specific duty to perform—everything was done decently and in order. In some respects they were all alike, "As well the small as the great, the teacher as the scholar" (1 Chronicles 25. 8), but in other respects there were diversities of gifts. Some were leaders, and in responsible positions to lead in praise; some were instructed in singing; others were skilful with instruments. But the object of all was to worship God.

At the present time, the " Lord of heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is He served by men's hands, as though He needed anything. " But He does seek true worshippers, worshipping in spirit and truth, singing and making melody with their hearts to the Lord. *F. L. E.*

From Cowdenbeath. —Singing is associated with joy. When the heart is cheerful the mouth will sing praise. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praise (James 5. 13). So it was with Israel at the Red Sea. They sang because they were happy and thankful that God had delivered them. On the contrary, when the captives sat by the river and were weeping, they were in no state of heart for singing. God has given liberty for this expression of joy in divine service in conjunction with worship. It did not form part of collective worship in the wilderness, and that, perhaps, because the wilderness experience was not a happy one [1].

When David would bring up the Ark of God to Jerusalem he sought to do it with singing and shouting and music. It was not with this that God was displeased, but only with the manner in which the Ark was transported. When David again brought up the Ark and this time had it borne by the Levites it was done with singing.. This was acceptable to God and when David had brought the Ark to its resting place he introduced a service of praise. In order to maintain this, he appointed certain men as leaders. It seems clear, however, that the appointing, in the first place, was done by the Levites (1 Chronicles 15. 16, 17), and from the tribe of Levi. The men who were appointed were men who were naturally skilful in singing and music, and who were suited to such leadership.

Although David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, the man who introduced the service of song, was himself a lover of music, for he played skilfully upon the harp, and he delighted also to sing, yet this in itself does not provide the reason for its incorporation into the order of divine service in the House of God. It is made clear later that such was the commandment of the LORD through his prophets Gad and Nathan as well as being the commandment of David (see 2 Chronicles 29. 25). This is very important, for God has not left room for men to introduce or give effect to any of his own ideas in connection with the service of the House of God either in the past or in the present. God has been jealous to guard His honour in this respect, and men do well to abide by the pattern of the House, and by the instructions He has given concerning its service.

Some have sought to advance reasons for having musical instruments to-day because they were used in the past. There are instructions given for the people of God to-day to sing, what to sing (psalms, hymns and spiritual songs), and to whom to sing (unto God, Colossians 3. 10, unto the Lord, Ephesians 5. 19), but no mention is made of musical instruments. The accompaniment to our singing should be the melody of our hearts. The House of God in the past was material, and the sacrifices and everything else associated therewith were material, but to-day the House is spiritual and the sacrifices are spiritual (1 Peter 2. 5). In keeping with such service God has given no instructions regarding the use of musical instruments; His omissions are important.

That the order of divine service might be maintained to-day, God has gifted men in various ways (1 Corinthians 12.), but there is no mention of gifts concerning singing or the playing of musical instruments. Singing has its place, but we require to be careful not to assign a place or importance to **this** which scripture does not warrant.

As a result of bringing the Ark to Jerusalem, the position was such that Levites were required to serve there as well as at Gibeon, where the brazen altar was. David made careful arrangements for this. When God chose a permanent resting place, having forsaken the tabernacle at Shiloh, the Ark was first to reach the place. The Ark, which denoted the divine presence among men, always went first. It was the first article of furniture to be put in its place when the tabernacle was reared (Exodus 40. 3), and it always went before the Israelites when the tabernacle was removed from place to place.

Thus, through **His** remarkable servant David, the purposes of God were being effected. The exercise of David's heart in the things of God was truly exceptional. God needs exercised men, yet men who are willing to act in accordance with His will.

James Bowman.

EXTRACTS.

From Kilmarnock. —Israel was God's earthly people and it was God's will that they should use musical instruments in their worship and service. In contrast to this, God's people in Churches of God to-day are a *spiritual* house—" a holy priesthood to offer up *spiritual* sacrifices " (1 Peter 2. 5). We note that there were various instruments used, psalteries, harps, cymbals and trumpets, and each had its special part to fulfil. There were also leaders appointed so that everything would be in order and there would be no discord or confusion.

Our mind was directed to what Paul by the Holy Spirit wrote in 1 Corinthians 14. regarding the various gifts which may be manifested in a Church of God. **If** all were exercised and subject to the leading of the Spirit, there would be no discord, and God would be glorified and the saints edified. Worship and praise should not be with instruments of music, but " with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto God " (Colossians 3. 16), " Singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord " (Ephesians 5. 19).

We note the Service of Song was to be carried on " continually before the Ark, " so in Hebrews 13. 15, we are exhorted " to offer up, through Him, a sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of lips which make confession to His name. "

A.

G.

S.

From Kirkintilloch. —It is noticeable that the service of song began after the Ark had rested in the place of God's choice (1 Chronicles 6. 31), and that when the burnt offering began the song of the LORD began also (2 Chronicles 29. 27). The burnt offering gave character to the song of the LORD. We suggest that the song of the LORD was different from the song of Moses (Exodus 15.), which was a song of the wilderness.

Musical instruments had a big part in the service of God in the old covenant, but we never read of them being taken into the Holy Place; this is significant for us to-day in our service in the Holy Place on Lord's day morning; musical instruments have no part in such a service. Regarding the tabernacle, Moses was told by God, " See . . . that thou make all things according to the pattern that was shewed thee in the mount " (Hebrews 8. 5). There is no legislation in

the New Testament Scriptures for musical instruments in our service Godward or manward. In Ephesians 5. 19 we are exhorted to singing and making melody with our heart to the Lord; it is vital that our hearts be in the right condition to draw near with boldness into the Holy Place [2]; if our heart condemn us not, we have boldness toward God (1 John 3. 21) [3].

After the Lord Jesus instituted the remembrance feast we read that when they had sung a hymn they went out unto the Mount of Olives (Matthew 26. 30); this shows us that hymns are associated with the breaking of the bread [4].

William Ure.

From **Barrhead and Paisley**. —For the service of song David composed various psalms or songs which have been preserved for us to-day, and a careful perusal shows us that among others there were songs of remembrance, of dedication, of thanksgiving, a song for the house, etc., and we see that some were set to Alamothe and some to Sheminoth. Authorities suggest, from original words, that those two words denote two types of voices—Alamothe was sung by treble, or high pitched, voices, while Sheminoth was sung by bass or male voices; Sheminoth meaning an eighth, or, as they suggest, an octave lower than Alamothe, which means soprano or treble.

The sacrifices we offer are spiritual, the homage and the praise of our hearts, and it finds expression in words and singing. We are exhorted to make melody in our hearts unto the Lord and to sing one to another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, such singing being equally a comfort to the human heart and a pleasure to God.

David also makes arrangements for continual worship and a morning and evening sacrifice is laid on the altar. This is not an offering for sins, but is a sacrifice of worship, and to-day the final offering for sins having been offered, there still remains a continual worship ascending to God on high from His people. Collectively once a week as a gathered together people we remember the Lord and worship, He being the theme of our worship, but individually, there should ascend the sacrifices of praise continually, the fruit of our lips, mingled with thanksgiving to His name.

In the 22nd Psalm, which we believe applies to the Lord in his hour of extreme trial on earth, we are caused to hear the anticipation which is expressed when looking beyond the trial he says, "In the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." This may have an application to-day when we on earth join in the song of the redeemed already in heaven, but will have a complete fulfilment when the redeemed of all ages will unite in an eternal song, the Lord Himself in our midst leading the song of praise and worship to God. *J. McK. Gault.*

From Cardiff. —The song of thanksgiving that went up must have delighted the LORD. We read that Chenaniah was master of the song, because he was skilful. Everything was arranged to give harmony and order. In the present dispensation does this justify us having leaders of song? Some thought that if we can have leaders of song, why cannot we have musical instruments? A list

of musical instruments **is** given us in 1 Chronicles 15.; again in all this we see order. To-day instruments have no place in our service, and we are told to make melody in our hearts. The old service with its ceremony and splendour has passed away, and a new and living way has been instituted. One thing to remember is that when we sing to God, we should sing with understanding. *David Berrisford.*

From Crowborough. —It was a grand and blessed thought to arrange the new service of the sanctuary and the same can be said of the service itself, a service whereby the heart of God would be delighted as He heard those skilful singers with their accompaniments. We observe that had there never been the gathering together of a people by sacrifice and obedience, there would never have been this collective ministry of song to Jehovah, the living God.

Regarding the arrangements of the service, it **is** noticeable how orderly everything is done. There **is** no haphazard behaviour about it. Three leaders are set over the service—Heman, Asaph, and Ethan. These three with their brethren had their appointed places. Each company had its place of service. They were not to serve where and how they pleased (what discord would have resulted had they done this !). The phrase used in connection with those who ministered thus might be worthy of note, "These are they that waited..." (1 Chronicles 6. 33), indicative of the fact that they would be standing, ready and in order for their service to Jehovah.

We can learn lessons from these things for ourselves to-day. We, too, have a "new song." The mouths that were once "full of cursing and bitterness," now can say, "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God" (Psalm 40. 3). Moreover, those who as regenerate ones have been gathered together to form God's House on earth, collectively have a *new service*—none such like it has been known. It **is** unique in privilege. To-day we have a sacrifice of spiritual praise to offer to God through our Great High Priest. It **is** the Lord Jesus who alone leads our praises. We are not formed into choirs. Each one of us, through Him, has equal right to engage in this divine service. Nevertheless, we do well to realise that we each have a place to fill therein, and to give heed to the divine injunction to-day, "Let everything be done decently and in order."

With regard to continual worship, it seems that just as the burnt offering and offering of incense, and all the work of the tabernacle, were continued, so together with that was the service of song, the singers "were employed day and night" (1 Chronicles 9. 33). "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion." "When everything was right and in order the praise was there. God did not have to wait for it. So should this be now with us as God's gathered together people. Sad it **is** when there is no praise for Him of whom David could say, "Great **is** the LORD, and highly to be praised." *J. B.*

From Atherton. —It was said that in the choice of chosen singers, and players of the instruments, they were chosen primarily because of their birth. **We** noted, however, that from each "lot" or family the number of servers was twelve, and this was the number chosen from a possibly greater number, proving that these were talented men for the work, and also with a spiritual desire to serve the LORD in this outstanding service.

The three great leaders of the service (Heman, Asaph and Ethan) were men of sterling quality and God-fearing, men of outstanding wisdom (1 Kings 4. 31).

In David's and Solomon's day instrumental music played a prominent part, and undoubtedly was acceptable in God's sight. The great question is if it is permissible to-day? We must see the difference between the material house and God's House of this dispensation. As far as this dispensation is concerned we cannot fail to notice the absence of instruction in their use in the New Testament, which should be conclusive proof that God does not desire such to-day.

Having regard to the use of instruments in David's day, we noted that there is no divine instruction [?]. In the service of the tabernacle in the wilderness commands were only given from God for the use of the silver trumpets to blow the alarm, etc. (Numbers 10.). It was agreed that whilst no divine instruction is given in the Word, yet the Psalms give clear and abundant proof that such service was well-pleasing to the LORD. David and others were used of the Holy Spirit to write the Psalms, which bring before us the proper use of instruments in praise. See Psalm 150.

The New Testament parallel for continual worship finds expression in the words of Hebrews 13. 15. It was thought that this scripture takes in more than the worship of the Lord's day morning meeting. It is proper to the spiritual service of God's people that they worship Him at the comings together for prayer, etc. Praise and thanksgiving should ever arise from the heart and lips of God's people.

G. Sankey, J. K. Southern.

From Knocknacloy. —David and his appointed singers burst out in a great melody of praise at the bringing up of the Ark (1 Chronicles 16.). Their meditation was upon God's marvellous works. When we remember the great deliverance, wrought for us on the Cross of Calvary by our Lord Jesus Christ, praise and thanksgiving ascend to God every Lord's day from those who are in the Churches of God called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. The children of Israel used various instruments in their praise to God, but we know, from the scriptures, that their's was a day of material worship, in a material House. But to-day is a day of spiritual things, and there is no legislation given in the New Testament for the use of musical instruments in praising God.

We should ever keep before us the great sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ and the things that pertain to Himself when we offer praise to God on a Lord's day morning. So, as with the children of Israel in a past day, as we meditate upon God's wonderful works and love in His Son, Jesus Christ, may our hearts and voices blend in praise and thanksgiving and worship to God. *William Woods.*

From Hamilton. —How suggestive is 1 Chronicles 6. 31 where we read that the service of song was set up by David "After that the Ark had rest"! The new service of the sanctuary could only be done acceptably when the Ark of God was resting in Jerusalem—the place of God's choice. Similarly to-day, we believe that spiritual songs can rejoice the heart of God if they rise from a people gathered together in a place answering to Jerusalem.

We see by contrast how unsuitable another place would be when we look at Psalm 137. Here the captives that are in Babylon are asked to sing a song of Zion, and their answer may well be pondered by many Christians to-day: "How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?" There are many to-day attempting to praise God collectively in song, but because they are in a spiritual position paralleling Babylon, and therefore out of tune with the Divine mind and will, their praise cannot be acceptable.

Just as everything in connection with the House of a past day was of material things, pointing forward to God's spiritual House to-day, the service of song also was that which was melody audible to the human ears, but it is typical of the "Making melody in your heart" of to-day; for it is from the heart that God wants to hear the Spiritual harmonies concerning the perfections of His Son.

F. Marks, N. McKay.

COMMENTS.

[1] (Cowdenbeath). —Is the service of the House of God affected by the circumstances of the people? The service of the Tabernacle was ordained for a redeemed people who had not forgotten the song of Moses and of Miriam, and who had not yet been condemned by their own lack of faith to forty years of wanderings. What David set up, by the Spirit, was in relation to the forthcoming Temple, the typology of which differs from that of the Tabernacle. —*A. T. D.*

[2] (Kirkintilloch). —The condition of our hearts does not give us boldness in the Holy Place, for none of us would ever be found bold enough for that if it depended upon our condition. Our boldness depends upon the blood of Christ, our covering is by His righteousness, not ours. —*A. T. D.*

[3] (Kirkintilloch). —This scripture (1 John 3. 21) is misapplied in relation to our collective approach to God. Approach to God requires of us that we have our hearts exercised; confession of sin is a necessity if we are to expect God to hear us in our private approach to God. But as a collective people our boldness is on a different basis, though we do not overlook the desirability of having our hearts cleansed ere we thus come. —*A. T. D.*

[4] (Kirkintilloch). —Some care is needed in the verse of Matthew 26. 30 as to the association of the singing of hymns with the breaking of the bread. It is quite evident that very much was said and done after the partaking of the loaf and cup, and it is by no means clear as to when this hymn was sung. —*A. T. D.*

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Question from London, S. E. —Does 1 Chronicles 28. 11-21 (especially verses 13 and 19) prove that David received his authority for the choir and the use of instruments from the LORD GOD?

Answer. —I would judge that this covers all the service of the House including the service of song, accompanied, in that day, with musical instruments. It is evident that God was pleased at the dedication of the Temple, "for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD" (1 Kings 8. 11). —*Jas. 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.

DAVID AND THE TEMPLE.

Many of David's writings reflect his profound appreciation of the infinite glory and majesty of the great God whom he knew and served so well. The 29th Psalm is a typical example. Probably it was the result of witnessing the impressive power of a great storm, but be that as it may, David's spirit was stirred to realise something of the greatness of the Divine dwelling place, of which he wrote,

" And in His temple everything saith, Glory. "

With such a conception of the glory of God, and with unique desire of heart to glorify Him, it may readily be seen how David was led to the conception of a dwelling place for the LORD among Israel, which would be in some sense worthy of such a purpose. As David himself expressed it,

" The house that is to be builded for the LORD must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries.... for the palace is not for man, but for the LORD God. "

Yet while he aspired to plan a building that would surpass all others, David realised that this " house of rest for the ark of the covenant of the LORD " was but for the "footstool of our God. " With such wisely balanced reverence and largeness of heart David approached this matter, conscious of the weakness of the highest human endeavour, and yet anxious to bring of the best for the honour of His God.

It is a singular thing that the initiative in this plan to build a glorious temple arose from David's heart. In contrast to Moses, who was commanded of the LORD to build the Tabernacle, David approached Nathan with the suggestion that a " house of cedar " would be more appropriate to the majesty of the God of Israel. It is lovely to trace the gracious way in which the LORD accepted the desire of David's heart, and while the Temple must not actually be built by David, he was allowed to prepare for it, and to him was imparted by God the detail of the design.

Sometimes we may be inclined to overlook the prominent place which this great ideal had in the life of David. For he had been king over all Israel only about six years (having of course reigned in Hebron seven-and-a-half years before that) when he brought up the ark of the LORD to Jerusalem. His proposal to Nathan that a Temple should be built was made immediately afterwards, so for

the remaining twenty-seven years of his reign one of his foremost ambitions **was** to accumulate adequate resources for the building. The sacred history scarcely mentions the matter again until within two years of David's death. During the intervening quarter of a century prominence is given to the military struggle with Israel's enemies, and to the threat to David's throne through the rebellion of Absalom. Nevertheless, the unwavering purpose of David's heart in regard to the Temple prompted him to set by in store throughout those years. He might well say to Solomon,

" Now, behold, *in my affliction* I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold.... "

Faith in the promise of God enabled him to look forward to the building of the Temple in peace, even when the pressure of enemies without, or the treachery of his family within, might have prompted the diversion of treasure to the strengthening of the kingdom's armed forces.

It seems remarkable that the reason given by God to David for his not being allowed to build the Temple was that as a man of war he had shed blood. Perhaps in the Divine foreknowledge it was designed that the reign of Solomon should prefigure the millennial government of the Prince of Peace, with which will be associated " the mountain of the LORD'S house " (Isaiah 2. 3). We understand that to Ezekiel was given a vision of the Temple of the LORD as it will be established in that day, the LORD saying to him, " Son of man, this is the place of My throne, and the place of the soles of My feet, where I will dwell in the midst of the children of Israel for ever: and the house of Israel will no more defile My holy name " (Ezekiel 43. 7). Only in this way could the wonderful promises made to David find fulfilment. " Them that honour Me I will honour " is a Divine principle remarkably illustrated in connection with David's exercise about the Temple. For in accepting the desire of David's heart, God promised that his son would build the house, and that the throne of his kingdom would be established for ever (1 Chronicles 22. 9, 10). As we read the history of Solomon and his successors, and see how miserably they failed, we realise that only in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ could the covenant with David be established. The last words of David as recorded in 2 Samuel 23. confirm this:

" The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spake to me:
One that ruleth over men righteously,
That ruleth in the fear of God,
He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth....
Verily my house is not so with God;
Yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant,
Ordered in all things, and sure. "

Among the foremost acts of that One who " ruleth in the fear of God " will be the raising **up** of " the tabernacle of David that is fallen " (Amos 9. 11). As David first heard the terms of such a covenant, his spirit was bowed in adoration, and he realised the wonderful blessing he had received:

" Who **am** I, O LORD God, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me thus far? And this was but a small thing in Thine eyes, O God; but Thou hast spoken of Thy servant's house for a great while to come.... and now it hath pleased Thee to bless the house of Thy servant, that it may continue for ever before Thee: for Thou, O LORD, hast blessed, and it **is** blessed for ever" (1 Chronicles 17. 16, 17, 27).

It **was** some ten years after the promise had first been given to David that Solomon was born, and that the choice should fall on the son of Bath-sheba reflects again the glory of Divine grace, and the sovereignty of God's dealings. Solomon **was** only sixteen years of age when his father charged him solemnly with the responsibility of building a house for the LORD, the God of Israel. " Solomon **my** son is young and tender, " declared David, " I will therefore **make** preparation for it. " During the **last** two years of his life this was David's absorbing concern. The outstanding glory of the sunset of his reign was the ceremony **at** which he and the people **dedicated** of their substance for the building of the house. The depth **of** David's affection for the house of God **may be** measured **by** the treasure

which he poured out at that time; not only had he prepared "with all **his** might" a wide variety of essential materials, but **seeing** he had a treasure of his own of gold and silver he gave this over and above all that he **had** prepared. Little wonder that this worthy example stirred the hearts of others to offer willingly to the LORD !

The Holy Spirit emphasises in detail in 1 Chronicles 28. 11-19 that David received the pattern of the House and all its contents from the LORD. HOW reverently this man's thoughts were moulded to the pattern of Divine revelation ! The willingness of heart to honour God by building a Temple of such grandeur was recognised by the granting of a Divine plan for its execution. Like Moses with the Tabernacle, David must allow none of his own ideas to mar the deep significance of all that would be enshrined in the pattern of the House. The human heart always tends to substitute thoughts of the natural mind for the pattern revealed by the Holy Spirit. **As** David handed on the sacred pattern to Solomon, he said,

"Be strong and of good courage, and do it . . . until all the work for the service of the House of the LORD be finished."

Can we not almost hear an echo of this charge in the words of Paul to Timothy?—

"Hold the pattern of sound words which thou has heard from **me**, in faith and love which **is** in Christ Jesus. That good thing which **was** committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth **in** us."

Study of the detail of the New Testament pattern of the spiritual house assumes a new importance as we trace the earnestness of David, and realise that his careful adherence to the word of God in his generation was the secret of his spiritual greatness.

G. Prasher, Jun.

THE NEW SERVICE OF THE SANCTUARY.

From Brantford. —We found a Scripture that would help us to understand the origin of this service in 2 Chronicles 29. 25, where it says, "According to the commandment of David, . . . for the commandment was of Jehovah by **His** prophets."

But in 1 Chronicles 23. 26 David said, "The Levites shall no more have need to carry the Tabernacle and all the vessels of it for the service thereof." 1 Chronicles 9. 33 tells us that the singers were chief Levites, free from other service, and were employed in their work, day and night. 1 Chronicles 25. 9-31 divides the 288 skilful singers into twenty-four sections of twelve persons each. The instruments were mainly the inventions of David. Prophesying entered into this work of singing and playing (1 Chronicles 25. 1). The songs that they **sang** were definitely the LORD'S songs and became a part of the Divine Service. The LORD'S song truly belongs in the place of **His** choice, and how blessed it is to know that we, to-day, can sing **His** song in the place of **His** name!

George Soper, Alex Sproul.

From Toronto. —What a picture of divine grace is seen in the Levites ! The Holy Spirit speaks of their father as a man of anger, a self-willed man, wielding weapons of violence, —into whose council God could not come, nor could **His** glory be united to his assembly. God, who was of purer eyes than to behold evil, could have nothing to do with self-will or cruelty. But He could bring Levi into **His** secret and unite him to **His** assembly. He could take him from his weapons of violence and bring him into His tabernacle where he could be occupied with the holy things of the sanctuary.

This service was the Levite's sole interest, and to have had any other interest would have been to deny his calling. Whether theirs was to carry the beautiful golden lampstand, or perchance, the Ark of the Covenant or one of the many

pins, they could only act **as** they were commissioned of God, who gave to **each** his charge. Their work, **as** it pertained to the Tabernacle **in** the wilderness, **was** now ended, but the service of the House of God continues, and God had been busy preparing the Levites for **the new** service. Special gifts had been given to certain **men** so that **Heman was** already known **as** "the singer" and could be used **in** the Song Service.

The Levites were **in** no **sense** distinct from the people, for the latter had laid their hands on the Levites, **and** were **thus** identified with them **in** their service. In this **way** "All Israel brought **up** the Ark" (1 Chronicles 15. 28).

Praise flows out to God from those of **His** children who have sanctified themselves unto the LORD, who have for **His** sake, separated themselves from kith and kin, and have come to Mount Zion. Theirs it **is** to bring an offering **and** come before **Him** to worship Jehovah **in** holy array. **As** the Grace of God has **been seen in** transforming the Levites, so we, who were at one time **no** people are now *the people of God*—trophies of **His** grace—living stones built up **a** Spiritual house to offer the sacrifice of praise making confession to **His** Name.
Samuel K. Seath.

DAVID'S PURPOSE CONCERNING THE TEMPLE.

From Hereford. —Our study this month shows David moving steadily towards the **climax** of a life spent in the service of God, namely, his long-cherished ambition to provide for God **a** dwelling-place more worthy of **His** glory. In this desire of his, and its outcome, **we** shall find much that **is** typical of the Lord **Jesus** Christ and **His** work in a later dispensation, but such **is** the pre-eminence of the LORD, that in this matter of building **a** house for God, David and Solomon have to be combined to complete the typical picture.

When his work of restoring freedom to Israel and of re-building Israel's glory was accomplished, he brought the Ark to Jerusalem. Now he would go further and build **a** glorious house for God. **We** remember the Lord's love for the House of God at twelve years of age; how "the zeal of Thine house" motivated **His** actions at about thirty years of age; and how, when it became evident that the Jews nationally had rejected God, **He** deserted the temple at Jerusalem and gathered around **Himself** a nucleus of disciples with and through whom He would build **a** house for **His** God (Matthew 21. 43, 23. 38, and 28. 19-20).

But whilst David's desire **was** pleasing to God, the divine purpose was otherwise; **a** reason given was that David was **a** man of war, and it was for Solomon ("peaceful") to build the house. The principle of Proverbs 24. 27 **is** here exemplified, for David prepared the work outside, in the field, and afterwards "Solomon built **Him** an house." Here both are needed to typify the work of Christ, who **came** into the field, the world, and fought the LORD'S battles against the tyrannising arch-enemy, and whose life was given "in the field" at Calvary; who afterwards, in resurrection peace and glory resulting from the work of the Cross, brought together Jew and Gentile in one peaceful unity to be **a** spiritual temple and **a** habitation for God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2.). It was David's son who should build, of whom God said, "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son." These words are applied to the Lord in Hebrews 1_M and that they **are** spoken in the **same** connection **is** seen from the opening of Hebrews 3, where the theme of chapter 1. (the glorious Person of Christ) **is** reverted to in connection with the building of God's house in this dispensation.

We are glad to see, however, that David's godly ambition **is** not unrewarded, for promptly and abundantly Jehovah answers him with blessings. David wished to build **a** house for God; God responds by building *his* house for ever, and by giving David **a** name like the great ones of the earth. In Philippians 2, we read of the reward of Christ Jesus, who humbled Himself, that **He** has been given the **Name** which **is** above every name, and in Hebrews 1. 3, "He hath inherited **a** more excellent **Name** than they." And so father and son are inter-

twined in providing a type of the Greater than both; David was given the name, Solomon built the house—in Christ the pre-eminent Name and the building of the house are combined.

It was also granted to David to play a considerable part in connection with the house, for he was given the pattern, and he contributed a tremendous wealth of gold, silver, copper, iron and timber for the work. Also, by his spiritual perception, he discovered the site on which the house would be erected. This last occurrence is very interesting. Consider the circumstances. As a result of sin, the destroyer is passing through the land, and " by the trespass of the one the many died. " But by the grace of God the destroyer is stayed, and with drawn sword hovers over the threshing floor where Araunah, oblivious of the danger, is busily occupied in his peaceful task of threshing wheat. David's penitent prayer calls forth the mercy of God, and he is instructed to erect an altar. The sacrifice intervenes between the angel of death and the people of Jerusalem. On this spot the House of God is to be built. Here is the divine foundation—other foundation can no man laid than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, whose life was given on the altar of Calvary, that we may pass from death unto life. He who experienced the fires of divine judgment has become the foundation stone, and so long as the people of God build firmly and squarely upon the work of Christ at Calvary, so long will there be an acceptable dwelling place for God upon the earth. *E. H. M.*

From Ilford. —A considerable relief from the struggle for the prosperity of Israel enabled David to revert to his early habits of praise and to desire the building of a house for God. It reflects credit on David that he was not satisfied with fatness, but turned his thoughts to giving God delight.

God's precise purposes were very carefully revealed to David, and the intense disappointment which he must have felt at being forbidden to build was considerably allayed by the promises concerning his own regal line.

In addition to the description of David as a " man of blood, " there are very sound reasons for his not being permitted to build the temple. Solomon was the more competent builder. Also Israel needed peace and prosperity if the building was to be successful, and this was not the case in David's time, for several quite large battles were fought after the time of his conversations with Nathan.

Although David gave his own fortune to the temple fund, Solomon had to make much preparation after his father's death. It is significant that David invited—and received—the co-operation of the people. They gave large quantities of valuables and many of them later served in the work. It seems, at first, a little surprising that the strangers in the land were used as labourers on the house of the God of Israel. Their use in the work possibly corresponds, in principle, to the use of the unrighteous mammon spoken of by Christ. The whole resources of the land were summoned in order to make the house of the LORD exceedingly magnificent. *Eric Morgan,*

From Kilmarnock. —Although it was good and well-pleasing to the LORD that David desired to build a house for the LORD'S name, yet he was not allowed to do so, because he had been a man of war and had shed much blood. However, that did not hinder him from preparing the material for the house, and giving his son, Solomon, instructions and encouragement to proceed. In Chronicles 22. 14-16 we have a record of the abundance of wealth and material he had prepared, collected from the nation, while 29. 3-5 gives a record of his own private giving, and verse 6 gives what the princes and chiefs of the fathers willingly offered. This showed that their hearts were in a good condition before the LORD. We note from 1 Kings 6. 7 that the stone used in building was all made ready before being brought from the quarry. This house was to be a dwelling place for God amongst His earthly people, Israel, and was to be a testimony of glory throughout all countries (see 1 Chronicles 22. 5).

We were caused to think of God's spiritual house of this dispensation. In 1 Corinthians 3. 9, Paul addresses the Church of God at Corinth as " God's building. " He had laid the foundation and others were building thereon. The house was composed of persons who had heard the Gospel and believed it, and were baptized and added. Like the material for the temple, each one added required to be " tested, " and the builders were warned to take heed *how* they builded. In Ephesians 2. 19, etc., the saints are viewed as being " of the household of God, " being built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being chief corner stone,.... " This is God's purpose and design for the present time.

A. G. S.

EXTRACTS.

From Barrhead and Paisley. —It was proof that David was in a good spiritual condition when, at the head of a united Israel, and in a state of peace and prosperity, he should give thought to the construction of a house for God. Such thoughts were divinely blessed, and although God did not allow him to put into action his plans, yet He blessed David and promised the establishment of his house as the rulers in Israel for ever. We know that in the future this will be true when Christ, the Son of David, will reign not only over Israel, but over all things. Did this compensate David for his not being allowed to build and was this prohibition a punishment on David for his life of bloodshed? We are of divided opinion on this, but it is certain that it was inconsistent for a man of war such as David to engage in the construction of God's house. To him God entrusted the destruction of his people's enemies and the establishment of Israel in the land, and in doing such, David played an important part in God's plan for His people. Each man can play a part, and it is not always good for one man to shoulder all the responsibility, all the time. However, David was allowed to arrange certain preliminaries until such times as Solomon, his son, was ready to take over.

Firstly, the plans of God's house. —God gave unto David the plans in writing, and in his great wisdom ensured that nothing of man's ideas was incorporated in the temple.

Secondly, the site for the building. —David paid a visit to **Oman**, the Jebusite, and arranged to buy his threshing floor as a situation for the altar of God. We note that David insisted on payment being made, believing that every effort he made for the house should be to his cost.

Thirdly, materials. —He **amassed** quantities of gold, silver, precious stones, cedar wood and iron, and arranged with Hiram of Tyre for the shaping and fashioning of the columns, pillars, doorways, vessels and ornaments, so that when fabrication was possible, no noise of hammer or tool should be heard, and that everything should fit into place.

It seems peculiar that God should allow so much Gentile labour to be employed. The cedars were felled and trimmed in Lebanon, the stones were cut and shaped to size and shipped by Gentile labour, and the ornaments of gold and silver were all the cunning work of Hiram, a half Jew. Perhaps we can see here a link with the present day, when much of the material for the house of God is prepared and fashioned prior to filling a place in the house.

There is a similarity in the materials used for the temple to those used in the tabernacle. Gold, silver and precious stones were the same, but the type of wood was different. Cedar wood was now used instead of acacia wood, as in the tabernacle, and cedar wood, too, is noted for its durability.

The function and purpose of the house, however, never alters, although the current manifestation of God's house may vary with the time and people with which it is found.

J. McK. Gault.

From London. —David is a type of the Lord Jesus in many ways. David put the enemies of Israel underfoot, gave security to the nation, and accomplished, in the power of God, peace for God's people. The Lord Jesus came to subdue the powers of evil, and He won the victory over the Arch-enemy and death. Solomon built the temple in peace, when his throne was established. The Lord Jesus, in resurrection, is the Prince of peace and the King of Glory. He has accomplished the work He came to do and has entered into His rest. The Kingdom of God is established. The Temple of Solomon is associated with Kingdom glory. The Lord Jesus is the Chief Corner Stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious. The glory of the spiritual house far exceeds that of the temple which David set his heart on. Oman's threshing floor was purchased for fifty shekels of silver, and the whole site cost six hundred shekels of gold by weight. The place of God's choice David possessed by conquest and purchase.

That which David planned and Solomon built was later desecrated by sin, so that the Lord said of the People of God, " Their house hath been left unto them desolate. " God grant that we may never destroy that which was purchased at so great a cost!

G. A. Reeve,

From Crowborough. —We learn from David's Psalms that his heart's desire had always been to build a house for God. The record in 2 Samuel 7. was not a sudden inspiration that filled David's heart, but rather that the time was now ripe to commence. It is interesting to note that it was when David was enjoying peace and security that he still remembered these things. How often is it the reverse with us ? In troubled waters we promise and resolve certain things, for our hearts are turned to think of Him. " Should we not, in the times of green pastures think more earnestly of the things of God ? "

It appears that Nathan acted rashly in giving his sanction to David without first consulting the One it concerned. Much unhappiness could be saved if God, our Father, were brought into all our plans. Though Nathan had erred in the first, yet he was faithful in the delivery of God's message to his king. Solomon was to be the chosen one for this work. David humbly accepted this. May we never query the wisdom of God in His appointments, but humbly accept it as His sovereign will!

It is surprising that God used men who were strangers to the Covenant of the Promise for the hewing of these stones. Many in the Fellowship to-day have been hewn, and the fashioning started, in the sects of men. *B. V. French.*

From Kirkintilloch. —The throne of Israel had first to be established before the temple was built, and, in this, we see a connection between the Kingdom of God and the House of God. There must be an establishing of the rule and authority of God amongst His people, as well as the building of the house, where worship can be acceptably rendered. This principle is also seen in connection with the tabernacle of Moses, for the kingdom was established in Israel at Mount Sinai by the giving of the law (see Exodus 19. 4-5), and then God gave the instructions for His dwelling among them in Exodus 25. and onwards.

We should not overlook the deep and practical exercise of men of God before David. He says of Joshua that he dedicated the spoil of Jericho unto the treasury of the house of the LORD (Joshua 6. 24). Samuel, too, was a man who, in his day, laid up treasures for the house of God, and, strange to say, so did king Saul, and notable men such as Abner and Joab (see 1 Chronicles 26. 27-28). In Joshua 7. we read of a man named Achan who took for himself things that were devoted for the house of God, and in so doing he was accursed, for we read that God troubled him (verse 25). How careful we should be to give to God that which is His.

The house of God figured **very** prominently in David's thoughts, for **it was** the **chief** exercise of **his** life. The words—"with **all** my might"—indicate how much David put into the work. He writes in **Psalm 69. 9**, "the **zeal** of thine house hath eaten **me** up," words which were also true of the Lord **Jesus** Christ (**John 2. 17**). If **we**, in our day, would be men after God's heart, **we must** learn the **zeal** of God's house. (See also **Psalm 27. 4**).

God desired a man who **was** of the **same** character **as** His house, "a man of rest," to build (**1 Chronicles 22. 9**). **We** thought of this **as** typifying the millennial glory of the house of God when there shall be no resistance to the building of the house of God. **We** thought also of the characters, "**a** man of war" and "**a** man of rest," **as** having fulfilment in the Person of the Lord **Jesus** Christ, who, **as** "**a** man of war," trode **His** enemies underfoot, and, **as** "**a** man of rest" **will** give to the world **a** thousand years' **peace**.
W. W.

From Cowdenbeath. —**We** have come now to **a** point in the history of the **life** of David which gives **us** some insight into the **deep** longings of the man's heart after his God. David **was** a man of keen spiritual perception, **as** is illustrated in **2 Samuel 5. 11** and **12**. He acknowledged the hand of God in that "he had exalted His kingdom for his people Israel's sake." Further, he had had exercise regarding the "ark of the covenant" in bringing it **up** to **Jerusalem** and setting it in the **midst** of the tent that he had pitched for it. This **is** the background of **2 Samuel 7**.

The revelation of the established throne **was** afterwards the burden of David's prayer to God. God had spoken of David's house for **a** great while to come (**1 Chronicles 17. 17**), and clearly, while much of what **was** revealed concerning the throne **was** fulfilled in Solomon, it **is** in the coming of the Lord **Jesus** to set up **His** throne that such **a** scripture **will** have perfect fulfilment (**Revelation 11. 15**).

Nevertheless, **we** learn from **2 Chronicles 3. 1** that David had instructed Solomon regarding the "**place**" where the house of God should be built, "in the threshing floor of Oman the Jebusite." The Divine purpose had been **made** plain to him, that this chosen spot would **be** the site of the house (**1 Chronicles 21. 8** to **22. 1**). **We** can conclude from **1 Chronicles 28. 2** that David had made considerable preparation for the building before he gave vent to his thoughts, and he "prepared abundantly before his death" (**1 Chronicles 22. 5**). It is sweet to note that David handed over his own personal treasure, because, in his own words, "I have set my affection to the house of my God." Words worthy of our consideration! Though David **was** **thus** privileged in respect of the preparation, the pattern of the house **was** the work of the Divine Architect. When he handed the pattern to Solomon, his Son, his own words were, "All this have I been made to understand in writing from the hand of the LORD, even **all** the works of this pattern" (**1 Chronicle 28. 19**).

The spiritual counterpart of the house to-day **embraces** Jew and Gentile (**Acts 15. 14-17**). God's place of rest **to-day** not **a** temple made with hands. This truth **is** illustrated by the words of the Lord **Himself** to the Samaritan woman, "neither in this mountain (Samaria), nor in **Jerusalem**, shall **ye** worship the Father" (**John 4. 21**), indicating **a** dispensational change in God's dealings with His people Israel.
Robert Ross,

From Cardiff. —**Psalm 84**. reveals David's heart of appreciation and longing towards God's house. In his zealous desire he compares his own spacious home with God's altar, dwelling behind curtains, and resolves to set the matter right. **Well** might we learn from Nathan's **all** too ready consent (**2 Samuel 7. 3**). How easy it **is** for man's **ideas** to creep into things of such vital importance in God's sight! God gave to David his **particular** sphere of **service** and to Solomon his responsibility. It speaks for to-day, **we** **felt**, in type, of the various **gifts** in the Church. David, **as** the preparer, would represent the evangelist, while Solomon,

as the builder, would represent the teacher as he builds into the house. Neither gift can be considered in any way above the other, both are vital to a Church of God. David could not fulfil the type as leader and captain of salvation, and also that of " the man of rest, " neither could Solomon be the type of both aspects of the Master. But the Saviour and " Prince of Peace " can. Surely there is none like unto Him. He is the " Chiefest, " the " Son over God's House. "

Even as David refused the offer of Oman with the words, " Will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God which cost me nothing ? " , so we reject offers made to us from the without on the principle of 3 John 7., " Taking nothing of the Gentiles " (see also Genesis 14. 23).
E. S. T.

From Atherton. —We find the echo of David's longing to build a house for God and to dwell therein in several of the Psalms, namely, in 23. 6; 26. 8; 27. 4; 29. 2 and 132. 1-5. These longings, so characteristic of David, were also reflected in some of the people, as is seen in the Psalms of Asaph and of the Sons of Korah. God was pleased to see such love and faithfulness towards Himself and His dwelling place. Yet, whatever the longings of others, it is significant that in David's heart was this overwhelming desire to build. But God, the All-wise, had other plans. It is remarkable that the site for the building should be revealed at a time of judgment, for it was in the place where the LORD answered David, that David said, in the Holy Spirit, " This is the House of the LORD God. " See also Psalms 78. 68-69; 87. ' 1-3; 132. 13 and 14.

The most wonderful thing about God's promise to David is the still future fulfilment, as is seen from Zechariah 6. 12 to 14, for not only is the building of God's house prophetic of the Son of God, but the establishment of Israel's kingdom is essentially bound up in the same glorious Person. The day shall yet dawn when the Son of David shall be set upon the throne of Israel (Isaiah 9. 6-7).

What are the lessons for to-day from the use that David makes of his spoils of victory, and the gifts he received from the enemies of the LORD ? Reference was made to the Apostle Paul's fine spiritual achievements in gaining victory after victory over the great enemy. His spiritual spoils were men and women who became living stones, which he, as a wise master-builder, built into the spiritual house (see 2 Corinthians 2. 14 and 1 Corinthians 3. 10-12). We do not infer that we can receive gifts from the without (see 3 John 2. 7).

In thinking of David's zeal for the house of God, we are caused to consider Him of whom it is written, " For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up " (Psalm 69. 9 and John 2. 17). From boyhood into manhood He had before Him the honour of the Place, of which He spoke again and again as " My Father's house " (Luke 2. 49, John 2. 16).
1). 11. *Butler, G. A. Jones.*

From Glasgow. —Exercise < heart on the part of God's servants is ever a pre-requisite of Divine service in any form, and this fact appeared to be well established in David's mind. It came about that when David was firmly established on the throne and had rest from all his enemies round about, that he turned his attention to the Ark of God, which, up to this point, was still in a temporary dwelling.

The man to build God's house must be a man of rest, and although David was not permitted to build, God, in witness to His appreciation of David's desire, made him the promise of a son who would be a " man of rest, " able to erect a house for God. David was not to be denied the opportunity of making preparations. He collected materials in large quantity, some of which were given by the nations around Israel. It is interesting to note, from 1 Kings 5. 1, that these gifts were largely due to David's pleasant personality, for we read, " Hiram was ever a lover of David. "

2 Chronicles 3. 1 tells us that "Solomon began to build... in Mount Moriah... in the place that David had appointed, in the threshing-floor of Oman the Jebusite." It was here that God came to David in revelation, when fear had prevented his seeking the LORD at Gibeon. One would like to think that the site chosen for the erection of the temple was the site of Abraham's trial in Genesis 22.

J. J. P.

From Toronto. —We see no parallel in any other, to build a house for God, for even Samuel was never directed by God to find a permanent resting-place for the Ark of the Covenant. We suggest that God, although implanting the desire in David's heart, had not expressly asked him to build Him an house (1 Chronicles 17. 6). One might well ask, Does God desire aught but spontaneous heart-worship from His people when they come before Him? Is there to be no preparation? Surely there should be a six day preparation, a gathering from the Scriptures daily, and a careful walk and a prayerful heart. Only thus can we, as an assembly, come with full baskets before our God to present our thanksgivings. We do not infer that brethren should come prepared to give out a particular hymn, or that prepared thoughts should be expressed, when leading the assembly, but that the Spirit might have free course in His working (1 Corinthians 14. 40).

Walter Todd, N. K.

From Melbourne. —There had been a long period of time from that in Deuteronomy 12. to Solomon's day, and some might have thought that the word of the LORD in Deuteronomy 12. concerning the Place of the Name, had been forgotten, but not so. "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure" (Isaiah 46. 10). In David's desire and Solomon's carrying into effect the desire to build the temple appears a principle of God's dealings with His people. While David could lead God's people to a certain point, he could go no further. Solomon must carry on from the point where his father left off. So was it with Moses and his successor, Joshua. And may this be true of those, who, to-day, are young men in the house of God! David showed a keen sense of responsibility towards his son, Solomon, in impressing upon him the greatness of the work which must be done.

In Acts 15. 16 we think we see the millennial House. We would associate this scripture with Micah 4. 1-2, when many nations shall go and say, "Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the work of the Lord from Jerusalem."

S. Stoope, T. L. Futtertm.

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Question from Crowborough. —Was Nathan in the mind of the LORD in his answer of 2 Samuel 7. 3?

Answer. —It is noteworthy that there is no record, in David's words to Nathan, that he purposed to build a house for the LORD. David merely expressed his concern that the Ark of God was resting within curtains. We judge that Nathan replied in verse 3 as a trusted counsellor, and as a wise man, though perhaps not in the spirit of prophecy. Then note the clear distinction in verse 4, where "the word of the LORD came unto Nathan," between this divinely commissioned message and his own earlier judgment. It is very gracious of God that His message should come through the same man, Nathan, otherwise if another had been the channel, David would have been perplexed, and Nathan would probably have been despised and insulted. God upheld the honour of His prophet, Nathan, and acted quickly, "the same night," and thus prevented any precipitous act by David. *Jas. 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.

THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN.

This month's study focuses attention upon the failures which stained the remarkable history of " the man after God's own heart. " With absolute impartiality the Spirit of God discloses gross carnal sin in David's personal life, and serious disobedience to Divine principle in his public administration of the kingdom.

The insidious deceitfulness of sin, and its power to harden the heart of the believer, are poignantly illustrated in David's dealings with Bathsheba and Uriah. He would little realise how far the first cherishing of an evil thought would lead him ! Subtly the influence of sin gripped his heart, for being drawn away after his own lust and enticed, the lust, when it had conceived, bore sin (see James 1. 13-15). Fear of the consequences of that sin dictated the murder of one of his loyalest soldiers. What a fearful hardening of heart had resulted when David could send by the hand of Uriah a letter plotting that valiant captain's death ! The first murderer had been warned by God that if he did not well, " sin coucheth at the door, " but disregarding the warning he nursed his evil passion until he murdered Abel; David also experienced the monstrous power of the sin which ever lies latent in the natural heart, and which, if given liberty, will spring into action like a wild beast, impelling to deeds of infamy and shame. The very grossness of his crimes is startling.

Ever since Adam and Eve tried to hide in Eden from the results of their disobedience, it has been typical of the conscience-stricken sinner that he will try to cover up his transgression. Remarkably enough God allowed David to do this successfully for a considerable time, perhaps to impress him deeply with the depressing and miserable effect of sin which caused his heart to condemn him before God. An echo of this misery is heard in the early verses of the 32nd Psalm:

" When I kept silence, my bones waxed old
Through my roaring all the day long.
For day and night Thy hand was heavy upon me:
My moisture was changed as with the drought of summer. "

Apart from the haunting of conscience through injustice done to another, the broken communion with God, the loss of the joy of his salvation, and of the consciousness of the Lord's presence, weighed heavily on David's spirit. This will always result from the toleration of unconfessed and unforsaken sin in the believer's heart. Communion with God **is** a most sensitive matter, and its enjoyment depends upon earnest exercise of heart in the sense of Psalm 19. 11-14 and I John 1. 6-10.

There followed the inevitable exposure of David's sin, with his stricken confession, " I have sinned against the LORD. " What had been done in secret was proclaimed upon the housetops of his kingdom, and great occasion was given to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme. Yet in spite of all the public scandal involved, the relief of David's spirit through confession to God finds expression in the words,

" I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid: I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD: And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin " (Psalm 32. 5).

The amazing grace of God in granting forgiveness and restoration stands out for the encouragement of the repentant saint with a prominence similar to the story of the prodigal son in its appeal to the convicted sinner. We do well to note very seriously, however, that while God forgave David's sin and restored the joy of his salvation, he was to work out in his life the fruit from his evil sowing. The restoration of the heart's communion with God **is** one thing; the practical consequences of our failure are a different matter. Nathan's words to David include both assurance of forgiveness,

" The LORD also hath put away thy sin, "

and solemn warning that punishment must be expected:

" The sword shall never depart from thine house... I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house... the child also that **is** born unto thee shall surely die. "

The child did die, despite David's pleadings with God; evil soon arose through the misconduct of Amnon, and Absalom's sword took vengeance on his brother; later on an unrepentant Absalom brought civil war to the kingdom with all its attendant bloodshed. The two aspects of God's dealings with the believer are beautifully illustrated as David went forth from Jerusalem at that time. While suffering the consequences of his sin, he yet knew throughout that experience the happiest fellowship with God, as Psalm 3. testifies; and as a rejected king his sufferings foreshadowed the rejection of Messiah. Have we not in this aspect of David's life an illustration of the words in Hebrews 10. 26-31 ? The believer cannot be lost once he **is** " in Christ. " Yet, "if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment. . . . For we know **Him** that said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense. And again, The Lord shall judge **His** people. It **is** a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. " Would not David have that fearful expectation of judgment hanging over him as the years went by, and in due time see the fulfilment of the LORD'S word through Nathan as the judgment overtook him ? That this principle **is** put into effect in this dispensation of grace **is** very evident from such examples as Ananias and Sapphira, or the saints in Corinth who were weak and sickly, and even died, as a result of unworthily keeping the feast. The great blessing of judicial forgiveness of our sins through justification, when we put faith in Christ, should never tempt us to treat lightly the stern fact that " God **is** not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. " And the more light we have, the more keenly may we expect the application of this principle to our experience.

While the sin of David in numbering the people was of a different type, it had two features in common with the earlier failure which are worthy of comment. In the first place, both involved many others besides David. **As** the destroying angel cut off many of his people this truth was burned in upon David's soul. He prayed: " Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely: but these sheep, what

have they done ? " It so often happens that the root of bitterness springing up not only troubles the person who occasioned it, but thereby the *many* are defiled. The more influential and gifted the person concerned may be, the greater number may be affected **as a** result. In the second place the judgments of God were remarkably related to the sin committed by His servant. David must have felt this keenly **as he** realised his responsibility to judge Amnon and Absalom for crimes which were of the same kind as his own infamous dealings with Bath-sheba and Uriah. When later **he** insisted on numbering the people, the judgment of God seemed to be directed at reducing the numbers in his kingdom. Thus the principle of sowing and reaping worked itself out even to the distinct relation of crime and judgment.

G. Prasher, Jun.

CONCORDANCE STUDY.

"WASH."

This study **is** suggested by the Penitential Psalm, 51., called by Martin Luther "The sinner's guide," written by David with the full realisation of **his** great sin upon him. David uses **a** few words to express his desire for cleansing. Psalm 51. 2, 7, "Wash **me** thoroughly," **is** from *Kabac* (Hebrew), from **a** primitive root meaning "to trample," hence to wash, probably by the trampling of the feet. This **is** the word regularly used for the washing of clothes, indicating the kind of washing which pervades the substance of the thing washed, and cleanses it through and through. We would suggest that this **is** the washing which **a** winner gets when **he** comes to Christ for cleansing.

Psalm 51. 2—"cleanse" (the same word in Psalm 19. 12 translated "clear," R. V.) from (Hebrew) *Naqah*, a primitive root meaning "to make clean," and acquires the meaning of "being acquitted from blame," "held blameless," "be freed," "be held innocent." This would suggest "justification" **as** in the New Testament.

Psalm 51. 7—"purge" from (Hebrew) *Chata*, a primitive root probably meaning "to miss," and hence comes to mean "to sin"; finally meaning "to offer for sin," "to expiate," "to purge," "to purify." This would suggest the bringing in of **a** sin-offering.

In Leviticus 15. 11, dealing with the man unclean through an issue, are found the three expressions for cleansing:—

rinse—the hands,
wash—the clothes,
bathe—the person.

"Rinse" from (Hebrew) *Shataph*, a primitive root meaning "to gush," and by implication means "to inundate," "to cleanse or thoroughly wash away." "Wash" is the word *Kabac* dealt with above. "Bathe" is from *Rachaks*, a primitive root meaning "to lave" the whole or part of **a** thing, usually the human body. This type of cleansing, as compared with the word "Kabac" = to wash clothes, "applies only to the surface of **a** substance.

There are three interesting words used in the New Testament for "wash," and they are also found in the Septuagint translation of Leviticus 15. 11, where,

Greek *Nipto* is used for *Rinse* the hands.

Loud is used for *Bathe* the body.

Pluno is used for *Wash* the clothes.

Briefly, *Nipto* is chiefly used for washing part of the body. Examples are: (feet) John 13. 5, 6, 8, 12, 14; 1 Timothy 5. 10. In the middle voice: (face) Matthew 6. 17; (eyes) John 9. 7, 11, 15; 13. 10.

This word is limited in the New Testament to washing persons and **is** not used for the washing of things.

Apo-nipto, meaning to wash off, is used once, in Matthew 27. 24, with reference to Pilate's washing his hands.

Loud means " to bathe " or "to wash the body. " Examples are: —Active voice—Acts 9. 37 and 16. 33 (the latter signifying that the jailor washed the bodies of Paul and Silas in relieving their stripes). Passive voice: John 13. 10 (he that is bathed); Hebrews 10. 22. Middle voice—in 2 Peter 2. 22; Revelation 1. 5 (R. V. M. only).

Apo-louo = " to wash off or away, " is used in Acts 22. 16. This does not refer to the remission of Paul's sins, which took place at his conversion on the Damascus road. The middle-voice shows that Paul had an interest in this act which would publicly demonstrate that his sins had been removed. Another example is in 1 Corinthians 6. 11 (see R. V. M.); again the middle voice is used, indicating that the saved Corinthians were testifying to this change in themselves by their obedience to the faith—" sanctified " and " justified " in this verse are in the Passive voice indicating that these acts were done by Another, even the Lord Jesus Christ through the Spirit, on them.

Pluno is always used for the washing of inanimate things, and is distinguished from the words already noted which are used with regard to living objects or persons.

Examples: —Luke 5. 2 (of nets); Revelation 7. 14, 22. 14 (of robes, figuratively).

The classical example which shows a difference in the words **nipto**=to wash a part, and **louo**=to wash the whole body, is found in John 13. 10. " He that is **bathed (loud)** needeth not save to wash (**nipto**) his feet. " The teaching of the portion is clear. Peter had been washed once for all, and this great absolving act could not be repeated, but defilement of the walk in the pathway does arise, and here the Lord cleanses us from defilement so contracted (1 John 1. 8-10).

Other words: —**Brechd=Luke** 7. 38, 44—to wash (A. V.), to wet (R. V.), to rain tears" (Mr. Newberry's margin); **Baptizo**, Luke 11. 38, is translated " wash " in both R. V. and A. V. **Jas. Martin.**

DAVID'S GREAT SIN.

From Hamilton, Ont. —It was during the Ammonite war that David committed his great sin, in the matter of Uriah the Hittite and his wife. Had David gone to battle instead of tarrying in Jerusalem, such a grievous calamity would not have befallen him. Satan finds much for idle hands to do, and well he knew David's weakness. Better had it been for David had he gone upon the housetop to pray, as did Peter (Acts 10. 9).

How displeasing to Jehovah to see David, the great king of Israel, walking according to sight of his eyes ! We are reminded of the words of James, " Lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death " (James 1. 15). The apostle Paul warns us to " abstain from every form of evil " (1 Thessalonians 5. 22). How unlike Joseph David was ! he in the day of his temptation said, "... " How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God ? " (Genesis 39. 9). We also thought of the Lord Jesus, David's Lord, who stood up to all the temptations of the Devil and overcame, because the law of Jehovah was in His heart. It is only as we walk by the Spirit, as Jesus did, that we will not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.

The penalty imposed by God was severe, that the sword would not depart from his house (2 Samuel 12. 10). Also, because of this deed great occasion was given for the enemies of Jehovah to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12. 14). How careful we ought to be in our lives that the way of the truth should not be evil spoken of ! we ought to be in our lives that the way of the truth should not be evil spoken of. Psalm 51. clearly sets forth David's confession, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight " (verse 4). Psalm 32. 5, also conveys his thoughts, " I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid, " etc. Did David not sin against Uriah ? Yes, very much so, but all sin, in the very first, is against Jehovah, and it was God with whom he had to do.

Could we but **realize** that when we sin against a brother, we are sinning against Jehovah, and in like manner, when we show kindness to our brethren, **we are** doing such unto God! (See Matthew 25. 40). In this connection, please read Acts 9. 4, Zechariah 2. 8, and 1 Corinthians 8. 12.

Immediately upon David's confession, God pronounced forgiveness, and was able to bring blessing out of evil. Where sin abounded, grace did superabound, for was it not through the wife of Uriah that Solomon was born? "How unsearchable **are** His judgements, and His ways past tracing out" (Romans 11. 33).

In 1 Chronicles 21. 1 we see that Satan moved David to number Israel, while 2 Samuel 24. 1 gives a somewhat different thought, that Jehovah "moved David against them to number Israel." We concluded that God permitted Satan to move David. It would seem **as** though Israel needed to be humbled, and that God was using David, Israel's head, as a means to this end.

David's desire, in seeking to number Israel, was not fully realised, **as** we read in 1 Chronicles 27. 24. *T. Ramage.*

From Birkenhead. It was the time when the kings went out to battle when David fell into temptation. Comparatively a young man at this time, for once he was choosing the path of ease, not the path of duty, and the ever-alert Tempter found some work for the idle hands to do. Though a great and noble man, he like others was never beyond being tempted at any time, and not even in solitude **is** one free from temptation. While we are occupied with the Lord's things, however, we are less prone to **fall** into temptation.

What David had done was normally worthy of death, but by this incident God would instruct us as to what is the real nature of sin, as it affects Himself. Sin displeases* God. Sin despises the word of the Lord. David knew the word of the Lord, but acted contrary to it. In a moment of temptation, our own desires are uppermost, we forget, we despise, we set aside the word of the Lord; and judgment is most severe when we know beforehand what is right.

When the sin was brought home to him by the prophet Nathan, David did not begin to excuse himself or justify himself. He did the right thing; he confessed with deep contrition of heart. A man who justifies himself delays God's justifying of him. His godly sorrow for his sin, as seen in **Psalm 51.** is so abundantly evident, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." This is one of the things that marked out David as a man after God's own heart. As when a ruler sinneth his act had brought great discredit on the kingdom and had given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. In the language of Psalm 51. the walls of Jerusalem had been broken down, and only God could build them up again. Though the sin was forgiven (very quickly upon his confession of guilt) the consequences of his sin would remain; the child would die; the sword would never depart from his house for he was a man of war to the end of his **life**; he had taken another man's wife and another man would take his. The choice of Bathsheba to be the mother of Solomon **is** one of the many outstanding examples of the triumph of God's grace over sin. If we only knew how God values a repentant and contrite heart, we would also know the restoring joy of God's salvation, and the Lord's own joy when He pours out a blessing on the contrite sinner.

In the numbering of Israel in 2 Samuel 24., the nature of the sin **is** not mentioned. The two occasions on which the people were numbered, one at the beginning of their pilgrimage in the wilderness and the other at the end, were both as commanded by God, and on each occasion a half-shekel had to be given for ransom money. [In Numbers chapter 1., the males from 20 years old and upward in Israel, by the Lord's command, are numbered for military service. (Numbers 1. 1-3). In Numbers chapter 3. the Levites were numbered (verse 15) and the firstborns of the rest of Israel were numbered (verse 40), and a redemption price of 5 shekels apiece was exacted for the surplus of the firstborn above the Levites.

This numbering was for service. In Numbers 26. Israel from 20 years old and upward was numbered for a just division of their inheritance (verses 2-4 and 51-56), the Levites from a month old and upward being numbered separately (verse 62). Only two men were in this numbering who were also in the first numbering (verse 65). Instructions are given as to numbering the people from 20 years and upwards and the payment of the ransom price—half a shekel—in Exodus 30. 11-16. In Exodus 38. 24-26, we find the number of Israel of 20 years and upwards equalled 603, 550 men. This is the same number as is found in Numbers 1. 46. —Jas M. J. David apparently forgot this, though strangely enough Joab seems to recognise the wrong of it. We have difficulty in understanding the character of the judgment that followed, but we are impressed with the solemn lesson it teaches, viz., the possibility that many saints may perish spiritually through one man's sin. The choice of three types of judgment is very unusual. Most others had no choice at all, but it does bring out the wisdom of David in preferring to fall into the hands of God than into the hands of men, because of his experience of God's mercies. Even the tender mercies of the wicked he knew were cruel. David was willing, like Moses, to take on himself the judgment when the angel stood at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. The place of judgment upon Israel became the place of the altar, where God could meet with men acceptably in perfect righteousness, and in mercy, because of the atoning blood. How noble too that declaration of David, a lesson for all ages, that he would not offer to God that which cost him nothing !

In both of these incidents we see how marvellously God brings good out of evil, not that evil is a necessity, but God's salvation is always of this order. He overrules for good even the evil of men.

In the many biographies of great men of the past, we do not find the secret sins and shortcomings of their heroes exposed, nor their humiliating confessions. The unerring faithfulness of this record of David's life marks it out as divinely inspired, and is yet another of the many examples in the Scriptures of God's faithfulness in recording not only the bright, but also the dark, deeds of men of God, that men of all ages may learn divine wisdom thereby. J. B., N. A.

From Paisley and Barrhead. —Lust flourishes in the bosom of the inactive. Lust is a product of the flesh, and, as such, militates constantly against the spirit. Concerning this, James asks—"Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain..."

David lusted after the woman Bath-sheba, but the child of his loathsome act was taken from him—he lusted, but had not! Further, in order to conceal his secret sin, he cruelly schemed the death of the apparently righteous Uriah, Bath-sheba's husband. He killed—and that because he coveted! His deserved punishment, on his own confession when apprehended, was death, but, "God, according to His loving kindness," forgave, yet, in doing so, pronounced to him that "the sword shall never depart from thine house." Thus, we learn whence came the striving within the precincts of that favoured household.

We have considered the expulsive effect of lust. We now consider the impulsive. James again comments that "man... is drawn away by *his own* lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death." But in this instance, by the grace of God, the full fruition of lust was arrested. Yet undoubtedly, although David did not die, his grievous sin had adverse consequences upon his later life.

Certain principles relating to repentance emerge from a consideration of this incident.

(1) From the human standpoint: —

There must be

(a) a realisation of guilt.

" I know **my** transgressions " (Psalm 51. 3 R. V. M.).

(b) repentance and confession of guilt.

" I have sinned against the **LORD**" (2 Samuel 12. 13).

(c) acceptance of the divine verdict regarding His righteous, **but** merciful, judgment.

" That Thou mayest be justified when Thou speakest, and **be** clear when Thou judgest " (Psalm 51. 4).

(2) From the divine standpoint: —

(a) The **LORD** works conviction by **His** Spirit and **His** Word.

" Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (Psalm 51. 11). **His** word through Nathan's parable (2 Samuel 12. 1-6).

(b) The **LORD** grants forgiveness blended with

" The **LORD** also **hath** put away thy sin: thou shalt not die ".

(c) merciful judgment.

" **Howbeit...** the child... shall surely die "

(2 Samuel 12. 13, 14).

The excelling beauty of divine forgiveness **is** manifested in the gift to Bathsheba of a second son, who was to fulfil the high destiny **of** a glorious reign over Israel. David called him " Solomon, " which name is derived from a root meaning, significantly, "to be safe (in mind), " or " to make amends, " while Jehovah seems to choose the name " Jedidiah "—" Beloved of Jah. " The sweet harmony between Jehovah and the sinner was now restored.

After all this, we read that Joab, David's captain, continued the fight against Ammon, and, lest David should be denied the honour, invited him to assemble the people and lead them to victory—as David should have done at the first—and take the crown of Ammon's king. But to us, living in the **last** time, who endure temptation and are thus approved, shall be " *the crown of life*, which the Lord promised to them that love Him " (James 1. 12). And again, when mockers are walking after their own ungodly lusts, our loving God yearningly beseeches **us** to keep ourselves in His love " looking for **the** mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life " (Jude 21).

Similar principles to those already enunciated are exemplified in the story of David's numbering Israel. We felt that the **sin on this** occasion was the motive which engendered the act. Was it that David would have delighted in strength of numbers while God viewed His people " as the stars **of** heaven "—numberless ? (1 Chronicles 27. 23). *David L. Baird.*

EXTRACTS.

From Knocknacloy. —**We** have records in 2 Samuel **of** the two great sins which David committed when his zeal seemed to have declined. While David's mighty men were besieging the Ammonites' city of Rabbah, David was tarrying at Jerusalem. David's rightful place was with the children of Israel in battle, but here he is lying at ease in Jerusalem. And thus, in this condition of slackness, he saw Bath-sheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite, and his lust for her being aroused by Satan, he break God's law **in** three aspects; namely (1) " Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife "; (2) " Thou shalt not commit adultery "; and (3) " Thou shalt not **kill**. "

We, who constitute God's people to-day, are also liable to fall into a state of slackness, and in order that this might not be so, we are exhorted in Matthew 26. 41, " Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. "

An armour has been provided that we may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one " (Ephesians 6. 14-17). Armour suggests battle a constant battling against the evil powers of this world. Let us " fight the good fight of the faith " (1 Timothy 6. 12).
William Woods.

From London, S. E. —At ease at home in Jerusalem, David falls readily into sin, as was the case when he sought rest among the Philistines. **He was** no longer standing by faith.

How ineffectual were David's attempts to conceal his sin, even after the removal of every obstacle which might give a semblance of lawfulness to his course ! **He** forgets he is a king by divine appointment. **Was this** reigning in righteousness, to take advantage of his kingly power to destroy Uriah, and to make Joab accessory to his crime ? But none can hide from the eye of God.

David's sin, committed in secret, God punished in the sight of all Israel. But God manifested **His** sovereignty in grace, for **He** chastened David by the child's death; and another son of Bath-sheba was the elect of God, who became king and the head of the royal family, the man of peace, the beloved of Jehovah. 2 Samuel 12. 13 beautifully portrays the truth of 1 John 1. 9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous. " Verse 14, however, gives a solemn warning that repentance and forgiveness do not always imply abrogation of punishment. It remains true that a man reaps what he has sown.

2 Samuel 24. The anger of God was kindled against Israel and He punishes *their* pride and rebellion by leaving them to the consequences of the workings of David's *natural* heart. Nine months of sin on David's part show the fatal influence of the enemy, but sin accomplished only awakens David's conscience.

J. B.

From Atherton. —In David's fall into the grievous sin of adultery, we see the old time formula re-enacted; he saw, he coveted, he took. This sin led to another more vile. How great the need ever to pray " lead us not into temptation!"

Bath-sheba was the granddaughter of Ahithophel, and this relationship, coupled with David's sin, may have led to his disloyalty (2 Samuel 15. 12, and Psalm 41. 9, and 55. 13).

We come to the climax; God sees (how important this is!) and sets about to convict David of his sin, by a parable, and leads him to declare his own punishment, namely, " the man that hath done this is worthy to die. " However at his confession and repentance, he is told, " thou shalt not die, " but punishment must follow, not only in the death of his child, but in future events in his life. Some such were, he was disgraced by one son (2 Samuel 13.), banished by another (chapter 15. 19), revolted against by a third (1 Kings 1. 5), betrayed by his friend, deserted by his people, and bereaved of his children.

Why was the Law of God not carried out in David's case, according to Leviticus 20. 10 ? Perhaps here we have an example of the outstanding grace of God. Further, it was said, that David, being king, God alone could deal with him in relation to his sin.

The variation in the scriptures, 2 Samuel 24. 1, and 1 Chronicles 21. 6, seems to arise from the different viewpoints taken. 2 Samuel 24. seems to be the historical revelation, and 1 Chronicles 21. God's viewpoint of the matter. "The anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel," resulting in the death of 70,000 men. Perhaps this was because of some unconfessed sin, not defined. The question was raised, "What was David's sin in his numbering of the people?" Some thought it was the work of the priests, as they collected the atonement money, others thought that David's wrong was in numbering them at the wrong time. The act was indicative of David's pride of heart in an attempt to assess his military power. This was so unlike the man who had so often trusted in God to deliver him in his weakest hour.

J. Bullock, G. Sankey.

From Ilford. —The story of David's sin with regard to Bath-sheba clearly demonstrates the way in which one sin leads to another, unless there is immediate realisation and repentance of the initial sin.

David, truly repentant, acknowledged his sin against Jehovah; he had wronged his fellow men as well, but he realised his primary guilt was before God. God, in forgiving him, is plenteous in mercy. We should seek also to follow this example. Often we say, "we forgive," but, in fact, are only too ready to bring up past. Often we say, "we forgive," but, in fact, are only too ready to bring up past failure, when it should not only have been forgiven, but forgotten, or "put away."

A balancing truth, however, is presented in 12. 14, which we do well to note. Sin has its consequences, because, not only does it affect those immediately connected with it, but the name and honour of God and His people are also involved. We should be very careful not to give occasion for any slur to be cast against God or His Son. Despite all the sad story of failure in this portion, God overruled for good. Another son was born to Bath-sheba, whom God greatly used.

What constituted the sin in numbering the people is less apparent. That a sin was committed is most definite, for Joab realised this action was wrong, and David also later confessed his guilt. In the other accounts we have of the people being numbered, there is direct instruction from God. In this case, we read in the Chronicles account, that Satan was the instigator behind tin's numbering.

Anon.

From Cowdenbeath. —These portions in the history of David's life are definite proofs of the truth of the Scriptures, for no one, who was calculating to deceive, would have inserted such accounts of the failings of one of the most zealous followers of Jehovah. We should not seek to despise these men because of their failing, but rather, learning from their failure, may we ever remember how prone we are to go astray, and the great need there is for us to cherish a spirit of watchfulness, and dependence upon God.

One has said that the beginning of lust, as of strife, is like the letting forth of water. Much more effort is required to conceal sin, than is needed to prevent it. Uriah's devotion to his king and his consideration of his brethren defeat David's effort to conceal sin. Possibly something like a year elapses before David is made to confess his sin, and any trouble that befell David during that period we can attribute to his sin, and to the fact that in that interval his communion with his God is interrupted, and David definitely suffered during that time by lack of communion (Psalm 32. 3).

The sin of David in numbering the people is more difficult to understand. According to 1 Chronicles 21., Satan moved David to number Israel, while in 2 Samuel 24. we are told it was God. Possibly we could reconcile the two portions by saying that Satan provoked and God permitted. The sin, we suggest, was pride of heart, and confidence in himself and in his own strength. This numbering of the people may appear to us as of small account, but in the eyes of God it was a great sin. Joab was aware of David's folly and the motive behind it. The fact that David took only the number of those over 20 years, and entered not the number into the account (1 Chronicles 27. 23, 24) would seem to substantiate the thought of personal gratification.

David McLelland.

From Crowborough. —Terrible lessons can be deduced from David's great sin as to what **is** in the human heart! "Deceitful above all things, and it **is** desperately sick" (Jeremiah 17. 9). No amount of experience in God's ways makes a man proof against its seductions.

Thus David's heart was hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3. 12, 13). For it **is** obvious that he was not in any measure sensible to his exceeding wickedness, until the LORD awakened his conscience through Nathan the Prophet. "Fleshly lusts . . . war against the soul" (1 Peter 2. 11). What devastations they make in that war! How they blind the eyes, harden the heart, sear the conscience and deprive men of all sense of honour and justice! But although David was forgiven and assured of the fact, he had to experience to his dying day the bitter consequences of his sin. For God's name had been dishonoured and great occasion had been given to His enemies to blaspheme (chapter 12. 14).

In 2 Samuel 11. we find no mention of God, although Uriah speaks to David concerning the ark (verse 11). This suggests that David's communion with God was interrupted, and we know he had lost the joy of salvation (Psalm 51. 12). Thus, as we view David in this the hour of his temptation and fall, how brightly shines out the spotless character of "His Son and Lord," as **He** tabernacled in this squalid scene!

It **is** not strange that the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, for there was cause enough for it. They were unthankful for the blessings of David's government and were strangely drawn in to take part with Absalom (2 Samuel 15. 13, etc.), and afterwards with Sheba (2 Samuel 20. 22). But that in **His** displeasure the LORD should move David to number Israel **is** very strange. In 1 Chronicles 21. 1 we read that Satan provoked David to number Israel. Therefore we gather that Satan, **as** an enemy, suggested it, and God, as a righteous Judge, **permitted** it, with a design, from this sin of David, to take an occasion to punish other sins of Israel.

D. N. B.

From Hereford. —When God put David to the test to **see if** he still trusted him, David miserably failed. What a contrast to 1 Samuel 17. where he won a great battle, alone, without an army, but with his God! David had slain his tens of thousands. **His** song of 2 Samuel 22. shows how he trusted God. Now he would trust in the arm of flesh and in the number of his armies. **He** would not listen to the advice of Joab. After the deed had been done, his heart smote him. In his confession of 2 Samuel 24. 17 we **see** that David still has a shepherd heart for he says, "Lo, I have sinned, and I have done perversely: but these sheep, what have they done?" In this numbering of the people David acted not only independently of any order from God, but from such unworthy motives as pride and vain-glory, self confidence and distrust of God, and ambitious designs of conquest.

From 1 Chronicles 21. 15-27 it **is** evident that the plague was not stayed until after the altar had been set up and the sacrifices offered, so that what **is** related in 2 Samuel 24. 16 was by anticipation. The reason why David was allowed to offer sacrifices on Mount Moriah **was** partly gracious consideration of his fear of going up to Gibeon (1 Chronicles 21. 29, 30), and partly in anticipation of the removal of the tabernacle and the erection of the temple there (2 Chronicles 3. 1). There seem to have been two sacrifices, burnt offerings and peace offerings, the first expiatory, and the second a thanksgiving, for the cessation of the pestilence.

H. Jefferson.

From Kilmarnock.—Someone has said—"The best of men are only men at the best"; and in the study before us we have a sad example of the truth of this saying. "*David tarried at Jerusalem.*" At a later time (chapter 18.) he purposed to go to battle with the men of war, **but** now he rests at home and Satan seizes the opportunity to ensnare him through the lust of the flesh. David's experience has been written for our learning, and each one, old and young, would do well to take heed and beware.

The apostle Peter, who had been ensnared by the great Adversary, the Devil, warns the saints and exhorts them to "be sober, and watchful: your adversary the devil... whom withstand stedfast in your faith" (1 Peter 5. 9, R. M.). However the acknowledgment of his sin and repentance are clearly seen from Psalm 51.

In the eyes of the world it is quite a good and necessary thing to number the nation and to get to know the strength of the army, but it was not so with Israel. 1 Chronicles 21. 7 tells us "God was displeased with this thing; therefore He smote Israel." He had promised to increase Israel like to the stars of the heavens (Genesis 22. 17), and although David knew this, he gave ear to a suggestion of Satan and caused Joab to number the people. This was much against Joab's mind and resulted in the death of seventy thousand persons. In the first instance David suffered, personally, for his sin, but, although he took the blame and repented for numbering **the** people, it was on the people that the judgment fell (1 Chronicles 21. 17).
A. G. S.

From Cardiff.—David, a mighty, renowned man of war, who as a lad slew the challenging giant Goliath of Gath, allowed success to mar communion **with** God, providing opportunity for the creeping of sin into his heart, culminating in the murder of Uriah in the hottest part of the battle. Uriah's name is listed as one of David's gallant men.

These callous deeds, —the illegal taking of Uriah's wife, and, at the expense of life, the scheming plans for the concealment of his sin—are episodes in the life of the same gentle personality, of whom we read, while as a shepherd tending his flock, he delivered lambs from the strong, cruel jaws of a fierce lion, and the powerful life-exhausting embraces of a hungry bear. Strengthened by undoubting faith and reliance on God, David went forth courageous and victorious, but urged by the soul-destroying powers and pleasures of sin, David fell miserably before the LORD

David replied to Nathan's parable (chapter 12. 6), "He shall restore the lamb fourfold." Paying for his sin fourfold, David was punished by God according to his own judgment through Absalom, Amnon, Tamar and Adonijah.

The reasons why David sinned in numbering the people we suggest, are (1) pride, (2) not observing God's laws. David possibly possessed great pride at being the human leader of such a vast multitude, the number of which, incidentally, was never completed. If the numbering of the people was not commanded by God, and was not performed under **His** direction, then a plague would overtake the people (Exodus 30. 12). Concluding, we suggest that David's disobedience resulted in the fulfilment of Exodus 30. 12, with the consequent pestilence, not of David's choosing, but of the **LORD'S**. *C. G. B., C. V. D.*

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from Ilford. —What **is** meant by the term, " At the time when kings go forth to battle " (2 Samuel 11. 1) ?

Answer. —" At the return of the year " suggests when Spring had commenced, that **is**, in the month Abib or Nisan. At such a time, when the winter was past, and movement would be **easier** for armies, kings, at war, would reopen their campaigns. Compare 1 Kings 20. **22, 26** and 2 Chronicles 36. 10. *Jas. M.*

Questions from Crowborough. —(1) An explanation of the discrepancy between the enumerations given in 2 Samuel 24. **9** and 1 Chronicles 21. 5.

(2) What **is** the significance in David offering burnt-offerings and peace-offerings when it would seem that the occasion demanded a sin-offering (Leviticus 4. 22-26) ?

Answers. —(1) 2 Samuel 24. 9 gives 800, 000 Israel and **500, 000** Judah. 1 Chronicles 21. **5** gives 1, 100, 000 Israel, 470, 000 Judah. 1 Chronicles **27. 24** shows that the numbering was not finished nor was a chronicled record kept. The actual census-taking took at least **9** months and **20** days (2 Samuel 24. 8), and probably " numbers " were handed into the King at different periods. In the 1 Chronicles 21. **5** number, the higher, even Levi and Benjamin, are not reckoned (see verse 6). If the standing army of 288, 000 men (1 Chronicles **27. 1-15**) were deducted from 1, 100, 000 it would bring it near the number of Israel given in 2 Samuel 24. 9. It may also be that error may have crept into the texts. Perhaps someone may have other explanations. *Jas. M.*

(2) 2 Samuel 24. **25** and 1 Chronicles 21. **26** state that David offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. But were these offerings presented for his own sin ? Psalm 51. verse 16 states " Thou hast no pleasure in burnt-offering, " and I judge that was David's conviction also after numbering the people wrongly. I would suggest he would fulfil Leviticus 4. **22-26**, even if no direct record **is** given to us. It will be noted from 2 Samuel 24. **1** that the LORD was displeased with **Israel**, as well as with David. Would then the words " So the LORD was intreated for the land " (verse 25) suggest that the offerings made by David were on behalf of the people and not himself ? *Jas. M.*

Question from Cowdenbeath. —We would appreciate some help on 1 Chronicles 21. 6-7. Why did wrath come upon Israel as a result of Joab not completing the numbering ? We would judge that Joab was under orders from David to number the people, and the reason for not completing the numbering was because he realised the folly of it, and had not the heart to go on.

Answer. —The wrath that came on Israel was not due to "**failure** to complete the numbering by Joab "; wrath fell because of the numbering being undertaken at all. See 1 Chronicles 21. **7**, —God **was** displeased with this thing. *Jas. 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.

Solomon might well have had in mind the experience of his father as he penned the exhortation in Ecclesiastes 12. 1-7: "Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, or ever the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; . . . and the strong men shall bow themselves." For the one whose youthful faith and gallantry enabled him to slay lion and bear and giant is brought before us in this month's study as "old and stricken in years" so that the heat could no longer be kept in his body. One of Israel's strongest men must now bow himself beneath the weight of years, with its inevitable accompaniments of frailty and failing faculties.

It is instructive to study the Holy Spirit's record of the thoughts which were uppermost in the minds of great men of God as they stood on the brink of eternity, "looking o'er life's finished story." For at such a time temporal things take on their true perspective, and eternal realities loom up in all their solemn and transcending importance. Jacob gathered his sons around his death-bed and told them what would befall them in the latter days; with wonderful, Spirit-imparted foresight he traced the characteristic feature of the purpose of God through each of his sons in relation to the great national destiny which Jacob knew God had in store for his posterity. Finally he solemnly charged them that they should not bury him in Egypt. Uppermost in Jacob's thoughts was the promise of God towards his seed, and his faith in that promise was impressed on his sons by the dying charge about his burial. Nor could all the glory of Egypt's power dim the spiritual vision of Joseph! "I die: but God will surely visit you, and bring you up out of this land . . . and ye shall carry up my bones from hence." It is most significant that the Holy Spirit singles out this dying charge of Joseph as the act of faith worthy of mention in the 11th of Hebrews. We pass on to the time when God had visited His people in accordance with the promise, and Moses was about to ascend Mount Nebo to die. With earnest emphasis he repeatedly charged God's people to cleave to the Word of their God: "Set your heart unto all the words which I testify unto you this day; . . . for it is no vain thing for you: because it is your life" (Deuteronomy 32. 46-47).

Similarly Joshua challenged the people with their responsibility to "fear the LORD, and serve Him **in** sincerity and **in** truth," taking from them a solemn pledge that they would obey the words of the law, and not deny their God. When we reach the end of David's reign, there **is** the same burden on the heart of that great **man** of God. In common with the patriarchs and Moses and Joshua, he realised that only in close adherence to God and **His** Word could Israel know prosperity. Urging Solomon to be strong and shew himself a man, David added, "Keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in **His** ways, to keep **His** statutes, and **His** commandments, and **His** judgements, and **His** testimonies, according to that which **is** written in the law of Moses" (1 Kings 2. 3). Each strong man, **running** his course, hands over the torch of truth to his successor, and passes on the secret of stability in the race. In similar strain Paul charged Timothy. **His** anxiety was for the preservation of the testimony. "I charge thee in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, . . . preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season;" and again, "Hold the pattern of sound words . . . That good thing which was committed unto thee guard through the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us" (2 Timothy 4. 1-2 and 1. 13-14). The great leaders whom God used to recover the truth of **His** House, and to bring together a remnant testimony, have also passed to their rest. Most of us have heard their earnest warnings of the need to cleave to the pattern of sound words **if** the testimony **is** to be maintained in its purity. The basis of sectarianism, despite many features which may at times dazzle the unsuspecting Christian, **is** the deliberate acceptance of compromise on many points of the Lord's present will for the disciple. Let us hear again the recurring charge, echoed down the ages by men of faith, and always emphasising the return to "the law and the testimony."

In addition to the dying charge of David to Solomon, which reflects his deep concern that the kingdom be maintained on sound principles, we also have recorded in 2 Samuel 23. the last words of the sweet Psalmist of Israel. What heavenly glory gilded the valley of the shadow of death as David realised the presence of the One who had led him throughout his varied earthly experiences!

David had a clear vision too of

"One that ruleth over men righteously,
That ruleth in the fear of God,
He shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth,
A morning without clouds" (2 Samuel 23. 3-4).

Truly it **is** the purpose of God to **sum** up all things in Christ! May we have grace to gird up the loins of our mind, being sober, and setting our hope perfectly on the grace to be brought to us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

G. Prasher, Jun.

DAVID'S GREAT SIN.

From Melbourne.—It was suggested that, in the light of Psalm 51. 12, the joy of salvation had been running very low in David's heart prior to his sin. It would appear from Psalm 32. that, for a lengthy period, David had failed to acknowledge his sin, possibly fearing the serious consequences both for Bath-sheba and himself. The law of Leviticus 20. 10 **is** explicit concerning such a deed, and David, by planning, had sought to save Bath-sheba from such a judgment. When his plans miscarried, the further guilt of slaying Uriah with the sword of the children of Ammon was added to his sin. By taking her as his wife he had sought to soothe his conscience and, possibly from the standpoint of the law, had saved the difficult situation, but the enemies of the LORD had been given cause to blaspheme, and he had sinned against Jehovah. The experience of Psalm 32. 3-4 had been his, and it was only when the experience of verse 5 became a reality that David again knew peace of mind.

David's proud heart prevailed on the day he ordered the numbering of Israel. There may be a tendency in one greatly gifted, even in an assembly of God, to get out of hand. Pride needs watching. David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people, and though lie confessed, retribution must fall, and the LORD sent a pestilence. Would the numbers given in 2 Samuel 24. 9, plus 1 Chronicles 27. 1, comprise the combined number of 1 Chronicles 21. 5? [See October issue.] T. L. Fullerton, S. Stoope.

THE LAST DAYS OF DAVID.

From Atherton. —David's heart must have rejoiced that God, in great mercy, chose one of his many sons, even before that son was born, to be his successor (1 Chronicles 22. 9). This choice abundantly proves that the sin of David had been freely and fully forgiven. Truly "a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." From Proverbs 4. 1-9 we are assured that both Bath-sheba and David sought to instruct their son Solomon in the fear of the LORD. This is an obligation, before the Lord, on every God-fearing parent. Special stress was laid on the value of the prayer of faith (James 5. 15-16). Yet there is no absolute guarantee that all children will be saved as a result of their parents' prayers, but we were reminded that God "willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2. 4). With regard to little ones, we have the words of the Saviour Himself, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (Matthew 18. 14).

Alas, the Devil is again at work, and under his influence the intriguers seek to upset David's appointment and God's choice. Adonijah, in unhappy league with Joab and Abiathar, asserts himself and assumes his right to the kingship and throne. Sadly he goes the way of all those who are found fighting against God. In the service of the LORD, in his kingdom, there is no place for intrigues or ulterior motives. David's charges to Solomon remind us of Paul's charge to Timothy: "the end of the charge is *love* out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned" (1 Timothy 1. 5). Youthful Solomon and youthful Timothy alike responded to the charge. What is the significance of the horns of the altar, of which both Adonijah and Joab laid hold when they fled from Solomon? We think that they speak of Jehovah's strength and also of divine mercy. To repentant Adonijah, mercy was shewn, but to unrepentant Joab there was no mercy. We were reminded solemnly of the "sin not unto death," and also of "sin unto death" (1 John 5. 16). G. A. Jones, G. Sankey.

From Kirkintilloch. —David begun to reign when he was thirty years of age, and he reigned for forty years (see 2 Samuel 5. 4), so that we now consider him as a man of seventy, in the closing years of his life. In 1 Kings 1. 1 we read that king David was "old and stricken in years." No doubt the active and strenuous life of David had much to do with his frailty in his later years, but also, the fearful experiences of his repentance and godly sorrow which followed his sin against Bath-sheba had told their tale upon him. Notice what Ethan the Ezrahite says of David when he observed his sorrow at the time of Absalom's rebellion: "the days of his youth hast thou shortened" (Psalm 89. 45).

Now that David's active rule over Israel was coming to an end, Adonijah exalted himself and presumed to take over the kingship. His name means, "My lord is Jah," and with this high-sounding name many were led astray, including the crafty Joab, who was ever after a place for himself.

David had publicly declared that Solomon his son was heir to the throne (1 Chronicles 28. 5), for this was the line through which Messiah was to come to earth as the Heir to David's throne. Behind this attempt by Adonijah was the working of Satan to overthrow the royal line and prevent the wondrous fulfilment of God's purpose that Christ should be born King of Israel.

The command of David still had great power with the people, for, from his own chamber he sent forth the proclamation that Solomon was king, and such was the effect of this, that Adonijah and his guests were afraid, and their conspiracy suddenly melted away. This will also be true of the days prior to the manifestation of the Lord Jesus Christ in His glory as King of kings and Lord of lords, for there will be imitators and impostors and false Christs who will lead many astray. All these things will come to an abrupt end by the proclamation of the true Messiah, the King whom God has appointed.

Adonijah laid hold of the horns of the altar. We thought this referred to the brazen altar, and that he was claiming the sacrifice thereon as propitiatory for his sin, for his act in laying hold of the altar was a confession of guilt, and he was pleading for mercy. David makes known to Solomon now what **is** the secret of prosperity in his kingdom, and that **is**, careful observance of the Word of the LORD (1 Kings 2. 1-4). Surely this principle **is** borne out in New Testament times. "Obedience to the faith," and "obedience to the truth," are often seen in the Acts and the Epistles, and their significance should not be lost sight of.
Harry King.

From Melbourne. —It looks as though Satan's hand was behind Adonijah in seeking to thwart God's purposes in selecting David's successor. Even in old age there **is** ever the possibility of falling away. Such was the case with Joab and with Abiathar, the priest who went astray. Solomon **is** a type of the Lord Jesus in a coming day. David dealt with his enemies, thus leaving the way open for the peaceful reign of his son, Solomon, corresponding to the time of our Lord's return to set up **His** kingdom on earth. It would seem that Adonijah pre-figures the Anti-Christ, that self-exalted one, who reigns for a short period prior to the coming of a greater than Solomon. David prepared abundantly for the building of God's House, a work to be carried on by his son, Solomon. Great responsibilities rested on Solomon's willingness and obedience.

T. L. Fullerton, S. Stoope.

EXTRACTS.

From Crowborough. —Adonijah was a very goodly man, **as** to outward appearance, but he had been brought up to have all his own way. He exalted himself, but in accordance with the Word of the LORD, he had to be humbled. We thought we saw in him a picture of the coming Man of sin, whom Satan will exalt. The kingdom, however, **is** the Lord's, and He shall surely reign.

J. Taylor.

From Cowdenbeath. —David's life, which had been an active one, left him at the end of days physically exhausted. After his ascension to the throne he had not spared himself. He had led Israel to victory against the surrounding nations, raising her to a position of supremacy. All Israel knew that David's end was near, and **that** Solomon was his successor (1 Chronicles 29. 1), yet Adonijah

sought to claim the position God had reserved for Solomon. His action was in defiance of his father's will, and, more serious still, against God's will (1 Kings 2. 15). As a result of the audience of Bath-sheba and Nathan with David, Solomon was proclaimed king and Adonijah's cause defeated.

Before his death David gave Solomon words of sound counsel, for he realised that the prosperity of the throne of Israel depended upon the attitude of its occupant to God and His word. David's words echo the words of God Himself unto Joshua (Joshua 1. 7). The young man who is willing to spend time with God and His word will assuredly enjoy spiritual progress. No better epitaph could we give David than the testimony borne of him in the Scriptures: "David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell on sleep" (Acts 13. 36).
James K. I). Johnston.

From Birkenhead. —The fact that David had not at any time displeased his son Adonijah, nor questioned his conduct, would suggest some failure on David's part to discharge properly his responsibility to Adonijah, and similarly towards Absalom (1 Kings 1. 6). David previously had assembled the princes of Israel and told them of his heart's desire to build a house unto the LORD, and that of all his many sons God had chosen Solomon to carry out this work and to sit upon the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel (1 Chronicles 28.). Apparently he thought this was unchallengeable, but the action of Adonijah, when so forcibly brought to his notice by the prophet Nathan and Bath-sheba, probably impressed him that this was a warning from the LORD and he took swift action. Both Zadok the Priest and Nathan the Prophet were charged to anoint Solomon king over Israel, and this they did with Benaiah and the faithful Cherethites and Pelethites, causing Solomon to ride upon the king's mule, and they brought him to Gihon.

Whilst Adonijah exalted himself, taking the line which Satan had pursued, Solomon in his greater wisdom is seen in great humility before God on the occasion of his exaltation. God-appointed leaders are men of this calibre, and even now men are chosen through the Holy Spirit to be overseers in the churches of God to feed His flock. Such should await recognition of leadership, in all humility, after the principle of Paul's instruction to Timothy, "Lay hands hastily on no man" (1 Timothy 5. 22).

With the kingdom secured to Solomon, David in his last days gives godly and fatherly counsel to his son. At this, the beginning of a new era, we see how he was cast back upon the Law of Moses. This was so in the revival in Josiah's reign, and also in the days of the remnant under Ezra and Malachi. This is an important principle, and David acted according to it. For us, the basis of all that we are and do must be the faith once for all delivered to the saints.

The last chapter of 1 Chronicles is a moving tribute to the zeal with which David in his lifetime prepared for the great work of building the house of the LORD, and we see the tremendous effect it had in all the nation with its princes and rulers, dedicating themselves and their substance to this work. What he did during his lifetime was well-pleasing unto the LORD, as witnessed by the Holy Spirit's testimony that David "in his own generation served the counsel of God" (Acts 13. 36). No better testimony than this can be paid to any man as to his whole life's work. The progressive recovery of truth makes possible the recovery of still more truth, and each of us should be exercised as to our responsibility to carry it out that we may be worthy of the heritage which has been procured for us over so many generations and at so great, *a cost. R. H., N. A.*

From Barrhead and Paisley. —The last words of men are usually of some moment, probably because in them is often expressed the wisdom of a lifetime's experience. David's words are no exception. We see the man of war speaking to the man of peace. "Be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man." Too often the quality of manliness is attributed only to those who do mighty deeds of courage and physical prowess, but a chargeⁿ such as Solomon received called for high qualities and determination to "keep the charge of the LORD . . . to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, and His commandments, and His judgements, and His testimonies." This was a calling worthy of the man who was being called, who was to ask his God for wisdom in the executing of his charge. The period of forty years or days is usually associated in scripture with a time of testing, and this is borne out when we consider the life of Moses, whose years were divided into three periods of forty, and also the Lord who endured forty days' temptation, so here also it is interesting to find that David reigned for forty years, no doubt a period of testing for him. Evidently, although censured by God for various crimes, his reign is approved. He lived for seventy years, died in peace, and was buried in his own city.

Surely we can learn from these incidents that the allocation of authority and the appointment of leaders are from above, and are not left to the opinion of the people, **as** we clearly see when David appoints his son, **as** his successor, in spite of the people. **All** the trouble and uncertainty which ended in David appointing Solomon could have been avoided if David had made it clear earlier that Solomon was his successor, and had made such a fact more evident by training his son for such a position.

We realise that youth should learn from the wisdom of age, especially in spiritual things, provided the aged have acquired the confidence of youth by their conduct, and like David, the mature in the faith should impart the wisdom of their experience to the immature, ensuring that the mistakes they made should not be repeated by those who follow. We must acknowledge, too, that spiritual peace and prosperity and the well-being of the community depend on the absence of jealousy and troublesome quarrelling such as attended the latter days of David. Undoubtedly the reign of Solomon is typical of the millennial reign of Christ, but before the kingdom can be established, there will require to be made certain adjustments; rebellions and troublesome elements must be eliminated, and righteous judgments passed on all who have sought to usurp the rightful King.

J. McK. Gault.

From Glasgow. —One might have expected that having established himself on the throne after many troubles, David's later years might have been peaceful, but we see that he had conquered his enemies round about, only to find that he had enemies within. Two of his sons sought to usurp the throne, and of these, Adonijah seems the more base. He thought to take advantage of his father's frailty to displace Solomon. But God took a hand in this matter, as in all others where He has a purpose to be fulfilled. Faithful men warned David of Adonijah's plot, so that the purpose of God was put into effect and Adonijah summarily discredited. David **was** not too frail to appreciate the need for swift action **in** nominating Solomon as his successor.

The good advice he gave to Solomon was the outcome of his own experience. Solomon was clearly told that prosperity would be the result of obedience to the law of God and of observance of His commandments. It is notable that no mention is made in Scripture of any national mourning for David, the fact of his

death and burial being very simply recorded. **His** death seems to fall neatly into its place in the progression of history, peaceful and expected, as though his work was clearly over. So ended a life in which God was magnified and in which God's purposes of the ages moved a step forward toward the day when the "Root and Offspring of David" would Himself appear to glorify God in His life of perfect obedience.

J. J. P.

From Hamilton, Ontario. —It is interesting to note that the life of David, which had been a stormy one throughout, was even at its termination beset with trouble. For the shepherd king who had so often gone forth to do battle against the enemies of the LORD had to face rebellion from his own son, Adonijah. Yet the purposes of God stood firm, and Solomon, God's chosen one (1 Chronicles 22. 9-10), came to the throne. The war drum of David was to usher in the olive branch of Solomon. So in a coming day, an Armageddon will herald in the thousand years of peace. Solomon could not have ruled in peace had not David conquered in war; and the enemies of Christ will first have to be made subject to **His** authority, before the Lion of Judah becomes the Prince of Peace.

And now the wealth of the old warrior's experience was to enrich the treasures of Israel's young king. Perhaps he was regretfully pondering his few but sad errors, as David counselled Solomon to give his heart and soul and mind to keeping the law of Moses. It was the old man handing the torch to the young, and saying, as Paul to Timothy in a later day, "Be strengthened" (2 Timothy 2. 1).

R. Pineas.

From Cardiff. —Adonijah, noting his father's time of weakness, exalts himself, saying, "I will be king." He appears to have had a very lenient upbringing and behaves accordingly. We contrasted the spiritual upbringing recorded in Hebrews 12. 9-11. Albeit, despite his weak condition, David takes immediate action and frustrates Adonijah's plans. Adonijah, preceding the reign of king Solomon, would seem to speak of the "Man of Sin," who will be consigned to the Lake of Fire, prior to the millennial reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a vivid contrast is presented in the death of David and that of the Lord Jesus. The former died with vengeance on his lips, while Jesus said, "Father, forgive them." This is but another view of the supremacy of Him, the altogether lovely One.

P. B.

From London, S. E. —We have before us in this portion the last glimpses of the man, who for many years has sat on the throne of Israel, and even now, though old and feeble, is still loved and revered by all Israel, for the "eyes of all the people" were "upon him." The emphasis in these closing words on David's life is on "King David," stressing, as it were, the authority which still belonged to the enfeebled old man. There is one, however, who mistakes feebleness for senility; and Adonijah, aping the works of Absalom, his ill-fated brother, exalts himself, and proclaims himself king. Lack of discipline in early life had its outcome in rebellion, even from a "goodly man." The LORD never makes this mistake; "for whom the LORD loveth He chasteneth" (Hebrews 12. 5, 6). We see behind the rebellion of Adonijah the hand of the Adversary. God had given commandment (1 Chronicle 22.) that Solomon should sit on the throne of Israel after

David and, more important still, Solomon alone should build the House of God. In the matters concerning the building of His House, God **is** most careful whom He chooses. Adonijah was not the selected instrument. Although Adonijah now considers himself safe as king, God **is** moving **in** the hearts of Bath-sheba and Nathan. When David **is** confronted with the news we see the old fire returning; and he commands the prophet, the priest, " and the man of war, to take Solomon to Gihon, and there anoint **him** as king in his stead. This **is** done, and what a shout of rejoicing goes up from the heart of Israel! Joab hears the shout and trembles; Adonijah flies to safety, and the hangers-on just melt away. The forces of Satan have been overthrown and his pitiful slave is seen cringing before a merciful Solomon.

In chapter 2. **we** have the last words of David, **his** charge to Solomon. What clarity of thought there **is** here as these words fall from the lips of a dying man ! Following the various charges comes the promise from God, " that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest. " May all these things be a lesson to us to follow after righteousness and forsake iniquity !

K. H. Riley.

From Kilmarnock. —Adonijah, in his youth, had been allowed to please himself, **as** 1 Kings 1. 6 shows. This should be a warning to fathers now ! But verse 48 shows David's satisfaction and joy **in** seeing Solomon seated on his throne. **As** David drew near his end he seemed to realise the great responsibility Solomon would have **as** king, and he charges him to " keep the charge of the LORD God " . . . " which **is** written in the law of Moses "; for he well knew that it was only **as** he did this that he would prosper. In this we are reminded of Paul's words to Timothy, **as** he drew near his end. He could foresee the difficult times that would come, and so he charges Timothy to " preach the Word, " " be thou sober in all things, " and " abide thou in the things which thou hast learned. " **His** last words to the Ephesian elders are also noteworthy, " I commend you to God, and to the Word of **His** grace. " **We** note that David reminds Solomon of what Joab had done to him, and also how he had slain Abner and **Amasa**, for which he **was** worthy of death. Shimei's cursing also **was** not forgotten, but he leaves the matter to Solomon's wisdom, and kindness **was** to be shown to Barzillai's sons, because of their father's thoughtfulness to David in **his** trials. In David's **wish** for justice he **was** acting according to the **law**, but **in** contrast to this, Paul acted **in grace**. When he reminded Timothy of Alexander the coppersmith, who had done him much evil, he added, " the Lord will render to him according to his works " (2 Timothy 4. 14). It **is** in this spirit we are called upon to act now.

A. G. S.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question **from** Crowborough (see October issue). —A comparison of the precise words **used** (according to R. V.) may perhaps explain the apparent discrepancy between 2 Samuel 24. 9 and 1 Chronicles 21. 5.

2 Samuel 24. 9. —" There were in 1 Chronicles 21. 5. —" ALL they of Israel 800, 000 VALIANT men Israel were 1, 100, 000 men that that drew the sword. " drew sword. "

300, 000 **men** were evidently NOT valiant!

" The men of Judah were 500, 000 " Judah was **470, 000** men THAT men. " DREW SWORD. "

30, 000 men of Judah were not swordsmen !

A. R. G. Chamings.

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" (Aces 17. 11).

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Editorial.

THE OLD IN THE NEW.

Our concluding study of the life of David emphasizes a principle which is of special importance to us who have been called of God into the Fellowship of His Son. A brother once expressed it in this way: " We need to be Old Testament Christians. " He meant that if we are to have a proper grasp of the truth of God in the present day, we must be able to understand the ways of God with men in Old Testament times, and realise the continuity of the principles which were illustrated in such helpful detail in connection with the earthly people and material House of Old Covenant times. The truth of this **is** brought out clearly in connection with the subject of the House of God. New Testament references to the subject are relatively brief, but they point back to the line of truth which runs through the Old Testament from Jacob to Malachi. A flood of light **is** thrown on the **six** verses at the opening of Hebrews 6., for example, by a study of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers; for those three Books have **as** one of their major themes the faithful dealings of Moses **in** all God's House **as** a servant. By translating the dealings of God with Moses into the terms of the spiritual House of the present dispensation, the principles of acceptable service towards God are wonderfully apparent. **We** repeat that this approach to the Word of God **is** of special importance to us who have been called into that which answers to the Holy Nation of the Old Testament. For otherwise many references **in** the **New** Testament Scriptures will **remain** obscure, and our enjoyment and understanding of that into which we have been called will be relatively limited.

This truth **is** perhaps more vividly impressed upon us **if** we try to place ourselves **in** the position of the disciples **in** the first Churches of God, before the New Testament Scriptures had been written. Their constant appeal must be to the prophetic word of the Old Testament regarding the Person of Christ, and to the principles of the Old Covenant **in** regard to their service. The apostles consistently quoted the inspired writings, and **as** they themselves were led by the

Spirit of God, they brought out from those writings a wealth of further truth made manifest as a result of the incarnation and redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. From this point of view the writings of David are prominent, and the frequent references of the apostles to his Psalms illustrate the abiding effect of that great man's life work, even when evil days had fallen upon his posterity.

Let us think for instance of the references to the 110th Psalm. The Lord Himself had used the opening verse of the Psalm to confound the Pharisees; they could not answer His question as to how the Christ could at the same time be David's Son and David's Lord. On the Day of Pentecost Peter gave an assured answer to the problem as he declared, " For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand,
Till I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified. "

Then in Hebrews 5. 6 is a quotation from the same Psalm,

" As He saith also in another place,
Thou art a Priest for ever
After the order of Melchizedek. "

It is worth careful study to trace the glorious fulness of truth in regard to the Priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ which is developed from those few words written by David so long before. The only other reference in the Old Testament to the person of Melchizedek is in Genesis 14. 18-20. Yet these references supply the foundation for a series of contrasts between the Aaronic priesthood and the order of Melchizedek, as worked out in Hebrews 5., 6. and 7., which exalt the Person of Christ as eternal Priest, far transcending those of Aaron's line. Nor can the delightful truth unfolded in those chapters be appreciated unless we have some understanding of the Levitical law, and the demands of God upon His people in relation to their approach to Him.

A similar development of truth from a portion of a Psalm of David is found in Hebrews 3. and 4. In this case the quotation is from Psalm 95.; we should not know from the English Bible that this Psalm was written by David, but it is ascribed to him in Hebrews 4. 7 (compare also Psalm 2. of which authorship is ascribed to David in Acts 4. 25). Taking up the theme of the Psalm, the writer to the Hebrews shows that successive generations failed to avail themselves of their privilege of entering into God's rest, and concludes, " There remaineth therefore a sabbath rest for the people of God. " As the light of the Old Testament sheds its rays across this portion, it is clear that the rest here spoken of is the " rest in service " in association with God's House. That was the ideal placed before Israel in the past, from the days of Moses onwards; many failed to give diligence to enter into that rest which God desired they should enjoy. So to-day our enjoyment of God's rest is a conditional matter, depending upon our earnestness in availing ourselves of the provision God has made for our acceptable service before Him.

It is very wonderful to realise that " the man after God's heart " was inspired of the Spirit to write such words, containing as it were the embryo of mighty truths in relation to His greater Son. The man who in his day was so concerned about the dwelling place of God among Israel, was moved by the Spirit to write that which would later be the foundation of much precious truth in regard to the spiritual House of this dispensation. Indeed through his writings and in the typical message of his own experiences, David stands out among Old Testament characters as one whose life sheds much light upon the ways of God in the present dispensation. Time would fail to examine in detail his testimony to the resurrection (e. g., Psalm 16.) the enmity of the world towards God's Anointed (Psalm 2.) and the expansion of grace towards the Gentile (Psalm 18. 49). Suffice to say that God's estimate of the abiding place which David has in the Divine purpose is illustrated by the Lord's words in Revelation 22. 16: "I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star. " *G. Prasher, Jun.*

DAVID IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

From Crowborough. —The name of David is mentioned more times in the New Testament than any other name of Old Testament characters, namely, **38** times in the Gospels, 11 times in the Acts, six in the Epistles, and three in the Revelation. **His** words carried much weight, for God had promised that one of the lineage of David was to be Israel's great Deliverer, whose advent they awaited. The Lord Jesus is introduced by the Gospel writers as the rightful Heir to David's throne. It is significant that the genealogies as given by Matthew and Luke are entirely different until David is reached. We asked why the genealogy of Joseph through Solomon is given (in Matthew) seeing that Joseph had no definite link with the Lord. Could we suggest that He was the son of Joseph by adoption, and that the record as given by Luke is that of Mary? Matthew and Luke emphasize those incidents where the Lord is mentioned as the Son of David. The Lord Himself laid claim to being the Son of David. In the Epistles the apostles shew that God revealed, through David, long beforehand, His eternal purposes of grace.

In Revelation 3. 7 the Lord is pictured as having the key of David. This would teach that all the promises of God are locked up in Him. The great Deliverer of all creation is symbolised as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. *S. Swift.*

From Atherton. —Great indeed is the person who finds his name honourably mentioned in the Old Testament; still greater the one who finds his name again honourably mentioned in the New Testament. Such **an** one was David. **His** name appears in the very first verse, and also in the concluding verses of the New Testament. In most occurrences in the Gospels David's name is used in association with the Lord Jesus—the Son of David. This title of the Messiah was accepted alike by Pharisees (Matthew 22. 42), by poor **people** (Matthew 15. 22), and even by children (Matthew 21. 15).

In Acts 2. Peter expresses what David realised himself in his lifetime, that ultimately he would go the way of all flesh. With prophetic foresight David speaks of the resurrection of his Lord. The Apostle Paul's record in chapter 13. is significant in several respects. The people asked for Saul as king, but it was God who raised up David to be their king. Paul stresses the point of Christ being of the *seed* of David.

In the preservation of David's seed, again and again Satan attempted to frustrate God's purpose. On a few occasions it was almost extinguished (see 1 Kings 11. 36, 2 Kings 11. 1 and 2, and 2 Kings 8. 19). The seed was preserved according to promise, and it is through the Child born, and the Son given, that David's throne shall endure for ever.

In the Revelation, two of the many Old Testament worthies are mentioned by name—Moses and David. To none other throughout the whole range of Scripture has such abundant testimony been given, by the Spirit of God, save to the Son of David. Oh that we could, in some small degree, leave behind us "footprints in the sands of time"! David, whose life of faithfulness and devotion was an inspiration to all, is again mentioned in one of the letters to the seven churches, in the midst of which his greater Son is seen in all His glorious power, seeking to stir up the hearts and consciences of men and women to make the House of God worthy of that all-worthy Name.

Finally the Lord is spoken of as "the root and the offspring of David" (Revelation 22. 16); the "root" because He was *before* David and whence David had his origin; the "offspring" because, after the flesh, He came *from* David. The root speaks of the Godward-side of the person of Christ; the offspring of the manward. Thus is seen the true Messiahship of the Lord—the God-Man.

The key of David. The actual key **was** a large one, borne on the shoulder. "The government shall be upon **His** shoulder" (Isaiah 9. 6). This bespeaks rule and government, telling us of **His** Kingship. "The bright, the morning star" (Revelation 22. 16) appears to refer to the coming of the **Son** of God into the air, at the end of this long night. Verse 17 undoubtedly conveys this thought in the repeated invitation "Come," to which **He** replies, "Yea: I come quickly." *J. K. S., G. S., J. B., E. B.*

From Cardiff. —David is unique amongst the kings of Israel because he **speaks** particularly of the Lord **Jesus** Christ. Peter provides us with the key to Psalm 16. when he says, "David saith concerning **Him** . . ." David realised that Solomon would sit upon his throne, but **he** visualised a further day when **the** Lord would rule in righteousness from Jerusalem, for a thousand years (Acts 2. 30-31). This fact **was** also announced before the Lord's birth by the angel, when he said, "**He** shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto **Him** the throne of **His** father David" (Luke 1. 32). The apostles seek to prove in the early chapters of the Acts that Jesus of Nazareth, of the seed of David, **is** the mighty King of whom David spoke. Both David and Jacob acknowledged that upon death their souls would go to Sheol, and that their bodies would **see** corruption, but a greater than they would annihilate the power of death, and **His** body would **see** no corruption. The Lord Jesus Christ **is** the only resurrected One to-day.

"The key of David," we felt, was not of necessity David's private property, but rather that it **is** in the hands of David's **King** and Lord (see Revelation 3. 7). It is the Lord's prerogative to open the enriching, holy and sure blessings either to an individual or to a nation. There **is** a day coming when this key again shall turn, and these blessings shall be the happy portion of Israel **as** a nation.

J. C. T.

From Hamilton, (Ont.). —From a study of the references to David in the New Testament, the fact emerges that David holds a key position dispensationally. In Matthew 1. the genealogy of the Lord Jesus **is** divided into three groups, the first ending with David, the second with the captivity, and the third ending with Christ, and in spite of the fact that many **names** of kings are mentioned, only David **is** referred to **as the king**. David **is** the one who could be a fit type of the King of kings. Solomon is a true type of the Prince of Peace, who **is** to come, but this peaceful reign would never have materialised had it not been for the mighty conqueror, —*David*.

The holy and sure blessings of David are mentioned **in** the Acts; and these blessings, namely, "the blessing of the **man** to whom the Lord will not reckon sin," are brought to us through the death of the Son of David, and are made sure by **His** resurrection, a fact which **was** also prophesied by David when he wrote, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades, neither wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to **see** corruption."

The expression "the root and the offspring of David," according to human reasoning, would **seem** to imply an utter impossibility. But when we think of the One who speaks in Revelation 22., the One who could say, when **He** was here among men, "Before Abraham was, *I* am," then **we see** that **as** God **He** was the root, **and as** Man the offspring.

As we have considered during the past year the life of this great man, who had been given by God such an honoured place in the dispensations, whose desire was to dwell in the House of the Lord all the days of his life, chosen because " he was a man after God's own heart, " it should encourage us to strive after these spiritual attainments, upon which God places so much value. Let us seek to emulate David, and more so, David's greater Son, who will one day sit down on the throne of David, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end.

J. Young, D. Beck.

EXTRACTS.

From Kilmarnock. —In Matthew 1. we get the genealogy of the Lord **Jesus** traced from Abraham through David, the *royal* line, in contrast to the *human* line, which we get in Luke 3. Jacob was evidently in the mind of God when he said of Judah, " The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, " etc. (Genesis 49. 10), and David also expressed God's will when he wrote in Psalm 60. 7, " Judah is my law-giver " (R. V. M.). This was God's chosen tribe for rulers. We note how often the Lord Jesus is addressed as " Son of David " in Matthew's gospel, by the common people. They evidently believed that their Messiah was to be a descendant of King David. Then in chapter 22. 41-45 the Pharisees answered the Lord correctly, that the Christ was David's Son. They knew He was of David's seed by nature, but were ignorant of **Him** as God manifest in the flesh, the Lord of all.

No doubt both the references in Acts 2. 25-36 and Acts 13. 22-23 to David and his prophecies would cause interest and conviction in the hearts of the Jews.

In Revelation 5. 5 the Lord Jesus **is** presented as " the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David. " This would indicate strength and courage. Later *in* Revelation 22. 16, the Lord acknowledges Himself to be the "root and the offspring of David. " As " root " He caused David to come forth, showing His Divinity, and as " offspring " showing His humanity. Thus He proved **He** was David's Lord and Son (Revelation 3. 7). We have difficulty regarding " the key of David. " We judge this speaks of " authority, " and as David had authority in his kingdom, so the Lord's will must be carried out in Churches of God to-day (see Isaiah 22. 22). **A. G. S.**

From Cowdenbeath. —" The children of Israel shall abide many days without king " (Hosea 3. 4). When our Lord came **as** the rightful claimant to the long-vacated throne He was able to prove His claim by means of His genealogy, which showed that He was directly descended, through the line of kings, from David. David was also **a** man of such godly character that the Spirit of God could use him to speak concerning Christ in his writings. David in the Spirit called Him Lord. In the incident concerning his eating of the Shewbread, whereby the Lord silenced His critics and taught the principle that God desires mercy and not sacrifice, David **is** paid **a** very high tribute.

The mention of David's name in the Acts **is** in keeping with the character of the Book. In order to prove the resurrection, both Peter, in Acts 2., and Paul, in Acts 13., appeal to the writings of David to shew that such an event had been foretold in Psalm 16. The Epistles were written for the purpose of expounding the truth of God for His people. Thus in Romans 4. David is quoted to teach a divine doctrine, the great foundational truth of the Gospel, namely, the forgiveness of sins.

In Hebrews the writer is exhorting the saints to have faith (Hebrews 10. 39). Faith enables a man to triumph. It also enables him to suffer. Among the many names recorded to illustrate the victories of faith in the lives of men and women the name of David finds honourable mention. Surely we can associate David with many of the words in Hebrews 11. 33-38. He was among those who had faith to suffer as well as faith to triumph. He was like the blessed One whom he foreshadowed—of whom the world was not worthy. The One who was born as Son of David, and whose claim to David's throne was not recognised, but who instead was crucified as the despised and disowned One at Calvary, is seen to be alive for ever more, still being spoken of (Revelation 5. 5) and still claiming to be (Revelation 23. 16) the root and offspring of David. Thus we see that the hatred of men in their evil designs to slay **Him** has not interfered with the outworking of God's purpose, for Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, is risen from the dead and shall yet sit upon David's throne. *James Bowman.*

From Melbourne. —We note Rahab in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus in Matthew 1., and pause to ask, **is** this the Rahab who hid the spies in Joshua's day (Joshua 6. 17) ? If so, then it was a very gracious act on God's part. In the gospels we see a fulfilment in Christ of the many prophecies concerning David. Yet in the days of **His** flesh few indeed troubled to look into **His** genealogy. Said He to the Pharisees, "What think ye of the Christ? whose Son **is** He?" "Some of the multitude said concerning Him, "What, doth the Christ come out of Galilee?" Others said, "This **is** the Christ" (John 7. 41). So there arose a division because of Him. Is He not ever the great Divider, between light and darkness, humility and pride, repentance and blasphemy, as in the case of the two malefactors with "Jesus in, the midst" ?

In the Acts we have David's prophetic character. He speaks by the Holy Spirit and foreknew that he spake concerning the resurrection of Christ (2 Samuel 23. 2). Other patriarchs, besides David, knew of the Lord's resurrection. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day" (John 8. 56). "But I know that my Redeemer liveth" (Job 19. 25).

In Psalm 32. 1 we have the imputing *not* of iniquity, and in Romans 4. we have the reckoning of righteousness. Imputed righteousness necessarily follows the forgiveness of sins. God graciously forgave us our sins, but He went further: He imputed righteousness. 2 Corinthians 5. 21 puts it beautifully, "**Him** who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." Branch, King, Servant, and Man are titles of the Son of God (see Zechariah 3. 8 and Jeremiah 23. 5). In **His** day they saw the Son of David as a branch, but they did not go far enough back to see **Him** as the root of David, for He **is** "the root and the offspring of David."

T. L. Fullerton, S. Stoope.

From Birkenhead. —Matthew's gospel traces the Lord's ancestry from Abraham and David down to Joseph the husband of Mary. This was important as establishing the fulfilment of God's promises that in Abraham and his seed should all the families of the earth be blessed, and that He would raise up in the house of David, One who would reign over the house of Jacob for ever. Through Mary **His** mother also, the Lord was descended from David, as **is** evident from Luke's account, so that both Joseph and Mary were in the direct line from David. Although not actually Joseph's son, the Lord was born unto the family of Joseph

and Mary in the manner divinely revealed to both, and was acknowledged by all as the Son of Joseph. Thus His light to the throne of David is established perfectly. It is significant that it is in the Scriptures referring to the Lord's relationship with David that the truths of His humanity and His deity are brought together. This point the Lord wished to bring out when speaking to the Pharisees in Matthew 22. when he asked them how it was that the Christ was David's Lord as well as David's Son, which they were unable or unwilling to answer.

In considering the Lord's reference to the incident of David eating the Shewbread (Mark 2. 23), was the Lord here emphasising the spirit of the Law rather than the letter of the Law, to do good to one's neighbour on the Sabbath day, and so justifying David's action? It may be that the Lord was pointing out to the Pharisees that they never thought of criticising David for his action though they knew it was not strictly in keeping with the Law, yet were quick to condemn the Lord's disciples as Sabbath-breakers because they plucked the ears of corn to satisfy their hunger, forgetting that there was room in the Law for works of mercy to be exercised on the Sabbath without breaking the commandment.

M. H., J. T., N. A.

From London, S. E. —Our study is of David in the New Testament, not in person only, but as seen in the great Antitype and the wonderful outworkings of God's purposes through Him. David verily knew and rejoiced in the glorious assurance of sins forgiven. Thus he is mentioned in the unassailable document of Divine forgiveness through grace, and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 4. 6-8). In Matthew 12. 3-8, "David's Son and David's Lord" is seen as Lord of the sabbath, yea, Lord of all, and not only greater than the House of God into which David entered, but Son over God's House, for "One greater than the temple is *here*." The words of David in Psalm 22. are quoted by our Lord in the dark hours of His deepest distress (Matthew 27. 46). David never knew the awful intensity of Divine judgment as the Bearer of sin, that overwhelmed the Lord at Calvary.

In the power of Him who takes of the things of Christ, Peter addresses the men of Israel on the day of Pentecost, and forcefully sets before their minds the wonderful prophecy of Psalm 16. 8-11, witnessing boldly and with undeniable truth the resurrection and exaltation of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 2. 25-36). David had received the glory of kingship over God's chosen earthly people, wonderful type of Him whose kingdom is a heavenly kingdom with a heavenly people; yet His will be the fulness also of kingly dominion over all God's creation, for *He must reign* even unto the subduing of His enemies. David finds a place in the Divine record in Romans 1. 3, and again in Paul's letter to Timothy in his reaffirming of the verity of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2. 8). When we come to the sublime glories of the exalted Lord Jesus Christ as presented to the beloved John in the Revelation of the Lord Jesus, we have "the root of David hath overcome" (Revelation 5. 5). The Lord, the Root, would surely speak of the very first and great cause of God's victorious might and of His abiding heavenly and earthly sovereignty. The magnificent sunrise of God's eternal day brightened the heart of the beloved John as, led of the Spirit, he was brought to experience fullest joy as the exalted Lord presented Himself in the words, "I J e s u s I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star." Verily David was a great star in the glorious galaxy of the faithful leaders sent for the guidance of Israel, and, withal, a wonderful type of the rising and eternal glory and splendour of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness. We close with the thought of the excelling honour accorded by God to the sweet psalmist of Israel, and the exhortation for our encouragement, "them that honour Me I will honour" (1 Samuel 2. 30). G. S. Pain.

From Vancouver. —As a matter of general interest to followers of " Bible Studies " during the past year, we draw attention to 1 Chronicles 17. 16, 17, as found in Dr. Young's literal translation—"And David the king cometh in and sitteth before Jehovah, and saith, ' Who am I, O Jehovah God, and what my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto ? And this is small in Thine eyes, O God, and Thou speakest concerning the house of Thy servant afar off, and hast seen **me** as a type of the man who is on high, O Jehovah God. ' "

No wonder some of the experiences of David, as told out especially in the Psalms, speak to our hearts so plainly of **Him** of Whom he is spoken here as "A type of the Man on high. "

Another incident of interest is found in 1 Chronicles 29. 3, where the word translated "peculiar" in Exodus 19. 5, also Deuteronomy 7. 6, Deuteronomy 14. 2, is translated " Proper good " in the Authorised Version thus: —" Moreover, because I have set my affection to the house of my God, I have of mine own proper good, of gold and silver, which I have given to the house of my God, over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house. " R. V. gives it: —" Seeing that I have a treasure of mine own, . . . I give it unto the house of my God. " While Dr. Young's Translation reads, " And again, because of my delighting in the house of my God, the substance I have—a peculiar treasure of gold and silver—I have given for the house of my God even over and above all I have prepared for the house of the sanctuary. "

What a grand ending for David ! nothing kept back ! and what a commentary of his character is given us by the Spirit, "I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who shall do all my will, " fitting type of Him, who became obedient unto death, yea the death of the cross !

" Not that I have mine own I'll call,
I'll hold it for the Giver,
My heart, my strength, my life, my all,
Are His, and **His** forever. " J, B.

EPILOGUE.

Our study of the remarkably varied life of David closes with this issue, but, we trust, the lessons we have learned therefrom will be abiding. We have been with him, a humble lad, in the fields tending his father's sheep, and we have seen him on the throne, righteously governing God's people, Israel. The days of deep distress and despair have been profitably compared with the days of elation and holy joy. **We** have soberly contemplated the dangers that accompany success, as the grievous sins of this otherwise noble man have been laid bare before us.

From the fertile soil of this rich life have blossomed the precious psalms of David. Many of them, though primarily applicable to his own experiences, contain deeper, fuller, prophetic meaning when we **see** their fulfilment in the Messiah. In all his experiences, whether crying from the depths or overflowing with goodly matter, David could truly say, " The LORD is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer, **EVEN MINE.** "

The papers in this issue impress **us** with the truth that it is the last, the Divine, assessment of character that counts. Matthew, very early, declares Jesus Christ to **be** the Son of God. John, in the Revelation, almost closes with the words, " I, J e s u s, . . . I **am** the root and the offspring of David. " Paul, too, in the **great** Gospel Epistle, traces back the genealogy of the Son to "the seed of David,

according to the flesh. " The common people, at all times, hailed the Lord as " Thou Son of David. " This association with the Lord's Christ raises David to a high plane. High too is the appreciation of men filled with the Holy Spirit. Stephen spake of David as one " who found favour in the sight of God. " Paul repeats the Divine approbation as a man after God's heart, who shall do all God's will. He saw in David one who " in his own generation served the counsel of God. " The Lord, Himself, and **His** Apostles, Peter and James and Paul, all quote from David's psalms. Truly, indeed, this is a remarkable assessment of the worth of the sweet Psalmist of Israel.

" Lives of great men all remind us,
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us,
Footprints in the sands of time. "

Jas. Martin.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Question from **Kilmarnock and Melbourne**. —We would be glad of help on " the Key of David " (Revelation 3. 7).

Answer. —The word " Key " needs no explanation as to its meaning, literally, but it is used also metaphorically in the following scriptures: Matthew 16. 19, Luke 11. 52, Revelation 1. 18, Revelation 9. 1, Revelation 20. 1, and in the scripture before us in Revelation 3. 7. The " key " so used is a symbol of knowledge, authority and power. The qualifying phrase, " of David, " would designate authority that is regal, kingly, absolute. Similar words are found in Isaiah 22. 22 (a slight difference in that there it is " the key of the house of David "), where the prophet promises to Eliakim the power of a king to execute judgment over the nation. In Revelation 3. 7 the words are applied in a Messianic sense to the Lord Jesus Christ, who has absolute authority over **His** Church, and is over God's House (Hebrews 3. 6). The following extract from "Needed Truth" Vol. I, page 104, is helpful. " Between the letters to Philadelphia and to Laodicea there is a marked change in the figure " (of the use of the key for opening and shutting doors). " In the letter to Philadelphia the door is that which for the Assembly the Lord opens, and no one can shut. In that to Laodicea, the door is for the Lord and is to be opened, not by the Assembly, but by an individual, by any one who hears and who is willing to respond.... The Laodicean Assembly is about to be given over and disowned by the Lord; the failure being so utter that fellowship with Him and testimony for **Him** can be found only in the isolated path of the one whose faithfulness to God has made him a solitary man. " *Jas. M.*

Question from London, S. E. —Concerning "the tabernacle of David" in Acts 15. 16, what is the counterpart in the out-working of God's dealings through the Lord Jesus ?

1. Is it the Kingdom of God?
2. Is it a restored and worshipping Israel ?
3. Is it the Church ?

seeing that a Tabernacle suggests a dwelling-place for God.

Answer. —Peter could prove the calling-in of the Gentiles by a vision, Paul and Barnabas by miracles wrought by their hands, but James made reference to an Old Testament scripture (Amos 9. 11-12) to prove this call, which was, at that time, being responded to by Gentiles. The words of other prophets also agree to this. (See Romans 10. 19-20 and cp. the Old Testament quotations.)

It is the "tabernacle" or "tent" of David which is here quoted, and not his kingly palace. Perhaps this would take us back to his early, lowly beginning, and may also have referred to the fact that the House of David had, at that time, sunk to a very low estate.

The Lord, born of the seed of David, had condescended to this low degree, when "the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us" (John 1. 14, R. V. M.). I judge this reference by James from Amos, is applied to the breaking-down of the middle wall between Jews and Gentiles, and to the building into the Church, the body, of Gentiles as well as Jews, with a view to their being "a people for His name," in the Kingdom of God. As the scripture **is** used here I do not think it refers to a restored and worshipping Israel, but as to whether the Amos scripture visualises such a future fulfilment I cannot say. *Jas. M.*

Question from Cardiff. —Was the Lord's body liable to corrupt, or is the thought that in resurrection-life the Lord beheld no corruption with His eyes (Acts 2. 27)?

Answer. —Once by Peter (Acts 2. 27) and once by Paul (Acts 13. 35) **is** Psalm 16. 10 quoted: "Thou wilt not give thy Holy One *to see* corruption." "To see" (Gr. *idein*, from *eidon*) is used with the meaning "to experience," as in Luke 2. 26 and Hebrews 11. 5, *death*; and in John 3. 36, *life*; and so here in Acts 2. 27, *corruption*. Peter's words in Acts 2. 24 concerning the spotless, sinless Man approved of God are powerful, "It was not possible that He should be holden of it (death)." *Jas. M.*

Question from Atherton. —Is the expression "and whose sins are covered" dispensational in character (Romans 4. 7)?

Answer. —Is this question enquiring if in different dispensations there were different ways of covering up sin? A great principle is being asserted in Romans 4. which applies to all dispensations, namely, that justification of the ungodly is based on faith. Even in Abraham's day, before the giving of circumcision, before the Law, it is recorded in Genesis 15. 6 . . . Abraham "believed in the LORD: and He counted it to him for righteousness." The same truth is proclaimed in Psalm 32. 1-2 (quoted in Romans 4. 7) by David. The same truth holds to-day. So the principle of imputed justification is the same for these three different dispensations, however different the means used may be in each dispensation. *Epikalupto* means "to cover up or over" (used only in Romans 4. 7) *Jas. M.*

NOTICE.

In January's issue we intimated that the subject, "The Minor Prophets." would be resumed (D. V.) in due course but it **is** thought well to take the second Letter to the Corinthians as our 1950 subject. Editors feel that the interest of some in the Minor Prophets may be better served by a series of papers thereon from our co-editor, Mr. S. Burrows, who has kindly agreed to write these during 1950 (D. V.).